



NORTHERN TIER NATIONAL HIGH ADVENTURE

REFLECTIONS



SOMMERS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

It's Reunion Time

by Allen Rench (Pink Panther)

Start dusting off those old trail clothes, queue up your ever improving tales, and prepare to head back to your home away from home. The North Woods, it's a callin' once again. August 29th is moving in fast, and before you know it, the parking lot will be full, campfires will be burning and Holrys and laughter will be sounding. My hope is that you will see and recognize faces that you haven't seen since you put your canoe in the canoe yard for that last time.

Some of us think of the Canoe Base as Sommers, some of us think of the Base as Rogerts or Bisetts. Where ever that magical place is you call the Base, it's time for Charlie Guides to come together in Ely this Labor Day. It's time to

SUBMISSIONS TO:**REFLECTIONS**

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or email in MS Word or
Plain Text to:

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with the subject line
"Reflections".

Pictures are appreciated
in high quality .jpg
format or by snail mail.

**DEADLINE for next
issue is - May 30th, 2008.**



renew old friendships; it's time to make new ones too, its time to just unwind.

Plans are in full swing for making this event the best ever. We are focusing on the entire family. We are preparing a Rendezvous encampment with fur era trade re-enactors. We want you to try your hands at the skills of their time. We want you to hear their tales, see their camps. We want you to throw a Tomahawk, fire a musket, strike flint and steel, learn rope making, coopering, black-smithing, hear what a logger's life was like and draw a two man saw and much more. See and experience life as it was.

Saturday evening while the adults are at the banquet, a special event is being developed for the youth and children. The event will be at

the International Wolf Center. There they will have their own dinner, learn about the wolves, go out on an evening howl, have a sleepover and wake up to a breakfast while looking on at the wolves in their habitat.

This year's speaker is Bob O'Hara, a long time friend,



supporter and mentor of the Northern Tier Program. He is a canoeist and adventurer extraordinaire. He has canoed historic trade routes, the arctic and paddled more rivers and lakes than I have in my vocabulary. He recently reached the distinct honor of completing his 50th consecutive year canoeing in the BWCAW and Quetico. He is a never repeating jukebox of adventures.

By all means if you have stories picture, film of your

adventures that you would like to share let us know and we will help set a place and time just for you.

If you haven't received a call about the reunion you should be getting one soon. This should help to prod you along. Please help us get the word out too.

One more thing keep your fingers tuned to [holry.org](http://www.holry.org) for our online registration (at <http://www.holry.org/reunion/>) and payment pages. Registering early and online will help us better prepare our events for the weekend and help make your trip North a memorable one.

Remember accommodations are first come first serve.

Let your sense of adventure be free again and join us for the fun.

Like always, I'll have the coffee pot on the fire waiting for you to arrive. ■

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Volume 16, Number 1 *Reflections* is the official publication of the Charles L. Sommers Alumni Association, Inc., P.O. Box 428, 5891 Moose Lake Road, Ely, Minnesota 55731-0429. *Reflections* is published three times a year (Mar., July, and Oct.). The Charles L. Sommers Alumni Association, Inc. is a nonprofit Minnesota corporation. The IRS has determined that the Alumni Association is an organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations to the Alumni Association are tax deductible. Membership to the Sommers Alumni Association is open to all persons 18 years and older. Association dues are \$10 for Annual Membership, \$25 or more annually for Sustaining Membership or \$150 (one time) for Life Membership. The Association's dues year begins January 1.

MOVING? Please let the Alumni Association know so they can update the Alumni database. Please provide your new address, phone number, etc. We will include your e-mail addresses in the member directory. Send your address changes or additions to P.O. Box 428, Ely, MN 55731-0428 or to Chuck Rose crose@stcloudstate.edu. **The US Postal Service will forward your newsletter to you – HOWEVER – they do it at the Alumni Association's expense!** The statement "Address Services Requested" on the newsletter tells the USPS that we want them to forward your newsletter so you don't miss an issue. It also provides us with your new address. For each issue we have between 50-100 address corrections that we pay \$.80 a piece to the USPS for this service. Please help us reduce this cost to the Association!

Editor's Campsite – Holry!

by Mike Bingley

This issue has taken a lot less time than the last one to get out and I hope that I've turned over a new leaf. I'm sorry about the last year or so, there's no real excuse except that I got busy. Speaking of busy, things sure are busy at the canoe bases this year – work weekends, people leaving and Rendezvous coming up in the late summer (the best time to be in the North Woods, by the way).

There are some great things in this issue, but I'd draw particular attention to Allen Rench's Charlie Guide diary. Allen really captures, in my mind, what a Charlie Guide is – it has less to do with where you worked and more to do with what you did. I remember asking a fellow guide during my first year when he figured someone could legitimately call themselves a Charlie Guide and Jason got a little twinkle in his eye and said "oh, you'll know." For me, it was when I was waist down in a swamp just west of Scout Lake, the rain was coming down and I had managed to keep my crew smiling (this was the first day of my first

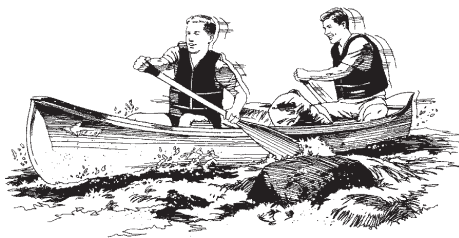
trip). I knew then and there I was part of the fellowship.

I bring this up because it strikes me that, other than my little ramblings, there isn't much content from those folks who've worked at the base in the last ten years or so as part of the newsletter. Even something short would be really appreciated – and I've got something to get you started. You might remember Jeff Foxworthy's famous (and occasionally painful) skits. On that note, next issue we'll have a "you might be a Charlie Guide if . . . " bit. I expect to see some responses from Kevin, Alex, Dave, Flip and Jason (you know who you are).

We also have the rendezvous coming up – it's a great chance to get to see some old friends and meet some new ones. I'd like to challenge the staff from the late 90s and early 21st century to make a point of coming to visit the base in Ely – and for those of you who have never been there remember, it's the people, not the place that matters.

Until then, Keep the Curvy Side Down! – Bing ■





President's Canoe

by Patrick Cox

As tough as it may be to believe, we are fast approaching the 2008 reunion. It seems only yesterday we were enjoying the opening campfire songs and skits with the ending roll call of the Charlie Guides who had passed on in the two years since our last reunion. It was a moving reminder of the friends we lost to one cause or another. Those who were closest to the ones we lost provided trail stories and other memories about the person lost. It was a somber reminder that we all have limited time on this earth – some more time than others, but limited for us all.

This year's reunion (or Rendezvous 2008) will have a new format of expanded options for everyone. Alumni of all ages as well anyone of about any age from youngsters, teens, and those of us who just act childish at times will find plenty to do. Those of you who have attended in past years know that we started developing a fur trade theme a few years ago by bringing in a blacksmith and asking some alumni who do historical reenactment as a hobby or work to display some of their knowledge. We are taking steps this year to undergo a major expansion of the concept. In addition to our own Cory Kolodji, the wandering Voyageur, this year will feature a full-scale reenactment camp hosted by a reenactment group from the Twin Cities area. They will cook on open fires, have pelts,

and reenact campfires and other events of the fur trade era. It will be somewhat like our own version of Fort William historical park in Thunder Bay.

