



No . 105

January, 2012

## President's Letter

### Calendar

BBLA Board Meeting  
3/17/12  
BBLA Board Meeting  
4/21/12

Happy New Year from the BBLA Board!

After heavy spring rains and heavier than normal runoff, we had concerns that the water clarity of our lake would be adversely affected, but that was not the case. Our testing verifies that the lake and water clarity continues to be in great shape.

The fall has been particularly dry and the lake is low but hopefully spring melt and rains will return it to normal levels.

With a smooth clear ice over it was interesting to see lots of activity on the lake. Folks were out exploring the ice thickness and marveling at the lake bottom which was clearly visible.

Walleye fishermen were out in droves as are kids and adults ice skating. It reminds us once again why we love living on Big Birch Lake.

Going forward your Board continues its work protecting the lake. We

are exploring the expansion of the buffering program. We will be focusing on Aquatic Invasive Species such as zebra mussels, Asian carp and milfoil, etc. We want to make all of our lake residents aware of the problem. Please be certain to inspect and clean any equipment or structures including boats, docks, rafts, lifts etc., especially if they are coming into our lake from other waters.

Along those lines there is an article that comes to us from Minnesota Waters on Lake Service Providers (LSP's), which is reprinted elsewhere in this newsletter. Please take the time to read it as the DNR is placing new regulations on these folks in 2012.

Also, I had a recent phone conversation with Mr. Gary Johanson of Todd County Environmental Services regarding the status of the Septic System Survey and upgrades in the upper bay.

There has been a lot of confusion among our  
**President's Letter** *continues on page 2*

## Aquatic vegetation essential to all lake life

By Gene Waldorf

If you've ever been out fishing (trolling) with friends or family, you more than likely heard or said this phrase, and maybe with additional expletives. It is nearly impossible to avoid snagging weeds with lures. Fishermen probably would prefer fishing a lake clear of so called weeds, which we more formally refer to as aquatic vegetation. One way to avoid snagging weeds in any deep lake is to always troll in water depths of more than fifteen feet. But you say, you are less likely to catch anything, and there are good reasons for that.

If you were to scuba dive in our freshwater lakes, you would quickly discover that the bottom beyond fifteen feet deep is barren; it looks like a desert. Aquatic vegetation can't survive in deeper water because the light penetration is insufficient to support life. So the lake bottom from fifteen feet to shore is where all the

weeds are found.

Aquatic vegetation is essential to all life in the lake. It is where small aquatic creatures live and become part of the food chain. It is the place where small fish and newly hatched fry avoid becoming a meal for other fish or birds. With no aquatic vegetation in the lake, fish could not survive.

Some aquatic species are not native to our lakes, and are not welcome. Asian milfoil is one example. When it becomes dominant in a part of a lake, fishing is impossible because it is very dense and tends to lay on top of the water. Sometimes it becomes so thick that boating through it is impossible. Fortunately, we presently do not have Asian milfoil in Big Birch Lake, but it could easily be transplanted from neighboring lakes, as close as Little Birch Lake.

How do we know we don't have unwanted  
**Aquatic vegetation** *continues on page 7*

### Inside this issue:

Septic system update	2
Report on Activities	2
Association Membership	4
Balance Sheet	5
Renew your membership	5
Contributing sponsors	6
Lake vegetation	8

**President's Letter** *continued from page 1*

residents regarding this matter. He has sent me an email outlining the current status of the project and what you can expect to happen in 2012. That information is presented elsewhere in this newsletter as well.

Finally, I would like once again to thank all of our volunteers and sponsors for their help and support allowing the BBLA Board to continue our mission of keeping Big Birch Lake clean and beautiful.

Don't forget to support all of the local Sponsors who help the BBLA financially or otherwise!

Here's wishing all of you a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year!

Ralph H. Mehr  
President

### **Todd County Planning and Zoning Director updates BBL property owners about septic system inventory**

The following information from Garry Johanson, Todd County Planning and Zoning Director, updates BBL property owners in Todd County regarding the septic system inventory program on Big Birch Lake.

