



Briggs Lake Chain Association

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 the adjoining and connecting watersheds

DECEMBER 2022 LAKE REPORT

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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Happy Holidays,

I see on Facebook the lakes are frozen and some daring souls have ventured out on the ice. Please be careful. They are not that safe yet.

Mark your calendars and save the date. **ICE DAY on the chain** is scheduled for Saturday, Feb 11th, 2023. The lakes will be frozen solid. Enjoy a day on Lake Julia and on Sunday, sit back and enjoy the Super Bowl.

It is time to think of winter and enjoy the snow in Minnesota knowing, "It was a wonderful summer at the lake". We enjoyed pontoon rides, towing kids on a tube around the lake, fishing, sitting around the campfire, enjoying a sunrise or sunset on the deck, watching the July 4th fireworks & boat parade, and more. The days start getting longer on December 22nd.

We kick off the winter season with **The Lighted Train on the Chain** on Saturday December 3rd. Always a fun event. A big **THANKS** to **Robert Sinclair**, the founder and organizer of this event.

Volunteers are what make our lake association a very successful organization. Who does all the work behind the scenes to make things happen? You do not need to be a board member to participate. Here is a list and a **THANKS** to our 2022 volunteers who are **not board members**. We need more volunteers in 2023 to continue the tradition. Please reach out to me or any board member if you want to help.

Communications - Announcements, Facebook & Website:

THANKS to **Ruth Thom & Pamela Simonson** on Julia for being administrators of our Facebook page. Another **THANKS** to **David (Jake)** for originating our Facebook account and page & being an administrator.

THANKS to **Gary Anderson and Mike Stacey** on Big Elk for putting up the high-water signs and other notices when needed. Gary also volunteers to pursue and write grants to help survey and monitor the invasive weeds on Big Elk. This year the BLCA was awarded various grants totaling about \$4,500 for projects he worked on.

THANKS to **Mike Flanery** on Julia for planning, getting the electronic sensors, recording the data, and sharing the data on the TLID page of the fluctuating water levels on the lakes.

Events & Programs:

THANKS to **Forrest Brothen** on Julia, the founder and organizer of Ice Day on the Chain, and the dozens of volunteers involved putting that on.

THANKS to **Ruth and Brad Thom** on Julia for organizing the spring & fall Highway 25 cleanup of the ditches.

THANKS to **Naomi & Victor Kimball** for leading the boat parade on the upper 3 lakes and to **Gary Anderson** on Big Elk.

THANKS to all the contestants who entered floats for the boat parade. The winners of the board parades:

On Big Elk:

1st Prize \$100

Boat #5. Freedom. Janet Deppa.

2nd Prize \$75

Boat #7. Under The Sea. Deb Stacey.

3rd Prize \$50

Boat #8. Mickey Mouse. Roberta Clifford.

Upper 3 lakes:

1st Prize \$100

Boat # 8 Mermaid Pirate Ship. Jordan Maiers & Amanda Royseth

2nd prize \$75

Boat #5 Mexico Fiesta. Terry O'Hara

THANKS to **Mark Baker and his team** on Briggs for doing all the setup and behind the scenes organization to make the fireworks a success. This is a big job. What does the team do? The BLCA owns a pontoon as a base for the show. We have it in storage. The day before the show, they need to take it out of storage, check it over for safety etc. The day of the show the team from RES PYRO, our fireworks vendor, brings the stuff to the Briggs boat landing. Volunteers help assemble the cannon stands and load the fireworks. RES PYRO runs the show. They are the ones on the boat for the show. After the show volunteers help pack up and load their van. They secure the pontoon at the boat landing overnight. The next morning, they put the pontoon back in storage. **We can't THANK Mark enough for doing this for so many years.**

THANKS to everyone who donated their time in June to work at our annual **Brat Sale at McDonalds Meat Market**. We don't have a 2023 date yet. It's another great way to have fun and meet new people. It takes a crew to work the four-hour shifts for 3 days. This year's income was the biggest in years.

