

No . 141

January, 2021

President's Letter

Calendar

BBLA Board Meeting

3/20/21

4/17/21

Happy New Year from the BBLA board of directors. We are all glad to have 2020 behind us, and look forward to a improved 2021.

Walleye stocking, continued efforts to detect aquatic invasive species, and streamlining the membership and financial system of the organization were three major improvements made on behalf of the lake and the BBLA members during 2020.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the walleye stocking effort done last spring. The fundraising has nearly reached the goal of \$10,000, the expenditure for the stocking. Grant Niehaus and his committee on fishing and wildlife did a great joy of completing the mission to improve BBL fishing.

As you fish this winter, please do not keep walleye less than 14 inches long. The BBLA wants robust fishing for everyone, and we encourage you to let the young walleye reach a mature size. Read the committee's report and the list of contributors in this issue of the newsletter.

The Aquatic Invasive Species Committee, co-chaired by Deb Johnson and Lynn Ersland worked hard over the warm weather months to ensure accesses were monitored for AIS. In the off season, they have continued to attend online classes to learn more about the latest research on AIS. Look for their stories about the research in this issue.

Vice President Kevin Costello led efforts to improve the online membership and contribution page of the BBLA website. In addition, treasurer, Craig Tweedale made improvements to the bookkeeping and financial reporting to the membership. Missy Kotzer, an employee of Slenner Wenner & Co. does the bookkeeping as part of a volunteer service from her employer.

Finally, we want to thank all of the people who volunteered in 2020 for the BBLA. Whether it was serving on one of several committees, or picking up trash around the lake and roadsides, please know that your efforts were greatly appreciated by the board of directors.

Ben Ellering
BBLA President

Research results on zebra mussels, starry stonewort

By Lynn Ersland

This past September the University of Minnesota once again sponsored a showcase through the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center, MAISRC. Deb Johnson and Lynn Ersland attended this three-day meeting. The sessions included topics on zebra mussels, starry stonewort, spiny water fleas, and invasive carp. Since we have zebra mussels in Big Birch Lake, I would like to comment on a couple of these sessions.

Dr. Mikael Elias from the U of M presented results on eco-friendly solutions to mitigate the spread of AIS. Dr Elias' testing involved using biofouling to keep AIS (in this case, zebra mussels) from attaching to surfaces in the water. Biofouling is an accumulation of microorganisms, plants, or algae on wetted surfaces. For this test, Dr. Elias used an acrylic and add-

ed an enzyme to it called Lactonase. This solution is then painted on a surface, which may be a boat, motor, dock, or a pump or water intake tube for an irrigation system. The current testing was conducted at Tonka Bay Marina in Lake Minnetonka. This test showed a dramatic improvement over previous copper-based applications.

The U of M is very encouraged with the results to date. Additional testing will be done before it will be ready for market. While this will not eliminate zebra mussels, it has the potential for keeping them off unwanted surfaces.

Speaking of zebra mussels attaching to unwanted surfaces, you may remember I wrote in the last newsletter about the brush Steve Neville from Neville Hardware in Grey Eagle designed for me to remove zebra mussels from the inside of the water intake tube for my irrigation system. This brush did an excellent job of removing the dead **Research results** continues on page 5

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Renew membership for 2021

The 2021 BBLA membership and sponsorship forms will be arriving in your mailbox in early February. The membership form is also available on the contact page of the association website: www.bigbirchlakeassociation.org

If you no longer want a paper copy of the newsletter and prefer to read it on the BBLA website, please contact the association via email or contact your area director.

Please know the individual membership was increased to \$50 by membership action at the annual meeting last August.

BBLA sponsors are important to the association, and we encourage our members to show their appreciation by supporting sponsor businesses in 2021.

The member list on page 4 is the final list of those who were members in 2020.

Follow the life of Big Birch Lake on its Facebook page. If you don't have a Facebook account, you can still follow the page by typing [bigbirchlakeassociation/](https://www.facebook.com/bigbirchlakeassociation/) Facebook into your browser.

