



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

JANUARY 2023 LAKE REPORT

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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Happy New Year,

It is winter in Minnesota. Get out and enjoy. The 6th annual Ice Day on the Chain is scheduled for Saturday February 12th on Lake Julia. More about that in the newsletter and on Facebook.

January is our annual "kick off" request to join or renew your Sponsorship / Membership to the BLCA (Briggs Lake Chain Association) for 2023. In the next week or two, via "snail mail" the letter will go out. In addition to joining the BLCA we are asking for donations to Ice Day on the Chain, AIS (Aquatic Invasive species) Fireworks, and Fish Stocking on the lakes.

If you don't get our mailing by February 1st. Please contact
Debbie Stacey; debis52@yahoo.com The new 2023 form is in this newsletter and will be on the website in the next few days.

In my December letter I did a shout out to the many who volunteer their time and energy but are not on the BLCA board. Some of the "Gentle Footprints" conservation programs include shoreland restorations, run-off control, rain gardens and planting native flowers on shoreline properties. **A BIG THANKS** to **Chuck Heinemann ... on Big Elk**. He has coordinated these projects on all 4 lakes for the last few years. Sorry I didn't have him in my last letter.

I want to do my annual "**Shout Out**" and "**THANKS**" to our board members and acknowledge their contributions and time spent on behalf of all of us who love our lakes.

In alphabetical order:

Debbie Affeldt on Big Elk. She was co-chair with Deb Stacey for the brat sale at McDonalds meats. It takes a team to stuff envelopes, stick on the mailing & return address labels and stamps for the 650 membership letters we send out in January. She is part of that team. With the new website we have a new format for doing the newsletters. She attended the training sessions so she can be a backup for Deb if needed.

Shelly Alger-Peyton on Briggs Is one of our Facebook administrators. Our page is set up so you need to send a request to be part of the group so non-members can't post dumb stuff. With the efforts to screen we still have 2,000 followers on Facebook. Good chance some of those people don't live around the lakes. It is no easy task to manage all the posts. Shelly is one of our delegates to COLA (Coalitions of Lake Associations in Sherburne County), our liaison with the ICE DAY team and our volunteer coordinator.

Cameron Graber on Briggs along with Ruth Thom is co-chair of the Healthy Lakes committee. Their focus as a group is to discuss and propose actions and projects to make a positive difference in the health of our lakes. He also worked on securing a grant to the BLCA from a local corporation to benefit our lakes. He manages the Healthy Lakes page on the BLCA website.

Margaret Macaulay on Big Elk Is our assistant secretary and takes the minutes at board meetings when Deb Stacey can't attend. Also, part of the team stuffing envelopes etc. for the January mailing. She is one of the many working the food booth at Palmer Day.

Lynn Miller on Julia is part of our website team doing updates, adding articles, posting notices. She was the planning team to build the new website that went live in June. Also, she is an assistant editor of the Palmer Directory. That involves a lot of work behind the scenes getting the book ready to go.

Roger Miller The other half of the Miller team, is the "Editor and Chief executive" of the Palmer Directory. It is a big job, contacting our advertisers, working with them on their ads, laying out the white & yellow pages, getting the book ready for the printer, proofing the book and finally getting his team out to deliver the books to our residents. **A HUGE THANKS to Roger & Lynn for a job well done.**

Adele Munstermann on Rush is our vice president. She has been the "Sunshine Lady" for many years. On behalf of the board, she mails Thank You, Sympathy, Get Well and other cards to our neighbors around the lake. At the general meetings we like to have drawings for door prizes. You can thank Adele for getting the prizes as donations.

Rosalie Musachio on Briggs is one of our past presidents. She is not resting on those past accomplishments. She is active on our Healthy Lakes and Gentle Footprints committees. Gentle Footprints" and "Shoreline Restoration" objectives are to improve and maintain our lakes through naturally ecological programs. Two examples are planting native plants and vegetation on shorelines, reducing runoff of lawn chemicals into the lake by changing the direction of rain gutters so water doesn't run directly towards the lake. She is one of the many working the food booth at Palmer Day.

