



shorelines

*Published By The Balsam Lake Homeowners' Association
A volunteer, non-profit organization serving the lake community since 1974.*



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Avg. High78° Avg. Rain4.3" www.balsamlake.com

*Where'd it go?
It took so long to get here!*



**Hold on,
Hold on...
The last day of
summer isn't until
September 21.
There's still time!
There's plenty
to do!
Bring on the fun!**



Time to drift...



*Time to hang out with
family and friends...*



Blacksmith Shop Approaches 60

If you have been around the Balsam Lake area long enough, chances are that you have stepped into the Blacksmith Shop for the broasted chicken, a local favorite. Located on W. Bone Lake Drive just northeast of East Balsam, "The Blacksmith" is approaching its 60th year in business this summer.

From 1948, when it first opened as a beer bar, until 1954, the Blacksmith Shop had three different owners. In 1954, Tubb and Marion Molamphy purchased the bar that was called the Pine Grove Tavern at the time. They moved from their nearby farm and settled into the living quarters that adjoined the bar. To pay the bills Tubb made weekly commutes to Silver Bay to work in a taconite plant. Marion kept the bar running while also taking care of a newborn and a three year old.

That three year old was Ellen Molamphy, the current owner of the Blacksmith Shop. She started working at the Blacksmith when she was 13 years old. After high school Ellen worked several jobs around the area but came back to the Blacksmith to take over for her parents. After six months of learning the bar business, Ellen officially took over in July 1983. Just two years later, she tore down the bar and rebuilt it. In 1986 she added the kitchen. In 1988 she converted the living quarters into the dining area. She was a busy one!



There have been tough times. The 1983 – 84 recession almost put an end to the Blacksmith. But Ellen has paid her dues over the years, and now she is adding a third generation of family ownership to the Blacksmith lineup. In July, her son Ron Molamphy and his wife Ngan came back to help run the Blacksmith. After 20 years in the Marines, Ron is going to manage the bar, Ngan is going to take care of the books, and Ellen will keep the kitchen running.

Most days of the week other activities are happening at the Blacksmith: volleyball league on Mondays, the Fox Creek Gun Club shoots out back Thursdays, and pool league meets four nights a week. Out back is a sand volleyball court and two horse shoe pits available for patron use. With picnic tables and bean bag toss games for the kids, the area behind the Blacksmith is

the perfect place to entertain a large group of guests, just call in advance to make sure it's not booked.

I asked Ellen if she has had any famous customers over the years. She said, "There have been a few notable people who have come in over the years. A few of them still stop by from time to time." I was eagerly waiting for her to divulge a few names. She only smiled, winked and said, "Their secret is safe with me." One last piece of Blacksmith history. The record for tacos eaten on Friday night (All You Can Eat Taco Night) is 33. Stop on by and see how many you can eat or try some of that famous chicken! In addition to their famous chicken, the Blacksmith offers a large menu with everything available to go.

By Dave Turbenson

**“You never
know what
worse luck
your bad luck
has saved you
from.”**

**– Cormac McCarthy in
*No Country for
Old Men***



Cabin life is always filled with surprises. John and Jo Close of East Balsam were greeted by this not so pleasing sight after the strong winds of June 17.

Wanna Live on Buckthorn Lake?



Do you know what Buckthorn is? I ask others that question many times a year, and I am still surprised to hear how many people are not familiar with the non-native shrub. This noxious shrub was intro-

duced to North America during the 1800's to be used in landscaping, primarily as hedge rows. Since then it has escaped our backyards and has been displacing native species in our urban and rural areas. Buckthorn has become such a problem because it has no natural predators on our continent, and it will grow in many habitats.

Don't let the juicy berries fool you, this is a bad plant. Although the berries have no nutritional value, Buckthorn berries are a favorite snack of local birds. After the birds consume these abundant berries, they are eliminated typically within 1/3 mile of the source. This is why it is not uncommon to see Buckthorn growing in ditches and woods close to an old farm house with a Buckthorn hedge.

Why is the BLHA writing about this bad bush? Buckthorn is spreading in our local woods (see map page 12). I first noticed it around Town Beach creeping east up towards Indianhead and along Hwy I. Since then I have gone up and down every road around Balsam Lake and have completed an unofficial survey of the problem around our beloved lake. I have spoken to the homeowner in Town Bay who still has Buckthorn planted as a landscape bush. After telling her about the shrub, she gave me permission to remove it from her property.