Bollig, Inc. inspected septic systems on Big Birch Lake during the summer/fall of 2011. I have sent out letters to everyone on Big Birch Lake indicating the following:

**\*\*Letter #1:** Your septic system is in compliance. This compliance inspection is valid for three (3) years.

**\*\*Letter #2:** Your septic system drainfield is in compliance, but Bollig, Inc. was unable to access your septic tank via the manhole cover for a leakage inspection. You will have one (1) year from the date of receiving this letter to have an inspection completed.

**\*\*Letter #3:** Your septic system drainfield is not in compliance, therefore we did not check your septic tank for leakage. You will have 1 year from the date of receiving this letter to upgrade your septic system drainfield and verify tank compliance.

**\*\*Letter #4:** Your septic system 'Holding Tank' could not be accessed via the manhole cover, therefore you will need to contact a licensed pumper to open the tank through the manhole cover and have a compliance inspection performed within one (1) year of receiving this letter.

**\*\*Letter #5:** Your septic system 'Holding Tank' is cracked and/or leaking, therefore

## Big Birch Lake Association Inc. Report on Activities July-August, 2011

	Oct '11	Jul-Oct. '11	% of Income
<b>Income</b>			
Book proceeds	100.00	100.00	41.7%
Donations-Members	0.00	120.00	0.0%
Golf Outing	0.00	115.00	0.0%
Interest Income	109.94	466.34	45.8%
Membership Dues	30.00	180.00	12.5%
Sponsors Contribution	0.00	100.00	0.0%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>239.94</b>	<b>1,081.34</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Annual Meeting	0.00	412.94	0.0%
Channel clearing	0.00	329.92	0.0%
Committee Expenses	50.00	50.00	20.8%
Internet & Publicity	0.00	0.00	0.0%
Misc.	0.00	188.99	0.0%
MN Lakes Assoc./MN Water	0.00	0.00	0.0%
Newsletter	175.00	1,853.78	73.0%
Secretary Compensation	300.00	600.00	125.0%
Social Events	660.21	1,708.71	275.2%
Supplies and copies	0.00	21.38	0.0%
Water Projects	748.12	1,096.22	311.8%
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>1,933.43</b>	<b>6,262.22</b>	<b>805.8%</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>-1,693.49</b>	<b>-5,180.88</b>	<b>-705.8%</b>

you have one (1) year to upgrade your septic Holding Tank.

We have communicated with many of the homeowners who have received letters and will work with everyone individually to achieve compliance on or before December 2012.

**Garry Johanson  
Todd County  
Planning & Zoning Director  
347 Central Avenue, Suite 2  
Long Prairie, MN 56347**

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

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**Gene Waldorf enjoyed some winter fun sailing across the lake in his ice boat. Photo by Robert Kutter**

# A warm dry fall ushers in a warm dry winter

"Winter is an etching, spring a watercolor, summer an oil painting and autumn a mosaic of them all."

--Stanley Horowitz

After a wet summer, the fall and early winter turned the other direction.

The first junco arrived October 1. Even though the weather was summer-like, that bird signaled the season to come.

The calls of young loons became more frequent in October as they found their adolescent voices. The calls were soft and short compared to the sound of adults in the summer.

The wind picked up during the first full week of October just as the leaves reached the peak of fall color. Some south wind gusts reached 40 mph creating big whitecaps on the water day and night for five days straight. Then a cool front turned the winds in the opposite direction and blew strongly for several days.

A bird was trying to escape the garage through a window oblivious to the large open door through which it had entered. I picked it up to give it freedom but realized it was not a familiar species. After examining it carefully, I let it go. According to my field guide it was an eastern phoebe. I had never identified one before. Interestingly the phoebe was the first species ever banded for study.

Beautiful fall weather marked the middle to late October. A light rain fell all day on the 25th to a very dry land.

A muskrat swam along the shore many times in late October. Some coots were curious about the muskrat as it floated on the water. The coots approached the muskrat and then suddenly skittered away when the muskrat moved. Another day three loons and the muskrat were near one another.

