

# Breezy Pointer

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 2 NEWSLETTER

BREEZY POINT, MN

4 PAGES

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## The Evolution of Breezy Point Resort, Part 6

## The New Marina II Restaurant & Dockside Lounge Sizzle!



Breezy Point Lodge main gate picture from the early 1950's. The sign, predating the year-round operation reads, "America's Foremost Summer Resort".



Guests enjoy the spacious decks overlooking the bay at the new Marina II Restaurant and Dockside Bar during it's first summer of operation.

(Parts 1 - 5 covered the period from Captain "Billy" Fawcett's purchase of the property to the winter of 1970.)

The Resort was operated on weekends from Christmas through March of 1971, capitalizing on the growing snow-mobiling business. The snow-mobiles of this era lacked the reliability of today's machines

and many guests found themselves supporting the local repair shops. On the positive side, the Resort realized a brisk bar business serving "copious amounts of adult beverages" to those unfortunate souls waiting for the repairs to be completed.

The void of guests during the weekdays didn't slow the furnaces' gigantic appetite for

bands entertaining the guests. Amongst the many comedy acts, Williams & Ree, who billed themselves as the "Indian and the white man" and still perform nationally, provided the laughs.

The advent of auto racing at Donnybrook Speedway, which was later renamed Brainerd International Raceway, brought

The long awaited opening of the Marina II Restaurant & Dockside Bar became a reality on May 10, 2008, coinciding with the Governor's Fishing Opener.

On the morning of the opener, Governor Tim Pawlenty and Bob Spizzo, Breezy Point Resort owner, cut the ceremonial ribbon to the applause of Resort guests, locals and the news media.

Governor Pawlenty held a live radio broadcast interview in the Marina II dining room, surrounded by fishing guides, fishermen and onlookers, while guests served them-



The ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Marina II Restaurant & Dockside Bar. Pictured left to right, Steve Wenzel, state director-Rural Development of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Bob Spizzo and Governor Tim Pawlenty.

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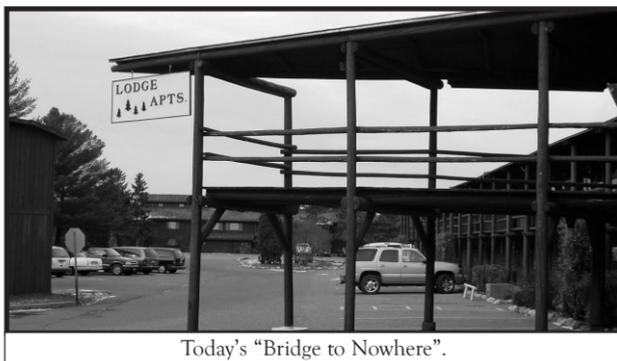
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Today's "Bridge to Nowhere".

fuel. It was a struggle to get the weekend revenue to outweigh the weekday expenses but the exposure of the winter guests to the Resort's summer amenities built a solid return business.

The Resort closed at the end of March and reopened for the 1971 summer season in the latter part of May.

The Supper Club was the nightlife focal point. In an attempt to be all-things-to-all-people, three venues provided the entertainment.

The first, and most elaborate, was the Chandelier Room. Here, show and dance bands performed along with comedy acts. The Swinging Ambassadors and Gene White & Friends were but two of the many

the big names in racing to the Resort. A. J. Foyt, Carrol Shelby, Jackie Stewart and Paul Newman called the Resort home during the racing weekends. Dick Smothers, of Smothers Brothers fame, was an avid race fan who also stayed at the Resort.

Over the next few seasons, marketing efforts were successfully focused on groups. One of the largest, which had the Resort bursting at its seams, was the Submarine Veterans of World War II. At 700 strong, including spouses and three admirals, it placed the Resort firmly within the ranks of the major Midwest conference destinations.

Other groups included the (Continued on page 2)



The elegant Marina II Restaurant dining room furnishings belie the casual dining offerings.

selves at the sumptuous breakfast buffet.