Why should we all care? Once this plant gets established, it spreads faster each year it goes untreated. Buckthorn crowds out and kills native plants. **After several years it can create such a dense thicket of growth that beautiful woods are no longer accessible for a leisurely stroll on a warm Indian Summer day.** Because of the multiplying effect of Buckthorn and its berries, the faster you kill the shrubs, the sooner you will stop the inevitable spread of this nasty shrub.

What can you do about it? For starters, you can learn what Buckthorn looks like. Once you can identify it, you will start to go a little crazy about how abundant it is in our local woods. The best time of the year to start notic-

ing Buckthorn is late October. Buckthorn stays green for two weeks longer after native plants have gone dormant or lost their leaves. The BLHA will send out an e-mail this year once Buckthorn is the only green plant in the woods.

It is time to get down and dirty. It is time to KILL buckthorn. For many homeowners this is a frustrating process. **You cannot simply cut down a Buckthorn plant and think the work is done.** After you cut Buckthorn, it must be treated with an herbicide to kill the plant. If you cut down a Buckthorn plant without treating it with an herbicide, it will come back with five to ten new sprouts of growth making the problem that much worse a few years down the road.

Two things to remember when eliminating Buckthorn: 1. Don't cut down Buckthorn unless you plan to treat it with an herbicide. 2. Focus on the female plants with the berries. (See photo page 12.) Killing the female plants will have the fastest impact on the spread of the berries.



Use undiluted Roundup and an old paint brush to apply the herbicide (18% Glyphosate) to kill freshly cut Buckthorn.

I have been coordinating groups of volunteers in Plymouth, Minnesota for the last three years. Our efforts have improved the quality of the woods in several local parks.

I have also created a website to educate people about Buckthorn. To learn more about identifying and removing this plant, check out www.removebadplants.com

If another ten years go by without any removal efforts in the Balsam Lake area, this invasive plant will overrun many acres of pristine woods. If you have any questions or concerns about Buckthorn, please contact Dave Turbenson daveturbenson@yahoo.com or 612-207-9023.

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In the Woods: A Meeting

By Maddie Launstein

The flashes of orange leaping through the sea of brown were a mesmerizing movement that kept my rapt attention for a long while.

I am at my grandparent's cabin in Wisconsin. It is a beautiful, wooded area that often smells of campfires. The people who live around Balsam Lake often set off small fireworks throughout the night; it is a well-known noise. The jet skiers and water skiers fly around the lake, water spraying out behind them, another sound I am much used to. The many trees are now changing colors, beautiful reds, gold and oranges floating in lazy swirls to the ground. Little salamanders hide under the autumn leaves; we go searching for them sometimes. This is the area where I meet him.

I have been here for five days; I am heading home in four more. I don't really want to go; I love it up here. Cool and not humid air, big trees (maples and pines galore), not the usual palms. Fresh water, not salty ocean water and not chlorinated. Grass, real grass, not that tough old stuff crawling with red ants. I've missed all of these things from the moment we moved from Minnesota to Florida.

It is about nine o'clock a.m. and brunch has just finished. My grandmother-Sandy-is a good cook and a healthy eater; no problem there. I say "Thank you," getting to my feet and heading outside. A squirrel and two chipmunks scatter as the screen door squeaks. I missed them too; it's not like there are chipmunks and squirrels running everywhere in the Keys.

It is a chill Friday morning; I can just see my breath in the cool air. I shiver and go back inside, grabbing my greenish-brown sweatshirt off the back of one of the worn wooden chairs. "Frost will be on the ground soon" says my grandmother. "And most likely before you leave." She sighs. "You can help me get the flowers ready for winter, take them inside and such." "Okay" I say, I have no problem with that. "Hooray!" I add with a cheer. I really do miss the snow and chill of winter, moving from Minnesota to Florida was a big change.

"I'm going down to the pond" I call to whoever happens to be listening. "Grab a net" says my grandfather (apparently he was listening)-he was reading the newspaper. "I'll come with you." "Kay" is all I say as I race Gabby and Molly down to the pole shed. Gabby and Molly are my grandparents' golden retrievers.

I frighten another chipmunk as I enter the huge shed. Deer skulls loom above me-my grandpa hunts. My footsteps echo, but softly. There is nothing to be worried about. I grab the net and head back outside into the cool breeze and autumn colors.

