

No 140

October, 2010

## President's Letter

### Calendar

BBLA Board Meeting

October 17, 2020

BBLA Board Meeting

November 21, 2020

Autumn has fallen upon Big Birch Lake. Most boats have been moved to storage and most docks and lifts have been removed from the water. What evidence of zebra mussels did you have on your dock, lift and boat? Was it greater than the year before or less? While we detest the presence of the invasive species, we need to monitor its fluctuations from year to year. Please report any changes to your area director. (Find list of directors on page 9)

BBL had a major boating accident this past summer, and according to the DNR, boating accidents were up in 2020. Please talk to your family and the people who visit you about the safety precautions we all need to follow on the water. (See story on boat safety page 5)

Also a few visitors to the lake showed disrespect to access inspectors. Please remind guests that boat inspection is about keeping invasive species out of the lake. We all need to do our part in this matter and respect the people whose job it is to inspect the boats.

If you cut weeds along your shoreline, it is your responsibility to cut them up and remove them from the water. The DNR requires that

you cut up and take out weeds and dispose of them. If the bog is too large, then call your area director to make arrangements to have the bog towed to a designated area.

The BBLA Board of directors welcomes two new members to the board—Blake Johnson was elected to represent Area D, which is on the eastern side of the lower bay, and Matt Everding was elected At Large. The board also says thank you to Dean Mohs and Robert Kutter, who both reached the term limit serving on the board for the past 12 and 14 years respectively.

Ben Ellering  
President



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## Board thanks plant sampling volunteers for 2020

By Deb Johnson

Our summer season has ended and while we are sad to see it go, the news from our access plant-checking teams is good. No Eurasian milfoil or starry stonewort (AIS) was found at our five lake accesses this summer.

All of the twenty members of our weed-checking program deserve a big "Thank You" for their efforts and dedication. Each two-person team checks their assigned access once per month from June through the middle of October. Two teams focus on each access so each one is sampled with a two-sided rake at least twice per month. So far this year our accesses have been checked 30 times, in total, with no invasive plants found.

Since lake accesses are often entry points for invasive species like starry stonewort, the team members hope to catch an infestation early, should we get one, when treatments are more

effective.

Thanks again to all of our "weed-checking" volunteers below for providing an early AIS warning system and helping to protect Big Birch Lake. Lou and Debbie Bullock, Jerry and Deb Rudolph, Bob and Connie Koch, Bob and Deb Niehaus, Mike and Amy Schwantes, Lynn and Mary Kay Ersland, Kevin and Ann Costello, Linnea Ingold, Lee Uphoff, Steve and Jean Doth, Craig Johnson



Summer sailing on BBL

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## BBLA 2020 Volunteers

Normally the BBLA thanks all of its volunteers with an appreciation gathering. Since they could not gather, here is a list of those who helped the association and the areas in which they volunteered.

- Alex Beste (trash pick up)
- Cody Hatton (trash pick up)
- Mike Sadlowsky (water sampling)
- Sherry Kutter (water testing)
- Marge Anderson (water sampling)
- Rick Matlan (water sampling)
- Jim Kluempke (Loon Counts)
- Chuck Schiemann (Water quality/Secchi Readings/Channel Sign/Loon Nest)
- Bernie Brixius (Secchi Readings)
- Holly Hinnenkamp (Secchi Readings)
- Vern Klasen (Secchi Readings)
- Leroy Blommel (Secchi Readings, Building Maintenance, snow shoveling)
- Howard Pakola (Secchi Readings/Loon Nest)
- Ken Meyer (Secchi Readings)
- Peter Rutherford (Channel Buoys, Fishing/Wildlife Committee)
- Glen Meyer (Loon Nest)
- Jim Sinclair (Loon Nest)
- Phil Ostendorf (Loon Nest)
- Tom Schanhaar (Loon Nest)
- Steve Thelen (Fishing/Wildlife Committee)
- Chuck Barth (Fishing/Wildlife Committee)
- Barry Meyer (Fishing/Wildlife Committee)
- Ralph Mehr (Fishing/Wildlife Committee)
- John Roe (Various Activities)
- Lee Moening (Various Activities)
- Larry and Elaine Hoeschen (Beaver Dam Clean Up)

## BBLA Financial Balance Sheet

	Aug 31, 20	Aug 31, 19
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
<b>Checking/Savings</b>		
1005 · Checking-CMCU	1,866.75	1,612.61
1010 · Share Account-CMCU	35.90	35.90
1015 · My Goal Savings	4,036.67	4,036.59
1020 · Money Markey-CMCU	8,119.20	11,015.02
1050 · Cert of Deposit-12 Month #1	109,790.76	107,978.60
1055 · Cert of Deposit-12 Month #2	10,501.62	10,366.52
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	134,350.90	135,045.24
<b>Other Current Assets</b>		
1080 · Initiative Foundation Fund	40,169.03	38,822.01
<b>Total Other Current Assets</b>	40,169.03	38,822.01
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	174,519.93	173,867.25
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
1200 · Building & Land	35,300.00	35,300.00
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	35,300.00	35,300.00
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>209,819.93</b>	<b>209,167.25</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>		
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Long Term Liabilities</b>		
2500 · Buffer Obligations-Strip Agreem	5,949.05	5,949.05
2550 · Reserve		
2551 · Aquatic-Invasive Species	100,000.00	100,000.00
2552 · Future Buffer Strips	14,495.72	14,495.72
<b>Total 2550 · Reserve</b>	114,495.72	114,495.72
<b>Total Long Term Liabilities</b>	120,444.77	120,444.77
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	120,444.77	120,444.77
<b>Equity</b>		
3990 · Unrestricted Net Assets	81,266.62	87,280.79
<b>Net Income</b>	8,108.54	1,441.69
<b>Total Equity</b>	89,375.16	88,722.48
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>209,819.93</b>	<b>209,167.25</b>