Evidence of the muskrat's burrow under some shoreline bogs became apparent as I watched it dive and disappear under the shore.

Blue skies, sparkling water, warm rays of sun and cool temperatures marked the opening of November. Most trees had shed their leaves but clusters of muted gold and maroon could be observed around the lakeshore.

By the end of the first week, strong southern winds blew for three days making one want to seek shelter further inland.

Fog hung over the lake on many November mornings when the air temperature was cooler than the water temperature. Looking across the water one could see Sliter Island appear and disappear like the mythical village of Brigadoon.



**An ice fisherman got ready to wet a line early in December. Photo by Robert Kutter**

The cloud of fog reflected deep in the smooth surface of the water.

Winter's first etching came in the form of skim ice on Bass Creek November 10. Temperatures that dropped into the upper teens caused ice to form along the shore of the lake on the 17th.

Four and one half inches of snow fell on November 19. It began mid-morning and snowed throughout the afternoon. At 2 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day it was 53 degrees. So much for the snow. The last time we saw a loon was also on Nov. 19. We saw more ducks on the lake this past fall than any other. A flock of a dozen



## Kutter's Column

mallards swam along the shore repeatedly in mid-November, even during the snowstorm.

Jim Sinclair reported a flock of trumpeter swans off the shore of Sandy Beach on November 20. Mary Jane Kolodge reported seeing two swans near the grass island just north of Sliter Island on Dec. 2.

We awoke to hoar frost covering everything on Nov. 21. Intricate spider webs the eye would otherwise miss became visible. Dock sections and boat lifts on shore took on a delicate presence.

I was awakened at 5:30 a.m. on Dec. 2nd by the sound of ice crashing on the shore. The broken ice apparently traveled across the lake by the strong winds. By afternoon the ice that was piled on shore had melted due to the wave action.

The lake froze over on December 6. Unlike the recent past, a smooth ice sheet developed uninterrupted by snow and rain. I went ice skating on Dec. 9th and saw two muskrats under the ice. I followed one for several minutes as it swam under the ice to escape my presence. The muskrat followed a channel in the lake bottom that took it under the frozen shore. There were many such channels along the shore.

The nice ice didn't last long. A few days of temperatures in the 30's made the ice sloppy. However, that didn't keep fishermen off the ice even with their ATV's. Near the end of December the ice was reported to be five to seven inches thick.

Two inches of snow fell on December 30, and temperatures remained above normal.

Fall and early winter has truly been a mosaic of all seasons making heaven seem a little closer in a house beside the water.

