

**Mark your calendar...**

- June 3 Healthy Lakes— 6:30 PM  
Palmer Town Hall
- June 4-5 BLCA Annual Community  
Garage Sale
- June 12 BLCA Membership  
Meeting—10:00 AM  
Palmer Town Hall
- June 14 Sherburne County Zoning  
Presentation: Floodplain,  
Shoreland, Septic Systems,  
Solid Waste, Building and  
Zoning—6:30 PM Palmer  
Town Hall
- June 14 Palmer Twp Board—7 PM
- June 15 Clear Lake Twp Board—  
7 PM
- July 2-3 McDonald's Brat Sales
- July 3 Fireworks on the Lake
- July 3 Briggs Lake Chain Boat Parade

**HAPPENINGS AROUND THE LAKES**



The BLCA

**advertises**  
*for your*  
**GARAGE SALE**

Are you considering having a garage sale this year? Hold your sale the weekend of June 4th & 5th and let the BLCA do the advertising for you! To bring the shoppers out to the Briggs Lake/Palmer Township area we will be advertising in 3 local papers for two weeks prior to the event. Let the spring cleaning begin, plan to participate in the community wide sale and put some extra cash in your pockets!

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**BLCA Membership Meeting**

June 12, 2010 10:00 am Palmer Township Hall



**PICNIC**

**BRING THE KIDS!**

After a brief business meeting the Sherburne County Sheriff's department will provide an entertaining and educational piece on jet ski and ATV safety for children and teens. They will have vehicles on hand for the kids to check out and a picnic lunch will follow with ice cream treats provided by Kemps. Mark your calendars!

The Sherburne County Zoning Staff will be presenting information to residents of Palmer Township and the Briggs Lake Chain on Monday, June 14th at 6:30 PM. Information to be covered includes Floodplain, Shoreland, Septic Systems, Solid Waste, Building and Zoning. Staff will be available after the presentation to answer residents questions.

## Presidents' Letter

### We've got a crisis here!

There is nothing quite like a good crisis to generate interest among those who might otherwise only be paying attention from the sidelines. Marginally interested with an ear to what is going on, but not actively engaged..... until they perceive CRISIS. Not too long ago Palmer Township residents packed the town hall to hear about proposed regulations for four-wheelers. Seems like there were a few out-of-control riders breaking the rules, making it an issue for all riders.

Last summer we had a minor blue-green algae outbreak on Briggs that drew a lot of attention and comment. People even started visiting the BLCA website. Several years ago we had a crappy die-back, caused not by anything lake residents did but from mostly natural causes. Not hysteria proportions, but there were many anxious property owners. Residents get anxious when we have high water events, with renewed interest in building a dam or other structure to manage water levels. When curly leaf pondweed was really bad, interest was high, people got involved.

So we wish we could report an emerging crisis, or at least one you don't know about (You all know the Briggs Lake Chain is on the *impaired waters list*, don't you?) So how about this: **The BLCA has a board volunteerism crisis!** Yes, now, right here in River City! The facts tell the story: The BLCA by-laws call for 24 board members (plus officers) with 6 suggested from Briggs, 4 from Rush, 5 from Big Elk and 5 from Julia. The past year the board has functioned with 16 members. Come August we will have even more vacancies. Board members and other volunteers are the ones who make the plans, raise the money, do the programs, carry on the association's business. The feedback from BLCA members is genuinely positive: "Keep up the good work." "Doing a great job." "We support everything you do," But after a while these faithful and hardworking volunteers need a break, some time off to let others step up and lead. Fortunately, this a great lake association with a history that goes back to the mid 50's, an easy association to be associated with, if you get our drift.

This is first call for you passionate lake residents to answer the bell to become new board members. Pick up the cause, do your part..... **We've got a crisis here!**

**Your Co-Presidents, Steve Demeules and Kenzie Phelps**

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 [blca@briggslakechainassociation.com](mailto:blca@briggslakechainassociation.com) or let any of the board members know of your interest and preference.

### 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](mailto: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 7:0 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](http://www.ClearLakeTownship.com).

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

## Best Management Practices

by Mike Punton

Recently, I was reading an article written by Paul Kinney in 1988. Paul was the acting President of the BLCA at this time. My take away from the article was that it's funny how some things really never change. Best management practices from 1988 are still relevant today. The basis of Paul's article was suggestions from the Freshwater Foundation and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency for individuals who are concerned about lake problems.

- Don't burn where ashes can wash into the lake.
- Don't fertilize your lawn unless it needs it. If you do fertilize, use one that is low in phosphorus. If you check the fertilizer bags, look for the middle number and use those with 5% or less.
- Landscape wherever possible to control runoff and erosion.
- Use pesticides, herbicides and other chemicals sparingly.
- Don't plant grass all the way to the lake. Let it grow naturally for some distance as a "buffer zone" which will slow down nutrient-rich runoff.
- Leave grass clippings on your lawn. Good ground cover absorbs runoff and filters nutrients. Plant sloped areas heavily with grasses, shrubs, and trees.
- Don't put a road or wide path to the lake. Curve any path you build and consider wooden steps rather than a road if you need access.
- Sand dumped on shore to create a beach can negatively affect the habitat of fish, birds, frogs and aquatic insects.
- Avoid lake structures that require tree clearing, excavating and filling (this refers to boat houses and other buildings on the shore).