We will also significantly change our options for those youngsters who don't want to attend or are too young to the Saturday evening dinner and program. The Wolf Center in Ely will host a campfire of sorts consisting of the usual campfire fun plus an option of watching the wolves feed and attempts at a "howling" event. Those attending this will stay the night so Mom and Dad can play in town.

We will have our Saturday banquet with a special speaker at the Grand Ely Lodge. Alan has arranged discounted room rates for those wishing to stay in town after dinner Saturday. Sunday morning will have a nice wilderness non-denominational worship service at the Base chapel area.

There will be options during the day on Saturday and Sunday for trips to Ely, for fishing on Moose and other lakes, hikes to Flash, a visit to Sig's cabin, visits to the American side of Prairie Portage, canoeing, swimming, and other good fun for attendees of all ages.

We invite you to come see some old friends and make new friends from different guiding years. Remember – even if you don't want to see us, we probably want to see you.

– Redeye, Pat ■



Don MacDonald Crafted Advanced Canadian Programs

by Dick Shank

Northern Tier lost a dedicated and innovative professional with Don MacDonald's recent return to his first love at Scouts Canada. His impact on program and participants will be felt for years to come.

Don's Scouting experience began in 1967, when he joined a Scouts Canada troop in his hometown of Strathroy in Eastern Ontario. He remained continuously active in Scouting through the Rovers organization until 1980. After education at the University of Guelph Don began his first career in dairy farming. Anyone who's shared time with him knows this is a passion he still carries just beneath the surface, often needing only the slightest reference to anything agricultural to steer the conversation to the merits of obscure breeds or forgotten farming techniques. Despite

full time farming Don participated with local troops and camping committees prior to his decade at Northern Tier.

Don joined the Canadian seasonal staff as an Interpreter in 1997, referred by Gary Wacik, a Scouts Canada executive. There he met Dr. Bob Christie, then Canadian Program Director, and worked at the Atikokan base. He returned for the 1998 season, and then served on the winter staff starting in the 1998-99 season. Don was named Director of Canadian Programs in 1999, a position he held through the 2007 season.

In addition to work with Okpik, Don spent the better part of each winter scouring Canada for the best possible seasonal staff for the Atikokan and Bissett bases. His staff members were known for their

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Don MacDonald Crafted Advanced Canadian Programs *(cont'd.)*



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loyalty to Don and the Northern Tier program. According to Terry Schocke, recently retired Director of Programs, many of those he recruited have graduated to participation in Scouts Canada, and there is a large network of past employees across Canada who maintain regular contact with Don.

During his tenure Don supervised the transformation of the Atikokan base from its former backwoods fishing camp appearance to an efficient and sophisticated operation. Full meal service was instituted; additional staff cabins, staff facilities, upgraded septic system, and ultimately the new Program Center were constructed.

At long last, Don was able

to inhabit an actual residence at Atikokan after five seasons in the “Muffin”, a homemade RV from the Florida Sea Base that had served as office and residence. Base enhancements also benefited the Bissett program.

But more than facilities, Don expanded program with new canoe route exploration and innovative training techniques, some of which he learned through his participation with the Experiential Education Association. Equipment upgrades included partnership with Souris River Canoes in Atikokan for rental of their popular lightweight canoes. Improved tents, packs, and trail food led to excellent participant satisfaction scores.

Don maintained excellent relationships with the local communities in Atikokan and

Bissett, including the local outfitters. He also didn’t forget the actual experience of canoeing, serving regularly as Interpreter on Scout canoe trips even after he became Canadian Program Director. His off-season canoe trips with friends and fellow staff colleagues have become an annual tradition.

Terry Schocke’s first recollection of Don was watching his emergence from 55 degree water at Moose Lake during swim check in 1997. Despite his manifestly blue color, Terry remembers he exhibited a positive attitude that marked him as a future excellent Charlie Guide. “Don always put the youth members first over every concern. He was totally invested in providing a safe and meaningful program for the

participants and also the staff.”

Don has taken on a new challenge with Scouts Canada as Council Field Executive for Cascadia Council, with territory covering much of northern British Columbia and the Yukon Territory. His identical twin (!) Doug, Council Executive in Alberta, is happy to have him living only a mountain range away. We hope Western Canada is ready for bagpipe music, Tilley hat, strong coffee, cow talk, foolish adventures, and big heart. Don is a life member of the Sommers Alumni Association, and can be reached through the alumni association website directory at holry.org.

Thanks, Don! We’ll see you on the trail! ■

2008 Alumni Work Week – Hol-Ry!

by Dick Shank

Please join us for a North woods break from your usual routine!

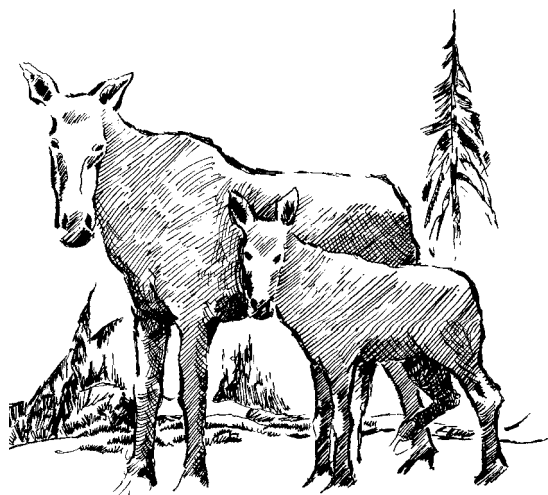
Alumni Work Week will be held at the Ely base this spring, coinciding with training weeks for our seasonal staff. This is your chance for some sweat equity and camaraderie with fellow alumni as well as both Ely and Atikokan staff, and to make your mark on this priceless Northern Tier asset.

Work week is May 30 – June 10 (okay, it's two weeks!) and will involve a major effort at completion of restoration of the Lodge building. This large project is intended to preserve and enhance the Lodge as a museum and interpretive center for the base. Exterior work, including replacement of rotted sill logs, rafters and crown ends of logs as well as exterior sandblasting and refinishing has been completed by a professional log building restoration company with outstanding results. Our focus is on interior refinishing, with the main hall of the lodge yet to be completed. Target for completion of this project is September 2008, in time for our Rendezvous over the Labor

Day weekend. We need a large number of people with volunteer spirit to make this goal!

Meals and accommodations on the bases will be provided at no cost. You'll have the added bonus of participation in training week activities as your interest and time permit, and also a chance to meet and interact with current seasonal staff as well as fellow alumni. Bring your skills and/or enthusiasm; on the job training will be provided. We can use help for a day or a week, so come as early and stay as late as you can! For more information, contact Dick Shank via email richard.shank@allina.com or phone (651) 698-5375, or contact any of the Sommers Alumni directors, contacts at (Holry.org). Consider contacting also some of your contemporaries and make your own reunion part of the fun.

You can combine some time at the base with some fishing and/or canoeing! The base will be glad to help outfit you if needed. As in prior years, some of our participants have worked a few days and then headed out on the trail. We hope to hear from you! ■



First Ever PSA/SAA Canoe Trip

by Bryan Craft

The wind was in our face, strong enough to blow hats off. Rain was in the air but not enough to stop us. We were off and paddling for the very first joint Sommers – Philmont alumni canoe trip.