## 2011 Big Birch Lake Association Members

Anderson, Derry  
 Anderson, Marge  
 Anderson, Todd & Debbie  
 Anderson, Warren & Chadyenne  
 Andrews, Mike & Jackie  
 Arvig, Tom & Emily  
 Athmann, Judy  
 Atkinson, Dan & Jan  
 Atwood, Duane & Cindy  
 Bauer, Lois  
 Auger, John & Karen  
 Beckermann, Fran & Linda  
 Beekhuizen, Julie & Steve  
 Bell, Bradley  
 Benson, Marilyn  
 Berg, Aaron & Becky  
 Berg, Andy & Chelsea  
 Berg, Ken and Bev  
 Berg, Louise & Dwaine  
 Bergmann, Ken & Marilyn  
 Beste, Tom & Julie  
 Beuning, Judine & James  
 Beyer, Harlowe & Lillian  
 Blommel Family  
 Blommel, Leroy & Marilynn  
 Bohlig, Silverius (Ves)  
 Bomstad, Gary & Sue  
 Brandon, David  
 Braegelmann, Patrick & Sandy  
 Brattensborg, Ruth  
 Broman, Ruth & Raleigh  
 Brookings, Betty  
 Brunner, Paul & Lauri  
 Bruyere, James & Marks-  
     Bruyere, Connie  
 Buchanan, Kent & JoAnne  
 Budde, Sheldon & Joan  
 Burger, Rob & Nanette  
 Bushman, Wayne  
 Butte, Rick & Colleen  
 Campbell, Mel & Sherry  
 Carlson, Allen & Shirley  
 Carpenter, Todd & Laura  
 Caspers, John & Allyson  
 Cavello, Butch & Amy  
 Cebuhar, Chuck & Mary  
 Chirhart, Jim & Penny  
 Chmielewski, Daniel & Barbara  
 Claussen, Kimberly  
 Collins, Joyce  
 Collins, Ken & Margaret  
 Costello, Ann & Kevin  
 Czap, Neil & Catherine  
 Daly, William  
 Damrow, June & Paul  
 Davis, Scott & Marjo  
 Dinndorf, Don & Floss  
 Dobesh, Jeff & Jill  
 Doth, Steve & Jean  
 Dougherty, Joan  
 Dougherty, Tim  
 Dubiel, Marvin & Pam  
 Duclos, Ed & Verina  
 Ebnet, Michael  
 Elfering, Vic & Evie  
 Elieff, Daniel  
 Ell, Mar & Wendy  
 Ellering, Ben & Jenn  
 Engelmeyer, Ron & Mary Kay  
 Enneking, Gene & Cheryl  
 Enright, Amy & Jennifer  
 Enright, Jack & Kay  
 Erdman, Chuck & Lyla  
 Erickson, Russ  
 Erslund, Lynn & Mary Kay  
 Eugel Law Firm, Greg Eugel  
 Fehn, Kenneth & Barbara  
 Felling, Merle & Kathy  
 Finken, Ida  
 First, Pete & Nicole  
 Flaws, Michael & Marilyn  
 Fox, Tom & Laurie  
 Freeman, Dave & Sue  
 Freeman, Ralph & Laurie  
 Frerichs, Al  
 Froehling, Joe & Jeanie  
 Funk, Rob & Carolyn  
 Gagne, Robert & Christine  
 Gallagher, Michael  
 Gallagher, Pat & Caryn  
 Gerads, Dale & Mary Lou  
 Gerding, Dewayne & Alvina  
 Gerdt, Bud & Elaine  
 Gerner, Robert & Charlene  
 Gervais, Greg & Cathy  
 Glaros, Tim & Neiger, Vivian  
 Goffin, G M  
 Gordon, Brian & Kirsten

