



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



BIG SAND LAKE 4TH OF JULY

FOURTH OF JULY PARADE

Saturday, July 4

11:00 AM at Northeast end of the lake



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Happy Spring! As winter fades and the days lengthen, I'm sure everyone is eager to get back onto the water or into the woods to enjoy some sunny, warm weather. As I sit down to write this newsletter, I think what do I want to talk about in this my last newsletter as President? I decided I want to highlight the important work of all the volunteers who keep the Big Sand Lake Association moving forward.

We rely on volunteers and I want to emphasize the importance of all the work that they do to keep Big Sand Lake pristine for us and all the future generations to enjoy.

The BSLA board members help the lake in many ways. They help organize and manage the business aspects of the BSLA, help organize the annual meeting, social functions, and membership drives are just a few of the responsibilities of the board. Matt VanBruggen is the Vice President, Jo Kilander is the Board Secretary and Al Judson is the Treasurer. The Secretary keeps the minutes of our board meetings and ensures that the minutes are posted online so all members can review board meetings.

Al Judson manages the board finances and he visits the post office regularly to check the mail. He then records the membership payments and enters member information in our database so we can communicate with our members. Al provides financial reports at each board meeting and the annual meeting. He also works with the charitable fund, the Northwest Minnesota Foundation and the Lake Emma Township to ensure we have the funds for our annual AIS inspection program.

The BSLA board directors are Bonnie Brand, Carolyn Corwin, Sue Fenton, Jo Kilander, Lisa Moore, Rich Provinzino, Aaron Roseth, Irene Weis, Dan Dyre (ex officio) and Don Kilander, (President nominee). Many board members serve multiple functions in our community. Bonnie Brand has supported the BSLA in many ways, of note in letting us use Pine Cone Lodge for board meetings and our annual meetings. Irene Weis is our Hubbard County Coalition of Lake Association (COLA) representative, in addition to her duties on the Lake Emma Township board. Rich Provinzino has been testing and monitoring water clarity on the lake for many years. Big Sand has seen continuous improvement in clarity, a credit to everyone on the lake. We should not take this improvement for granted, as some area lakes have recently seen a reduction in visibility. Dan Dyre has wrestled with the lake water safety buoys for years. You can see that all the board members work together to support our mission of preserving and protecting Big Sand Lake.

Adrienne Bray, Beth Kreuger, Jo Kilander and Carolyn Corwin coordinate the various social activities. They recruit our neighbors to hold our summer social gatherings at their homes, they buy the various supplies we need for the socials and help set up and clean up after the socials. They also coordinate the logistics and supplies for the annual meeting. The pink postcards you receive advising you of the summer socials and meetings are also produced by the social committee.

Barb Kimer, Bonnie Brand and Sue Fenton coordinate the membership committee. They develop the annual membership letters and manage the printing and mailing of the membership applications and letters to all BSLA members.

Heather Wittman coordinates our Facebook, Twitter and social media sites. Heather is constantly updating our social media sites with pertinent news and announcements. Heather also manages the emails that are regularly sent to members. Heather works with Paul Shoemaker to keep our BSLA website up to date.

Cindy Rehkamp edits this newsletter for us and works with Sarah Glad on the layout and design of the newsletter.

Gene Fladaboe and Bob Conyers monitor the dissolved oxygen levels in the lake and lake water temperatures. Dissolved oxygen and water temperatures are important factors for healthy fish populations.

Richard Sederstrom conducted testing for Zebra Mussel Veliger for many years on the lake. This is critical testing for early indications of zebra mussel contamination in the lake. Don Kilander recently assumed this important duty, and I have volunteered to take over this testing from Don.

Chris and Ann Hilger and Linda Lee coordinate the Big Sand Lake Charitable Fund. As you know we rely on the Charitable Fund to conduct the annual funding drive to support our aquatic invasive species inspection (AIS) program at the public access. This critically important effort allows us to conduct a very robust AIS inspection program throughout the entire recreational season.

Many members have contributed to the resident directory, Lake Management plan, history project, shoreland management, and many other important projects. I encourage everyone to visit the website where we have a great deal of information on the lake and lake environment and history.

