

Remembering the Past – Improving the Future...promoting the care, improvement, and general welfare of the Briggs Lake Chain [Julia, Briggs, Rush and Big Elk] and adjoining and connecting waters...

May 2015

Volume XXII, Issue III

LID Update

Mark your calendar...

- 05.07.15 Healthy Lakes— 6:30 PM Palmer Town Hall
- 05.09.15 BLCA Board Mtg—8:30 AM
- 05.11.15 Palmer Twp Board—7 PM
- 05.19.15 Clear Lake Twp Board-7 PM

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Our Mothers Day Flower Fundraiser will be held May 8-10 and is sponsored by the Briggs Lake Nursery.

For every purchase you make, 15% will be donated to the BLCA. Thank you!

As you know, the BLCA Board endorsed and sponsored the recent petition efforts to form a Lake Improvement District [LID] for all four lakes of the Briggs Lake Chain. The primary focus area of the LID would have been controlling the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species [AIS], especially now that there is Eurasian watermilfoil in the lake chain. Unfortunately we came up short of the needed 50% [plus one] signatures of eligible property owners. Our final tally: Rush Lake 56.9%, Briggs Lake 55.9%, Julia Lake 54.5%, Big Elk Lake 25.8%: **Total 48.1%**

As is obvious from the lake totals, property owners on the upper three lakes were in favor of the proposed LID while those on Big Elk showed little support. In mid March 2015 the BLCA made a request of the Sherburne County Commissioners to form a LID for the upper three lakes, using the petition totals for the upper three lakes [combined 55.7%] as evidence of support for a LID with revised boundaries, that is, excluding Big Elk Lake. The MN statute that created LIDs allows LIDs to be formed in several ways, the most common being the petition process, which we followed at the commissioners request in January 2014. As part of our March 2015 request we acknowledged that those who signed the LID petition in 2014 and early 2015 did so with the expectation it was for four lakes, not three.

In March 2015, the BLCA requested the commissioners to use another approach, which allows the county to pass a *resolution of intent to start a LID without going through the petition process*. BLCA board representatives and commissioners had a good discussion regarding the request, but at that time no action was taken by the commissioners. Although the BLCA representatives were optimistic, there wasn't much traction on our request. Additional meetings will be scheduled with the county to determine the best approach. Possibilities include:

- The BLCA conducts a survey of property owners on the upper three lakes to determine the level of interest for a three lake LID, with the county using the data to decide next steps.
- The BLCA does another petition for a LID on the upper three lakes, asking eligible property owners on Rush, Briggs and Julia lakes to sign for the revised LID, followed by the normal hearing process.
- The county passes a *resolution of intent to start a LID for three lakes, followed by the normal hearing process [no petitions]*.

While we were not successful getting a LID started for all four lakes, we are very encouraged that 55.7% of property owners on the upper three lakes thought the LID was the right approach to our chronic lake problems, primarily AIS, addressing them with predictable and sustainable funding.

Now we are waiting for the dust to settle a bit before the next move. Doing nothing is not an option. Our lakes need the specific and directed attention that a LID will provide. If it means a three lake LID, then so be it. That's where we go. Stay tuned for the next chapter.

Kenzie Phelps, for the BLCA Healthy Lakes Committee

Presidents Letter

Greetings Lake Lovers,

It's great to be done with winter and being able to use watercraft again. The way the light plays on top of the waves is exhilarating.

I have been cleaning up debris on my shoreline to cut down on the nutrients getting into the lake and have already seen some invasive curlyleaf pondweed (CLP) strands mixed in. Volunteers will soon be traveling around the upper three lakes to see where the CLP is the worst so that we can get it treated before the water gets to 60°.

Thanks to our core of generous donors we are on track to raise about what we did last year to treat AIS. The Clear Lake Lions have made a generous donation and the DNR has given the BLCA a \$6,000 grant. Later this summer, 12 acres of the invasive Eurasian water milfoil (EWM) will be treated on Rush and in late summer all the lakes will be professionally surveyed for EWM to see if it has spread to any other lake and to define next year's treatment needs.