Grossman, Steve & Kathy  
 Gruenke, Bernie  
 Hammarsten, Jim & Beth  
 Hammerstrom, Lee  
 Hanson, Earl & Carri  
 Hartmann, Alex and Betsy  
 Hatton, Rene & LuAnn  
 Heffron, Larry  
 Heinen, Doug & Nancy  
 Heisick, Rosemary  
 Hellerman, Joe & Sheila  
 Henderson, John & Mary  
 Hennemann, Kitty  
 Henry, Paula  
 Hess, Herb & Mary Kay  
 Hinman, John & Kathryn  
 Hinnenkamp, Bill  
 Hinnenkamp, Ebe & Helen  
 Hinnenkamp, Hollis  
 Hird, M. Clark  
 Holthaus, Ken & Joan  
 Hughes, Bob & Sally  
 Hughes, Dan & Liz  
 Hughes, Frank & Bonnie  
 Hughes, Kathryn  
 Humbert, Rick & Lois  
 Huseby, Craig & Nicole  
 Hylden, Thomas & Shelley  
 Ingold, Kirk & Mandi  
 Ingold, Linnea  
 Jacobsen, James & Marjorie  
 Jaeger, Dwight & Audrey  
 Jarnow, Dean  
 Jarsko, Judy  
 Jepperson, Craig & Mary  
 Jeske, Ron & Nancy  
 Johnson, Craig & Debra  
 Johnson, Dale & Janet  
 Johnson, David & Betty  
 Johnson, Evelyn B.  
 Johnson, Jim & Mary  
 Johnson, Kay & Adrian  
 Kam, Erv  
 Kappes, Mike & Jannie  
 Kaschmitter, Jack & Terry  
 Kemper, Linda & Jeff  
 Kennedy, Dennis  
 Kerfeld, Art & Rosie  
 Kerfeld, Don & Diane  
 Kerfeld, Glenn  
 Kerzman Construction, Jeremy  
     Kerzman  
 Killian, Joe & Delores  
 Kirchner, Jerry & Jonelle  
 Kirscht, Dwight & Inez  
 Klaphake, Florian & Doreen  
 Klaphake, Pam & Steve  
 Klaphake, Rick & Deb  
 Klapperich, John & Suzy  
 Klapperich-Straw, Julie  
 Klase, Vern & Marlene  
 Klocker, Barb  
 Kluempke, Dave  
 Kluempke, Jim & Cathy  
 Kluempke, Sarah & Paul  
 Klug, Jim & Darlene  
 Koch, Bob & Connie  
 Kohorst, Don & Lonnie/Bob & Joann  
 Kollodge, Marv & Mary Jane  
 Konsor, Stephen & Karen  
 Kotsmith, Randy & Karen  
 Kotsmith, Terry & Sharon  
 Kraker, Bob  
 Krebs, Jean  
 Krekelberg, Daniel  
 Krig, Gary & Peggy  
 Kuehne, Ron & Midge  
 Kuhlmann, Mary  
 Kutter, Gaye & Lee  
 Kutter, Robert & Nancy  
 Kutter, Sherry & Wayne  
 Kyllo, Carole  
 Lafayette Inc. Johnson Family  
 Lambrecht, Paul & Sandra  
 Langer, Denise  
 Larry's Construction Co. Pat & Larry  
     Kerzman  
 Larson, Gayle & Lemons, Karen  
 Larzelere Cabin  
 LeBrun, Tim & Judy  
 Lemieux, BJ  
 Lenzen, Ruthie & John  
 Lieder, Bill & Renee  
 Lilligren, Kirk & Cathy  
 Linz, Curt & Mary  
 Loehr, Jim & Renee  
 Lundeen, Darrell & Marlys  
 Mack, Sue & Murray

Maeder, Nik & Brandee  
 Martin, Cris & Bonnie  
 Martin, Julie  
 Matchinsky, Gary & Larson-Matchinsky, Susie  
 Matchinsky, Jim & Rose  
 Matchinsky, Karl & Sharon  
 Matchinsky, Mike & Jill  
 McConnell, David & Ann  
 McQueen, Kathleen  
 Mehr, Mike & Lori  
 Mehr, Ralph & Mary Ann  
 Messerich, Steve & Char  
 Meyer, Aloys & Arlene  
 Meyer, Barry & Stacy  
 Meyer, Glenn & Dianne  
 Meyer, Juel C.  
 Meyer, Ken & Sherry  
 Meyer, Leo & Janice  
 Meyer, Mark & Barb  
 Meyer, Red and Arlene  
 Meyer, Roy & Susie  
 Meyer, Virg & Joyce  
 Mies, Roger & Mary  
 Miley, Rod & Nancy  
 Moening, Lee & Judy  
 Mohr, Richard & Marilyn  
 Mohs, Dean & Sandy  
 Molitor, Karen & Chick  
 Molitor, Jon & Pat  
 Moser, Harry  
 Moser, Scott/Greg/Patrick  
 Muellner, Harry & Joanie  
 Muellner, Thom & Paula  
 Mullen, Steve & Sockalingam, Suganya  
 Nathe, Howie & Renee  
 Nathe, Mike & Laura  
 Neibling, Peggy  
 Nelson, Gary & Pat  
 Neville, Jim & Judie  
 Neville, Steve  
 Niehaus, Bob & Mies-Niehaus, Deb  
 Niehaus, Tony & Carol  
 Nohner, Bernice  
 Nohner, Kevin & Mary  
 Nordman, Alan & Judy  
 Olson, Cathy  
 Orth, Dave & Linda  
 Osendorf Family  
 Ostendorf, Mark & Lisa  
 Ostendorf, Ozzie & Lenore  
 Ostrem, Justin & Amy  
 Palmquist, Mary Pluth  
 Patch, Dick & Lois  
 Pavlicek, John & Kathy  
 Pearson, John & Diona  
 Pelo, Rod & Phyllis  
 Peterson, Tom & Ginger  
 Pflipsen, Charles & Arlene  
 Phillips, Roger & Rosemary  
 Piersak, Tom & Jeff  
 Plafcan, Paul & Deborah  
 Plombon, Roger & Gloria  
 Poganski, Rob & Lisa  
 Poganski, Roger & Joyce  
 Poganski, Rock & Marcia  
 Powers, Robert & Kathleen  
 Provinzino, John  
 Pung, Kenneth & Mary  
 Rahn, Dave & Lisa  
 Rasmussen, Steve & Sandra  
 Rediske, Dick & Marilyn  
 Reed, Beverly  
 Renard, Jeanine & Tom  
 Richardson, David & Anna  
 Richie, Lovell & Betty  
 Rieger, Pamela & Joel  
 Rieland, Chuck & Lucy  
 Rieland, Shirley  
 Rieland, Mike & Mary  
 Ritter, Grey & Barb  
 Roe, John & Janet  
 Rogotzke, Barb & Arnold  
 Roehrl, Mel & Ann  
 Rolfes, Robert & Charles  
 Rose, Herm & Therese  
 Rose, John & Sharon  
 Rudolph, Jerry & Debbie  
 Russel, Jim & Mindy  
 Rutherford, Laurel & Peter  
 Salwasser, Jim & Louise  
 Sand, Dan & Mary  
 Savage, Bill & Sharon  
 Schanhaar, Tom & Knutson, Deb  
 Schiemann, Chuck & Ellie  
 Schiffler, Dean & Carla  
 Schlicht, Diane  
 Schlough, Tom & Joyce  
 Schmid, Ted & Julie

