

No 148

October, 2022

President's Letter

Calendar

BBLA Board Meeting
October 15, 2022

Fall has come to Big Birch Lake, even though some days it still feels like summer. It is a bittersweet time as folks store boats and remove docks and lifts from the water. We hope you had a great summer at BBLA, and we look forward to the next warm weather season.

Please read the stories in this newsletter that highlight what has been recently accomplished by all of the BBLA board members and volunteers and what the plans are for the months ahead.

Fish and Wildlife Committee chair, Grant Niehaus reports on the walleye stocking that will take place in October. Heed his recommendations about using fall fertilizers and disposing of yard and beach waste.

Follow that up with Kutter's Column about moving toward a more natural shoreline.

Don't miss the story on Dr. Sieben's retirement from the BBLA Board of Directors where he reflects on his years serving on the AIS Committee and the Lake Safety Committee. He also reminisces on a life-long love affair with Big Birch Lake.

The board purchased weed sticks that will be installed at two accesses to help boaters more effectively remove weeds from boats and trailers.

Thanks to the 87 people who attend the annual meeting in August. We appreciate your interest in your organization.

Want to know what the BBLA Board of Directors has been up to? Read its report on page 8.

Have a great autumn and cold weather season, and look forward to the January newsletter. Keep up to date on the BBLA Facebook page with more current events.

President
Kevin Costello



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BBLA to install weed stick stations at accesses

By Deb Johnson

The BBLA is planning to purchase and install Aqua Weed Stick stations at two Big Birch Lake accesses next spring.

Weed Stick stations contain tools which help boaters clean their boats and trailers of lake vegetation before leaving the access.

The tool is a combination hook and scraper with a four-foot handle on a 30-foot retractable cable.

Currently the Department of Natural Resources is in the process of preparing the parking locations for the stations at the North Bay and State Forest accesses.

With these weed stick tools readily available, the BBLA hopes to help boaters prevent the spread of invasive species from one MN lake to another.

The station includes a sign, a 30 foot retractable reel, a four foot weed stick and

mounting bracket.

The association will spend nearly \$1000 per station.

Deb Johnson chairs the Aquatic Invasive Species Committee.



Inside this issue:

Association Balance sheet	2
Kutter's Column	3
Association Membership	6
Contributing Sponsors	7
Area Director's Map	9



What better way to enjoy the lake on a warm, beautiful, late September day than to paddle along Sandy Beach.
Photo by Robert Kutter

BBLA Financial Balance Sheet

Aug 31, 22

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings

1005 · Checking-CMCU	1,136.70
1010 · Share Account-CMCU	35.90
1015 · My Goal Savings	4,032.95
1020 · Money Markey-CMCU	37,420.48
1050 · Cert of Deposit-12 Month #1	111,334.23
1055 · Cert of Deposit-12 Month #2	10,644.61

Total Checking/Savings	164,604.87
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Other Current Assets

1080 · Initiative Foundation Fund	45,337.93
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Total Other Current Assets	45,337.93
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Total Current Assets	209,942.80
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Fixed Assets

1200 · Building & Land	35,300.00
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Total Fixed Assets	35,300.00
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TOTAL ASSETS	245,242.80
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LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Long Term Liabilities

2550 · Reserve	
2551 · Aquatic-Invasive Species	100,000.00
2552 · Future Buffer Strips	14,495.72
Total 2550 · Reserve	114,495.72

Total Long Term Liabilities	114,495.72
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Total Liabilities	114,495.72
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Equity

3990 · Unrestricted Net Assets	133,848.96
Net Income	-3,101.88

Total Equity	130,747.08
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TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	245,242.80
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The DNR did some electro-fishing on the North Shore of BBL on Sept. 15. This is one way the DNR determines the species of fish in the lake. The other method is netting which it did in 2021.
Photo by Robert Kutter

Events & recommendations: walleye stocking, buffer zones, fall cleanup, lake safety

By Grant Niehaus

Fish and Wildlife Committee Report

We have reached our goal to stock 650lbs of walleye fingerlings in BBL. Thank you to all of those who donated to the event. We will be publishing a list of all of the donors as well as pictures from the stocking event in the January 2023 newsletter. The stocking will start on October

15th at 2 p.m. at the State Forest public access and will continue to take place at the various accesses around the lake the following days until 650lbs have been stocked.

For those interested in viewing this stocking event, you're welcome to join us at the State Forest public access on 10/15 at 2 p.m.

Water Quality Committee Report

Board members Grant Niehaus and Gary

Rostien along with some BBLA volunteers will be evaluating our existing buffer strips that we currently have in place with local farmers this fall and will look at adding additional buffers in the future based on areas that have elevated orthophosphoric readings.