This is just a short article on the work of the current board and volunteers. The history of the BSLA is filled with many volunteers who have worked throughout our entire thirty year history to keep Big Sand Lake clean and beautiful and to ensure we do all we can to preserve our beautiful lake for future generations.

Bob Bray

COVID-19

The unprecedented health challenges facing our country now due to the corona virus pandemic and all the associated requirements to close most businesses and cancel any meetings or gatherings for the foreseeable future have necessitated significant changes in all aspects of our lives.

The BSLA board discussed these matters, via email, and we made several decisions regarding our meetings, and board leadership positions.

The BSLA board first decided to suspend the various BSLA bylaws, regarding elections and meetings, until such time that the appropriate state and local authorities advise that the current virus pandemic has been eliminated and they deem it safe and appropriate for meetings and gatherings to once again occur.

The board then voted to suspend all BSLA meetings and social events until further notice, under the provisions outlined in item 1.

The board then voted to elect Don Kilander BSLA President and Chuck Fenton as a board member effective June 20.

The Big Sand Community has a long history of support and caring for our lake and community. I know we will all do our best to support those in need and in less fortunate circumstances. As we watch the virus strike so many in nursing homes and spread throughout the nation, I hope and pray that our families and communities are spared the terrible toll other families and communities have suffered.

I assured Don that although my term as BSLA President ends soon, I will be available to him and the Board whenever needed. I want to thank everyone for your support and assistance to me and the board during my time as BSLA President. Good luck to Don and the Board.

I hope to see you on the lake this summer. Good luck and good health to you and your families.

Bob Bray



DO YOUR PART TO PROTECT BIG SAND FROM AN INVASIVE SPECIES INFESTATION

Contributions are still needed to fund the 2020 Big Sand watercraft inspection program. Again this year, BSLA has contracted for 1,100 inspection hours at the public access for 2020. As of this writing, \$6,905 of the needed \$10,728 has been received from only 35 of the approximate 200 Big Sand property owners.

If you have not yet made a contribution, please do your part to protect our beautiful lake. Online donations can easily be made by going to www.bigsandlake.org and clicking on DONATE NOW in the right hand column under Charitable Lake Fund.

Important note: on the form, in the "Additional Information" section and under "Please choose an option", please select "General Spendable". If you prefer, a check (designating it for watercraft inspections) may be mailed to: Big Sand Lake Charitable Fund, Northwest Minnesota Foundation, 201 3rd Street NW, Bemidji MN 56601.

Watercraft inspection is currently our best option for protecting Big Sand and preventing infestation. Considering that almost 1,000 Minnesota lakes and rivers, including twelve in Hubbard County now, have some form of invasive species, watercraft inspections are increasingly important. Treating lakes with herbicides to control Eurasian Milfoil, Starry Stonewort or other invasive plants can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, much of it the responsibility of the lake association and home-owners. Most importantly, although costly containment may be possible, there is no effective treatment for a lake infested with zebra mussels.

Thank you in advance for helping to protect Big Sand from invasive species through watercraft inspections.

HOSTAS

A GREAT GARDEN CHOICE

Robyn Wimmer
Wimmer's Itch, Big Sand Lake

Hostas have always had a warm place in my heart. I love them! They're workhorse perennials in spite of our winter temperatures and soil and come in many varieties, making them pretty much no-brainer plants for those of us who enjoy gardening at Big Sand. Hostas are considered the "go to" plants here in Minnesota, with over 6100 registered cultivars listed by the American Hosta Society.

They are hardy to Zones 3 or 4 depending on the variety; make sure you choose yours for Zone 3a, as north-central Minnesota is the coldest zone in the Lower 48. Check the grow tag or ask your local nursery when picking out your plants so you're sure you're getting one for our area. The tag should also provide information on planting, growing, and maintaining your plant.

While hostas prefer a rich, moist soil that's high in organic matter, they can survive in a wide range of soils. You can help them thrive by adding organic materials such as peat, composted manure, leaves or composted kitchen waste.

