

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Bluffy Lake Lodge December 2021

Another year has passed. We are thankful for a healthy and good year. It is a lot of work getting ready for our Canada trips and it seems that is all we think about the beginning of a new year. But the pleasure we receive at Bluffy Lake Lodge surpasses the work.

For family - Our oldest daughter Danielle is working for City of Mason City; daughter Jennifer is working for State of Iowa in Des Moines; son Grant is working for Bemidji Beltrami telephone; and youngest son Adam is happily working at his friend's RV business. We enjoy having Adam back in Longville after working in North Dakota for the last 11 years. Our grandson got married and we have an addition of two new great grandsons. Family Thanksgiving get-together was a big highlight for this year. So much to appreciate!

We did make it to Bluffy Lake Lodge June 22. We were waiting (like everyone) for the Canadian requirements to change. We did our fair share of Covid testing with two trips crossing the border before vaccinated travelers could cross the border August 9th. We thank the wonderful, daring fishermen that made the brave journey to Canada to experience the great fishing. We applied for some grants. We received a PPP improvement grant. The old log storage by the dock was torn down and replaced with Dean's small boat motor/repair storage building, the very rotten 50 year dock approach was replaced, and purchase of three new picnic tables and an outhouse. We also tore down the rotten mouse/rodent log cabin and brought in another storage building. The worst part ~we make a mess~we clean up the mess. We did find time to fish. The walleye fishing was great in the main lake. We caught quite a few over 18" walleye and had our share of below 18" walleye to eat. We never caught a lot of Northern but I (Donna) did catch a 37" Northern. An exciting night was when a young bear decided he wanted to destroy our new grill and join us in our cabin. Dean is fairly comfortable with bears but this guy was just a little too bold. That is the first bear we have had in the camp in our 5 years (knock on wood). The weather was a wee bit too warm first part of July and again mid August. The absolutely beautiful, warm fall was such a blessing and made up for the extremely warm weather. The season ended with 15 geologists for two weeks. They came by planes, pickups and a helicopter. (No trains!) They were doing soil sampling for gold north of Bluffy Lake. They would be transported out for the day and dropped off in the bush with each equipped with electronics and designated soil sample spots. Of course they were able to call for help if needed. They were a great, YOUNG group and may be back at the beginning of May. They test the samples in the winter. We had no bear hunts this year because of the late Canadian border opening and no moose for the U.S. moose hunters because of the warm weather. The geologists did a great job of helping us close up the camp. It was so sad to leave! Our plans for next year are to finish our cabin with move-in date before June 1, paint the new buildings, and work on gray water sewer systems. We have a lot more on our list but those are the essential improvement plans. Our fishing package prices haven't changed from this year's prices. The prices for minnows and gas to be decided (like the stock market). Our Ear Falls bank branch closed. Our nearest banks are Red Lake (1.5 hours/one way) or Kenora (2.5 hours/one way). We are asking people to bring checks to pay for their fishing trips. It helps that I can upload checks without visiting the bank. Even the Township of Ear Falls is concerned about the cash in the camps and local businesses. The good news is Canada hasn't changed their HST (sales) tax. I will be looking at other options but with the 5% credit card service is way too much of a debt. As far as next year, we are pretty sure that Canada will still have the same vaccination requirements. If you have a reservation for next year and are not vaccinated, please give us a call. If anyone has deposits from the previous years, they are still good. To hold reservations, please send deposits the first part of the year. No one knows if there will be a pre-Covid testing or ArriveCan app to cross the border. As far as Covid PPP, there will be a few changes in the cabins. Nothing drastic. We are a two man (one woman/one man) team that will do our best to meet Covid requirements and cleaning. I will have pillows available but recommend bringing your own sanitary pillow. Sanitary requirements will be vital for your health and ours.

It was great getting back home on October 9 to nice weather. We came home in the first part of August to dead grass and returned in October to a beautiful green yard and mowing. Both Dean and I got our bucks this fall. Doesn't seem possible that we have been back for two months. There is always something to do. Also enjoy going two miles for groceries on a highway. We did get our booster shots and are ready for next year.

Thanks again for sticking with us for the last two years. We are thankful for the wonderful support we have and the great friendships that have developed in the last five years. Have a great 2022! See you next year! Sorry no sport shows this year.

Donna and Dean