Secchi disks readings and orthophosphorus sampling is wrapping up for the year.

Events continues on page 4

Naturalizing a shore is good practice

A natural shore is a step toward cleaner lake water

Many don't like the appearance of a natural shoreline. They think it looks messy and unkempt. However, as good stewards of water and wildlife, we should do our best to keep a shoreline as natural as is reasonable.

"Maintaining native vegetation where land meets water can filter out harmful runoff, provide habitat for aquatic and terrestrial wildlife, and stabilize banks and shores to prevent erosion, among many other benefits," according to an article in the July-August Minnesota Conservation Volunteer 2022.

For many years the BBLA awarded a Friends of the Lake Award to those who did outstanding work to preserve a natural shoreline. The award was meant to encourage others to reconsider the nature of their shoreline.

If you are lucky enough to own some natural shoreline, try keeping it that way. Get rid of invasive species (buckthorn) and plant native perennials, grasses, trees and shrubs.

Aquatic vegetation is also part of the shoreline. MCV advises us to follow the rules and regulations if you want to remove cattails. Permits from the DNR are required. Resources for maintaining a natural shoreline are widely available.

What we property owners do where land meets water will invariably affect the quality of water in Big Birch Lake. Climate change and aquatic invasive species have already changed the lake. Just look at the abundance of plant vegetation that has grown in the water in the past few years.

If you have photos of BBL from the 1920s, 30s, 40s, and 50, compare the shoreline with today's shoreline. What differences do you see?

A dam between Big and Little Birch keeps the water level stable now, but at one time, people boated from BBL to LBL and back and the water level in the lake fluctuated continuously. During the drought in 1936, my mother said the water was 100 feet from the normal shoreline.

This past spring, high water and high winds eroded shorelines. After the water level resided, many were left with beach-

es washed into the lake. There are many natural sand beaches on BBL, but even they took a beating and exposed rock and tree roots or did damage to what had been in place for years.

Look at where water meets land on your beach. What do you see? Is the land held securely in place? Is it attractive? Are there some native plants that would enhance the stability of the land and be attractive? I purchased seeds of native deep-rooted grasses a few years ago. I started the seeds under lights in



From mid-July through September, this green muck (a mixture of aquatic plants and algae), kept everyone out of the water on my shore. Photo by Robert Kutter

my basement and had good germination. This past spring with much erosion along the shore, the area where the grasses grow was the least disturbed by the ravages of wind and water.

This past August, the 1996 riprap on our property was replaced. When I first asked Todd County for a permit to upgrade and replace the riprap, the answer was no. However, after someone from the county came out and looked at what had happened to it over the years, a permit was issued to replace it.

We have riprap because our home is unusually close to the water due to an early 20th Century road that was less than 100 feet from the lake. The riprap is needed to keep the foundation of the building from being damaged as it was in the 1980's when my parents lived here.



Kutter's Column

The new riprap has boulders instead of rocks to hold the shoreline in place. The boulders were placed at a grade that should prevent ice from shifting the shoreline which was a common problem with the first riprap.

After the work of the landscaper, there was a strip of land about six feet wide between the riprap and the lawn. In September, I purchased nine varieties of native perennial plants from a grower in Glenwood and filled in the area. I was also able to divide some of the native grasses that escaped the landscaper's backhoe and plant them as well.

Next spring will reveal the success of planting native aster, baptisia, coreopsis, echinacea, liatris, lobelia, monarda and rudbeckia. The plants selected should provide a seasonal display of color.

Keeping a lakeshore both functional and attractive is a balancing act, and anything we can do to keep it natural is beneficial to the land and water quality.

Lake property often requires much care and maintenance as we become increasingly mindful of how the land around the lake impacts the water quality.

Keeping Big Birch Lake a jewel from Mother Nature is going to require all of us doing our part to have a healthy fishery and recreational body of water.

How we treat this natural resource insures heaven seems a little closer in a house beside the water.

Events continued from page 2

Thank you to all of the volunteers who have helped collect, process, gather, and submit the data to the state. We truly do appreciate your help.

For those performing yard maintenance on their lake properties this fall for the upcoming winter, please consider using phosphorus free fertilizer. Phosphorus free fertilizer has the middle number of 0 on the fertilizer bag of 3 numbers (ex: 5-0-10).

Also, please consider disposing of yard and beach waste (ie: grass clippings, leaves, lake weeds, etc.) in areas away from the lake not conducive to runoff and away from any streams that flow into the lake.

