



## PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Greetings Big Sanders,

The days are longer, and the temps keep rising. Spring is just around the corner, or have we already hit the corner? It has been a crazy winter without the snow and cold that we are accustomed to experiencing. Our lake levels were down last fall and the hope that a normal snowfall would bring the lake levels back up is not promised. Hopefully we will have spring rains to help the cause. It's become a challenge to keep adding to the dock in order to get the boats on lifts.

Your Big Sand board has been hard at work on a number of issues, and I want to thank them

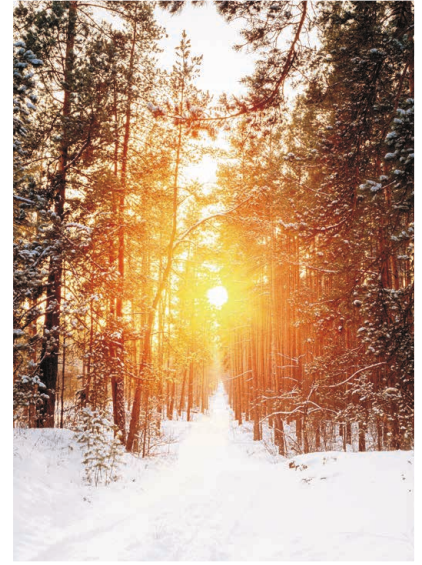
for their time and efforts. The current board of directors: Don Kilander, Jo Kilander, Ann Hilger, Chuck Fenton, Catherine Williamson, Mike Cziok, Mark Kalvoda, Al Judson, Linda Lee, Steve Kimpton, and Rich Provinzino. Their dedication to preserving our lake and bringing our residents together to create a more inviting community to gather and enjoy is immeasurable.

At the end of 2023 the lake membership stood at 156. The goal for 2024 is to have 100% of the lake residents become members. The first step towards that goal is to make any NEW Big Sand Lake residents honorary first year members. In other words, the first-year membership is free. Jo Kilander has been working on dividing the lake into neighborhood sections with section captains entrusted with the task of calling on those who are new to the lake as well as calling on those who are not members. We could use your help. So, if you would like to be a section captain, please contact Jo Kilander at [jolkilander@gmail.com](mailto:jolkilander@gmail.com).

Invasive species are always on the mind of lake residents. Our charitable foundation pays for our share of monitoring the landing and checking boats and trailers for invasive species. We have contracted for 1100 hours of work from the DNR at \$25 per hour. So far, our investment has been successful, but we need to be vigilant and continue this work. Your donations to our charitable foundation are greatly appreciated and help ensure that we can continue the fight against AIS. At the end of summer 2023 board member Catherine Williamson was involved in the hiring of Steve Henry, an aquatic survey professional, who did a complete aquatic plant survey and an invasive species detection of Big Sand. I'm pleased to say that we passed with flying colors. A copy of that report is available to members. Our website has a link to obtain a copy of the survey 2023 BS AIS Survey, or contact Chuck Fenton [chuckfenton@outlook.com](mailto:chuckfenton@outlook.com) or Catherine Williamson [cwilliamson@dspritw.com](mailto:cwilliamson@dspritw.com) if you would like a copy.

Socials are always a great time to meet your neighbors and make new friends on the lake. Our BSLA annual meeting will be on June 22nd, and will continue to be graciously hosted by Bonnie and Jeff Brand at Pine Cone Resort. It is fun and informative. Registration begins at 10:30 with refreshments and lunch provided. We encourage everyone to attend as it's important that we hear the thoughts and ideas of all residents. Continuing into the summer we will be seeking lake residents to host those other social events.

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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER - CONTINUED

Seeing our lake from different shorelines is always a highlight. Pink postcards will be sent as reminders of the monthly events. We will also be having socials at local venues such as Good Life. Our ever-popular 4th of July boat parade took a hit last year due to bad weather, but we will be back stronger than ever this 4th. Be ready to decorate those pontoons and boats and celebrate our nation's birthday. The annual golf scramble will be in September at Headwaters Golf Club. Everyone is welcome to participate in golf regardless of their talent and enjoy the food, drink, and prizes afterwards. Or just come for food and drink after the golf. Jo Kilander is busy setting up socials and many of you have attended the ladies' luncheons. If you would like to host an event or would like to help Jo please let us know.

Heads Up! We are working with a company that will be setting up a Big Sand Lake online store this spring for you to order those lake sweatshirts, t-shirts and other Big Sand merchandise. Watch for a blast email and a link on the website for the timeframe.