By some confluence of circumstance and BSA Policy I wound up as part of the 'younger' crew. (Crew is the name we give to the group paddling as a unit.) Now all I had to do was try to keep up with these youngsters in their forties and our guide at the tender age of 22. I knew I would never set the pace and quickly realized the wisdom in having three in a canoe. When I became worn out I could opt for the duffer position. Of course those guys from Philmont in the bow didn't realize the stern paddler didn't have to work quite as hard. But they did catch on and soon became very proficient in the stern using the 'J' stroke, a steering and 'resting' stroke.

Our equipment for the two crews of six each was an Alumacraft canoe, weighing about 78 pounds; a Wenonah Kevlar canoe, weighing 45 pounds; two personal packs, weighing 55 to 60 pounds; a food pack, you don't want to know; and a kettle equipment pack, weighing about 80 pounds. The reason I mention the weight is so you know which one to grab after you make a 'wet foot' landing, get over the slippery rocks near shore and head for the portage which may be a few rods (1 rod = 16 feet) to 100 rods or more. The first day we did one portage. Another day we did seven portages.

The major lakes in our

'loop' were Birch, Knife, Kekekabic, Thomas, Ima, Ensign, then back to the Moose chain. I had been over this route several times but I still saw things I hadn't seen before. Our very proficient 'Charlie Guide', i.e. Interpreter, Terence Ruane, pointed out the Indian pictograph on a rock wall near Hatchet Lake. I had heard it was there but never saw it for the lichens.

There were a few incidents that I'll mention obliquely because 'What happens on Thomas stays on Thomas!' Sufficient to say we did some 'bonus miles', four to be exact. Did you know a 'real man' never gets lost? Then there was the 'panning for gold' program at the Knife Lake campsite. It seems an elderly man lost his wedding band in a 'grumper' (latrine) and had to go searching for it when the loss was discovered. Even to this day he checks for the ring's presence many times and says a small prayer of thanks for finding the ring.

One highlight of the trip was finally getting to stay at a beautiful, unique campsite on Wisini Lake, which is located on a 30-foot rock overlooking the lake. The day was clear and warm so we enjoyed a refreshing swim. But never having been up the rock before I discovered it was dusty because of the lack of rain and the camp host and hostess were two huge, brazen chipmunks who deposited their sign in my cup during the night. Also, a night stroll was not advised because at the edge of the rock was a 30 foot

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First Ever PSA/SAA Canoe Trip (cont'd.)

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drop to the rocks and water below.

I signed up for the first Sommers Alumni Association/Philmont Staff Association canoe trip. I always go to my roots and ask, "What would Bruce Springsteen say?" The song *Glory Days* (Springsteen 1984) is a reunion song for me. "I hope when I get old I don't sit around thinking about it, but I probably will."

Before the trip, Butch Diesslin set up a meeting at the Ely Steak House on Saturday evening. I planned to meet the group and get a jump on the trip. I had driven 800 miles from Michigan to meet the group so was good and ready at 7:00pm. We went around the table and introduced ourselves. Andy from Philmont said he had been to Atikokan in 1982. *His guide arrived with three canoes tied to the top of a Cutlass Supreme that was referred to as the ghetto cruiser.* I was so proud to say to Andy that I was his former Atikokan guide. Andy said he thought his guide was taller.

Our group from Philmont included Andy Battenfield, Mark Schewwer, Paul Conboy, Andrew Wahll, David Fromm and Lee Huckstep. From Sommers was Paul Nitardy, John Nitardy, Jack Olson, and Bryan Craft. The guides were Tim Babb and Terrence Ruane.

The trip was great to relive the beauty of the woods, and remember the thrill and pain of portages. The first night we went to Birch Lake and the second day we went to see Dorothy Island. Things were missing from 1978, but good to see I could still find it. We ate

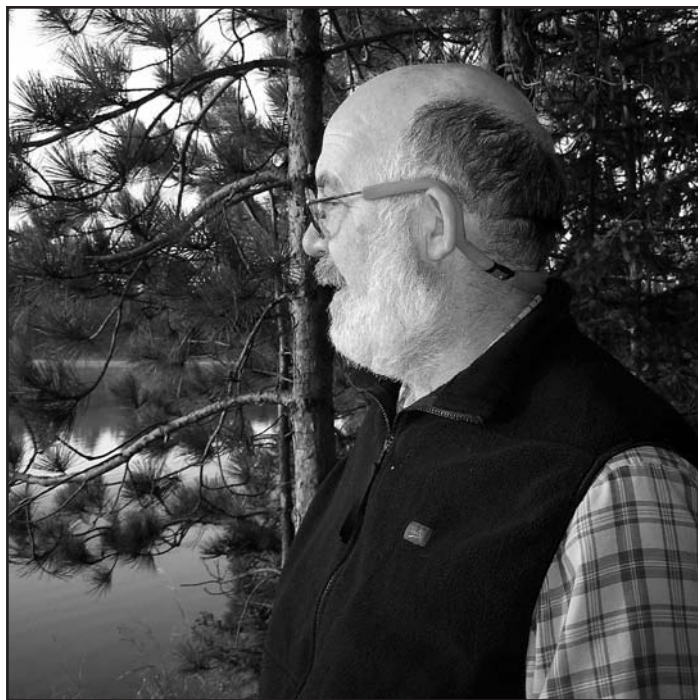
lunch at the overlook on Knife where the Philmont boys made the hike better than us flat-landers from the upper Midwest.

We camped the second day on South Arm of Knife where we had time for an evening paddle to relive Jack's memories from his first trip fifty years ago. Day three we camped on Wisini. It is a great place to swim and view a sunset. Day four we went to Ima. It was our guide Terence's favorite lake. I enjoyed a little rain and a great sunset.

The last night we stayed on Horseshoe Island and had time to see Prairie Portage. We made it back to the base in time for a sauna just like the old days. That evening Andy called his advisor from the first trip and he remembered that I caught the biggest fish. This made me smile. When I returned home to Michigan I called Kevin McElroy (a former Atikokan guide) to tell him that I caught the biggest fish.

Glory Days... This trip was my chance to relive those glory days when I caught the biggest fish and a young Scout thought I was tall. I have since replaced the ghetto cruiser with a Lincoln LS (we put the canoe on my wife's station wagon) and have made new friends from PSA. The best part of this trip was enjoying the woods with fellow staff members. I hope to participate in future alumni trips.

Bryan Craft was a Sommers staff member from 1978-1984. He currently lives in southeast Michigan with his wife and daughter. His wife, Anne, was on base staff at Sommers 1982-1984. Bryan remains a tall man at 5'6". ■



Don MacDonald

Thanks Don

by Mike Bingley

I wanted to take a moment to write something about my friend Don MacDonald. Don is the reason why I ended up at Northern Tier – he's the reason most of the recent Canadian staff ended up there. I think it's fair to repeat what Jen Arnold told me when she heard Don was heading to BC to work for Scouts Canada – "wow, in many ways, Don is the Canadian program!" I think that's an accurate description and to expand on it, I like to tell people that Don really is the Sandy Bridges for the Canadian Program.