These various yard wastes contain phosphorus, which when introduced back into the lake provides additional phosphorus for the weeds and algae in the lake to feed on. By limiting the amount of phosphorus entering the lake, we can help reduce the amount of algae and weeds during the summer.

Lake Safety Report

New board member Steve Thelen has taken over as chair of the Lake Safety Committee from Russ Sieben who has reached his term limits for the board. Thank you Russ for all of your hard work and dedication over the years.

The channel buoys will be pulled sometime during the middle of October. For those utilizing the channel after mid October, please exercise caution when navigating through the channel.



Volunteers are the strength of the BBLA. Two people who over the years have volunteered countless times are Marilynn and Leroy Blommel. Here they are pictured serving coffee at the BBLA Annual Meeting on August 28, 2022.

Photo by Jeanne Niehaus.



Above, Robert Kutter, guest speaker at annual meeting, shared his knowledge of loons on BBL. Nancy Kutter assisted with the slides. Photo by Jeanne Niehaus.



The BBLA Board of Directors prepared for the annual meeting held August 28, 2022. Photo by Robert Kutter

Director shares his view of BBLA organization

My wife and I have been blessed to be full time lakeshore residents on Big Birch and Little Birch for over 20 years. Our daughter joined us along the way and has lived every day in a lakeside home. Life has always been busy, and we had taken little time to volunteer or be involved with the lake associations, so the invitation to serve on the BBLA board did not come from our efforts.

It has been an eye-opening experience as we were previously unaware of the significant efforts that go into maintaining an active lake association.

The amount of time and talent is awesome, and all of our lakeshore properties are more enjoyable and valuable due to the work of a small number of board members and an awesome team of volunteers who work to make the lake a remarkable asset in Central Minnesota. Here is a list of some of the work these folks do for the lake.

- work closely with state and county agencies
- create and manage farm field buffer zones for water inlets
- work with the DNR on fish stocking annual fish stocking fundraiser totaling over \$10,000
- roadside cleanup
- annual meeting
- dinner for volunteers
- golf event, ladies luncheon
- newsletter mailing and posting (thanks to editor Bob Kutter)
- website hosting, Facebook page, mailing list management
- member recruitment mailings
- manage finances, taxes, member dues and donations
- recruit corporate sponsors
- creation and maintenance of the office/Community Center

Board members are unpaid volunteers, so I do not write this to earn favor but to gratefully share a look into the great work that benefits all BBLA members. Thank a volunteer or board member, talk to your neighbors about joining and reach out if you would like to help!

Enjoy the lake,
Mark, Summer and Ella Erdmann

Erdman was elected to the BBLA board in August 2021. He is the director for Area G, which is the North Shore of BBL.

Sieben reflects time on BBLA board, life at BBL

By Robert Kutter

Russ Sieben served on the BBLA Board of Directors for 13 years. After reaching the term limit for a director (12 years), he reflects on his work on the board and on life at Big Birch Lake.

Sieben was a member of the Aquatic Invasive Species Committee, and he credits John Roe and Deb Johnson for their leadership of the committee and tenacity in research and in efforts to keep invasive species out of the water.

"We need people like that to be advocates for the lake," he said.

Zebra mussels arrived despite the efforts of the BBLA to keep them out, and now the committee is focused on keeping stony starry stonewort out.

"The weeds are on the minds of everyone with

what the zebra mussels did to clear the water and allowed native plants to grow tremendously," he said. We don't have a solution for that issue but he hopes we can do something.

Sieben also served on the Lake Safety Committee, which is responsible for the channel markers and making sure the hazard buoys get placed by Todd and Stearns Counties.

"South Bog Tzar" was a nickname he was given in helping residents move bogs to the little grass island in the lower basin.

Living in Millwood Township, he was also involved in limiting access and monitoring the St. Rosa access. He noted the DNR access on the north bay is the most active in Todd County. It even gets more use than a Lake Osakis access.

Looking ahead he thinks the association will do more with buffer strips to prevent agriculture runoff from entering BBL. It may even add some new zones. The state now provides some funding for this issue as well.

He also hopes the association continues to work on building a stable fish population.

Russ Sieben grew up in Melrose and as a child was a friend of Tom Arvig in the early 1950's. The Arvig family had a place on the lake, and Russ spent much time there. Also, his dad rented a summer cabin from Chick's, which kept Russ close to the lake.

After high school he went to college and then into military service. After dental school, he returned to Melrose and set up a dental practice.

In 1970 he and his wife Mary bought a place on Little Birch and stayed there a few years.

Then they built a home in Melrose, but all the time they rented a small cabin from Arvig.

Sixteen years ago he purchased his present home from Arvid Moline. He had a week to decide if they wanted to buy the place. Consulting with their sons, they decided

to purchase this home for family legacy.