I jog down the hill to the pond. The gold, red, orange, and brown leaves crunch and crackle under my swiftly moving feet. I slow about halfway down the slope, stopping to examine the partly decomposed leaves, looking for salamanders. I find none, and keep going down the hill, speeding up again. "Ghaaah!" I gasp, my feet sliding out from beneath me. I fall, rolling and sliding down the damp leaves, that is, until I run into something large and hard, very hard. The breath is knocked out of me. I gasp as a woodpecker lands not five feet away from me. It cocks its head, its bright black eyes alertly watching me.

I climb to my feet with a sigh; my sweatshirt is definitely more brown than green now. I wipe off as much as I can, but the mud is sticky and stains, it is not a worthwhile use of my time, so I give up. I stumble as a frog dives for safety (shouldn't it be getting ready to hibernate for winter?) away from my foot, but I don't fall.

Making my way more carefully this time, I get to the pond. My grandfather (Fran) comes down a minute or so later with Gabby and Molly tearing down the hill ahead of him, their feet spraying leaves and mud. My grandpa looks startled by my disheveled state. Then he says with a bit of a smirk "Watch out for those trees, they hurt." I stare at him for a moment. A smirk?! I am about to retort, but then I hear this noise. It is a short barking sound, then a rustling movement, pacing or shifting one's body. I know that my grandfather hears it too; he turns his head towards the sound, his eyes like the woodpecker, alertly watching. Gabby pricks her ears. Molly barks. Just once, a single, short bark, a warning.

For a moment there is silence, then another movement, a bigger one. The crackle of fallen leaves, then the splat of something hitting mud, a foot (or paw)? Then it is quiet again, but for only a short time. A bird cackles, then a woodpecker (the same one as before?) begins to hammer a tree.

I look at my grandpa. He looks at me. "Hasn't gone far", oh how calmly he says it. It is completely silent now, no birdsong, no shifting, only the crackle of fallen leaves. Suddenly the noise starts again. I jump, it surprised me. The same bark, this time two of them, and small shifting movements. All these sounds are fainter now, as if coming from greater distance. I wonder for a moment-the barks are doglike, but not quite, there is something off about them.

I made the choice on a whim; I really do hope that it is worth it.

I walk quietly, so the sound doesn't stop right away. But then I make the mistake of stepping on a dried twig. It snaps loudly and I freeze. The noise abruptly stops, no more shifting; it is completely still, then a scuffling sound as leaves are stirred up. The scuffling seems to just leap up and hurry away, but slowly enough so that I am able to follow if I go quickly. I walk for ten or fifteen minutes. The sounds eventually stop after a few minutes, but I keep going



Nature Photography by Brian Collins, naturalist and Biology instructor. To see more of his work and follow his wildlife odyssey *One Thousand Days in Nature*, visit saintcroixbirds.blogspot.com

Continued On Page 17

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Our 2014 Annual Meeting will again be held at Paradise Landing on Saturday, August 9. All members are invited to a buffet breakfast at 8 a.m., prior to the meeting at 8:30 a.m. Watch your emails for an e-blast with breakfast reservation info and the annual ballot.

Members who choose not to attend the breakfast are encouraged to attend the meeting. We are proud of our active membership and thank you for your ongoing support. Of course, more help and input is always appreciated as our association continues to help with community projects and lake improvements.

We do have room for more board members. Meetings are held the second Saturday morning of May through September at 8 a.m. You'll be done before the day on the lake begins! If you would like to be a part of our Board of Directors, please send your name and contact info to: debbie.irestone@meritide.com. We will add your name to our ballot at the Annual Meeting, ask you to introduce yourself, and tell us a little about you. **Please join us on the BLHA Board!**

See you the 9th!

Member Benefits

- When you submit your membership form by the required date, your information is published in our Biennial Directory.
- You receive the three issues of *Shorelines*, mailed to your home address
- With profits from the advertising in our publications, our Community Outreach makes donations to different causes in our area. In addition to sponsoring the Freedom Fest Fireworks and purchasing water patrol equipment, we have supported the Polk County Museum, the Balsam Lake Library, Balsam Lake First Responders and Milltown Fire Department, the Chamber of Commerce, the Smart Growth Committee, the Balsam Lake Garden Club, Kinship of Polk County, the Red Cross, and the Balsam Lake Water Ski Association.
- Welcome to Summer and Farewell to Summer Gatherings

Hey current members! Please do the BLHA a favor and make sure your neighbors are members of the BLHA. Let them know what the BLHA does for the community and the benefits of being a member.

