



# shorelines

Published By The Balsam Lake Homeowners' Association  
A volunteer, nonprofit organization serving the lake community since 1974.



**JULY 2017**

Avg. Temp.....70°  
Avg. High.....82°

Avg. Low.....57°  
Avg. Rain.....3.9"

For Current Weather:  
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## *The BLHA Boat Parade Will Be Held On Saturday, July 1, At 3 p.m.*



Help keep this 60-year-old tradition alive. Start planning today. Michael's, Party City and Dollar Stores all have fun decoration stuff. Don't forget there is a \$25 free coupon at Balsam Lake Hardware for parade supplies in the July *Shorelines* (see page 11). Create lifetime memories for the kids. They love it!!!

Ideas for a boat parade float include: patriotic, hunting, water sports, movie themes, sports themes, book themes, Disney themes, cartoon characters or any fun idea. Old Halloween and party decorations can easily be transformed into a fun boat float idea. Wood boats, vintage boats, decked out ski/wake boats and Jet Skis are encouraged to join the parade. Local businesses, organizations, schools and clubs are also welcome to join the fun. Please contact Dave Turbenson at [daveturbenson@yahoo.com](mailto:daveturbenson@yahoo.com) if you would like to confirm your spot in the parade or if you have questions. Preregistration is not required but requested.

Participants meet up in East Balsam at 2:45 p.m. just past the big narrows (see parade route on page 11). The judge blows the horn at 3 p.m. and the parade starts. The wood boats lead the parade and everyone else follows. The parade lasts about an hour and gift certificates from local restaurants are given to the top five rated boats. The winners also get tons of pictures posted on Facebook and printed in 2018 *Shorelines*.

The Balsam Lake Library will be holding the

# LIBRARY'S USED BOOK SALE



on Saturday,  
July 1, 2017  
from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

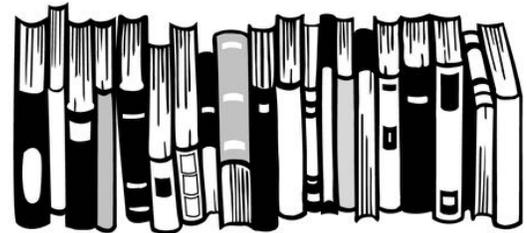
## Joe Kimball, Author

*The Friends of the Balsam Lake Library will hold an Author Event on July 8, 2017, at Our Lady of the Lakes Catholic Church at 10:30 a.m.*

Joe Kimball will talk about his book, *Secrets of the Congdon Mansion*, a first-hand account of the infamous Congdon murders in Duluth. One of Minnesota's richest women was smothered in her 39-room mansion, and her night nurse was bludgeoned to death on the stairway. A daughter was accused of planning the murders to speed up her \$8 million inheritance. There were convictions and acquittals in the case, along with more bodies, arson, bigamy and more.

The mansion, known as Glensheen, has become a popular tour site on the shores of Lake Superior, but the guides won't tell you much about the case. It was one of the region's most publicized and sensational murder cases and Joe had a front-row seat, covering it from start to finish as a reporter for the *Star Tribune*.

This is the 40th anniversary of the murders.



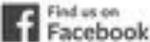
## Library Ongoing Programs and Events

- **Storytime** Tuesday mornings at 10:30 for toddlers, preschoolers and their caregivers.
- **Coffee and crayons for adults**, usually on the second Friday of each month at 10:30.
- **Cribbage** Wednesday at 12:30 in the community room.
- **Tech Time** with our technology advisor, Barb. She can help with specific questions and training. Times vary, check website or Facebook for updated info.
- **Drop-in computer hour** Wednesdays from 12:30-1:30. Meet with our staff member, Rebekah, for assistance with basic technology needs.



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# NIKKI KEISSLING NELSON

as told to Mary Skaret

**Nikki Keissling Nelson** says she's not the Matriarch, "That should really be my mother, who lived here full time for so many years. I'm just happy I can now spend more time here since we retired. Once you've lived on this lake, you can never forget it!

