



# The Birch Bark

June 2023



## Election Issue

White Birch Lakes  
Recreational Association  
4730 Lake Road, Farwell,  
Michigan 48622

Office: (989) 588-7169  
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### SPECIAL ELECTION ISSUE

**WHITE BIRCH LAKES RECREATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING AND**

**ELECTION of 2023-2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**SATURDAY, JULY 15th 2023, AT 10:00 AM**

Meeting will be held at the Campground Pavilion

Candidate's letters and election information enclosed

Please remember you must have a valid picture ID to vote



### MEET THE CANDIDATES

A chance to ask questions or just hear the candidates speak before you vote. They will be at the Campground from 9 am to 10 am prior to the Annual Meeting.

### ELECTION 2023 NEWS

We are once again approaching our Annual Members Meeting and the election of Directors. There are three (3) seats open for election this year. Three (2) seats will be for a three (3) year term. One (1) seat is a one (1) year term.

#### ABSENTEE BALLOTS

An application for absentee ballots is enclosed with this Newsletter.

**NOTE:** In order to vote by Absentee Ballot your total account balance must be \$314.00 or less on all lots. Please call Lisa at 989-588-7169 with any questions.

### Calendar of Events

4 <sup>th</sup> of July Parade (campground)	July 1st	12 pm
4 <sup>th</sup> of July Picnic	July 1 <sup>st</sup>	1:30 pm
Bingo (clubhouse)	July 8 <sup>th</sup>	1-3 pm
Meet the Candidates	July 15th	9 am
Annual Members Meeting	July 15th	10 am

**THE BOARD IS REQUESTING ALL MEMBERS TO PLEASE ATTEND THE ANNUAL MEETING EVEN IF YOU VOTED BY ABSENTEE BALLOT TO ESTABLISH A QUORUM. IF A QUORUM IS NOT REACHED, ANOTHER MEETING WOULD HAVE TO BE SCHEDULED RESULTING IN ADDITIONAL COSTS TO THE ASSOCIATION.**

## ANNUAL MEMBER'S MEETING JULY 15, 2023

In order to streamline the registration process of the Annual Member's Meeting, we have implemented the following to establish the necessary quorum, encourage Member participation and expedite the voting procedure as follows:

- 1) There will be a registration table at the pavilion entrance. You will need to check in at this table upon arrival to verify your Member "In good standing" status. You will need to show a pictured ID. After your Member status has been verified, you will receive a wrist band to speed up the receiving of ballots.
- 2) A hand-held microphone will be utilized for Member comments and /or questions. You will need to state your name and lot number prior to your comment and/or question. The microphone will be brought to you.
- 3) The Annual Member's Meeting will commence at 10:00 AM.
- 4) The meeting will be conducted in a professional and respectful manner in order to conclude the business of the meeting as efficiently as possible.
- 5) Once the business portion has been completed, voting will start.
- 6) You will show your wrist band to the Election Committee, receive your ballot(s) and cast your vote(s).
- 7) Members who do not attend Meet the Candidates or the Annual Member's Meeting or who arrive late will need to register with the Election Committee prior to receiving ballot(s).
- 8) The voting results will be announced after the ballots have been counted. Note: Members who have voted absentee are encouraged to attend the Annual Meeting and will be counted towards the quorum.



### Voting

We have had some issues in the past at the Annual Members Meeting when it is time to vote. The problem is when the Member(s) name does not match the records in the office. The Office and Election Committee uses the name(s) that are on the official tax roll from the county. This can create a problem when (for example) spouses or co-owners names are not on the record and they show up to vote.

**It is the PROPERTY OWNERS' RESPONSIBILITY to have the tax records updated with the names of those who may vote.** Remember, each lot that Assessment fees are paid on results in one vote per lot and a picture ID is required.

If you are uncertain as to whose name(s) appears of record for your lot(s), please contact Lisa (Association Secretary) at 989-588-7169 or [ecoffice@whitebirch.org](mailto:ecoffice@whitebirch.org)

**2023 Application for Absentee Ballot  
White Birch Lakes Recreational Association Election**

1. White Birch Lakes Recreational Association (WBLRA) By-Laws provide that Members may vote by Absentee Ballot by requesting a ballot in writing.

2. If you choose to vote by Absentee Ballot in the **2023 WBLRA election**, you must **complete this application and return to the POST OFFICE BOX listed below or deposit it in the locked Election box located in the Secretary/Treasurer's office during business hours.**

3. Absentee ballots will be sent out *AFTER* Thursday, June 15, 2023. ***To receive an Absentee Ballot, this application must be received AT THE POST OFFICE or be deposited in the locked Election box located in the Secretary/Treasurer's office during business hours BEFORE Thursday, June 29, 2023. No other application will be accepted.***

4. FIRST AND LAST NAME OF VOTER \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING STREET ADDRESS AND/OR P.O. BOX # \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE & ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

5. LOT NUMBER(S) \_\_\_\_\_

You may only vote for lots upon which you pay assessments-**NOT CONTIGUOUS LOTS.**

6. MEMBER'S SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

**MUST BE SIGNED**

7. Member's Signature: (By signing this application, this certifies that they are an owner of the listed lot(s), that they are a member in Good Standing, that they intend to submit an Absentee Ballot for the lot(s) listed, and they will not permit a non-member, or member not in Good Standing to vote using the Absentee Ballot(s) they will be issued.)