Membership to the BLHA is only \$20 each year. Considering all of the great things we do for the Balsam Lake community, we feel this is a great value. If you are already a member, we thank you for your support. If you are not a member, please consider joining our association.

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Sticks and Slivers

*Ours is not an avid hunting family; we dabble. I remember my father dressed in red (before blaze orange) taking his gun out the Friday night before deer season and spending some time in the woods, sometimes with others, sometimes alone, sometimes with my brothers as they grew older. I don't remember any big bucks hanging in the trees (though my brothers will remember more clearly than I). I think, for my father, hunting was a time for reflection, an escape from a six-day-work week, a time for a Hershey's bar while sitting on a fallen tree. None of my hunting associations, though, can come close to rivaling what Brent Mathson, local writer, relates in his latest book, **Sticks and Slivers and the Mathson Gang.***

I bought Brent's book mainly because I was so impressed that someone I knew had published one. I read Brent's book out of loyalty. I recommend Brent's book because it's a good read--for hunters and non-hunters. Brent balances the technical aspects of hunting with heart-warming anecdotes and beautifully written descriptions of the woods he hunted.--Sue

From the introduction of **Sticks and Slivers...**

"As I was driving home, I couldn't help but to reminisce back to the years when I had been an avid bow hunter. The sport had changed a great deal since the time I had first shot a 20 cent arrow from a broken bow with a patch on one its limbs. I'm sure that my nephew would have been astonished if he had seen the equipment that I, and those I hunted with, used during the early years of the sport. I am certain that the tackle and the tactics that we used on our hunts for the whitetail would astound most modern-day-day bow hunters. During these reminisces, it occurred to me that I had been a part of the early history of Wisconsin bow hunting...Before I had finished driving home, I had already come up with a title...'Sticks' was what we called our bows; 'slivers' was the term for our arrows; and the 'Mathson Gang' was the title our community had pinned on that small band of Robin Hoods, who foolishly pursued the white tail deer with primitive weapons."

From Chapter 1, **Sticks**

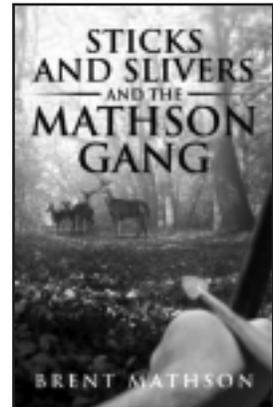
"It didn't take us long to realize that the beautiful glossy finishes on our bows were a real detriment in the woods on sunny days. The drivers often commented that they spotted the posters by the glare from their bows. It didn't take a Sherlock Holme's deduction to come to the conclusion that the deer could probably see the flashes as well.

There were several remedies for this problem at the time. Of course, buying a a bow with a nice camo finish on it was not an option because they were not available. All the bow companies surmised that their customers wanted nice shiny bows with a durable gloss finish that would last longer than their owners. Hunters soon realized the fallacy of this notion and invested in some means to hide the telltale flash of their weapons. One of the most popular was a camouflage tape that was applied over the bow's surface. Another solution was to apply a coat of camo paint over the bow's shiny surface. This was very effective, but many in our group were rather squeamish about applying a drab paint over their fancy bows... The Herter's company offered a set of camouflage cloth covers that simply slipped over the bow limbs. The covers worked great..."

From Chapter 6, **The Perfect Hunt "**

As I think back to that hunt nearly thirty years ago, I often wonder just what there was about it that made it such a special memory to me. There have been other October days when the sun shone as brightly and when the woods were in similar splendor. My dad and I had both shot bigger bucks on other hunts. I came to the conclusion that it wasn't the main events that made the day so special. It was the little things shared with a favored companion that had make it perfect. It was the simple conversation as we rode in an old Chevy truck over a bumpy gravel road that we had traveled so many times before. It was the sight of my dad gracefully stringing his Lambrecht bow

(continued on next page)



The book, released January 2014, is available at Amazon and Barnes and Noble. Locally, signed copies are available at Balsam Lake Hardware, Monty's Sportsman's Haven, and St. Croix Outdoors.