**We asked Nikki**, "How old is your Balsam Lake cabin?" Nikki says her aunt told her about 20 years ago that it was probably built by her grandpa, John Boeris who moved to Balsam Lake in 1925. She thought he built the cabins at his house down Park Drive and moved them to current location nearer to Pearson's Point on the south shore of the main lake. When Nikki's family moved to Balsam Lake in 1948, it was a little resort, called John's Resort and run by her aunt and uncle. That cabin was only 18 feet by 13 feet x 13, very little, was not insulated, no indoor plumbing (until it was put in about 20 years ago) and electricity but no electric appliances. There was another cabin exactly that size and a third that was insulated and a little larger - maybe 20 feet by 25 feet. So John's resort had 3 cabins.

**Nikki Keissling and her family** - father, mother and 2 brothers - moved to Balsam Lake from Chicago (she thinks to be closer to her mother's family) in May of her 1st grade year in 1948. "But for us kids it was just plain fun - simple and peaceful. I was so glad that we had moved from Chicago."

**"That first summer we lived in a cabin** at my grandparents, just down the road. But after that in the summers, we lived in what was called the 'boathouse.' Nikki says, "There were never boats stored in there but it probably was called that because it was the resort office as well as our house and next to the beach where boats were pulled up. It had two corners on land and two others over shallow water and I helped my aunt and uncle with the resort. It was maybe 3 or 4 times as large as the little cabins and divided into 3 rooms - kitchen/resort office, one bedroom in the front and a room in back that, at first was rented out and then made into two bedrooms (a hanging blanket made the 'wall' between bedrooms for us.) Once I remember a group of square dancers using it and put all the furniture out on the lawn. The whole kitchen ceiling was hinged on one side so we could lift it with a pulley system. When it opened, we could climb up to the attic to play on rainy days."

**"The resort had two outhouses**, one for men and one for women, shared by all cabins. There was an ice house with ice harvested from the lake in the winter, a screened 'fish cleaning shack', live boxes on the docks for the latest catch and a big, old wood burning stove by the dock. We all remember many fish fry's on that stove shared by family and cabin renters. Each of the cabins got a row boat but we kids had our own little, brown boat that barely floated, our toy. In the summer, Balsam Lake had a Water Pageant at the town beach with admiral hats, guest stars (like Axel and his Dog), amphibian rides and log rolling competitions. It was a big deal! We found our own log and decided we were going to do that - well, it wouldn't really float like theirs but we had a great time on it for several years. One time we floated half way to the island on our log. I sure wouldn't recommend it now with all the boats zooming by!"



This was built around 1925 by John Boeris and became part of John's Resort.

and sit on frost covered toilet seats. He also covered his car with a tarp and plugged in a head-bolt heater so it would start each morning. We walked all the way to school most days. My dad left for work earlier but occasionally a passing neighbor would give us a ride on a really cold morning. But most days we just walked to and from school. We had just as much fun living on the lake in the winter as in the summer - Snow forts and sledding and skating!"

**"Our family only had a row boat**, and no motor, so my brothers and I didn't go far on the water in the summer, unless others took us. We travelled further when we could skate on the ice. Oh, skating on the lake was so fun - you could go and go and go. We would go down to Paradise to see the planes land on the ice. We would skate out to the ice fisherman - just to see if they were catching anything! Some years there was too much snow to do that. But we always shoveled off a rink on

(continued on Page 4)



Picture painted by Nikki, circa 1970.

*(continued from Page 3 - Nikki Keissling Nelson)*

Raskin Bay (behind the cabins) and skated there a lot! We almost never even went into town, except for school. Our mother didn't either, our dad brought home the groceries we needed. I babysat in the summer when I was in junior high and did take the kids to town and the beach. As a junior and senior in high school, I worked at Barney and Jim Anderson's Drugstore and thought I had gotten the best job in town. I remember I got \$37.50 every two weeks for 80 hours of work. I don't think I could have told you how to get to Amery or Frederick because I had never driven there. We did have to go other places to buy school clothes, but other than that we rarely went anywhere."

