

**NORTHERN TIER
HIGH ADVENTURE TRIP
AUGUST 11 - 19, 2007
CREW E081207C**



**JOSEPH AMODEI, CREW CHIEF
NICHOLAS AMODEI
KEVIN BEDFORD, NAVIGATOR
TURNER DAVIS
BO MARCHMAN, CARTOGRAPHER
PADRAIC NYE
LEE MARCHMAN, ASST. ADVISOR
ED BEDFORD, ADVISOR
IAN OLSEN, INTERPRETER**



Our Crew



Joseph Amodei – 16, Eagle Scout, Senior Patrol Leader, Crew Chief



Nicholas Amodei – 13, Star Scout, Patrol Leader



Kevin Bedford – 16, Life Scout, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Navigator



Turner Davis – 16, Life Scout, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader



Bo Marchman – 15, Life Scout, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Cartographer
The Cartographer position was actually Chief Navigator, it just sounded better.



Padraic Nye – 14, Star Scout, Patrol Leader



Lee Marchman – 52, Bo's father, Troop Committee Member



Ed Bedford – 49, Kevin's father, Scoutmaster, Advisor



Ian Olsen – Northern Tier Interpreter
(if they called him a Guide there would be an additional tax imposed by Canada).



This trip journal is a compilation of the thoughts and journals of all participants. It started with my journal. I then added some of our best pictures. Comments from the journals of all of the other participants were then added in the appropriate locations. Finally copies were printed and bound for all of us. Thanks for everyone for their willingness to share their thoughts and experiences. I think it is a wonderful way to remember the trip. – Ed

Saturday, August 11, 2007

Our fourteen months of planning are over and we have finally left for Northern Tier. Our crew decided to meet at the Bedford house at 6:00 a.m. and head for the airport. Everyone was on time, but we were the last to arrive as we drove around the airport three times and then had to wait for a shuttle bus from the park and ride. Northwest Airlines had set up a



special check-in line for us and we handed out the boarding passes, which I had printed off the internet in advance. Everyone also liked the Troop 820

luggage tags Joseph and I made. We got through security just fine, the screws in Nicholas' knee did not set off the metal detector. Joseph had to go back for his boarding pass. We had reserved the airline tickets many months ago, on Northwest Airlines flight 611 from RDU to Minneapolis.

The flight was perfect, taking off and landing on time. It was Padraic's first commercial flight and he was very excited. After landing we picked up our luggage, found the bus, and then waited, hoping that Colyer would arrive. This was one of my big concerns. He was flying in by himself from Halifax, Canada with a transfer in Toronto. Colyer was scheduled to land about half an hour after we did. Fortunately, he did show up, and was on time, although he forgot his uniform) and our bus pulled out about 11 a.m. I was concerned that if he had missed a connection we might have to leave a few people behind, rent a car, etc. I am glad we did not need that contingency plan.

We had requested a lunch stop at someplace other than a fast food chain like Burger King or Taco Bell. Our driver recommended Famous Dave's a regional bar-b-que chain. We stopped at one off the highway at about 11:45. We all ordered individually off the lunch special menus and had the outside patio to ourselves. It was very good. John Stavas was particularly pleased as he loved going to Famous Dave's when he lived in Nebraska.



After hitting the gas station next door for candy, we got back on the bus and back on the road. It was a pretty long drive to the Soudan Underground Mine State Park. We were impressed by how many vehicles had a boat or canoe on top or on trailers. Some people napped on the bus, others read, played cards or chatted. We sang Happy Birthday to Kevin Dorman.

We had scheduled our mine tour for 4:00 and were quite pleased when we arrived at 3:35. However, the mine had somehow changed our tour time to 3:30 and thought we were late. They divided our group up, with 20 going at 3:30 and the last 12 at 4:00. It was 50 degrees in the mine, and those (like Joseph) who left their warm clothes on the bus were a bit chilly. We rode down a very long, slightly sloped elevator about a half mile down and then got on a train for another $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile. The old iron mine had closed in 1962, and it was very interesting. It was also good to stretch our legs and do something. We checked out the gift shop and waited out a rain shower while waiting for our second group. We were back on the bus as planned by 5:30 heading toward dinner in Ely.



Arranging for dinner for 32 people in Ely had been quite challenging as most of the restaurants turned us down saying they were too small to handle a group of that size. Vertin's was willing to serve us, but we wanted someplace different as we were having lunch there on Sunday. We ate at Journey's End Café and Smokehouse, which closed their entire restaurant to serve us. We had ordered in advance so we would be able to eat quickly and get to the International Wolf Center on time. Mr. Bedford helped them deliver the

right meals to the right people. We had a little excitement after dinner as Andy Murray was counting people on the bus while Mr. Bedford paid, and we left Mr. Marchman behind. Andy says he must have gotten off the bus after he had been counted. Fortunately, we had barely gone a block when Bo realized his Dad was missing.



We arrived at the International Wolf Center at 7 (exactly as planned) and brought our stuff in to their classroom. We participated in the public Wolf Howl program at 7:30 and a private program on the flora and fauna of the North Woods before a bit of free time and going to bed at 10:30, sleeping in the auditorium. After I announced we would get up 5 minutes earlier

than planned for every 5 minutes it took people to settle down things quieted down very

quickly. There was only one 5 minute “penalty”. There was a bit of wolf excitement around 11 with a scuffle outside the windows. The speakers were left on all night so we could hear them. - Ed

I flew in an airplane for the first time and it was awesome. Today I slept at the Wolf Center with the wolves out the window right next to me. – Padraig

We flew in to Minneapolis, which was cool. That wasn't so bad, but then the bus ride was 6 hours! Luckily Chris had his DS (Nintendo Double Screen) so it made the time pass quicker. The Wolf Center was cool, we slept in the auditorium and there was glass into the wolf living area. We heard them howling at night. So far-awesome. - Joseph

The wolves were cool. – Kevin

We slept in the Wolf Center. Totally awesome! 4 wolves, 2 white and 2 brown. There was only a glass wall between where we slept and the wolves. They were up messing around late at night. – Bo

Sunday, August 12, 2007

As usual, I got up early. I wrote my journal entry for yesterday. The morning at the Wolf Center went well. We got up at 6:50 and packed up our gear. Breakfast was at 7:25 and they opened the Gift Shop special for us at 8:00. I think we bought enough stuff to make them happy they opened early. I skipped breakfast, still a bit worried about the Northern Tier weight limit. I was 2.2 pounds under the limit when we left Chapel Hill, but didn't want to take any chances.

After loading the bus at 8:30 we headed to the Spirit of the Wilderness Outfitters for a fishing presentation. It turns out they were just down the road so we arrived early for our 9:00 presentation. They started us early. The fishing presentation was interesting for the fishermen, but boring for the rest of the group. We then looked around, bought some fishing lures, etc. We practically had to drag Mr. Ager out of the store. He was taking this fishing thing very seriously. Turner bought a rain jacket as he had either forgotten his or didn't have one.

We had time to spare, so we let everyone wander around downtown Ely for an hour before lunch. As it was Sunday morning many places were closed, but it filled the time. We had lunch at Vertin's Café. This place has apparently been around forever. They gave us a private room in the back and we could choose from pasta, chicken or a cheeseburger. I ate only a little bit of pasta and gave the rest to Colyer as his burger had not yet arrived and it was almost time to go. The service was a bit slow. I should have relaxed more, but was anxious to get to Northern Tier.

Today was Turner's birthday. We sang to him on the bus and gave him a couple of Twix candy bars for a present. We got to Northern Tier early, before the 1:00 check-in time. The place seemed deserted so we took some pictures by the sign and unloaded the bus. Then we checked in and were assigned interpreters and cabins. I was actually a bit disappointed I didn't get weighed. I guess I looked ok.

Our interpreter, Ian Olsen, led us to our cabin. We then went and checked out tents, food and other gear. We picked a challenging 75 mile route and visited the trading post. A bear was seen in camp, it tore open a tent. Therefore we went back to the cabin and ate all of the food we brought. While we were snacking Padraig rigged our fishing poles. We sat on a rock with a beautiful view and discussed some of our goals for the week with Ian. Just about everyone wants to catch a fish and see wildlife. Joseph appointed Bo our



Cartographer (really the Chief Navigator). Dinner was meatloaf, a bit disappointing. After dinner I arranged the \$100 Trading Post gift certificates. This was fairly complicated, but in the end worked out well. I was very pleased to see so many of our crew writing in their journals tonight. We plan to get up at 6 a.m. to pack up. Breakfast is at 7. – Ed

Woke up and ate breakfast at the Wolf Center. Pop-tarts, bagels and cereal, about what I expected. We watched the wolves some more. They are amazingly fluid and have a unique gait, plus they are beautiful creatures. Back on the bus and headed to the outdoor outfitter for



the fishing presentation. The guy giving the presentation kept saying that every lure worked great. At Northern Tier we met our Interpreter, Ian, and all afternoon we gathered our gear and food and packed it in the packs. At the Leave No Trace presentation someone said that there was a bear sighting, and later we saw somebody carrying a mangled tent. - Bo

Today we got up and then went to a fishing presentation. The live leeches and the crawfish were cool and my favorites of what we were shown. Mr. Ager was sucked in to the store and almost did not leave. Then we got to wander downtown Ely. That was lots of fun. I wish we could have done that in Minneapolis. It was interesting to see another place, but we were done walking through downtown in about 15 minutes. So, me, Bo, Chris, Turner and Will Priest chilled in the park until lunch at Vertin's. Then we went to Northern Tier. We finally arrived! No one was there, we were 40 minutes early. Then we got our guide, Ian. He seems pretty cool. He looks hippyish and has a cool hemp necklace with an amethyst stone. Then we got our bags and canoes. The packs are huge. We are calling ours the manatee because they are big and grey. The gift shop looks cool and the Isle of Pines root beer is really good. We planned our route. We are going to go through This Man Lake, That Man Lake, Another Mans Lake, and No Mans Lake, then we will go through Monument Portage and come back through Knife Lake. The trip is going to be exciting. I cannot wait to get on the water, do some fishing and see how different Minnesota and Canada is. We also got our food, lots of pasta and quick oatmeal, but it looks better than expected. Now it is time to go to bed. I am in a cabin with a cot and everyone else around. - Joseph

Our guide Jan is cool. We planned our route. Padraic hurt his toe. The guide says go by God's time, except all time is God's time. - Kevin

Our Guide is awesome!! They have a good Trading Post. I had meat loaf, mashed potatoes with gravy and cake for dinner. - Nicholas

We met our interpreter. He is cool. His name is Ian. We are sleeping in a Tiki Hut. The Northern Tier Trading Post is the best trading post in the world. I have one hundred dollars to spend in it. - Padraic

Last night after the Wolf Center Staff gave us some good talks about the plants and animals we were likely to see, one of them got the wolves to howl. Wolves like to howl, and when they howl all together, they harmonize in a wolfish way and suddenly three wolves sound like a dozen, and make a sound that I would never have predicted. We could feel it in our bones.

Our how-to-fish discussion was wonderful. The expert could've been related to Nicholas Cage in manner and delivery. He ever so patiently answered all of our questions over and over again. And again, so I for one left knowing we'd be filling the boats with whoppers.

With the troop logistics proceeding smoothly on Bedford time, we happily got to Ely with an hour to kill so that everyone could amble around. Ely has the feeling of a jumping off place - there seems to be a canoe outfitter down every side street, and many restaurants. It also has the feeling of a place that buttons itself up tight when September comes - small houses without a lot of windows, with lots of oil tanks and wood stove chimneys. The weather was 95F in Ely yesterday, but for it us today the heat broke and it was cool right away, probably in the 50s the first night. Today there were mare's tails blowing in high from the northwest with that feeling of fall just around the corner. Canoes are everywhere, in front of outfitters and on cars and trucks. I saw more beautiful cold molded hulls driving by than I'd expect to see at a wooden boat show. I liked the restaurants - with this many scouts, a good place to eat is important. And for me, just before heading out on a back country trip, restaurants always seem like very interesting places.