THANKS to **Lyf Titcomb & Shelly Alger-Peyton** on Briggs for taking the lead and managing our BLCA Palmer Day food booth. This is a huge group effort. Thanks to the many volunteers that help with set up, cooking the food, serving and cleanup. This is our biggest fundraiser of the year. We can always use more help. It is a lot of fun working the booth with friends and neighbors. This year's income was the best ever.

THANKS to **Josie Zytkovbicz** on Rush Lake and the **Polkatooners**. The fun float they created was sponsored by the BLCA in the Palmer Day parade to promote awareness of our organization to those not on our lakes.

THANKS to **Walt Munsterman** on Rush for organizing and managing our "Water Quality Testing" program. This program is a joint effort of Palmer Township, Sherburne Water Conservation District and the BLCA. Testing is done every two weeks, from late spring to early fall, for water clarity, total phosphorus and chlorophyll-A. **The testers are BLCA volunteers**. Palmer Township pays for the testing. BLCA volunteers deliver the water samples to the Sherburne SWCD in Coon Rapids to be analyzed. Charts and graphs of recent years can be found on the website. I don't think the 2022 results are ready yet. They will be posted on the website. The good news is our efforts are paying off. The lakes are slowly but surely getting cleaner. Walt's team of testers includes two volunteers from each of the four lakes. One tester from each lake is a backup. He might need some new testers for next summer. Please contact Walt directly. If you don't have his contact info, you can contact me. This is a **HUGE THANK YOU to Walt for a job well done**.

There are dozens and dozens of volunteers. Sorry I can't name every single person in each category. All of us on the lakes appreciate the volunteer time and effort put in by all involved. In January we will do our annual membership mailing. On the back of the membership form is a section of volunteer opportunities.

Now THANKS to all of our board of director members who give their time and energy to the Briggs Lake Chain Association. We will highlight their individual efforts in my January letter.

Wishing you and your families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year..... Brad

The lake association motto is: *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 watersheds.*

Thank You for being good stewards of our lakes and supporting the BLCA with your membership donation.

introduced to non-motorized watercraft. We are recommending that the BLCA apply for the grant. Ruth and Naomi are putting a proposed budget together and Rosalie will present the idea to the board for approval to go ahead with the application, which is due Dec. 7.

Time ran short for discussing 2023 goals. Members are asked to review the current 2022 goals prior to the December 1st HL meeting.

WATER TESTERS ON ALL 4 LAKES

Julia - Nancy and Tom Hahne

A backup is needed on Julia

Briggs - John Schnell

Backups are Naomi and Victor Kimball

Rush - Walt Munsterman

Back up is Steve Demeules

Big Elk – Gary Anderson

Backups are Barb and Darrell Tucker

Testing is done Monday after 4 pm or Tuesday before 10 am. Samples must be refrigerated if done on Mondays. Walt will pick samples up at your home after 10 am. You can just leave the samples in the cooler by your door. Walt will leave new bottles in the cooler when he picks up the samples. Labels must be filled out on the bottles. Questions about water testing, call Walt Munsterman at 320-743-2416. His back up is John Schnell and he can be reached at 320-743-4749

Welcoming a new board member:

Tom Nordin – Big Elk Lake

Tom and his wife Joyce purchased their cabin on Big Elk Lake in October of 2016. They both grew up on smaller lakes and enjoy waterskiing, fishing and cruising on their pontoon. They have been slowly trying to improve part of their 5 acre parcel adjacent to their cabin but love the wilderness that the mostly unimproved rest of the parcel provides.

Tom was interested in serving on the BLCA board to assist in the preservation of the beautiful chain of lakes we all enjoy.

When not at the cabin in the summer, they enjoy their full-time residence in the Martin Farms Development in Otsego, MN. Joyce is a dental professional and office staff administrator for Prairie Dental in Eden Prairie. Tom is a property portfolio manager for MBG Property Management in St. Louis Park, MN.

Since 2005 Tom has managed the Eden Prairie Center, Knollwood Mall, Albertville Premium Outlet Center and most recently Crossroads Center in St. Cloud, for various companies, including Brookfield and Simon Property Groups, two of the largest commercial property companies in the United States. Tom is also a current licensed real estate agent in both Minnesota and Florida and has been buying and selling real estate since 2005.