**Nikki and her brothers** went from elementary to 11th grade in Balsam Lake with only about 12 to 13 other students in her class. "In my junior year, I joined students from Centuria and Milltown in Milltown and it was called Unity High School. Before, we were bused there for band, and then back to Balsam Lake. "The three schools, Balsam Lake, Centuria and Milltown were combining their resources." Nikki was in the first year of Unity Graduates in 1959 (though the new building wasn't yet finished.) There were 66 in her graduating class. In the fall of 1959, she moved to the Twin Cities for work and lived with lake neighbors, the Helms, "like family". It was there in 1960 at the Prom Ballroom in St. Paul that she coincidentally met Les Nelson, another person from northwestern Wisconsin. He was from Clam Falls - less than an hour north. He had graduated in 1958 from Frederic High School. In 1961, they married at Faith Lutheran Church here in Balsam Lake.

**In January of 1964**, Nikki and Les moved to California for a job in the construction industry and became almost 53 year residents of California, but never forgot Balsam Lake. The young family came back one week every other year and stayed in the house that had been built on the site of one of the original cabins. Regular trips to Balsam Lake continued as the Wisconsin/California family expanded. Nikki says, "I repeat many of these stories to the kids and the grandkids so then they know too what it was like back where I was growing up. And now they have all had their own experiences here themselves."

**Nikki and Les retired** in 2003 after almost 40 years in the construction industry and started spending a lot more time here - like 6 or 7 months, depending if they stayed for hunting. Their two sons Greg and Chris and their families returned to this area as well. Their two daughters, Charlotte and Sheri, who are teachers in California come here for family vacations each summer.

**"Every year, in the middle of winter**, everyone in our family (including all 9 grandchildren-which is the 5th generation of our family to enjoy Balsam Lake) picks a date when the ice will go out of the lake and place a \$1 bet. We have been doing it so long, I don't remember when it all started. I am guessing it probably was right after we moved away from Wisconsin. It keeps us all thinking about Balsam Lake whether we are 2,000 miles away or not!"

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## 2017 YOUTH SUMMER READING PROGRAM

June 13 - July 19, 2017



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### How does it work?

- Kids, Pre-K-12th, can register at the Kick-off party or at the library.  
*We have our 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program available for nonschool-age children.*
- Read, Read, Read. As many and any books you like.
- Come in to the library once a week to tell a librarian that you read.
- Choose a prize from a local business.
- Check out material from the library to enter the final drawing.

*To earn extra entries you can attend Summer Reading events or do something to "Build a Better World" - small act of kindness, community service, pay it forward. etc.*



### Attention Adults!

We also have a fun summer reading program for adults (ages 18+). Stop in the library to find out how you too can win great prizes this summer.

June 19 - July 26

**Mystery Night - July 26 at 6:30 pm**



## SUMMER READING EVENTS

*For kids of all ages & their families. For the most updated information check our website or Facebook page.*

- **Tuesday, June 13 - Kick-off Party & "The Magic of Isaiah" Magic Show**

10 a.m. at Balsam Lake Public Library  
Summer Reading registration followed by a Subway catered lunch.

- **Thursday, June 15 - Buttons, Beading & Stamping Fun**

4:30 p.m. at Balsam Lake Public Library  
2nd chance sign-up! Fun crafts followed by root beer floats!

- **Tuesday, June 20 - Underwater Worlds w/Land & Water Conservation**

10:30 a.m. at Balsam Lake Beach  
Explore the world's underwater with aquascopes.

- **Thursday, June 22 - Tour of RCU Bank**

4:30 p.m. at Balsam Lake Public Library  
Meet at the library. Tour RCU then head back to the library for "BEE smart about money" with Deb Paulson and other fun activities.



- **Tuesday, June 27 - Sundown Border Collies with DAWCWR**

10:30 a.m. at Pine Park  
Experience throwing frisbees to the dogs.

- **Wednesday, June 28 - Butterfly Worlds w/Lauren from Crex Meadows**

4:30 p.m. at Balsam Lake Public Library  
Learn about butterflies in our area and how we restore their habitat.