The initial check out of our gear and orientation with our interpreter, Ian Olsen, was efficient though hampered by a shortage of staff as many summer workers had returned to school. Ian has the calmness of someone who's spent a lot of time in the bush. This was his last guided trip of the summer. He plans to finish up with a short solo trip then return to civilization and perhaps school.

The base is impressive, with the buildings well kept and newly stained, and with a good end-of-the-road, about-to-jump-off spirit to the place. And many, many canoes. The equipment building had a number of old canoes hanging up as exhibits, including some birch bark hulls. We had a good time sitting on a rock outside our cabin and bear proofing (by eating them) the few snacks we had thought to bring along on the trip. I especially regretted having to pass out a big bag of jerky that I had hoped to surprise everyone with on some long windy day later in the trip. But the bear-shredded tent was impressive, so we ate with gusto. I enjoyed listening to the thoughtful trip planning by Mr. Bedford, Joseph, and Bo, and hearing tantalizing snatches of the place names along the way of the route that our leaders put together - Emerald Lake, Monument Passage, Carp Lake, the Man Chain, No Name Lake! Low whispers of the voyageurs blew through the pines close outside our cabin that night. - Lee

Monday, August 13

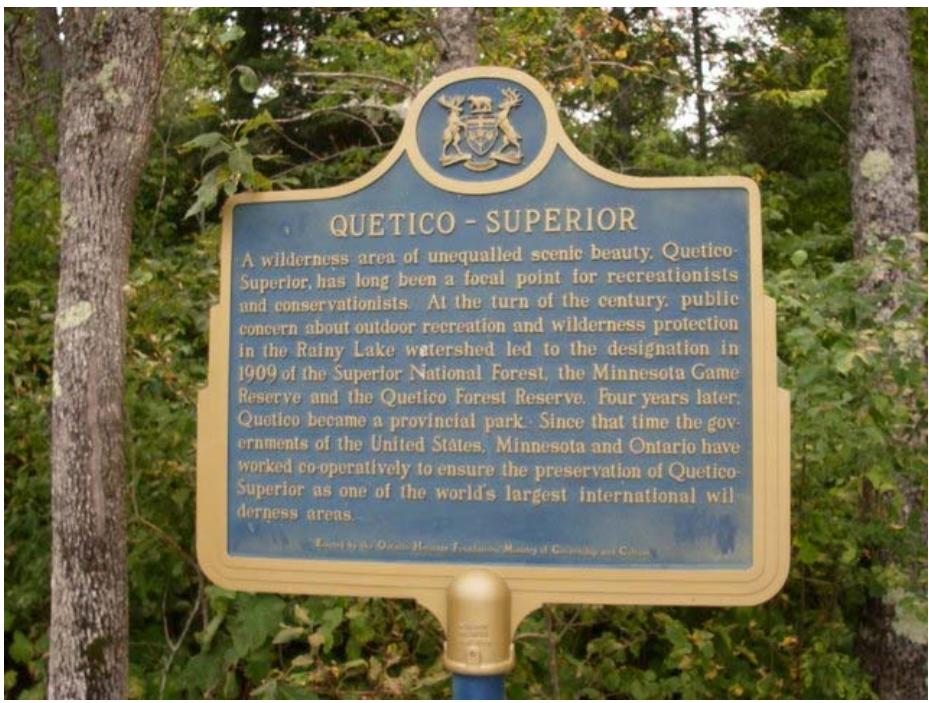
Wow, what a day. I guess it started at about 1:30 when I woke up when Bo got up and said he was going to the bathroom. When he didn't come back in a reasonable amount of time I went looking for him. He had thrown up and wasn't feeling well. I gave him a shirt to wear and stayed up with him for a while. We then went back to bed. Everyone got up at 5:50 to pack. Bo still wasn't feeling well. We had just started packing up when Mr. Cunningham showed up at our cabin to tell me that John Uehling had thrown up in the middle of the night and wasn't feeling well. He reported that John didn't know if he could/wanted to go on the trip feeling the way he did. So, I spent the morning and breakfast taking care of John and Bo. I knew Bo was going on the trip no matter what. I decided that John wasn't that sick and could also go, and convinced him of that as well. Both of them felt lousy, but neither had a fever.

Checking out took a long time. Much of the summer staff had already left and headed back to school. We decided that we wanted to do the GPS challenge and do water clarity readings and checked out that equipment in addition to the regular gear. Our canoes were finally inspected and we got on the water about 9:45. Bo, our strongest Scout paddler, was riding duff as he still wasn't feeling well. Kevin pulled an extra shift of paddling to cover for Bo.



We had hoped to make Prairie Portage before lunch to check in to Canada. When we realized that wasn't going to happen we stopped at a campsite to eat lunch. The turkey and cheese sandwiches sure tasted good as did the peanut bars. After lunch we finished paddling to customs at Prairie Portage. We were the last group of the day to arrive. While we were there waiting a float-plane landed on the lake and then took off a few minutes later. That was pretty neat. The wait was finally over

and we were allowed to check in and buy our fishing licenses. We didn't get out of there until 2:30. We were told the fire danger was extreme, but that fires were still permitted. We were instructed to be very careful.



We paddled toward Carp Lake, our entry point into the Quetico. At the first portage Turner started to feel sick. With Bo and Turner both sick we adjusted our plans and decided to camp on Carp Lake rather than moving on to the Man Chain. We did about 15 miles today.

After making camp Turner laid down to take a nap, but soon got up to throw up. We met and decided that with two people sick we should adjust our plans. We decided to go through Emerald and Plough Lakes to Knife rather than up the Man Chain. This would reduce our mileage

considerably, but we were concerned the illness might sweep through our group. Nick and Ian cooked a good dinner (which Bo and Turner didn't eat) and we did some fishing, but didn't catch anything. I discovered you can gain an hour of daylight by not taking off your sunglasses until it is too dark to see. Our route tomorrow looks pretty easy, but there aren't any campsites shown on Plough Lake, where we would like to camp. – Ed



I woke up at about 1:00 and threw up 4 times. I felt sick all day, so I didn't eat breakfast. The first morning of canoeing passed in a daze with me riding in the middle of Mr. Bedford's canoe with Joe paddling. At the customs station we saw a float plane landing and dropping off supplies for the border guards while we were waiting to be checked through. As I was lying on the ground a mouse came

up and crawled all over me. I paddled some in the afternoon, but it was no fun and I went to bed early after dinner of fajitas with animal crackers and chocolate pudding for dessert. Unfortunately, Turner got what I had part way through the day and didn't eat dinner. Ian said there was supposed to be a meteor shower late at night, but obviously I didn't stay up for it. - Bo

Today is our first day on the water. Last night Bo was sick and is not feeling too good. It takes forever to get out on the water. There is only one guy who can inspect canoes. The first lake we go to is Moose Lake. It is fairly busy and we see a bald eagle and nest. We get to the entrance to Canada. We get to take a nap while the adults check us in to Canada. While waiting we see a float plane land and take off. Then we canoe into Carp Lake and Canada and immediately it is less crowded. Bo started feeling better, and Turner started feeling sick, so we found a nice campsite and settled down. Dinner was fajitas with fresh beef and it was excellent. Turner went to bed immediately, and he is not usually one to miss dinner. I tried a little fishing, but got only a hit or two, but no fish. I went to bed pretty early, because we were all exhausted. We went 15 miles! We also decided to cut our journey down to 50 miles and go through Emerald and Plough Lakes to get to Knife Lake instead of the Man Chain. It was a good first day and I cannot wait for what is to come. - Joseph



We set off today and saw a bald eagle. Loon eyes are blood red, one was two feet away. We saw a huge bald eagle nest that was really cool. It had a baby bald eagle in the nest. He was hungry. Turner was sick most of the day. I had to do the dishes. – Kevin

Today was a good paddle tempered by illness in the crew. We didn't get paddling until "late", or 9:30, after collecting paperwork, stowing our gear in lockers, getting paddles, checking out radios, picking up food and cook gear boxes, and finally carrying it to the boats and launching. The boats are loaded low, as each has a crew of three plus two large packs. But we made good time, I thought, and even with a late start and illness did a hearty 15 miles punctuated by a leisurely turkey sandwich lunch and clearing into Canada at Prairie Portage. As we paddled on into the Quetico the hills began to get a bit taller. We stopped at a beautiful campsite fairly late with a tired crew, and I think all slept well except for Turner, who eventually had to sleep in the open. - Lee



*Wow, I'm in awe of this vast wilderness
It's my last trip for this season in the Northern Tier
I have a good group of men, they are from NC,
and they want an epic adventure, as do I.
We plan to go to Emerald then up to the Ottertrack
then down the mighty Knite. There is much adventure ahead of us.
- Ian Olsen*

Route – Moose Lake – Newfound Lake - Sucker Lake – Prairie Portage – Birch Lake – Carp Lake – 15 miles.

Tuesday, August 14

I woke up at 5:30 as I heard Turner moving restlessly about. It sounded like he was right outside our tent. It turned out he was as he had moved outside when it was too hot in his tent. Turner is still feeling poorly. In addition to his stomach he reports a headache and he has a slight fever. I gave him some ibuprophen. He settled down and went back to sleep. Mr. Marchman got up and shortly thereafter Joseph. Joe and I took a canoe and went out fishing. We stayed out for nearly an hour, but didn't catch anything. However, we both enjoyed the activity and spending some quiet time together. We paddled back down the lake a bit to check on our other crew. They reported that John Uehling was feeling better which was good news. When Joe and I got back only Padraic had woken up and joined Mr. Marchman. As Turner and Bo were still recovering we let everyone sleep. Everyone finally got up around 9:30. Bo reported he was feeling much better. We decided to have a quick (no cook) breakfast so we could get on the water quickly. Somehow quickly still took two hours. Turner still wasn't feeling well so he rode all day. Bo reported he was fine, but he didn't have his usual endurance. Kevin was tired from the extra shift the day before.

Getting to Emerald Lake wasn't easy. We had to cross a large area of Carp Lake in a cross wind with white caps. But, when we portaged to Emerald Lake we were all impressed with its beauty. It really was a different color and we could see why it was named Emerald Lake. The wind continued to be a challenge, but we kept going. We found a beautiful spot for lunch on top of a small hill. Padraic wanted to stop there to camp and fish, but we had only been paddling for two hours and hadn't done many miles at all so we continued on to Plough Lake. When we got to the Plough Lake portage I had Turner (who still wasn't feeling well) and Padraic (our smallest Scout) in my canoe, so I got to portage the canoe for the first time. It was actually lighter than a full food pack, but much more awkward. Nicholas patiently walked behind me on the portage. I really liked Plough Lake. Where we entered there was deep moose muck. The lake was narrow so we were able to see both sides. Padraic spotted our first turtles. Turner started to feel better. All the way up Plough Lake we looked for a campsite. We found one on an island, but it was too small for our

group. We were almost at the end, where there was a long portage we had hoped to put off until tomorrow. Fortunately we found a really nice campsite at the end of the lake and set up camp.



