

FALL escapes

OUTINGS ARE ROOTED IN FRIENDSHIPS AND TRADITION

Whether it's having a Roman candle shooting competition on the Fourth of July, or vying for the top pumpkin pie recipe at a Thanksgiving dinner, many of us have traditions that hold special places in our hearts. For us Lake folk, waiting from September until November for another holiday celebration can become long and fidgety. That is why many of our Lake locals have established other events and personal traditions to enjoy hobbies, friendships and to add some adventure to a beautiful fall season. Although there are too many adventures to cover in one issue of L•O PROFILE, here are just a few that have been shared with us.



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Girlfriend's Getaway

Every year, Cecilia Thomson, who owns Mallard Point with her husband Bruce, sets out on what she likes to call a "Girlfriend's Getaway" to enjoy shopping, culture and friendship. The foursome — Margie Gattermeir, Judy Pezley, Nickie Foster and herself — established their tradition eight years ago when the group traveled to Chicago in the fall for some culture, and to the

Kansas City Plaza at Christmas for shopping. Since then, their tradition has blossomed into an exciting bonding experience. They try to plan as many trips a year as possible. This fall, the women are going to Los Angeles for a week to soak in some culture and to see "Pink Martini."

For Cecilia, it's easy to keep this yearly ritual alive.

"We always have so much fun together; we all enjoy the same things and love new experiences. It is rare that you find four women who can spend days together, have incredible fun and share life's great experiences—we are so fortunate to share this bond and all this fun. I love my girlfriends!"

The Dam Run

AFTER 130 MILES OF SITTING ON A PWC in late August, The Dam Run changes from being a simple description of the event to a term that accurately describes the event in a more off-color manner. Ask those who have ridden from Bagnell Dam to Truman Dam and they'll agree the name change is probably more fitting than the original Dam-to-Dam Run which was initiated in 1999 by former KRMS Radio employee Dave Krank.

The tradition started for various reasons, but currently is a well-known precursor event to the Lake Shootout, raising money for local charities including Habitat for Humanity, Child Advocacy, Lake Area Rescue Teams and other local organizations. Surdyke Yamaha at the 26 MM of the Main Channel has been the starting

point for the last four years. Participants can bring their own PWCs, trade-out or rent from there.

The group then continues together toward Truman Dam to meet up for food and drink catered by one of the Barrett Brothers' restaurants: Wobbly Boots, Shorty Pants or Dog Days. That's just enough sustenance to last the second-leg of the trip until the after-party at Captain Ron's at the 34.5 MM.

Everyone is invited to sign up as a business, a group or as an individual. With an entry-fee of \$100 per person, entrants receive two meals, fuel/oil and an opportunity to extend summer and play with other Lake enthusiasts. Greg Surdyke, owner of Surdyke Yamaha, loves the adventure.

"It offers a day of site-seeing on parts of the Lake you don't normally visit. One year we saw cows swimming in the water!" Vicki Kramer, marketing consultant for Broadcast Viper Group, which owns KRMS, is a four-year participant and enjoys the opportunity to escape her job to "claim our own waterways. It's insane, though. I have discovered muscles I never knew I had."

Besides the fun and camaraderie, there's a philanthropic side to the event.

"It's fun. It brings customers together, and it raises money for someone who needs it," says Surdyke.

As long as people continue to participate, The Dam Run will live on.





Duck Hunters Anonymous

It would be hard to discern whether Mark Haas or Phil Berger loves duck hunting more, but the fact is clear that each loves it enough to take his own unique hunting trip up north.

Haas, owner of Main Street Asphalt in Camdenton, Mo., moved to the Lake from Chicago, Ill., in 1996 and just two years later started his current 11-year tradition of duck hunting in the Dakotas. Everything about this man from his vehicle license plates to his office, adorned with duck emblems decals and taxidermy, quacks “duck.” (His cell phone even rings in duck-calls!) His trip begins in October when he packs up to spend two weeks with his buddies in North Dakota, a starting spot for duck migration. Haas lodges in a cabin and hunts a farmer friend’s land.

In the last decade of his adventure to the Dakotas, Haas has taken dozens of different people with him to teach them about the sport and enjoy its culture. He admits, “Duck-hunting, after awhile, just becomes a part of who you are.”

Berger, owner of Phil’s Custom Canvass in Lake Ozark, Mo., is not as flamboyant about his sport as his peer, but he loves it nonetheless. Instead of traveling toward the Dakotas for his traditional October hunt, Berger and his girlfriend Kathy Bisges, a veterinarian and owner of



Lake Pet Hospital in Eldon, Mo., go farther north into Canada where, as Berger puts it, “it is so unpopulated they still like people.”

That statement is invaluable because the couple does not own their own property; they have to ask local farmers’ for permission to hunt. Every aspect of this tradition is both fun and rewarding for the couple. The road trip north, meeting new friends and the ambiguity of scouting and hunting their favorite kind of game will keep them coming back, Berger promises.

“We will go until we can’t walk,” he muses.



Shillelagh Golf Tournament

Randy Kelly, owner of Kelly’s Port, returns to his roots every October to participate in the “Shillelagh” (an Irish stick) golf-tournament, an event at Hillcrest Country Club hosted by Kelly’s Bar in Kansas City’s Westport. Kelly’s Irish father, Randle Kelly, founded the golf tournament nearly 32 years ago to raise money for the Welcome House — a nonprofit organization for recovering alcoholics and drug abusers. The baton now has been passed on to his two brothers who are on the board of directors of the Welcome House.

The festivities start Sunday night at Kelly’s duck cabin near Kansas City where the men gather for the “debriefing.”

“Since the tournament is on a Monday, the debriefing makes a real weekend out of it,” says Kelly. “We get together to barbecue, joke and shoot the breeze. Tee-off isn’t until noon, so that gives us an opportunity to sober up before golfing.”

Ten years ago, when Kelly started regular participation, the cabin slumber party amassed a slim number of six guys. Last year, 160 guys showed up.

For Kelly, the entire event is a blast, from Sunday at the cabin to the next day on the green. Soon Kelly will be planning his own golf tournament, which will mimic the scramble format of the Shillelagh. ●




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