The media exposure for the Marina II couldn't have been greater. Representatives from the major networks covered the event.

The crowd then moved to the Dockside Bar and it's adjoining decks overlooking the bay to witness the departure of the fishing boats filled with guides and dignitaries.

Shortly before noon the boats returned and the fishing results were announced. Governor Pawlenty received a bit of ribbing when it was announced that Carol Molnau, his Lieutenant Governor, had out-fished him.

The first few days of the (Continued on page 3)

Whitebitch, Inc at Breezy Point

### Mission Statement

To build together the most preferred resort with the best people providing superior service to our guests in an enjoyable, safe, efficient and profitable manner.

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## Employee Spotlight



David Spizzo

David Spizzo, the son of Bob Spizzo, owner of Breezy Point Resort, is assistant general manager of the Resort.

Unlike many family owned companies, David was not just put in a position of responsibility because of his relationship to the boss. He had to work for it.

David got his start in the complexities of resort management while still a student at Pequot Lakes High School. Armed with a bank loan, in 1995 he started and grew the jet-ski rental business at the Resort marina.

Known locally as "Big Wave Dave", he demonstrated a business sense and a love of satisfying the customers, traits that would serve him well in the future.

After high school graduation,

he traveled throughout Europe and attended the University of Minnesota where he earned his degree in business administration.

Returning to the Resort, he leased the boat marina in 2001. His responsibilities included personnel, fueling operations and boat rentals. After upgrading the fleet of pontoons and fishing boats, and with careful attention to expenses, he turned the marina into a profitable venture.

2004 saw a turn in David's career when he became assistant manager of Antlers Restaurant.

Again, he put his past management experience and education to use, managing Antlers' day-to-day operations. During the interview for this story, he made it abundantly clear that he left the cooking to the professionals!

In 2005, he was promoted to manager of the Marina Restaurant and Dockside Bar. Although the management principals were similar

to those at Antlers, he was faced with the challenge of maintaining an attractive atmosphere in the old building.

Plans to construct a replacement for the old Marina had been in place for several years, complete with the necessary governmental approvals, but much to the chagrin of both employees and guests the actual demolition and rebuilding was repeatedly stalled by meritless litigation.

Since 2006, he has been assistant general manager of this family business, reporting to the general manager and mentor, Dave Gravdahl. David's oversight includes all facets of the Resort's operation.

David says he enjoys the problem solving challenges of the job, and there are many with an operation of this magnitude, as well as the friendships he has made with both employees and guests.

He and his lovely new wife, Krista, live with their dog and cat in Breezy Point.

## Sponsor a Pig!

Whitebirch, Inc., the parent company of Breezy Point Resort, has dedicated its charitable donations to Spring Point Project, a firm that is developing a cure for diabetes type 1, a disease that now affects more than 20 million Americans and more than 1 million new cases each year.

Type 1 diabetes is usually diagnosed in children and young adults, and was previously known as juvenile diabetes. In type 1 diabetes, the body does not produce insulin. Insulin is a hormone that is needed to convert sugar (glucose), starches and other food into energy needed for daily life. The disease can lead to amputations, blindness, kidney failure and death.

Spring Point Project, founded in Minnesota in 2004, has built, equipped and staffs biosecure facilities for the continuing research of transplanting islets from the pancreas of specially bred and raised pigs that may produce a cure for type 1 diabetes. Pig donors need to be raised

under ultra-clean conditions, in accordance with the guidelines of regulatory authorities.

The use of the harvested islet cells offers a viable solution for diabetes patients-in particular, the tens of thousands of people with difficult to manage diabetes.

Spring Point Project's non-profit status brings stability and control over all aspects of the project, and fits with the goal of bringing unprecedented research data toward a clinical application in a speedy and cost-effective manner.

Bob Spizzo, president of Breezy Point Resort, said, "My longtime friendship with Tom Cartier, the organization's founder, and the understanding of the process I've gained from my son, Thomas Spizzo, the project's director of operations, have greatly impressed me with the valuable work they are doing. We are honored to be one of the original contributors to this non-profit organization that is singularly focused on finding a cure for diabetes."

