

BOYD'S BULLETIN

2023 Season

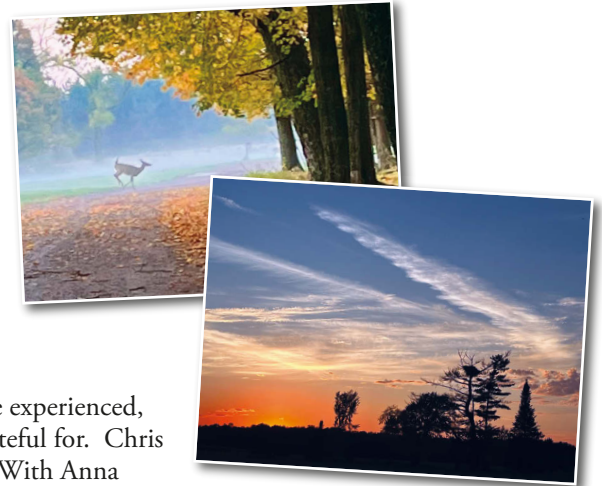


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On a quiet evening shortly before our 2023 season ended, I stood outside on our deck and enjoyed the rare sound of a lone wolf sending up a call. Soon after, another wolf answered from the direction of Long Lake. As the two sang back and forth, another wolf joined the song from the East side of Dog Lake. While these three adult voices harmonized, several smaller, higher pitched voices joined the chorus from the direction of the original wolf. Someone was calling their family together, and their family answered. As I listened to this family celebrate the stillness and the time together, I couldn't help but think about the coming winter and reflect on this past season. The weather is getting cooler, and it's time to surround ourselves with loved ones, slow down, reflect, make changes, and root ourselves in gratitude for everything around us.

This season was one of the busiest and possibly most challenging seasons we have experienced, and yet the memories that shine through are the moments and people we are grateful for. Chris retaking the reigns of the dining room and kitchen is a shining example of this. With Anna moving and joining her family in Michigan last year, we began the search for a kitchen manager that would love our small slice of heaven as much as we do. While I can't imagine living or working anywhere else, the long hours of the dining room and kitchen, the physical demands, and the remote location aren't for everyone. Without finding the right fit to fill Anna's position, Chris stepped back in, and with Becca's help, she worked incredibly hard to train a new dining room staff.

Back in the kitchen, we were blessed to have Jeff, Hugh, Eberhard and Jean. Each of these team members works so hard in their positions to make sure the kitchen runs smoothly and efficiently. We have been so fortunate to have them working with us for so many years or, in Jean's case, decades.



An Incredible 34 Years with Jean at Boyd's

This season marked the culmination of Jean Wheeler's incredible 34 year career at Boyd's. When I think of gratitude, family, and holding the people we love close, I think of Jean Wheeler, and I'm sure I'm not alone. She has made more birthdays, anniversaries, and weddings special with her beautiful cakes and bakery creations than I can count. She always has a smile, a hug, or a warm chocolate chip cookie for anyone having a bad day.

Jean started at Boyd's in 1989, when she first joined us as a waitress in the fall. She then experimented with both the dishwasher and pots and pans positions for a year each, before she finally settled in as our beloved creator of pastries and confections. Jean definitely had her hands full with the demands of being our full time baker, but she still always found the time and energy to help prepare both the insides and outsides of our cabins every spring with our housekeeping staff and grounds crew. Fall would either see Jean helping Jim clean and refurbish our resort boats, or in the kitchen deep cleaning our steam tables and ovens after a busy season. In the winter, Jean tackled the never ending project of

splitting and stacking firewood to be used in cabin fireplaces during our open season. She has been the Jean of all trades, and master of everything she puts her mind to. We could not be more proud to be able to say that she has been such an integral part of this resort for so long, we cannot thank her enough for her wonderful contributions to each and every season, and we wish her the very best in her retirement. We send Jean off with so much love and can't wait to hear about the adventures we know she will be embarking on in the coming months and years.

Just as Jean spent decades as part of the team that has made the resort what it is today, we have many guests that have born witness to the evolution of Boyd's over the years. John Breidster's ancestors were original members of the Mohawk Club, and he is one of those guests. He has been spending a portion of his summers at the resort since 1948, and after 75 years he still maintains that no one makes better pancakes than Boyd's (thank you Jean).

John has memories of the times when the sawmill was active, when meat served in the dining room came from animals raised on the property, and has family lore that is older than the Mohawk Cabin's foundation. In the early 1900's John's grandfather, Fred Breidster, formed the Mohawk Club with three other gentlemen from Milwaukee. They built a cabin on Middle Price Lake, which they used to hunt and fish. They were good friends with Hugh Boyd, and watched much of the history of the resort.