If you are away from the lake during the cold months, Facebook is a good way to stay connected to the lake.

Obituary of lake resident

Zida Lorraine Tiemann, 92 of Melrose, passed away peacefully surrounded by her family on November 15, 2020 at the CentraCare Care Center in Melrose, Minnesota.

A Memorial Mass of Christian Burial will be held at a later date.

Zida Lorraine Tiemann (Kaproth) was born December 13, 1927 in Foley, Minnesota. She was the youngest of 10 children born to Joseph and Pauline (Kampa) Kaproth. She graduated from Foley High School and started working for Nash Finch and Montgomery Ward. When she was hired by Northwestern Bell, she moved to Sauk Centre where she met George Tiemann. They married April 29, 1950. They moved to Dickinson, North Dakota and then to Staples, Minnesota where she continued to work for Northwestern Bell. Later they moved to White Bear Lake, Minnesota. Zida completed her business training at Globe Business College. She worked at Honeywell, Univac and the Northern Pacific Railroad and the Burlington Northern Railroad. Zida retired from the communications division of the Burlington Northern Railroad in December, 1985. Upon retiring they moved to Roseville and then back

BBLA Financial Report

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings

1005 · Checking-CMCU	1,570.56	1,161.75
1010 · Share Account-CMCU	35.90	35.90
1015 · My Goal Savings	801.83	802.00
1020 · Money Markey-CMCU	9,171.82	7,571.53
1050 · Cert of Deposit-12 Month #1	110,153.69	108,561.13
1055 · Cert of Deposit-12 Month #2	10,547.04	10,411.36
Total Checking/Savings	132,280.84	128,543.67

Other Current Assets

1080 · Initiative Foundation Fund	44,251.44	40,496.36
1499 · Undeposited Funds	500.00	0.00
Total Other Current Assets	44,751.44	40,496.36

Total Current Assets

177,032.28 169,040.03

Fixed Assets

1200 · Building & Land

35,300.00 35,300.00

Total Fixed Assets

35,300.00 35,300.00

TOTAL ASSETS

212,332.28 **204,340.03**

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Long Term Liabilities

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
Total 2550 · Reserve	114,495.72	114,495.72

Total Long Term Liabilities

120,444.77 120,444.77

Total Liabilities

120,444.77 120,444.77

Equity

3990 · Unrestricted Net Assets	81,266.62	87,221.96
Net Income	10,620.89	-3,326.70
Total Equity	91,887.51	83,895.26

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY

212,332.28 **204,340.03**

to where it all started, the Melrose area, and lived many enjoyable years on Big Birch Lake. Zida went back to school in St. Cloud to train and then work with hospice patients in Long Prairie for several years.

Zida had a wonderful sense of humor and an infectious laugh. She was a fabulous cook. Her fish fries and potato salad were family favorites. She enjoyed many hobbies including knitting, reading (one of her favorite books was Dandelion Cottage), fishing, bird watching, walking traveling and she especially looked forward to playing cards. She took pride in her husband and five children and loved spending time on Birch Lake. Zida was a woman with a high level of integrity and compassion. Her fondest memories

involved spending time with her husband, family and friends. She was especially close with the Galarneault's who she considered family.

Survivors include her five children, Joan Carlson of Shelton, Washington, Constance (Robert) Koch of Grey Eagle, Mary Lou (Craig) Tweedale of Grey Eagle, Kathryn Hennemann of Grey Eagle, and William (Jennifer) Tiemann of Sauk Centre; her seven grandchildren, Lorne (Amanda) Koch, Dale (Kimberly) Koch, Christopher Tweedale, Katie (Nick) Zastrow, Curtis (Rachel) Hennemann, Andrew (Stephanie) Tiemann, Alexander Tiemann; her six great grandchildren Keira Kade (Lorne and Amanda Koch), Cohen and Khloe (Dale and Kim Koch), Adelyn and Theodore (Katie and Nick Zastrow); and sister-in-law Dolores (Emil) Kaproth.