So far, we have fewer donations than what we need to spend on AIS treatment. We will be short several thousand dollars, which is a larger shortfall than last year. A LID would have helped but isn't an option right now. Ultimately, to keep treating AIS, we will need more people donating more money and more people volunteering to help make BLCA fundraisers more successful.

Please consider helping out at the Palmer Day Food Booth and the McDonald's Brat Sale. It's a lot of fun and you can team up with your own buddies and take a shift or help another team and make new friends. The success of these fundraisers will help keep the wolf from our AIS treatment door. I don't think anyone wants to reach the point where we can't afford to do what is needed but we are headed that way.

We need YOUR help! We need more people to get involved through donations of time and financial support.

Dan Merchant, BLCA President

BLCA Hwy 25 Clean-Up

Join us Saturday morning, May 9th to help clean up Hwy 25.

Meet at Palmer Town Hall at 10:45 am—We will provide snacks and beverages prior to heading out instead of lunch afterward.

Bring your hat & gloves, wear shoes for tromping around in ditches, and help us make a difference!

BLCA *Picnic in the Park* following the June 13 General Meeting at Palmer Park / music, lunch & beverages provided.

Palmer Township Clean-Up Day is May 16th - bring your 'stuff' to the Palmer Town hall.

Wellness and Weight Loss Support Group / Palmer Town hall / 2nd & 4th Tuesdays @ 5:30 pm / Everyone welcome!

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 by email at: palmertwp@gmail.com by noon on Tuesday before the meeting or call her at 743-2100. Our website is: www.palmertownshipmn.org

Clear Lake Township

The Clear Lake Township Board meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM in the Township Hall. Let **the Township clerk** know of agenda items by Thursday morning before the meeting. To contact Clear Lake Township, please call 320-743-2472 or email the Township Clerk at: clearlaketwp@hotmail.com Our website is www.clearlaketownship.org

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

Sherburne County Citizen 4/4/15 article reprinted with permission of Gary Meyer.

These lakes are our (our) gems

The sheets of ice covering area lakes dissolved into springtime this week. Big Lake was the last of the lakes to become ice-free Thursday in a matter of two hours, as 40-mile winds blasted the remaining covering into oblivion. And the quiet of winter was gone. Makes us think about the wonderful fun that awaits boaters and swimmers.

We've covered a number of lake issues in The Citizen and West Sherburne Tribune and the plight of our hard-working lake associations at the Briggs Lake Chain and in Big Lake. Invasive weed species that need to be dealt with, the threat of zebra mussels, which are affecting area lakes, the negative effects of agricultural runoff, shoreline degradation and an abundant supply of fish are the big issues.

Sadly, not enough local people are considering it their cause to pitch in and help - either with labor or with cash. We reported two weeks ago the Briggs Lake Improvement Association officials, meeting with the county, were hoping to "move its boundaries" to eliminate a lake (and a large share of non-participating property owners) so it could reform its potential tax service district (LID) and continue efforts to make it a reality. Nobody wants to pay higher taxes, myself included. But the disconnect many of these dissenting property owners have to the important issue has us wondering.

Our lakes are our most important resource here in Sherburne County. They are the reason for our high standard of living - nature's gem to be shared. The argument that locally-generated taxes benefits the lake experiences of those "just visiting" doesn't hold water. We aren't "just visiting" and need to pledge our efforts to improve these waters - not just sit idly by. That is the issue not only with the Briggs Lake Chain, but with the Big Lake waters as well.

I will be doing a story in the Tribune next week, reporting on the diminishing participation of Big Lake property owners in their association. Fewer property owners are signing up as \$50-a-year paying members of the Big Lake-Lake Mitchell association. Sadly, there's a disconnect there, too.

We live around these waters because we enjoy seeing the sun rise and set over them. The most wonderful experience of the year is to enjoy a boat ride and witness the merging of land and water.

Or the anticipation of what comes when a worm and a hook goes below the surface. We live around these waters because they bring a wonderful element of nature to our doorsteps. Too many of us, I fear, relish the good but retreat when it becomes their responsibility to become involved.

