



Briggs Lake Chain Association

June 2024 Lake Report

The President's Report

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Greetings & Happy June!!!

Spring has sprung and Summer on the Chain is on its way!!! The April & May showers have brought us beautiful flowers and greenery. However, with the rain showers comes issues with high water and Palmer & Clear Lake Townships. NO WAKE ordinances #115 on the upper 3 lakes and #2024-03-19A for Elk Lake. What does a No Wake Ordinance mean? Below is a portion of the Palmer Township ordinance definition. The complete ordinances are on the Palmer & Clear Lake Townships websites.

Violating these ordinances can result being charged as a misdemeanor.

Section 2: DEFINITIONS: Terms used in this ordinance related to boating are defined in M.S.86B.005. "Slow-No-Wake" is defined by Minnesota Statute and Rule as the minimum speed necessary to operate a watercraft but no more than five (5) miles per hour (See Minn. Stat. 86B005.sub.16a or Minn. R. part: 6110.3700 for exact definitions).

Section 3: SURFACE ZONING OF BRIGGS LAKE CHAIN BY RESTRICTING SPEEDSDURING CERTAIN HOURS.

(A) Slow - no wake speed 24 hours per day when the lake level on Briggs Lake, Rush Lake, and Lake Julia exceeds 964.2 feet, elevation, datum: NGVD 29, as measured by the gauge established and maintained by the Palmer Township Board. Said gauge shall be recertified each season before high water events begin or at such times as the Board determines. Such restrictions shall become effective upon posting or on a specified date as determined by the Board, whichever is later. All public watercraft access shall be posted prior to and during the time restrictions are in place. In addition, notice of said restrictions shall also be posted at Palmer Town Hall.

(B) When high water levels have subsided and have remained below an elevation of 964.2 feet above mean sea level for three (3) consecutive days, said restrictions shall be promptly removed.

Section 4: CHANNEL RESTRICTIONS: Slow-no wake speed shall be enforced with in the water way between Briggs Lake and Lake Julia; between Briggs Lake and Rush Lake and the Briggs Lake Bijou Area throughout the open water season no matter what the water elevation. Water marker buoys shall mark the beginning and end of said channel.

Our lake chain has an amazing reputation for great fishing and fun water sports nestled within a small welcoming community. Let's all have a wonderful start to our summer season and work together to keep our waterways safe and enjoyable for visitors and neighbors alike.

Be sure to watch the BLCA website and Facebook page for High Water Events, DNR boating/lake safety/rule reminders, summer happenings and fun events you can sign up to volunteer with the BLCA.

We need everyone's helping to heal our lakes, we cannot do this alone.

Be safe & respectful while enjoying the lakes this Summer season.



A **BIG THANKS** to all the volunteers who helped make this year's "Sidewalk Cook Out" at McDonald's Meats a huge success. Also, a **Thanks** to board members Bre Bauerly and Shelly Alger-Peyton for taking the lead on this fundraiser. Another **Thanks** to all the lake

Amanda Timm
Top contributor · 1d · 🌐

Don't skip lunch or dinner! Come to McDonald's Meats for a brat or pork chop! Come support BLCA! 🍷



residents and customers who joined us for some food and socializing.

Editor's note: Is Brad Thom dressed as a Hot Dog or a Bratwurst? Word has it, sales for both doubled on his shift.



Ready for business day two!



BLCA Financials through April 30, 2024

Income to date: \$ 39,898.78 Expenses to date: \$ 28,631.55

Net Proceeds to date: \$11,267.23 Operating checking
\$21,902.60

Money Market/ rapid response fund: \$103,494.43 Outstanding deposits: None

The 2024 budget was presented and approved at the August general membership meeting. You may request a detailed year to date 2024 budget. Email your request to blca@briggslakechainassociation.com Include your name, email address, lake address and phone.

Did you submit your 2024 annual BLCA Sponsorship?

