



shorelines

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



AUGUST 2017

Avg. Temp.....65° Avg. Low.....52°
Avg. High.....76° Avg. Rain.....3.5"

For Current Weather:
www.balsamlake.com



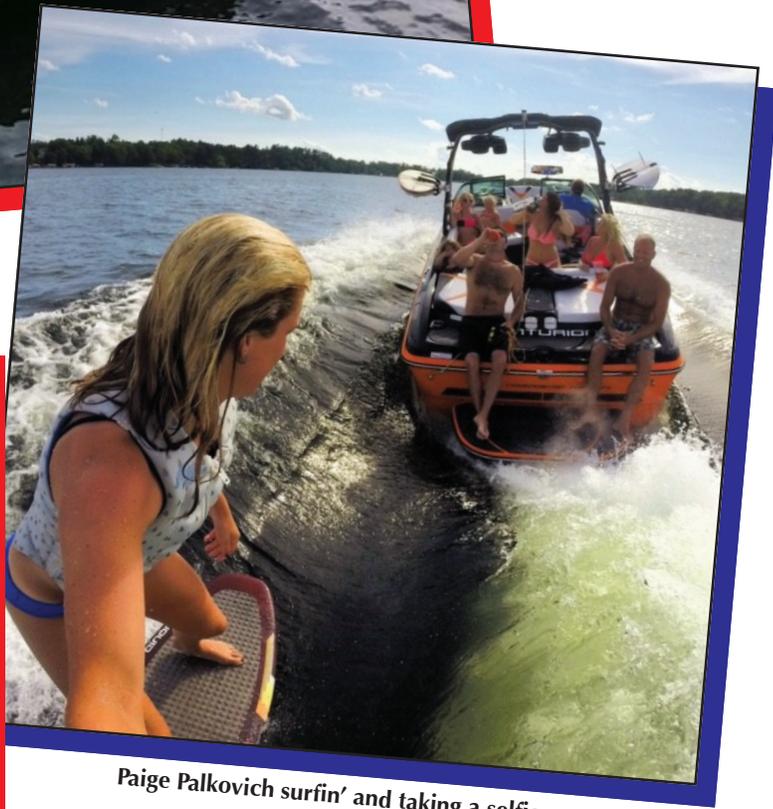
Linda and Denny Moll's grandchildren, Connor Moll and Eden Novitsky, have passed their Boat Safety Class and are off on their first solo trip. Many thanks to Police Chief Tom Thompson for providing his expertise at this yearly class for our young people every spring! It is much appreciated!



Marcia Freed and a big fish!



Jim Freed and a bigger fish!



Paige Palkovich surfin' and taking a selfie.

BLHA ANNUAL MEETING

Our Annual Meeting will be held, Saturday, August 12, 2017, at Crickets Bar & Grill, 1361 100th St., Amery, WI, (approximately 1/2 mile north of Hwy. 8 on 100th St./Co. Rd. H). Due to capacity limitations, reservations are limited to 2 people per household. Members are invited to a Breakfast Buffet, cost \$10 per person. Breakfast at 8 a.m. and meeting starts at 9 a.m.

Cabin Country

THIS ISN'T JUST NEAR THE LAKE

Reprinted with permission from StarTribune Cabin Country • Friday, April 29, 2016

Eighteen years ago, we fulfilled a lifelong dream and bought a small vintage log cabin on Balsam Lake, just across the border in Northwestern Wisconsin. Filled with knotty pine and warmed by a stone fireplace, it was the perfect place to raise our children. But down at the water's edge there was something we loved even more: an original boathouse with guest quarters. Ringed by tall windows, and lined with more knotty pine, it even has a tiny bathroom. It's a rare site on Minnesota lakes, but as with beer and bottle rockets, our neighbors to the east are just a bit more relaxed with their rulebooks.

When you sleep in a boathouse you don't just feel like you're next to the water, you feel as if you are actually floating on it. After the loons end their evening serenade, the lapping water lulls you to sleep. You hear every splash from a jumping fish, even in the middle of the night. To heck with modesty: We encourage our guests to never close the shades, lest they miss the expanse of stars above or, better yet, the occasional northern lights. And there's no need to stop at the border fireworks stores, when seemingly every weekend night features a different blazing rocket display from one cabin or another across the lake.