- Rober Kutter (Newsletter, Facebook)

### Access Weed-Checking Program – Volunteers for 2020

- Lou and Deb Bullock
- Jerry and Deb Rudolph
- Bob and Connie Koch
- Bob and Deb Niehaus

- Mike and Amy Schwantes
- Lynn and Mary Kay Ersland
- Kevin and Ann Costello
- Linnea Ingold
- Lee Uphoff
- Steve and Jean Doth
- Craig Johnson

**Thank you!**

# Autumn's glow falls across Big Birch Lake

## Summer in the rearview mirror catches rays of fun

Perhaps the most common sound heard on the lake this past summer was boat engines being reversed to remove weeds from the propeller. That little maneuver so many boaters practiced repeatedly was thanks mostly to white-water crowfoot, a native plant that took advantage of clear water and a lower water level to grow and bloom prodigiously in 2020.

Without a permit, lakeshore owners can remove up to 2500 square feet of weeds in front of their property. The best way to control weeds is to remove them by hand. Use of chemicals or weed harvesters is not permitted by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

There is still time this fall before the lake freezes over to get in the water and pull crowfoot out by hand if you can find it. If that doesn't appeal to you, you can wait until next spring and get an early start on weed pulling. (Gee, I can't wait.) However, I think I will try to spot it early and reduce its impact on my beach.

The plant was a nuisance for boating and swimming. In some spots on my shoreline is was so thick the fish were complaining. However, the ducks were happy with all the forage. With so much to eat, they didn't know where to turn next.

Weeds aside, summer 2020 was certainly unusual. As people sheltered in place due to the pandemic, they spent more time on the water boating, skiing, boarding, wake skiing, fishing and reversing their engines. Yet, no one reported good fishing. (Maybe it was all those engines in reverse that scared the fish.) Many property owners also made improvements to their landscapes and homes with time to complete projects.

I hope everyone can look back on the summer of 2020 with some fond memories but also look forward to a less stressful summer of 2021. Summer is behind us as we enjoy the lake in mid to late fall.

With 90-degree temperatures in the rearview mirror, some feel the cool fall temperatures as relief and time to focus

on enjoying the last blooms in the garden. By Labor Day the warm days of summer were behind us and as tradition has it, some boats and docks were removed from the water for the season.

Looking back, I've always wanted to "do everything" at the lake. It is comical, right, or borderline crazy? "Everything" is all the reasons you were drawn to the lake in the first place. Of course, one learns early on there just isn't time and or motivation when opportunities arise. Then there are all the other things that take up your time—commitments to this organization or that activity.

When we retired here 2003, I told myself I was going to fish often. Most summers I got out fishing once or twice. I even began ice fishing the first few winters until I decided I didn't want to be that cold just to catch a fish, nor did I want to invest in an expensive shelter to keep myself warm just to catch a fish.

The longer one stays the more one should have done on the list of "everything at lake" right? I have swum every summer except this one. The whitewater crowfoot kept me from that pleasurable activity. Yes, I could have gone to the Sandbar or jumped off the



## Kutter's Column

In my youth growing up on a dairy farm across the road from the lake, I would swim everyday that I could. Sometimes I would go five times until my mother would say, "That's enough. You are waterlogged." I admit to a few ear infections from being in the water too much, but swimming was the most fun growing up at the lake.

I also grew up water skiing and kept it up until I could no longer balance on one ski and my upper body was unable to hold a rope. (I even held the ski rope by one foot at times.) I know others have done this as well, but I remember the fun of skiing around the entire lake. I watch in admiration those who ski across a placid lake on a beautiful summer morning.

How many remember the heavy wooden, homemade, dangerous surfboards pulled by a boat in the 1950's and 60's? They could dip beneath the surface and the rider would go flying.

Knee boarding became a craze in the 1980's. Kneeling on a fiberglass board with a strap to hold your knees in place one would hold a tow rope and maneuver in and out of the wake much like skiing. The popularity of that gave way to wake boarding, wake skating and wake surfing which seemed to follow the snowboarding craze.

There is much more to explore around this topic of doing "everything" at the lake. (To be continued in a future column) There is always the regret that we failed to get in that last boat ride before cold descended. However, this year we made it happen on an especially warm September day. I have always been thankful I didn't need to travel any distance to witness the beauty fall drops on Minnesota every year.

Still, with the unexpected changes brought to life by a pandemic, heaven seems closer in a house beside the water.