Sieben wants his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren to have the opportunity to enjoy the lake and help preserve the pristine integrity of the BBL.

"This is like heaven. We sit out here in the evening and enjoy a wonderful life and want to preserve what we have."

"It's a spectacular place." He has traveled extensively. Alaska is the only other place that can make him say, "Oh wow!"

Russ and Mary Sieben head to Arizona for the winter, but their children use the lake home during winter.

"Best of both worlds. Lake life is wonderful, and we want to stay on the lake as long as we can," Sieben concluded.



Russ and Mary Sieben enjoy their own slice of heaven on the south shore of BBLA.

Photo by Robert Kutter

MEMBERSHIP AS OF JULY 2022

Althaus, Kurt & Lori	Fox, Thomas & Laurie	Lafayette Resort	Rutherford, Peter & Lourel
Anderson, Chadyienne	Frerichs Frank, Jane	Lambrecht, Craig	Rutherford, Tyler & Amy
Anderson, Jean	Froehling, Joseph	Langer, Denise	Sadlowsky, Mike & Vicki
Anderson, Stephen & Lisa	Fuchs, Lori	Larson, Brendan & Debi	Sand, Daniel & Mary
Anderson, Todd & Debbie	Gagne, Bob & Christine	Larson, Gayle & Karen Lemons	Savage, William & Sharon
Arulfo, Michelle	Gallagher, Pat & Caryn	Larson, Maxwell & Brenda	Schanhaar, Tom & Deb
Auger, John & Karen	Gangl, Dale	Lemieux, BJ & Rachel	Schiemann, Charles & Ellie
Austing, April	Gerads, Dale & Mary Lou	Lieder, William & Renee	Schiffler, Dean & Carla
Austing, Dick & Jane	Gerding, Dewayne & Alvina	Lilligren, Kirk & Cathy	Schlough, Thomas & Joyce
Becker, Isaac & Nancy St. Pierre	Gerner, Robert & Charlene	Linz, Curtis & Mary	Schmid, Judith
Becker, Virginia	Gordon, Brian & Kristen	Loehr, Jim & Renee	Schmid, Ted & Julie
Beckermann, Fran & Linda	Grossman, Jim & Jan	Logan, Guy & Suzanne	Schmidt, Thomas & Joann
Beekhuizen, Steven & Julie	Grutsch, John & Jan	Mack, Murray & Sue	Schnettler, John & Jan
Benning, Ken & Mary Pat	Hammerstrom, Malia	Matchinsky, James & Roselyn	Schriver, John & Lezie
Benolken, Sue	Hatton, Rene & LuAnn	McConnell, David & Ann	Schwantes, Mike & Amy
Berg, Ken & Bev	Heinen, Nancy	Mehr, Mike & Lori	Schwartz, Dick & Ellen
Berg, Aaron & Becky	Helget, Ron & Becky	Mehr, Ralph & Mary Ann	Schwartz, Stephen & Joan
Berg, Dwaine & Louise	Hendrickson, David & Colette	Messerich, Steve & Char	Schwieters, Charles & Beatrice
Bergmann, Ken & Marilyn	Hennemann, Kitty	Meyer, Barry	Sealock, Donald & Jennie
Beuning, James & Judine	Hess, Herb & Mary Kay	Meyer, Glenn & Dianne	Seep, Terry & Kimberly
Blommel, Mike	Hinnenkamp, Ben & Pam	Meyer, Ken & Sherry	Seitzer, Jim & Belinda
Blommel, Leroy & Marilynn:Member	Hinnenkamp, Hollis & Mary Jo	Meyer, Juel	Shafer, Tom & Bonnie
Blommel Family	Hoffman, Dan & Janell	Meyer, Roy	Sieben, Kevin & Beth
Boecker, Elmer & Juliana	Holthaus, Ken	Meyer, Virg & Joyce	Sieben, Russell & Mary
Bomstad, Gary & Susan	Howe, Michael & Jeanne	Miley, Rod & Nancy	Sieloff, Justin
Borgerding, Clarence	Hughes, Bob & Sally	Mische, Hans & Julie	Silbernagel, John & Marie
Braegelmann, Pat & Sandy	Hughes, Dan & Liz	Moening, Lee & Judy	Sinclair, Ken & Jan
Brattensborg, Ruth	Hughes, Parry & Kathy	Mohr, Marilyn	Sinclair, James & Carolyn
Brixius, Bernie & Lisa	Humbert, Rick & Lois	Mohs, Dean & Sandy	Spanier, Eric & Jana
Broman, Mark & Marcia	Humbert, Ryan & Stacy	Molitor, Chick & Karen	Spears (Moening), Heather
Brunner, Paul & Lauri	Huseby, Robert & Christina	Molitor, Jon	Spence, Jim & Christine
Bruyere, James Jr	Ingold, Linnea	Moser, Scott & Helen	Stalboerger Family, Lorraine
Bullock, Lou & Debbie	Iverson, Ron & Jennifer	Moser, Jean	Starfield, Glenn & Katy