- **Wednesday, July 5 - Menagerie of Pets! with DAWCWR**

4:30 p.m. at Balsam Lake Public Library  
A friendly dog, a curious cat, dancing cockatoo, lazy snake & more!

- **Thursday, July 6 - Karate in the Park**

With Milltown Karate - 4:30 p.m. at Pine Park  
Dress comfortably and be ready to move.

- **Tuesday, July 11 - Pioneer School Days**

10:30 a.m. at The Little School  
A journey back in time, making butter, writing on slates, dressing in pioneer clothes and old school games. Bring your own authentic, pioneer lunch. Sign up by stopping at the library, calling or via Facebook.



- **Thursday, July 13 - DOC's Restaurant Experience**

4:30 a.m. at Balsam Lake Public Library  
Meet at the library. Tour Doc's Restaurant and build your own pizza!

- **Tuesday, July 18 - Reptiles! with DAWCWR**

10:30 a.m. at Balsam Lake Public Library  
Hold a snake or kiss a frog!



- **Wednesday, July 19 - Summer Reading Finale Party w/ the Mad Science guy**

4:30 p.m. at Balsam Lake Public Library  
Pizza & Prizes @ 4:30 p.m. followed by Mad Science guy, Jim Birkel @ 5:30 p.m.

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# JOYS OF "GOING TO THE LAKE"

*After we had been married three months*, my husband asked if it would be okay to buy his parents' lake property in Balsam Lake, Wis. He had enjoyed summers there since he was ten. Although my family spent a week at a Minnesota resort a couple of times, I grew up in South Dakota and swam in a public pool. I had no idea what "going to the lake" meant.

*We bought an older house* with no view of the lake and no indoor bathroom. A wood stove provided heat. I repeatedly told our toddler, "Don't touch it; it's hot." He touched it and said his first word, "hot." We also got the aluminum fishing boat with a 10-horsepower motor, which didn't take us far.

*My husband would fill and empty a wash tub* so that I could bathe, but I insisted we needed indoor plumbing. Our daughter used a portable potty chair until 3 because I was afraid she might fall into the outhouse hole. We built a small cabin with two bedrooms, a loft, and a functioning bathroom in 1974. Through the years I would pack the car, pick up the children after school, and pick up my husband after work. Then, we'd head for the cabin. I at first threatened to put the cabin up for sale before calling the mortician if my husband were to die. But with a year-around cabin, we discovered that the winter season there was as wonderful as the summer. With a used speedboat, I saw more of the lake and realized how beautiful it was. And now our grandchildren are enjoying lake life. After almost 50 years of ownership, we are happy that our son and his wife have taken responsibility.

*I don't remember* when my attitude about lake life changed, but as we took a ride in that original aluminum boat over the summer, I again was grateful for the joys that "going to the lake" provides.



Marie and Tom Mattison  
Balsam Lake, Wisconsin

*This article first printed in the Friday, December 16, 2016 of the Star Tribune.  
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**SAVE THE DATE!**

**Balsam Lake Invitational Ski Show**

Saturday, June 24, at 7 p.m., at Sunnyside Marina

**Freedom Fest BLHA Boat Parade**

Saturday, July 1, 2017, 3 to 4:30 p.m.

**Freedom Fest Fireworks**

Monday, July 3, 2017, at Dusk

**Balsam Lake Water Ski Show Team Exhibition Show**

Saturday, July 8, at 7 p.m. - along Hwy. 46 at west end of Balsam Lake. Show viewing is by boat only.

**Balsam Lake Protection & Rehabilitation District Annual Meeting**

Saturday, July 15, 2017, 9 a.m., at Unity Schools

**Balsam Lake Homeowners Association Annual Meeting**

Saturday, August 12, 2017, 8:30 a.m.,  
Crickets Bar & Grill

**Balsam Lake Water Ski Show Team Exhibition Show**

Saturday, August 19, at 6 p.m. - along Hwy. 46 at west end of Balsam Lake.  
Show viewing is by boat only.