Schmidt, Tom & JoAnn  
 Schmit, Nicholas & Karen  
 Schnettler, John & Jan  
 Schnettler, Mary & Ed  
 Schrom, Richard & Joyce  
 Schwartz, Steve & Joann  
 Schwieters, Chuck & Bea  
 Sealock, Don & Jennie  
 Seep, Terry & Kimberly  
 Seitzer, Jim & Belinda  
 Sexton Family Cabin, LLC  
 Shafer, Tom & Bonnie  
 Sieben, Ann & Chris  
 Sieben, Russ & Mary  
 Silbernagel, John & Marie  
 Sinclair, Jan & Ken  
 Sinclair, Jim & Carolyn  
 Sisters of the Order of St. Benedict  
 Smoley, Greg & Gretchen  
 Sorenson, Larry & Loanne  
 Sorenson, Lois  
 Stalboerger, Lorraine  
 Steffy, Trent & Mary  
 Steinbring, John & Sandy  
 Strack, Laurie & Robert  
 Strait, Peggy  
 Stueve, Charlie & Doris  
 Stueve, Elaine  
 Tanner, Ed & Lucy  
 Taylor, Norm & Mildred  
 Tembrock, Henry & Marion  
 Thieschafer, Beth  
 Thome, Scott & Maxine  
 Thompson, Sally & Rod  
 Tiemann, George & Lorraine  
 Tiemann, Modonna  
 Timmerman, John & Molly  
 Timp, Art & Jean  
 Tomsche, David & Molly  
 Tomsche, Ed & Theresa  
 Tomsche, Michael  
 Trulson, Kent  
 Tweedale, Craig & Mary Lou  
 Vannatta, Jeremy & Jill  
 Vener, John & Corinne  
 Vener, Mike & Kim  
 Viere, Kevin & Ann  
 Voelker, Fran & Mil  
 Waldorf, Gene & Bernie  
 Waldvogel, Dennis  
 Walker, Tom  
 Walters, George & Sue  
 Wander, Dave & Joan  
 Warnert, Ron & Lee Meyer  
 Weitzel, Bob & Jean  
 Weitzel, Mary & John  
 Welle, John & JoAnn  
 Westpahl, Monte & Pat  
 Wheelock, Brad & Kathy  
 Wiebolt, Bernard & Dorine  
 Wolf, Lori  
 Wolters, Ronald  
 Worms, Tim & Gidlow, Sonja  
 Wright, Walter & Phyllis  
 Zaborski, Tom & Julia  
 Zackoski, Mike & Kim  
 Zaczowski, Marie  
 Zenzen, Art & Marilyn  
 Zimmerman, Larry & Marion  
 Zimmerman, Lowell  
 Zirbes, June

Big Birch Lake Association, Inc  
Balance Sheet

## Mandatory Actions for Lake Service Providers (LSP)

By definition, service providers are individuals or businesses hired to install or remove water-related equipment or structures from waters of the state.