**Stunning fall foliage was on display on the east shore September 21, about a week before peak colors.**  
**Photo by Robert Kutter**

boat in the middle of the bay, but that is not the same as walking in the water and getting to the depth where one wants to dive in.



## News from the Board Room

The BBLA board organized for its new term by electing Ben Ellering, president, Kevin Costello, vice president and Craig Tweedale, treasurer on September 19, 2020.

Board member, Brian Gordon, will seek permission from landowners along the lake outlet into Little Birch for trapping beaver which have built a dam impeding the flow of water.



**Beavers building dam in Adley Creek between the lakes.**

The board discussed the impact of fertilizers on water quality with additional discussion to come. The latest Secchi disk readings (water clarity) for the north basin was 8.8 feet and the south basin was 9.7 feet.

The board heard concerns due to the lack of public access inspectors during the Labor Day holiday. It will seek explanation from Todd County. The board will hire an inspector for the St. Rosa access for the remainder of the season.

Thus far \$8200 has been raised for the spring fish stocking done by the BBLA. The goal is \$10,000. People can contribute to the fund anytime through by mail or by going online to the association website and following the link on the donation page.

The board will seek more information regarding fishing tournaments to provide better assistance to scheduling public access inspection hours.

New chains have been purchased to replace those on the buys.

## Fish stocking, water quality need attention from everyone

By Grant Niehaus

### Fishing

Walleye stocking fundraising is ongoing, and we currently have raised around \$8000.00 so far. Thank you all of whom donated. If you are still considering or are interested in donating, donations can be made through the Payment/Donate link on the BBLA website, or by mailing a check to the BBLA with Walleye Stocking noted in the memo line.

The Fishing/Wildlife Committee will be meeting with the DNR this fall to review the walleye electrofishing survey results of BBL, as well as, discussion of any potential slot/bag limits to improve the quantity and/or quality of the fish in the lake.

**As a reminder to all folks fishing BBL, keep any Northern Pike that you can (In accordance with the State Laws/Regulations) as there are too many Northern Pike in BBL according to the DNR. Also, please promote catch and release of walleye less than 14" to allow a "better quality fish" caught in BBL in the future. Also, when fishing bluegills or crappies, please release the large fish to allow them to spawn and pass along their good genetics to the next generation of fish.**

### Water Quality

Secchi readings are wrapping up for the year. Once all the numbers are compiled from everyone, a condensed report will be sent off to the state agencies for publishing. As always,

thanks to everyone who helped volunteer by taking the readings and collecting the data. (See the volunteer list on page 2.)

Ortho phosphorus sampling is taking place as required. We recently added two additional sampling sites to our list with the potential of adding more in the future. Thanks to those who helped collect, test, and compile the data this year.

A survey was completed to locate all the creek/streams/culverts that flow into Big Birch Lake. This data will be beneficial to help identify if any additional testing locations are needed in the future. The committee is working with the Stearns County Soil and Water Conservation District as well. We want local landowners to understand options for improving the quality of the water entering the lake from the Hoffman Creek inlet.

**Remember, if you choose to fertilize your yards, please consider utilizing a phosphorus free fertilizer. Also, if you have any yard or beach waste (such as leaves, weeds, grass clippings, etc..) please consider disposing of them in an area that does not drain directly or indirectly into the lake. By following these two actions we can reduce the amount of phosphorus entering the lake, which will help decrease the amount of filamentous algae and weed growth we have been seeing over the last couple years in BBL.**

## Mussels damage water systems

By Lynn Ersland

Are you, like me, finding dead zebra mussels in your irrigation intake tube every spring when you hook up your system? I found out that if I did not remove these mussels, they would break loose and plug up the water pump, potentially burning it up.

Steve Neville from Neville Hardware in Grey Eagle has designed a brush that attaches to a drill that will loosen the dead zebra mussels. If you need a tool like this, contact Steve. A two-inch diameter brush costs \$10. A four-inch diameter brush costs \$25. Good luck fighting these pests!

### Obituary of Jeff Wander

*Loving son, husband, brother and father.*

Jeffery Wander, age 52 of Monticello, passed away September 11, 2020.

Survived by his parents, Dave and Joan Wander; wife, Sara Wander; brother, Terry Wander and sons Connor Wander and Noah Ahmed.

A private family service was held.

Jeff loved sailing his boat on Big Birch Lake and lived his life to the fullest. He will be missed by many.

Memorial preferred to the American Kidney Fund.

# Mohs retires from BBLA Board citing board's work on invasive species, building

By Robert Kutter

Dean Mohs served on the BBLA Board of Directors for 12 years representing Area D. (The area is in the lower basin on the east side. Four three-year terms is the limit one can serve consecutively.) He chaired the building committee and was instrumental in transitioning the building from Gene and Bernie Waldorf who gifted it to the association. In the transition process, he was able to get the real estate taxes waived from Todd County due to the non-profit status of the organization.

He helped establish the first association webpage through the Melrose Telephone Company.

During his tenure, Mohs believes the major accomplishment of the board was the formation of the Aquatic Invasive Species Committee to educate the public about invasive species and to act to prevent their presence in Big Birch Lake. He commends the work of John Roe, Deb Johnson, and Lynn Ersland for their leadership on the issues. Starting the boat inspection program and continuing the weed sampling, and water sampling were essential to monitoring the water condition of the lake.