We have a **NEW** option this year for renewing your sponsorship or signing up to be a new sponsor. **You can now complete & submit your form AND payment online!!!!**

If you know of any new property owners or would like to learn more about renewing your previous sponsorship, please contact a BLCA committee member or myself so we can reach out to you/them and discuss membership details, water conservation and the various programs we have in place to protect our waterways through the BLCA and Health Lakes committees along with our TLID (Three Lake Improvement District).

Summer is here. Do you see the GREEN membership signs? Share your pride in the BLCA and our goals. Post your sign where people can see it. They look nice hanging from the fire number signs.



We have 206 paid members as of 5.27.24. The Goal is 250. That is \$10,000. As a group you make a difference.

Introducing a new Lake Report column that will be featured every other month with ***“We Remember”***.

The new column, ***I Have a Question***...., will address reader’s questions about things like BLCA history, past and current water quality efforts, relationships between the BLCA and the Three Lake Improvement District [TLID], Aquatic Invasive Species, high water events, the Rush Lake dam, water quality trends, relations with the two townships, etc. Curious Lakers can submit their questions to:

caheinemann@midco.net or ***kenziehelps@gmail.com***

This month’s question and answer was submitted by Shelly Alger-Peyton. ***What is the difference between the BLCA, TLID (Three Lake Improvement District) and Healthy Lakes Committee??? Aren’t these all the same???*** This question has been brought up on many different occasions. Here is the Mission/Purpose statement for each committee/ group. Please reach out to Shelly for additional information or with questions.

BLCA Mission: To promote the care, improvement and general welfare of the Briggs Lake Chain and adjoining and connecting waterways. The BLCA is a 5013C non-profit organization that is all donation funded by sponsorship donations and other individual donations to our various events and conservation programs. These funds are used for water testing expenses, conservation program grants that property owners can apply for

through the BLCA, annual fish stocking, 4th of July fireworks display, kids paddle event, plant giveaways, Ice Day Community event and more.

TLID (Three Lake Improvement District) Purpose

The purpose of the TLID is lake protection, preservation and rehabilitation on Rush Lake, Briggs Lake, Lake Julia, and the Bayou extending from Briggs Lake, and to provide predictable funding for all related programs and activities. Lake Improvement Districts allow citizens to address its lake issues with consistent funding. The three lakes petitioned Sherburne County for its formation and was approved in 2014. The TLID is a local government unit for the upper three lakes and is a more formal organization. Its charge is to manage AIS aquatic invasive species and other projects.

The TLID is funded by an assessment to property owners based on the annual TLID budget, approved each year by property owners at the annual meeting. **Each property parcel is assessed the same amount, so it is not a tax, and the assessment is not taken out of property taxes but is part of the property tax statement.** These funds are used for water surveys, various AIS lake water treatments and testing.

Healthy Lakes Committee Mission

The overall purpose is to improve and maintain the water quality of the Briggs Lake Chain and connecting waterways. There are three primary goals addressing the water quality improvement strategy in the lake improvement plan.

- + Shoreline and In-water Vegetation
- + Land use and Zoning
- + Water Quality Monitoring

Each goal area has one or more specific goals as stated in the BLCA yearly goals. The Healthy Lakes Committee is focused on researching conservation and educational programs and bringing those programs and ideas back to the BLCA for possible implementation. The BLCA funds all approved conservation & educational programs through this committee.

“This WE REMEMBER” column by contributors Kenzie Phelps & Chuck Heinemann

This We Remember: Jim and Linda Wicklund, Big Elk Lake – by Kenzie Phelps 2010

Many people around the lakes have fond memories of their lake experiences: parties, picnics, family, boating. Here is one who remembers the quiet. More about that in a moment.

Jim Wicklund first came to the Briggs Lake Chain in 1957 when he was working as a correctional officer in St Cloud at Graystone University [MN Correctional Facility, St Cloud]. He loved the lakes so much he has been here ever since, despite a three-year absence with a move to St Cloud. He first settled on the west side of Briggs, then later purchased 203 feet of lake shore just south of the old Guilyard farm, where his brother built a cabin, and he built a year-round home.