Many winter activities available at Big Birch Lake

Ice fishing, ice skating, iceboat sailing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, cross country skiing among the ways to have fun in winter at the lake.

Before we could hang the last Halloween decorations, the snow began falling on October 20, the temperatures dropped into the low 20's and once again 2020 proved to be an abnormal year at Big Birch Lake.

After a short but beautiful display of fall color around the lake, winter let us know it was closer than we imagined. Up to eight inches of wet, heavy snow fell the third week of October. Yes, we needed the moisture but would have preferred it in the liquid form. Only 1.33 inches of moisture was recorded for October.

Those who did not have docks or boat lifts out of the lake, scrambled before the predicted storm to get lakeside tasks completed, but many were left with other chores to complete assuming incorrectly the snow would melt quickly. Such is the fate living with the quixotic Minnesota climate.

Relief came in the form of above average temperatures the first of week of November. Seventy-three degrees warmed our bodies and our hearts no matter how briefly. Like my neighbors, I scrambled to do everything I could to finish outside work before November dropped the other shoe, which it did the following week. Unfortunately, less than one inch of moisture fell in the month.

Ron Kuehne spotted a young loon in front of his place November 27. It stuck to a fifteen-foot radius where it presumably was finding a good food supply for several days. Usually young loons leave a week or so before that date.

Ice over did not occur until December 15. While ice formed earlier on many parts of the lake, it took a couple of weeks to get coverage and even then it was sketchy. Avid anglers checked the ice often to determine its thickness. By the third week of December, many were on the ice in pursuit of fish.

The Grey Eagle Gazette reported ice over in 1959 as November 14 after an extremely cold early November. The paper went on to say ice over usually occurred shortly after November 23. A look at records shows the lake freezing over later in the past 17 years was often

a week or two into December. Small areas of open water remained near Cow Point and south and north of Hammarsten Island after Christmas Day.

A short-lived blizzard on December 23 brought a white Christmas to the lake even though the snow accumulation was only a couple of inches, fortunately for snow lovers, another four inches fell December 29. On the North Shore more people were present for the holidays than is usual due to postponement of trips to warmer climates because of the pandemic.



Steam rising from open water on the upper bay of BBL on December 24, 2020. Photo by Robert Kutter.

In the October 2020 column, I wrote about all of the things one can do at the lake during the warm months. I would be remiss if I did not consider what can be done at BBL during the winter. There are the obvious: ice fishing, snowmobiling, and ice skating, (which was especially good this year before the snowfall).

When I was a kid and lived across the road from the lake, I would come home from school, quickly do my farm chores and then grab my skates and go sit on the lakeshore bank, put on my skates and skate until the sunlight was just enough to get me back home.

After a snowfall, I would take a scoop shovel to the lake to clear a skating rink



Kutter's Column

which I would maintain until the snow got too heavy to move. Occasionally there would be a pickup hockey game. I wish there had been many more since hockey intrigued me.

When I first moved to the lake, I always maintained a skating rink using a snowblower and shovels. I even tried flooding the ice a few times to create a smooth surface. I haven't made a rink for a few years. I gave up after snowmobilers thought a rink was something for them to run over and slide around on.

Cross country skiing is another winter physical activity that can be done on a snow covered lake. The snow has to be thick enough to prevent one's poles from sliding on the ice. I have also seen people snowshoeing on the lake.

The late Gene Waldorf had an ice sailboat that would propel him swiftly across the ice. He told the story of how his wife, Bernie, told him not to go through the channel. Of course, that is what he did, and he went through the thin ice near the channel.