Like everyone on the board, Mohs is concerned about starry stonewort getting into the lake. The presence of it in lakes nearby heightens the board's concerns. Stonewort is the

most challenging issue the board could face.

For 10 years, Mohs was responsible for monitoring the lake level and measuring rainfall, which he then reported to the DNR. He passed that job on to former board member and volunteer, Chuck Schiemann.

After looking for lake property for 15 years, the Mohs purchased property on the lake in 2002 and eventually it became their permanent home. They enjoy the beauty of the lake and the many friends they have made over the years.

The BBLA Board thanks Dean Mohs his 12 years of service to the lake association.

## Kutter served 14 years on BBLA Board, will continue to edit newsletter, Facebook page

Robert Kutter served 14 years on the BBLA Board and ended his term on September 1. The term limit is 12 years and he fulfilled two additional years for an unexpired term.

During his term, he took over editing the newsletter from Val and Mil Voelker. when they sold their lake property. He will continue in the position of the newsletter editor.

Kutter also started the BBLA Facebook page and will continue to manage it. It currently has 948 followers.

Dean Mohs and Kutter worked to establish the first website for the association in 2007, and Kutter maintained the website until 2017.

"Threats from aquatic invasive species is the obvious big story since before the arrival of zebra mussels," said Kutter.

The AIS Committee was formed out of the fear some known invasive species would find its way to BBL. The first threat was Eurasian milfoil and it has not been detected in the lake. The second big threat was zebra mussels, and we all know the

impact they have had on the water.

"I'm grateful for the leaders of the AIS Committee and the work they have done to change the focus of the organization," said Kutter.

Ralph Mehr, Peter Rutherford and Ben Ellering were the presidents of the BBLA during Kutter's tenure, and each brought good, helpful direction to the association.

Kutter was born on what was a dairy farm on the north shore of the lake next to Lakeview Cemetery. He grew up with summer residents along that shore that included many adventures on the water and the farm.

After a career in education, he and his wife Nancy had the opportunity to purchase a family property on the north shore. "I didn't expect to retire here, but when the opportunity arose we went for it. It was like coming home," Kutter said.

The old saying, "Home is where the heart is." has found meaning for him as he believes where one was born and raised in indelibly stamped on one's heart and mind.

## Boating fatalities rise, as does state boating

*Editor's Note: The following story is from the Outdoor News, Sept. 18, 2020 reprinted with permission.*

By Javier Serna

St. Paul— An increase in the number of boaters on the water this year has coincided with an increase in boating fatalities, according to the Minnesota DNR's Division of Law Enforcement.

The current number of 13 boating-related deaths is one of the highest in the past decade. Lisa Dugan, the DNR's recreation safety outreach coordinator, said this week that 2016 was a deadlier year at this point in the season.

Last year, there were 10 total fatalities, the lowest since the state began tracking the statistic in 1961, Dugan said.

"Even though 10 fatalities is 10 too many, we were heading in the right direction last year with people educating themselves, displaying the right behavior, and more life jackets being worn," Dugan said. "Last year was a really positive year and then this year from the very start of boating season we are looking at more boaters on the water, (including) more new boaters."

The coronavirus pandemic has likely caused boating participation to skyrocket, because it's on a short list of ways people **Boating fatalities continues on page 10**

## MEMBERSHIP AS OF SEPTEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup> 2020

Althaus, Kurt & Lori  
Anderson, Jay & Derry  
Anderson, Jean  
Anderson, Stephen & Lisa  
Anderson, Todd & Debbie  
Andrews, Mike  
Arulfo, Michelle  
Atkinson, Dan & John  
Atwood, Duane  
Auger, John & Karen  
Austing, April  
Austing, Dick & Jane  
Beckermann, Fran & Linda  
Beekhuizen, Steven & Julie  
Berg, Dwayne & Louise  
Berg, Ken & Bev  
Bergmann, Ken & Marilyn  
Beste, Alexander  
Beste, Thomas & Julie  
Beuning, James & Judine  
Bitz, Steve & LaVonne  
Blommel Family  
Blommel, Leroy & Marilyn  
Boecker, Elmer & Juliana  
Bohlig, Silverius  
Bomstad, Gary & Sue  
Braegelmann, Patrick & Sandra  
Brandon, David & Kristine Dunford  
Brandt, Barry & Paula  
Brattensborg, Ruth  
Brixius, Bernie & Lisa  
Browman, Raleigh & Ruth  
Brunner, Paul & Lauri  
Bullock, Lou & Debbie  
Bushman, Wayne  
Butte, Rick  
Campbell, Mel & Sherry  
Carlson, Allen & Shirley  
Carpenter, Todd & Laura  
Carstens, James & Brenda  
Casper, Paul & Deb  
Caspers, John & Allyson  
Cavello, Butch & Amy  
Cebuhar, Charles & Mary  
Chmielewski, Daniel & Barb  
Claussen, Kim  
Collins, Jim & Crystal  
Collins, Joyce  
Collins, Margaret  
Comfort, Jeff & Julie  
Costello, Kevin & Ann  
Coulson, Brad & Jane  
Damrow, Paul & June  
Davis, Scott & Marjo  
Denne, Marv & Mary Beth  
Dinndorf, Don  
Dobesh, Jeff & Jill  
Doth, Stephen & Jean  
Dubiel, Marvin & Pam  
Duclos, Edwin  
Duevel, Jerome & Kim  
Elfering Family, Evelyn  
Elieff, Daniel & Julie  
Ellering, Ben & Jenn  
Engel, Greg & Susan  
Engel, John & Carol  
Enneking, Gene & Cheryl  
Enright, Jack & Kay  
Erdmann, Mark & Summer  
Erickson, Russell  
Ersland, Lynn & Mary Kay  
Everding, Matt & Missy Kotzer  
Eveslage, Steve & Sarah  
Falk, Jeremy & Jennifer  
Fehn, Ken & Barbara  
Finken, Ida  
First, Pete & Nicole  
Flaws, Michael & Marilyn  
Fox, Thomas & Laurie  
Freeman, Dave & Sue  
Frerichs Frank, Jane

