

2006 Minnesota Lake Association of the Year

Volume XVI Issue I

January / February, 2010

Mark your calendar...

- Jan 1 **Happy New Year!**
- Jan 7 Healthy Lakes— 7:00 PM
- Jan 9 BLCA Board— 8:30 AM
- Jan 11 Palmer Twp Board—7 PM
- Jan 19 Clear Lake Twp Board—7:30 PM
- Jan 21 Sherburne County Planning Commission—hearing on septic ordinance
- Feb 4 Healthy Lakes— 7:00 PM
- Feb 8 Palmer Twp Board—7 PM
- Feb 13 BLCA Board— 8:30 AM
- Feb 16 Clear Lake Twp Board—7:30 PM
- Feb 23 BLCA Hayride—2:00—5:00 PM at Santa's Forest Tree Farm

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HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM THE BLCA

And, with the New Year...

...come resolutions as well as some changes from the BLCA for 2010.

Dues: The 2010 dues statement is included with this issue of the newsletter. This year, the Board has voted to offer an "Early Bird" special through April 15, 2010. If you pay early, your dues will be \$25.00 rather than the regular price of \$30.00. A good deal for those of you who want to save some money!

Stocking of Elk Lake: Once again, we will sponsor stocking of Elk Lake with Walleye fry. We're asking for contributions of \$20.00 (or more) to help increase the population of Walleye in the lake. If you live on Julia, Briggs, or Rush, you're invited to contribute also...

Invasive vegetation control: There are two programs—one is to help pay the cost of general spraying for curlyleaf pondweed—the second is for individual spraying in front of your property.

Please look at the material and help support the BLCA in our efforts to make the lakes a better place to be.

Briggs Lake Chain Conservation Projects 2010

At a minimum the BLCA wants to protect what we currently have in water quality. Better yet, we want to improve on what we have. Here is how you can help.

Good News for BLCA members! 2010 provides you with more opportunities to undertake a conservation project with financial help from your lake association. **SERP** (Shoreland Education Restoration Project) will continue to provide up to \$5000 in grant money to help with your shoreland restoration projects through July 2011.

In addition, the BLCA has added small, mini grants in 2010 to encourage as many BLCA property owners as possible to begin their own conservation projects. Called **BLCA Healthy Lakes Mini-Grants**, this financial help comes directly from the BLCA and is targeted for a wide variety of conservation projects.

In a nutshell the available funds for conservation projects in 2010:

- A. SERP funds through a DNR grant: \$5000 maximum.
- B. BLCA Healthy Lakes Mini-grants (from your lake association): \$500 maximum.

You may inquire about or apply for either funding by contacting: Walt Munstermann at 743-2416, munstrushlake@aol.com, or Kenzie Phelps, at 743-2663, kenziephelps@gmail.com.

An introductory workshop will be held in April to provide more information. Stay tuned, and keep the momentum going!

Presidents' Letter

New Years Greetings from your BLCA

This issue of the Lake Report is filled with good stuff: conservation information, new board profiles, This We Remember, Best Management Practices (BMPs) and more. And did we say **forms** for you to fill out??? This is the time of the year to renew your membership, (or become a paying member for the first time), donate to the weed spraying and walleye stocking efforts, and decide whether or not to sign up (and individually pay) for spraying of curlyleaf pondweed, submerged weeds and shoreline algae on your lakeshore. Here they are:

1. **BLCA Membership Form.** For the first time ever the BLCA is offering an **Early Bird Special**. If you get your dues in before April 15, 2010, you get a \$5.00 discount on your membership, and pay only \$25.00. Your membership dues after April 15th are \$30.00. Fill out the enclosed membership form, with your check for \$25.00 and return to BLCA by April 15th!
2. **Weed Spraying Donation Form.** As in the past, the BLCA relies on your individual donations to help manage curlyleaf pondweed. Spraying affected areas must continue each year: this invasive aquatic weed is not going away, but we can manage it. Please do your part to manage curlyleaf pondweed: make a donation to help defray the spraying costs.
3. **Walleye Stocking Donation Form** (flip side of the **Weed Spraying Donation Form**). Last year the BLCA started another lake improvement effort by stocking walleye fry in Big Elk Lake, paid for entirely by donations from around the lakes. We continue this program again this year.
4. **Individual Spraying for Curlyleaf Pondweed, Submerged Weeds and Shoreline Algae.** Note: there is a lot of information from Lake Management, our contractor. **READ CAREFULLY**
 - A. Letter Addressed **Dear Briggs Lake Chain Association Member**. This letter explains what you need to do if you want individual spraying on your shoreline.
 - B. Please note the 4th bullet point: **Chara**. The algae that Lake Management sprays for is called chara, and is not the blue-green algae sometimes present later in the summer.
 - C. Form entitled **Control programs for curlyleaf pondweed, submerged weeds, and shoreline algae**. Fill out this form if you want your shoreline sprayed and you will pay for it. Please note that the only payment you make now is for the required \$35 DNR permit. *See bottom of form*. This check you make out to BLCA and mail back to BLCA with the completed form. The BLCA will then coordinate the permits with the DNR. Be sure to mark your lake location on the map on backside of the form.

WHEW! It is obvious there is a lot going on in your lake association! At the minimum we want to maintain the current water quality, not let it deteriorate. Better yet, we want to improve water quality. That takes an adequate budget, a lot of volunteers, and for each of you to be a paying member. Take advantage of the **Early Bird Special** and send your member dues in by April 15th.