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and the Mathson Gang

and striking off into the woods with it in one hand and a scuffed leather quiver in the other. It was the music of an old crow call in the still of the woods, begging for conversation with a reluctant flock. It was time spent on a rotted log waiting for the unlikely to occur and then watching it happen. It was the smile on his face and the way he gripped my hand as he congratulated me on my kill. It was all these little things that had made the day so memorable."

Brent on writing the book:

(I am going to insert here that Brent has lived near Balsam Lake by Loveless Lake for over 30 years-Sue)

As I was growing up in the rural community of Blair, Wisconsin, a small group of men took up the sport of bow hunting for whitetail deer. The sport was in its infancy and there wasn't much information about it, so the hunters had to learn as they went along. My dad was most instrumental in getting the group formed, and at the age of ten, I started tagging along even though I was too young to carry a bow. I spent my formative years hunting with this group of men and attribute many of my successes later in life to the lessons that I learned while in their company. May 1991 my dad died. To insure that I would never lose the special memories I had of hunting with him and the gang, I began jotting down notes in a journal. Several years later, another one of my old hunting buddies died, and I decided that I would try to put a book together about my hunting adventures and give copies to each of the men who had been so instrumental in my life so that they would remember the good times that we had had. In 2008, after 33 years teaching Industrial Arts at Unity, I retired, and I made it a priority to finish the book. When I had the manuscript completed, I began searching for a publisher without much success. I only needed 50 copies, so I decided to put the books together myself. I ran off the copies on my computer, hand folded the 8 1/2" by 11" sheets of paper to give me four book pages, and then contact cemented the pages to the cover. I was proud of the results, and that Christmas my family members and old hunting buddies got a very special present.

On a whim I sent a copy of my manuscript to Tate Publishing company and the book was released in January 2014.

As an author, having your work accepted and printed by a publisher is very exciting but the most rewarding aspect of my writing and publishing experience is knowing that I have preserved and shared some very special memories with family and old friends. Memories that are not written down too often are forgotten and lost forever. The modern bow hunter would have little knowledge of the tactics and equipment that were used in the 60's when a small band of hunters decided to pursue the whitetail deer with primitive weapons. The modern bow hunter will probably shake his head with disbelief when he reads about some of our early experiences with the sport. The senior hunters who were fortunate enough to have "lived" those early experiences will nod their heads as old memories are resurrected and say, "Yep, that's the way it was."

To those reading this article, I would urge all of you to record special events or memories that you have experienced even though at the time they may seem insignificant. Sometime in the future they may become very significant. With some work and perseverance you can wrap up your book and put it under the Christmas tree. It will be the gift that never stops giving.



Brent with his Herter's Special bow and the last two wood Sabbota arrows he used when bow hunting. He is sitting next to the wood box that he and his dad and built together. From the book, "It's a plain wooden box that my dad and I put together in a couple of hours. I wouldn't trade it for a hundred Easton Game Getter arrows. In a kid's day, it's the little things that make the magic." On top are the boots worn while on his "perfect hunt."



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With All Fun, there's a Bit O' Work!



*"To poke a wood fire is more solid enjoyment than almost anything else in the world."
- Charles Dudley Warner*



Cleaning fish at Perry Mound.



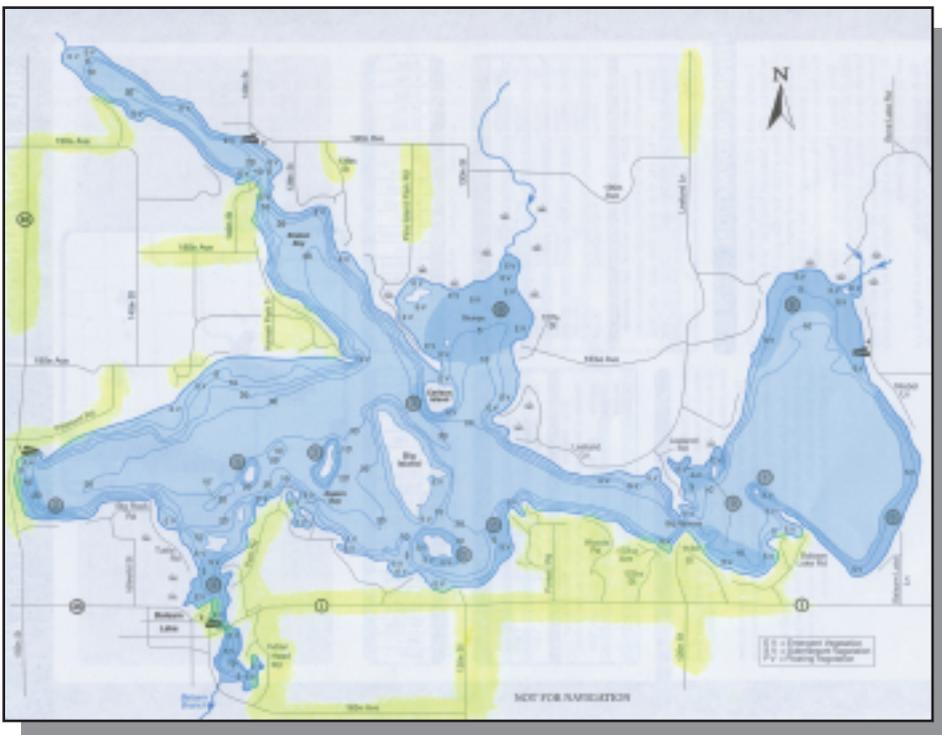
*"You know when they have a fishing show on TV? They catch the fish and then let it go. They don't want to eat the fish, they just want to make it late for something."
- Mïch Hedberg*