Hugh built a large building which acted as a kitchen for his lumbermen, and the Mohawk club sometimes took advantage of lodging in the rooms above the kitchen when trekking between the Boyd's property and their camp on Middle Price Lake. After building the lodge, Hugh built several cabins close to it for families from Illinois. When the Great Depression struck, these families sold the cabins back to Hugh for pennies on the dollar. It was after re-acquiring these buildings that Hugh turned his lumber business into a resort.

Around this time, the Mohawk Club approached Mr. Boyd and requested that he build a spartan cabin on Long Lake that the members would own in perpetuity until the last member passed, after which it would become a part of the resort. Five generations later, we're proud to welcome the descendants of the Mohawk club to the resort every summer, and to maintain the legacy that is the Mohawk cabin.



The Resort Through History



A few years ago, Chip Heun, successfully tackled the almost mind numbingly difficult project that was remodeling the Mohawk cabin. This past winter he was able to turn his focus to a slightly less daunting (but still complicated) Hillside remodel. The foundation that supported the old pot belly stove had to be demolished to make room for a full fireplace. Chip found that lots of rebar and scrap iron had been set in the concrete to strengthen the stove platform when it was built. This made demolition a long and painful process, but not only did Chip get the construction of the new fireplace finished before our first spring guests arrived, he also was able to remodel the kitchen and help us install some updated appliances



Hillside Renovations

As I mentioned in last year's newsletter, Hillside wasn't the only cabin getting some attention. Thanks to Eddie and Joe, Goss's master bedroom was completely remodeled, and the alcove off the living room that also serves as a bedroom got new wood paneling, some beautiful French doors, and updated windows. Both rooms look lighter and more spacious, and both have heat year round with the addition of a new furnace system.



Even though Goss and Hillside were both large undertakings, nothing compared to the complete rebuild of our boathouse and main dock. This spring, the ice left Long Lake on April 27th. Well before that, Mark from Northland Pier and his crew were busy at work tearing down our old boathouse. Then, as soon as they were able, Joe and his team began building a new structure on the old foot print, with Eddie completing all the staining and the siding for the new building. Pictures are worth a thousand words, so I am going to let the images do the talking. All I can say is that it was incredible to wake up one day to find the old structure gone and just a few short weeks later find a new version standing in its place!



Goss Renovations



This fall, we finally completed the remodel of this area by finishing the update to our main docks. We couldn't be happier with the final product. Everything is new construction, but still honors the original look that has been a resort staple for decades. We still have some dock lighting updates to finish and some support poles have to be cut to the appropriate length once everything settles after the winter, but we think this is an incredible update that everyone will enjoy!



As our season comes to a close and we wrap up our shut down process, we turn inward and reflect on the updates needed by some of our cabin interiors and some of our core policies. This year, we'll be giving our Girls cabin a kitchen make over, complete with a new full sized fridge. Guests can also look forward to new carpeting throughout the cabin and new vinyl in the bathroom.



Our Wigwam will also be seeing some changes. Our beloved old arcade games are well overdue for retirement. Unfortunately, we can't replace them until we have a larger doorway for the new games to enter. This has Chip busy remodeling the North side of the building and installing french doors that will allow us to update some of the amenities this building offers.

And while we try to keep as much the same as we possibly can in the face of a rapidly changing world, there are some things we have to change for the continued wellbeing of the resort and everyone who enjoys it.



As all of our guests know, due to invasive species, we do not allow private boats or motors on our lakes. This traditionally has also included kayaks and canoes, but with the rise in popularity of paddle boards, various family-sized floats, lilypads, etc, we need to expand the definition of what is unsafe for our lakes. Please do not bring any type of water craft or flotation device with you for use on our lakes. We cannot risk the catastrophic damage that aquatic hitchhikers would wreak upon the resort. If you have any questions about what is safe for our lakes versus what can only be used elsewhere, please check with the office before your visit.



On our rate sheets and our confirmation sheets, there are a couple other important updates we would like everyone to be aware of.

Throughout the years, we have done our best to increase our rates as little as possible. This year, will be no exception, but rates will be increasing by 4% which is a larger increase than we typically have. We apologize for any inconvenience this causes, but unfortunately it has become unavoidable.



Firm check-out and check-in times have also become unavoidable. We understand lingering over that final breakfast and delaying the hard goodbye, but we believe the departure is hard because the stay was so much fun. We want to provide that experience for everyone, including the family that will be enjoying your cabin after you. In order to provide everyone with the best experience, our staff needs the appropriate time to clean and prepare, so we ask guests to adhere to our 9am check-out time.



