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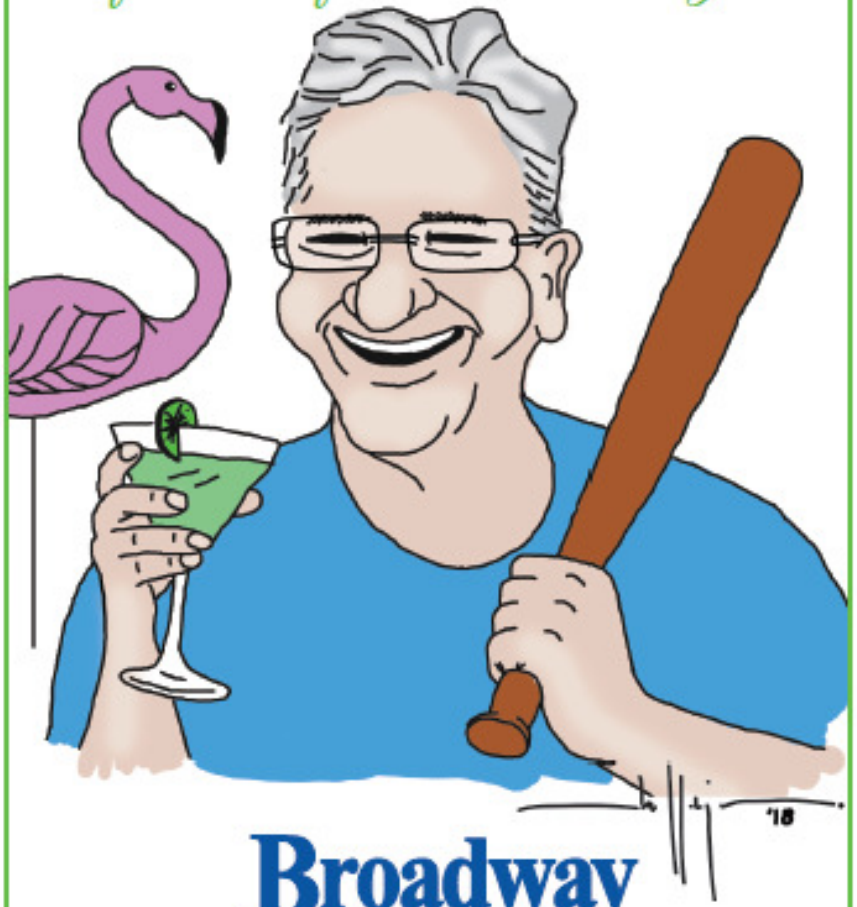

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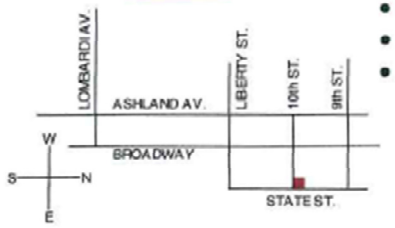

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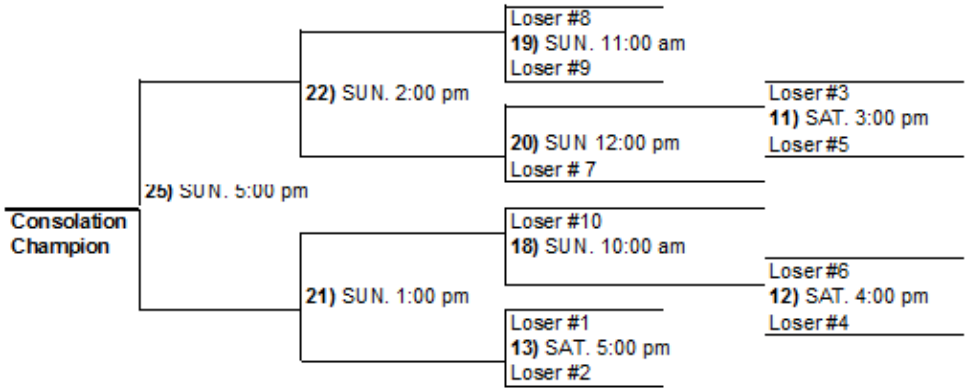