**Labor Day Weekend Water Ski Show**

Saturday, September 2, at 6 p.m.,  
at Sunnyside Marina

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**shorelines**

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# Information About Electric Shock Drowning

Our members, Kitty and Jim Haight sent me the link to this story about Electric Shock Drowning:

*The parents of 15-year-old Carmen Johnson*, who tragically died from electric shock drowning while swimming near her family's Alabama lake house last April, are speaking out about the rarely reported phenomenon after it took the lives of two more women recently. The women, 34-year-old Shelly Darling and the 41-year-old Elizabeth Whipple, went missing after sunbathing on Lake Tuscaloosa Friday afternoon. Their bodies were retrieved from the lake early Saturday morning. Preliminary autopsies for the two victims show the cause of death as electrocution, said the Tuscaloosa County Homicide Unit.

*"I have been around water all my life* and I never thought that electricity in a huge body of water like that could do what it did," said Carmen's father, Jimmy Johnson. "It is something that even people like me now after all these years never had any idea that this even happened." He reports that Carmen jumped off the top level of the family's boat dock into the lake with her friend Reagan. Jimmy Johnson lowered a metal ladder into the water so the girls could climb out. Minutes later, he heard Reagan scream, "Help!" That is when Johnson and his son, Zach jumped into the water after the girls and immediately felt piercing electric shocks. "Cut the power off," Johnson yelled to his wife. Johnson, Reagan and Zach survived but Carmen didn't make it. Johnson later found a light switch at the dock that was half full of water. When he put the metal ladder into the water, the electrical current from the light switch traveled through the dock to the ladder and into the surrounding water, where the girls were swimming. Johnson believes that if his family had been educated about electric shock drownings this might have never happened. Now he is sharing his daughter's story as a warning to others, along with tips to help prevent similar tragedies from occurring.

### Safety Tips include:

- Use a plastic ladder, rather than a metal one, so it won't help transfer electricity into the water
- If you start to feel a tingle in the water, swim away from the dock, which is where most electrical issues occur.
- Check all the wiring around your dock, including your ground fault circuit breaker

*Every day, about 10 people in the U.S. die* from accidental drowning, per the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. But electric shock drowning is difficult to track. It's known as a "silent killer." According to the ESD Prevention Association, the electricity comes from the wiring of the dock or marina, or from boats connected to a power supply. When the current hits the water, swimmers can be paralyzed by the shock, leaving them unable to swim. The ESD Prevention Association recommends never swimming near marinas, docks or boatyards. You should also routinely have your boat inspected by an electrician.

For more information, here is a link to the nonprofit Electric Shock Drowning website: [www.electricshockdrowning.org](http://www.electricshockdrowning.org)

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## RAINY DAY ON BALSAM LAKE?

Stop by the Museum to check out the Star Wars Display

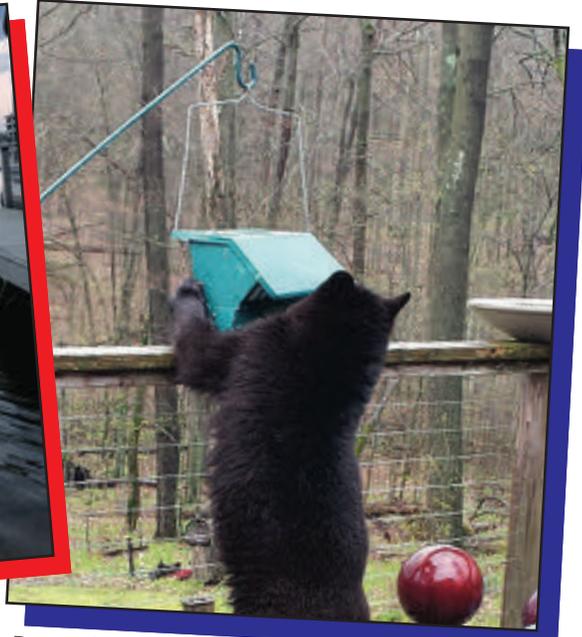
When Star Wars hit the movie theaters in 1977, it instantly became a box office smash, especially with children. Kids wanting to bring the action home from the theater with them could find their favorite heroes, villains, creatures and spaceships in miniature size on the toy shelves. From 1978 to 1985, Kenner Toys manufactured hundreds of action figures, vehicles, and playsets featured in the movies Star Wars, The Empire Strikes Back, and Return of the Jedi. These toys today are as iconic as the movies themselves. This display is available to loan to libraries and museums and is a huge display of these original Kenner Star Wars toys. It includes 100 unique action figures, 3 larger creatures, 19 vehicles and 13 playsets and more.

