



Briggs Lake Chain Association

May 2024 Lake Report

The President's Report Shelly Alger- Peyton

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Greetings & Happy May!!!

Spring has sprung on Briggs Lake Chain!!! If you are like me you are working on Spring yard cleanup, putting docks and watercrafts in the lakes, planning Spring planting, and starting gardening projects. I am also getting excited to see how my Gentle Footprint conservation project blooms and grows for its second Summer. It was beautiful last Summer with all the different native plants/shrubs/grasses and colorful flowers. We as Minnesotans know that the end of April and beginning of May can still be a little cool for flowers and shrubs, so watch the temps in case Mother Nature throws in a few of those colder nights.

*Be sure to watch the BLCA website and Facebook page for DNR boating/lake safety/rule reminders, individual conservation project/grant applications, our new Lake Steward program opportunity, Spring happenings and **volunteer fundraising events.***

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

Be safe & respectful when enjoying the lakes this Spring/Summer season & Memorial Day weekend.



McDonalds Meats Porkchop & Brat fundraiser 2024

Dates: May 9th, 10th, and 11th. YES, this is fishing opener weekend. A great time for a meat sale. Grab a bite to eat or a To Go order on your way to the lake.

Booth open from 9am to 6:30 pm (closes 2:30 on Saturday).

This is our 2nd largest fundraiser for our non-profit. VOLUNTEERS make our organization successful & we need several for this event. Here is the link to signup Genius volunteer form. THANK YOU in advance for your support!!!!!!

I'll see you at McDonald's Meats in May!!!!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/.../10C0E4DABAA28A7F49...>

Please contact Shelly with any questions. See you at McDonald's Meats in May!!!!

Upcoming Special Event:

BLCA Healthy Lakes **FREE** Tree and Shrub Giveaway!

Who: **BLCA paid sponsors (donated in 2024)** are eligible to pick up a free native tree AND free native flowering shrub to plant in their yard!

What: Bare Root seedlings: Red Maple, Hackberry, and a variety of native flowering shrubs

When: **May 4th – 5th 9-10 am:** First come, first served – first 50 families

Where: Palmer Township Hall parking lot

Why: Trees help clean lakes!

[BLCA Financials through March 30, 2024](#)



Income to date: \$ 30,063.48

Expenses to date: \$ 24,229.31

Net Proceeds to date: \$ 5,834.17

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).

Spring is in the air. 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 182 paid members as of 4.27.24. The Goal is 250. That is \$10,000. As a group you make a difference.

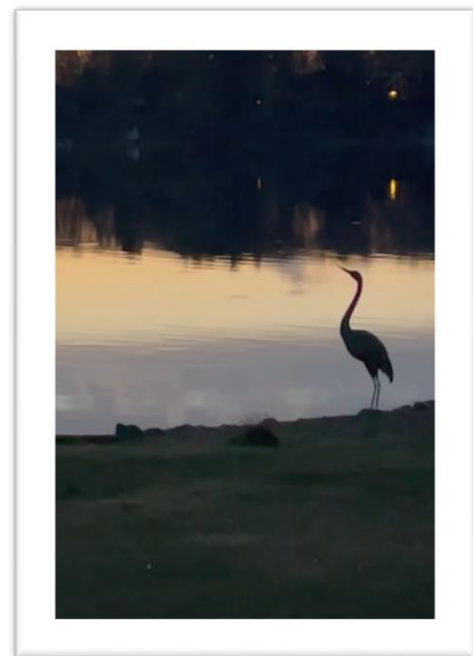
If you did not receive your BLCA Sponsorship packet or tax-deductible receipt & display sign, please contact Shelly or another board member for assistance.

This WE REMEMBER: Paul and Norma Fors, Lake Julia 2009 by Kenzie Phelps

Does this sound familiar? “I like to get up in the morning and look out at the lake. It sure beats looking at a parking lot or apartment building.” Paul and Norma Fors have been a part of the lakes for the better part of 54 years, first buying two parcels of property in 1955, then living in both a tent and cabin in the years before and during the time it took to build their home.

Building took about 10 years, starting in 1975. Paul, a bricklayer, worked on other people's homes during the week in the twin cities area while Norma drew house plans and made preparations for each weekend jaunt to the lakes. What started out to be a nice small cabin turned into their year 'round home, which they moved into in 1985. According to Paul, “It was a fun project; Norma always had things ready to go.”

Lake Julia was the treasure they shared with other cabin owners and weekenders. Paul fondly remembers the lake at that time: “We would walk along the shoreline in waders and catch nice bass and sunnies. There was a nice natural hard sand shore line [now covered in muck] in front of our land and all



along the north end of Julia.” At the time there were no speedboats, just fishing boats, so the water and lake bottom didn't get all riled up.

