

Moose Lake News Column for September 4, 2019

By Jan Stapleton

I look forward to reading the Time Machine column on page 3 of the Sawyer County Record each week. Looking back at what was news 25, 50, 75 or 100 years ago is fascinating. Looking back at what happened here on Moose Lake five years ago this week reminds us of what being a community is all about. This week's column is a mini Time Machine for the Moose Lake News column remembering the "Super Storm" of September 4th, 2014.

On that September 4th, I was in Glacier National Park hiking with my best buddy Mary when my husband called. Joe told me that the big sky I so loved about Montana was now available in our yard as our largest white pine had come down during a major storm. It was, by most long-timers on the lake's account, the worst summer storm ever to hit the Moose Lake area. Thousands and thousands of trees were laid down or damaged during the weather event. Only a few residents got the Sawyer County red code alert call shortly before the storm hit at 8 a.m., as the power had gone out just before the storm was rolling in.

Coffee still in hand, many residents were startled by the amazing turn of winds from the south, then from the northwest, accompanied by large hail, all of which turned many areas around the lake into a disaster area. Power remained out for area residents for up to nine days. Power trucks from all over northwest Wisconsin were working round the clock to replace poles and string lines, but they first had to deal with getting access through the downed trees. Phone service was generally on, but some disruptions were reported.

Right after the storm, the Town of Round Lake maintenance staff cleared paths for emergency vehicles on all town roads, and then continued to clear those roads of debris, assisted by area residents. Over the next few days, debris was cleared from the roads and moved onto the right-of-ways by town staff and six logging contractors. Debris was then moved further off the right-of-ways, and threatening trees were taken down from near the roads. The area landscape was further altered due to damage caused by the driving winds and hail that browned and slowly killed trees for many months.

Kudos went out to the many who were acknowledged for their hard work and heartfelt efforts after the storm including, but not limited to, dozens of volunteers, the Town of Round Lake maintenance staff, town board members, and power and telephone utility workers. Dave Sanders, Town of Round Lake Board Chairman at the time, recalls how the community came together to check on residents and properties. Sanders laments that, although he had to cancel a Canadian fishing trip, he personally contacted residents on the east end of the lake by boat giving him a little time on the water.

Most importantly, there were no reports of personal injury during the storm, although Aleve and brandy Manhattans were in high demand for many nights after the sun went down. Jim Onarheim did suffer a head injury while assisting in tree removal near Pine Point Bridge, from which he says he's mostly, but not completely recovered. Looking back, our Moose Lake area was forever changed five years ago, but it survives as the most beautiful place on earth.

R & R Bayview Restaurant and Resort will host a fish fry benefitting the Round Lake Fire Department on Friday, September 13th from 3 p.m. until 9 p.m. The menu will include deep-fried or baked cod, catfish, smelt, shrimp, and clam strips. Orders come with a choice of clam chowder, coleslaw, or house salad, plus either a baked potato, French fries, or their special cheesy potatoes. Prices range from \$11.99 to \$15.99. This is a great way to fill enjoy some great food and catch up with your neighbors while supporting your local fire department

Birthday greetings for this coming week go to Tom Rudolph on September 4th; Eric Tamm and Lynn Egge on the 6th; Ethel Richter, Bob Zaborsky, and Ann Smereczniak on the 8th; Laura Berlage on the 9th; and Betty Haling on the 10th. Wish Brianne and Doug Sanders a happy anniversary on September 8th, and Mary and Tom Steinmetz on the 9th.

For information on the Town of Round Lake government, check the website: townofroundlakewi.org. For Moose Lake Improvement Association (MLIA) information, view the website at MLIAhaywardwi.org. Please send items of interest to Jim Onarheim at 715-462-4448 or jonarheim@centurytel.net.

Have a peaceful week.