- All LSP business owners are required to attend a workshop and pass an exam before they may obtain a permit.
- All employees that work for an LSP will be required to take an online course and receive a certificate of completion.
- Business owners and employees will be required to have their permit and certificate of completion accessible at all times while providing services.

By attending the workshops, LSPs will learn up-to-date information on regional AIS infestations; learn the regulations that apply to moving boats, docks, lifts and equipment; discuss best strategies to remove AIS; and to learn how one can work with the DNR, Minnesota Waters and regional lake associations to prevent the spread of AIS.

You are part of the action plan! You can help make sure that your local businesses are trained and permitted before ice out of 2012 by taking a few simple steps to help spread the word.

Here's how:

- [Send us contact information](#) for the Lake Service Provider you use or know about.

Be prepared to forward information about the LSP workshops to your email contacts when available (schedule and details to be released before year's end)

More information about the workshops will soon be available at

www.minnesotawaters.org. Please contact Carrie Maurer-Ackerman, Program Director at [carriea@minnesotawaters.org](mailto:carriea@minnesotawaters.org) for more information. (Reprinted by permission from MN Waters.)

			Oct. 31, '11
<b>ASSETS</b>			
Current Assets			
Checking/Savings			
	Cert of Deposits-CMCU		128,369.91
	Checking-Central MN CU		15,434.07
	Money Mkt.-Central MN CU		10,101.59
	Share A/C Central MN CU		<u>20.90</u>
Total Checking Savings			<u>153,926.47</u>
Total Current Asset			<u>153,926.47</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>			<u>153,926.47</u>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>			
Liabilities			
Long Term Liabilities			
	Buffer Obligations-Strip Agreement		9,996.50
	Reserve		
	Future Buffer Strips		10,000.00
	Invasive Aquatic Species		40,000.00
	Invasive Aquatic Vegetation		40,000.00
Total Reserve			90,000.00
Total Long Term Liabilities			<u>99,996.50</u>
Total Liabilities			99,996.50
Equity			
	Opening Balance Equity		25,233.98
	Retained Earnings		33,876.87
	Net Income		-5,180.88
Total Equity			<u>53,926.97</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>			<u>153,926.47</u>

## Renew your BBLA membership

The 2012 BBLA membership and sponsorship forms should be arriving in your mailbox in January. The membership form is also available on the contact page of the association website: [www.bigbirchlakeassociation.com](http://www.bigbirchlakeassociation.com)

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 invite new lake residents or friends of the lake to become members.

BBLA sponsors are important to the association, and we encourage our members to show their appreciation by supporting sponsor businesses in 2012.

**Renew your BBLA  
membership for 2012**

## Big Birch Lake Ice-over Dates

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

## Big Birch Lake Contributing Sponsors, 2011

### ALBANY

Ecolab Pest Elimination Division Stanley Kortenbusch (800) 325-1671

### FREEPORT

Atkinson Well & Pump Ltd. (320) 836-2597  
 Charlies Café Jesse Job (320) 836-2105  
 Ellingson Plb,Htg-A/C Nick Shaw (320) 836-2117  
 Freeport State Bank James Hemker (320) 836-2126  
 Hennen Floor Covering (320) 836-2177  
 Hennen Lumber Co. Tim Hennen (320) 836-2185