Tom and Joyce's favorite getaway has been the time spent with neighbors and friends on the south side of Big Elk Lake.

**5th ANNUAL
ICE DAY
ON THE CHAIN
SATURDAY, FEB 11, 2023
LAKE JULIA**

FISHING REGISTRATION 11:30 am - 12:00 pm
Fishing Tournament 12:00 pm - 2:30 pm
Vintage Snowmobile Run 12:00 pm (Starting @ Town Hall)
Golf Tournament 1:30 pm - 3:30pm

BRICKYARD GRILL
KINIKESKI'S
Johnsonville
otter
lincoln
BRIGGS LAKE EST. 1941 GENERAL STORE
TRAVIS WILLIAMS StateFarm

Pond Hockey, Hole In One Contest, Cornhole and more games...

NUTRL Vodka. Seltzer. Real Juice.
FREE BRATS AND CHIPS. CASH DONATIONS ARE APPRECIATED

We all play a role in improving water quality in Minnesota

No matter where you live, our choices are powerful because water moves. The substances that fall on our streets flow through storm drains that empty directly into our lakes, creeks, rivers, and wetlands. Raindrops pick up chemicals, pollutants, and debris that they touch along the way. Every point in a raindrop's path is an opportunity to improve our water quality.

The 10 actions in this brochure can help our waters immensely. Take on a few of these actions at your home and share them with others. You can also look for volunteer opportunities through your city, watershed organizations, or county to have a greater impact on water quality in your community.

Every positive choice and voice helps improve our waterways, wildlife habitats and the beautiful, fun waters where we Minnesotans relax and play.

- 1 Salt sparingly**
Shovel first, minimize salt use, sweep up excess. Just one teaspoon of salt permanently contaminates five gallons of fresh water. Shovel snow first, apply salt only to ice patches, use as little salt as possible, and sweep up leftover salt when ice is gone. Remember: More salt better, and sodium chloride is the most common deicer, says walking below.
- 2 Keep streets clear of leaves and grass clippings**
Sweep, rake, mulch or compost. Stormwater runoff carries leaves and grass clippings from streets into lakes and streams, where their nutrients cause destructive algae blooms. Use these nutrients to your benefit. Use them as much for weed suppression, or make them into compost to use as fertilizer. This protects water quality—and saves money.
- 3 Kick the chemicals**
Lawn and garden chemicals can harm pollinators and wash into the street's storm drains that connect directly into nearby lakes and streams. Discourage the growth of healthy lawns and gardens. Pull weeds by hand or use spot treatment for weeds. If you have a weed or pest problem, consult the University of Minnesota Extension website for advice. Get a poll test before applying fertilizers. If you spot-fertilize, sweep up excess from pavement. Remember, a need for chemical treatments is an option of last resort.
- 4 Mow your grass to a height of 3 inches**
Mowing your grass a little longer helps roots grow deeper into the soil, suppresses weeds, and requires less watering. If you do water, do so in the morning and ensure sprinklers only aim at the grass and the plants.
- 5 Scoop the poop**
Pick up after pets. When pet waste is left behind, rain water washes it into lakes and streams. Pet waste contains bacteria, such as E. Coli, that can cause illness in people, pets, and wildlife. Pet waste also contains nutrients that cause destructive algae blooms in lakes and streams.
- 6 Adopt a storm drain**
Keep drains free of leaves, grass clippings, and litter. Water entering a storm drain is carried directly to the nearest water body carrying leaves, grass, soil, litter and anything else it picks up along the way. The slugs of stormwater in these drains contribute to street flooding, harms wildlife, and pollutes our waters. Remember, reaching out and cleaning the drains clean more and get resources at www.adopt-a-drain.org.
- 7 Capture rain water**
Capture and clean rain water and recharge groundwaters. Plant a rain garden, which collects rain water runoff, lets it soak into the ground, and filters out excess nutrients and other pollutants. Pollinators can benefit, too. You could also install a rain barrel, which captures rainwater from the roof of your house or garage to use in your garden. Or you can redirect downspouts to flow into your yard instead of running off into the street.
- 8 Replace turf with native plants**
Pledge to plant for pollinators and clean water. Trade some of your turf for native plants or choose a turfgrass alternative, which require less mowing and watering. Native plants provide pollinator habitat, are drought resistant, and their deep roots bring rain down into our ground water. Less mowing also improves air quality. Check local nurseries for maintenance requirements.
- 9 Un-pave the way**
Choose pervious paving for walks, patios, and driveways. Paving stones and porous pavement let water soak into the ground, recharging groundwater and keeping runoff out of the street. Next time you have a pavement project, visit our website to explore options.
- 10 Conserve water**
Reduce water use. Water your lawn only when it's needed during dry periods. Water about one inch a week (including rain fall). Water early in the morning to reduce evaporation. Conserve water by switching water from hot to cold on driveways and sidewalks. Install WaterSense fixtures inside and outside and maintain them regularly.

