



A Note From the BSLA President

Believe it or not summer is around the corner. Even though it has been a long drawn out winter many strategies have been discussed regarding the protection of our lakes from Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) especially zebra mussels. Hubbard County Coalition of Lakes Association (HCCOLA) has been recognized around the state as a leader in this fight. At this date zebra mussels have not been found in Hubbard County lakes although Mille Lacs and Winnibigoshish do have infestations. It has been amazing to see the response of the local government agencies.

- The city of Park Rapids contributed money for AIS inspectors;
- Lake Emma Township granted \$14,000 for AIS inspectors of which \$4,500 is for Big Sand Lake with an additional \$500 to assist at the Lake Emma access (Little Sand contributed \$400 of their \$3,000 grant for the same purpose);
- Hubbard County contributed \$35,000 for AIS projects in our county;
- State and DNR: An AIS decontamination unit will be located in Dorset with Johnson on the Water hosting the unit. AIS inspectors can send boats that have been recently in contaminated lakes or boats with "suspicious" materials before the boats are launched in our Hubbard County lakes. Nate Sitz has been hired to oversee AIS inspections and also work with the decontamination unit.
- Rapid response strategy is being developed on a county level in order to react quickly and effectively to an AIS infestation.

The BSLA Board will:

- Do water monitoring testing
- Do veliger (young adult zebra mussels) testing
- Work with Hubbard Co SWCD in providing 600 hours of AIS inspector hours at our public access (Hubbard County lakes will have 19 AIS inspectors at 22 accesses)

- Volunteers for AIS inspections at the public access will be sought. Training will be provided on June 8 in Lake George. Contact me if interested.
- Work toward establishing a rapid response plan for our lake if there are indications of any form of AIS
- Encourage lake owners to monitor their beach areas for any signs of AIS (suspend a small cement block in the lake 1 foot off the lake bottom)
- Provide information at the annual meeting regarding AIS
- Encourage lake owners to use certified lake provider services and follow regulations regarding movement of docks and boat lifts from infested lakes

On a sad note, Alfred "Fred" Boggs, a long time summer resident of Big Sand has died of cancer. I had the pleasure of teaching with Fred at Park Rapids Area High School. I remember Fred as having a great sense of humor, a big smile, love of life and a conservationist who loved the "land". I (we) offer his wife Polly our deepest sympathy.

I'm looking forward to a relaxing summer on Big Sand.

Alan Judson
BSLA President,
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Fisheries Management:

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2013 FISHING OPENER

At this writing in late April it is difficult to say what lies ahead as to when the ice will go out on many area lakes. Thick ice and heavy snow along with lower than normal temperatures have left us wondering what's going to happen and when.

One thing we know for sure is that the ice will go out and we should see some elevated lake levels along with some improvement of our persistent drought conditions. Beyond that we will have to wait and see what evolves.

Another thing we do know for sure is that our Minnesota fishing season for 2013 will open at 12 AM on Saturday, May 11th whether the ice is out or just floating around in our lakes. Specific areas in some lakes may be posted by the DNR as off limits for fishing if there is a possibility of disrupting certain fish spawning areas during the opening days of the new season.

Park Rapids and the surrounding area of lakes will be hosting the 2013 Governor's Fishing Opener on Opening Weekend. The hard work and efforts put forth by local businesses, the Chamber of Commerce, and many individuals is fantastic. Working together as they have will provide a great welcome to the Governor and his party, the press, officials from both public and private sectors, and large numbers of fisherman. This will provide Park Rapids an opportunity to tell everyone what the area has to offer in vacation and recreation facilities, a place to live, and a place to bring your business.

Walleye slot limits on Big Sand Lake remain unchanged from the 2012 season. We all hope that the coming season will bring us another year of good fishing and good times.

Even though the Rock Bass seem to continue their constant ability to get on the line, for those who would like to catch a different species it is important to remember that we must get below the level the Rock Bass are in as quickly as possible with our bait and sinkers. One way to do this is to switch from lead sinkers to sinkers from some of the more dense metals now available. You can buy a smaller sinker that because of its density will fall more quickly to your target area. This also decreases the chance of losing lead on the bottom of our lakes which can kill many of our waterfowl if swallowed by them. You will find, however, that the cost of the new sinkers will be greater than the traditional lead.

An observation: over the past few years there has been a continuing increase in the size of our sunfish. Also, indications are that our perch seem to be coming back after a number of years of being quite scarce. What do you think? Any comments? It's always good to hear from you.