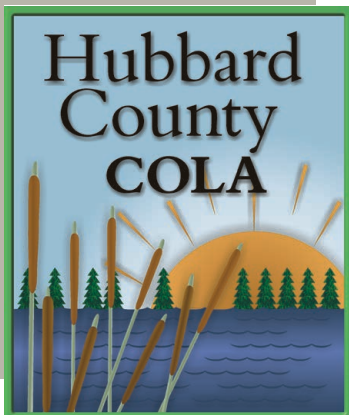
Those of us who enjoy the lake like to catch fish and have a fish fry. But it's not always easy to catch that elusive walleye on our lake. I want to announce that the slot limit has been changed by the DNR to follow the state guidelines of keeping one walleye over 20". So those 21" eaters are now allowed to be kept. At the annual BSLA meeting at Pine Cone on June 22nd we'll be hosting a special speaker, TJ Erickson from TJ's Guide Service. TJ has guided people on our lake many times and will be giving tips to those who need a little help in catching those elusive walleyes.

Finally, we are in need of new board members as those who have served their three-year term will be leaving us. Please let our nominating committee Don Kilander [kilanderdon@gmail.com](mailto:kilanderdon@gmail.com), Chuck Fenton [chuckfenton@outlook.com](mailto:chuckfenton@outlook.com), or Catherine Williamson [cwilliamson@spiritw.com](mailto:cwilliamson@spiritw.com) know if you would like to serve.

It is my pleasure to serve all of you as the BSLA president. The board and I look forward to your input on what is best for our lake. Please feel free to contact me with your ideas and concerns.

Pontoons of the Lake,

Chuck  
[chuckfenton@outlook.com](mailto:chuckfenton@outlook.com)



## SHINING A FLASHLIGHT ON COLA'S ACTIONS

We would like to welcome board member, Steve Kimpton, as our Hubbard County COLA representative. Steve has shared that he is very pleased to have this opportunity to represent BSLA and will do his best to contribute to the mission and goals of BSLA. Meetings will be held April – October, with their annual meeting occurring August 29. If you are interested in what Hubbard County COLA does, we encourage you to visit their web page at [hubbardcolamn.org](http://hubbardcolamn.org).



# IT'S TIME FOR MEMBERSHIP DUES RENEWAL AND CHARITABLE FUND DONATIONS FOR WATERCRAFT INSPECTIONS

The Big Sand Lake Association (BSLA) and the Big Sand Lake Charitable Fund Advisory Committee have been brainstorming over the winter how best to clarify for BSLA members the difference between the finances and fundraising of the two entities. We continue to hear that it is confusing how financial contributions are used, and members forget what they paid for and when they paid it! Therefore, it was decided by the BSLA board that fundraising for the two separate bodies would be combined into an annual spring campaign appeal.

## WHAT DOES THE BIG SAND LAKE ASSOCIATION DO?

The Big Sand Lake Association conducts many important activities to “promote and maintain the environmental, economic, and recreational protection of Big Sand Lake,” and to make it a safe and wonderful place to own a home or cabin. BSLA maintains the [bigsandlake.org](http://bigsandlake.org) website, distributes newsletters, maintains a member directory, conducts lake water testing, applies for grants to help offset the cost of DNR watercraft inspection at the boat launch, maintains webcams, coordinates social events and so much more.

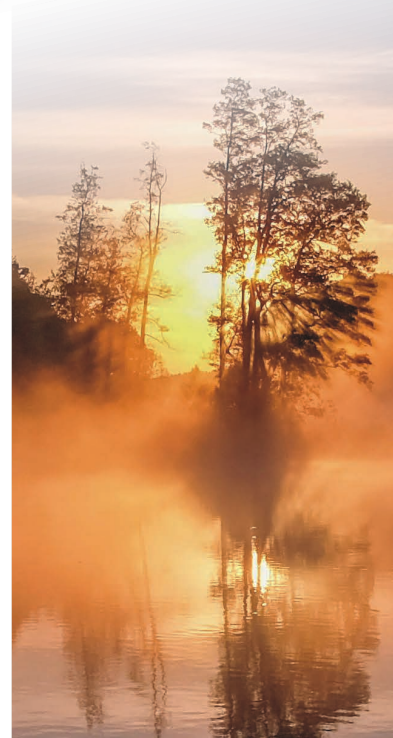
Annual dues to pay for the activities of the BSLA are set at \$50 for members/property owners, and Associate Member dues are \$20 per year for family, friends, and non-property owners. Think of BSLA money as our household checking account, taking care of smaller day-to-day expenses.

## WHAT DOES THE BIG SAND LAKE CHARITABLE FUND DO?

The Big Sand Lake Charitable Fund was established in 2009 to “preserve, protect and enhance Big Sand Lake and its environs.” The Big Sand Lake Charitable Fund is managed by the Northwest Minnesota Foundation. Examples of how the fund has been used include helping to pay for the costs of the annual DNR watercraft inspections, and for the special aquatic survey conducted this past year. In addition, the fund is available to support other large expenses or special projects necessary to protect the lake, including quickly addressing any possible AIS infestation emergencies. Think of the Big Sand Lake Charitable Fund as our long-term savings account.