Hostas can be put in the ground after all danger of frost has passed. While spring is generally the best time to plant, they may also be planted in the summer; they'll just need more water until their root systems have become established. While it's tempting to plant them close together, my experience has taught me to allow them their space the first year so they have room to fill out. Of course, if you're planning an event later in the summer, you might want that 'filled-in' appearance sooner. If you go that route, you may need to divide them next year although it isn't necessary for the health of the plant for mature hostas to be divided. Good reasons might be for a neater appearance or for making more hostas. If you decide to divide, there are plenty of YouTube videos and print information online; you could also ask at the nursery if you need help.

Hosta leaves come in an array of colors ranging from bright green to gold and blue tones. They often have edging or a center of white, cream, or gold and occasionally, you'll even find they have splashes of color. They may be smooth, veined or ribbed and they can be heart-shaped, lance-like or cupped.

Depending on the color of your chosen plant, a lighter one will enjoy two to three hours of morning sun in order to develop a deeper leaf color. Blue hosta does better in a shadier site to avoid leaf burn and/or bleaching. Should this occur or if your plant begins to look brown, you'll need to either move the plant to a shadier location or provide more water.

Hostas' flowers are born on tall stalks and have white, lavender or blue bell-like blossoms that attract bees, hummingbirds and butterflies. If you're considering a pollinator garden or would simply like to attract them, hostas are a good choice although not all varieties are fragrant. Be sure you check the grow tag on the pot or ask at the nursery for this information. One caveat to the flowers is the deer like them, a lot! I use a commercially sold, stinky solution to keep them out of our shade garden and it works but I do need to respray throughout the season.

You might want to check out Jean's The Right Plant Place located at 420 3rd Ave SE in Perham. Open April through October Jean carries over 300 varieties of hostas along with many other perennials grown especially for Minnesota. In addition to plants, there is a gift shop with all things garden!

And if you're interested, Minnesota will be hosting the national American Hosta Society meeting in Minneapolis, June 10-13, 2020. Hosta will be for sale to the public at this event

Whether you're an experienced gardener or just beginning, hostas are pretty reliable and generally don't require a lot of work. They can survive in deep shade, they can be planted in large masses for reliable color and texture in your garden and they're adaptable to many sites. They seem to do best in filtered or dappled shade that is available for much of the day. Deep shade is viable but it would most likely affect the plant's growth rate. The decision is yours. Happy planting!

Information provided by Mary H. Meyer, Extension Horticulturist and Professor, University of Minnesota Extension



SPRING 2020

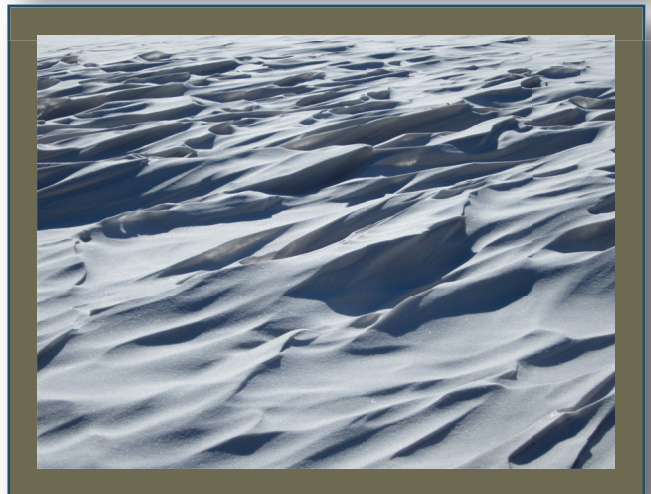
Early Spring To-do Checklist

- [✓] Monitor the lake for 'Ice Out' date.
Ice Out for Big Sand Lake last year was May 1st.
- [✓] Watch and listen for returning woodland and water birds.
Welcome home, loons!
- [✓] Store all winter outerwear when the temps reach 60 degrees.
- [✓] Pull all winter outerwear out of storage when a cold front blows in and drops 5" of new snow.
- [] Clean up the screen porch... AFTER pine pollen and popple fluff season.
TBD
- [✓] Put us on the waiting list to have our docks put in the lake and to have the septic tank serviced.
- [✓] Be sure that we have paid our Lake Association dues.
- [] Spring cleanup in the woods.
In process.
- [✓✓] Check each other for ticks after working in the woods.
- [] Schedule summer visits for friends and family.
Constantly.
- [] Finish indoor and outdoor maintenance projects.
In process.
- [✓] Watch the new spring calves arrive in the nearby pastures.
- [✓] Take the beach towels and summer bedding out of storage.
- [] Make repairs on the boat, pontoon and water toys and prepare them to be launched.
Almost check.
- [] Take remaining screen porch sofa cushions to be recovered.
Next week.
- [] Head to Hafner's to buy a pickup truck load of annuals.
Wait for the Memorial Day Weekend sale!
- [✓] Order a new cover to be made for one of the boat lifts.
- [✓] Keep an eye on the businesses reopening for the season in Park Rapids and Dorset.
Typically, all shops are open by Memorial Day weekend.
- [] Re-stain decks and repaint porch railing.
Soon.
- [✓] Enjoy the change of seasons.

