**Traditions Golf History**

West Bend Lakes Golf Club, Horicon Hills Golf Club, and The Golf Club at Camelot are part Traditions Golf, a trio of courses designed to provide you with 54 holes of excellence in golf. The three courses are part of the legacy of golf started and grown by the Merkel family over the past 38 years. The Merkels are a family of 8, with each of the 6 boys (Lee, Bob, Jim, Jody, Jon and Rich) and 2 girls (Vicki and Kay) at some point owning or working as part of the family of golf courses.

**The Beginning**

In 1982, brothers Lee and Bob, along with partner Larry Henkel purchased their first golf course, Lakeside Country Club in Pewaukee. At Lakeside Bob worked hard at running the food service program with 500+ fish frys and large banquets. Two other brothers, Jim and Jody, worked long hours improving the course, while Merkel sisters, Vicki and Kay worked as waitresses and in the kitchen. Turning this course into a success was truly a family accomplishment.

Moving on from Lakeside in 1987, Lee purchased Willow Run Golf Club in Waukesha. He turned the sleepy 18-holer into one of the top outing destinations in the Milwaukee area, with nearly every family member working in some capacity.

All of their initial golf course ventures were milestones on the road to the three courses currently owned by the Merkel family and re-branded in 2020 as “Traditions Golf.”

In 1994, Lee, Bob, Jim and Tom purchased **West Bend Lakes**, a run-down 9-hole course. Over the next 20 years, they invested nearly a million dollars improving and expanding the facility into an 18-holer.

In 1996, Lee and his daughter, Laura purchased **The Golf Club at Camelot** and began its transformation by building a new million-dollar club house and banquet facility. Over the years, they have continued to grow the facility into the premier banquet and outing facility of Dodge and Washington Counties.

Late in 2014, Lee, Bob and Jim purchased the newest addition, **Horicon Hills Golf Club**. This facility also received the Merkel touch with a new irrigation system, clubhouse renovation and updated equipment.

**A Family Tradition Continues**

Each family-run course is owned independently and offers golfers unique challenges and landscapes to enjoy. Management of the courses has expanded to include the daughters and sons of the original 8:

* Lee, the eldest, is a partner in all 3 courses and serves as CEO of Traditions Golf. You will see him at all three courses, but spends the majority of his time at Camelot.
* Bob, the 2nd oldest, is a partner in both Horicon Hills and West Bend Lakes and spends his time at West Bend where he is responsible for running the office and handling group publications.
* Jim, the second youngest, is a partner at Horicon Hills and West Bend Lakes and splits his time between the courses. He is the GM at Horicon Hills and assists with daily tasks at WBL’s.
* Laura (Merkel) Beaudoin, Lee’s daughter is a partner at Camelot and handles the daily operations, along with advertising, website management and vendor negotiations for Traditions Golf.
* Tom, Lee’s son is a partner at West Bend Lakes and his major responsibility is as Superintendent.
* Chris, Jim’s son is the GM at West Bend Lakes and handles the daily operations.

Each course treats its guests like family and a member at one of our courses enjoys membership at all THREE. Come experience the tradition of golf excellence that the Merkel family has created.