There's something wonderful about a campfire at the lake.

Weeds Gone Wild! Buckthorn: On the Midwest's Least Wanted List



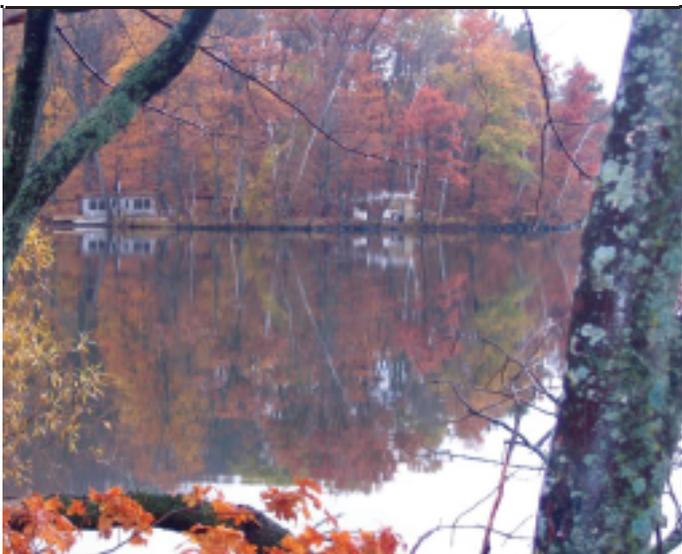
Female Buckthorn plants are easily identified by their blue-purple berries.



Areas infected with Buckthorn.

Winners All...*if only there had been a photo contest this year.*

Be sure to enter your award winners between Aug. 1 and Feb. 15! Info on website.



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Yes, BLHA has a Facebook page. To LIKE us, first, you have to have your own page. Once you do, just type balsamlake.com into the search feature. Look

us over and then hit LIKE. **So what's with the chicken?** Periodically, this chicken will pop up in various area surrounding the Balsam area... Even I don't know where. When said chicken makes an appearance on the BLHA Facebook page, the first person to LIKE and COMMENT with the location of the chicken will win a treat at BLICS!!!



YUM. Test run: If you checked FB and saw this photo, you'd LIKE and then comment: "Chicken is at the base of the water tower by the library!"

Change in Date...

Farewell to Summer Party

Saying Good Bye to the lazy days of summer is a little harder this year, so the party date has been moved to Saturday, Sept. 13, at DOCS, downtown Balsam from 3-5.



Vintage Balsam Lake



Pig in a blanket, pig in a poke, but never heard of a pig in boat. Cutie!

Probably by now you've all stopped in to get your Balsam Lake gear, but in case you haven't, now's the time! I mean, it's been six years since Caroline and Steven Rediske have opened basically Balsam on Main Street. That place is paced with tees, sweat-shirts and the ever-popular pajama pants (built for comfort). And for those HOT summer days, a can koozie declaring Balsam Lake your favorite place. And if you have a desire to design your own, Caroline started doing custom embroidery back in 1995--so she knows what she is doing and she does an awesome job. (www.basicallybalsam.com)



The fun doesn't stop in Balsam Lake. This year the BLFD Demo Derby is August 30 behind the fire hall.

