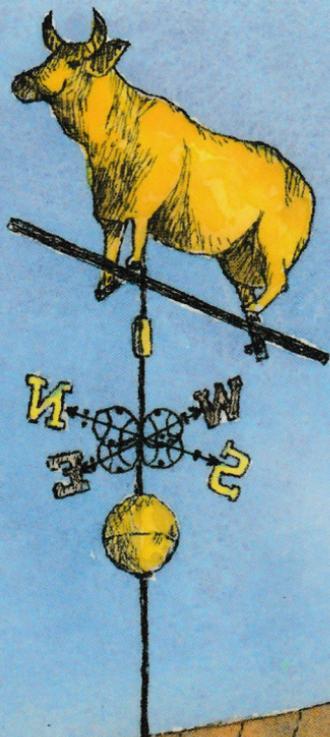


# *The Lighter Side of Dairymen's*



Member Stories of  
Fish, Fun & Frivolity  
Over the Years

## Prose

**The following story was written during the mildest winter season on record in the Northwoods – the winter of 2023-2024. It should come as no surprise that Dairymen’s members, when they arrived for their reservations, met the challenge of little snowfall and downright balmy temperatures with grace and creativity. Winter hikes produced some unique memories.**

### Nature Said

*by Miranda Barfuss*

Nature said--I need a break from all you howling snowmobiles. I need a slumber in a warm spa. I need a confusion to get you bipeds back on your feet. So we stood. So we ambulated. We walked our feet counter-clockwise around Home Lake where great-grandmother took her peaceful miles and up Rainbow where we've always been roaring, but now quiet foot crunch to the sun streaked glories of Razorback Ridge. Ancient footprints appeared in the snow and departed, and the spiritual wind came in rushes heard rolling for miles before arriving with a greeting, ravishing breath stealing, and wonder soaring up there, up high, way up to where the treetops point. Gazing calmly around at the crossroads. Yes, this way, down the lakeshore. Yes, this way to the high bluff. We know this place. We know it in every heartbeat. Husband turned at a touch on his shoulders, like the warm arm of a grandparent wrapped round to say, my grandson, why have you worried all these years? You were always going to be on a beautiful trip to the place you belong with your own wild long-limbed children who feel safe with you, who feel loved by you, who you will feed charcoal grilled memories and play games in raucous humor before more ancestral angels shepherd us all to sleep for long cool bundled silent overnights so unburdened we all relish the slow waking morning eyelash fluttering low sunlight proclaiming absolutely nothing to do. No scheduled arrival. No obligation to attend. No egg timer or egg cracking exactly on the stroke of any time, or need to be or need to breathe, remembering exactly how it is to breathe. Vacation glories undo, undress and

## Prose

droop over high hill hiking so relaxed we're hallucinating and that's exactly what I need to store up in my heart to bring home. A stretching heaven called February, but just another miracle day that the Lord has made. At the crossroads he says, ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls. At the crossroads we kept our eyes high and thanked nature for her slumber.