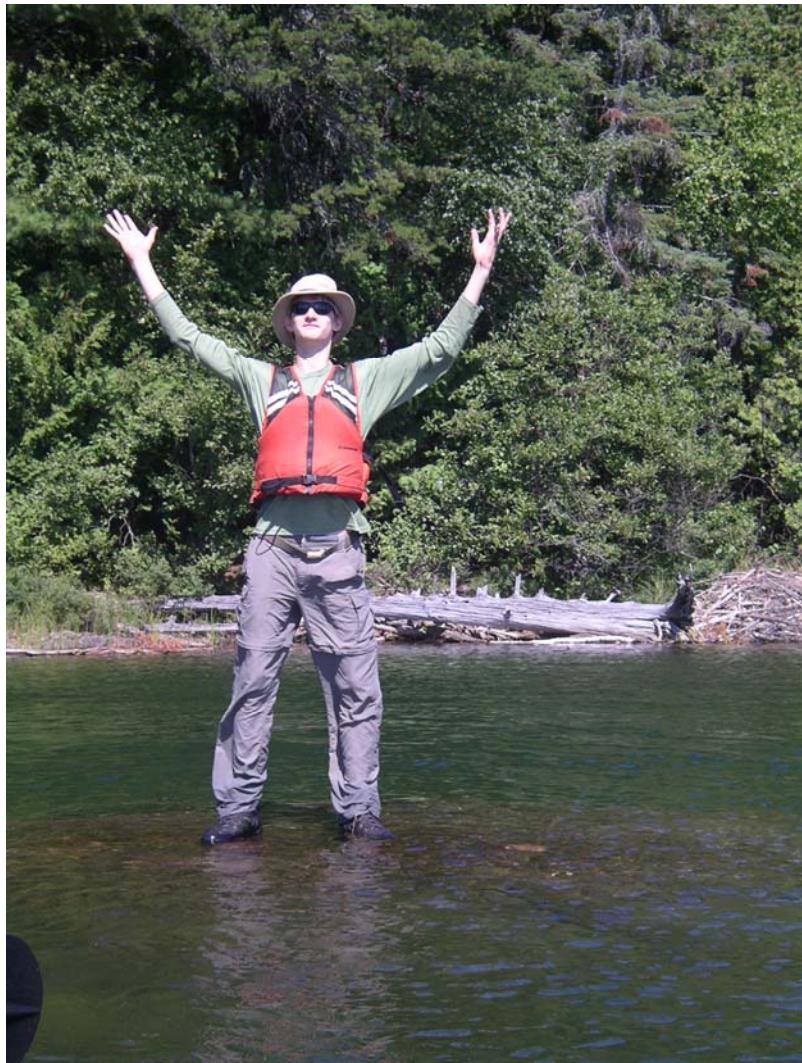
Padraic caught our first fish and then several more. Joseph caught one and then Kevin caught a big one when he went out in a canoe with Padraic. Kevin and Nick cooked a delicious spaghetti dinner with meat and corn sauce. We encountered our first mosquitoes tonight. They really didn't

bother me, they seemed more interested in Turner and Padraic. Kevin, Turner, and Joe wanted to stay up and play cards, but they couldn't talk Bo into it, and made him promise to play the next night. – Ed

Today I found out that portages suck!!! Me, Padraig and Ian had a wonderful conversation. Then we went to Emerald Lake. It was incredibly beautiful. The water was tinted green. Then we portaged to Plough Lake. Ugh! Then we came upon a beaver, dead in fact. Uber-ridiculous. Then I caught my first two fish that day. We had spaghetti for dinner. - Nicholas

When I woke up late everybody else except Kevin and Turner were up. I felt so much better. I could actually enjoy breakfast - granola and energy bars. Dad showed me a beautiful view from the point of our campsite. The sun was shining down on the islands and the swells were growing out of the water because of the breeze. It blew all morning as I paddled with Mr. Bedford and was as wild as ever during our lunch of pita bread, summer sausage, cheese and gorp. The portage to Plough Lake was

really nice either because I wasn't carrying a canoe or because it was just a nice portage. It was full of evergreen trees covered in moss. Plough Lake was really narrow and fairly shallow, the bottom covered in "moose muck", but that didn't mean we saw a moose, just some ducks and loons. We found a small campsite right before the 150 rod portage, which was quite fortunate. We fished a



lot in the evening with only a couple small fish as a result. Dinner was pasta with sauce and pudding for dessert. We sat around a campfire in the evening and talked about thorns and roses. - Bo

I didn't write in my journal yesterday because I was very sick. I threw up and had fevered dreams. It was NOT FUN. Today I started to feel better near the end of the day. We traveled through Carp, Emerald and Plough Lakes. The landscape was amazing. My favorite lake was Emerald, a large and clear watered lake that was very deep. – Turner

We slept in today and didn't leave camp until 11. We saw a moose skull at lunch. It was cool. We saw a dead beaver covered in algae at Plough Lake. I cooked dinner because no one else wanted to. We had spaghetti and meat sauce. Turner finally felt better. I went out with Padraig to fish and caught the biggest fish of the trip so far. - Kevin



I made some hot chocolate in my nalgene and it was late at night so I wasn't ready to drink it so I went to sleep with it in my sleeping bag and it kept me warm all night. Then in the morning it was cool and I drank it all.



Mr. Marchman made powdered milk in my nalgene, so all day my water tasted like milk. We then paddled to Emerald Lake. It was the most beautiful lake I have ever seen. The water was so clear you could see over 15 feet down. I love Emerald Lake and always will. I wanted to swim, but the guys said no. We got to our campsite. Little did we know

it was a terrific fishing spot. I caught four little bass and I went out in a canoe with Kevin and he caught a huge bass. Kevin said he never caught anything that big before. I like Kevin a lot more as a friend now. I can't figure out what to buy at the trading post. I will have to think about it. – Padraig

I got up at 6:30 and decided to go fishing. Mr. Bedford and I got in a canoe and went fishing for an hour. Unfortunately, no fish. Then I go fishing with Padraic for another hour and still no fish. Then everyone else gets up. Turner is still really sick and will be until dinnertime. We are pretty slow to get moving and pack up, but it feels good to get going. I get to ride with our guide Ian and he seems pretty crazy. He likes lots of music, which is cool. We get to Emerald Lake and it is absolutely beautiful. It is a massive lake and the water is a pretty green. I love the water clarity. The wind picks up and there are whitecaps in this part of the lake. The feel of the big lake is intense. You are in this small little canoe that could easily get swallowed up by the vastness of the lake – awesome. We had a long portage this morning, but it was not horrible and it felt good to be back on the water. From Emerald we take a really nice portage to Plough Lake. The portage is really green. There are lots of big cedars and it is 100% in the woods, not rocky like the last portages. The beauty of the trail was stunning. Plough Lake on the other hand was murky and narrow. You felt close to the nature around you, “more intimate” as Ian said. We find our campsite right before we have to do a 150+ rod portage, yay! It has a nice view out over the lake. We then do some fishing, lots of lures get stuck and we have to go out in a canoe to get them back. I catch my first fish! It was an 8” bass, not too big, but now I have at least caught a fish. Me and Turner clean dishes and the water was completely disgusting, not even a pad for cleaning, but oh well. I cannot wait for tomorrow. We went about 10 miles today, and with day trips we may be back on course to do 75 miles. – Joseph



If there is a most beautiful spot in a land already full of them, we may have seen it today at Emerald Lake. From our campsite there was a hidden rocky point that looked out into the windy passage across Carp Lake. I got up early and sat there staring for half an hour while Ed and Joseph fished and the rest of the crew slowly resurrected. It looked pretty windy, with patterns swirling across the water and trees bending far across the lake. Turned out to be our first day of paddling in real wind, which was a good challenge and workout. The wind was from the NE and smelled of autumn. I had to put on foul weather gear to stay warm.

We portaged to Emerald Lake, which has deep green water that reminded me somewhat of the Bahamas. I wished I had brought my snorkeling gear after all, the water was so clear. We ate on a high bluff overlooking the lake, watching the wind

pour by either side of a good sized island, with white caps and a steady 15 plus breeze in the wind chute. The lake's color seemed to deepen the tints of the rocks and trees. I could've stayed there for a day or so.



It's been a beautiful day, one for the story tellers. The campsites are in well chosen spots - I always seem to develop a deep affection for wherever it is we're camping. I'm writing this while lounging on an old shower curtain on the bluff above the water. We're camping in the trees and the stars are well out, in an utterly black sky. The crew are all in their tents talking before sleeping hard. Moments ago, Padraic said to Nick in their tent: "I can't believe only two years ago you were in 6th grade". Time goes by so fast... - Lee

Route – Carp Lake – Emerald Lake – Plough Lake – 9.5 miles

Wednesday, August 15th

I got up early again and decided to do some fishing as the Scouts are using all of the poles (we have three) when they are awake. I fairly quickly caught a very nice bass, over a foot long on a jig. Lee was awake and we started discussing the fish outside of Padraic's tent. Padraic loves to fish and, as expected, his head popped out of the tent quickly and when he saw the fish he and Nick decided to get up and take a canoe out to fish. They caught another bass and Joseph caught one. Mr. Marchman cooked them as an addition to breakfast. As requested, I woke Joseph at 8, but it still took us a long time to pack up and get on the water. Joseph put the three adults in the middle seats for the short paddle to the long portage at the east end of Plough Lake. I was carrying a canoe again, when Ian came back and asked me if I wanted a break I took him up on it. My arms were sore, not my neck or shoulders. He showed me how you have to change the position of your arms.



Our plan for the day was to find a campsite as soon as possible after the portage. The first one we found was too small. The next one looked great and we had one canoe unloaded

when Ian pointed out that we were on the American side of the lake and our camping permit was for Canada. So, we continued to search. Nicholas and Padraic were not happy about leaving that nice campsite and we spent some time discussing why it was the right thing to do. Fortunately, we found a great campsite not much further to the east. We set up camp, had lunch and hung a bear bag for the first time as we were going to be leaving the campsite for the day. Hanging the bear bag was a challenge. Neither Ian, Kevin nor I could throw the heavy bear bag rope over the target limb. But, I got out the parachute cord and Bo tied a rock on the end of it. Bo then threw the rock with the small rope tied to it over the branch and we used that to haul up the big rope. Then, in trying to knock down a dead limb Ian got the second bear bag rope stuck in the tree. That was pretty funny.

We finally got back on the water around 2 in the afternoon, about three hours after we had planned. Ian said he would let us troll (but not fish) from the unloaded canoes as we paddled to Monument Portage. I quickly hooked a very large bass, much larger than the one I had caught that morning. However, when he was at the side of the canoe and we were debating how to get him in the boat he got away. Everyone was healthy today. Bo wanted to paddle in the stern and Nick was in the bow so I got to fish some more. I hooked two more, the second one also got off within sight of the boat, but the third one we really and truly caught. Joseph caught four fish while trolling from Ian's canoe. On the way to Monument Portage I spotted something on a cliff wall. We paddled over to investigate and found a monument to Ben Ambrose, a former resident.

As we were paddling (and I was riding) I found myself thinking about our schedule. I decided to take the advice offered by Northern Tier and not to worry about it. At the portage I took off my watch and gave it to Joseph. I told him not to give it back to me until we returned to base. I think this surprised everyone as they all know how compulsive I am about time. I know Joseph was surprised.



Kevin really enjoyed Monument Portage. We took lots of pictures.

Nick and Padraic jumped in to the muck at Saganak Lake. (See Nick's picture at the beginning of this report). I slipped and fell on my butt on the landing. Paddling back to the campsite we were fighting a tough headwind. I was now in the stern and Nick, Bo and I all paddled hard. We made it across, well ahead of the others, and waited for them. The wind



died down and Nick was able to fish, but he didn't catch anything. Turner caught a big fish, a 17" bass, which he brought back to camp for us to eat. We made it back to camp pretty late that evening. While Bo and I were out getting water we saw a beautiful double rainbow. Turner and Joseph saw one shaped like a McDonalds sign, with a double arch.

It was dark by the time we ate dinner. Joseph and I volunteered to cook as everyone else was really tired (Leadership by example). We had Beef Stroganoff, which (in my opinion) was the best meal of the week. We impressed Ian all week long with our cooking. Nick helped fillet Turner's fish and Kevin cooked it. It was truly a team effort. It was a great dinner. We have a big day, with lots of miles planned for tomorrow.