Don ended up working for Northern Tier kind of by mistake. As I understand it, he was looking for a summer job when he could go paddling and phoned his twin brother Doug, who had been the Scout Executive for Northwestern Ontario in the late 70s and early 80s. Doug suggested that Don phone Sandy Bridges and see

what Sandy could do. This was early 1997 and Don found Doug Hirdler on the other end of the phone who asked him how quickly he could get there. So Don spent the summer paddling, came back the next summer and stayed on through the winter. Realizing early that fall that the explosion in participants in the Canadian programs meant that a lot more Canadian staff would be needed, Don went on the road recruiting.

That's where most of the Canadian staff come in. Heck, Kim Reid was recruited on that first trip when Don found himself in Sudbury (or was it North Bay?) recruiting Rovers to come work for him. I think he managed to get twelve of us that trip. Later he visited Universities and Colleges across Ontario finding staff.

The neat thing about Don is that he can probably tell you who he recruited on which trip, how long they worked for him

and what they're doing today. He'll also tell you that he's trying to recruit them to be a scout leader in whatever town they're living in now. That's the two part magic of Don – first off, he really and truly cares about everyone who works with him – they're part of his family and he treats them as such. Secondly, he really cares about what we do in Scouting. I really can't imagine him doing anything else – well maybe dairy farming, but I think he'd be trying to set up the first all cow Scout Troop while he was doing it.

Don is also someone who enjoys a good joke, strangely he enjoys it even more when he is the target. I'm not sure how, but no matter what, he ends up being the butt of many a good joke. My favorite was one in 2001 that I unfortunately missed initially but made up for later. Doug MacDonald was visiting and noticed how Don had a small deck built outside of the trailer he was living in. As an offhanded comment Doug asked if that was so he could address the masses and that he really could use a podium. Within hours, Adrian Van Rooyen had one built and installed. For the next year or so, that podium criss-crossed the country from Doug to Don as birthday presents and the like. Sadly it was lost in Ely one winter (but – if anyone knows where it is, I would really appreciate it being found).

I'm lucky, I get to keep working with Don, since he now works for the same Scouts Canada council that I do (albeit in a city that is an eight hour drive and two hour ferry ride away). His passion for Scouting and creative ways of doing things are making him a bit hit in Northern BC. Atikokan and Bissett won't be the same without him. ■

Reflections on a Friend

by Gayla Sullivan

Friends from long ago and far away never really disappear, but they do have an interesting way of coming out of the woodwork sometimes... Last winter, as I was sitting down to check my email at a Delaware elementary school where I teach first grade, I opened up an email in which the subject read: "Gayla is this you?" I was tempted to delete it as junk mail, but changed my mind.

The message read: "I don't know if you remember me or not, but in the summer of 1985, we worked together at the Charles L. Sommers High Adventure Boy Scout Camp in Ely, Minnesota. I Googled your name and I think I have found you. Is this you? Let me know." The message was signed "Heli".

My mind flashed back almost 22 years ago – two kids, half a career, many summers and lifetimes ago – I immediately remembered my friend Heli from Finland, who had come over to Minnesota as part of an exchange with the Finnish scouting program.

Back then in the mid-80's, email was still a distant idea on the horizon, only really accessible to professors and computer geeks at colleges and universities around the country. Since I have a fairly unusual first name, and kept my maiden name because my husband's last name is coincidentally, the same as mine, it was fairly easy for her to find me via cyberspace.

And "yes", I emailed her back, "it is me!" We then began a renewed friendship, and reminisced about our summer in Minnesota, as two of only about 6 or 7 women who worked at the Base during that time. We wrote about our shared love of the Minnesota wilderness, despite the mosquitoes, humidity, and having to hang "bear

bags" (a skill, we agreed, that neither one of us had really quite mastered!) We remembered the friends we'd made, the packaged meals on our trips, the way the moon shone so clear on Moose Lake. I reminded her of how we joked that she was a "real" scout, while I was merely an "honorary" Boy Scout, having to join the Boy Scouts of America, so that I could work at the Base for the summer.

I came back to the Base that winter to work the Okpik Winter Camping Program before graduating from college. Sommers is a different place in the winter months – cold, stark, and beautiful, and it occupies a different part of one's soul. The summer brings magic and memories, the winter – if you can stand it and survive the cold and all it brings – brings out a part of you that will always survive.

I remember skiing up to the Canadian Border 6 miles away by myself one sunny and cold morning on a weekday after the daily jobs around the Base had been done. After reassuring the rest of the staff that I was properly equipped and would probably be back before 2 pm or at least well before sunset, I set off on my skis toward the border. I will never forget the beauty and isolation of that afternoon, realizing after getting to Canada, that this was probably the furthest away from any other human being I would ever be, and so far in my life, that has been the case.

As I ate my lunch at the border, I remembered the summer before, when Heli and I had guided a family on a weeklong canoeing trip in Quetico National Park. It was the end of the summer and I suppose I had proved that I could be a somewhat competent guide. As we got to the border after a couple hours of paddling, the Canadian side

demanding to see Heli's passport because she was from Finland. She didn't have it. It was safely in her suitcase below her bunk in one of the staff cabins.

Not knowing what to do, I radioed the base from the American side. "Don't worry" was the reply. "Tell us where it is and we'll have Bubba bring it up in the motorboat". And so, what could have been a very inauspicious start to our trip changed the moment that Bubba zipped up in the motorboat, Heli's passport firmly in hand. I will never forget how happy Heli looked; for a moment she thought we'd have to go back to the base and delay the trip because of her.

And so I have been blessed, to renew a friendship from long ago that began at the Base so many years ago. I have realized that despite the years that have passed, our different cultures, and the distance that separates us, that Heli and I are really more alike than different. Our lives mirror each others' – we are both working moms with kids, and we both have a special place in our hearts for the summer we spent together – before we had to grow up and really be adults with real jobs and real responsibilities.

There are the little things – the haunting sound of the loon, the swish of my paddle in the waters near my home, the mention of Ely, Minnesota in the credits of a magazine article, swatting a mosquito in the humidity of a long summer afternoon – these moments are colors in the pattern of my soul and remind me that the summer of '85 in the Northern Minnesota wilderness was not so long ago and not so far away... ■

CHARLES L. SOMMERS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Charlie Guides Rule

RENDEZVOUS 2008



It's time to mark a spot on your calendar for a fun filled Labor Day weekend at the Canoe Base in Ely.

The reunion begins on Friday Aug 29 and runs through Monday Sept 1

If you haven't been before you'll not want to miss out.

HOLRY: I can't believe it has almost been 2 years since we last got together but plans are in full swing for this years reunion. Get your sites set on the North. We have invited a group of Fur Trade re-enactors to come join in the fun. We are expecting to have a functioning and hands on encampment which will include muzzle loaders, Tomahawk competition, Flint & Steel, Logging, Black-Smithing, Story tellers and more. Plan on arriving Friday Night for our campfire and sing along. Bring your instruments too. Saturday will be time to visit, reconnect and relax. Saturday evening is the Banquet at the **Grand Ely Lodge**. Our guest speaker will be **Bob O'Hara**, paddler extraordinaire For the children and Youth we are preparing a special evening and night at the **International Wolf Center**. They will have their own meal, learn about the wolves of the North, go out on a wolf howl, sleep over, and have breakfast at the center .