**8. RETURN THIS COMPLETED APPLICATION BY U.S. MAIL TO:**

White Birch Lakes Election  
P.O. Box 839  
Farwell, Michigan 48622

(or the locked Election box located in the Secretary/Treasurer's office during office business hours)

***9. Applications for Absentee Ballots MUST BE received BEFORE Thursday, June 29, 2023 to receive a voting ballot(s) by mail.***

***10. ABSENTEE BALLOTS MUST BE MAILED AND RECEIVED ONLY AT THE POST OFFICE BOX BY 4 PM, FRIDAY, JULY 14, 2023 TO BE COUNTED.***

11. If you do not receive an Absentee ballot by *Friday, July 7, 2023*, please contact the Election Committee Chairperson, Teresa Stephens 989-339-1417.

Office Use Only

Membership Status Verified \_\_\_\_\_ (initials)

Not Verified \_\_\_\_\_ (initials)

Revised 10/13/2022

My name is Steve Bryant, owner White Birch Lot number 1  
I am submitting my letter of intent to run for the Board of Directors of White Birch Lakes of Clare. My wife Louise and I have lived in White Birch for 47 years. Myself and 2 partners were the second developers for the subdivision. I have been a member of the Board of Directors for over 20 years and feel that I bring a lot of experience and knowledge to the board. It has always been my intention to operate within the annual budget while maintaining all of our amenities and facilities, without increasing assessments. I would appreciate your vote for this seat.

Respectfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Bryant". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "S" and "B".

Steve Bryant

June 1, 2023

## LETTER OF INTENT

To: White Birch Lakes Recreational Association, May 28, 2023

It is my desire to be placed on the ballot for a seat on the Board of Directors of the association.

I have been a property owner since the beginning of development of this area by Nueland Development Inc. in the 1970's. I began with a  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre parcel which entitled me to use the campgrounds. I later purchased a  $1\frac{1}{2}$  acre parcel and used it for camping. I fell in love with the area and subsequently purchased the adjoining  $1\frac{1}{2}$  acres and over time have developed it into my homestead which I used on weekends and vacations for a number of years.

After the death of my dear wife, Jessie, I met and married my loving wife, Willa, who many of you know because of her volunteerism here in the community. We have made this our one and only home for 6 years now. I call my place Agrestic Acres on the mailbox but it is really my campsite with a house on it. I guess that makes me a hybrid; part camper and part homeowner.

I have experienced the joys and frustrations of camping and the quiet stability of a homeowner.

I retired from the hustle-bustle of life in the Detroit and suburban areas and fully enjoy the peace that comes from living in "the woods"; enjoying nature around me.

### MY QUALIFICATIONS:

I have an Engineering Degree from Lawrence Technological University, in Southfield, MI. I have worked for each of the big three automotive companies in various important capacities. I am fully retired from industry and now hold a ministerial license with the Church of God of Anderson, Indiana. I have experience in and been licensed in Real Estate Sales, Mutual Fund Sales, Life Insurance Sales and worked as an instructor in Robotics. I am a honorably discharged veteran of the US Army with the rank of SFC.

I feel my educational and work backgrounds eminently qualify me to the important position for which I am applying.

It is my intention, if elected, to consider the desires and needs of both the campers and the homeowners. I am fully aware that there are different considerations for each group. However, I feel that when we all are fully aware of the rules and requirements of the association and Lincoln Township and abide by them, other differences can be worked out within legal boundaries.

Above all, for all of us to fully enjoy the beauty and amenities afforded us here in WBLRA, we must agree to live by the rules established by the founders (until legally changed) and be considerate of other people's feelings and expectations. It should be noted that first of all this is a residential area which allows camping, not the other way around. We should have all been aware of that when we bought our first parcel of property in this beautiful part of God's creation.

Sincerely,  
William H. Coombe (Bill)  
Lots 232/233

*Bill Coombe received  
5/30/23  
H. Jank*

My name is Kevin Dombrowski.

6/1/23

I would like to submit my letter of intent/candidacy to run for one of the open seats for the Board of Directors at White Birch Lakes Recreation Association.

I am the owner of lots 1209 and 1210 and have been a camping member since 1988. Having enjoyed WBLRA since 1972 when my parents purchased a camping lot (1210) from the original developers. I was 10 years old then.

My qualifications include serving on the WBLRA board for 12 consecutive years, then taking a one year break and then most recently filling a board vacancy for the past 11 months. I live in Brighton Michigan, and am a full time registered nurse at the University of Michigan, as well as a proud Navy Veteran. I plan on building my retirement home at WBLRA and eventually becoming a "full-timer".

During the time I was on the board we weathered an expensive lawsuit; dealt with the issues of the pandemic; and took a stand with the other board members to push for a special zoning district. This zoning kept the camping experience that we all have grown to know and enjoy. Not to mention the running of the everyday needs of the facilities, the amenities, the employees, the equipment, and most importantly THE NEEDS OF THE MEMBERSHIP.