If you are a Millennial stop by and relive seeing the movie. If you are too young to vote stop by and wonder, why your parents still like the older Star Wars movies best. This exhibit will be here until Labor Day, but stop by and see it now!

# PHOTOS FROM AROUND

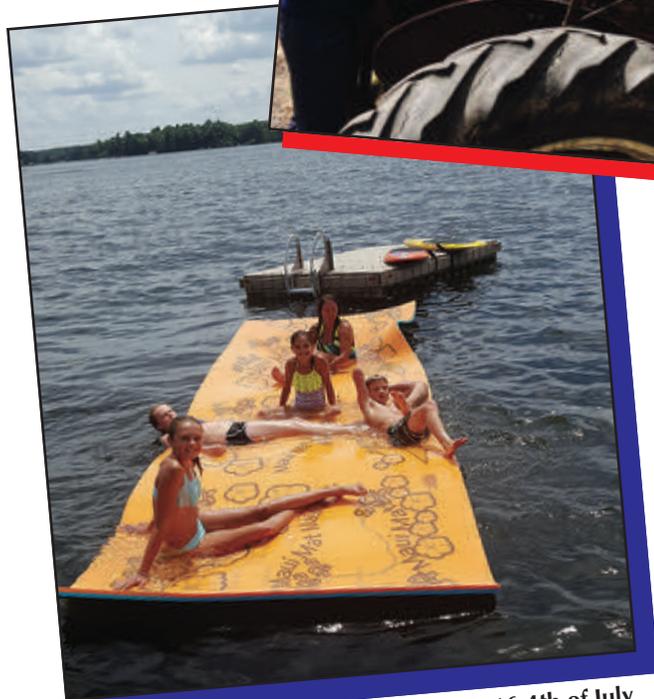


Charlie Hansen with the 36-inch Northern he caught on East Balsam while fishing from his kayak ... Nice fish!



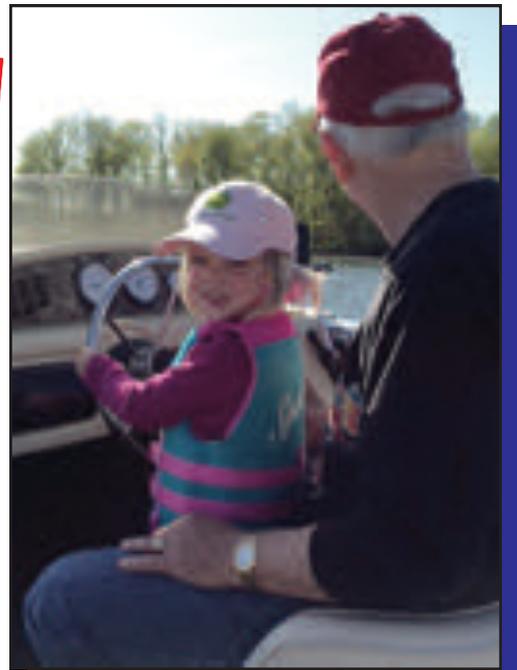
Bear enjoying a birdbox lunch at Kris Muller's deck.

Mommy, Mia and Jack on Grandpa's tractor.



Borka and Moore families enjoying 2016 4th of July weekend at the Flynn cabin.

Mia driving Bompa's speedboat.



How to fish things out of the lake.

# BEAUTIFUL BALSAM LAKE!

All photo descriptions  
courtesy of editor.



Amelia SantinHello enjoying the first ride of the season.



Gord Walther celebrating his 42nd birthday at the Otter.



Happy family on a  
boat ride.



Who knew there are TWO famous dogs named  
Rocco on Balsam Lake!



