

A history of the Annual Fourth of July Hand Lake Boat Parade

By Debra Samuelson

Marci and Robert Samuelson (known to all as “Sam”), purchased their lake home in 1978, naming it “Samar’s” (Sam/Marci=Samar’s!). Eleven years prior to the Hand/Hay Lakes Property Owners Association being formed, Sam and Marci started an annual 4th of July Lake Party. They wanted to connect and interact with the lake owners and extended an open invitation to all lake owners. Their party first started with a stiff competition of decorating the lake owner’s boats, pontoons, canoes...really, as long as it floated, it was qualified to compete! All boats would then gather in “Samuelson’s Bay”, where they would be judged. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners received a trophy, but the biggest honor, was that the trophy winners were the first to lead the boat parade around the entire lake. Those who did not participate were invited to join in by cheering on the decorated boats from their respective docks. Once the boat parade was completed, all were invited to the Samuelson’s cabin for a potluck and party. The celebration included enjoying fabulous food, conversation and laughter, while festivities and competitive games were played throughout the day. Games included playing horseshoes, volleyball, egg toss, balloon toss and badminton; all winners received small prizes and big bragging rights!

The Samuelson 4th of July Potluck Party continued annually for 20 years. Sam passed away in 1999, however, the Hand Lake Annual 4th of July boat parade, still continues today, with elaborate and creative decorated boats and costumed boat owners, gathering first in “Samuelson’s Bay”.

Scott and Debra Samuelson purchased the Samar’s cabin in 2000. We will someday

give Samar’s property to our only son Alex, with the expectation, it remain in the Samuelson family for generations. To remember and honor Sam, the wood sign, displaying all the Shadywood Shores Dr NW lake owners, will permanently be engraved Robert “Sam” Samuelson.

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