Today someone might take an ATV onto the ice and slide around, but my favorite memory of ice activities was from my teenage years. When the ice was thick enough to drive a car on it, well, we did. A friend had a black, 1948 4-door Chrysler. With a few inches of snow cover, he would drive onto the lake, accelerate, and then crank the steering wheel sharply. That old car would spin in circles halfway across the upper bay. If you were lucky enough to ride in the enormous back seat, the thrill was like the best car on a Tilt-a-Whirl at the county fair.

We also pulled skiers and kids on sliding saucers across the snow covered lake behind a tractor. The big fear was hitting a chunk of ice.

Winter at Big Birch Lake, with all of its opportunities for fun is just another reason heaven seems closer in a house beside the water.

MEMBERSHIP AS OF JANUARY 1ST 2021

Althaus, Kurt & Lori
 Anderson, Jay & Derry
 Anderson, Jean
 Anderson, Stephen & Lisa
 Anderson, Todd & Debbie
 Andrews, Mike
 Arnzen, Nate & Emily
 Arulfo, Michelle
 Atkinson, Dan & John
 Atwood, Duane
 Auger, John & Karen
 Austing, April
 Austing, Dick & Jane
 Bacon, Jeffrey & Lorena
 Beckermann, Fran & Linda
 Beekhuizen, Steven & Julie
 Berg, Dwaine & Louise
 Berg, Ken & Bev
 Bergmann, Ken & Marilyn
 Beste, Alexander
 Beste, Thomas & Julie
 Beuning, James & Judine
 Blitz, Steve & LaVonne
 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
 Broman, Mak & Maria
 Browman, Raleigh & Ruth
 Brunner, Paul & Lauri
 Bruyere, James Jr
 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
 Duncomb, Bruce
 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
 Ferry, Claire
 Ferry, Stephen & Nancy
 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
 Hickman, Donald
 Hinman, John & Kathy
 Hinnenkamp, Ben & Pam
 Hinnenkamp, Eberhard & Helen
 Hinnenkamp, Hollis
 Hinnenkamp, William
 Hird, Mike & Susan
 Hoeschen, Rick
 Hoeschen, Russ & Amy
 Hoffman, Dan & Janell
 Hoversten, Chris & Leah
 Howe, Michael
 Hughes, Bob & Sally
 Hughes, Daniel & Elizabeth
 Hughes, Frank
 Hughes, Parry & Kathy
 Hughes, Robert & Mrs Robert
 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
 Kaufman, Robert & Josephine
 Kelly, Brandon & Becky
 Kemper, Jeff & Linda
 Kennedy, Dennis
 Kerfeld, Art & Rosie
 Kerfeld, Cheryl
 Kerfeld, Donald & Diane
 Kerfeld, Glenn
 Kirchner, Gerald & Jonelle
 Kirchner, Gerald & Jonelle:Member
 Kirchner, Gerald & Jonelle:Memorial
 Klaphake, Deb
 Klaphake, Florian & Doreen
 Klaphake, Steve & Pam
 Klapperich, John & Suzy
 Klasen, Kyle & Stacy
 Klasen, Vern & Marlene
 Klocker, Barb
 Kloos, Mike & Becky
 Kluempke, Jim & Cathy
 Klug, Darlene