If the loons don't wake our guests in the morning, our morning ritual will. You see, in the bottom of the boathouse resides a small antique wooden speedboat. And there is no better time to enjoy its gleaming mahogany goodness than in the early morning when the lake imitates glass. When that vintage flathead motor burbles to life, and we roar off across the bay, it's time to wake, grab a cup of coffee, park yourself in an Adirondack chair on the dock and wait for your turn for a thrill ride, knowing you just had one of the best sleeps of your life.

But the best show in this lakeside theater happens in the fall, when the trees explode in color, the sunrises and sunsets become noticeably more intense, and seemingly everyone is back in the city. We extend the boathouse season as long as we can, with a stack of wool blankets at the ready, waiting to winterize the woody until we've squeezed out every last weekend on the water. And come winter, well, we're always tempted to add a few more blankets and spend the night just to say we did.



REGULATORY BUOYS

All regulatory buoys are white with a single orange band at the top and bottom of the exposed buoy. The control symbol is spaced between these bands and is also orange in color. Any wording or message will be in black letters.



BOATS KEEP OUT: This buoy is signified by a cross in the center of an open diamond. Boats Keep Out buoys mark areas where vessel operation is prohibited. Typical areas for these buoys are swim beaches and dams.



CONTROLLED AREA: This buoy is signified by an open circle. Control buoys mark areas where vessel speed or wake is controlled for safety purposes. Some control buoys may limit water skiing or other activities. Typical areas for these buoys are around boat launches and other congested areas.



DANGER: This buoy is signified by an open diamond. Danger buoys mark areas that are hazardous to vessel operation. Typical areas for these buoys are submerged rocks or shoals.

NOTE: "Slow-no-wake" is a common message on controlled area buoys. Slow-no-wake means that speed at which a boat moves as slowly as possible while still maintaining steerage control.

shorelines

Published and distributed three times a year (June, July, August) to homes adjacent to Balsam Lake, Wisconsin by the Balsam Lake Homeowners' Association, a private, nonprofit volunteer organization supported by membership dues, contributions, and advertising subsidies.

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- 2017 August article contributors:** Bruce Bildsten, Jim & Marcia Freed, Debbie Irestone, Linda & Denny Moll, Tiffany Morton, Mary Skaret.

Layout: Gayle Olson. **Editor:** Debbie Irestone.

RICHARD AND JESSE McCLAIN

as told to Mary Skaret

Until the early 1960's there was a resort on the south side of the bay that goes into the Big Narrows into East Balsam - it was called Dixie Lodge. In the 1960's it was subdivided into lots and now has many home sites. Nobody living today knows much about it - Ron Helms said, "It was big in the 20's and 30's but we don't know for sure when it was built. Vern Tilton's mom worked there as a housekeeper and sold them vegetables from her garden. He and his brother sold them worms for fishing. Judy Stewart remembers going there on Sundays for her grandmother when they made homemade peach ice cream and Helen Freeman played on their golf course. Nikki Keissling Nelson says her family only had a rowboat with no motor - so they never got that far away from their cabins on the main lake.

But in 1996, I interviewed Richard and Jesse McClain who had both worked there as teenagers and were both 89 years old in 1996. They took me on a tour around the lake. Richard had been Chairman of the township of Milltown and Chairman of the County Board of Adjustors until he was 80 years old when he resigned. He said, "That seemed like a 'seemly' thing to do because the public might think I was losing it. 'Seemly', that's a word you don't much hear anymore." Of course, he knew every nook and cranny of Balsam Lake. I'd like to share some of what I learned from them.

In 1923 (may have been first year of Dixie Lodge) Richard was just 16 years old and asked John A. Steele (the owner with his wife, Catherine Steele) for a job. "Steele said, 'Well, I guess I need to hire someone to help, so I will try you for a week for \$35 / month.' He let me stay on and gave me \$40 that first month but said, don't tell Mud - that is what he called his wife. Steele was always good to me. When our tour came to Dixie



Lodge, I could hear and feel Dick's nostalgic pining even from a very rational/practical man. His memories were so vivid and he called those days his "happiest years" between the "miseries" and the "almost bearable."