Bushman, Wayne	Jacobsen, James & Marjorie	Nathe, Mark & Ann	Steinbring, Brad & Denise
Butte, Rick	Jansen, Jeff & Teri	Nathe, Mike & Laura	Steinbring, John & Sandy
Campbell, Mel & Sherry	Jarsko, Judy	Neibling, Tim & Sue	Stomberg, Chuck & Nancy
Carlson, Shirley	Jepperson, Craig & Mary	Neville, Steve	Strack, Robert & Laurie
Carpenter, Todd & Laura	Jeske, Nancy	Niehaus, John & Mary	Tanner, Lucy
Carstens, James & Brenda	Jim Lind Family	Niehaus, Bob & Deb	Tembrock, Henry & Marion
Casper, Paul & Deb	Johnson, Adrian & Kay	Niehaus, Grant	Thelen, Steve & Amy
Caspers, John & Allyson	Johnson, Leonard & Amy	Niehaus, Anthony & Carol	Thielen, Marvin & Judy
Cavello, Butch & Amy	Johnson, Craig & Debra	Nohner, Kevin & Mary	Thompson, Rod & Sally
Cebuhar, Charles & Mary	Johnson, Don & Julie	Orth, David & Linda	Timmermann, John & Molly
Chaput, Larry & Bradley Johnson	Kadri, Abdu & Janice	Osendorf, Phil & Gail	Tomsche, David & Molly
Chirhart, James & Juanita	Kalgren, Rick & Ann	Osendorf, Rosemary	Tomsche, Dr. Ed & Theresa
Chmielewski, Daniel & Barb	Kappes, Mike & Jannie	Ostendorf, Mark & Lisa	Tschida, Stewart & Amy
Claussen, Kim	Kelly, Brandon & Becky	Ostendorf, Lenore	Tschida, Wayne & JoAnn
Collins, Jim & Crystal	Kemper, Jeff & Linda	Ostrem, Justin & Amy	Tweeddale, Craig & Mary Lou
Collins, Joyce	Kennedy, Dennis & Holly	Pakola, Howard & Barb	Uphoff, Jim & Lee
Comfort, Jeff & Julie	Kerfeld, Art & Rosie	Patch, Bruce	Van Beck, Chad & Brenda
Costello, Kevin & Ann	Kerfeld, Cheryl	Pavlivek, John & Kathryn	VanDrehle, Donald & Helen
Coulson, Brad & Jane	Kerfeld, Donald & Diane	Pelo, Rod & Phyllis	Vener, Mike & Kim
Czap, Neil & Catherine	Kerfeld, Glenn	Peterson, Dr Thomas & Virginia	Vener, John & Corinne
Damrow, Paul & June	Klaphake, Deb	Phillips, Rev Roger & Rosemary	Waldorf, Bernadine
Davis, Scott & Marjo	Klaphake, Florian & Doreen	Piersak, Jeff & Kim	Waldvogel, Dennis
Denne, Marv & Mary Beth	Klapperich, John & Suzy	Piersak, Thomas	Walker, Tom
Dinndorf, Don	Klasen, Kyle & Stacy	Pladson, Dr & Mrs Terence	Wander, Dave & Joan
Dobesh, Jeff & Jill	Klasen, Vern & Marlene	Plombon, Roger & Gloria	Ward, Rick & Missy
Dougherty, Tim	Klocker, Barbara	Poganski, Rock & Marcia	Warnert, Ron & Lee Meyer
Dubiel, Marvin & Pam	Kloos, Mike & Becky	Powers, Robert & Kathleen	Weinman, Roger & Constance
Duevel, Jerome	Kluempke, David	Provinzino, Chuck & Jannine	Weitzel, John & Mary
Duncomb, Bruce & Vicki	Kluempke, Jim & Cathy	Pundsack, Craig & Lisa	Weitzel, Michele
Elfering Family, Evelyn	Koch, Bob & Connie	Rahn, Dave & Lisa	Welle, Larry & Rose
Elieff, Daniel & Julie	Kohorst, Don & Loni, Bob & Joan	Rasmussen, Steve	Wiebolt, Bernard
Enneking, Gene & Cheryl	Konsor, Stephen & Karen	Refsland, Curt & Mary	Wolters, Ronald & Kathy Hinnenkamp
Erdmann, Mark & Summer	Kotsmith, Randy & Karen	Rieger, Joel & Pamela	Zaborski, Tom & Julia
Erickson, Russell	Kotsmith, Terry & Sharon	Rieland, Shirley	Zachman, Jeff & Linda
Ersland, Mary Kay	Krig, Gary	Rieland, Chuck & Lucy	Zackoski, Michael & Kimberly
Everding, Matt & Missy Kotzer	Kuehne, Robert	Rieland, Matt & Shari	Zaczkowski, Marie
Eveslage, Steve & Sarah	Kuehne, Ron & Midge	Rieland, Mike & Mary	Zenzen, Art & Marilyn
Falk, Jeremy & Jennifer	Kunkel, Phil & Rose	Ritter, Greg & Barb	Zimmer, Chris & Sarah
Family of Lovell & Bertty Richie	Kutter, Robert & Nancy	Roe, John & Janet	Zimmerman, Larry & Marion
First, Pete	Kutter, Wayne & Sherry	Rothstein, Gary & Ruth	Zimmerman, Lowell & Kris
Flaws, Michael & Marilyn	Kyllo, Carole	Rudolph, Jerry & Deb	
		Russell, Jim & Mindy	

