Urban Canoeing and the Importance of Wilderness

Evelyn May

[ce4553dr@metrostate.edu](mailto:ce4553dr@metrostate.edu)

For most Minnesotans, canoes are objects of considerable childhood memories. Water and lake activities are favorite past-times for people in our northern state. From our memories of paddling bliss to our adult years, one thing doesn't seem to change: it is our love of the water.

We wait through a long, arduous winter for spring and summer to arrive. Craving vitamin D from the sun, we look for outdoor adventures to fill up our warm months. Being students, money is typically an issue when planning our outings. This year, the University Activities Board planned a free day trip for students to canoe at Taylors Falls, Minnesota. The school provided the transportation, meals, and canoe equipment for the trip. Make sure to check your student email and Orgsync to find out more about upcoming activities.

Some other fun ways of getting the best bang for your buck is to sign up for an annual Wheel Fun Rentals pass. This pass gives you 50% percent off of all rentals from the company at Lake Nokomis, Lake Calhoun, and Minnehaha Falls. This is a great way for people who bus or bike commute to have affordable outdoor fun without having to buy a paddle board or canoe. Discount websites such as Groupon and Living Social also have deals on outdoor activities.

With such considerable resources from the both Student Life and around the metro area, we at *The* *Metropolitan* have been reflecting lately on the importance of taking advantage of this and supporting parks and wilderness. Even if most of us never have a Walden experience via the spirit of Thoreau, we are surrounded by wilderness and parks. The previous paragraph gives an introductory gaze into such vastness.

After all, when Twin Cities’ natives talk about “going up north,” many times they are traveling to a city less than an hour away.

“I have a friend at work who has a cabin up north,” said Editor Brayden Mann. “Now, I grew up in Isanti and a mutual friend grew up in Pine City. Both are roughly an hour north. The friend with the cabin would talk about how much of a trek it is to Sandstone for the trip. [The Pine City friend] and I would just look at him saying ‘…Sandstone is a half hour from either town,’” Mann recalled, chuckling a bit. “Can you imagine how much more to Minnesota wilderness there is beyond that,” he said.

Of course, there is so much more. What makes Minnesota so unique is both its embrace and distant fascination with the wilderness.