



Lake Soundings

The Gilmore Lake Association Newsletter - Fall 2021

Gilmore Lake 1960s: A Resort Heyday *Local resorts shaped summer fun and community*



Daniel's Resort on Little Gilmore. Date unknown.

The start of the Stokes family summer vacation on Gilmore Lake in the 1960s had become something of a ritual.

The family of four, plus a couple of friends, would pack the car and begin a circuitous drive on pre-highway roads from Eau Claire. There were often several fun stops, including one at the bakery in Rice Lake. "Check-in wasn't until noon so whenever we left, we timed it to arrive exactly at noon," recalls Larry Stokes, who was eight years old when his family first visited Gilmore Lake in 1961. "We made an adventure of it."

They stayed at Iverson's resort, the largest of eight or nine resorts that once dotted the shores of Gilmore. Renting cabins or cottages at small family-run resorts was the way many, if not most, people enjoyed the lake before the era of individual lake property ownership. The World War II generation had young families and owning a second residence was a luxury few could afford.

For the Stokes and many others, this form of recreation created a unique sense of community. "We rented a

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President's Message

Dear Lake Neighbors,
Fall is here and the weather and colors have been superb! The Board has several updates to share with you.

First, I want to welcome Homer Gatlin III as a new board member who is replacing John Ney, a long-serving member and past president. Homer will be a great addition to our group. Thank you,

John Ney, for all you have done for our lake, especially fighting against EWM and leading our walleye stocking program. Board members' contact information can be found on page two if you need to reach any of us.

Second, we found a significant increase from two

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Lake Resorts from page 1...



Cabin numbers 3 and 4 at Iverson's Resort on the west side of Gilmore Lake. The largest resort on the lake, Iverson's had seven cabins overlooking a long sandy beach.

cabin at Iverson's the same week every year," says Stokes. "So did many people and we got to know each other so well, it was like family. We really looked forward to seeing them every year."

Russ Robinson has similar memories. "It was a neat lifestyle," recalls Robinson, who grew up in Milwaukee but spent six weeks every summer in the 1950s and '60s at the cabin his grandparents bought on the southwest shore of Gilmore Lake in 1928. "Most people only had two weeks off from work the entire year and they'd build their whole vacation around the lake. Many people came from Chicago and rented the same cabins during the same two weeks every year, so it was like a reunion."

It was the heyday of resorts in the Minong-Wascott area. A local chamber of commerce resort directory at the time boasted of "paved highways" to the "land of unpolluted air and water." It listed

...Continued next page

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20 resorts in the region stretching east-west from Gilmore Lake to Nancy Lake and north-south from Matthews Lake to the Minong Flowage.

Gilmore Lake Resorts

Iverson's Resort had seven small clapboard cabins with white trim aligned closely on the bluff overlooking a sandy beach on the west side of Gilmore Lake. There was no lodge, but a main house where the Iverson family lived plus a store that sold ice cream and a few groceries.

Another large resort was located across the channel from today's boat landing, a short distance from the Robinson cabin. Fred's Pinecrest Resort had a small cluster of cabins, a restaurant/bar and a store that sold milk, bread and other essentials, including fishing bait. There was a gas pump in later years when small outboard motors became popular.



Stokes recalls a few other small resorts on Little Gilmore, including Daniel's Resort and Wildwood Resort, the latter of which was run by Bill and Miriam Buttron. Wildwood offered lake front cottages, central showers, aluminum boats and fish freezing, according to a brochure advertisement.

Wayne's Resort was located on the sandy southeast shore of Gilmore and purchased by Fran Bogner and his late wife Marlease in 1976. The original 1800s log cabin was replaced in 1993 but Fran still maintains the two small cabins as guest cottages.

At the north end of the lake was Banker's Gilmore Pines, which rented three cabins starting in the 1940s.



Talking with long-time residents, it seems there were other small resorts or families with cabins to rent that populated the lake in those years, many forgotten to history.

Resort Lifestyle

The resort era had its own lifestyle for summer guests. "Moms would watch their children play at the beach and the dads would go fishing in the morning and usually take a nap in the afternoons," says Robinson. In the evenings, dance clubs were popular, including the K&I Club that was located on highway 77 between County Road I and Highway 53. "It was a hot spot among the Gilmore crowd. K&I had a nice restaurant and a dance floor with live music. That's where everyone went."

Stokes remembers spending a lot of time fishing in heavy steel rowboats painted green. "I'd spend hours rowing and trolling by myself and catching walleye, northerns and bass," he says. Five-horse motors were available for rent, but Stokes's father couldn't justify the cost. "The boats were really heavy so you had to think carefully about going to the north end of the lake to fish. If the wind changed, it might be tough to row back."

By the mid-1960s, the local resort boom began to fizzle. "People started to buy their own cabins and the resorts began to go out of business," says Robinson, whose family has been on Gilmore Lake for five generations.

Iverson's Resort sold two of its seven cabins in 1969. Larry Stokes bought cabin No. 4 from the owner's son in 1989 and still enjoys it today. Stokes is also now a member of the Gilmore Lake Association board of directors.

"It was a special time coming to the lake every year as a kid," says Stokes. "So many great memories of the family, friends and the lake itself."



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President's Message from page 1...

acres to seven acres of Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) in June when our annual plant survey was conducted. The board made a decision at that time to treat the EWM with a new liquid herbicide (ProcellaCor) which was administered by hose near the lake bottom in certain locations where EWM was found. In our post-treatment survey in August, NO EWM was found on any of the treatment sites, but each had good diversity of native plants. While we have hope that this will be a successful treatment regimen, we know that EWM will continue to be an issue in our lake because it is present in Little Gilmore and in the North End with limited options for treatment. Please be conscious of "prop-chop" and dragging up anchors full of weeds which can spread EWM to new areas.

Third, many of you were interested in the proposed development of the Rothe property in the north end. The property was sold in August to the developer, Tony Turek, and he is moving forward with developing a plan for the property. Tony made a presentation at our Annual Meeting and provided a preliminary drawing of his plan. If you would like a copy of the preliminary drawing, please contact me and I will send it to you. I anticipate that he will be working through the winter on finalizing the plat drawing and submitting it to Washburn County Zoning for their review.

Fourth, the walleye stocking program was completed this fall. Approximately 1,500 extended-growth

walleye (6" to 8") were released into the lake. This fall's stocking was the fifth walleye replenishment since 2012.

Fifth, we have over 90 members and the Board is very pleased to have your support for our Association. Please remember to renew for 2022 using the form on the back of this newsletter, and fully complete the form so we have updated email and telephone information, in case we need to reach you. (Remember that we occasionally have floods...we've luckily been spared lately, but don't get complacent!)

In order to save on printing and mailing costs, we will be sending newsletters electronically to all residents for whom we have an email address. Please join and become a member!

Have a great winter!

Fran McCloskey
President

Important Dates for 2022

The 2022 Annual Meeting will be at 10:00am on Saturday, June 25 at the Jack Link Aquatic & Activity Center. Annual Picnic to follow.

The 2022 Annual Boat Parade will be at 1:00pm on Saturday, July 2 (rain date is the following day).



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Gilmore Lake Association

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Gilmore Lake Association
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