



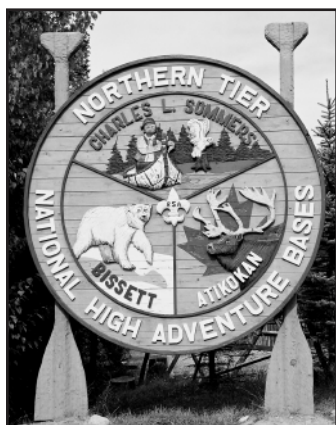
REFLECTIONS



SOMMERS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Rendezvous 2006

Submitted by Larry Hanson



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 - April 1st, 2007.**



The 2006 Rendezvous is now behind us. It was a full 3 days packed with camaraderie, fellowship and remembrance. In attendance were alumni spanning several decades. We had guides in attendance 80 plus years of age all the way down to future guides as young as 9 months. In all we had 71 adults and 11 children at the base. 120 guests came together for our Saturday evening banquet.

It was weekend packed with activities. Friday night included a campfire led by Barbra Cary Hall and Cori Kolodji in the stockade / welcome area. Songs and laughter filled the night as we celebrated generations of our family of voyagers and took time to remember with awe the spirit of those recently departed alumni.

Saturday's forest blow down / regeneration tour organized by Barbra Cary Hall and led by a Forest service staff was a "sell out" hit. Other activities included log furniture building, voyageur camp, and flint knapping demonstrations. There were activities for the kids and of course paddling on Moose Lake.

The highlight of the 2006 reunion was the banquet held at the Grand Ely Lodge. Hosted by our esteemed Voyageur Corey, the night included many highlights. The keynote event was the Hudson Bay boys (Evan Durland, Tom Copeland Brian Dobry) as they did a great presentation on their recent 1,400 mile / 60 day trip to Hudson's Bay.

What has become a regular event was the silent auction

that made \$2,400 for the Scholarship Fund.

Many thanks to all who volunteered to making this event a success. To those of you who made the journey back to the Canoe Base thanks for being part of this coming together for a gathering of shared experience, reflection and celebration. We look forward to seeing all our alum next time. ■

See page 13 for more photos!



President's Message

by Patrick Cox

As you read your association's newsletter, you will find some information on recent events. The reunion (aka Rendezvous 2006) was a great success. We have articles and photos of the various events inside. If you could not make it this time, we hope you will plan for the next one in 2 years. It is always a lot of fun. We manage to see some old friends and make a few new ones. The opening campfire was great as usual. It featured a new part that is a remembrance of our fallen fellow Charlie Guides. It was a great opportunity to tell a few war stories of times gone by.

We also introduced everyone to a new and unique opportunity for those who wish to continue down the trail in pursuit of new wilderness ventures. As most of you know, the SAA members have always been allowed by the Base to take pre and post season trips with a few friends for the cost of the food and replacement of damaged or lost equipment. This evolved out of our long tradition of taking pre and post season trips with our fellow Charlie Guides during our guiding days. This old tradition now has a new wrinkle. One of our newer affiliate members was a grub in the late 1960's. He later became a Philmont Ranger, but he never lost the love of the canoe trails. His name is Lee Huckstep. Lee developed the idea of expanding on the Philmont Ranger equivalent of our pre and post season trip custom – known to the Ranger Alumni as the "Philmont Trek". The result of Lee's effort was the creation of what we now call the Exchange Program and the SAA Voyage for our members. Lee submitted an article for this edition discussing the program in more details. Please take a look and see if it is something that grabs your interest.

The Exchange Program's first trip will be next year and will consist of a crew of Charlie Guides and Rangers taking a canoe trip together out of Ely. The next year will be a hiking trip at Philmont. You don't have to do both and space is very limited. The unique part of this is that it will be an all adult crew. It will function just like a regular Scout crew who might come through the Base or through Philmont in any year. The crews will be assigned trail staff, provided normal crew equipment, food, and everything else. The trip will count as a participant trip for those pursuing the Triple Crown Award. The fees and all the details are in Lee's article and in the promotional materials.