Reservations can be made on line at **www.holry.org/rendevzvous** or mail in forms. Make this weekend for you and the whole Family. (Housing first come first server)

**Help get the word out, contact another Guide .
We'll have a coffee pot on the fire waiting for you.**



**Charles L. Sommers
Alumni Association**

**CHARLES L. SOMMERS
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

**PO Box 428
Ely, Minnesota 55731**

**More information
Contact: Allen Rensch
(507) 536-0736 home
(507) 990-3854 cell**

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____

Phone No (____) - _____

Email: _____

Adult(s): _____ # Children: _____ (12 & Under)

CHARLSE L. SOMMERS
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

RENDEZVOUS 2008

BASE HOUSING

FIRST COME FIRST SERVE

SATRDAY BREAKFAST

*EGGS BACON SAUSAGE PANCAKES CEREAL
FRUIT COFFEE JUICE MILK*

SATURDAY LUNCH

*CHICKEN TENDERS FRENCH FRIES SALAD
COFFEE JUICE MILK*

SATURDAY BANQUET

*NORTHWOODS BUFFETT GRAND ELY LODGE
OPEN BAR @ 5:30 DINNER @ 6:30*

SLEEP OVER WITH THE WOLVES

*DINNER, WOLF HOWLING, SLEEP OVER BREAKFAST AT THE INTER-
NATIONAL WOLF CENTER (1ST THRU RETIREMENT) 5:30 -*

SUNDAY BREAKFAST

*EGGS BACON SAUSAGE PANCAKES CEREAL
FRUIT COFFEE JUICE MILK*

SUNDAY LUNCH

*BURGERS FRENCH FRIES SALAD FRUIT
COFFEE JUICE MILK*

SUNDAY SUPPER

*SASLBURY STEAK POTATOES VEGETABLES
SALAD DESERT COFFEE JUICE MILK*

MONDAY BREAKFAST

*PASTRIES CEREAL FRUIT COFFEE JUICE
MILK*

RENDEZVOUS TEE SHIRT

REGISTRATION FEE

GRAND TOTAL

DEDUCT \$15.00 IF REGISTERED BY JUNE 1

Nights: _____ Occupants: _____ x 3.00 = _____

Adults _____ x 4.00 = _____

Children _____ x 2.00 = _____

Adults _____ x 5.00 = _____

Children _____ x 2.50 = _____

No: _____ x 17.95 = _____

No: _____ x 26.00 = _____

Adults _____ x 4.00 = _____

Children _____ x 2.00 = _____

Adults _____ x 5.00 = _____

Children _____ x 2.50 = _____

Adults _____ x 6.00 = _____

Children _____ x 3.00 = _____

Adults _____ x 4.00 = _____

Children _____ x 2.00 = _____

Sm: _____ @ \$ 10.50 EA = _____

Med: _____ @ \$ 10.50 EA = _____

Lg: _____ @ \$ 10.50 EA = _____

XL: _____ @ \$ 10.50 EA = _____

2XL: _____ @ \$ 10.50 EA = _____

INDIVIDUAL \$15

FAMILY \$30

\$ _____



Charles L. Sommers
Alumni Association

REGISTER ON LINE
WWW.HOLRY.ORG/RENDEZVOUS
OR
MAILCHECK OR MONEY ORDER TO:
CHARLES L SOMMERS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
PO BOX 428 ELY, MN 55731

A Charlie Guide Diary

by Allen Rench

Diary: 27 Jan 2008 2:30am. Couldn't sleep, but am enjoying the snowy view while looking out over the backyard deck. Temps are 0F. Only rabbit footprints have blemished the snowy landscape. I can't put down the passionate conversations that took place during the Alumni Committee meeting yesterday. Topics circulating in my head are, "Our connectedness as an association and ensuring that all who have been or are on staff at all the Northern Tier Canoe Bases fully realize how much of a brotherhood we truly are". I guess that's what has me awake.

Everyone and I mean everyone that has spent time working at anyone of our bases has a bond to each other which can't be broken, whether they know it or not. This bond is founded on passion for Scouting, our camaraderie, our love of the out of doors, personal growth, a desire to relish in the experiences of

our friends, our predecessors and our successors.

I can't help but remember being part of the development of the programs in Bissett, and Atikokan albeit a small part. Now these bases are maturing and living up to the visions of their creators. For us to truly connect as an international organization, it is important to know what binds us together.

A word that comes to mind is Anchor. High Adventure Canoeing is anchored in the History, Traditions and Lore at the Charles L. Sommers Canoe Base. This is where it all began. Anchors, when working correctly are not always in sight. They secure the ship to the sea floor. It provides the necessary weight and strength to hold the vessel in place with the rise and fall of each wave. It keeps her steady with the ever-shifting winds. If the anchor is beyond view, all who are tethered to it can dive down and explore it. Over the

years additional strength has been added to this anchor with the development of canoe trekking from Atikokan and Bissett. The staff that has been tending these programs enriches us all. Their stories and experiences have expanded our identity.

As a boy I knew I was going to be a Charlie Guide and would always be one. This was insured by the influences of my father, brother and the treks I took as a Scout. After swamper training and receiving my first contract, I knew I had arrived. From then on no matter which portages I crossed Obukwins, Yum Yum, Monument Portage or waters I paddled, White Otter, Sasaginigak, Knife, I was a Charlie Guide. I was proud of what it meant to hold that distinction.

As an alumni association this is the spirit that we must always convey to all who have taken 1 or 100 treks at Northern Tier. Even though there are 3

bases we are a single family. The moment you step off the bus, plane, car or train and take your first paddle stroke with your first crew, "You Are a Charlie Guide". Your experiences have and will add to the strength and breadth of our Anchor. You have joined a vast brotherhood of adventurers who love to see the North through your eyes.

As an organization that supports the Northern Tier Programs it is my hope and prayer that our ideals live on through the encouragement and support of all who cross the trails of the North as staff, but as a family that we can continue to support each other.

The sun is slowly rising and a slight shimmer is reflecting off the snow. A chickadee coming to grab a quick snack has landed on the feeder outside the kitchen window. My eyes are feeling quite heavy, think I can get some sleep now. ■

Crack Fish

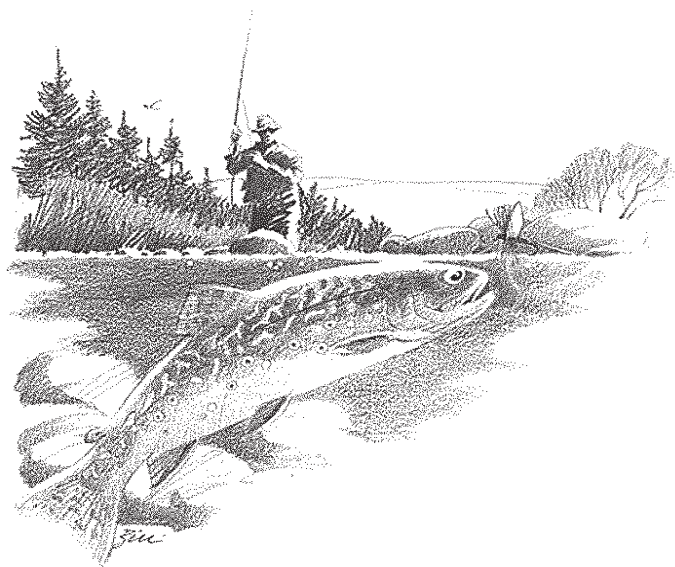
by Roy Cerny

There was a time when I was guiding canoe trips that I wouldn't let the scouts fish until we had made camp for the night. By about the third year of guiding trips I had relented and began to troll a lure out the back of my canoe everywhere I went. I just couldn't pass up the good fishing spots anymore and even though we had to portage fish sometimes and often we got to our campsites a bit later in the day it was well worth it for the fish that we caught along the way. After a time one becomes so adept at reading the weather, the lakes and river structure, the