After a divorce and a 3 yr. absence he returned to the Briggs Lake chain, this time buying property on the South side of Big Elk, where he and Linda currently take up residence 5 months of the year. Nothing available on Briggs, he landed on Big Elk, and liked it, and stayed, because of the walleye fishing.



Early on while living on Briggs there was excellent fishing: northern, bass, crappie, pan fish, walleye, and solid weeds in front of their home. They used to drag an old bed spring with cement blocks to cut through the weeds, plus they had a rule: "If you go in swimming you have to pull out some weeds." A rule of thumb for lakeshore owners at the time was that it was okay to take out weeds, but only enough to create a swimming area. Lakeshore owners understood that weeds were necessary for good fish habitat.

Jim was the consummate fisherman, enjoying all kinds of fishing. Briggs lake used to produce some good sized northerns. Over the years the northern population dwindled, in part because of non-lake people who came to the lake, often more than once a day, and speared the big northerns through the ice. While on Briggs, he used to call the kids in from swimming by ringing the old bell he got free from Earl Coyle in Clear Lake. It turned out to be the old Clear Lake Fire Bell. Jim held on to the bell for many years, before finding the perfect home for it in 2009: he graciously donated it to the new Palmer Township fire station.



I was going through some old photos and wanted to share these. Tornado that went through in August of 1967. These were taken from the South side of (Big) Elk Lake.



When Jim returned to the lakes and found property on Big Elk in 1977, walleye fishing was very good. Now, according to Jim, fishing is "mediocre at best." He suspects the herbicides and pesticides from farms up stream coming into Big Elk by way of the Elk River have negatively affected the walleye fishing.

Back in Jim's early days there were only dirt roads. Winter travel was a bit of a challenge for those, like Jim, who were year-round residents. There were times when he could make it to work, but not make the return trip, and he would end up staying at the officer's dormitory at the St Cloud prison. One time, around the mid 60's, it was 4 days before he could make his way home from St Cloud after a nasty winter blizzard. But despite the travel challenges, one of Jim's earliest memories was the quiet of the winter, very little noise, few distractions, very quiet.

One of his more exciting memories was the tornado of July 27, 1967. "As we were eating dinner my daughter noticed a funny cloud coming right at us. We lived on the bayou at the time, and quickly left our house because we had no basement. We ended up in one of the trapshooting buildings just a short distance away at the Lakes Chain Sportsmen's Club: 22 people and 2 dogs. The funnel came directly over the north end of Big Elk." Fortunately, they all survived, although the tornado killed one motorist on Highway 10 and one on 25. It was a slow-moving tornado, staying on the ground for a long time. Jim says he wouldn't sit through another but take off and drive away from it at right angles.

One of Jim's biggest accomplishments was founding the Lakes Chain Sportsmen Club in 1962. It was a very active club, at one time having over 200 members [at \$1 per person membership]. Among other things the club had trap shoots, ice fishing contests, did conservation work, held a fox hunt, helped get the lakes stocked with walleyes, and seined carp from Rice Creek behind the Harold Mix property. Unfortunately, the club dissolved several years later.

Reflecting on earlier times: when the Elk River water was clear and cleaner, one of the favorite spots for the Wildlands was Turtle Beach, where the Elk River flows into Big Elk Lake. He and his family would picnic, swim and fish at the inlet. According to Linda: "The perfect spot to relax and enjoy the summer." The biggest changes he has seen since 1957: the number of years around residences, and road improvements. And his one wish, if he could make it happen: "Clean water. Get the fishing back to what it was when I got to Big Elk in 1977."

Update – May, 2024 – by Linda Wicklund

We'd like to catch you up since 2010, when you last read about Jim and Linda Wicklund -- residents of Elk Lake since 1977.

