Northwest Angle
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The Angle course is more than golf, however. Given the relatively short window of opportunity (an early spring and a late fall might allow for four months of swinging), and the fact that the season coincides with the money-making chances of the fishing world, time on the links is a treasured commodity.

A couple of hours a week re-establishes friendships with neighbors after an eight-month break. Fiery feuds are rekindled. Business deals and expansion possibilities get discussed. Canadian impositions are lamented. Hunting and fishing tales are exaggerated.

Golf becomes an acknowledgment of the need for a social bond in a community that prides itself on the strengths of individuality.

A town meeting with a pitching wedge, if you will.

Risser's golf plans for the future are modest. Better mowers.

A few more bunkers. The right lottery ticket, or a fortuitous will-reading might bring bentgrass greens to the Angle.

But for now, that's merely a pleasant thought, just like the course was in 1975.

"We like to think about it," smiled Judy Risser.

George Risser flinches as his errant drive clanges off the guinea fowl/peacock enclosure he placed between the first and second fairways. The birds in side erupt in a raucous warble not unlike some heckling gallery, making it clear to the world that this golfer has misfired.

Risser has taken a chunk of his character and stuck it in this course. Like his neighbors, who have leveled air strips and dredged marinas in equally improbable locations, he both struggles against and revels in the near claustrophobic solitude of the Northwest Angle.

It might be nice to have things a little easier, but if they were, he admits, it wouldn't be nearly so satisfying. As he swiped through the grass around the bird pen in a fruitless search for his ball, it occurred to me that if easier does not mean better, George Risser must find a great deal of satisfaction in his golf.