The environment needed to raise "medical grade" pigs that are suitable for islet transplants is expensive to maintain. Through the sponsorship of a pig, contributions will further this research and someday may lead to a cure for this dreadful disease.

Additional information is available at: [www.springpointproject.org](http://www.springpointproject.org)

growth. Outside influences always seemed to happen at the wrong time. The country was gripped by concerns over the Watergate scandal and gasoline shortages.

Consumer confidence had ebbed and, along with it, the tourist industry began to suffer.

This was not the ideal time to be building the Resort business.

*To be continued...*

## Whitebirch Village

Preliminary design work on Whitebirch's newest project, Whitebirch Village, is continuing.

The basic design elements have been determined and incorporated into a master plan.

Phase 1 of the project is the construction of 18 units on the 15 acre site within walking distance of Antlers Restaurant.

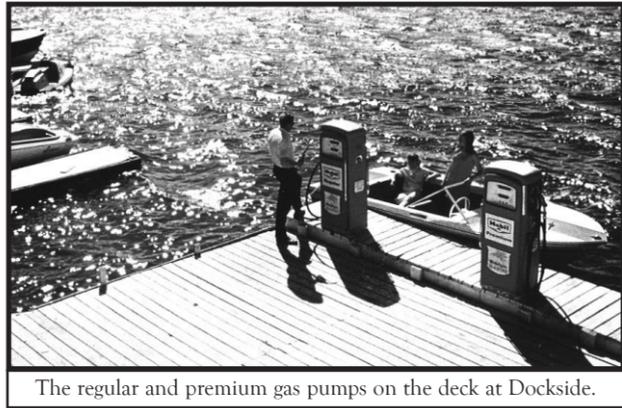
The preliminary plat for phase 1 has approved by the City of Breezy Point Planning & Zoning Commission. The next step in the process is the submittal of the final plat to the Planning & Zoning Commission, after which the City Council must give their approval.

The public interest in this project is growing. The numerous inquiries have proven that the need in the Lakes Area for maintenance-free, upscale living is real.

## The Evolution of Breezy Point Resort, Part 6

Continued from page 1

3rd Marine Division Association, Council 32 of the Teamsters and two groups of 250 people of the Rochester Division of IBM. True to its earned reputation for white shirts as the mandatory employee uniform, the IBM attendees worked and partied in their starched white shirts.



The regular and premium gas pumps on the deck at Docksideside.

1972 saw another change in ownership. The original Hopkins House partners reorganized with additional partnerships of the Resort going to Dave Gravdahl, today's general manager, Jim Harmon.

Harmon became general manager and Gravdahl was responsible for sales.

The forerunner of today's Whitebirch, Inc. was created with an ownership stake of 50% by Hopkins House investors and 50% by Jerry Lenz, who had been a partner of Don Eastvold's during his ownership of the Resort in the mid-60's. Whitebirch developers then purchased

2700 acres of land adjacent to the Resort from Brownee Cote, the owner of Grandview Lodge.

Their initial plans included the development of an additional 18-hole golf course, an RV resort cluster development of 5000 campsites and the resurrection of the defunct ski resort that is today operated as a snow tubing hill behind the Primetime Restaurant.

Although big plans were being made for the future of the Resort and surrounding area, the early 70s saw few, if any, construction or development projects.

Maintaining the day-to-day

operations and balancing the sparse winters with the slow growing summer business kept managements focus on the accounting books.

There were, however, some moments of real excitement.

In the 1960s, a log framed second story walkway had been built to connect the Lodge Apartments and the administration building, now used as the Resort's laundry

On a bright summer morning, a moving van made its way down Breezy Point Drive and, to the amazement of the driver, demolished the walkway. Other than the hurt pride of the driver, there were

no casualties. A squabble quickly erupted between the Lodge owners and the Resort over who should receive the insurance proceeds. (A stub end of the walkway, the "bridge to nowhere", still extends from the Lodge Apartments.)