So many ideas yet to share, so little space. Need a taste treat? Wholesome breads fresh from the brick oven at Kent's on Fri/Sat. (Hwy 8/65) (focaccia to die for). After Labor Day Fun? Maybe a drop into Baker's Apple Orchard on Hwy 35 for their Fall Festival Sept. 27-28. Enjoy fresh cider, smell the woodsmoke, tour the art gallery, pick some apples, walk the hiking trails. Or look for the best pumpkin ever at Bergmann's Pumpkin Patch on Hwy 35. (Maybe opt to get the bejeebers scared out of you on their Halloween hayride.)

I'll be planning next summer's issues over the winter, so if you have a feature idea, a story to share, a topic addressed, let me know! enjoy life!

--Sue editor.shorelines@balsamlake.com

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In the Woods: A Meeting - Continued from Page 5

in the general direction of the original sound. The wind picks up; I can hear it whistling through the leafless trees. My breath becomes clearer in the air, a little white fog emanating from me. The orange, red, brown and gold leaves crunch and crackle as I step on them. With the wind they rise up, swirling around me. My own personal tornadoes.

The trees begin to thin out after about ten minutes. I speed up in anticipation, for the sound has started again. I hear a single bark, and small movements, though quickly moving.

I am practically sprinting when I reach the clearing, where I come to a dead stop, slamming on the brakes. "Woah" I breathe as I look around. It is a sort of meadow, but not a green and flowery kind of meadow. It is a brown and red and gold meadow. The stalks of the grasses are so thick and lush it seems as if it is a sea of brown. I can just see the tops of the trees, bare and reaching, across the other end of the meadow.

I am still staring when a movement catches my eye, other than the blowing and flowing back and forth movement of the meadow. I turn. I gasp. So this is the source of the barks and movements. It all makes sense now. It is a fox. He is leaping away from me, but not fearfully, more as if he is playing. His beautiful, sleek coat bounces on his lean and muscular shoulders. It is a majestic reddish-brown color that seems to be forever graceful and flowing, with a tinge of white on the tip of his tail. As he leaps and bounds, I notice that his slender and elegant feet are dark, nearly black and reaching up to his elbows, like gloves. His narrow muzzle is also white tinged, with beautiful alert, shy and playful gleaming eyes watching, always watching. He is the most handsome creature I have ever seen. He barks, leaps and bounds for nearly fifteen minutes. I watch him with rapt attention for the entire time. I am not sure that I even blinked.

Then suddenly he turns and dives away into the forest. He looks back just before leaving, focusing entirely on me, acknowledging my presence for the first time. Then waves his handsome bushy tail and vanishes into the woods.

I wave, knowing that he knew I was there the entire time. I am glad he knew, and I will always cherish this memory, I am forever grateful that I followed my instincts and found the clearing and the fox.

I then head home, following the route I came from. When I get back, Gabby and Molly sniff at me, confused and wary of the very faint scent of a stranger on me. My grandfather looks up as I enter the cabin. His glance is questioning "A friend" I say, "A rather sly friend." He nods, generously not asking anything more, and going back to doing something on his laptop.

I will never forget this experience, and I learned that sometimes you just have to follow your instincts, and make your own choice.

*(Maddie was 12 when she wrote this essay for school.
Proud grandparents Fran and Sandy Launstein submitted the piece.)*

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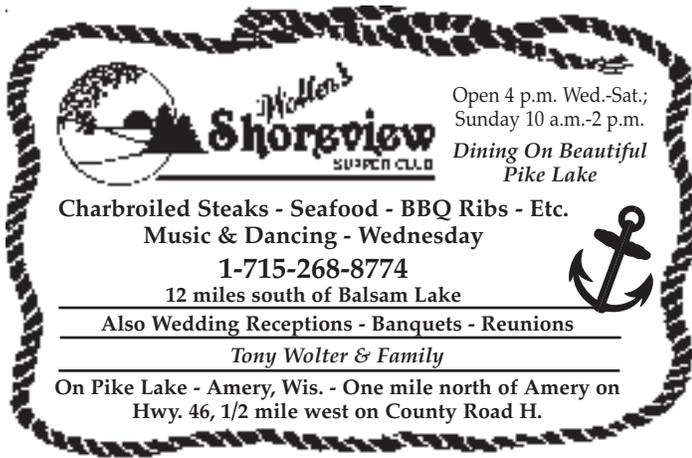

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