- We still enjoy life here as part of the Briggs Lake chain and six months of the year in SW Florida since 1987. The mobile home park was a humble RV park which had been an orange grove. We have made many friends over the years. Actually, it was more like a family affair but now the park which was owned by a family is now owned by a big corporation. Lots of changes. Some are good but not all.*

- One fun event we do here in MN is the Elk/Briggs dinner club. We each take a month to host a dinner with a specific ethnic theme. A very fun way to get together and always great food and fellowship.*

- In case you're not aware, there is a beautiful memorial for our son Karl Joe Wicklund. The memorial is in the Palmer Park.***





Karl died while serving in the Navy. He was a helicopter crew chief and aspired to be an airline pilot.

- **Jim is still enjoying lake life at 94.** You'll still see him out walking each morning with Linda.

- **Since her retirement Linda has loved spending lots of time cooking and baking.** Only one thing makes her happier -- dog sitting or just a visit from one of her canine friends. She's never met a dog she didn't like!

***DON'T FORGET – apply for your 2024
BLCA Conservation – Restoration – Lake Steward -
Plant Bank Grant Programs!!!***

***** FREE GRANT MONEY & NATIVE PLANTS*****

Gentle Footprint Program - is a grant-based program that provides a percentage of reimbursement costs to homeowners for eligible shoreland projects, such as restorations, rain gardens, rain barrels and water diversions. The BLCA has a long history of promoting the improvement of water quality and of supporting conservation efforts. In 2008 the BLCA initiated a



Shoreland Education Restoration Program (SERP) to increase awareness of the benefits of restoring shoreland with natural plants and controlling rainwater runoff. These reduced the quantity of pollutants and nutrients in our lake waters. The SERP program, originally was funded by the DNR and administered by the BLCA, featured grants to individual property holders to pay for restoration projects. Eventually, the MN DNR stopped funding the grants and the BLCA decided to fund and administer shoreland restoration and runoff control programs under the BLCA and changed the name to "Gentle Footprint" grant program. Apply under the Healthy Lakes link on the BLCA website.

www.briggslakechainassociation.com



Lake Steward Program (new for the BLCA in 2024) - through MN Lakes & Rivers the BLCA provides the resources necessary to educate lakeshore homeowners on environmental sustainability through proper shoreline maintenance and facilitates shoreline restoration projects with materials personalized for each region. Watch the BLCA Facebook page and BLCA website for details on how to apply. See www.mnlakesandrivers.org for conservation information and www.briggslakechainassociation.com for application details.



Healthy Lakes Plant Bank - is an opportunity to apply for a mini-grant to add native seed or plants to our lake area property. Each grant will be for a total of \$200 which can be used to purchase native plants or seed mixes from our partner, MN Native Landscapes (www.mnllandscape.com). MNL can assist in plant seed selection and delivery to BLCA properties. Sample projects include planting up to 108 native plant plugs to your shoreline, enhancing an existing space with native perennial plants, or seeding a pollinator plot on your property. Watch the BLCA Facebook page and website for details on how to apply.



**** If you or your someone you know in the area is not receiving our "Lake Report" monthly newsletter, please contact myself or another board member so we can keep everyone notified of volunteer opportunities, community events, new projects and high water/no wake emergencies. This is a GREAT resource for updates!!!!**

Upcoming Summer events 2024:

- **BLCA Annual June Membership Meeting & BBQ** – Friday, June 7th 5:00pm – Board meeting

- 6:00pm – General meeting - Palmer Park Pavilion



- **4th of July Boat Parade & Fireworks** - Parade – Saturday, July 6th at 2:00pm, - lineup at 11:30am, Briggs/Rush channel, - Lake parade order Rush, Briggs, Julia - Big Elk Lake, 12:00pm & lineup at 11:30am - **Fireworks** – Saturday, July 6th at 9:00pm/dusk, Briggs Lake, south end by the boat launch.