time of day that you develop a feel for exactly what lure to use and can often predict just where and when a fish will strike and even how big it will be. I would be trolling a lure, perhaps a red and white daredevil or maybe a river runt and I would ask my bowman if he could see that weed bed up ahead off the point and he would say "yeah, so what about it". I would say "when our canoe gets about 50 feet past the point I'm going to have a strike and pull in a 4 lb northern for supper." "Uh sure you are" would be the typical response. I would be right so often that the

scouts would start to look at me like I had supernatural powers. If I took a scout out fishing I might say "if you can drop that black hula popper just to the left of that bunch of lily pads and then just let it sit there until the ripples get out about 10 feet before you pop it you will get a nice big bass before you can get 4 pops in."...and they would. There is nothing like the excitement of a top water strike and their eyes would nearly pop out of their heads in surprise. I'm not bragging about my fishing skills but just saying we fished so much that we couldn't help

but know what was going to happen a good share of the time. In spite of my learned fishing skills I have to say I can still be surprised by what can happen. On this particular trip all I can remember is that it was on the Minnesota side of the border and we had paddled and portaged particularly hard that day to get to the beautiful campsite we had found. Maybe it was Ogishkemuncie or another small lake in that area but it was a really nice site. The pull-up for the canoes was not the best but the site was a huge flat rock ledge about 6 or 8 feet above the



Crack Fish (cont'd.)

water. We had nice flat tent sites but they were on solid rock so the tent corners had to be weighted with boulders. It wasn't a soft bed but at least no sticks were poking through the tent bottoms. We set up the cooking fire in the homemade rock fireplace and I had to admire our kitchen. There were 3-4 big boulders set up around the fire that had flat tops on them about the height of kitchen countertops. What a pleasure to stand up and use the ready made tables to mix the cake mix for dessert and to have a place to set all the pots and pans. We cooked a nice supper and the scouts had set out all their clothes to dry in the sun on the flat rock surface. There was gear scattered everywhere and the campsite looked a bit messy and disorganized. If the campsite had a fault it was the big split that ran about 50 feet into the site through the rock ledge. It was just wide enough to drop your foot into and there was a real danger of a barked shin or worse a sprained ankle or broken leg. I warned all the boys to be careful walking around because a bad injury could end the trip for everybody. After dark we all sat around the campfire telling

stories and drinking coffee. I heard a sound and turned my head and noticed that one of the scouts had left his fishing pole lay on the rock and the attached lure had fallen into the big crack in the rock. Without any help but from the Almighty the rod, reel, and lure had hooked a fish that had been hiding in the water at the bottom of the crack. The rod was twitching away so I grabbed it and hauled in a small perch perhaps 8 inches long. I swung it around so that they could all see and soon there was a mad scramble for rods and reels and flashlights began shining down into the crack to see if more could be caught. The crack was so deep and it widened out at the bottom that it connected with the main lake and fish could easily swim in and out. Perhaps they were taking shelter there from predators or the heat of the day. Soon additional "crack fish" were being caught and hauled up to the top of the rock. They were too small to eat but the boys had a great time catching them. I must admit I learned one more thing about fishing that day and it was the first time I had ever caught a fish in the middle of a campsite at night sitting around the campfire. ■

The Story of the Loon in the Rafters

by Lou Sabatini

It was the season of 1971, fourth trip out for the summer. So that would have been about the first week of August. I was with a crew from Texas. It was the last full day of the trip. We had just finished crossing the Meadows portages and were paddling southwest down Sunday Lake, planning to find a campsite on Bailey Bay before heading into the base the next day. We were about half way down Sunday Lake when I noticed something in the water about 200 yards ahead. As we got closer, I realized that it was a large bird floating lifeless on the surface of the lake. We'll never know how this loon met it's fate, but as I picked it up out of the water, I could tell that it had broken it's neck. It was still warm.

A short while later we found a campsite. After all of the routine chores of making camp were completed and the crew was enjoying their last evening on the trail, I returned my focus to the loon. I was not sure how all of this would turn out, but I figured he was already dead anyway so what could it hurt? My logic was that a stuffed loon would look pretty cool in some appropriate location back at the base. So I proceeded to gut the bird, make sure that the internal cavity was thoroughly cleaned out, stuffed it with moss and salted it down. Then I put it in a plastic bag and sealed it to try and preserve it as best I could.

Upon returning to the base, I made my way up to the office to seek out Sandy and inform him of our new treasure. When I told him the story, his jaw dropped! A troubled look came over his face. He said "Do you realize what you have?" Immediately I

felt a great sense of satisfaction that my lucky find was going to be a significant contribution to the base, only to be totally deflated by Sandy's next comment. He then sobered me by reminding me that I had taken a federally protected migratory waterfowl from it's natural habitat. Now I felt that I had really done a stupid thing, and why didn't I think of that before and how was I going to pay the fine and so forth. Sandy pondered for a moment. I felt some relief when he said, "I have a friend with DNR that owes me a favor". I will see what I can do about this."

The next day Sandy was on his way down to Duluth to work out the details, which ultimately took him all the way to Minneapolis. He put a lot of effort into this. It was obvious that he wanted to keep the loon also.

The end of the summer came and no one got in trouble so I assumed the details worked out, one way or the other. In the meantime Sandy had secured a waiver so that he could get a permit for the base to be able to have the loon stuffed and put on display.

When I returned to the base the following summer, I made the usual rounds and greetings. I strolled into the lodge and there was the loon, beautifully stuffed and set up in the rafters.

I was fortunate enough to be able to be an advisor for a crew in 2004 and then again this past summer, in 2007. On both occasions it was very fulfilling to stroll into the lodge and gaze up into the rafters and see the loon. It has collected a little dust over the years, but it evokes some very fond memories. ■

A Charlie Guide Goes Fishing

by Christopher W. R. Thurman

Ahhh – the shakedown: a time to help crews pack “the right way” and show them what is in an interpreter’s pack. The one question I was asked more than any other during this trip preparation activity was, “Why do you carry so much fishing gear?” I did, it was true, carry a lot of fishing gear, so I was never really surprised by the question, and my response, “You take what’s important to you,” never altered. I went to Northern Tier because I care about Scouting, wanted to have a unique experience, an adventure, to meet new people, to see the Boundary Waters, and to catch fish. Today some of my fondest fishing memories are of my three summers as a Charlie Guide (1994, ’95, ’96).