Richard was driving for our tour with me in the passenger seat and his wife Jesse in the back seat with several Polk County Plat Books which she handed up as needed. Richard looked at the 1920 Plat Book and continued, "There was no County Road I going by the southwest shore of Balsam Lake but there was a dirt road. Paradise Island was owned by a Wellington and had a well-developed resort (Joan Stanze called it a Gentleman's Club.) "When people would come they would ring a bell on shore and a boat would come and get them. East of Paradise there was a H.W. Griffin who had 3 or 4 cottages to rent and then the property of Dixie Lodge started up owned by John and Catherine Steele.

Dick's wife, Jesse piped up, "I have never heard some of these stories. I worked there as a waitress. They were good jobs for local girls. The wage that sticks in my head was \$2.50 per week but we made good tips. I had lived near Half Moon Lake since I was ten years old and graduated from Milltown H.S in 1926. Dick had been there for two years when I started at Dixie. I remember he and I would go rowing when we were sweethearts to the woods where Dixie collected maple syrup.

We courted and were married in 1927 two years later." They were married almost 74 years.

Richard continued, "It was almost unbelievable how well Dixie Lodge was known. Most of the people came from Chicago or the Twin Cities. They would usually stay two weeks to a month. Mr. Steele would go pick them up from the train in Centuria in an old Essex and I guess he had a couple Model T's. He would bring back all the groceries too in a big carrier on the back. Everybody ate all their meals in the dining room in the lodge. Dixie Lodge had the American or Continental plan, I can never remember which is which."

"J. A. Steele never did anything himself. They were 'Lords of the Manner,' we were just peons. Oh, they were always good to us. He was a true southern gentleman. He always wore knickers with long socks and golf shoes. I never saw him in anything else. He sat in his office that looked over the whole operation. I only saw Mrs. Steele making flower arrangements. She may be kept her own room. They had a bedroom in



the lodge. They had a first and second cook, a hired kid (that was me!), an older hired man (somebody to cut all the wood - they had a big fireplace in the lodge that took 4'lengths,) four waitresses and one housekeeper. She took care of all the cabins and did all the laundry every week. It is amazing how we got everything done. We had an overnight capacity of 60 people, 14 cottages (some called Maryland, Virginia, Carolina, Alabama, and Wake-Me-Up) with no modern conveniences and often we fed 150 people on Sundays. Each cottage had at least 2 rooms, and a porch and some had as many as 4 beds. The specialty was Southern Fried Chicken (they were proud of that - it was not Swedish or Dutch or anything) which they served every Sunday."

"Every morning I would have to start the fire for the cook. Then I would milk the cows. After that I would get 12 quart pails filled with hot water and knock on all the doors of the cottages. Of course, I was a 'baggage masher' and really got to know a lot of the people. You know the more money they had the nicer they were and the more ordinary. Only the 'Four Flushers' would push you around. (We decided four flusher must have come from poker when somebody tries to bluff a five when he

(continued on Page 4)

(continued from Page 3 - Richard and Jesse McClain)

doesn't have it.). And of course, I had to take the garbage out. Then I would keep out of site so they wouldn't think of something hard for me to do."

"J.A. Steele liked me. One time he let me keep a few pigs in a nearby tamarack swamp and let me feed them garbage from the lodge. Nobody knew they were there. But one morning he said to me, 'This morning Mud said she thought she smelled pigs - so you better get them out of there fast!' So, I had to move them much further away to my home farm which wasn't nearly as convenient."

"A guy named Gus Munch came about 2 or 3 times each year. His company had sold the city of Chicago all their traffic lights and he often brought important people along like the Treasurer of the city of Chicago and other contractors. He was a real cosmopolitan figure and there was not much he didn't know. He was a great fisherman and when he was there I used to row his boat for him for \$2 / day. That was a lot of money then. He had an Elto motor but it would take an hour to go to Little Balsam and trolling with a motor was against the law then. The area north of Carlson Island called the "stumps" was off bounds because it was a spawning area especially for northern pike. I would row fisherman over there from Dixie and then anchor just outside of the restricted area so they could cast in."