### GREY EAGLE

Benchmark Real Estate Judy Frieler (320) 491-0024  
 Bitz Hardware Hank Steve & LaVonne Bitz (320) 285-2000  
 Bitz Plumbing & Heating Services, Inc. Loren Bitz (320) 285-4875  
 Bruno's Hub Supper Club Bruce Rohde (320)-285-4318  
 Central Lakes Landscape & Construction Ken Frieler (320) 285-5715  
 Office (320) 285-2256  
 Double "R" Bar & Grill Bob & Norie Pallansch (320) 285-2965  
 Grey Eagle Gas & Grocery (formerly BP) Dave & Lisa Rahn (320) 285-2336  
 Grey Eagle Electric, Inc. Kevin & Nancy Bitz (320) 285-2626  
 Hinman Lawn Service John & Kathy Hinman (320) 285-3811  
 The Historical Rock Tavern Paul & Joan Ellering (320) 285-3576  
 Lake Country Storage John & Janet Roe (320) 285-4965  
 Kutter Insurance Agency (320) 285-2299  
 Marilyn's Vacations Marilyn & Leroy Blommel (320) 285-5595  
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 Update Building Supplies Duane Becker (320) 285-8085  
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**Aquatic vegetation** *continued from page 1*  
 vegetation in Big Birch Lake? Although we can never be 100% sure, we monitor key areas of the lake every summer. Monitoring consists of throwing out a grappling hook and pulling in and identifying all the “weeds” on the hook. The hook is thrown out in four directions for depths of three, six, nine, twelve and fifteen feet, along a line called a transect. On Big Birch Lake we monitor nine transects once each month, in June, July and August. If you do the math, it means sampling hooks pull in vegetation from 180 spots in the lake each month, or 540 for the summer!

The data is recorded and a report is filed with the DNR. It is not only important to watch for unwanted invasive species, but also to note significant changes in the native vegetation. If certain species become more dominant or disappear, it may be telling us about a serious change in the lake water quality.

You will note from the chart with six of the common species in Big Birch, there are no major changes occurring. That is true for the twelve years our vegetation monitoring program has been active, and that is good news. We do see some cycles of change, such as occurred for curlyleaf pondweed, but

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short term cycles are common. This past year we saw an increase in the presence of flatstem pondweed, and it will be interesting to see if it continues next season.

So who does this monitoring? Presently there are three couples, two on the upper bay and one on the lower bay. Couples work well for this task, because one can toss the hook and identify the various species, while the other records the species on a data sheet. Dan Swanson of the DNR provided the species identity training for

the volunteers. Since there are about twenty varieties of vegetation in the lake, it takes some time and effort to monitor accurately. We welcome anyone who may be interested in helping, to contact any BBLA board member or email us at [bbla@meltel.net](mailto:bbla@meltel.net)

<b>Vegetation Sampling - Species Density in Transect 1</b>										
<b>Year</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
Muskgrass	9	8	7	4	4	4	8	6	4	5
Coontail	14	9	13	11	7	10	6	4	8	3
Northern Watermilfoil	5	5	2	3	3	3	0	0	4	2
Curly-leaf pondweed	4	3	3	0	0	0	2	3	2	8
Flat-Stem Pondweed	11	6	8	4	8	8	6	7	9	0
Star Duckweed	1	0	3	6	2	13	11	7	8	6

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## Uprooted vegetation makes good compost

By Gene Waldorf

This past summer we had our share of strong south winds, which usually leave piles of uprooted vegetation on the shoreline. Not only is it unsightly, but it will give off an odor when enough of it accumulates.

It has been my practice to get my farm pitchfork out and remove the weeds from the shore so they can be dried and taken to a compost location. Otherwise, I am informed, the weeds will rot and finally add nutrients to the shore and back to the lake.

Does removing the weeds help the lake? I don't know. But logic tells me fewer nutrients are cycled back to the lake, which is a good thing.

The amount of vegetation I remove may not be significant, compared to the miles of shoreline, but sometimes it can seem enough for concern. Note the picture of vegetation that floated in from just one windstorm and collected from

just 10 feet of my shoreline. Another side benefit is the weeds make a great compost for flower and vegetable gardens.

**A pile of lake vegetation washed ashore by strong winds makes good compost and won't add nutrients back into the water.**