Paul doesn't recall problems with lake weeds, and that “the fishing was great.” At one point their property, as well as their neighbors, ran a good 10 feet further out into the lake, but because of erosion problems they lost that part of their property. The road into Lake Julia at that time was just a sugar sand road, and Highway 25 was still unpaved. Their girls used to complain about “going down the sandy road to the lake.”

Norma's fondest memories include driving around the lakes to the Cottonwood Beach Resort to go dancing and meeting other people from the lakes. “Living in the suburbs,” said Paul, “you didn't know your neighbors. But at the lakes you knew everybody. Every Friday night there was a potluck dinner at the town hall, and a lot of lake people showed up.”

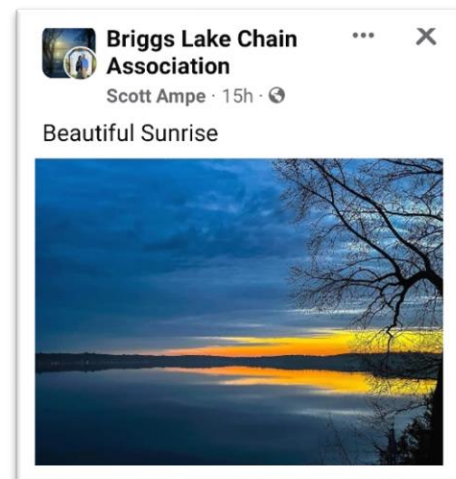
Moving into their home was one of Paul's warm memories: “We didn't move in until it was completely done.” Before they started building their home, and during construction, their girls were at the lake all summer, and all kinds of people came to visit. “Our girls practically grew up here. We had good times here.” Adding to their adventures on the lake, Norma's sister and her husband built a cabin on the east side of the channel between Briggs and Julia.

From their time as weekenders and builders to 2009, the biggest change the Fors have seen is “from cabins to all year homes,” which they don't see as negative but part of normal change. What Paul doesn't see as normal change is worsening water quality. If he could make things change, he would improve water quality and clarity, like it was just a few years ago.

Catching Up With Paul Fors In 2024

In 2009 in a **This We Remember** Lake Report article featuring Paul and Norma Fors, Paul said the first thing he likes to do in the morning was look out at the lake. Now in 2024 he still looks out at Lake Julia first thing in the morning. On a recent morning, he spotted Canada geese feeding in the shallows off his shoreline. Only now Paul takes in the early morning quiet by himself, without Norma, his long-time wife and partner. Norma died in 2017 from complications of progressive supranuclear palsy, a rare brain disease that affects body movements such as walking, balance and speech. Paul took care of Norma for over 12 years at their Lake Julia home. She spent the last 8 months of her life at the Monticello Nursing home on the banks of the Mississippi River.

Paul not only enjoyed the view of Lake Julia from his living room, but he was also out on the water often.





In addition to his love of fishing, for 28 years he collected water samples on Julia for the BLCA’s water quality monitoring efforts, for which he was recognized and honored by the BLCA, TLID and Palmer Township.

Now 94, Paul is fiercely independent, still living comfortably in his home. In addition to normal housekeeping chores, he attends a Bible study group at Santiago Lutheran Church, has breakfast every Thursday with group of long time friends, goes to acupuncture and other medical appointments, does jigsaw puzzles, and enjoys fishing outings with

longtime friend Ronnie Ahlman, who has been on Lake Julia going on 80 years [since he was 2].

So how does he get around to his various destinations? He drives himself to wherever he wants to go! When asked how he backs out of his garage and up his hilly driveway to 42nd street, he said “I don’t. I back down my driveway and into the garage.” He learned how to do this when Norma was alive since it was easier for her to exit their car on the passenger side and go directly from garage to kitchen!

Among the many things an independent 94 man does, Paul loves to cook. On the day of this interview, he was planning on broiled salmon for dinner. No big deal he said. When not in the mood to cook he drives to various local restaurants for takeout.

Upcoming Spring/Summer events 2024:

- **McDonald’s Meats Pork Chop/Brat fundraiser** – May 9th-11th, see the BLCA Facebook page and website for details. **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!**



- **2024 MN Fishing Opener** – Saturday May, 11, 2024, see MN DNR website for rules & regulations www.dnr.state.mn.us
- **2024 Spring Garage Sale weekend** – May 9th-12th, watch the BLCA Facebook page and resident’s signs for date/time details.



- **Palmer Township Cleanup Day** – May 18th – 7:00am-12:00pm, Palmer Township Hall, see Township website for details.
- **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 12:00pm,
 - 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

DON'T FORGET – apply for your 2024 BLCA

Conservation – Restoration – Lake Steward - Plant Bank Grant Programs!!!



Gentle Footprint Program - is a grant-based program that provides a percentage of reimbursement costs to homeowners for eligible shoreland projects, such as restorations, raingardens, 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, was originally 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.mnlcorp.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 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

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.