Freudenrich, Jeremy & Holly  
Froehling, Joseph  
Funk, Robb & Carolyn  
Gagne, Bob & Christine  
Gallagher, Pat & Caryn  
Gangl, Dale  
Gerads, Dale & Mary Lou  
Gerding, Dewayne & A  
Gerner, Robert & Charlene  
Gordon, Brian J  
Grossman, Jim & Jan  
Grutsch, John & Jan  
Hammerstrom, Malia  
Hatton, Rene & LuAnn  
Helget, Ron  
Henderson, John & Mary  
Hendrickson, David & Colette  
Hennemann, Kitty  
Hess, Herb & Mary Kay  
Hinman, John & Kathy  
Hinnenkamp, Ben & Pam  
Hinnenkamp, Eberhard & Helen  
Hinnenkamp, Hollis  
Hinnenkamp, William  
Hird, Mike & Susan  
Hoffman, Dan & Janell  
Hoversten, Chris & Leah  
Howe, Michael  
Hughes, Bob & Sally  
Hughes, Frank  
Hughes, Parry & Kathy  
Hughes, Tim  
Humbert, Rick & Lois  
Ingold, Kirk & Mandi  
Ingold, Linnea  
Jacobsen, James & Marjorie  
Jansen, Jeff & Teri  
Jarsko, Mrs. H. L.  
Jepperson, Craig & Mary  
Jeske, Nancy  
Jim Lind Family  
Johnson, Adrian & Kay  
Johnson, Craig & Debra  
Johnson, Dan & Julie  
Johnson, David & Betty  
Kadri, Abdu & Janice  
Kalgren, Rick & Ann  
Kappes, Mike & Jannie  
Kautman, Robert & Josephine  
Kelly, Brandon & Becky  
Kemper, Jeff & Linda  
Kennedy, Dennis  
Kerfeld, Art & Rosie  
Kerfeld, Cheryl  
Kerfeld, Donald & Diane  
Kerfeld, Glenn  
Kirchner, Gerald & Jonelle  
Klaphake, Florian & Doreen  
Klaphake, Rick & Deb  
Klaphake, Steve & Pam  
Klapperich, John & Suzy  
Klasen, Kyle & Stacy  
Klasen, Vern & Marlene  
Klocker, Barb  
Kloos, Mike & Becky  
Kluempke, Jim & Cathy  
Klug, Darlene  
Koch, Bob & Connie  
Kohorst, Don & Loni, Bob & Joan  
Kotsmith, Terry & Sharon  
Kraker, Bob  
Krig, Gary & Peggy  
Kuehne, Robert  
Kuehne, Ron & Midge  
Kuhlmann, Mary  
Kuhns, Vanessa  
Kunkel, Phil & Rose  
Kutter, Robert & Nancy  
Kutter, Ryan & Jenny  
Kutter, Wayne & Sherry  
Kyllo, John & Carole