One of the main priorities of the Big Sand Lake Charitable Fund has been to raise money each year to pay for the cost of DNR boat inspectors stationed at the Big Sand Lake boat launch to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species into the lake. For 2024, there will be 1,100 inspector hours contracted with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). After grants received from the state of Minnesota and Lake Emma Township, the balance of the DNR watercraft inspection bill is \$15,200, and we are once again seeking donations to cover the expense. **Therefore, in addition to paying your annual membership dues, please donate to the Big Sand Lake Charitable Fund to help cover the cost of this critical activity that is our best weapon against the spread of aquatic invasive species.**

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# MEMBERSHIP DUES

## *Continued*

Please watch your mail for our letter detailing the BSLA's request for annual membership dues payment, and the Big Sand Lake Charitable Fund's request for donations for DNR watercraft inspection at the public access. Two separate color-coded envelopes are included in the mailing, one for paying your annual membership dues, and another for contributions to the Big Sand Lake Charitable Fund. Or pay now using the two separate online payment options on the [bigsandlake.org](http://bigsandlake.org) website.

Thank you for helping us maintain a strong lake association, and for your generosity in protecting Big Sand Lake!

The BSLA Board and the Big Sand Lake Charitable Fund Advisory Committee

# BIG SAND LAKE GATHERINGS

## THE "BRAIN FARTS" TAKE FIRST PLACE!

Linda Van Bruggen, winter social chair extraordinaire, reports that the Big Sand winter social group has been very active. "The Brain Farts" play trivia every other Thursday at Zorbaz! And yes, they have even taken first place a few times! Plus, a couple of Thursdays a month the ladies gather at Wine Not for happy hour. Well, it started as ladies only... then the men wanted in... then it evolved into dinner at a local restaurant after happy hour. Linda reports that it has been a fun break to gather with Big Sand neighbors... and discuss the "non" winter!! Last time they met, 15 dined at Necce's and there were plans to get together for a Valentine dinner there as well. Linda reports that residents have been very receptive to ideas and have responded enthusiastically to emails. The group recently welcomed a new family on the lake – the Prieslers, Scott and Coleen, who moved in next to Corwins. Linda will continue to solicit participation throughout the remainder of the winter months. If you are not receiving Linda's emails and want to be notified of any upcoming events, please send an email to Linda at [freddie54mn@yahoo.com](mailto:freddie54mn@yahoo.com) and she will add you to her list.

It's not too soon to start thinking about summer activities on Big Sand, and that includes getting together with your neighbors. Please put the Big Sand Lake Association Annual Meeting date on your calendar – Saturday, June 22nd, Pine Cone Resort with registration starting at 10:30 a.m., followed by the meeting and a lunch. It's a perfect time to reconnect with summer residents and hear the BSLA Board updates on pertinent lake business. Stay for the family picnic immediately following the meeting hosted by your BSLA Board.

Jo Kilander  
BSLA Social Chair





# BIG SAND LAKE ASSOCIATION

## Rain Garden Update



In 2009 a rain garden was created by the BSLA just east of the public landing on Lake Emma. The signage is in great shape, but it is hard to tell if anything remains of the rain garden itself. In any event, the site has clearly been invaded by a variety of shrubs and plants that got there on their own. This spring a group of residents that live nearby have agreed to make a more comprehensive assessment. The threshold question is whether the original concept is still viable and worthy of attempts at rejuvenation. It would be very helpful if we knew more about the original plans, particularly what plant materials were used and where they were placed. If you were involved with the original project, or otherwise have access to any such information, please let Wick Corwin know.



## BIG SAND LAKE MERCHANDISE

### HEADS UP - NEW MERCHANDISE COMING SOON

Looking for new Big Sand Lake t-shirts and sweatshirts, as well as other Big Sand Lake merchandise? WATCH the BSLA website and email updates for the launch of the new on-line store.



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

Forwarding Service Requested

# BSLA 2024 CALENDAR

## ANNUAL MEETING / FAMILY PICNIC SATURDAY, JUNE 22, PINE CONE LODGE

**10:30AM REGISTRATION**

(Coffee/Treats/Socializing)

**11:00AM ANNUAL MEETING**

**NOON FAMILY PICNIC BBQ**

This annual event is a wonderful time to socialize with fellow Big Sand Lake residents and to learn of the current activities and plans for the lake association.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

If you have an idea for an activity or are interested in hosting an event, please contact: Jo Kilander - [jolkilander@gmail.com](mailto:jolkilander@gmail.com)



### SOCIAL MEDIA



Check out the Big Sand Lake Association Facebook page and Instagram for Big Sand current events, photos and area happenings. For easy access, click on the Facebook and Instagram icons located on the right hand column on the homepage at [www.bigsandlake.org](http://www.bigsandlake.org).