Jenna, Paige and friends on a Top 10 Day on Balsam Lake.



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# THESE VINTAGE BOATS!

On Saturday, August 12th the Bob Speltz Land-O-Lakes chapter (Minnesota and Western Wisconsin) of the Antique & Classic Boat Society of America will be having an outing on Balsam Lake. We expect at least a dozen and maybe two dozen vintage wooden speedboats and classic fiberglass boats to attend. Everyone will meet at the docks at Paradise Landing at 11:00 am. We'll then go on a group tour (parade) of the lake and return to Paradise around 12:30 p.m. for lunch, before heading out again later in the afternoon for another cruise. **We invite anyone on Balsam with a vintage motorboat of any kind -wood, fiberglass or aluminum- to join us.** And we invite everyone to come to Paradise to see the boats. The BSLOL members are great people, a ton of fun, and love to talk about the boats and the hobby. We had a similar event three summers ago and everyone loved Balsam. Hope to see you on the lake!



## POLK COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

in conjunction with local Lake Associations actively patrols this lake. Many of the most common complaints brought to the Polk County Sheriff's Department Water Patrol are briefly addressed below.

**REGISTRATION:** All boats (other than sailboats under 12' and manually propelled boats which do not have a motor) and PWC's must possess both a "Certificate of Number" (registration numbers) and Expiration Decals displayed on the front half of the bow in contrasting colors to the rest of the hull. This means both the annual sticker and the full registration number must be displayed. Boats kept on Wisconsin lakes for 60 consecutive days MUST be registered in Wisconsin. Fine for violations range from \$162.70 to \$200.50 and can be issued to operator OR owner.

**UNDERAGE OPERATION:** ANY operator born after January 1st, 1989 must possess (and be able to show) a Wisconsin approved Boater's Safety Certificate. Persons under the age of 12 may not operate a PWC. Persons between 10 years of age and 12 years of age may operate a boat only WITH direct parental supervision. Permitting underage operation or operating without Safety Certificate carries a fine of \$162.70.

**PWC SPECIFIC RULES:** PWC's may not be operated at greater than Slow No Wake (SNW) speed within 200' of shore or within 100' of another vessel, dock, raft, or a person water skiing. This means the slowest speed possible to maintain control. PWC's may not be operated between sunset and sunrise. PWC's may tow a skier/tube rider if the PWC is designed to carry THREE persons and a "competent spotter" is riding and facing backward with the operator. More than one skier or tuber rider is allowed. All persons riding on or being pulled by a PWC must use approved Personal Floatation Device (PFD). PWC's must possess a fire extinguisher. Fines for these violations range from \$175.30 to \$200.50.

**BOAT SPECIFIC RULES:** Boats may not be operated at greater than SNW within 100' of shore, a water skier, dock, raft or buoyed restricted area (including SNW area). No persons are allowed to ride on boat decks or gunwales (side of the boat, seat backs, sun decks or seats on raised platforms). All boats operated between sunset and sunrise must use required lighting. Boats may not exceed restrictions of Capacity Plates, must possess sufficient PFD's for all passengers and must possess a fire extinguisher in a "readily accessible location" if the boat has any closed construction (compartment of any kind). The boat's battery must have terminals covered and be held in place to prevent the battery from moving. Boats must have a competent spotter in the boat when towing skiers (mirrors do not fit Wisconsin's requirement). Towing skiers between sunset and sunrise is prohibited. Fines range from \$162.50 to \$200.50.

**RECKLESS OPERATION/INTOXICATED BOATING:** Creating a hazardous or dangerous wake, operating in a "reckless manner" or using "unreasonable or imprudent speed" are all illegal. Operating under the influence of an intoxicant or with a detectable amount of a restricted controlled substance can result in fines, an arrest or both. Fines for these violations range from \$162.50 to \$452.50 and can also result in an arrest and criminal charges.

Any questions, concerns or comments should be directed to:  
Deputy Jeff Hahn  
Polk County Sheriff's Department  
Recreation Department  
715-485-8313 or email at jeffrey.hahn@co.polk.wi.us



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