Lambrecht, Paul & Sandra  
Larson, Brandon & Debi  
Larson, Gayle  
Lemieux, BJ & Rachel  
Lieder, Bill & Renee  
Lilligren, Kirk & Cathy  
Lind, Kevin  
Linn, Mike & Denise  
Linz, Mary  
Lloyd, Karen  
Loehr, Jim & Renee  
Logan, Guy & Suzanne  
Louden, Sarah  
Lundeen, Darrell & Marlys  
Mack, Murray & Sue  
Maeder, Niklas & Brandee  
Malm, Scott & Ann  
Martland, Richard & Marge Anderson  
Matchinsky, James & Roselyn  
Mattson, Amy  
McConnell, Ann  
McQueen, Kathy  
Meh, Mike & Lori  
Meh, Ralph & Mary Ann  
Meldaus, Raymond & Elizabeth  
Meyer, Barry  
Meyer, Glenn & Dianne  
Meyer, Juel  
Meyer, Ken & Sherry  
Meyer, Roy  
Meyer, Virg & Joyce  
Miley, Rod & Nancy  
Miller, Peter & Anna  
Mische, Hans & Julie  
Moening, Lee & Judy  
Mohr, Richard & Marilyn  
Mohs, Dean & Sandra  
Molitor, Chick & Karen  
Molitor, Jon  
Moser, Jean  
Moser, Scott & Helen  
Mueller, Jerry  
Nathe, Mike & Laura  
Neibling, Tim & Sue  
Neville, Steve  
Niehaus, Anthony & Carol  
Niehaus, Bob & Deb  
Niehaus, Grant  
Niehaus, Jeanne  
Niehaus, John & Mary  
Nohner, Kevin & Mary  
Orchard, Joan  
Orth, David & Linda  
Osendorf, Rosemary  
Ostendorf, Lenore  
Ostendorf, Mark & Lisa  
Ostrem, Justin & Amy  
Pakola, Howard & Barbara  
Palmquist, Mary Pluth  
Patch Family  
Pavlivek, John  
Pelo, Rod & Phyllis  
Peterson, Dr Thomas & Virginia  
Phillips, Rev Roger & Rosemary  
Piersak, Jeff & Kim  
Pladson, Dr & Mrs Terence  
Poganski, Rock & Marcia  
Provinzino, Chuck & Jannine  
Pundsack, Craig & Lisa  
Rahn, Dave & Lisa  
Rasmussen, Steve & Sandy  
Rediske, Marilyn  
Reed, Beverly  
Refsland, Curt & Mary  
Richardson, David & Anna  
Richie, Betty  
Richie, Paul  
Rieger, Joel & Pamela  
Rieland, Chuck & Lucy  
Rieland, Matt & Shari  
Rieland, Mike & Mary

Rieland, Shirley  
Ritter, Greg & Barb  
Roe, John & Janet  
Rolfes, Robert & Charles  
Rose, Herman & Therese  
Rothstein, Gary & Ruth  
Roy, Barbara  
Rudolph, Jerry & Deb  
Russell, Jim & Mindy  
Rutherford, Peter & Lourel  
Sadlowsky, Mike & Vicki  
Sand, Daniel & Mary  
Savage, William & Sharon  
Schanhaar, Tom & Deb  
Schiemann, Charles & Ellie  
Schlough, Thomas & Joyce  
Schmid, Judith  
Schmid, Ted & Julie  
Schmidt, Thomas & Joann  
Schnettler, Edmund  
Schnettler, John & Jan  
Schwantes, Michael  
Schwantes, Mike & Amy  
Schwartz, Stephen & Joan  
Schwieters, Charles & Beatrice  
Sieben, Kevin & Beth Thieschafer  
Sieben, Russell & Mary  
Sieloff, Justin & Sarah  
Silbernagel, John & Marie  
Sinclair, James & Carolyn  
Sinclair, Ken & Jan  
Sorenson, Larry & Loanne  
Sorenson, Lois  
Spears (Moening), Heather  
Steinbring, John & Sandy  
Stueve, Charlie & Doris  
Tembrock, Henry & Marion  
Thelen, Steve & Amy  
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Thompson, Rod & Sally  
Tiemann, Madonna  
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Tomsche, David  
Trierweiler, Corey & Julie  
Trulson, Kent & Loretta  
Tschida, Stewart & Amy  
Tschida, Wayne & JoAnn  
Tweedale, Craig & Mary Lou  
Uphoff, Jim & Lee  
Van Beck, Chad & Brenda  
VanDrehle, Donald & Helen  
VanHavermaet, Paul & Amanda  
Vener, John & Corinne  
Vener, Mike & Kim  
Viere, Kevin & Ann  
Waldvogel, Dennis  
Walker, Tom  
Walters, George & Sue  
Wander, Dave & Joan  
Warnert, Ron & Lee Meyer  
Weber, Thomas  
Weber, Tom  
Weitzel, John & Mary  
Weitzel, Michael & Jean  
Weitzel, Michele  
Welle, Larry & Rose  
Wiebolt, Bernard  
Wobegon Properties LLC  
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Wright, Thomas & Sara Roberts  
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Zachman, Jeff & Linda  
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Zimmer, Chris & Sarah  
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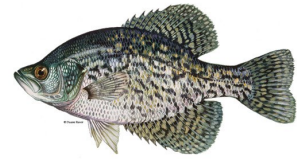
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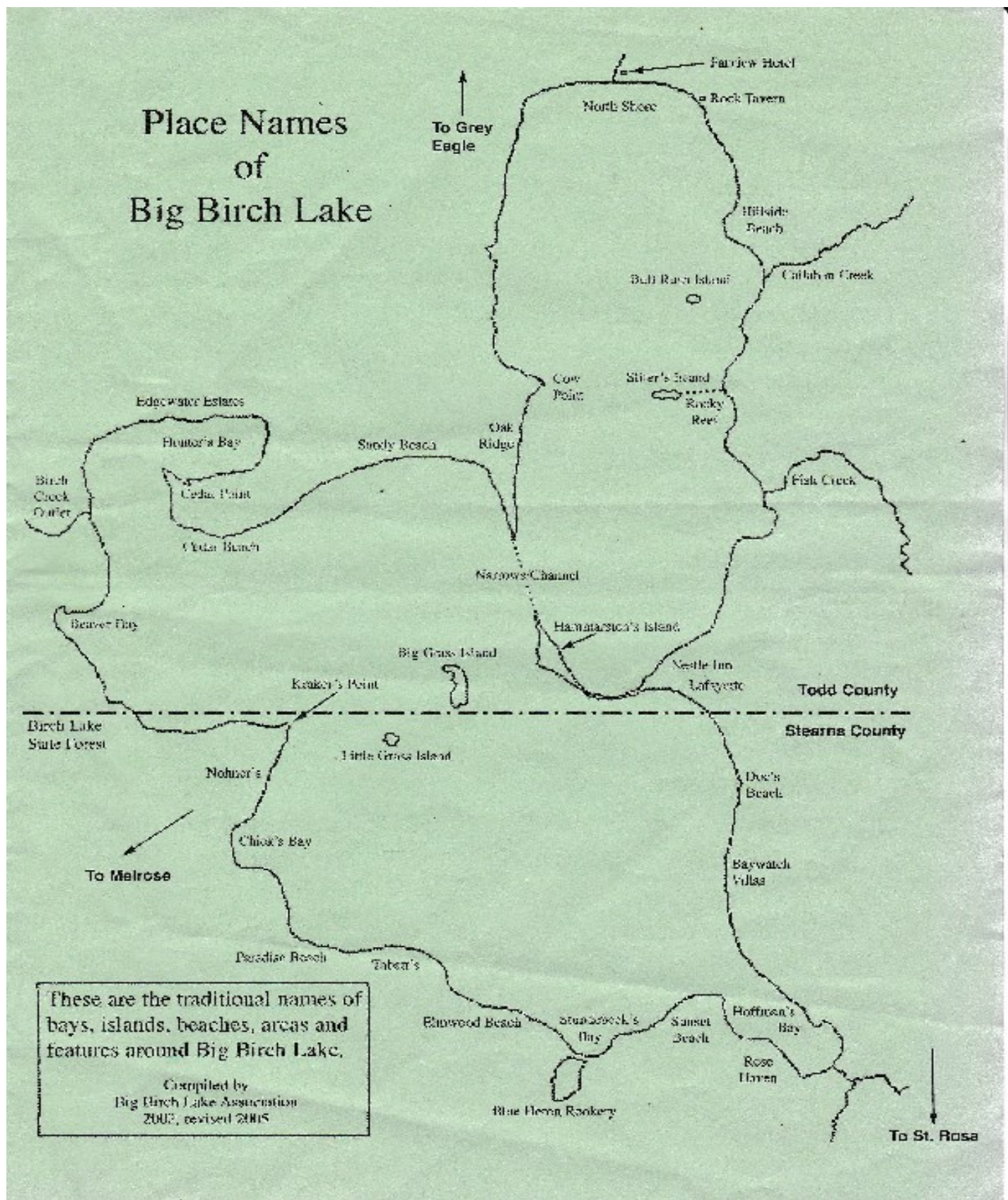
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Place Names of Big Birch Lake was compiled by the Big Birch Lake Association in 2002 and revised in 2005. On the BBLA Facebook page, there is a photo tour of the lake presented with many of the bays, island, beaches, areas and features identified. Along with each area, some history is presented. If you know some history of an area, please share that with the editor. Some areas do not have names or have not been recorded. For example, the south facing beach of Nestle Inn and the LaFayette was historically known as Pleasant Beach.