SPONSORSHIP AS OF MARCH 22ND 2022



PLATINUM

Opatz Metals & Rolloffs	Holdingford
Spirit Liquor	Melrose
Warrior Boats Inc.	Melrose



GOLD

Central Minnesota Credit Union - GE	Grey Eagle
Central MN Realty-Brandon Kelly	Grey Eagle
Rahns Oil & Propane	Melrose



SILVER

Freeport Trucking	Freeport
Grey Eagle Electric Inc.	Grey Eagle
Double R Saloon Inc.	Grey Eagle
Nancy's Bait & Tackle	Grey Eagle
Lake Country Storage LLC	Melrose
Proliant Dairy Inc.	Melrose
Kemper Excavating	Melrose
Melrose Electric Inc.	Melrose
Meadowlark Country Club	Melrose
Melrose Plumbing & Heating Services Inc	Melrose
North Risk Partners	Melrose
Kraemer Lumber Co Inc	Melrose
Freeport State Bank	Melrose
Hoffman Tree Service	Sauk Centre
Main Street Title & Closings LLC	Sauk Centre



BRONZE

All Stars Sports Bar & Grill	Freeport
Hennen Floor Covering Inc	Freeport
Hennen Lumber Co Inc	Freeport
Neville Hardware	Grey Eagle
Update Buiding Supplies, LLC	Grey Eagle
Econ-O-Wash Laundromats	Melrose
Engelmeyer Land Services LLC	Melrose
Bussmann Properties LLC	Melrose
Bueckers, Ervin	Melrose
Mayers Inc.	Melrose
CAP Enterprises of Melrose Inc	Melrose
Grey Eagle Gas & Grocery-Sincler	Melrose
Spanier/Nathe Cabinets LLC	Melrose
Munson Feed Co Inc.	Melrose
Minnesota National Bank	Sauk Centre
Tim Kampsen Agency	Sauk Centre
Centre Powersports & Marine	Sauk Centre

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News from the boardroom: water quality, AIS, fish stocking, safety

• Buffer Strips

There will be visits with farmers and a plan will be formulated as to how to go forward with the use of buffer strips. Further discussion will take place at the October BBLA board meeting.

• LBLA/BBLA Collaboration

The BBLA will meet with the Little Birch Lake Association in the spring to determine how the organization can work together.

• Water Quality

Grant Niehaus, Gary Rothstein, and Peter Rutherford are planning, after fall harvest, to meet with farmers to understand and document the current buffer strips for which the association currently reimburses the land owners. Then over the winter they will reevaluate the current arrangement come up with a proposal in spring for future reimbursements.

At the annual meeting, Chuck Schiemann asked about Hoffmann's Creek north leg with the high phosphorus. Niehaus is also hoping to work with Ron Austing to see if he is open to a buffer strip.

• Aquatic Invasive Species

Weed sticks and their potential locations was discussed. It was decided that the first two locations would be the north bay access and the State Forrest Campground access.

It was moved that two economy weed stick landing kits be purchased.

The BBLA will complete the 2023 application for inspections at the St. Rose access at the end of October. The six page report long plus a schedule where we need to request the number of hours of inspection time each day from 6/4 to 10/31/23.

Due to the access' poor shape, there was a question concerning last year's plans to improve the access. Deb Johnson, AIS Committee chair received an email from Stearns County this summer complaining about the state of the boat ramp. There is concern that the BBLA will get no inspection time at all for next summer.