You may ask what is the Triple Crown Award. Some of our alumni are Triple Crown recipients and know what it represents. For those who have not heard of it, the Triple Crown Award is an award issued by the SAA to Scouts and Scout Leaders who have completed a trek at each of the three BSA National High Adventure Bases. This includes any of the summer or winter programs at each Base or their satellite bases. It even includes the now closed Maine and Wisconsin base programs for those that attended either. Recipients receive a special uniform size emblem similar to the participant patches received at the conclusion of their high adventure trip. They are also listed in the national database of Triple Crown Award recipients that will be posted in the near future on our website. It has proved to be a very popular award with something close to 1,000 people having earned it so far in its roughly 9 years of life.

There is much more inside. Enjoy your newsletter. ■

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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 close@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

Editor's Comments

Mike Bingley

I'd like to dedicate this issue to the memory of two great journalists who have contributed to the base and to this newsletter: Mark Nordstrom and Bob Cary. Both of them passed on to the great canoe loop in the sky this past winter and, I must admit that it hit me pretty hard.

Many people knew Bob and knew of his writing – I have a copy of Jack Pine Bob sitting on my bookshelf right now. I always enjoyed Bob speak and watching him tell his stories at the 2002 reunion was a highlight of that visit to the base. I've often told people his story about how he figured that gun control saved his life – namely that the Japanese had gun control before World War II and none of them could shoot worth a damn. Bob's contribution to the base has been well documented and others can speak about him better than I can.

I really miss Mark Nordstrom and I suspect that I will miss him even more once this issue comes out. There probably aren't that many people who know this, but Mark made a practice of calling the Reflections editor and thanking them for the newsletter

after each one came out. I got that call twice and it made my day each time. I never really got to know Mark all that well – only met him in person about twice, but I really liked his sense of humour. He once accused me of having "beard envy" and, after his article on Night Paddling was published in the winter edition, he called and joked that he was going to get some ribbing at the reunion that fall because he had put the rock on the wrong side. I'm sure that he wouldn't mind me telling you that. I've included an article that Mark wrote a couple of summers ago right after I met him for the first time during the 2004 work week. For whatever reason, it never got published. I'd like to publish it now.

What I'm also sure of is that Mark and Bob wouldn't be very happy if we were to dwell on them not being here. They'd want us to go paddling, snowshoeing and to continue to help the young people of today through Scouting. I think that a great legacy to them would be to do just that!

Enjoy this issue folks, and keep the curvy side down!

Bing ■



Northern Tier Seasonal Staff Scholarships for 2006

During 2006, SAA along with the Northern Tier Advisory Committee awarded 19 scholarships to Northern Tier seasonal staff members. This year's awards totaled \$18,000. The scholarship program has awarded a total of \$194,000 to 151 individual staff members since its beginning.

Staff members become eligible for the scholarships after completing two years on the seasonal staff at one of the Northern Tier bases. Each staff member is eligible to receive up to \$3,000 during their careers with Northern Tier. The scholarships are sent directly to the financial aid office of the staff member's school for payments of any expenses related to his or her education at that institution.

The Northern Tier Staff Scholarship Fund has three designated scholarships. The Christopher D. Breen Memorial Scholarship is awarded to a seasonal staff member who embodies the "can do attitude" and "service to scouts" that was Chris's legacy. The selection is made annually by the professional staff of the Northern Tier

High Adventure Program from staff members applying for the seasonal staff scholarships. The 2006 Chris Breen Memorial Scholarship was awarded to 2nd-year staff member Travis Anderson, an Interpreter in the Northern Tier Program. Travis received a \$500 scholarship for studies at Slippery Rock University.

The Terry J. Wall Scholarship was endowed by Dr. Terry Wall, who participated in the Northern Tier Program as a scout in 1970 and several times as an advisor from 1981 to 1995. The scholarship recipient is selected annually by the professional staff. The 2006 Terry J. Wall Scholarship was awarded to 4th-year staff member Kyle Ford, a Chief Interpreter in the program. The \$1,500 scholarship supports Kyle's studies at Stephen F. Austin State University.