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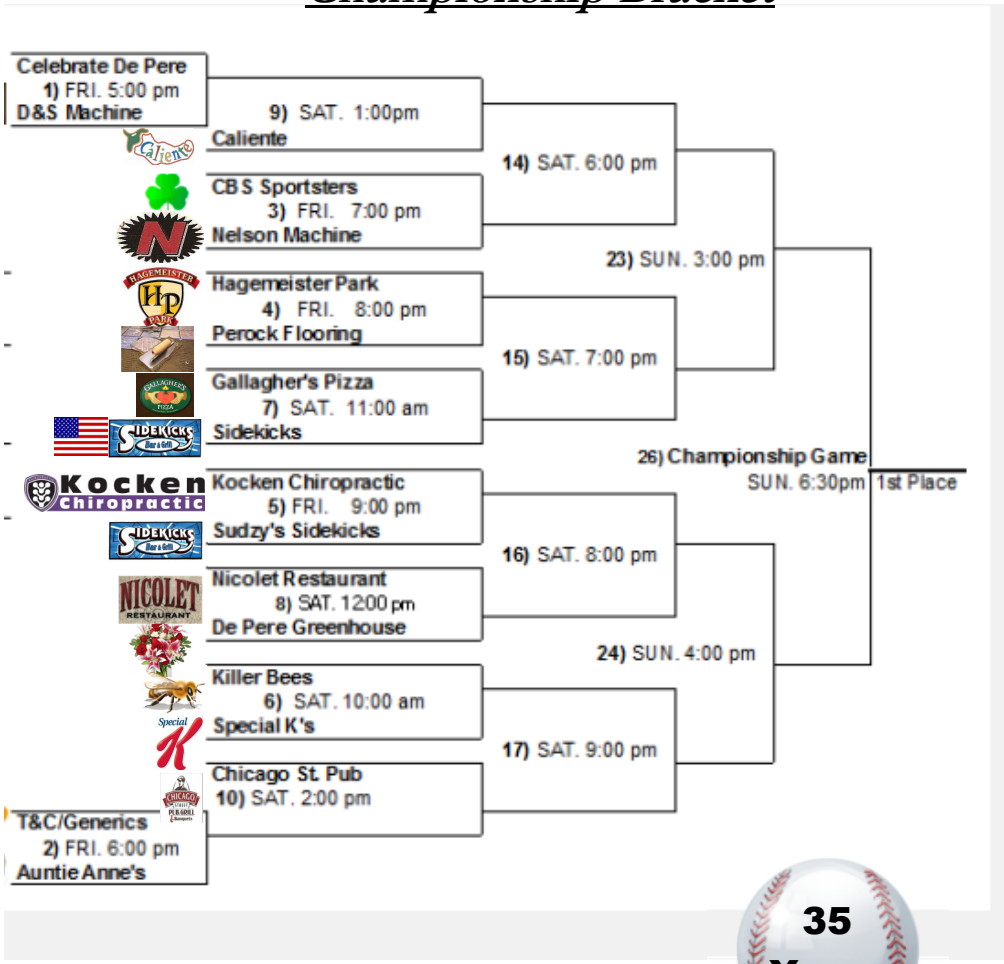

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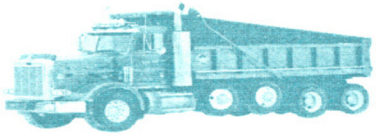

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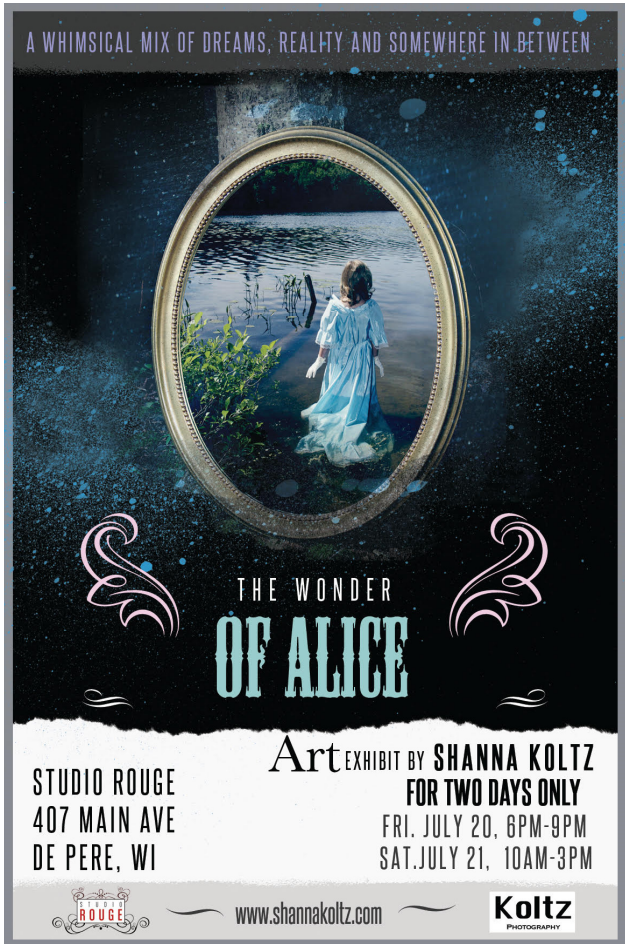