Every night we are doing Thorns, Roses and Rose-Buds. I am very impressed with the thoughtful and heartfelt comments that are being made. What an exceptional group of fine young men. Perhaps these sessions are not critically important as everyone knows each other, and their strengths and weaknesses, but I find it to be one of the highlights of my day.
– Ed

Breakfast today was accompanied by fish caught by Mr. Bedford, Padraic and Joe, which definitely spruced up the oatmeal and energy bars. I had to clean the dishes afterwards. We broke camp late and headed the 300 yards down the lake to the 150 rod portage. I was quite glad that I wasn't carrying a canoe that far. Of course, Ian could do it no problem. Once on Ottertrack we ran in to two other crews. We wanted to make camp early in the day to have ample time for our day trip, so we stopped at the first campsite we saw. Unfortunately, it was on the United States side, where we didn't have a permit to camp. Right across the lake though was another even nicer campsites. We pitched our tents, threw our gear in them ate Hudson Bay Bread and PB and J, packed day packs, took forever to hang our bear bag and started for Monument Portage. It was an easy five mile paddle down wind, during which we saw another beaver lodge and a plaque on a cliff face dedicated to Ben Ambrose, a man who used to live out here in the middle of nowhere. We also trolled on the way, with several bites, and one huge one that came off the line as Nick tried to pull it in the boat.

Monument Portage itself wasn't all that monumental, just a trail that looked like a power cut with 3 chest high monuments, one of which looked like the Washington Monument and the other two like construction cones. Nick, Padraic and I all went into the moose muck, which left little rocks in my boots for the rest of the day. On the way back to our base camp we were fighting a major head wind, so that if the boat turned just a point away from the wind it would be whipped around and thrown off course. Soon after we rounded a point it started to rain, but stopped almost immediately. It sprinkled on and off until dinner, and yielded several rainbows, including two doubles. As Ian, Dad and Nick camp back from cleaning Turner's monster fish the whole western horizon turned this bright orange color that faded upwards into the sky, and it started raining again. As it stopped and the sky



cleared, our whole camp was bathed in an orange light that gave it a surreal quality. Unfortunately, it was dark by the time we ate dinner, but the clouds had cleared and the sky was full of stars. There were more stars than I had ever seen, and the Milky Way was extremely obvious, something I had never experienced before. There was also an occasional shooting star, that was a remnant from the meteor shower. We lit a fire which I didn't stay to enjoy, instead Kevin, Joe, Turner and I went and played cards in our tent, something that they had unsuccessfully been trying to get me to do for a couple nights. - Bo



Today we went to Monument Portage. There were three monuments marking U.S. or Canada's border. It was awesome. Turner caught a gargantuan bass. It was 16 inches long and made great fillets. We

also found the Memorial Plaque of Ben Ambrose. Who was he? We also found a perfect campsite, but it was on the U.S. side and we didn't have a permit to camp there. Later we found a campsite in Quetico. - Nicholas

This morning we got up and were a little slow to pack up. We catch three fish this morning, Mr. Bedford, Padraig and I catch them and we decide to eat them. We fry them in the fish batter and it is excellent. I cannot wait until we catch and fry more fish. Then we go to the portage. It is about $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile and with a full pack that is a long way. It feels really nice to get back on the water after the portage. Our plan is to take the first campsite we see and use it as a basecamp, then go to Monument Portage. We see another trek or two, so we lose the feeling of being completely alone in the wilderness. The lake we will be canoeing on is Ottertrack. It is located at the north

end of Knife. We find a nice camp and start to unload, then Ian arrives and we have to leave because it is in the U.S. and we did not realize it. That was probably a stroke of luck because the next site we find in the Quetico is a really beautiful point that has the feel of an island, but is really not. We take this site, set up camp, and then head to Monument Portage. We are going to troll as we go. Trolling is when you let the line hang back out of the canoe and the fish bite as you go. I catch four fish on the way to Monument Portage.

We see a cool plaque on a cliff face dedicated to Ben someone. The cliffs we canoe past are amazing, 50+ foot drops straight in to the water. When you are next to one and look up it is breathtaking. We get to Monument Portage and get to walk up this one without gear, which is nice. The whole portage is along the border, so you can stand half in Canada and half in the U.S. At the end of the portage planks lead in to the water because the mud is so deep. Nick and Padraig get in the water and the mud goes up to their knees at least. Chipmunks are all over the place. They are also known as minibears. They are very brave and will always try to steal your food.

On our way back from Monument Portage Turner catches a 16" bass. It is a monster and it is going to be delicious to eat. Also, me, Turner and Ian stop at what looks like trails to where Ben (the guy who once lived in the area) once lived. You are supposed to be able to find the remains of where he used to live. We go up separate trails that go straight up hill and they both end in dead ends. It was still cool to get out and explore the woods. Also we did a little tracking because on one of the trails we see tracks of boots from a while ago and it is really cool to see how long they have remained. Also we see the clearest rainbow I have ever seen. It was a double too. It was beautiful. We think we see the end of the rainbow and we try to canoe towards it, but as we get close it moves farther away, just like Turner said. When we get back the others are futilely trying to catch fish. Luckily, we have the monster fish and it is excellent once we fry it up. Dinner is really good too. Me and Mr. Bedford cook a beef and noodle stew with a stroganoff/cheese sauce. We try to avoid "fisticuffs" all day because that is what the chaplain warned us would arrive the third day. We have lots of fun making fun of the word "fisticuffs". At night the stars are amazingly clear even though it was cloudy all morning. I just sit and watch the stars, it is really peaceful. I even get to see a few shooting stars streaking across the night sky. Then back at the tent we get to play some cards, Chinese War. I lose a lot. Oh well, at least we finally get to play and Bo doesn't go to sleep on us like he did last night. Each day seems so far apart from the others. It is unreal to think of the campsite we were at last night. It seems like a different time, not so close of a time. - Joseph

{The plaque commemorates "Ben Ambrose 1896-1982." Ben was a prospector who sought gold for more than 60 years in this area. His homestead once occupied the property across the lake, on the US shore.}

Today was a very strange day in the weather department. It was raining, but the sun was shining at the same time. We had some spectacular rainbows. We found a great campsite. It is at a point of land and is very beautiful. I caught a 17" bass and we ate it for dinner along with Beef Stroganoff. – Turner

We woke up and did a 152 rod portage. The pack got heavy and annoying. We found a really good campsite on Ottertrack Lake and set out for Monument Portage. We saw a cool grave stone on a cliff face about half way there. At Monument Portage there were three monuments. Canada was on one side, the United States on the other. Padraig and Nick jumped in Swamp Lake and got almost engulfed. Turner caught a huge fish and another one. Ian filleted them and I cooked my first fish for everyone. We saw some shooting stars tonight. It was really cool. We heard a huge bird flapping its wings during Thorns and Roses. It might have been a bald eagle. We saw two other treks today. That was kind of disappointing. – Kevin

The paddle from our base camp down to Monument Portage was spectacular, with steep cliffs on the north side of the lake. Each boat kept a rod in the water on both legs, as trolling was something that we normally wouldn't do when underway with packs, and some good fish were hooked and lost. But enough were kept to make a fine fish addition (very well cooked by Kevin) to our late dinner of excellent noodles and sauce. Ian showed us his special family filleting technique, which was actually one I hadn't seen - leaves the ribs on the fillet



then delicately cuts them out. It's a good technique for smaller fish because it greatly reduces the meat otherwise left around the ribs.

Today was a very long day, full of action and interesting details from start to finish. I suspect everyone slept well. To a man the crew was cheerful and a delight. With a diligent Cartographer, Navigator, Crew Chief, and Advisor, for the first time in many years I'm keeping only a casual eye on the charts and our schedule. The navigation and route selection has been carefully considered with changes made in a considerate and logical fashion. Such freedom from care has seemed very luxurious to this simple paddler. I've enjoyed our thorns and roses sessions, too - some memorable roses tonight were, for Kevin, his delight at cooking that incredible fish, for Bo, the surreal light changes as the rain faded away while we were just returning from Monument Point and getting back to the base camp, for Padraic, the big bass that Turner caught. The night before Padraic's rose was how at dusk that evening, Ian had helped him to just quietly look out at the lake for a moment. - Lee

Route – Plough Lake – Ottertrack Lake – Monument Portage to Swamp Lake – Ottertrack Lake – 11.5 miles.

Thursday, August 15th

We had big plans for today, but they sort of fizzled. Mr. Marchman and I decided to cook breakfast as a treat for the guys, to let them sleep, and in the hopes of getting an earlier start for a big day of paddling. Well, we decided to make the fancy breakfast with the hash browns and blueberry cake, and it took forever. It was very good. Clean-up also took quite a while, as usual. Today I was paddling with Joseph and Nicholas. We quickly encountered a significant head wind, and some serious waves, with white caps. Fortunately we were heading directly into the wind and waves. It was really quite fun and exciting. We weren't able to take any pictures, we were too busy paddling. I also learned a lot about Dungeons and Dragons. It was one of my most enjoyable paddling sessions, both for the company, the conversation and the challenge.

We were bringing up the rear all morning long, but I never felt we were struggling. We were having a great time and were doing well, just not as fast as the others. It did concern me a bit that we didn't have any maps in the canoe, they were all in the others, but we typically stayed within sight of each other.

Well, all of a sudden we took a path between two islands and there were no other canoes in sight. We could go left or we could go right. We had no map and no clue where the other two canoes had gone. We stopped and thought through the situation. We considered blowing our whistles, but decided to check out the path to the left as it was shorter than the one to the right and more likely they disappeared quickly going in that direction. We guessed right and found the rest of the group at the portage. It was exciting, however, as for

a few minutes we actually were lost in the Wilderness. It was a five minute experience we will probably always remember.

Near lunch time we were about to turn right to join the main body of Knife Lake. Ian was concerned about the wind and waves and we stopped to scout out the area ahead. I stayed with the canoes, but Ian and Lee reported that the waves were much bigger on the other side and Ian did not feel it was safe to proceed.

We decided to have lunch at a campsite on the American side of the river and see if the wind and waves would die down. Unfortunately, the wind kept up all afternoon. Eventually we decided to make camp. We stayed on the American side of the river, using the principal of “any port in a storm”. We didn’t feel it was safe to proceed and hope to safely find a campsite on the Canadian side.



The highlight of the campsite was the American campsites have toilets! Nearly everyone took advantage of this luxury. I helped Padraic cook dinner. Nick, Joe, Turner and Bo went swimming. Padraic and I were jealous as it looked like a lot of fun. Kevin was tired and didn’t want to get cold.

As we didn’t get far today we plan to get up at 3:00 tomorrow morning for a night paddle. We will paddle to Thunder Point and have breakfast. It is still possible for us to make 75 miles if we really push it tomorrow. The thought of the other crews making 75 and bragging about it really motivated our group, although everyone acknowledged that we had our challenges with Bo and Turner getting sick. We all went to bed early. – Ed

This morning when I get up Mr. Marchman and Mr. Bedford have cooked us our eggs and sausage breakfast. It was delicious, especially the sausage and hash browns and the powdered eggs weren’t bad, that’s a big compliment. It took us a while to finish dishes and get on the water, but once we did it was extremely, windy. If we stopped paddling we would get turned sideways and flipped. Early on me, Mr. Bedford and Nick’s canoe got separated. The other two canoes were ahead of us. They went around a corner and out of sight. When we go around the corner we have a choice, left or right? We have no map and can’t see them in either direction. We have to decide whether to use whistles, guess or what. After looking it over, we decide to take the path to the left. We start paddling and sure enough they are at the 15 rod portage. This situation was a little scary, I didn’t really panic, but in the back of my mind was a little worried. Luckily we remained calm and thought our way through the situation. It was fun to paddle with my brother today and I will adjust paddling assignments so I get to again. The wind was ferocious and at one point waves were crashing over the side. We had to all constantly paddle as compared to the normal just two people paddling. We kept up our conversation and didn’t let the wind adversely affect our spirits. We explained DnD to Mr. Bedford. This was a very interesting conversation, to go to the very beginning of Dnd and explain it to

someone. He already had a base understanding through his knowledge of World of Warcraft. This was a very cool part of the day!

