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BALHEPBURN GOLF IS A PAR 32 SHEEP PASTURE

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By Heather Rule

When one considers New York Mills they often think of several things: Lund Boats, Janet Karvonen, the Great American Think Off, to name a few. But there is something many people may not think about, and that is arguably the “best kept secret” of New York Mills... Balhepburn: a sprawling, nine-hole, par 32 golf course just north of New York Mills

overlooking Windy Lake. Balhepburn is owned by Dr. Howard Legried, a retired veterinarian, and his wife Lou. Oh, and the best part, the golf course also doubles as a sheep pasture. A fully authentic pasture where the sheep are the groundskeepers and the # rule is to close the gates so the sheep don't get out.

Entrance to this prestigious course involves signing your name in the club house, where you can also buy 50 cent cans of pop or 25 cent golf balls (on the honor system) and, well, that's it. Howard & Lou do not charge any money for the course and all are welcome to attend. Free clubs are also available for use.

The course was created over 30 years ago when Howard started piecing together the course. He already had the sheep pasture and it just made sense to get some holes, greens, and clear up some fairways. Now, decades later, the course has seen thousands of visitors from all over the world. Notable visitors include famed Star Tribune columnist Patrick Reusse.

Locally, the course is regarded as a prized community possession and used for multiple community golf tournaments during the summer, and also a full adult golf league with over 25 members. Howard still maintains the course and most recently added two alternate holes, both par three holes that cut across holes four and five. The most revered (and frustrating) hole is hole number 7, a 190-yard par three that has a raised green and is named "Windy View."

The course is technically open year-round, and Howard himself has golfed out there every month of the year. The course is responsible for thousands of people falling in love with the game of golf and is a true treasure of New York Mills. Balhepburn Golf Course is located at 39501-40519 530th Ave, New York Mills, MN 56567.

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