I do not feel that there is any real secret to catching fish in the North Country, but maybe that is because I caught fish just about every time I tried. I did manage to persuade my crews to travel to smaller lakes or take longer portages away from main canoe routes to chase after fish that may not have seen a lure before. I also admit that I was an accomplished bass angler before I went to Northern Tier. Growing up in South Georgia, I fished for largemouth bass, catfish, and bream. I think the real key to catching fish is to have some type of fishing knowledge and skill. Before my first summer I did some reading – well, research (I was in college after all) – on fishing for northern pike, walleye and smallmouth bass as well as northern largemouth bass. These were the species I was interested in catching. Through my research I gained some knowledge on their haunts and diet, as well as

the types of lures to use. Many of the lures I read about were said to work on all of these fish, which meant I didn’t have to pack four or five tackle boxes, and I would have room in my pack for a change of clothes and toothbrush.

To be successful and to have a truly enjoyable fishing experience, I believe in using good quality gear. Please put the Zebco 33 away, and don’t be the guy with the flimsy telescopic rod that can fit inside your pack. I’m not saying you have to own the equipment that Al Linder or Roland Martin have, but I am saying invest in gear that can withstand mild to heavy abuse. Take along gear that is comfortable, durable, and that you know how to fix if it gets broken while on a trip. The outfit I carried with me consisted of a 6’6” one-piece, medium-heavy rod and a monster \$60 spincast reel (because I knew how to fix it) spooled with 20lb test monofilament line. If I could go back today, I would take a spinning reel with 14lb test line and a 7’ medium-heavy rod.

While portaging, my outfit would be tied to the inside of the canoe, but I had it out and within reach as I paddled. Mostly I practiced catch and release as I traveled. But, if I caught fish to eat before camp was made, I recruited a Scout to carry them on portage trails, usually the Scout who carried a personal pack. Yes, I had dead fish portaged, and, yes, they stayed fresh for dinner. After making camp, I would grab a Scout or an advisor to go fishing with. I always thought I had to take advantage of the moment, because it would not last; in addition, the people I

was with were there for only a short time, and they deserved a fishing memory. And I was right, because instead of fishing I’m writing about fishing, and I was witness to many Scouts posing for pictures with fish.

The tackle box I carried was 12in. x 8in. x 2in. deep, and it was crammed full of spinnerbaits, buzzbaits, jerkbaits, crankbaits, spoons, and jig heads. A large Ziplock bag that held other Ziplock bags full of soft plastic baits was also in my pack. I tried to use every lure I brought to catch at least one fish. Now to make my bait look more natural in the water I never used a wire leader. Of all the lures I carried there were two lures that I relied on a great deal. My “go to” baits were a chrome/blue back 7 oz Bill Lewis Rat-L-Trap and 7 oz jig with a 3 inch chartreuse twin tail grub. Both of these lures are multi-species lures; that is, they are capable of enticing northern pike, walleye, and small and largemouth bass. It turns out that during my time as an interpreter I used these two lures more than any other, and I caught all fish species mentioned on them at one time or another in great numbers.

The Rat-L-Trap is a lipless crankbait that requires only a simple cast and retrieve to work effectively. Because it has a lot of flash and makes noise, fish will react to it and strike it out of instinct, anger, or hunger. I had a lot of luck catching pike, walleye, and bass in open water areas on many lakes such as Meadows Lake in Quetico and Wisini and Hatchet lakes in the Boundary Waters. I fondly remember catching smallmouth bass in the Tuck River, near Robinson Lake, and around

some small islands at the north end of Agnes Lake in the Quetico. For walleye, I would cast out and count to ten, allowing the lure to sink before I started my retrieve. This tactic proved valuable in the quiet water of the Bloodvien and Gamon rivers of Manitoba as well as in the area where Knife and Ottertrack lakes meet along the US/Canada border.

The jig is probably the most versatile lure any angler can use. It can be fished around log jams, bounced along the bottom, or just cast out and retrieved, and it can be fished in any season, in any water condition and at any depth. I kept my jig choice simple by using just a jig head and a twin tail grub. This simple lure caught many walleye for me just by bouncing it around the base of waterfalls and the end of shoals throughout canoe country. I even caught my largest pike (38 inches long) on it while bouncing it around some lily pads on Scout Lake in Manitoba.

By no means am I suggesting that the Rat-L-Trap and a jig with a grub are the only lures one should take to these northern waters. I decided to discuss them because they helped provide many a fish fry. Other lures I carried, used, and caught fish with are Daredevil Five of Diamond Spoons (1 oz), floating jerkbaits, large beetle spins, inline spinners, and plastic shad imitation baits. Because the northern waters are so clear, I recommend using dark or natural color baits. The only bright colors I took were my chartreuse grubs and the yellow on Five of Diamond spoons.

One lesson I learned early in my first season was to carry a good filet knife. Carrying a filet

Notes from the Portage Trail

Jeff Kittmer (2000-2003) and **Steph Shifflett** (2000-02) are please to announce the birth of their daughter, Megan. Jeff currently owns a company guiding trips in Ontario's Algonquin park (www.wolfdenexpeditions.ca) and is looking forward to teaching his daughter to paddle.

Below is a press announcement from May, 2007. **Ed Woolverton** (92) was a Charlie Guide in 1938. He lives on an island in Lake Vermilion, west of Ely, in the summer and Florida during the winter. (see [http://charlottecountyfl.com/Pressrelease/pressdetail.asp?](http://charlottecountyfl.com/Pressrelease/pressdetail.asp?PrID=1241)

A Charlie Guide... (cont'd.)

knife should go without saying, but there was that one time a young Scout begged me not to worry about carrying one as his mother had just bought him one and he really wanted to use it. Yep, he convinced my not to carry my filet knife. A few days later we were camped out on Hatchet Lake with a nice mess of fish to fry when a loud questionable voice exclaimed, "I can't find my filet knife...must have lost it on a portage trail." There I was, hungry for fish, gazing on their near lifeless bodies, and they had to be cleaned. I took a little more time than usual cleaning those fish, but you would too if all you had was a Swiss Army Knife. A few days later I heard a voice exclaim excitedly, "I found my filet knife. It was between the pack and pack liner." I won't mention what I was thinking!

Before my second season I decided that I was going to carry a swim mask with me that summer. My reasoning was simple; I wanted to see what was under the water. I truly hoped I would see fish swimming around. After my second trip that summer I realized just how brilliant I was for having brought a swim mask. Under the water I found lots of lures stuck on logs and rocks around campsites and at

the base of falls. Not only did I see fish but I touched them at the falls between Knife and Ottertrack lakes. While spending the afternoon on a lake in the "S" chain of Quetico, I came across a ton of freshwater mussels. I convinced my crew to help me harvest some. We steamed them open, pulled out the meat, and battered and fried them along with some fish. Now that was some good eating! Although the swim mask added a little weight to my pack, it was definitely a valuable tool, one that was fun, to have.

Sometimes I wonder how it is I can remember so many details about fishing adventures I had over twelve years ago when I can't remember what I did last Saturday night! I share this information in hopes it will provide a more enjoyable Northern Tier fishing experience for the reader and to jog the memories of others who have been in my shoes. Please feel free to add to, modify, or disagree with my gear choices as you see fit. I am very proud to say that my time at Northern Tier did allow me to share my passion for Scouting, gave me a unique lifetime experience, and allowed me to make new friends, to see the northern border country, and to catch fish. Tight lines! ■

[PrID=1241](http://charlottecountyfl.com/Pressrelease/pressdetail.asp?PrID=1241)). I mentioned this trail in an article I wrote about Ed that was published in Reflections in 2002. I hope I'm canoeing at 92.