The Erickson Memorial Scholarship recognizes an employee who has worked in a base-staff position, gone "above and beyond" expectations in support and service to



Rendezvous 2006

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Thank You Bob

by David M. Hyink



Bob Cary, 84, died at home in Ely, Minnesota on Saturday, June 17, 2006. He was born in Joliet, IL, on Oct. 20, 1921.

As a founding Director of the Charles L. Sommers Alumni Association, a fellow member of the Northern Tier National High Adventure Committee, BSA, and a long-time friend and associate of the late Bob Cary, it is my honor to be asked by his daughter Barb, to offer some remarks on the life of her father and our great friend.

Like my 1997 tribute to Sandy Bridges, I will do that by using two of the most important words in the English language... Thank You!

Thank you, Bob — for decades of service to the Boy Scouts of America. Your impact on the Northern Tier wilderness programs — both summer and winter — cannot be overstated. Your longtime service as a member of the Northern Tier National High Adventure Committee is recognized and much appreciated by your fellow volunteers and BSA professionals. Untold numbers of young people will learn about critical outdoor skills as they read your booklet on “Okpik: Cold Weather Camping” as well as the “Fishing Merit Badge Book.” Your numerous articles in *Scouting* and *Boys’ Life* doubtless inspired many young folks to give wilderness canoeing and winter camping a try.

Thank you, Bob — for your tireless efforts and devotion to keeping the northern wilderness open and available to America’s youth. While “flying below the radar” was not exactly your style, your advice, counsel, and wisdom made a huge difference as our team worked tirelessly to ensure that organized youth groups could continue to have access to the BWCAW. When we needed to

put a public face on the issue, you willingly stuck your head up and “took fire.” Your “Sorry Kids” editorial was a classic. Generations of young people are indebted to you — both now and in the future as they take canoe trips and enjoy and appreciate the majesty of the boundary waters.

Thank you, Bob — for serving your country during WWII. The freedoms and liberties that you fought for as a member of the “Greatest Generation” served you well as a participant in a free press, as a presidential candidate and as you “poked fun” at a politician or two.

Thank you, Bob — for your service to and support of the Charles L. Sommers Alumni Association. From the design of our “Twilight Paddlers” logo, to your willingness to provide custom artwork for greeting cards, posters and various other projects, you never denied a request. To that end, you joined the ranks of our most honored, as you were a recipient of the

George D. Hedrick Volunteer Service Award.

Thank you, Bob — for your mentorship. Over the years you have helped transform countless numbers of “the world’s smartest 18-year-olds” into wise adults! You always understood that good outdoorsmen (and good leaders) are developed with care, patience and understanding. A great many of us have much to thank you for.

Thank you, Bob — for generously sharing your sense of humor with us. We could always count on you to make us laugh — often at ourselves, and even more often at the absurdities of things in life that we took much too seriously. The Ely-Winton Committee to Save Minneapolis-St. Paul just won’t be the same without you!

Thank you, Bob — for your candor. You didn’t always say what everyone wanted to hear, but you always said it with the inten-

tion of making things better. You were a “builder” not a “breaker.” Those who temporarily ignored you did so at their peril. Not that you always had the right answer, but you were always working toward a better answer.

Thank you, Bob — for your writing. “Birdshot and Backlashes” and “A View from the North Country” had us waiting for the Ely Echo each week. Your many books rekindled great memories for a lot of us, and whetted the collective wilderness appetites of tens-of-thousands of readers — young and old. Your writings brought the wilderness experience to life. And, it is to everyone’s good fortune that they will live forever.

Thank you, Bob — for letting us know before you left us that we’ll find you sitting by the fire with the coffee pot on when our paths eventually meet up. It’s not hard to imagine a great Rendezvous, gathered around a blazing fire, with “Jackpine Bob” holding court before the likes of Charles L. Sommers, Frank Bean, Hod Ludlow, Orrin Felton, George Hedrick, Cliff Hanson, Henry Bradlich, Sandy Bridges, and a legion of other “Charlie Guides.”