Two gas pumps for boat fueling on the dock directly in front of the Dockside Bar often presented anxious moments for the employees. Dockside guests who had possibly over-imbibed and wanted a closer look at the bay, strolled the deck by the pumps while waving their lit cigarettes in their hands. Shooing them back into the bar was a part of the employees' job description.

The challenges for the Resort continued through 1974. On the one hand, the summer business had seen modest

**To treat your facts with imagination is one thing, but to imagine your facts is another.**  
John Burroughs

Whitebirch Inc.  
Family of Companies



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## 45 Summers...It's a Family Tradition!



The Berke family reunion photo at their 45th summer at Breezy Point Resort.

On a summer day in 1964, Ralph and Marilyn Berke loaded their car and, with their young daughters, Shelly, Deb and Pam, headed north from the Twin Cities for the Brainerd Lakes area. Having no advance reservations, they stopped at the Brainerd Chamber of Commerce office to inquire about resorts in the vicinity.

One name caught their ears...Breezy Point Resort. Although they had never been there, they'd seen newspaper ads so it seemed rather

familiar. They made the call, found there was a vacancy, and took off for what would become their summer vacation choice for the next 45 summers.

That first visit only lasted 3 days but they were hooked. The first couple of years they stayed in a cabin on Fawcett Hill. They then booked several stays in the Beachside units.

In the early 80's, they purchased a timeshare, as did 2 of their daughters. The rest, as they say, is history.

This year their numbers reached 25. Their 45th summer at Breezy Point Resort coincided with Ralph and Marilyn's 60th wedding anniversary.

When asked about the biggest change they've seen over the years at the Resort, they said it certainly was the new Marina II restaurant.

Our congratulations and best wishes to the Berke family! We wish you many more years of memories at Breezy Point Resort.

## Hockey Tournaments Grow

The Breezy Point Ice Arena is one of the top hockey tournament and hockey camp destinations in Minnesota. The arena operates one NHL sheet of indoor ice as well as an outdoor sheet during the winter season.

The 2008/2009 hockey tournament season came alive on October 31, 2008, with the first of 20 scheduled tournaments.

This season will see 220 teams traveling from as far away as Ontario, Canada.

When family members and fans are included, the tournaments will attract over 12,000 visitors to the Lakes Area.

New this season is the Breezy Point Sports Shop. This competitively priced, full service pro shop carries everything except skates. For more information about the Ice Arena, call 218-562-5678 -

## From the Desk of Bob Spizzo



Bob Spizzo

*Is the cup half empty or half full?*

As bleak as today's economic conditions may look, someday it will be remembered as a time of great opportunity.

Stocks, bonds and real estate are at bargain prices. Many homes and building sites in Breezy Point are available at prices we haven't seen in two decades.

Whitebirch, Inc., is confident that our future is as bright, or even brighter, than it was before the economic downturn.

Each year, more Resort guests realize that we live in the most appealing part of the state.

Although we're away from the stresses of the big city, our medical services, schools and

shopping are second to none.

Whitebirch, Inc., is optimistic about the future and is continuing the renovation and new construction projects in spite of today's economic climate.

Our commitment to protecting the environment is evident in all phases of planning and construction, as exemplified by the stormwater retention system in the new Marina II facility.

Our staff and I greatly appreciate the many wonderful comments we've received about the new Marina II Restaurant and Dockside Bar. These comments have reaffirmed that our visions for the facility were accurate as anticipated.

We look forward to another successful year at the Resort, as well as the growing ice arena and timeshare sales businesses.

The growth of our business brings with it not only increased employment at the Resort, it is also an economic boost enjoyed by the entire Lakes Area.

## The New Marina II Restaurant & Dockside Bar Sizzle

(Continued from page 1)

Marina II and Dockside operations were not without the usual hiccups. Working with the all new, state of the art kitchen and beverage equipment was a total departure from the aging fixtures at the old Marina.

The wrinkles were quickly ironed out and the Marina II and Dockside soon became the talk of the town.