## Big Birch Lake Association Board of Directors

Director	Representing	Lake Phone	Home Phone
Ben Ellering , Pres,	Area J Director		320-260-1907
Kevin Costello, V Pres.	Area C Director		320-249-0472
Craig Tweedale, Treas.	Director At Large		608-317-6647
Jay Anderson	Area I Director		763-482-1926
Lynn Ersland	Area H Director		320-285-2655
Matt Everding	Director At Large		320-492-5902
Brian Gordon	Area F Director		763-443-6902
Bob Hughes	Area G Director	320-285-2712	615-890-0991
Blake Johnson	Area D Director		612-910-3871
Deb Johnson	Director At Large		320-285-5833
Adrian Johnson	Area A Director		952-939-0939
Grant Niehaus	Director At Large		320-583-4939
Jeanne Niehaus	Director At Large		651-757-7475
Russ Sieben	Area B Director		320-256-3936
Larry Welle	Area E Director		320 894 6695

Big Birch Lake Association e-mail address: [bbla@meltel.net](mailto:bbla@meltel.net)

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Web Site: [www.birchlakeassociation.org](http://www.birchlakeassociation.org)

**Mission Statement:** The purpose of the Big Birch Lake Association shall be to improve and protect water quality, to advance the propagation and habitat of fish and to protect the welfare of all wildlife in Big Birch Lake and adjacent areas.

named it the Lafayette Resort then and have enjoyed 51 years on Big Birch Lake.

My wife Ruth and I live in Plymouth but try to get to the lake as many week-ends as we can to enjoy family and fun.

Johnson was elected as Area D Director.