Finally, **Thank you Bob** — for being such an important part of our “Up North” experience. As writer Sam Cook so aptly put it, “We have been Up North.” “And (thanks to you) part of us always will be.”

Fish and ski in peace.

September 2, 2006
Ely, MN ■

Bob Cary Completes His Life; Died Saturday

by Anne Swenson originally published Monday, June 19, 2006 in the Ely Echo

Bob Cary, 84, died at home on Saturday, June 17, 2006. He was born in Joliet, IL, on Oct. 20, 1921 to Rex and Cornelia Cary.

He attended public schools and graduated from Joliet Community College in 1941. He attended the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts, studying commercial illustration in 1946-47 on the GI Bill. He attended the Ojibwe language school 1988-89.

Cary enlisted in the U.S. Marines, Feb. 1942, served with 2nd Marine Division in combat in Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Saipan and Tinnian, 1942-1944. He became a

member of the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

He was employed by Illinois Natural History Survey in waterfowl research, 1947-48. He was the outdoor writer for the Joliet Herald News 1948-1955; editor and outdoor writer for Joliet Spectator 1956-57 and the outdoor editor for the Chicago Daily News, 1958-1966.

Cary moved to Ely, MN where he was a canoe outfitter, wilderness guide and founded and ran Canadian Border Outfitters, 1966-1973.

He became the editor of the

Ely Echo weekly newspaper in 1974 and continued as the outdoor writer and columnist to the present. He was a guest columnist for the Mesabi Daily News in Virginia, MN and Duluth's Senior Reporter. He published books including "The Big Wilderness Canoe Manual," "Winter Camping," "Born to Pull," "Tales of Jackpine Bob," "Ely Echoes: The Portages Grow Longer," "Bush Pilots: Legends of the Old and Bold," "Fear Was Never an Option" and illustrated many more. He also wrote "Root Beer Lady," a biography of legendary Dorothy Molter, the frontier woman who lived 54 years in the wilderness, most of it alone.

He free-lanced articles to Outdoor Life, Sports Afield, Minnesota Sportsman, Travel, Minnesota Monthly, Boundary Waters Journal, Chicago Tribune, Wall Street Journal and other publications.

He was a lifetime angler, hunter, trapper, canoe camper and a cross country ski racer for 30 years.

In conservation efforts, he assisted Illinois Izaak Waltons in getting 3,500 acres of Joliet Arsenal land transferred from federal to state ownership for public recreation area in 1950; organized Will County Clean Streams Committee in the 1950s; coordinating efforts of Izaak Walton League and Wildlife Federation members in an antipollution drive resulting in fish restoration in a number of rivers. He won the Illinois Izaak Walton award for his antipollution articles.

He served on the DNR Advisory Committee for Gov. Wendell Anderson; served on the state committee for the Minnesota Lottery to provide funds for natural resources; served on the committee to establish the International Wolf Center at Ely. He organized and taught in the Wilderness Guide School, held in Ely, Eveleth, Duluth, MN, 1967-1970. In Ely he served on the Advisory Committee for the Northern Tier High Adventure Base, Boy Scouts of America and served on the Nordic Ski Association board.

For two years he was the host of the WELY radio show "Camp Talk," appeared in numerous outdoor TV shows and was a frequent speaker and lecturer at Elderhostel and public schools.

He ran for President of the United States in 1980 as candidate of the Independent Fisherman's Party. Lost to Ronald Reagan by 63 million votes.

He was married to wife Lillian for 46 years until parted by her death. He married Edith Sommer in 1998. Both women were excellent anglers, shooters, canoe paddlers, campers. "How lucky can one guy get," he said.

His favorite avocations were camping, canoeing, fishing, hunting, landscape painting, writing and being the drummer for the Starlighters swing band for the past five years.

He is survived by his wife Edith, daughter Barbara

(Continued on next page)

Riches

by Bob Cary

Come share with me my wealth,
For I am rich beyond all magnitude,
From nature's trove love mined the best
Of texture, sheen and color mood.

