

Chicog News for August, 2024
JoAnn Malek

Camping has changed from my younger days. When Mary and Dewey Anderson took over Shangri-La on South Twin Lake in 1986, the 45 campsites were filled with tents and a few small campers. There were four cabins and a few larger seasonal trailers. Some campers registered for a weekend; many stayed for a full week.

Almost forty years later, new owners Nate and Kayla Netz have spaces for just fourteen short-term campers. The resort has three cabins now and space for 97 seasonal trailers. The Netz' have brought back the original name, chosen by first owners, Elsa and Ralph Dahlgren. Shangri-La is defined as earthly paradise.



*Make up your mind - don't stay behind;
The lakes and woods are beckoning.
Forgoing that wealth - renew your health,
Postpone the day of reckoning.*

This ditty, copied from a long-ago Shangri-La brochure may or may not have drawn crowds, but business was good. Mary and Dewey were busy from morning until night. Their home was on-site, with bar attached. Mary cleaned the bar first thing every morning and was there until Dewey took over at 8pm. When the bar closed, between midnight and 2am, he'd clean bathrooms before he slept. A unique feature of the resort was a beer locker, an earthen storage area built into the hill outside the bar.



On the spring day when the bar burned Mary was doing bookwork. She grabbed her paperwork and moved outside. The fire department quenched the blaze and saved their home. The fire auxiliary brought food and coffee. "Everyone was wonderful." The house was filled with smoke so the Andersons moved into one of the cabins for a couple of months. When it came time to rebuild the bar a group of their regular campers came all the way from Iowa to help. "The new structure went up in one day."

The Andersons did all the raking, mowing, and plowing. They had a small grocery store with a glass-fronted case for penny candy. Mary cleaned the cabins. State regulations required that linens be washed commercially, so laundry was brought to Henson's in Minong once a week. The cabins weren't winterized but the bar was open year-round. In those days snowmobiling was huge. The bar and their gas barrel made Shangri-La a favorite stopping point.

Mary tells me that the hardest part was the upkeep, every day of the week. Their only days off were Christmas and Easter. The best part was the friendships. And the festivities. Campers returned year after year. "We celebrated Christmas in July, Halloween in August. During hunting season we had live music for our hunter's ball. The place was always packed. Best of all was my daughter's wedding. Almost all the campers joined the festivities."

A couple of years after coming to Chicog, Mary was encouraged by friend Mary Mattie to run for the job of town clerk. She was elected, and held that position for twenty-seven years! At first, everything was done by hand. They didn't have computers. "Every year something else was added to the job." The town treasurer keeps the books, but the clerk cuts the checks. Mary Mattie was the

town treasurer. When she needed to be hospitalized, Mary A went to her house four days a week to collect taxes. "I knew nothing about nothing about nothing."

Dewey Anderson was a volunteer for the Chicog fire department and also served on the town board. "He helped with anything he was asked to do." He has been at VitaCare Living in Spooner since 2022. For three and a half years before that Mary cared for him at home. He may not remember much about the days of Shangri-La, but Mary's memory is outstanding. Elsa Dahlgren once told her that in their early years Ralph mowed the grassy field between North and South Twin Lakes. That field is now Middle Twin Lake. Does anyone know more about this change?

ENTER YOUR BEST at the Chicog Fun Fest. Prepare ribs or chili or apple pie. Medals will be awarded for first three places in each category. Email Darcie Pahos at townofchicogmail@yahoo.com by August 10 to reserve a spot for your entry.

GATHER with neighbors at the Chicog Fun Fest, Saturday, August 17. Enjoy the Cobblehouse Cafe food truck. Wine coolers, beer, sodas. Games for all ages. Dunk tank. Bean bag tournament. Three 50/50 raffles. Music by Terri Rogers 1-4pm, Bill Stubs 4-8pm.

AT BOOKS AND BREAD, drive through for free produce, meat, bread, dry goods, library resources. There are no identification, residency or income requirements.

DRIVERS ARE NEEDED for the ADRC vans. Call Amber Anderson at (715) 635-4465 for more information.

IMPORTANT AUGUST DATES

Wednesday 8/14, 6pm, monthly Chicog meeting

Saturday, 8/17, 12-9, Chicog Fun Fest, town hall

Wednesdays 8/14&28, Namekagon Transit service

Wednesday, 8/28, 10:30-12, Books&Bread, Beaverbrook

Tuesday, 8/29, 11-1, Bibliodragon, town hall

Town Website: www.townofchicog.com

Thank you for reading the Chicog News