"Munch helped J.A. Steele lay out a nine-hole golf course. Many of the holes were through the woods so they had to cut down the trees on all the fairways (with no chainsaws), dynamite the stumps, and then pull the roots out of the ground - 265 yards was the longest fairway. The greens were placed where there were no trees. He had 17 Indians working for him, me, Mr. Steele's handicapped brother, and Mike Mosay who was the Chief of the St. Croix Chippewa Indian band at the time. We hard raked the whole golf course and planted grass. Of course, there was no water so they had sand greens, hauled from the beach on Paradise Island on Steele's big barge which Steele called the 'Robert E. Lee'). Mike Mosay took care of the course after that. He brought his family in the spring of each year and they built a wickiup for his wife, their two daughters, Archie (chief after Mike), Tom, Dan and little Joe. He and his wife also took care of a granddaughter after one of his daughters died of TB. The little girl was so pretty - very black hair, brown skin and really brown eyes."

"In the winter we used to cut 300-400 cakes of ice and put them in the ice house. One time as a prank I locked Tom in the ice house. After about an hour I let him out and he ran around after me with the shaver we used for making the ice for homemade ice cream. But Tom and I were good friends. The tool shop was behind the ice house and the Indians used to hang out there when it rained. Mike used to go back there and tell stories in the Chippewa language. His voice was so beautiful. I would sometimes go back there because I wanted to listen, even if I didn't understand a thing. But they usually would stop when I came around. I so wished, I could take part."

Here is where the stories ended. Richard and Jesse both died in a car accident in 2001.

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BALSAM LAKE WATER PATROL - GOOD JOB!

As we come to the end of summer, we should be thankful for the fine job done by our Balsam Lake Water Patrol keeping us safe.

Did you know there are 22.7 miles of lakeshore on Balsam Lake and the Water Patrol covers all of it? And by law, our Water Patrol must document time spent on the lake and results of their time on the lake. The WDNR has congratulated our Water Patrol on keeping very good records. These records are important to qualify for the optimum payment from the WDNR. Did you know that the WDNR could pay up to 75% of our water patrol cost with our Balsam Lake Homeowners Association paying the balance?



Our Water Patrol officers appreciate our patrol boat!

We know there are times on the lake, when the Water Patrol pulls you over, that you do not feel thankful for their presence. But, think about the times when someone rides their jet ski through your swim area or somebody swings their pontoon within the no-wake-zone of your shore. Or when that fishing boat goes way too fast through the narrows. If you see someone operating their vessel irresponsibly on our lake, you can call the police and report this occurrence. Give them a description of the vehicle and of the person driving it and they will do their best to tag this person. Our Water Patrol may not be on our lake at all times, but if there

is a report, they can be on the lake in minutes. So, next time we say, **“Where is our Water Patrol?”** the answer is, **“Right here, keeping us all safe and secure on our lake.”**

Homemade Bubbles with Sugar

What's better than blowing bubbles on a warm, sunny day? There's no need to buy store bought bubbles when you have sugar, dish soap and water handy at home. Just adding a little sugar to your homemade bubble recipe will make your bubbles last longer. The sugar slows down the water evaporation, which in turn keeps the bubbles from drying out so they stay intact for a longer period of time (unless of course the bubble hits the ground - then all bets are off!)

Supplies:

- 1 tablespoon Imperial Sugar Extra Fine Granulated Sugar (the extra-fine sugar is important!)
- 2 tablespoons dish soap (Joy or Dawn seem to work best)
- 1 cup water

Directions:

1. Mix all ingredients and stir gently until the sugar is dissolved.
2. Blow huge bubbles.
3. Repeat as many times as necessary!

Hot Apple Pie Dip

Ingredients:

- 1 tub (8 oz.) reduced-fat cream cheese spread
- 2 Tbsp. brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 1 apple, chopped, divided
- 1/4 cup shredded reduced-fat cheddar cheese
- WHEAT THINS Original Snacks

Instructions:

- Heat oven to 375 degrees F.
- Mix cream cheese, sugar and spice in medium bowl until well blended. Stir in half the apples.
- Spread into pie plate or small casserole dish; top with remaining apples and cheddar.
- Bake 10 to 12 min. or until heated through. Serve with WHEAT THINS.