• Building/Equipment Committee

A new overhang has been installed on the back door on the BBLA property. The flap on the BBLA property's roof

has been repaired. The roof appears to be in good condition otherwise. The cleaning crew will clean the outside front on the BBLA property.

• Fisheries and Wildlife

Fish Stocking of 650lbs of walleye fingerlings will take place on 10/15 and will happen over multiple days. We will be utilizing Centre Fisheries out of Sauk Centre to do the stocking at a cost of \$10,400 Dollars (\$16/pound). We plan on stocking the State Forest Campground (150lbs), Stundebek's Bay (150 lbs.), St. Rose (150 lbs.), and North Bay Accesses (200lbs).

Folks are invited to see the stocking take place. Niehaus will also take some pictures of the stocking event. He will also send the list of donors to newsletter editor for publication in the January Newsletter and on Facebook.

The committee will write and mail out thank you notes to the local businesses/organizations who donated.

The committee plans to discuss the possibility of having a northern only fishing tournament to help reduce the number of northern pike in the lake (According to the DNR, there are too many small northern pike that are competing against the small walleyes). Little Birch is currently doing this and is giving prizes for different categories of northern caught.

There are plans to fix and install bedding on wood duck/mallard tubes this winter (March timeframe). Niehaus is seeking help from anyone interested. No updates on the loon count at this time.

• Lake and Area Safety

With folks walleye fishing into the late fall, the committee recommends leaving the channel buoys in until mid to late October (The chains and blocks will stay on the lake bottom all winter long and the buoys and lights removed). A storage location is needed for the buoys.

Come next year, the plan would be to get the channel buoys and lights installed within a couple weeks after ice out.

Chuck Schiemann will be taking care of removing the sign this year.

• Publicity

June 23, 2023 is the set date for next year's golf tournament.

There were 87 people at last month's annual BBLA meeting.

www.bigbirchlakeassociation.org

Next Meeting – October 15, 2022

Association thanks organizers of summer social events

The BBLA Board of Directors thanks the organizers of the two summer social events for the association.

Jeanne Niehaus and Gary Rothstein organized the annual golf outing at Meadowbrook Golf Course in Melrose.

Anne Costello and helpers organized the annual ladies luncheon held this past August at the Double R in Grey Eagle.

Below are the winners of door prizes (Yeti tumblers) from Opatz Metals/ Rolloffs and a blanket made by Lisa Brixius.



Big Birch Lake Association Board of Directors

Director	Representing	Phone
Kevin Costello, Pres.	Area C Director	480-250-3698
Matt Everding, V. Pres.	Area F Director	320-492-5902
Craig Tweedale, Treas.	Area J Director	608-317-6647
Jay Anderson, Sec.	Area I Director	763-482-1926
Mark Erdmann	Area G Director	612-386-9254
Blake Johnson	Area D Director	612-910-3871
Deb Johnson	Director At Large	320-285-5833
Adrian Johnson	Area A Director	952-939-0939
Brandon Kelly	Area E Director	320-491-6107
Hans Mische	Director At Large	320-250-9002
Grant Niehaus	Director At Large	320-583-4939
Jeanne Niehaus	Director At Large	651-757-7475
Gary Rothstein	Area H Director	320-290-7818
Mike Sadlowsky	Director At Large	612-366-5494
Steve Thelen	Area B Director	320-309-9881

Big Birch Lake Association e-mail address: bbla@meltel.net

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 PO Box 342
 Grey Eagle, Minnesota 56336
 Kevin Costello, President
 Robert Kutter, Editor
 E-mail: bbla@meltel.net
 Web Site: 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.

Members elect three new directors at annual meeting

BBLA members elected three new members at the annual meeting on August 28, 2022.

Brandon Kelly is Director of Area E, which stretches from Slitter Island to Hammarsten Island.

Hans Mische was elected as a Director-at-Large.

Steve Thelen was elected as Director of Area B, which stretches from Stundebek's Bay along the southwest area of the lower basin.