As you can see, this is a busy time of the year at the Lake. Like most year-round residents, we have many projects going, along with increasing social obligations as neighbors return to their cabins. But, it is so exciting to see Springtime begin again in the woods and waters - we are enjoying every minute.

I will leave you with a few photos that I snapped at the end of March during a walk on the lake. There had been a light snowfall the day before, followed by a strong wind. The resulting snowdrifts were sculpted into amazing white "waves".

(To read more of Liz Quaday's observations of life on Big Sand Lake, please visit her blog at postcardsfromlizblog.wordpress.com).



2020 MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Thank you to everyone who has renewed their BSLA membership or who have joined since the first membership notice was sent out in early January. Our membership stands at 145 members and Friends* as of April 18. Our goal is to match or better the 164 BSLA members in 2019.

No one knows for sure what will be happening this summer due to the COVID19 crisis except that Big Sand Lake will still be there. We do know that lake services providers have been given the ok to install docks and lifts. We know that boating and fishing can be done in a safe, social distancing way.

We also know that without a doubt BSLA will be functioning as normal as restrictions allow — conducting regular testings for water quality and AIS prevention; communicating with other area lakes for AIS warnings and precautions; ensuring that the sheriff's department has placed and are maintaining the safety buoys around the lake, keeping residents informed about current news around Big Sand and the neighborhood via our website and blast mails as needed.

That means your membership dues and support are as needed in 2020 as in any year. If you have not yet renewed or joined, please go to the membership tab on www.bigsandlake.org. Membership dues and donations can be mailed in with a downloadable membership form or paid online with a credit card or PayPal. Thank you for supporting BSLA as we strive to help to protect and keep Big Sand Lake the beautiful place it is for all to enjoy — even during a pandemic!

Can't remember if you have paid your dues? Current paid 2020 memberships are confirmed when a loon symbol appears in front of a name on the password protected Member Directory on the above website. Of course only current members are allowed to open the Member Directory, Click on "Forgot my password," if you believe you have paid 2020 dues but have forgotten your password or are having trouble getting into the site, immediate assistance will be emailed to you. Otherwise, please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

Stay safe! Stay healthy! Hoping that by the time you receive this newsletter, we will be looking at COVID19 in the rear view mirror.

Bonnie Brand / bonnie@pineconelodge.info and Barb Kimer / barb-kimer@gmail.com
BSLA Membership Co-Chairs

2019 WATERCRAFT INSPECTION RESULTS FOR BIG SAND



During the summer of 2019, the watercraft inspectors for Big Sand Lake recorded 1,466 inspections conducted during the 1,100 hours of being at the Big Sand public access. A partial summary of the results from the charts compiled and provided by Nicholas Macklem, Hubbard County Environmental Specialist, is below:

- 126 watercraft (14.35%) entered Big Sand from infested waters
- 59 (6.72%) came from Zebra Mussel infested waters
- 5 (.57%) came from starry stonewort infested waters
- 19 (2.16%) had plants, animals, water or mud on the watercraft
- 5 (.57%) arrived with the drain plug in
- 100 (11.30%) came from out of state

The complete chart of 2019 results for Big Sand along with a chart of the results for each lake in Hubbard County participating in the inspection program can be viewed on our website, www.bigsandlake.org under the "AIS Prevention and Reports" tab.

Inspections for the 2020 season have already started. An inspector was on duty on May 9, fishing opener (see photo). Although it was snowing most of the day, 5 boats were inspected that Saturday morning.