Reach out, my love, I give you gold,
In sunrise ray amid dawn mist,
And silver gleam of rain reflects
Of branch and leaf where vines entwist.

I cannot guess at carat count,
If diamonds are to your delight;
Among the those countless twinkling gems,
Displayed above on velvet night.

And there, my love, the riches are:
The boundless wealth from Nature's store,
Bereft of flaw, bereft of mar,
My gift to you for evermore.

(Stephen) Hall of Duluth, MN; granddaughter Jessica Hall of Duluth; sister Joyce (Howie) Scheidt of Joliet, IL; stepson Jay (Ann) Sommer and their children Alex and Isak Sommer of Walker, MN; stepdaughter Annette (Joe)

Baltich of Ely; three nephews and two nieces, many cousins, and a world of friends and fishing buddies.

He was preceded in death by his mother and father Cornelia Heun and Rex Leroy Cary; daughter Marjorie

Kavney, and wife, Lillian Kluge Cary in 1993.

Services are slated for Saturday, June 24 at 11 a.m. at St. Anthony's Catholic Church with Pastor John Fossum of the Grace Lutheran Church officiating.

Memorials are preferred to: Lil Cary Ojibwe Library and Scholarship Fund at Vermilion Community College, Salvation Army or Christian Children's Fund. ■



Author, Journalist Bob Cary dies at 84

by Sam Cook, News Tribune Staff Writer



Bob Cary of Ely, sitting in his home in Ely in 1992, reflects on his years of hunting.

Bob Cary, the Ely outdoorsman and humorist who drew national acclaim in 1980 when he ran for president on the Independent Fisherman's Party ticket, died at his home Saturday. He was 84.

Cary began writing for the Ely Echo in 1974 shortly after it was founded. He left the newspaper from March 2003 to May 2004 after differences over the newspaper's editorial position on the Iraq war. He wrote for the Mesabi Daily News in Virginia before returning to the Echo.

Cary, who was known by his self-given nickname "Jackpine Bob," launched his tongue-in-cheek presidential campaign with a budget of

\$27.50. The campaign resulted in 300 newspaper stories, 100 radio interviews and 15 television features from around the state and nation, according to a News Tribune story from 1980.

"Look," Cary said in that story, "(Democratic contender) John Connally spent \$10 million, and he only got one delegate. I spent \$24.10, and I only got one less delegate than John."

Cary publicized his campaign in the Ely Echo. He promised, if elected, to live at his cabin home near Ely and rent the White House to tourists. He also supported a military draft in which members of Congress would be the first to go to war, a plan he felt would ensure peace. He promised to build a fish hatch-

ery in every town with high unemployment.

Cary held the title of managing editor or senior editor at the Echo for most of three decades. In addition to writing news stories and editorials, he wrote his "Birdshot and backlashes" outdoor column and a more recent column called "From the Desk of the Old-Timer" until just before his death. In fact, he wrote his final "Old-Timer" column to be published after his death, said Ely Echo publisher Anne Swenson.

His witticisms about life, titled "View from the North Country," appeared on the front page of the Ely Echo for more than 30 years.

"With people who read the Echo, Bob was the Echo," Swenson said Saturday.

Cary was a man of diverse talents. In addition to his work as a journalist, he wrote 10 books and illustrated several others. He co-owned and operated a canoe outfitting business near Ely for eight years. In his late 50s, he took up cross-country ski racing and continued racing for nearly 30 years. He learned the Ojibwe language in 1988-89. A drummer, he played in several Ely dance bands through the years. As a Marine, he served in the South Pacific during World War II, compiling stories from the war in his

2005 book, "Fear Was Never An Option."

Cary was known as a masterful storyteller and was in demand as a public speaker for many years.

"The one thing that always amazed me was his ability to tell stories and just keep the audience in the palm of his hand," said Doug Hirdler, general manager of Charles L. Sommers Wilderness Canoe Base outside of Ely, where Cary often volunteered.