Then we stopped at a cove and climbed up a ledge to go have a look at the next lake. The wind gusts were unstoppable and the waves were enough where it could possibly flip our canoes. We go to a campsite on the other side of the lake and a nice warm sit in the sun ensues. I really enjoy the warm feeling of



the sun on me and listening to the wind blow through the trees. After that we play some cards. It is nice to just sit down with friends and play some cards. The toilet here is nice because there is a seat and you don't have to use leaves. Me, Turner, Nick and Bo decide to go for a swim. The water is freezing at first, but once I'm in it is warmer than the surrounding air with the wind going. We get out when we get cold and then jump back in to warm up again. It was lots of fun and very refreshing. The next best thing to a shower. Getting out for good was very cold, but it felt very warming to go from extreme cold to a comfortable warmth. Padraig and Mr. Bedford were kind enough to make us hot chocolate and said they will go swimming next time. We still have not seen a moose. The loons are cool with their loon sounds and the way they dive in to the water. Dinner is good, but I could have used a little more. Later Ian brings out his juggling stuff. He does some really cool tricks. I think it might be cool to take up contact orb juggling, even though I completely sucked when playing with the juggling stuff. Now though it is getting late and we plan to get up at 3, so I think I will go to bed. - Joseph



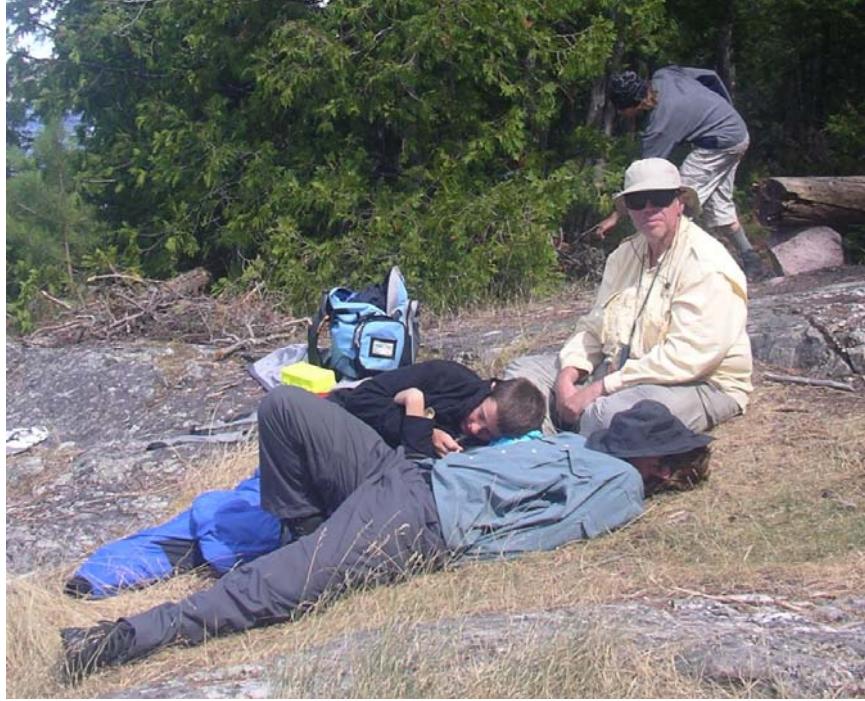
Turner and Mr. Marchman paddled me this morning. Our lunch location was very windy. It is a nice campsite with a toilet. I think the plan is a very bad idea. Joe plans for us to get up at 3 and paddle for a long time. I know my brain is going to force me to go to sleep or not paddle at full strength. Although we'd see cool stuff I'm still planning on sleeping most of the time. Everyone argued about who should make dinner. Bo cut his thumb earlier and just cut his middle finger. Bo, Nick, Turner and Joe are swimming. They're gonna be really cold. We saw Huggies (Clark's) trek go by. Today is the worst day. – Kevin

We started a bit early today with the intent to go to another base camp and take a day trip to Edy Falls, but after hash browns, powdered eggs and a blueberry cake, all of which was cooked by Mr. Bedford and Dad, it became apparent that the wind was going to slow us down. We made it to the portage from Ottertrack Lake to Knife Lake without much of a problem since it was pretty sheltered, but after the short and pretty portage, it got a bit harder on Knife Lake. The wind was blowing straight down the lake and one had to paddle hard to make any progress. I was in Ian's canoe with Padraic riding so it wasn't that hard. We did 6 or 7 miles and took a break behind a rocky point where I did some bouldering.

Unfortunately it didn't last long. I grabbed a big rock which broke off in my hand and I fell down into the rather chilly water with a few scratches on my hand and arms as a result. On top of the point Knife Lake was blowing something crazy so we went across the lake and ate lunch with the hope that the wind would die down. It didn't and with some consultation we decided to camp on the American side because of the high chance of capsizing. We relaxed and lay around all day, playing cards and whittling. We also had to come up with another route because the day trip we were going to do wasn't possible. After some consultation it was decided that we would wake up at 3 and do a night paddle, eat breakfast on Thunder Point and keep going to Prairie Portage and head into and camp at Bayley Bay. With our plan decided we had an early dinner of chicken and noodles and went to bed. - Bo

Today the voyageur's ghosts were looking over our shoulders. It was bright, blowing hard and gusty from the southwest. We had a vigorous upwind paddle to get to the entrance of the long section of Knife Lake - I paddled with Turner and Kevin, and even with those one or both pulling like great horses, it was a good work out indeed, but those two can paddle and made it seem far easier than I'd have thought. The wind was just roaring, gusting, howling in the trees, and swinging 30 degrees between puffs. We're wind bound as I write, lunching in half a lee on the U.S. side, just around a peninsula from Knife Lake. It seems far too rough to paddle into out in the bigger arm of Knife Lake, which has a long fetch and waves over 2' on the windward side. We did have had to think it over for a while, though, sitting here in a sunny spot with shelter in behind select trees and shrubs.

Now, in the afternoon, most are napping - explorers perched on a headland, resting or talking quietly while waiting for the gales to ease. Luckily it's only cold in the direct wind, the sun is shining through a Canada blue sky, with bright white cumulus clouds drifting across the water over us.



Wearing wind gear and sitting in the sun with full bellies, it's a pretty fine place to be. Ian, interpreter, has his blue hammock strung up and Bo, the rock climber, who fell in while we were on recon across the way, is dried out and drowsing in the sun. Lunch (of serious business to voyageurs) was summer sausage, cheese dip, stoned wheat thins, GORP and cookie covered chocolate chips...this morning Ed and I (me hitherto being quite the slacker in the cooking department) made breakfast - fried summer sausage mixed into hash browns with an onion, and powdered scrambled eggs. We even made a Northern Tier blueberry muffin "cake" in a "double boiler" made of a fry pan with water and a bowl "oven" covered by a bowl lid. It never got brown but did get slightly more cooked than pudding, and was acclaimed by the starving paddlers.

Bo's whittling a chain from a piece of cedar (and just whittled his hand severely also), and Ian is doing poi to the delight of the voyageurs. Ian also juggles a balance ball, plays Native American flute very well, and wails a wicked blues harp. How many times through the centuries have travelers sat on this spot in the wind, whittling, talking, napping, drinking, gambling perhaps (our guys play cards), maybe putting pitch on birch bark seams (or epoxy putty on scrapes in Kevlar)? Or talking of their loved ones and future plans? (Ian tells me he is finishing up, moving back to Rochester MN, then to Boulder with his girlfriend, who will manage a Caribou coffee there. Seems a long way from our little carefree camp in the sun to a coffee shop at the foot of El Dorado canyon.)

We sit here looking out over the water a quarter mile to a peninsula the other side of which is exposed to the full force of miles of water and wind. Sometimes there will be as lull there, and while it is quiet here we can hear the wind in the tree tops on that far ridge there across the water, and the wind is just, utterly, howling, with tree tops bending far over. I'm wearing full foul weather gear just to stay warm in the wind. The extent of the chill was plain when Bo, Nicholas, Joe, and Turner emerged from a great swim, to demonstrate genuine voyageur goose bumps of epic proportions. I was the somewhat wistful lifeguard.

Our plans are changed by the wind. To even go for a mile or so into this would be foolish, as we're seeing brief periods solid 25 knots with gusts in the high 20s, though if we could make it those few miles we'd cut down into a chain of lakes somewhat more protected, and eventually visit a famous waterfall. We plan to make up for lost time by waking at three AM this morning. Ian will wake us with his flute.
- Lee

Ian is our interpreter. He is a cool guy. He is a lover, not a hater. He has the coolest juggling things. I hope to meet more people like him in this world. If everyone was more like Ian this world would last forever. - Padraic

Route – Ottertrack Lake – Knife Lake – 5 miles

Friday, August 15th

Well, things do not always go according to plan. I did get up early, but that was because Kevin was throwing up. He didn't just throw up a few times like Bo and Turner, he threw up all night long. The first time right in Bo's shoe which was sitting outside the tent.

I stayed up with him and we sat on the rock in sleeping bags all night. It was our coldest night. For a while Kevin was still willing to leave at 3, but seemed relieved when I abandoned that plan. He finally fell asleep and I let him sleep until everyone else was awake. Bo took the news that Kevin had thrown up in his shoe quite well. Even though we were not leaving at 3 a.m., the group still wanted to shoot for 75 miles. Ian clearly did not think that was possible, but he adopted a "we'll see" attitude. We broke camp quickly (for the first time) and headed for Thunder Point. We had a granola bar and one section of a left over



orange each before we left. Boy was that slice of orange delicious! We were up there eating our oatmeal and hot chocolate breakfast and enjoying the fantastic view at Thunder Point when Clark's group arrived to have lunch. They were a bit surprised we were having breakfast at lunch time.

We then explored an old Native American knife quarry and went to the Isle of Pines and saw Rainbow Rock. I have never seen anything like that rock.



We did multiple small portages and paddled and paddled and paddled. On Seed lake, one of the lakes thorough these small portages, Kevin saw every turtle on the whole lake. I had almost no sleep the night before and felt very tired before breakfast, but really perked up after breakfast on Thunder Point. The guys (almost all of them) really wanted to get the 75 miles, which would be VERY difficult. Kevin was too tired and sick to paddle, but was gamefully willing to ride. However, that meant we

were down one on paddling. I was pretty tired too, but everyone else was pretty strong. We reached our decision point before getting back to Prairie Portage and decided to go for the 75 miles. I was impressed that Ian did not try to talk the guys out of it.

We crossed Prairie Portage and headed in to new territory. At this point I was pretty worn out and Joseph put me in the middle with Turner up front and Bo in the stern. They seemed energized by the challenge and I really enjoyed the ride. We were paddling straight in to the sunset, and paddled until sunset. We started looking for a campsite just before the sun set. We found a real nice one on an island. We paddled 23 miles in one day. That was quite an accomplishment and we were all pretty proud.

The island was grassy for a change instead of covered with rocks. It was also covered with mice. When we put our gear down mice started running over it. They were everywhere, little mice with big ears. I had a nice talk with Padraig before dinner. Bo cooked dinner with Ian's help. Everyone else really enjoyed it, I was too tired to enjoy it. This was the first time Kevin ate all day, about 4 bites. I went to bed early and slept like a log. I usually am a very light sleeper, but nothing woke me that night. Kevin also went to bed early. We didn't even do thorns and roses. I didn't even take pictures of the mice.