On the flip side of the same coin, we ask all arriving families to respect our 3pm check-in time. During our spring and fall stays both early arrivals and lunch departures may be scheduled, but please confirm with the office that it is in your reservation. As always, no matter what time of year you are visiting us, please stop at the office and check-in before heading to your cabin.

While checking in, please don't forget to mention any furry, feathered, or scaly pets visiting with you and any special behaviors our staff may need to be aware of when working in and around your cabin. Pets are a very special type of guest: they don't always understand why they are in a new place or that the resort staff coming into that place is supposed to be there. If your furry

Photo by Holly Maepohl

*Out with the Old and in with the New:
Our updated boathouse and docks*

family member is nervous about their Northwoods visit or stranger danger, please let the office know or hang up your "No Housekeeping" tag on your cabin. Our cabin staff is happy to arrange housekeeping appointments throughout the morning hours and we can always schedule a towel drop-off or simply leave you alone rather than do a full make-up on your cabin during your stay. We want what is best for all of our guests, two-legged and four-legged alike. Unfortunately, this year alone we had three incidents of dogs biting at staff (thankfully none broke the skin), but we need to reinforce that any four-legged guests who act aggressively toward our staff or other guests will be asked to leave and find other accommodations.



The Wigwam

We've always been proud to welcome pets without any additional charge (and plan to continue to do so), but we do reserve the right to ask for reimbursement for any damages a pet may cause. We also ask that you please let us know right away if your pet has an accident or damages something so that we can remedy the situation quickly.

I hate typing out rules, but our beautiful escape from reality has survived since the time when the gentleman of the Mohawk Club would travel North on the caboose of the Soo Line railroad because we have found a way to protect it and its caregivers. If anyone has any questions about their 2024 reservations, please don't hesitate to call our office and ask Mary, Dick, Tyler, or if it's during our open season, Nathan.



Dick and Nathan: Best Friends!

Hopefully all our guests this season had the opportunity to meet Nathan, our newest office team member. We could not have been luckier to find such an incredible person to be part of our resort family. The banter between Dick and Nathan was some of the best comedy I've heard, and if Nathan wasn't making our guests smile, he was finding joy in something they told him and sharing his own infectious laugh. We look forward to many more seasons with Nathan helping Mary in the office and making Boyd's even more special for guests and staff alike!

In particular, I myself was incredibly grateful to Nathan for the close eye he kept on Gert when she was assisting him in the office. This fall in particular Tyler and I relied heavily on Gert's friends and family to help us monitor her after we found a lump that turned out to be a mast cell tumor. Our gates closed for the season on October 9th and on the morning of October 10th, Tyler and I whisked all of our doggos down to Madison so that Gert could wow the veterinarians at the university with her awesomeness. Gert was scheduled for surgery on October 12th. Her various medical conditions make her a high risk surgical patient, so we are grateful that she was in such exceptional hands and I am happy to report that since surgery she has been resting comfortably and her incisions are healing beautifully. She has informed me that she plans on making a full recovery and her surgeons have let us know that they got clean margins around her tumor and Gert will be able to enjoy many more years supervising all office related activities.

Over the three days I have written this, the wolves have serenaded us every evening. They are no longer calling each other, but singing together and each voice lends its own unique quality to the fabric of their music. While I know this is a time to slow down, I am also excited for next season, when our team members will begin cleaning out cabins, planning menus, launching boats, and bringing their own unique skills back to Boyd's to weave the fabric of an incredible 2024 season.

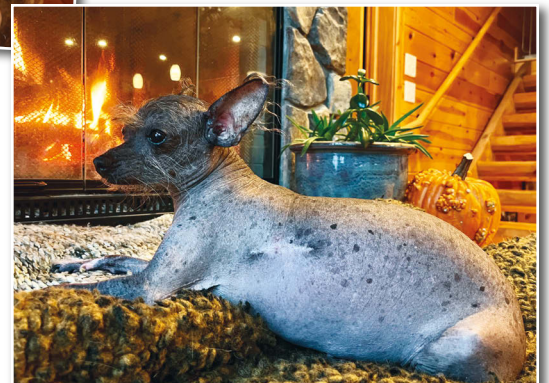
Until we are all called back together in the warmer months, I wish everyone a quiet and warm winter season surrounded by laughter and loved ones.

Stay safe and be merry!

Laura Stuef



Gert is on the mend!



BOYD'S MASON LAKE RESORT