Steve Demeules and Kenzie Phelps, Co-presidents BLCA

The Green Sheet

There are no Green Sheet ads this month. **Remember, ads are free to BLCA Members.** Get your information to **Carol Kufner** at 743-3753 before the 20th of the month.

Palmer Township

The Palmer Township Board meets the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 PM in the Township Hall. Let **Kathy Miller** know of agenda items at 743-2100 or email her at **palmertwp@mywdo.com** by noon on Tuesday before the meeting.

Clear Lake Township

The Clear Lake Township Board meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM in the Township Hall. Agenda items should get to **Debra Seeley** at 743-2485 by Thursday morning before the meeting. Visit the township website at: **www.ClearLakeTownship.com**.

Please attend your respective Township meeting and voice your concerns about matters relating to our lakes.

BMP's — Natural vs. Impervious Surfaces

by: Mike Punton

Remember learning the water cycle in school? If you do, your memory probably goes something like this:

The sun shines on lakes and rivers, causing water to evaporate and form clouds. Clouds grow heavy and begin to rain down. Rain runs off the ground, back into lakes and rivers, where the cycle repeats.

Now brace yourself— what you learned is not entirely true! It includes the misleading concept that rain runs off the ground. Oh, in cities it runs off well enough (more on that soon), but in natural areas, only 10% of rain and snow actually runs off the land. Of the other 90%, 50% soaks into the ground and 40% evaporates. Instead of being taught that rain runs off the ground, we should have been taught rain soaks into the ground, since five times more soaks in than runs off.

Natural areas — landscapes covered by grasses, trees and other plants — are "soft" and act like a sponge soaking up water. As landscapes develop into cities, they become "harder," with the ground being covered by roads, parking lots and buildings. In downtown areas where almost all the ground is covered by hard surfaces, 55% of rain and snow runs off the ground, and only 15% soaks in. Notice the difference? Five times more water runs off of downtown areas than what runs off of natural areas.

As landscapes are covered with hard "impervious" surfaces, the amount of water that soaks in (infiltrates) decreases and the amount that runs off increases.

If you're considering a building, remodeling or landscape project in the coming months, please make every effort to keep as much "natural area" as possible. Sherburne County has restrictions on the percentage of impervious surface that's allowable. My advice is to check with the county as you're developing your plans.

Happy New Year.

New Editor for *The Lake Report*

We welcome **Penny Houtz** as the new Editor of *The Lake Report*. She and husband **Doug Seiler** live on the east side of Rush Lake. Penny is a former English and language arts teacher and now develops educational assessments for a variety of states. Thanks, Penny, for volunteering, and welcome aboard.

From your Board...

Items from the December 12 BLCA Board meeting included:

Committee Assignments

need Communications and Events chairs and Website Manager (webmaster)

Marilyn Humble will continue as Sunshine Mailing; Barb Aaberg will coordinate Education programs

Grants

grant money is available from DNR and BLCA for SERP projects (shoreland restoration)

BLCA will fund conservation Mini-grants—details to follow

Palmer Directory

should be distributed to all areas by now—let us know if there are changes to be made

Budget and Fund-Raising

considering a change to 501.c.3 status which would allow tax deductions for payments and donations

Membership

voted to offer Early Bird membership dues at \$25.00 (until April 15, 2010)

The Lake Report



Briggs Lake Chain Association
See us on the Web at
www.briggslakechainassociation.com

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F.Y.I.

Join us on Feb 23 for a hayride at Santa's Forest Tree Farm off Highway 10 from 2:00 PM until 5:00 PM. In addition to the hayride, we'll have s'mores and a fire to keep warm.

Nancy Riddle, Sherburne County Planning and Zoning Administrator, wrote to us about the **septic issues** from last summer. She reports that the open pipe situation on Elk Lake has been corrected and inspection of the Briggs Bayou showed no evidence of a failing septic system. Also, the county is in the process of adopting a new ordinance that will mandate upgrading of failing systems within 18 months. The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on January 21st to discuss the proposed ordinance. The county is also considering an informational training session on septic and lakeshore property maintenance. Thank you, Ms. Riddle, for the follow-up.

This 'n That

The **2009–2010 Palmer Directory** has been placed in the black boxes or on your door. Additional Directories are available at the Palmer House and Briggs Lake General Store. If your name(s) or other information is incorrect, **PLEASE** let us know, and we'll make the change in our database. For corrections, contact Steve Demeules at **Steve.Demeules@briggslakechainassociation.com** or call him at home at 320-743-4749.

The Clear Lake / Clearwater Fire Departments will be holding **cold water ice rescue training** in mid-January, either at the outlet of the Elk River on Elk Lake or at the Briggs–Rush channel.

The building at **High Pointe** will be the site of a controlled burn when there is adequate snow cover to do so safely, according to Clear Lake Fire Chief **Ron Korn**.

Palmer Township reminds residents that **garbage cans and recycling containers** need to be kept back from the roadway so the snowplows don't hit them.

Mike Ganz wanted us to let you know that the **Palmer Town Hall is now open on Tuesday for the new lending library**. He thought maybe people would like to use the town hall for cards, board games or conversation. Contact **Kathy Miller** for more info.

The BLCA Board meets year 'round. Meetings are on the second Saturday of the month at the Palmer Town Hall beginning at 8:30 AM. You're welcome to attend if you'd like. If there are items you'd like the Board to consider, please let any board member know. If you'd like to serve on a BLCA Committee or help with BLCA programs or projects, we'd love to have your help—simply email us at **www.briggslakechainassociation.com** or let any of the board members know of your interest and preference.