This was also a great campsite. Every place we camped was someone's favorite site. I really liked this one, despite (or maybe because of) the mice, but think my favorite is still the one on Plough Lake because of the fishing. – Ed



Our trip is coming to a close. The sunset is beautiful and it makes me feel very small. My thoughts begin to turn to home and all the good things there, yet they linger on the wonderful experiences of this past week. Today we paddled over 20 miles. It was hard, but fun. Looking out over the view makes me want to paddle off into the distance. – Turner

Nevermind, today was the worst day. I woke up at 1:30 and puked in Bo's shoe. I had to throw up like 5 times and diarrhea 3 times. I finally fell asleep as the sun was rising. When I woke up I still felt like crap and all day sat in the canoe instead of paddling for 23 miles. At Thunder Point I napped while the others had breakfast. We saw a pine martin or mink along the shore. We went to a rock quarry where Native Americans made their tools and weapons. We also saw Rainbow Rock on Dorothy's Island. We did four portages in a row. We went back to Prairie Portage where they had a bathroom with toilet paper! We camped on an island infested with mice. Bo made dinner, but I only ate three bites before going to sleep.
– Kevin

Guess what happened at 1 in the morning? Kevin threw up...in my shoe. The choice was made not to get everyone up at 3, so instead we were up at 7, and with only a granola bar we set out for Thunder Point. It was a beautiful morning with a light breeze,

something that made the paddling fun, but not too hard. As we headed up the lake we entered some of the prettiest land we'd been in. One of the shores was much emptier and scrubbier and barren. It must have burned in the not too distant past. At one point a helicopter flew toward us and then came back and landed further up the lake in a cove. The hike up to Thunder Point left me breathless, but the view was even more breath taking. Spread out was several islands and the shoreline full of bays. We heated up water for a breakfast of oatmeal, dried pineapple and our everyday hot chocolate. As we finished breakfast Crew D (Clark's crew) came up to the peak to eat lunch. Our next scenic stop was Dorothy Moulter's old island. She was known as the "Root Beer Lady", and as her name implies, used to sell root beer to travelers, mostly scouts. Her house is gone; it was taken to a place near the Wolf Center and made into a museum. The big attraction on the island is the "Rainbow Rock" an old stone full of stripes of red, yellow, white and gray in crazy convoluted circles and layers. It was carried there by a glacier a long long time ago and has been there ever since. Our third attraction of the day was an old Native American stone quarry that they used to break chunks of a flint like rock out of to nap knives and arrowheads. It wasn't obvious what it was, but up close I could clearly see spots where stone had been worked out of outcroppings and there were little chunks of sharp stone all in the water. Somebody left a bunch of trash in the woods which I found when I went to the bathroom, and after cleaning it all up we set out again.

We set out from Prairie Portage onto Bayley Bay at about 4:00 with the intent of paddling until dark, and that we did. We found a campsite on an island just after the sun went down, something that Nick had been wanting to do all week (camping on an island). On the rocky beach there were several eagle feathers, a pike skull, and a pile of rocks that looked suspiciously like a grave. As we were pitching the tents we discovered the island was infested with mice. They were everywhere, scampering every which way and trying to get our gorp. I was supposed to be cook, but by the time I got dry and down to the beach Ian had already started rehydrating the potatoes and corn. There wasn't much else to do so we sat around for a while, and then he made the sauce and I made

the cheese cake. Joe came down and hung out with us, and then we ate. It tasted awesome. The cheesy sauce Ian made for the potatoes and chicken was delicious, and we were all starving from our long day. We went 23 miles and I paddled almost the whole way except for maybe 10 or 15 minutes. Needless to say, I slept well. - Bo

We were going to get up at 3 and go paddling, but at around midnight Kevin got up and was sick and throwing up all night. So when I wake up at 8 or so I realize they've decided not to do the night paddle. I was looking forward to that, but it seems we can't stay healthy for very long. We were already packed, so we eat our granola and get on the water. Kevin is too sick to paddle all day, so we are a man down. We get to our first destination, Thunder Point. It is a quarter mile trail that is very steep, but once we get to the top, we have a beautiful view of the upcoming paddle. We have breakfast here, and right as we are about to pack up we run into Chris and Clark's trek about to have lunch.



We have a long day ahead to reach our destination and 75 mile goal. We see a helicopter. It is flying pretty low and goes straight over us. We keep paddling and get to our first portage. It is only 40 rods, but there are immediately three other portages and it is kind of annoying

to have to pack and repack our gear so many times. After the third portage we have lunch on the delicious Hudson Bay Bread with PB&J. We are making good time today as we have not gotten wind bombed like we did yesterday. Once we reach Prairie Portage we are committed to the last 17 miles back to base. The sun is fading and we still have a long way to go. We are on the water and it is big water. The sun sets and we are still on the water. Luckily we find an island campsite. We paddle there and it looks like there are no tent sites, but we land and



there are plenty of sites in the center. The island is infested with mice. They swarm as we unload, when we cook, and when we sleep. Nick is very excited to have an island campsite, as he has been pushing to camp on an island all week. Me, Bo and Ian cook dinner. It is so good. It is potatoes, corn (of course), and chicken in an awesome sauce Ian concocted. It is so warm and delicious! Also for dessert, we have chocolate chip cheese cake. The meal was one of best if not the best. Nick searches the island for firewood and we use it all. Nick has really enjoyed making campfires. It is a clear night and the stars are out again. We paddled an amazing 23 miles today! That is unbelievable! – Joseph

What a beautiful last full day of paddling, though certainly a surreally hard one for Ed and Kevin. After rising early from our windblown camp with a quick granola bar breakfast, we paddled several hours to the summit of Thunder Point for hot oatmeal and coffee. We had a good view to the SW, looking up Knife Lake in our direction of travel. The day was full of surprises and moving hard across the water. We ended on our cozy little Mouse Island, which was perfect. We came ashore on a shingle beach, stepping ashore on small stones where some eagle feathers bracketed the jawbone of a pike. Though we never saw or caught a live pike, the teeth on this jaw were chilling, a combination of dog teeth and rows of fish teeth. And the pike had probably not been much longer than two feet, if that.

We came ashore at dusk. I collected firewood with Nick in the dark, scavenging lower branches and looking hard for something to burn. Bo cooked a cheese potato stew, glutinous and good. I did a thorough wash up, possibly the first of the trip, while talking for a long time with Ian. The stars were vivid. The mice were hungry though curiously fluffy and kind of pleasant to watch except when they were crawling into our packs. Our tents were pitched in deep grass.

The stars were perfect. No moon, no clouds, just a northern summer sky. At this northern latitude, Polaris seemed comically high to this North Carolina sailor. We slept hard and well. – Lee

*A loon calls in the dead of night
 The warmth of the fire has come and gone
 All that is left is white ash
 A field mouse rustles through our food packs
 The night is still
 Bright stars shine dim through the clouds
 Life is good in canoe country*
 - Ian Olsen

Route – Knife Lake – Thunder Point - Quarry – Isle of Pines - Seed Lake – Melon Lake – Carp Lake – Birch Lake – Sucker Lake – Prairie Portage – Inlet Bay – Bayley Bay – Basswood Lake – 23 miles

Saturday, August 15th

This morning, like a bunch of shipwrecked sailors, we started talking about the foods we missed the most and would like waiting for us back at the base. Lasagna, pizza, watermelon, shrimp, anything with ice, soft frozen lemonade, orange juice, etc.

Nicholas had a hard time finding some of his gear as Mr. Marchman thought it was mine and put it in our tent. The mice chewed a hole in Kevin's backpack and Padraic's rain pants to get out some gorp.

Kevin claimed he was much better. I was still tired. Kevin, Padraic and I were canoeing together today. But, Kevin really didn't have any endurance for paddling. We started the



day by paddling to the American side to find the largest cedar tree in Minnesota, the final location we needed to earn the Geocaching patch. The tree was impressive, with a circumference of 104". We then started paddling toward the base. Our canoe

was struggling, and couldn't keep up. I had Kevin switch with Padraic and Padraic did some of his best paddling of the week. I was also tired and we continued to lag well behind. After the first portage I talked with Joseph and told him we really needed to switch up paddling assignments. He put Bo in the bow of my canoe and we did just fine. We saw a large beaver lodge and did two long portages. Kevin got the best souvenir about 10 feet away from the lodge, a stick gnawed on and stripped of its bark by a beaver. I really liked coming back in a different way and not back tracking. We had lunch on an island on Windy Lake. After lunch Nicholas suggested we go swimming. This was a great suggestion and I quickly said I wanted to go swimming. Padraic and I had missed swimming the other day and I was real glad we had a chance to do it. We had to talk Padraic in to the swimming, but he was glad he did it. Ian was anxious to get back to base, but he was great and allowed us to swim.

We gave Ian a few small gifts at lunch. We gave him a Troop 820 high adventure t-shirt, one of our sporks (he chose a green one to match his bowl), and a Troop 820 thank you wooden nickel.

We also did a double round of thorns and roses. We did one for Friday through Saturday lunch as we had skipped it for the first time the night before as Kevin, Turner and I had gone to bed early. We then did one for the entire trip. It was clear that everyone had really enjoyed and gotten a lot out of the trip. The fact that three of us had gotten sick was unfortunate, but everyone pulled through.

We got back to the base and cleaned the canoes and checked in all of our gear. We were then assigned to an off-water cabin and proceeded to hit the bathrooms, showers and saunas and Trading Post. The Trading Post at Northern Tier is excellent, not only souvenirs, but also most things you would need for your trip.

Dinner was disappointing, Salisbury Steak. The Closing Rendezvous was very good, although we were confused about where it was supposed to take place. After dinner, we had more trading post time. I got a phone call from Colyer's mom on my cell phone. She was at the RDU airport looking for us! We all then went back to the cabin and started sorting gear. I found some stuff in my bag that belonged to Padraic. He was afraid it had been lost. We did a final round of thorns and roses from our bunks and then went to sleep. – Ed

I woke up and felt good enough to paddle, but slowed down considerably after 3 miles or so. We saw the biggest cedar tree in Minnesota. I can't wait to be back at base and get all cleaned up. – Kevin

This is the last day of our trip. We get up earlier than usual. We have about 11.5 miles left to go. On our way out we do our last geocache point. It is a 2500 year old cedar. The tree is amazing. Some of the branches are bigger than the surrounding trees. It is amazing to think something could be alive for over 2500 years. This is the coolest tree I have ever

seen. We get on our way and we start to see more motorboats. They seem so unnatural and violating after canoeing in the wilderness for a week. We go swimming at lunch. This time it is hot and the water is very refreshing. Everyone but Kevin goes swimming. It is nice to go swimming one last time before we head back to base. We arrive at base camp about 3:30. We carry our gear like one last portage. Speaking of portages we had our two longest portages today, each about a half mile. They were long, but made you appreciate how nice paddling was. – Joseph

We wanted to get a quick start so we could have a leisurely day and make donuts on Boy Scout Island, and by the standards we set on the first days of the trip we did pretty good. We left at about 9:00 and paddled at a brisk pace with granola in our tummies. We



made a quick trip to get a geocache, the oldest tree in Minnesota. Ian said it was 2500 years old, something I could believe, the trunk was

ginormous, but it wasn't any taller than any of the other trees, just extremely tapered. The bark had a flowing quality that gave the whole tree a mystic quality. We took some pictures and set out again. There were several motorboats on the lake, fishing and ferrying lazy people's canoes. We set a good pace and did the first of the day's long portages without a problem. On the other side it was rather swampy and I stepped into a rather deep patch of moose muck - up to past my knee. I almost couldn't get out. We paddle out to the main lake through a long shallow inlet covered with lily pads and blocked by a beaver dam at the put in. We ate lunch on an island in the middle of Wind Lake and went for a quick swim. None of us wanted to start the final leg, because it almost would mean that the trip was over. Unfortunately, we had no choice. We saw one last beaver lodge, waded through a shallow passage between two islands, and hit the seawall of base. I thought we would have a bunch of stuff to do post trip, but it wasn't that bad. We had to rinse life jackets and packs and hang them up to dry, hang up the tents, throw away the trash and return the other gear. It felt so good to get a shower, even if it wasn't hot. But the sauna was, and I felt even better after that and another wash. We went to the Trading Post and got the ceremonial belt and other memorabilia. Spending spree!! The computers messed up and it took forever for me to check out so I got to dinner of mystery meat late, not that I ate much of it. - Bo

The last day, cool light breezes, fall in the air, a bittersweet knowledge that our trip is soon to end. We had a last, perfect lunch together on a little island just before a longish portage to Moose Lake. I'd only carried the Kevlar canoe all week, and Ian invited me to carry his aluminum version, which at 85 or so lbs. was, he said, 35 lbs. heavier than the featherlight Kevlars. The last portage was 175 rods with a low hill in the middle, and I was grinning through gritted teeth by the other side. It isn't the weight so much as the concentrated force of the pads on one's shoulders. I might have felt cocky about making it without stopping but for the fact that on the whole trip, Ian, our true voyageur, carried that canoe as well as his heavy Duluth pack without a wince.