Tom Nordin on Big Elk is our newest board member joining the team in October. Tom's interest in serving on the board is to assist in the preservation of the beautiful chain of lakes we all enjoy. He is one of the many working the food booth at Palmer Day,

Scott Ruiter on Rush is another long-time board member. In addition to being on the BLCA board, he is active in TLID (Three Lakes Improvement District) and our liaison with the TLID. Scott & Shelly Alger are our representatives to COLA (Sherburne County Coalition of Lake Associations) working as a group in the county to share ideas and success stories from lake associations in the county. A fair amount of funds to the BLCA and TLID are from grants from the state and county. Scott is part of the team that completes the forms to get those monies. He is the lead person delivering the Palmer Directories to area residents.

Debbie Stacey on Big Elk is our secretary. That alone is a big commitment. In addition to taking the minutes at meetings, she is the publisher and editor of "The Lake Report", our

monthly newsletter. Yes, she is the one who writes the articles, gets the pictures and puts the newsletter together. **Let's stop right now and give Deb a BIG THANKS for a job well done on the newsletter.** It takes a lot of time to get all of this done and meet a deadline. In addition, she is chairman of the membership committee. Deb & Diane Tiegs write up the membership letter and form. Her group stuffs all the letters and gets them in the mail. When the forms are returned, she logs everything on our master membership form and updates the changes.

Diane Tiegs on Big Elk is our treasurer. Diane has an extensive background in finances and volunteering. Her expertise and dedication is much appreciated. You're thinking "Easy job. Count the money". We are a non-profit. That means there are a lot of forms of the State and Federal government that need her attention and follow up. Thanks Diane. I HATE paperwork.

Brad Kipp on Briggs. What do I do? I write the President's letter for the Lake Report. I hope each letter is entertaining with a few comments, educating everyone with what's happening around the lakes, promotes a positive message from the BLCA and encourages more of you to participate. Over the years our website and some other technology things became out of date with the times. I am glad I could be part of the team that worked on upgrading the new website, a new format for the newsletter that allowed for more color and graphics, and on the design team for the new logo.

The 2023 BLCA board members' pictures are in this newsletter.



THANKS ... THANKS ... THANKS I can't say it enough to everyone around the lakes who volunteer their time and energy for the betterment of our community lakes.

Happy New Year Brad

We all play a role in improving water quality in Minnesota

No matter where you live, our choices are powerful because water moves. The raindrops 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 organization 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

Showel first, minimize salt use, sweep up excess.

Use one teaspoon of fair permanent conditioner for every gallon of fresh water. Showel 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 means more sodium chloride, the most common deicer, also walking below you.



2 Keep streets clear of leaves and grass clippings

Sweep, rake, mow or compost.

Stormwater runoff carries leaves and grass clippings from streets into lakes and streams, where their nutrients cause green and algal blooms. Use these nutrients to your benefit. Use them as mulch 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.

Encourage 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 30-day test before applying fertilizers. If you spot fertilize, sweep up excess from pavement. Remember, a need for chemical treatment is an option of last resort.



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 algal 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. This clogs stormwater infrastructure, contributes to street flooding, harms wildlife, and pollutes our waters. Remember: nothing but rain down the drain! Learn more and get resources at www.adopt-a-drain.org



4 Mow high

Mow your grass to a height of 3 inches.

Keeping 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.



7 Capture rain water

Capture and clean rain water and recharge groundwater.

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 rain water 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.



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.



8 Replace turf with native plants

Plant 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 ordinances for maintenance requirements.



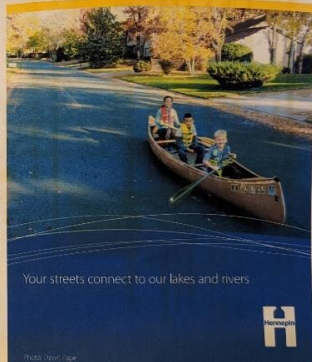
10 Conserve water

Reduce water use.

Water your lawn only when it's needed during dry periods. Water about once a week, including on fall. Water early in the morning to reduce evaporation. Conserve water by watering rather than hosing off on lawns 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.us/energy
energy@hennepin.us
612-348-3177

WMWA
WEST METRO WATER ALLIANCE
www.westmetrowateralliance.org



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

SORRY EVERYONE.....I COULD NOT DOWNLOAD THE PICTURES OF THE BOARD MEMBERS FOR SOME REASON. THEY WILL BE IN THE NEXT LAKE REPORT

THOSE OF YOU WHO ICE FISH.....

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE pick up after yourself. The trash and cans left on the ice sink to the bottom of the lake when the ice melts. Please help us take care of our lakes.