 Knapp, Anna
 Knettel, Jason - F
 Koch, Bob & Connie
 Kohorst, Don & Loni, Bob & Joan
 Kotsmith, Randall & Karen
 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
 Kylo, 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
 Loudon, 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
 Mehr, Mike & Lori
 Mehr, Ralph & Mary Ann
 Meldaus, Raymond & Elizabeth
 Messerich, Charlene - F
 Meyer, Barry
 Meyer, Glenn & Dianne
 Meyer, James & Kerry
 Meyer, Juel
 Meyer, Ken & Sherry
 Meyer, Mark & Stacey
 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
 Muellerleile, Larry & Sharon
 Nathe, Mike & Laura
 Neibling, Tim & Sue
 Neville, Steve
 Niehaus, Anthony & Carol
 Niehaus, Bob & Deb
 Niehaus, Grant
 Niehaus, Jeanne
 Niehaus, John & Mary
 Niehaus, Mitchel
 Nohner, Kevin & Mary
 Orchard, Joan
 Orth, David & Linda
 Osendorf, Rosemary
 Ostendorf, Lenore
 Ostendorf, Mark & Lisa
 Ostendorf, Phil & Gail
 Ostrem, Justin & Amy
 Pakola, Howard & Barbara
 Palmquist, Mary Pluth
 Patch Family
 Paylivek, John
 Pelo, Rod & Phyllis
 Peterson, Dr Thomas & Virginia
 Phillips, Rev Roger & Rosemary
 Piersak, Jeff & Kim
 Piersak, Thomas - F
 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
 Roffes, 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
 Schiffer's Liquor
 Schirmers, Carol
 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
 Sealock, Donald & Jennie - F
 Sieben, Kevin & Beth Thieschafer
 Sieben, Russell & Mary
 Sietloff, Justin & Sarah
 Silbernagel, John & Marie
 Sinclair, James & Carolyn
 Sinclair, Ken & Jan
 Snyder, William & Paula
 Sorenson, Larry & Lorraine
 Sorenson, Lois
 Spears (Moening), Heather
 Spitzmueller, Jim
 Spitzmule, William Kathryn
 Steinbring, John & Sandy
 Stocker, Bob & Cathy
 Stueve, Charlie & Doris
 Tembrock, Henry & Marion
 Thelen, Steve & Amy
 Thielen, Marvin & Judy
 Thompson, Rod & Sally
 Tiemann, Madonna
 Timmermann, John & Molly
 Tomsche, David
 Tomsche, Dr.
 Trierweiler, Corey & Julie
 Trulson, Kent & Loretta
 Tschida, Stewart & Amy
 Tschida, Wayne & JoAnn
 Tweedale, Cliff & Joan
 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
 Voller, Kenneth & Arlene
 Voller, Richard & Janet
 Waldvogel, Dennis
 Walker, Tom
 Walters, George & Sue
 Wander, Dave & Joan
 Warnert, Ron & Lee Meyer
 Weber, Thomas
 Weber, Tom
 Weinman, Roger & Constance - F
 Weitzel, John & Mary
 Weitzel, Michael & Jean
 Weitzel, Michele
 Welle, Larry & Rose
 Wiebolt, Bernard
 Wolters, Ronald & Kathy
 Wright, Thomas & Sara Roberts
 Zaborski, Tom & Julia
 Zachman, Jeff & Linda
 Zackoski, Michael & Kimberly
 Zaczkowski, Marie
 Zenzen, Art & Marilyn
 Zimmer, Chris & Sarah
 Zimmerman, Lowell & Kris