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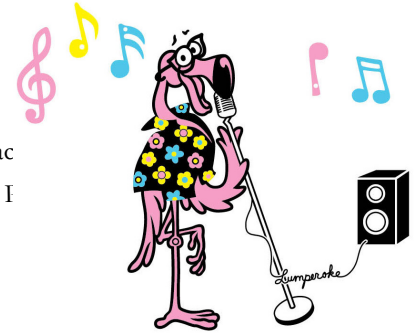

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Pink Flamingo Hall of Fame

Al Counard

Al Counard was the founding sponsor of the Pink Flamingos. His tavern, the Abbey Bar, sponsored one of the original teams when slo-pitch softball was first played in De Pere (circa 1975). Two years later, in the Abbey Bar, Geno Pichette and several of his friends organized a team to play in a tournament that summer. It was at that moment Geno proclaimed: "We'll call ourselves the Pink Flamingos." And, so it began. This group played in a couple of tournaments over two summers before making the decision to join a slo-pitch league at VFW Park on Thursday nights (circa 1979). Al sponsored this team, which was known as the Abbey Bar Pink Flamingos. Al's generosity created a festive atmosphere on Thursday nights and by 1984, the Flamingos organized their first tournament. The inaugural Flamingo weekend was the greatest success. On Friday, the fans went through all the beverages and food that had been ordered for the entire weekend. On Saturday morning, Al stepped up and shared his inventory from the Abbey Bar. A true friend to the Flamingos and our founding sponsor…here's to you Al Counard.

Joe Emmerich & Keith Noskowiak

Joe Emmerich and Keith Noskowiak are being inducted into the Flamingo HOF because of their contributions to our continued success of the tournament. They both played a year or two in the tourney but their success rate was .321 – however that was their fielding percentage and not their batting average. They both played for the Sports Corner, their saloon, and when I asked Doug Seeman for any inside scoop on their playing prowess, he thought for a while and finally said, "did they really play in the tournament". The tournament started in 1984 and the "Sports Corner Bar" came about in 1989. Their bar was one of our 3 clubhouses. They have over the years sponsored 3 teams in the tournament and their after tourney parties are legendary. Thank go there were no cell phones back then. In 1998 they bought and now run Nicolet Restaurant. They not only have an ad in our program they also sponsor a hole in our golf outing and have even come up with their own venture to help us out, the donate money for each run scored in the tourney. That is the board you see in left field. So it is my honor to introduce these two gentlemen into the 2018 Pink Flamingo Hall of Fame – Joe Emmerich and Keith Noskowiak.

Mike "Lumpy" Byrne

Michael Conley Byrne. A three sport star in high school. Personal trainer. Announcer at River Bandit games. Fashion aficionado. Financial advisor to friends and family. Sports analyst with a keen eye for picking the spread. Lumpy was none of these. Lumpy was the guy who walked in the room and everyone gravitated toward him. The best friend to many. You saw him and your face started to smile. Generous and caring, he knew how to live life and made sure others had fun. He was a tremendous asset to the Pink Flamingo Tournament and the Pink Flamingo Way. It was never about the money. Like us, he made it by mistake. It's always about the good time. Lumpy touched so many in so many ways. He loved his music. There is a quote from Billy Joel that sums up Lumpy's love of music and why he shared that love so generously. "I think music in itself is healing. It's an explosive expression of humanity. It's something we are all touched by. No matter what culture we're from, everyone loves music. Lumpy was music.

Former West De Pere coach Doug Page stopped at the 2017 tourney to visit some of his "old" basketball players and some former students. Nice to re-live some old memories!!