Tom Igel



Organizational Development & Communication:

Heather Wittman
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NEW ONLINE PAYMENT OPTIONS FOR BSLA

Happy Spring and with it comes the unveiling of a new feature on the Big Sand Lake Association's website. You will now be able to securely renew your BSLA membership (or join BSLA if not already a member), or make a general donation to BSLA. Payments may be made via PayPal or by individual credit card. A receipt will automatically be emailed to you confirming the transaction.

An additional important benefit of renewing your membership online is that you may immediately review, correct and update the contact information listed for you in the BSLA database and in the BSLA Resident Directory. We encourage you to try it out. Visit our website at www.bigsandlake.org; click on the "BSLA Information" link, and then follow the prompts to take advantage of this quick, easy and secure way to keep both your BSLA membership and contact information current. Additional login instructions are printed elsewhere in this newsletter.

In the event you are not online or do not wish to make transactions in this manner, you may still mail a check to BSLA using the form enclosed with this newsletter. If renewing online, please do not use the enclosed mail-in form. Membership forms for mail-in renewals may also be downloaded from our website.

We have worked long and hard to bring this feature to you with hopes it will simplify your life. Personally, I would like to thank Barb Kimer for her continued dedication toward the website and bringing this new feature to life. Our goal is to not only preserve our beautiful lake, but to benefit the environment by ultimately switching to less paper and we thank you for your continued support. ~*We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children. ~Native American Proverb*

Heather Wittman

NOTICE: LOGIN INSTRUCTIONS FOR 'RENEW MY MEMBERSHIP' AND 'MEMBERS ONLY' AT www.bigsandlake.org

1. User Name = a primary email* address matching one in the BSLA database
*only one email address per membership is valid
2. Password = a password* will be emailed to addresses in the BSLA database in mid-May
*an option will be available to change to a password of your choice
3. Having trouble? Did not receive a 'starter' email? Click on 'I forgot my User Name or Password'
* If your email address is identifiable, an automated response will be emailed to you
*If no match is found, follow the prompts to contact us to submit a primary email address

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know? Approximately 2,225 visits to the Big Sand website have been recorded just between January and April of this year. And that does not count those who visit our webcam through the link on the Downtown Park Rapids site. We hope you are one of those using our website. If not, we encourage you to go to www.bigsandlake to see all it has to offer.

Did you know? We redesigned the site last fall to be more attractive, easier to navigate, and more informative with interesting and helpful links. This spring we are adding the capacity to pay membership dues online and update contact information automatically (see article elsewhere in this newsletter). A huge BSLA thank you goes to Paul Shoemaker of Cloud Digital for his assistance, patience and tireless effort in setting up the new version of the website. We greatly appreciate his expertise as he continues to manage our website technicalities.

Did you know? Keeping the website current and informative is a fun, on-going project. Anyone with an interest is invited to join the small group of volunteers working with the website. No technology expertise is required! We also welcome any suggestions to improve the site. Contact Heather Wittman, hayden2@gmail.com, or Barb Kimer, t-bkimer@msn.com.

NEEDED: CALLING TREE COORDINATOR

The Big Sand Calling Tree was established as part of the Lake Management Plan to provide a system for informing residents around the lake about social events and other lake issues as the need arises. The primary goal for the calling tree is to provide a welcoming, friendly and inclusive feeling for all residents on Big Sand and to make a more personal connection within the “neighborhoods” around the lake. With this purpose in mind, perhaps a better term for the ‘callers’ would be ‘ambassadors’. In addition, the calling tree can provide more complete details about the events than what is included in the announcements in the newspaper and on the Big Sand website.

We are in need of a general coordinator for this volunteer effort. Duties for the Calling Tree Coordinator include maintaining the list of volunteer callers and contacting them prior to upcoming BSLA events to communicate details, etc. (approximately 3-4 times during the season). Last summer there were 13 “neighborhood volunteer callers” who were responsible to contact approximately 8 – 12 neighbors. This is a great way to get to know neighbors from around the lake. If interested in volunteering as Coordinator or to serve as a caller, please contact Barb Kimer, t-bkimer@msn.com or 612-267-7355 for more details.

NEXTDOOR Neighborhood
A Private Social Network for Your Neighborhood
Big Sand Lake, Minnesota

A Nextdoor Neighborhood has been set up for Big Sand Lake. The Neighborhood name is Big Sand Lake MN.

Stan and I use Nextdoor in our Minneapolis neighborhood. We find it to be a wonderful resource! Over the Winter, the neighborhood rallied behind a family who's home was destroyed by fire. This Spring, Coyote sitings were reported. A neighbor sent out a plea for buffet tables she needed for a gathering - plenty were secured! We've learned about missing animals, a break-in, and highly recommended painters. I found a terrific dog sitter!