- **Palmer Day 2024** – Saturday September 7, 2024 – Palmer Park

- See website for schedule of events – palmerday.com
 - **BLCA Food booth will be open from 8:00am-11:00pm** and we will need numerous VOLUNTEERS to help with our largest fundraiser for the year. **Volunteers will also be needed for setup on September 6th and cleanup on September 8th.** - Watch the BLCA Facebook page and Website for signup genius details.

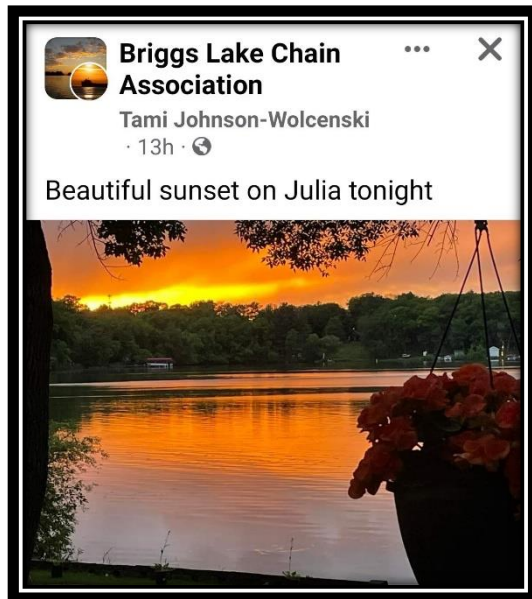
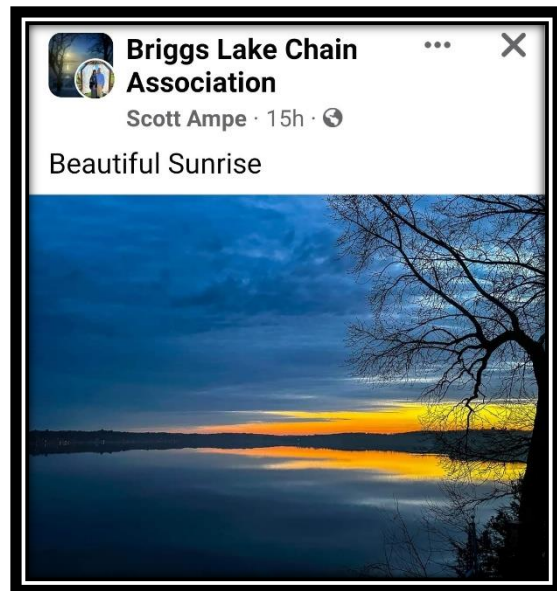


REMINDERS:

- We are still in need of additional BLCA committee members for all 4 of our lakes (Briggs, Elk, Julia and Rush). We are always looking for enthusiastic volunteers, fresh ideas and solutions to continue our water conservation to heal our lakes and evolve with the ever-changing environment.

- **Please plan on attending** your monthly BLCA meetings at Palmer Townhall, the 2nd Saturday of each month at 8:30am. To learn about and assist with water conservation, enriching activities, food and fellowship.
NEXT MEETING: Friday, June 7th at 5:00pm/6:00pm. (This is a Friday due to park pavilion scheduling.)
- See www.briggslakechainassociation.com for all meeting details for your BLCA & Healthy Lakes committee's and the TLID (Three Lake Improvement District). As well as, previous meeting minutes, water testing results/details, budget documents, upcoming events and tips and tricks for seasonal lake conservation.
- Look for informative posts on our [BLCA Facebook page & BLCA on Instagram.](#)

If you would like to VOLUNTEER as a committee member or for one of the above-mentioned positions/events contact myself via call or text at 612-283-8362 or email at sdreimer@frontier.com. I look forward to volunteering alongside you to heal our waterways!!!! - Shelly



The fish are biting on Julia



BLCA Mission statement: 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 watershed.