Research results *continues from page 5*
zebra mussels and eliminated the problem of a plugged pump or burned out the pump motor.

I don't want to finish an AIS article without discussing our worst AIS fear, starry stonewort. After analyzing 11 years of starry stonewort treatment data across three states, MAISRC researchers have found that current methods (generally copper-based algacide treatments) are not slowing starry stonewort's expansion within infested lakes. However, treatments can be effective at reducing a biomass of starry stonewort in localized areas providing nuisance relief. Researchers also found that if infestations are found early enough, when they are still small, sustained hand removal efforts can be highly effective for reducing and containing infestations. These findings emphasize the need for early detection and containment efforts and identify a pressing need for continued research into effective control options for established infestations.

I can assure you that all our volunteers checking our accesses for AIS plants and algae know how important this job is. We encourage all BBLA members to report any new populations of plants that they spot.

Get the lead out of your tackle box this winter

By Robert Kutter

Lead is toxic to loons, fish, and other wildlife. This winter may be a good time to get the lead out of your tacklebox. Lead in the form of sinkers, jigs, and other fishing gear is commonly found there. Non-lead tackle, tungsten, tin, and bismuth can be found at tackle shops. Please make the effort to update your fishing gear and protect wildlife.

Big Birch Lake is one of the more than 600 lakes which keep track of the loons for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Volunteer Jim Kluempke is the loon tracker for BBL.

The National Loon Center, which will be built at Crosslake Minnesota, has hired Jon Mobeck as its first executive director according to the Outdoor News. Mobeck will seek donors and funders to raise \$6 million by the summer of 2022. The center will promote the protection of the Minnesota state bird through research. The loon population is one of the best predictors of water quality. Do your part to protect wildlife.

Zebra mussels, mercury impact walleye population

By Lynn Ersland

Zebra mussels do impact walleye populations as does mercury concentrations according to Naoimi Blinick, a graduate student in conservation sciences at the University of Minnesota. In the first phase of research on the largest walleye lakes in the state from 2017-2019, she found walleyes were 14 percent smaller in lakes with zebra mussels. The second phases of ongoing study is intended to determine why this is occurring and why does it matter.

Every lake contains phytoplankton which are eaten by zooplankton, which are eaten by small fish, which are eaten by larger fish. Zebra mussels filter phytoplankton which upsets the food chain. When the zooplankton populations are reduced, the small fish, including walleye, do not have as much food available.

Walleyes tend to eat in offshore area where there is less sunlight. When the zooplankton source is reduced, walleyes are forced to move near shore for their food. That area has more light to which walleye are sensitive and there is a higher concentration of mercury for ingestion. As a result, the food source is decreased, and a smaller fish develops. The smaller fish is more likely to be eaten for larger predators. Also smaller fish have fewer energy reserves reducing the chances of surviving winter.

One possible way to improve the walleye population is to stock fingerlings, which the BBLA did this past spring. Also, the Department of Natural Resources stocks fingerlings and fry in BBL every other year. Stocking fingerlings bypasses the first year of growth when the reduced size occurs the most. The stocking efforts may overall improve the walleye population in BBL.

Winter ice cleanup volunteers needed

After the snow melts, most likely in March, the BBLA is sponsoring an opportunity for volunteers to clean up any trash left on the lake by people from winter recreation activities. If you want to volunteer, contact board member Brian Gordon. (763-443-6902) Watch the Facebook page for additional information.

Walleye stocking fundraiser successful

The Fish and Wildlife Committee of the BBLA has nearly reached its fundraising goal of \$10,000 for the walleye stocking that took place last spring. So far \$9,500 has been contributed to the fund from BBLA members and others interested in improving fishing in BBL.

Find below a list of people who have donated to the cause. The names listed were reported as of December 16, 2020. The committee thanks everyone who gave and reminds those who have not there is still time to do donate. The donation link can be found on the BBLA website at bigbirchlakeassociation.org

When fishing BBL this winter, please keep northern pike as per the DRN regulations as there are too many in the lake. Also please release small walleye (less than 14 inches) to allow them to reach maturity. Word on the lake is that many people are keeping 10-inch walleye. The ones to keep are 16-18 inches. Encourage other to follow these guidelines so quality size fish can be enjoyed by everyone.

Listed below are the names of contributors to the walleye stocking fundraiser.

Andrews, Mike
Arnzen, Nate & Emily
Austing, Dick & Jane
Beckermann, Fran & Linda
Berg, Dwaine & Louise
Contributors continues on page 7

Big Birch Lake Ice-over Dates

2020	December 15
2019	December 2
2018	November 20
2017	December 7
2016	December 10
2015	December 19
2014	November 21
2013	November 27
2012	December 10
2011	December 6
2010	November 27
2009	December 10
2008	December 7
2007	December 1
2006	December 1
2005	November 30
2004	December 14
2003	November 29

SPONSORSHIP AS OF SEPTEMBER 21ST 2020



WALLEYE CLUB

Engelmeyer Land Services LLC	Melrose
Kutter Agency Inc.	Grey Eagle
Hinman Lawn Service	Grey Eagle
Midwest Clinic of Dermatology	Grey Eagle