Even a properly operating septic system will occasionally discharge nutrients (phosphorus and nitrates), and some bacteria to surface and ground waters. Design and install systems that have proper elevation and do not tax the system.

Twenty-two years ago the Briggs Lake Chain was challenged by several of the same demons we continue to face today: High phosphorus levels, algae, weeds and septic system issues. Over the past 2 decades, the county and state governments, as well as the DNR have developed rules and regulations to mitigate some of the issues. Several of them relate to obtaining proper permits and approvals prior to building or manipulating lakeshore. The remaining "best practices" remain the responsibility of the individual property owners. As I read through them, most seem pretty reasonable, common sense laden ideas we can all adhere to.

## From the Editor: Signs of Spring

May is a wonderful month to enjoy the sights and sounds of nature as signs of life emerge from under the cold winter blanket of snow. Once again my perennials somehow managed to survive the frigid Minnesota winter temperatures. At our bird feeders we witnessed the return of our pair of cardinals, along with the nuthatches, finches, and black-capped chickadees that never left. Two weeks ago, we were delighted to see the hummingbirds looking at the blooms of my bleeding hearts, which prompted me to find, clean, and put out their feeder. That same weekend, I found myself digging out the grape jelly for the orioles who were impatiently waiting for their expected treat.

Earlier this month, we woke to find all our bird feeders knocked to the ground and the bird-seed can pulled over, just like two years ago when we had a black bear visit our house. (Yep, this is bear country.) We put away the bird-seed can and pulled down the feeders each night just in case, although the DNR says it is possible that the visitor could be a raccoon or a deer. Whoever the visitor was, it has moved on now that we no longer leave food out at night. Last week we saw a small fox while driving by Doug and Susie Brown's house, and then two days ago, my husband spotted two baby fox in the same area.

In April, we watched as a pair of wood ducks found the box my husband built in honor of my dad, who passed away a year ago this month. He was an avid birder and had a special fondness for these beautiful ducks. Each morning, the pair would come, and the boy would wait patiently on the lake while she would lay an egg. Then, as she began her month-long ordeal of sitting on her eggs, we remarked on her uncanny ability to leave the box at the same time each day (dawn and dusk) to find food out on the lake. Finally, last Thursday while working from home, I happened to walk out onto the deck just as she began calling out her chicks to take that remarkable leap of faith from high above the ground to begin their life on our lake. By the way, they really do bounce! She had nine little ducklings, which she led through the high grass down to the shore.

## The Lake Report



Briggs Lake Chain Association  
See us on the Web at  
<https://www.briggslakechainassociation.com>

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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. E-mail or snail mail copy to the Editor.

## F.Y.I.

### BLCA Membership

Join the BLCA and receive our newsletter and a membership card to display at your residence. Only BLCA paid members will receive the Lake Report and Green Sheet—don't miss out! Your membership dues are \$30.00. If you need a copy of the form, please go to the BLCA website or contact a board member.

To have *The Lake Report* sent to your computer, please include your email address on your membership form or send it to Steve Demeules.

If you need to mail dues or donations, please send it to the BLCA Treasurer, Karen Jones, 11271 42nd Street, Clear Lake, MN 55319.

**As of May 27, 299 members have paid their dues for 2010!**

**This year's goal is 400 members.**

## This 'n That

Join a Parade! Remember that the Briggs Lake Chain awards prizes for those who wish to participate in the annual 4th of July boat parade—held on July 4th this year.

Grant money is available from DNR and BLCA for SERP projects (shoreland restoration) and BLCA will fund conservation Mini-grants—You may inquire about or apply for either funding by contacting: Walt Munstermann at 743-2416, [munstrushlake@aol.com](mailto:munstrushlake@aol.com), or Kenzie Phelps, at 743-2663, [kenziephelps@gmail.com](mailto:kenziephelps@gmail.com).

Keep an eye out for new neighbors, and let the BLCA know so that we can welcome them to the area.

Thanks to all who support the BLCA thru dues, donations, and volunteering.

Marilyn Humble has agreed to continue as the Sunshine Chairperson. Please send news about BLCA members to her 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@mywdo.com](mailto:imhumble@mywdo.com)

If your name(s) or other information is incorrect in this year's directory, PLEASE let us know, and we'll make the change in our database. For corrections, contact Steve Demeules at [Steve.Demeules@briggslakechainassociation.com](mailto:Steve.Demeules@briggslakechainassociation.com) or call him at home at 320-743-4749.

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 (743-2100 or email [palmertwp@mywdo.com](mailto:palmertwp@mywdo.com)) for more information.

If you have photos of lake life here on the Briggs Lake Chain, please feel free to submit them electronically to Penny Houtz at [phoutz@frontiernet.net](mailto:phoutz@frontiernet.net) for publishing on the BLCA website.

**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 [blca@briggslakechainassociation.com](mailto:blca@briggslakechainassociation.com) or let any of the board members know of your interest and preference.