Anyone who knows me knows that I don't bow to any specific group or side at WBLRA. I have made many decisions over the years with some being well received, and some have not. However, I make my decisions based on the needs of the membership as a whole. Not the needs of any special interests or groups: Right is right and wrong is wrong. We are all dues paying members, and we all have equal rights to enjoy all that this association has to offer.

We have the Covenants and Restrictions that we must comply with. They are the rule book and they guarantee our rights as members. That is a given. If we don't like the rules, we hold a vote and change them. Majority rules...simple as that.

Taking the above into consideration, we also need to be respectful and understanding of our fellow members and neighbors. We all enjoy WBLRA for our own reasons, and we all need to respect each other. It's a two way street. We are one association and we all need to work together to resolve issues and address concerns. Nobody is going to fix it for us. We need to do it ourselves.

In closing, I will continue to consider and respect the needs of the membership AND every single member when dealing with the various issues that come up from time to time.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin Dombrowski

received  
6/1/23

Date: May 1, 2023

Re: Open Board Seat

Hello All,

My name is Dawn Holzer and I am seeking a position in the upcoming election for a position on the Board of Directors for WBLRA.

My hubby Dan and I have lived in White Birch for 19 years and we both love this place and everything it has to offer. We wave to everyone that goes by our place. So enjoyable...

I have served on the Board in the past from 2011 to 2020. I worked in the office of WBLRA in 2009-2010. I also worked one season in the office of Lake of the Pines Association in 2013. Best times ever....

I have been an active member on several committees which include Finance, EPC, Election, Conservation, and Activities.

I so *appreciate* volunteers. We have to have them to help maintain this Association. Most recently is the work that has been done to upgrade the front gate and the work that has been done to upgrade the Bulletin Board area at the gate also. Plus all the improvements that have been made to the campground and walking trail last year. What an improvement!!!!

I worked for the Clare County Gypsy Moth Suppression Program this past year. I was 1<sup>st</sup> exposed to the Gypsy Moth problems back in 1988, when my hubby and I bought our 1<sup>st</sup> cottage in Clare County. So as you can see, they don't go away but we all can help control the infestations. I have also worked with the Clare County Forester at the Clare County Conservation Department and learned the threats and recommendations for the survival of our wonderful trees. One of the largest threats to our Red Oaks is a very devastating disease, called "Oak Wilt" which is started by a beetle and then travels through the trees root system to other trees. There is an abundance of information about Oak Wilt on the web. Just google it for more info. We *all* have to be pro-active to help control the spread of this disease. It is recommended not to cut oaks from April to July.

Thank You for your consideration

*Dawn Holzer*  
Dawn Holzer

Lots 1101, 1102, and 1103

*received  
may 1st*

# Marie Sherry ✓

Lots 713/714 ✓ [Marie4WBLRA@gmail.com](mailto:Marie4WBLRA@gmail.com)

Candidate for a Vacant Seat on the Board of Directors of White Birch Lakes Recreational Association ✓

May 30, 2023

Dear Neighbors:

It seems hard to believe that I'm starting my fourth summer camping at White Birch. That first year, I had a lot with no good access, bought cheap on tax sale, and I knew absolutely nobody. Four years later I've met a lot of great people, made some friends, and have two lots not only with access, but also with electricity! White Birch has truly become my peaceful place.

I ran for a board position last year, and I did not do a good job of introducing myself to all of you – so I'm going to try to do better this time around. First, here's the resume items. I am currently serving as the treasurer, finance director, and property tax assessor for a small city downstate, and I have a master's degree in public administration with a concentration in urban planning and an alphabet soup of professional certifications. I'm looking forward to retiring in a couple years, after around 30 years of local government service, and starting a new adventure that will most certainly include White Birch. I've also had the honor of serving our country as a petty officer in the United States Navy.

Here at White Birch, I've been involved with two of the standing committees – Policy and C&R. Last year I chaired Policy and participated in C&R, and this year I've chaired both committees (although Policy has been largely inactive). The C&R project was quite a challenge, and I'd like to publicly thank my committee members for their hard work. I'm proud of the spirit of cooperation between this committee and the White Birch Board as we tried to craft a document that will stand the test of time and serve all members of the association well.

If I am elected to serve you on the board, my priority would be to bring the C&R project to its conclusion, with community education sessions followed by the vote of members. My other goals would be to update the By-Laws and then work on policies including those which help guide our committees. It is my belief that solid and understandable policy will go a long way towards healing rifts that have existed in our community both recently and in the distant past. I am pleased that the current Board was able to implement a new website and email communication system (and kudos to staff on both!) so that we can better share information with members.

Everyone has different strengths – if we need someone to create a marketing plan or design a product, that's not me. My strengths are my knowledge and experience in public administration, a field that exists solely to serve communities. I would appreciate the opportunity to share my strengths not only through committee service, but as an actual decision maker for our membership. Thank you for your consideration and I hope that I have earned your vote.

Marie Sherry  
5/30/2023

Reviewed  
5/30/23