NORTHERN PIKE

Central Minnesota Credit Union - GE	Grey Eagle
Warrior Boats Inc.	Melrose



CRAPPIE CLUB

Freeport State Bank	Freeport
Double R Saloon Inc.	Grey Eagle
Bitz Plumbing & Heating Services Inc.	Grey Eagle
Update Buiding Supplies, LLC	Grey Eagle
Guy Waymore's Musc Emporium	Grey Eagle
Thieschafer Accounting Ltd	Melrose
Kraemer Lumber Co Inc	Melrose
Lake Country Storage LLC	Melrose
Outdoor News Inc.	Plymouth
K&R Tax Service LLC DBA H&R Block	Sauk Centre
Coborn's Incorporated	St Cloud
St. Rosa Lumber Inc.	St Rosa
Arnzen Construction Inc.	St Rosa
Edina Realty-Jeff Piersak	St. Cloud



BASS CLUB

Shady's Golden Eagle	Burtrum
Hennen Lumber Co Inc.	Freeport
Triple J Restaurants Inc	Freeport
Hennen Floor Covering Inc	Freeport
Freeport Gas & Grocery-Sinclair	Freeport
Hennen Lumber Co Inc.	Freeport
Hennen Lumber Co Inc.	Freeport
Neville Hardware	Grey Eagle
Plumbing on the Side	Grey Eagle
Central Lakes Landscape & Construction	Grey Eagle
Central MN Realty-Brandon Kelly	Grey Eagle
Benchmark Real Estate-Judy Frieler	Grey Eagle
Grey Eagle Gas & Grocery-Sinclair	Grey Eagle
Lafayette Resort	Grey Eagle
Nancy's Bait & Tackle	Grey Eagle
Eagle Fabricating & Water Walker Dock Sys	Grey Eagle
American Family Insurance-Kyle Hoiium	Melrose
Spaeth Sodding & Landscaping Inc.	Melrose
Melrose Plumbing & Heating Services Inc	Melrose
Central Minnesota Credit Union	Melrose
Meadowlark Country Club	Melrose
Melrose 1 Stop-Sinclair	Melrose
Rahns Oil & Propane	Melrose
Joe Hellermann Repair	Melrose
Melrose Bakery	Melrose
Dan Schmidt Printing Inc	Melrose
Norwex - Karen Molitor (320) 249-8000	Melrose
New Munich Gas & Grocery-Sinclair	New Munich
Centre Powersports & Marine	Sauk Centre
All Stars Sports Bar & Grill	St Rosa
RJ's Country Store LLC	St Rosa
Nordman's Cabin, LLC	St. Paul

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The Big Birch Lake Newsletter is an official publication of the Big Birch Lake Association, Inc.

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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.

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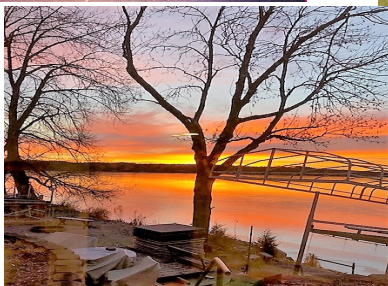
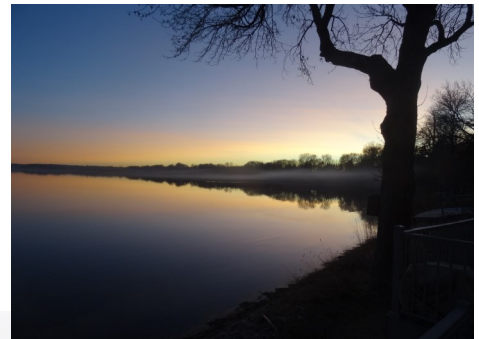


**Grant Niehaus at walleye stocking last spring.
Niehaus chairs the Fish and Wildlife Committee of the
BBLA.**



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Here are some scenes from 2020 to
remind us of life at Big Birch
Lake.