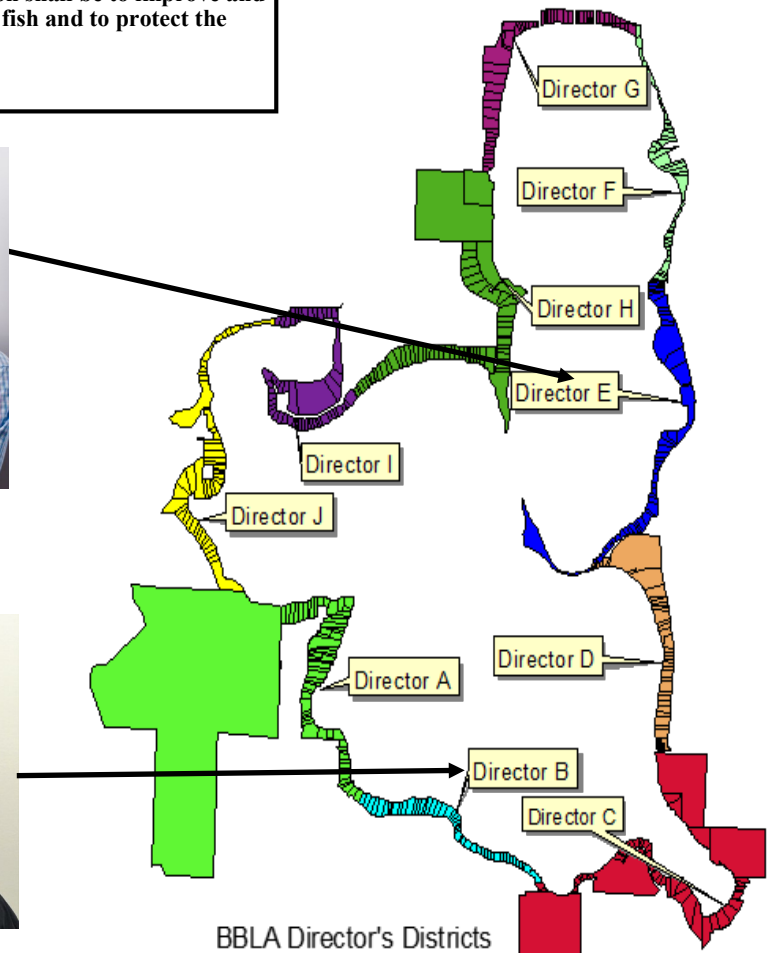
Please welcome them to the board, thank them for their willingness to serve, and contact them if you have a question or concern about the lake.

Brandon Kelly was elected as Director of Area E.



Hans Mische was elected as Director-at-Large

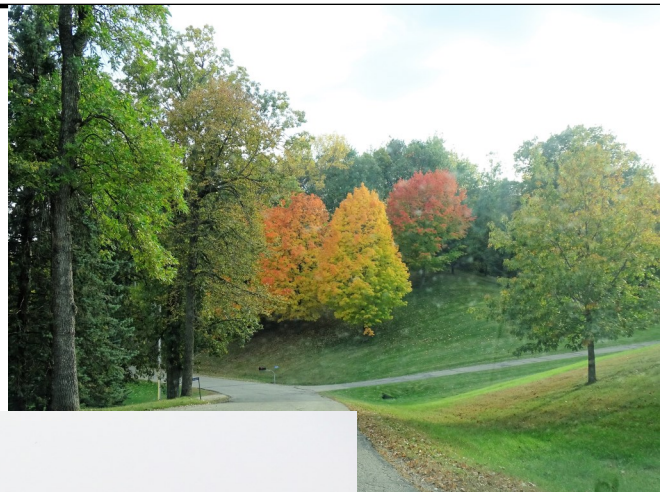
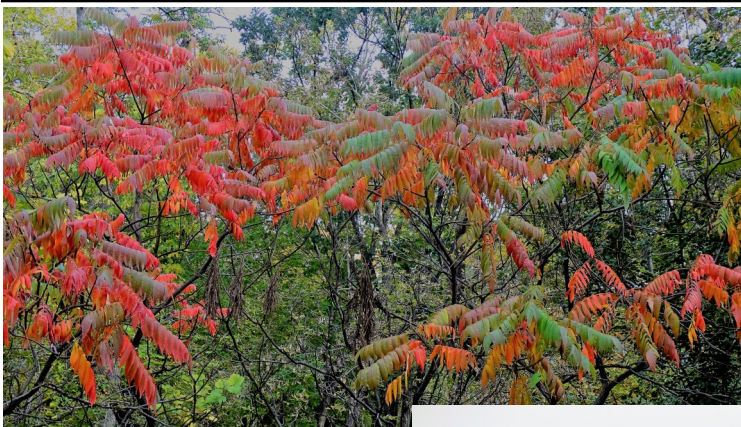
Steve Thelen was elected as Director of Area B.



BBLA Director's Districts

BIG BIRCH LAKE ASSOCIATION, INC
PO BOX 342
GREY EAGLE, MN 56336

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One does not have to travel far to view spectacular fall colors. These photos from around BBL can fill your heart with the gifts of nature. Photos by Robert Kutter