Just before the portage we investigated a huge beaver lodge. Later, we were also treated to the show of watching a loon catch a good sized fish and feed it to a young loon, who eventually was able to flip it around and swallow. We also saw more eagles.

During lunch on the little island we lay on a flat rock that sloped to the water, and went for a swim in perfect water, maybe 72F. It was my first swim of the trip also, too. Aaaah. We did my favorite thing, thorns and roses, after our swim. I mentioned how much I had enjoyed being with my companions of the trip, how beautiful was the wilderness and the rhythm of paddling through it.

But I remember clearly: what I was really thinking was how perfect it all was at that moment, sitting with Ed and these wonderful Scouts, all of us reflecting on the trip in that bright sun on that warm rock, and autumn coming but with all the world ahead. - Lee

We ended up doing 75 miles, well $77 \frac{1}{2}$ miles. We got the geocaching award. When we got back and I got to see everyone it was great. I felt so good and so fresh after my shower. I went to the Trading Post and bought all of my gifts. Later that night we had a kind of indoor campfire and all of the skits were great. Our guide Jan is talented. He can do all kinds of juggling tricks and he can do a thing called a myachi. I want to get one of those one day. - Padraig

Route – Basswood Lake – Windy Bay – Windy Lake – Moose Lake – 12 miles



WILDERNESS GRACE
FOR FOOD, FOR RAIMENT
FOR LIFE AND OPPORTUNITY
FOR SUN AND RAIN
FOR WATER AND PORTAGE TRAILS
FOR FRIENDSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP
WE THANK THEE, OH LORD
AMEN



Sunday, August 15th



The weather this morning was once again gorgeous. I think the guys could have slept all day, but the bus was arriving at 10 to take us home. I took a few more pictures and woke the guys for breakfast. After breakfast there was time for a final trip to the Trading Post and we finished packing our gear and cleaning the cabin. I wound up

with a lot more stuff to take home. I was able to use one of my compression sacks as a second piece of luggage. We loaded the bus and were ready to go, but had to wait for the Agers. Our interpreter, Ian, came down to say good bye. Note Bo's belt and buckle. That was the most popular souvenir from the Trading Post.

In Ely we had to check back in to the United States. It was a bigger deal than entering Canada. They made all the Scouts line up with their passports or ids. They even asked some Scouts questions like where they had been born.

On the way to the airport we stopped for lunch at Pizza Hut, where not everyone got as much food as they would've liked, so shortly afterwards we stopped for dinner at Taco Bell. We ran

in to some traffic and arrived at the airport a bit late. I spent the bus ride talking to different



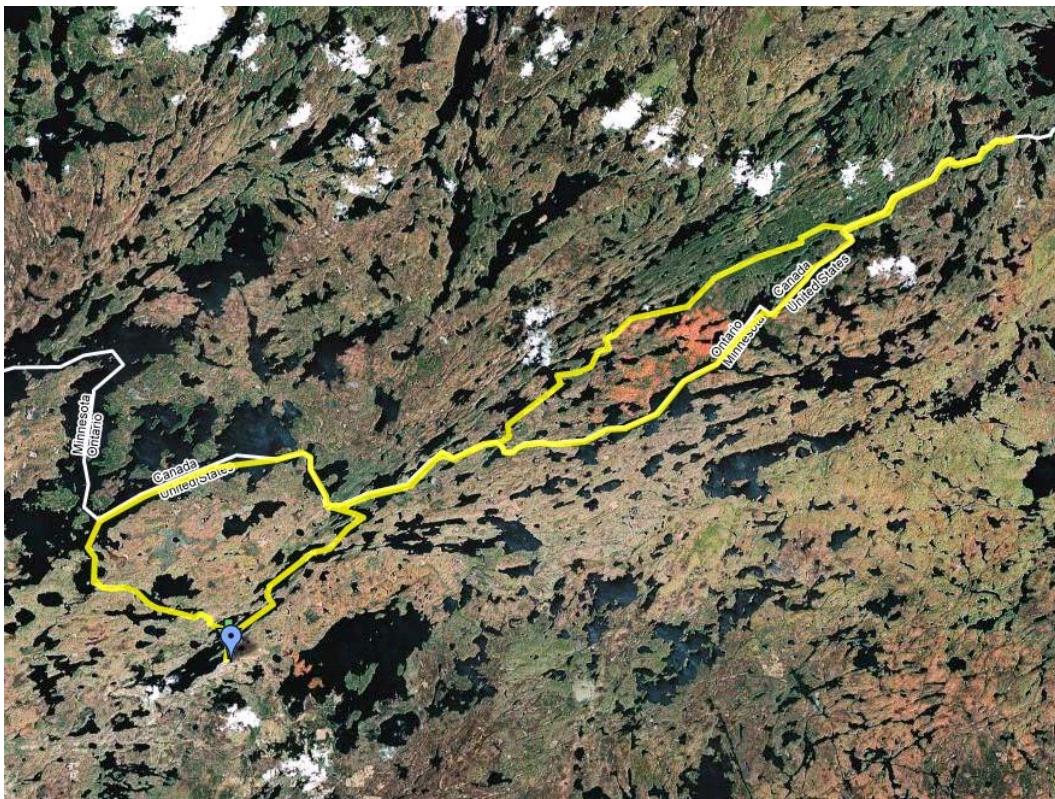
Scouts about their trips. Mr. Ager's group did not catch a single fish! They did help rescue a solo canoeist who had lost his canoe.

The Northwest luggage belt on the lower level was broken and it was a madhouse upstairs. They let us check in together. We then headed to the gate. We had been out of touch for a week and many people were interested in what had gone on in the world. Our flight was about 30 minutes late, but we all got on board. Scouts that did not get a window seat on the way to Minnesota had one on the way back.

We were met at the airport by a bunch of families. Unfortunately when the luggage was unloaded five of us were missing bags. We had to wait in line and fill out a form. When we finally got home it was after 1 a.m. - Ed

My Northern Tier trip is over and I am on the airplane right now, an Airbus A320. I love riding, well flying, it's a lot of fun. Well anyway, the trip was great. I loved it. It was one of my most memorable Boy Scout trips ever. I made great friends with Jan, our Interpreter. He is a really cool guy. I love Northern Tier, maybe one day I will work there. I'm just about landing right now so I am wrapping it up. I had a great time. - Padraic

Our Route – approximately 77 miles



Philosophical Musings – Well, planning this trip was a lot of work. But, it was well worth the effort. The experience was a wonderful one for Scouts and adults alike. The challenges were significant, particularly with the Scouts that felt poorly on our trip, but we accomplished all of our goals. Bo, Turner and Kevin faced the challenge of being sick and having to rely on others. Taking care of them was also a challenge for me, but taking care of someone when they don't feel well seems to bring you closer. Joseph faced the challenge of leading this group. Nicholas and Padraig were challenged to keep pace with the older Scouts. The portaging and paddling challenged everyone. The wind and waves were exciting and challenging. The wilderness was beautiful. The airport security checks and border checks reminded us that there is also evil in the world. Confiscating first aid supplies from a group of Boy Scouts is a sad commentary on the world today. Traveling in uniform resulted in some gripes from the Scouts. However, it got us special treatment in checking our bags at both airports and made it a lot easier to keep up with all of the Scouts.

Shake Down Trips – Our crew did two shake down trips. One to Jordan Lake and one to Falls Lake. These were very useful. We did 8-10 miles on each trip. For the shakedowns we were two per canoe to maximize paddling time. It gave Joseph and I information on the paddling ability of the various crew members. It taught us some valuable lessons such as the need for sun glasses and the importance of long pants and shirts to avoid sunburn. It gave us a chance to try out our boots. It gave Mr. Marchman an opportunity to get to know the Scouts he was not that familiar with, and gave the Scouts an opportunity to get to know Mr. Marchman. We also did a pack check the week before we left.

The pack check meeting was boring. Turner was indecisive about rain gear. Nick needs to pack better. Padraic has almost nothing extra, which is good. Dad told Joseph to be nice. I broke my luggage tag by accident. Mr. Marchman forgot to bring clothes for before and after the trip. - Kevin

Good Decisions – Lots and lots of them. Paying extra for two Kevlar canoes. Investing all of the planning time before the trip. For example, the bus company we used gave us a charter bus for the same price that another company wanted to charge for a school bus. Buying bowls and sporks for the entire crew. Bringing Tony'Creole seasoning. Altering our route when we were concerned everyone might get sick, stopping early the day of the wind, rotating canoeing partners, selecting favorite meals. Rotating canoeing partners was one of the best decisions. We got to spend time with everyone and share different experiences. I don't think the trip would have been nearly as much fun if we canoed with the same people for the entire week.



Questionable Decisions –

- Ian assured us he had plenty of Purell for washing hands. He had only about a half ounce and we had left our 6 ounce bottle behind.
- I picked a lousy paddle that I was unhappy with all week. I was anxious to get on the water, but should have spent more time on this important decision. I was always borrowing the paddle of someone that was riding. The metal shaft was very annoying. I also wish we had taken a bent shaft paddle to experiment with.
- The dishwashing routine was poor at best. We should have insisted on better sanitation.
- We could have and perhaps should have used the GPS all day and every day. We spent a lot of time estimating miles traveled with the maps.
- Joseph and I wore long sleeves and hats, but got sunburned on the top of our hands. We should have used sunscreen before that happened.
- Nicholas was stubborn and wouldn't wear his long sleeve shirt or his sun hat. He did, however, wear his stocking cap most of the time and used sun screen.

- Bo had a water bottle without a loop for the top and Lee had two small water bottles. These minor variations made it more difficult to fill and carry those bottles.
- Mixing pudding in a nalgene bottle.
- On Mouse Island the mice ate a hole in Kevin's backpack and Padraic's rain pants to get at some left over gorp. It isn't only bears you should be concerned with, but also the mini-bears.
- We found a giant fishing lure. We couldn't leave it behind (Leave No Trace), but it was a real pain to carry and portage until Lee suggested putting it in the GPS box.