"He always had a story to tell," said Steve Kleist, a water resources instructor at Vermilion Community College and longtime friend of Cary's. "I guess you'd call it his campfire charisma."

"He's been the recorder of so much," said Patti Steger, owner of Steger Mukluks. "He's the one who made the history of this area make sense."

Steger said she's particularly fond of Cary's drawings.

"I remember for years he would do portraits — drawings of some of the characters around Ely," she said.

Harry and Mary Lambirth are smallmouth fishing guides who got their start working for Bob and Lil Cary at Canadian Border Outfitters near Ely from 1968 to 1973.

"Bob was so multi-dimensional," Harry Lambirth said. "He was so good at so many

things. I remember grouse hunting with him. He was one of the best wing-shots I ever saw. He taught me to duck hunt. He taught me to deer hunt."

"He was the voice of the outdoors," Kleist said. "That was his niche around here."

Cary often helped new instructors at Sommers canoe base learn the ropes.

"This was the first year he wasn't able to be at the training of our staff members and let me tell you, they really enjoyed his coming in and sharing stories," Hirdler said.

Cary was born in Joliet, Ill., in 1921. He served as outdoors editor at the Joliet Herald News from 1948 to 1955 and at the Joliet Spectator from 1956 to 1957. He was outdoors editor of the Chicago Daily News from 1958 to 1966, traveling across the country to hunt and fish, nearly always with his wife, Lillian, at his side.

He and Lil moved to Ely in 1966 to start Canadian Border Outfitters with Ely businessman Emery Bulinski. They sold out to Bulinski in 1973. Lil, Cary's wife of 46 years, died in 1993. Cary is survived by his second wife, Edith Sommer of Ely, whom he married in 1998.

Always a writer, Cary even suggested wording for his own remembrance.

In a 1989 story in the News Tribune, Cary said his epitaph should read, "I could have been eminently famous in a number of different fields, but every time I was about to do something great, I went fishing."

He added, "I never regretted the fishing."

*News Tribune staff writer
Will Ashenmacher
contributed to this story. ■*

A Scouter is Helpful

by Chuck Rose

A few times I had the privilege of fishing with Bob Cary. The most memorable time was July 11, 1984. Bob let it be known at the Sommers Canoe Base that he needed some pictures of rainbow trout for the Fishing merit badge book. Michael Bridges and I got the call that clear, calm evening. We met Bob at the Canoe Base's landing, hopped into a boat with a canoe as an extra passenger. Up Moose Lake we motored, into Newfound, then portaged the canoe to (paddle-only) Found Lake. It was time to rig up. Bob had me put something called cowbells on my line (tipped with a piece of worm). Long, red, and flashy, I figured cowbells would probably scare most fish.

"I got this lure out of my wife's tackle box, don't tell her," he said with a wink.

Long and lanky, with a wide-brim hat, and full of talk, Bob was in his element as we trolled counterclockwise around the lake. He told us about his cross-country ski trips to fish on Found, about how they had heard wolves howling over the hill, north toward Manomin Lake, about the locals who had recently switched from snowmobiling to skiing to get to their favorite fishing holes; some had come to like skiing. Though I knew it intellectually before, I really felt his years of experience as we glided along.

Two-thirds of the way around, I felt a strong tug on my line. A trout, a big one. Michael and Bob worked the canoe back to the portage landing as Bob coached me, telling me to keep it in the



warm, tiring, surface water.

"My Finnish eyeball makes that about four pounds," Bob said with a big grin. This was later confirmed by a scale.

Bob was thrilled as I was, though the evening was going about like he planned. Of course, catching the fish was only half the purpose. Now a bit more businesslike, Bob started setting up for pictures. Bob figured his life jacket and rod looked better than mine, so we switched. I sat in the bow of the canoe, with brush in the background while Bob waded into the water to get a good angle.

"Now I'm going to show you how they get those shots for the cover of *Field and Stream*."