10 things you can do to protect Minnesota's lakes, rivers, and streams

Your streets connect to our lakes and rivers

Hennepin County Environment and Energy
hennepin.org/energy
environment@hennepin.org
612-348-3777

WMWA
WEST METRO WATER ALLIANCE
www.westmetrowateralliance.org

Hennepin

Photo: Matt Jace

PREVENT YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM FROM FREEZING THIS WINTER

Depending on your system, location, and water use, you may never have a freezing problem with your septic system. However, here are some precautions you can take if you have had a past problem or are concerned about having a future problem. It is not necessary to do all of these, but you may pick and choose based on your situation:

1. Place a layer of mulch (8-12 inches) over the pipes, tank and soil treatment system to provide extra insulation. This mulch could be straw, leaves, hay or any other loose material that will not compact and stay in place. This is particularly important if you have had a new system installed late in the year and no vegetative cover has been established.
2. Let the grass in your lawn get a little longer in the late summer/fall over the tank and soil treatment area. This will provide extra insulation and help hold any snow that may fall.
3. Use water in your house; the warmer the better if you feel the system is starting to freeze. The Onsite Sewage Treatment Program is usually an advocate of water conservation, but if freezing is a concern, increasing low use to a normal water use can help the system. This

includes spreading out your laundry schedule to possibly doing one warm/hot load per day, using your dishwasher and maybe even taking a hot bath. DO NOT leave water running all the time, as this will hydraulically overload the system.

4. If you know you are going to be gone for an extended period, plan accordingly. This could include having someone use sufficient quantities of water in the home regularly or pumping out your tank before leaving. If you live in an area with a high-water table, you should only pump out the tank if the tank was designed for high water table conditions. If a tank is left full for several winter months, the sewage will get very cold in shallow tanks and can even freeze. If you then return home before temperatures start to rise, the effluent left in the tank will be cold. By starting with an empty tank, you can then start fresh with warm effluent. If you use a cabin on a limited basis during the winter months, this may be a good idea as well.
5. Fix any leaky plumbing fixtures or appliances in your home. This will help prevent freezing problems and help your system work better year-round.
6. If you have appliances that generate very low flows such as high

efficiency furnaces, you can put a heat tape in the pipe, and while on vacation have someone come by and run warm water for a while. Alternately, you could install a small condensate pump that holds and discharges 2 gallons per cycle.

7. Keep all types of vehicles off and limit walking and other people-related activities on the system. This is a good rule to follow year-round.
8. Make sure all risers, inspections pipes and manholes have covers on them. Sealing them and adding insulation is a good idea. Insulation may be added during construction particularly if the top of the septic tank is within 2 feet of the surface.
9. Keep an eye on your system. If any seeping or ponding occurs contact an onsite professional to help determine the cause and remedy.
10. Add more insulation to your system. This could include replacing pipe with insulated pipe, adding styrofoam over septic tanks or adding more soil cover.

For more information please contact the Sherburne County Zoning Department at 763-765-4450.

Source: University of MN Extension