The summer tourist season went into full swing on Memorial Day weekend. Chris Olson's *Memories of Elvis Show* brought a record

crowd, filling the decks and beach. Boat arrivals filled the slips with many anchored a ways offshore to see the show.

Not to be overlooked was the activity in the Lakeside Ballroom on the third level.

The summer saw a growing number of wedding receptions, family reunions and other group events hosted in the rustically elegant surroundings.

This new Resort facility has been receiving rave reviews since it's opening. One guest, upon having dined at the

Marina II, remarked to an employee, "This isn't a restaurant, it's an experience!"

Others questioned why it had taken so long to replace the old blighted building. For several years, the designs had been determined, DNR and Thirty Lakes Watershed and city approvals had been granted, the financial arrangements were in place and the contractors were poised for action.

Each year, obstacles in the form of lawsuits and disgruntled citizen objections were

thrown up in its path. More importantly, groups that had shown an interest in hosting events at the new Marina II facility became weary of hearing, "It'll be done next season." They lost confidence and booked elsewhere.

The new facility has brought with it a remarkable 22% growth in 2009 group reservations.

From a business standpoint, one can't help but wonder how much business has been lost because of the repeated delays.

**Guy (at lunch counter)---**

**"These sure are swell pickles. Do you put 'em up by the can?"**

**Hash House Hattie--- "Heck no! We put 'em up right here in the kitchen!"**

**Captain Billy's Whiz Bang, January, 1932**

## What's in a Name???

The City of Breezy Point wasn't always a city. In fact, it wasn't always called Breezy Point. In 1939 it was incorporated as the Village of Pelican Lakes.

The owners of Breezy Point Resort became concerned when a shipment of furniture destined for Breezy Point Resort was shipped to Pelican Rapids by mistake.

In order to avoid future confusion, as well as more firmly establish the identity of the

Resort, they initiated a petition to change the name of the village.

So, in 1969 a new ordinance again changed the name, this time to Village of Breezy Point. A revised state statute in 1974 again changed the name to the City of Breezy Point.

And there you have it! The City of Breezy Point was named after Breezy Point Resort.



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Reservations Accepted

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*\*Valid through December 30, 2008*

*\*Not valid with other specials.*

**Timeshare Owners**

We have had a great response to our request for you to receive the new ID Cards.

As you know, the new ID Cards are an integral part of Breezy Point Resort's security program and protect our timeshare owners, guests, employees and facilities from unauthorized access to the Resort property.

The new ID Cards replaced the original cards, some dating back to the 1970s. Timeshare associations not managed by the Resort have not been reporting to the Resort any ownership changes. The updating of these records and issuance of new ID Cards, at no charge, were necessary to adequately monitor the facilities and the individuals who use them.

Numerous compliments have been received about the discounts the holders of the new ID cards have received on food and purchases at the Gift Shop.

The benefits of the new ID Card are obvious. Owners who opt to continue using their old card should be prepared to show proof of their timeshare ownership while on Breezy Point Resort property.

If you have not done so already, please call 218 562-4207 to schedule an appointment for the new ID Card.

**WHITEBIRCH ESTATES/EAGLES NEST POOL NOW OPEN**

The new Whitebirch ESTATES/EAGLES NEST indoor swimming pool opened last spring to rave review by its timeshare owners.

RCI has awarded Whitebirch Estates and Eagles Nest with the RCI Gold Crown Resort designation based upon guest surveys entailing resort quality, service and community delivery, and overall vacation experience.

The associations, both managed by Breezy Point Resort, are the only timeshare associations at the Resort to hold the Gold Crown designation.



Chief—"She's gonna jump—go back and get a net!"

Fireman—"Aw, go yerself—I'm busy!"

Captain Billy's Whiz Bang cartoon from January, 1932.

I, not events, have the power to make me happy or unhappy today. I can choose which it shall be. Yesterday is dead, tomorrow hasn't arrived yet. I have just one day, today, and I'm going to be happy in it.

Groucho Marx



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