The Charlotte Country Visitor's Bureau announced several awards on May 16, 2007. Among the awards was this one:

Pioneer Award? This début award honors an individual whose twenty-five year effort, and commitment led to the discovery and creation of the Woolverton Trail for exploration, adventure and enjoyment. Ed Woolverton's trail blazing accomplishment as a pioneer now provides enjoyment, exploration and adventure for thousands of kayakers and nature lovers. Long before the sport became a national pastime, Ed Woolverton envisioned mangrove paths as a paddling paradise. He persevered in mapping and maneuvering through mangrove canopy trails enabling them to be incorporated into the Charlotte Harbor Blueway trail system.

Former Atikokan staff member **Tom Abthorpe Sr.**, age 63 years, passed away unexpectedly on Tuesday, December 4,

2007 at his residence. Tom was born on December 31, 1943 in Oshawa, Ontario. He worked at General Motors before joining the O.P.P. and moving to North Western Ontario in 1965. Tom loved his family, especially his grandchildren. Tom's home and liquor cabinet was always open to any visitors. He was a member of Scout's Canada, Crime Stoppers, O.P.P. Veterans Association, St. John's Ambulance Board of Directors, The Masonic Connaught Lodge # 511 A.F. & A.M., The Royal Canadian Legion and was a volunteer for the Fort William Historical Park. If friends so desire memorial donations made to the charity of your choice would be greatly appreciated.

Phillip Barbee, who worked for Northern Tier the summer of 2006 is now serving in the US Army. He is currently a PFC serving in Tikreit, Iraq at Speicher Base.

Matt Gonzalez, Ralph Nader's vice-presidential running mate, worked at Sommers in 1984. We had lost his address.

If you have address or email updates for the SAA, please go to www.holry.org for online submission of information. ■



Phillip Barbee

Second Annual Alumni Wilderness Voyage (June 12 – 19, 2008)

The Charles L. Sommers Alumni Association, Inc., and the Northern Tier National High Adventure Programs are sponsoring the **Second Annual Alumni Wilderness Voyage** – a 7-day canoe trip with a Northern Tier Interpreter.

Eligibility Requirements

The Alumni Wilderness Voyage is open to Sommers Alumni Association members and Philmont Staff Association members.

NEW – Qualified members of the SAA or PSA member's Immediate Family [Spouse, Parent Grandparent, Child or Stepchild (minimum age 13 years old)] may also participate.

The Voyage

Participants will be divided into *normal sized* Sommers crews of up to 8 participants, and will travel under the guid-

ance of a current *Northern Tier Interpreter*. This will give each participant the opportunity to experience the current Northern Tier program trip, and to re-live some of the experiences of past wilderness canoeing voyages. The Alumni Wilderness Voyages will all be entirely within the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) in Minnesota, hence not require the citizenship documentation for travel into Canada.

The Schedule

Tuesday, June 12 – Arrive at the Sommers Base after Lunch and before 2:00 PM. Meet your Interpreter and fellow crew members to begin your trip preparation, packing and planning. Spend the night in the on-base cabins. **June 13** – Start your voyage after an on-base breakfast. **June 13-18** – Enjoy

the peace and solitude of wilderness canoe camping with your Interpreter and fellow crew members. **June 18** – Return to the Sommers base in the afternoon for a sauna before supper in the Dining Hall. After supper, share trip experiences with the other alumni crews. **June 19** – Head for home with a packsack of memories.

Reservations – Complete the application form on the next page, along with the check for payment in full. The **cost** for the Wilderness Voyage is **\$400 per person**. This fee includes: BWCAW camping fees, trail food, canoes, paddles, PFD's, packs, group equipment, on-base lodging and facilities use plus all of the on-base meals. Cancellations made on or before May 1, 2008 will receive full refunds. **The Reservation**

Deadline is May 1, 2008.

Participants are responsible for their transportation to and from the Charles L. Sommers National High Adventure Base near Ely, Minnesota. Each participant is responsible for providing their personal gear. Voyage information – including a medical form, a "swimmer certification form and a personal gear list – will be sent to participants with the notification of acceptance of their participation fee payment.

On-line Resources – You are encouraged to visit the Northern Tier website at www.ntier.org

The website has downloadable copies of the forms necessary forms to be a participant (medical forms, Safety Afloat requirements, and personal equipment lists). ■

Philmont Staff Association Annual Alumni Trek (August 10 – 16, 2008)

Crew-up with your SAA friends and eligible family members and journey to the Boy Scouts of America's famed Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico, for a week-long trek hiking the trails and experiencing the programs that have made Philmont the best known youth camping facility in the world. In this 70th anniversary year of Philmont, you will hike with members of the Philmont Staff Association (PSA), make new friends, and be assigned a genuine Philmont Ranger for the first three days of your trek. When you are finished, you will receive the coveted Philmont arrowhead award and, with your Northern Tier participant's award, you'll be at least two thirds of your way to earning the SAA's Triple Crown award.

This opportunity is part of the exchange program between

the SAA and PSA which began in 2007 when members of the PSA joined with SAA members for a Northern Tier Voyage. This year the program expands to allow SAA members to trek at Philmont with PSA members as part of the annual PSA trek. This trek is the only way adults can experience the Philmont program unless as an adult advisor to a crew. This is truly a rare and unique opportunity.

Participants must:

- be a SAA member or immediate family member
- be 14 years of age by January 1, 2008 or have completed 8th grade by the time they hit the trail
- be a current member of BSA
- have a completed Philmont medical form
- be in good enough shape to carry a pack of up to 50 lbs. over rugged mountain trails

of altitudes ranging from 6,200 feet to 12,441 feet.

Cost: \$350 – Your full payment is due May 24, 2008. The cost includes food and crew equipment. Each participant is responsible for personal gear. Trek space is limited and reservations are taken on a first-come, first served, basis. There will be no refunds after May 24, 2008.

Additionally, you will be responsible for your own round-trip transportation to and from Cimarron, New Mexico. You will need to arrive at Philmont on Sunday, August 10 and will hit the trail on Monday, August 11. You will return from the trail on Saturday, August 16, and are invited to attend the dedication of the new Philmont Staff Activity center Saturday afternoon and attend the annual PSA meeting on Sunday, August 17.

Persons wish to fly to the Philmont area can fly into Albuquerque, Colorado Springs or Denver, and car pooling opportunities with other trekkers are usually available. Persons flying should plan on traveling to New Mexico on Saturday, August 9 to insure timely arrival at Philmont on August 10.

Start planning your own High Country adventure now. You will hike the beautiful Sangre de Cristo Range of the southern Rocky Mountains, enjoy the programs which make Philmont famous, swap stories, and come home with a whole new set of High Adventure memories.

Questions about the trek?

Contact Lee Huckstep at hstp1@aol.com or call 713-529-6757 in the evenings.

Registration form is on the back page. ■

Philmont Staff Association
Alumni Trek at Philmont (August 10 – 16, 2008)
Registration Form

SAA member name _____

Family member(s) attending and relationship to SAA member _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Address: _____

Amount enclosed: _____

Make checks payable to: Sommers Alumni Association, P.O. Box 428, Ely, MN, 55731-0428.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



ELY MN 55731

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