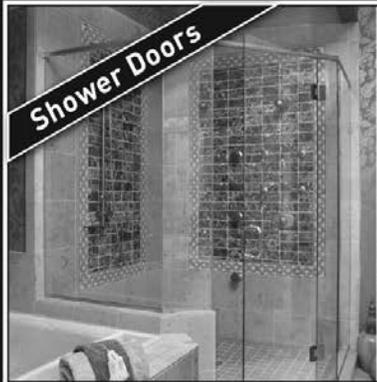
What Do You Do Over The Winter When You Are Away From Balsam Lake?



Ron & Julie Helms with Ron & Stephanie Ward on a boat ride!

A lake is the landscape's most beautiful and expressive feature. It is earth's eye; looking into which the beholder measures the depth of his own nature.

– Henry David Thoreau



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15TH-ANNUAL MILLTOWN FIRE DEPARTMENT TACO FEED



The 15th Annual Milltown Fire Department Taco Feed is fast approaching. If you have not yet marked your calendar for the fun and festivities with the Milltown Fire Department, the fun will be on **Saturday, October 14, 2017, at 4 p.m.** There are many prizes that will be given away, a live auction, and as always, all-you-can-eat tacos. *(Hot dogs are also available)*

MFD would like to thank all the past sponsors of the Taco Feed and everyone for stopping in past years. Without the sponsors and you, they would not have been able to make this such a success.

If you weren't aware, proceeds from the Taco Feed allows the department to purchase new equipment, which makes their job safer and allows them to provide better service to you.

BALSAM LAKE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

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

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No admission fees. Donations appreciated and
sustains their efforts.

Balsam Lake Farmers Market

Continues through Friday, October 13
in parking lot of Our Lady of the Lakes Catholic
Church, Balsam Lake - Hours: 3-5:30 p.m.

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

Milltown Fire Department Taco Feed

Saturday, October 14, 4 p.m.



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WALKING WITH WILDFLOWERS

This article was published in the July 2009 issue of Shorelines.

On Saturday, May 16, 2009, I was invited by my lake neighbor and good friend Helen Brooks to join the Balsam Lake Garden Club for a wildflower walk on the Ice Age Trail north of St Croix Falls. It was a cold, windy morning as Helen and I pulled into the Lions Park parking lot north of town. My car temperature reading said it was 45 degrees and the wind was blowing at about 20 mph. We got out of the car and met Cora Dversdall (who organized the walk) Sylvia Hansen, Betty Olson, Paulette Thibault, Gail Rustad, Missie Sogge and Barb Delaney, our walk leader.

After enjoying coffee and treats provided by Sylvia and Betty, we set off into the Ice Age Trail north of the park. Cora told me that the Ice Age Trail is a thousand mile trail that meanders through Wisconsin, starting at the St. Croix Falls area and winding up in Door County. Barb pointed out many spring wildflowers and as I got used to looking for them, I could see their tiny blooms as well.

We hiked for about an hour and a half, past what Barb called 'seepage creeks. These are creeks that come up out of the ground instead of coming from runoff. On our walk, we saw False Rue Anemone, Blood Root, Wild Blue Phlox, Common Yellow Violet, Blue Cohosh, Wild Geranium, Virginia Waterleaf, Yellow Bellwort, Spring Beauty ... the list goes on. I mentioned I couldn't see how I would remember all these names of flowers I know I have seen in the past. Paulette told me the best identifying book for me would be *Wildflowers of Wisconsin* by Stan Tekiela. Flowers in the book are categorized by colors to help with identifying the plants.

We also passed a bench that I admired and Cora told me it is called the Aldo Leopold Bench. It is a simple design that I am sure I can talk someone into making for me. The bench was designed by Aldo Leopold who wrote the Sand Country Almanac. I 'googled' Leopold Bench and got the plans from the United States Environmental Protection Agency website. It was a very interesting walk and I made many new friends. They are a good group of people who made me feel very welcome. If you are interested in joining the Balsam Lake Garden Club, contact Kris Muller, 715-825-5357.



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PHOTOS FROM AROUND

Photos on pages 12 & 13
provided by Tiffany Morton.



Paige Palkovich enjoying Balsam's blue waters.



Surfing!

“*Memories made at the lake last a lifetime.*”



McClain showing us a slalom move most of us would not attempt!

BEAUTIFUL BALSAM LAKE!