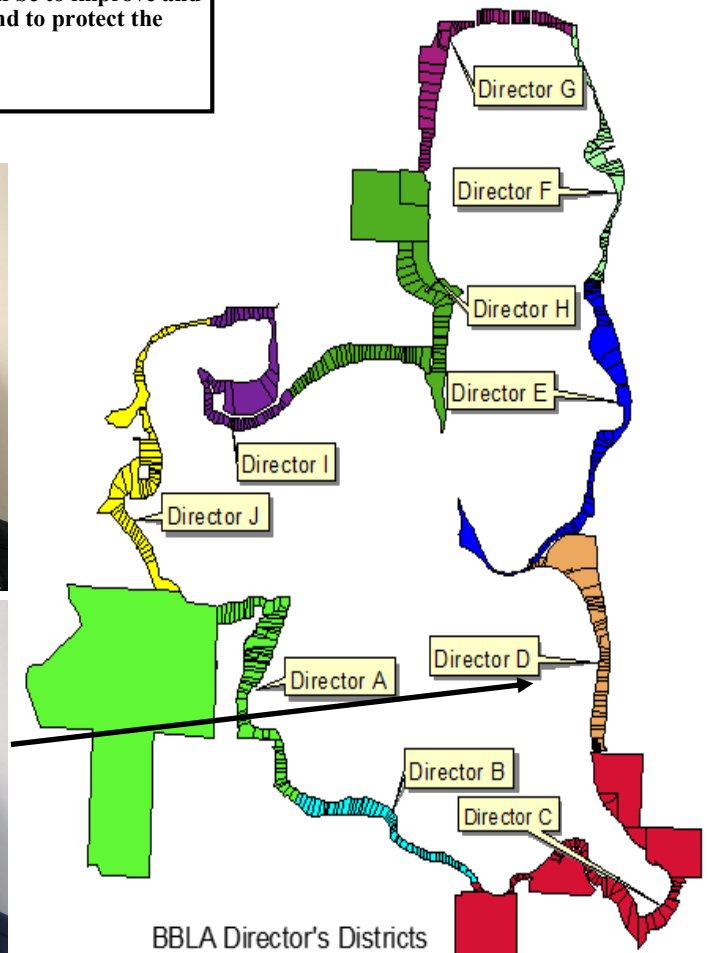
Two newly elected BBLA Board members are pictured. The election was held by electronic ballots in August 2020 as part of the email BBLA Annual Meeting.

**Matt Everding** grew up on the north shore of BBL, and has now lived on the east side of the lake for four years.

He has done work for the BBL Charities the past few years.

He enjoys fishing and spends his summers chasing muskies all over the state of Minnesota and Canada. He also does ice fishing for walleyes all winter long! He was elected At Large to the BBLA Board.

**Blake Johnson** has been coming to Big Birch Lake since I was 9 years-old when my dad and all of his brothers and sisters bought Vessie's Resort. We re-



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**Boating fatalities** *continued from page 5*  
can recreate safely and with recommended social distancing.

Dugan said just how many new boaters were on state waters is a hard thing to quantify, but that she's looked at the number of online safety classes that have been taken this year as an indicator. Typically at this point in the year, about 7,000 people have taken the class. This year, about 10,000 people have taken the class. "That's a pretty huge jump," she said.

Youth ages 12 to 17 years old must receive a watercraft operator's permit to legally operate a boat. Adults wishing to learn more about boating safety on seeking a discount on boat insurance also are encouraged to take the course.

While the number of boating safety violations recorded by the state conservation officers is about the same as last year, Dugan said, the number of warnings has gone up substantially.

"That tells us there is a lot of education happening on the water this summer," she said. "Conservation officers are taking the time to educate boaters rather than writing citations."

Warnings for a lack of a required

fire extinguisher, life jacket violations, missing registrations, and riding on gunwales make up the bulk of those written, she said.

"They are entry-level mistakes," Dugan said. "A seasoned boater is going to avoid these."

Looking at the 57 non-fatal boating accidents thus far, 17 of the involved collisions with other watercraft. Others involved water skiing, wake boarding or tubing mishaps, accounting for nine more incidents.

#### **Life jackets a concern**

Of the 13 fatalities this year, most have one thing in common, Dugan said: It's men not wearing life jackets.

"Looking at the last few years, there is a trend where it is all male fatalities," Dugan said. "It is too great of a trend to ignore."

She said that in many cases, it's been men falling overboard and not having their life jackets on. This year only two of the fatalities involved victims who were wearing life jackets.

The law required that there be an approved personal flotation device for everybody on board a vessel, but it doesn't require they be worn.

And now, as the 2020 boating season

heads towards the home stretch into fall, it's the colder water that makes it most dangerous.

"If people have been on the water a lot, they might be more relaxed about their life jacket and might not make it a priority," Dugan said. "But generally when we start getting into the cold-water season, there are fewer people on the water and lower temperatures. Help is farther away."

Dugan said she is frequently asked what is the best life jacket out there that money can buy.

"The best one is the one that you will actually wear at all times," she said. Having it on increases your chances of survival, and life jackets these days have become less intrusive and obstructive, with some that the user can hardly tell they even are wearing, she said.

"They are easy to put on and don't get in the way of anything," Dugan said. "It takes away those excuses we've always heard."