Gear, Equipment and Supplies

- Northern Tier List – Attached is a copy of the Northern Tier Personal Equipment List. One of the things that we learned is that the list provided was exceptionally accurate. If it was on the list you did or might need it. If it was not on the list you didn't need it.
- Canoes – We paid extra for two of the Kevlar canoes. Our third canoe was a standard aluminum canoe. The Kevlar canoes were much (25-30 pounds) lighter than the aluminum canoes, a fact we very much appreciated when portaging. They are also more delicate. We were pleased with our decision to get two Kevlar and an aluminum one. Our interpreter carried the aluminum canoe on the portages.
- Pants and Shirts – Most, if not all of us, had zip-off nylon pants, but hardly anyone zipped off the legs. The long pants and long sleeve nylon shirts were critical to avoid sunburn. They performed very well and dried quickly. Many were purchased from Cabelas or Sierra Trading Post. Several of us had pants with swim suit liners. These worked well and we didn't need extra underwear. Start shopping early to get good prices.
- Socks – We ordered and wore Teko Ecopoly Light Hiking Socks. We got them from The Sock Store in Burlington, North Carolina (336-228-0562). They were a fantastic deal as they were seconds, and they performed exceptionally well.
- Boots – Perhaps one of the biggest concerns before the trip. We all purchased Cabelas Backcountry Wading Boots with Rubber Cleated Soles. The boots ran large and many had to be returned for smaller sizes, but we all wound up with the same boot. We did not have any boot problems. They performed well in the water and on the portages. The water drained out through the mesh sides.



Cleated Rubber Sole

- Food – The food was quite good. We had corn with every meal, I am not sure if that is because it was all they had left at the end of the season or if Ian just liked corn. Corn is my favorite vegetable, so I was fine with it. Ian said we were the only crew all summer that had exercised the option of selecting specific meals and that we did a great job picking the best meals and avoiding the losers. Lunches alternated between Sausage, cheese and crackers and Hudson Bay Bread. The dinners were all good. Ian was quite impressed with the cooking skills of all of our Scouts.
- 1st Aid Kits – We purchased Orion Open Ocean First Aid Kits for each crew and supplemented them with a Sam splint. We had to give up a few items coming back through airport security.
 - Bowls, cups and sporks – We purchased bowls, cups and sporks for everyone. That way the bowls and cups stacked and used minimum space. The Light My Fire sporks were great.



- Water purifier – For Father's Day I requested and received an AquaStar ultraviolet water purifier. It worked well and was greatly preferred by everyone over the polarpure or bleach methods. I went through two sets of batteries and it didn't work the last day, so we had to go back to boiling. It worked fine when the batteries were replaced. I just hadn't thought it would become everyone's primary water treatment method or I would have brought more extra batteries.



- Foot Powder – Critical. Our crew had a four ounce Gold Bond Medicated Foot Powder and a four ounce Gold Bond Medicated Body Powder. We used all of the foot powder, but only a little of the body powder.



- Tents – The tents were Taurus models from Alps Mountaineering. They performed fine. We were able to fit two adults in the two person model and four scouts in the four person tent. The company offers great prices to Scouts through the website www.scoutdirect.com.

Wildlife – Bald Eagles, Sea Gulls, turtles, beaver, mink, red squirrels, loons, Merganzer ducks, chipmunks, snakes, tree frogs, grouse, rabbits, mice with big ears, and bass.

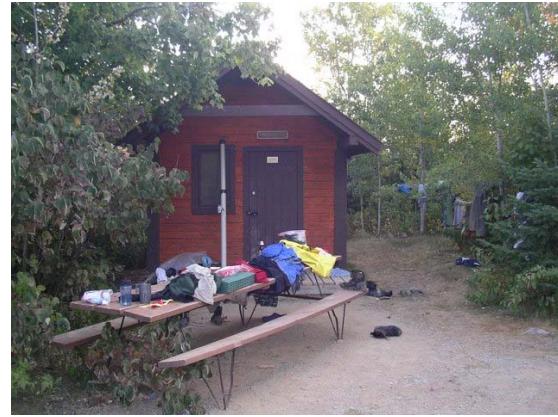


I caught three good size small mouth bass. I saw lots of loons and two snakes and a dozen bald eagles. – Padraig



Weather – Hmm, how to describe it? How about PERFECT. Highs in the upper 70s, lows in the low 50s. Barely any rain and hardly any bugs. August is a great time to go!

Northern Tier Base Accommodations – The cabins were pretty small and crowded, but worked just fine. Some of the folding cots in the first night cabin were falling apart. We gave Padraig the worst one as he was the lightest. He was a good sport about it. The off-water cabins were better with their bunks, bathrooms and convenient location near the Trading Post. The food at base was disappointing.



Cameras and Photos – The camera I purchased specially for the trip had its problems. The first time was my stupidity, putting the replacement battery in backwards. Once I figured that out it worked again for the life of the replacement battery, but the third battery I brought did not work, perhaps because it had been sitting in a bag of water. The memory cards worked fine, even after being fully submerged. Bo had an earlier version of the same camera. It was superior because it used AA batteries instead of fancy rechargeable ones.

The camera had broken on Thursday, and about halfway through the day Kevin used his magic powers to fix it, magically. - Kevin

Things that Impressed Me

- Our 23 mile day.
- The beauty of the woods, the sunrises, rainbows and sunsets.
- The solitude and the long stretch on Emerald and Plough Lakes without seeing anyone else.
- The Scouts willingness to keep journals.
- The Scouts were always on time for the bus and very well behaved throughout the trip. It was always an adult we were waiting for on the bus. Note that this did not surprise me, but it did make me proud.
- Bo generously offering to let me to use his camera when mine malfunctioned.
- Bo, Turner and Kevin being willing to ride in the canoes for hour after hour even when they weren't feeling well.
- Joseph's leadership and how well we worked together.
- Bo and Kevin's efforts as Cartographer & Navigator. The crew didn't get lost once.

- Nicholas' energy. He was always ready for the next activity and was the one that built and maintained the fires we all enjoyed.
- The cooking ability of all of the Scouts.
- Padraic's improvement in paddling over the course of the week, his willingness to help others fish and his joy in anyone catching a fish.
- Everyone's team spirit.
- The Trading Post at Northern Tier.
- The food on the trek.
- The very few and short grumpy times.
- Ian allowing us to go swimming on Saturday when he really wanted to get back to base.
- Our bus driver.
- Thorns and Roses – sometimes it seems the Scouts don't really appreciate what they are seeing or doing. Our thorns and roses sessions proved that isn't true. The comments were touching, heartfelt and honest. Definitely one of the highlights of the trip.

Losing Weight – I lost fifty pounds to meet the maximum weight for my height and to be eligible to go on the Northern Tier trip. I am proud of that.

Sea Gull Jokes – We spent much of the canoeing time on Monday making up and telling sea gull jokes. A few of them were even amusing.

What do you call a sea gull that lives in a bay? A bagel!

What is a sea gull's favorite pet? A beagle!

What is a sea gull's favorite snack food? Pringles!

Thanks

Thanks to Ed not only for compiling this journal, but for his planning, organization and management of the expedition. If ever there was a tour de force of planning, logistical execution, and compassionate leadership, this was it.

And thanks to all the other voyageurs and our interpreter, for your good humor, persistence, and willingness to keep on with it. I'd paddle with you anytime. - Lee

Additional Great Photos





EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST PROVIDED BY NORTHERN TIER

Tents (2 person and 4 person as needed). We took a two person for the adults and a two and four person for the Scouts. Ian had his own tent.

Canoes (one canoe per three people).
Optional lightweight canoes available.
We had two lightweight canoes and an aluminum one.

Paddles
PFD's (Personal Flotation Devices).
Personal gear packs (3 people per pack)
Plastic pack liners (4 mil)
Food and equipment packs
Stoves (two stoves per crew), fuel bottle, fuel funnel, and fuel
Dining fly (one per crew)
Cooking pots (8 qt, 4 qt, 3 qt, 1.3 qt, 2 qt. coffee pot, lid skillet)
Trail oven with liner pans and handle
Measuring/dipping cup
Bucket, collapsible 4 gal
Buckets, plastic 1 gal



Soap Kit (pot scraper, soap, bleach, scouring pads, matches)
Utensil Kit (spatula, spoon, whisk, knife/spreader, slotted spoon, pancake turner, hot pot tongs)
Fish Fillet Board
Polar Pure water purification
Ropes and pulleys for bear bagging
Saw, folding
Shovel, small
Toilet tissue
Emergency communications (radio or Satellite phone depending on location)
Food, condiments, spice kit

Optional: hatchet, folding fire grate, aluminum griddle, seat cushion for middle passenger

PROVIDED BY CREW

Crew first aid kit
Leather gloves (one pair per crew) for camp chores, handling hot pots, etc.
Cord (50' length, 1/8" diameter) for clotheslines, tarps and tents, shoe laces, repairs, canoe lines, etc.
Repair kit (multi-tool, small spool of fine wire, duct tape, sewing kit)
Maps (one set per canoe for your route. Interpreter will probably have a set also) May be purchased at base
Sunscreen, enough for crew
Bug repellent, enough for crew
Fishing rods (We had three, which was enough. Everyone can't fish at the same time)
Fillet Knife
Lightweight fish stringer (one per canoe)
Toothpaste (one small tube is more than enough for a crew)
Hand sanitizer (two 8 oz. bottles per crew)
Foot powder
Anti fungal cream or spray
Skin lotion, non scented

Optional:

Ground cloths (85"x110" or 60"x 90" plastic sheeting to place inside tents). Some crews wouldn't travel without them and some never use them. During a rainy week ground cloths sometimes come in very handy.
Water purification filters
Spice kit, personalized to augment the base-issued kit (for crews that like really spicy food)
Daypack, one per crew for sunscreen, bug repellent, etc.
Metal mirror, small
Binoculars

PERSONAL GEAR (based on synthetic, quick drying clothing. NO COTTON!)

“Dry” clothes (also known as “camp” clothes)

Camp shoes (lightweight sneakers or moccasins) **not** sandals or water-slippers!
Long-sleeve shirt (synthetic)
T-shirt (synthetic)
Pants (synthetic) or use rain pants
Socks (wool or synthetic), one to two pairs
Lightweight fleece jacket or vest
Underwear (synthetic) one pair
Stocking hat
Long underwear, synthetic (usually not needed from July through mid-August)

“Wet” clothes (also known as “travel” clothes)

Boots (U.S. made jungle boots best. Old hiking boots or work boots also good if instep drainage is added)

Long-sleeve shirt (synthetic) for sun and bug protection. Sleeves can be rolled up for warm days.

Socks, wool or neoprene

Underwear (synthetic)

Pants, zip-off legs nice to have (synthetic). If not, also pack a pair of synthetic shorts

Broad-brimmed hat

Raincoat (good quality – no ponchos!)

Rain pants (can double as second pair of pants)

Other Gear

Sleeping bag (lightweight & compact 30 degree bag adequate – compression stuff sack should be used)

Stuff sacks for clothing and gear. Use compression sacks, zip-lock bags, or pack clothes with sleeping bag

Sleeping pad (closed cell or self-inflating foam. $\frac{3}{4}$ length adequate)

Bandanna or small camp towel

Toothbrush

Bowl, plastic – unbreakable, around 12 oz.

Spoon, plastic or metal

Cup, plastic or metal

Water bottle (high quality, not old beverage bottles)

Sunglasses, keeper strap

Lip balm with sun block

Personal medications as needed (two supplies carried in two different packs)

Feminine hygiene items as needed

***Pocketknife, small**

***Flashlight or headlamp (small, pocket-sized)**

***Matches in waterproof case**

***Whistle**

***Small compass**

***Should always be carried on person for emergencies**



Optional:

Fishing tackle (small pocket-sized tackle box)

Camera

Head net for mosquitoes

Comb or small travel brush

ITEMS FOR THE END OF YOUR TRIP

Clean, dry clothes

Dry shoes

Toiletries (shampoo, conditioner, shaving supplies, deodorant, washcloth, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, etc.)

Towel

Bathing suit for sauna

Flip-flops for shower

NOTES FROM FELLOW CREW MEMBERS