To the associations - keep up the good work. It is very necessary, in spite of the uphill battles that challenge them. Meanwhile, we will dedicate ourselves at both papers to cover the issues and keep them in front of the readers. It's important to us, too.

BLCA Board Position Opening

The BLCA Board announced an opening for a Leadership position starting October 2015. This great opportunity comes around only every 2 years or so. If you are passionate about good water quality, citizen participation, making a difference, and like a new challenge, this position may be for you.

- **Title:** BLCA President, AKA as BLCA Board team leader and prime coffee maker
- **Duties:** Lead Board meetings and summer General Membership Meetings, prepare agendas, be spokesperson for the BLCA, keep Board members engaged and active, and more!
- **Skills:** Delegating, organizing, being able to work with elected officials, respond to member's concerns and complaints, remember names, attend social events, and more!
- **Knowledge:** Willing to learn, listen and ask questions, and know which way the water flows, and more!
- **Benefits:** Takes possession of the key to Palmer town hall, makes new friends, enjoys good vibes, and more!
- **Support:** Surrounded and supported by a team of passionate, engaged, intelligent, crafty, funny, alert, hard working, dedicated and highly motivated board members..... and more!

Note: *Lacking any of the above have never disqualified any of the previous BLCA presidents!*

To get your name on the nomination list for BLCA President, or to put someone else's name on the list, contact Karen Nielsen at kmn@midco.net We need your help to continue the great work of the BLCA.

The Lake Report



Briggs Lake Chain Association

See us on the Web at:

<https://www.briggslakechainassociation.com>

Email us at blca@briggslakechainassociation.com

Webmaster: Mike Flanery

Karen Nielsen *The Lake Report* Editor

And Green Sheet contact

320-293-0394 or Email: kmn@midco.net

Virginia Demeules, Palmer Directory and Membership Data Updates: vdemeules@aol.com
Phone: 320-743-4749

The Lake Report is published for the benefit of BLCA members and lake residents. Please submit articles and feedback by the 20th of the month for inclusion in the next issue. Email or snail mail copy to the Editor.

This 'n That

Please send news about BLCA members to **Marilyn Humble** so that a card may be sent for such things as illness or a death in the family. Call her at 743-2741 or email her at: imhumble@midco.net



Happy Fishing!

4/23/15, To Boat Landing Users —FYI:

Today I launched my pontoon at the Julia Landing. My service provider ended up not being able to remove his empty trailer until a boat and large Styrofoam blocks floated it high enough to get back on top of the concrete pad. It was a lot of work and not everyone has access to the devices needed to do the job. Someone else had smashed his or her trailer fenders getting back on top of the pad the previous day.

The water is low and boaters, gunning their engines, have washed out the material for the end of the pads. The Julia pad has a very tall drop off. If you are launching there, walk out on it and determine where the pad ends and see for yourself how much it drops off.

Trailers going off the end risk damage, getting stuck and holding up the other users of the landing. It would be prudent to apply this advice to **all** the landings.

The DNR is aware of the situation and has put it on the to do list. They hope to inspect and then correct things before the fishing opener. In the meantime, make sure you know how far you can back out onto any pad before you go over a cliff.

Dan Merchant

PS We are down on donations for July 4th fireworks...even though we have the unused fireworks from last year due to the platform fire, we could still use your help!!

PSS Check out our new website—we now offer Paypal for your convenience!

Green Sheet Item

1968 12' fiberglass Butterfly sailboat and trailer—good condition.

Blue-green deck with white hull. Comes complete with the following:

A 2-piece mast, white sail with wood battens, daggerboard, spring-loaded kick up rudder, wooden tiller, boom, ropes and hardware.

Hull weight: 137 lbs / Hull depth: 15 inches

Sail area: 75 sq ft / Mast: 18 ft

Crew capacity: 600 lbs.

Sailboat trailer is a 'Little Dude' with 2 brand new tires.

\$875.00 CASH ONLY (no checks)

Call: 320-260-2934 (Koontz on Briggs)