

Four old grumpy fishermen enjoy trip

On Christmas Day, four guys got a text message from Santa Claus that read: "You've been just barely good enough to deserve a two-day, three-night ice fishing trip beginning Wednesday, Dec. 26. If you want to get a better approval rating in 2019 from me, you will have to improve your relationship with your CEO."

Who were the four guys that Santa texted? Bob Goetz from Austin, Bob Hanson from Albert Lea, Gary Oliver from Fairmont and Paul Proft from Owatonna.

After all four sent a text thanking Santa and promising to improve their relationship with their CEO, away the four did go, headed for Brindley's Resort on Leech Lake by Walker, MN. Three hundred miles later with good roads and no snow, they arrived on Wednesday evening, Dec. 26 at about 4 p.m.

The first stop in Walker was to purchase fat-head minnows for perch fishing. An interesting thing in buying the minnows was no more bar code per minnow—it was one bar code per scoop of minnows (\$4.95/scoop).

On to Brindley's to check in to our reserved cabin. As we walked into the lodge, we were greeted by Arrow. Arrow adjusts her greetings



FACT OR FICTION

...you decide

by Bob Hanson, Emeritus

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"If you repeat what you have read here, it may be used against you."

according to the season of the year. In the summer, she greets with a stick; in the winter, you must do the Minnesota Stomp at least twice to leave the snow at the door. Only then will she give you a nudge and a friendly head and body shake. Arrow is a well-trained, eight-year employee of the black lab canine family.

On to our cabin: it had three bedrooms, two bathrooms, a source of heat in each room, TV, fireplace—right on the lake. An interesting thing was a basket by a light switch with two new decks of cards. We were sure they knew we played cribbage, as on the reservation one of the items you were to bring was a cribbage board. Of course, there was a big sign that read: "Only dumb fishermen think they can walk on soft water. Smart fishermen walk on hard water." (All four of us qualified

as smart.)

Thursday morning we were in for a surprise—10 inches of fresh snow. Friday brought more of a surprise—12 inches of new snow. Saturday morning we became bewildered—17 inches of snow and minus 17 degrees. (The sky was clear with a beautiful sunrise over the lake, the kind of beauty that would make an atheist wonder.)

The accommodations were great, starting with a continental free breakfast in the lodge. Mike and Jeff took us out n the lake to a heated, ready-to-use, eight-hole fish house. They cleaned the 32 jumbo perch, two northern and one walleye, packaged them, froze and labeled each package, ready to go with the fish we caught.

The service was great. Gary's car was snowed in—no problem, they dug it out, even checked to be sure it

started. The only problem I had was a jumbo perch that had my hook and Paul's hook in his mouth; it was claimed by Paul, even though I hooked it first, and gave Paul slack to pull it out of the water, as the two lines were wrapped together. Paul maintained "possession was his, as he pulled the fish out of his hole."

For reservations year-round, call Brindley's at (888) 547-5477. The service is excellent—they even cater to people when their birthday and anniversary are the same day that they stay there. Gary Oliver can verify that did happen.

In summary, four grumpy old fishermen most certainly appreciated being treated royally by Brindley's.

P.S. The result of two out of three games of cribbage partners during the three evenings was: Bob and Bob came in a strong second, while Gary and Paul were next to last!

P.P.S. Each CEO received a copy of the text message from Santa.

Bob is a retired AAL (Aid Association for Lutherans) agent, currently working on his master's degree in Volunteering. His wife, Genie, is a retired RN, currently working on her doctor's degree in Volunteering. They have two children, Deb in North Carolina, and Dan in Vermont. Bob says if you enjoy his column, let him know. If you don't enjoy it, keep on reading, it can get worse. Words of wisdom: There is always room for God.