*All photo descriptions
courtesy of editor.*



Families lined up on their boats.



Barefoot skiers of the mist.

*“Time wasted at the lake is
time well spent.”*



Patsy Hansen's flotilla birthday party, it happens every year! Who needs a party room?

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The Polk County Historical Society is excited to be offering two, three day sessions of Pioneer Schooling to be held at the restored, Polk County Lanesdale Rural School in Balsam Lake. First session, August 8, 9, 10. The second session, August 15, 16, 17. Time; 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The fee for each three-day session is \$35.00 per child.

To make this unique program successful, we are suggesting the children should be between the ages of 6-14. Students are asked to dress as children did in the 1900s; costume's available at school.

**Questions can be directed to
Vera 715-485-9269 or
polkcountymuseum@lakeland.ws**

IT IS A SMALL WORLD AFTER ALL!

by Marcia Freed

This Balsam Lake story began in a city called The Villages, Florida population 118,000. My husband and I were renting at that time and looking for a home to buy. A friend told us about a home for sale and said the owners were going to list it the very next day, so we got their number and called right away and went to see it. We fell in love with it, told them we would go home and talk it over, then called them that night and made an appointment to present an offer the next day at noon as they were going golfing in the morning. But the next morning at 9:00 a.m. we got a call from them saying the house was sold! I asked how that happened when they didn't even have an appointment and she said a couple was renting down the street from them and knocked on their door that morning and asked to see their house. They loved it and made an offer right away as they were leaving that same day to go back to Wisconsin to go ice fishing. I asked her if she knew where they were from in Wisconsin, she asked her husband, and he told her Balsam Lake Wisconsin. I couldn't believe it! I told her, "No way, that's where we are from!" How could this be, Balsam Lake is only a little village, population 1008! I then asked her, "What are their names?" And she replied, "Oh no, I couldn't tell you



that, as they are our buyers now!" I pleaded but she wouldn't give in! I think she thought I was mad but I wasn't. I just wanted to see if we knew the people. So, a few days later, Jim and I were at the square with our good friends, Denny and Karen Aubin (owners of BLICS), and a man walked up to Denny and said, "Aren't you the guy that owns the ice cream store in Balsam Lake?" and Denny replied, "Yes, I am. Then he asked them their names and they said they were Denny and Linda Moll. Then Denny asked them if they had recently bought a home in The Villages, and they said, "Yes, how did you know?" and Denny said "Meet the people you stole the house from!" Their facial expressions were priceless, but we assured them we weren't mad and were happy to meet them. The story ended up in the Village Daily Newspaper in the column called "it Only Happens in the Villages". After the story ran, the newspaper called and asked if they could give

my phone number out as quite a few people had called to say they were also from Balsam Lake! We all decided to meet for dinner, 7 couples in all, and we formed The Balsam Lake Villagers! We meet monthly in The Villages and have had 2 golf play days! We also meet monthly at Balsam Lake and have had 2 pontoon parties and a progressive dinner party. The couples in our group are: Denny and Karen Aubin, Al and Linda Anderson, Don and Sandi Cullen, Tom and Jane Hoffman, Larry and Carolann Hunter, Bryan and Lois Gilbert, and Jim and Marcia Freed. This is a "Its A Small World" story!



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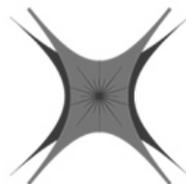
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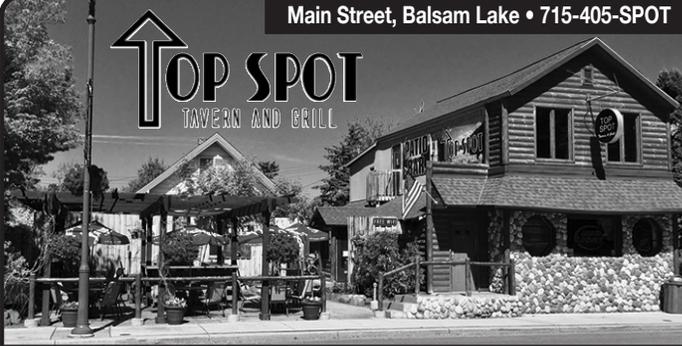
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