We find Nextdoor to be very well done, reliable, and secure.

You may find an invite in your email box --the invite will come from Nextdoor. Or it may come from one of your acquaintances around the lake. You may also log onto Nextdoor.com and search for Big Sand Lake MN to join. Membership is free.

The 'Big Sand Lake MN' neighborhood boundary is made up of the residents of Big Sand Lake.

Questions?? Please call or email Catharine Williamson, SpiritW@me.com 952-936-0204. I'm happy to share first hand the many benefits we've found from being a neighbor on Nextdoor.

Below please find the description for Nextdoor found on the Nextdoor web page: www.nextdoor.com

WHAT IS NEXTDOOR

Nextdoor is the private social network for you, your neighbors and your community. It's the easiest way for you and your neighbors to talk online and make all of your lives better in the real world. And it's free.

Thousands of neighborhoods are already using Nextdoor to build happier, safer places to call home.

People are using Nextdoor to:

- Quickly get the word out about a break-in
- Organize a Neighborhood Watch Group
- Track down a trustworthy babysitter
- Find out who does the best paint job in town
- Ask for help keeping an eye out for a lost dog
- Find a new home for an outgrown bike
- Finally call that nice man down the street by his first name

\$38,928.80
CHARITABLE LAKE FUND ~ BIG SAND LAKE

The Charitable Fund received a number of contributions over the Winter Months. We are approaching \$40,000 in contributions!

The Charitable Fund Supports Big Sand Lake. It's larger fund base is able to benefit Big Sand Lake's more expensive projects. The Mission for the fund is the preservation of Big Sand Lake.

In the upcoming months, we will publish a list of donors. If you wish to remain anonymous and have not noted that on your donor form, please notify Catharine Williamson or Linda Lee.

We are working to create a donation portal through the BigSandLake.org website.

The committee welcomes your thoughts and comments. Please feel free to contact an advisory committee member.

Thank You Very Much For Supporting The Charitable Lake Fund!! We are making our way to the goal of \$100,000 by December 2013!

*Catharine Williamson, Chair 952.936.0204 spiritw@me.com
Bill Ellis-Al Judson-Bob Klepinski-Linda Lee-Tom VanBruggen-Ken Wilcox*



In Memory FRED BOGGS

We remember Fred Boggs who passed away on April 22, 2013, at his winter home in Rock Port, TX after an admirable battle with cancer. Fred and his wife Polly moved to Big Sand when Fred accepted a teaching position at Park Rapids high school where he taught for two years before retiring. Fred enjoyed lake life – fishing, gardening, birding, tennis and bicycling. He was a regular at the courts in Park Rapids and with the Monday and Friday bicycle group. He and Polly frequently volunteered to maintain the bluebird houses along the Heartland Trail. A memorial service will be held at Lady of the Pines Catholic Church in Nevis this summer.

**If you know of other Big Sand residents who have recently passed away, please contact us at news@bigsandlake.org, or mail a note to: BSLA, P.O. Box 181, Park Rapids, MN 56470*

NEWSLETTER MAILING SCHEDULE CHANGE

In past years the BSLA Board of Directors has made an effort to send to you two spring newsletters, an April and a June edition, and a fall edition in October. This spring in the interest of saving printing and mailing costs, we have chosen to send just one newsletter in May. We plan to continue the October newsletter, also. Please keep this newsletter with you as a handy reference throughout the summer. Also, check the website: bigsandlake.org for changes and updates. Thank you!

Karen Nelson, Editor
bslanews@arvig.net

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OFF BOARD POSITIONS

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Calling Tree Coordinator:
Open



P.O. Box 181, Park Rapids, MN 56470

Calendar of Events 2013

June

- 18 Women's Luncheon
11:30 am at Summerhill Farm
- 22 Social Gathering
5:00-7:00 pm
at Nancy & Pat Ryan's
20087 Glen Drive
- 29 Annual Meeting
10 am at Evergreen Lodge

July

- 4 Boat Parade
11 am meet at the inlet

August

- 20 Women's Luncheon
11:30 am at Linda Lee's
20200 Gladwin Drive
- 24 Social Gathering
5:00-7:00 pm
at Rich Jacobson's
23081 Gunner Drive

September

- 14 Fall Social Gathering
5:30 pm at Evergreen Lodge



BSLA 2013

ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, June 29, 2013

10:00 am at Evergreen Lodge