The rainbow went back on the hook (without the cowbells). I stayed in the bow of the canoe. Michael, holding the fish in his hands, waded out into the lake about 30 feet. Bob waded out just beyond him with two SLR cameras around his neck hanging just above the water's surface (one had black and white film, the other color slides). He instructed Michael to hold the fish under the water's surface and to toss it out of the water on his com-

mand. With the cameras inches above the water surface, Bob snapped a dozen shots.

We decided to paddle around the lake one more time before we lost our light. Half way around, I felt the same strong tug on my line. Another fish, an identical twin. We had time for just a few more pictures.

How lucky can a guy get? On the way back to the Base, Bob reminded me that people try all their lives to catch one fish like the two I hooked.

We got back at dark. Excited, I called home.

"MOM, I CAUGHT TWO FOUR-POUND RAINBOW TROUT."

"Gee, that's nice."

"Can I talk to Dad?"

"He's in bed."

"Well, in the morning, tell him I CAUGHT TWO FOUR-POUND RAINBOW TROUT."

"Okay."

Hmm, not as impressed as I thought she should be.

The next evening, following Bob's instructions, I baked the trout in foil with onions. It came out perfect, flaking off the skin with just a flick of the fork. I suppose a half dozen people helped eat them. As much as I anticipated eating those trout, I was more anxious to see the pictures. In August, I stopped by Bob's cabin. Most of the pictures had Michael's hands in them, but a couple had that fish jumping and fighting to get away. Terrific. One did appear in the Ely Echo. I still have copies floating around my slide collection and scanned into my computer.

And now the rest of the story. Over Christmas vacation, I was sitting around the

(Continued on next page)



Torn Hearts

by Mark Nordstrom

When I was a Charlie Guide I was also cannon fodder.

I was passionately interested in spending my time canoeing through the Canadian Shield all summer. I was also

(Continued from previous page) kitchen table with my sister, Donna, and my mom. I don't remember where the conversation had been going, but Donna suddenly said, "I'm sorry I forgot your birthday last summer, Mom."

A thought rushed into my brain. "Was that the day?" I stammered.

"Yes, it was!" stated Mom.

I'd blame Bob, but that would be just plain silly. I haven't forgotten my Mom's birthday since.

Looking back now—on the eve of Bob's funeral—I'm struck at how privileged I was that day. Bob was a fishing guide, Michael became one, but I was lucky one that night. Thanks Bob, for an unforgettable evening.

Chuck Rose ■

1-A at my local draft board, until otherwise identified.

It was 1970 and fighting in Vietnam was being called a war. I still don't know how likely it was that any young American would actually have to put his life on the line there, but each of us expected that it would be we would be the one and we were scared and repulsed at the idea of risking our lives for no legitimate reason.

I arrived at the woodsy boat basin, as we then affectionately identified what is now Northern Tier, waiting to find out whether or not my number, drawn in the draft lottery, would identify me as one of the people who would go to Vietnam and risk death for no good reason, or whether I'd be allowed to bask in the decadence of U.S. life.

At the time a very popular singer was at the top of the music charts glorifying living in the woods and I and my fellow Charlie's guides were way ahead of him. We found ourselves being asked (by our

parents' ignorant friends and our own ignorant friends) if we were hippies when the year before we'd been asked if we were lumberjacks. I arrived ready to spend my summer as a Charlie Guide with what those psychiatric folks call mixed emotions. I was passionately interested in spending my summer in the woods and showing kids how they could enjoy it, but I was also very, very aware that my draft number would be drawn that summer and it would shape the rest of my life.

I felt I was special, though. I was born on July 7, 1952. If you write that in the standard abbreviation, it's 7-7-52. The five and two add up to seven and that's all sevens – all lucky numbers. I figured that a draft lottery would mean that I would get the last number to be drafted. I was confident of that (in a nervous sort of way). It was all numbers. It had to work out that way.

Also, on the day my draft number was drawn, I was in Canada. Folks who dodged the

draft in those days went to Canada to avoid service. I figured that being in Canada and returning to the U.S. had to help me somehow (yeah, right).

It was all lies. I knew that if I were drafted I would fight and if I fought I would hate it because I thought it was very, very wrong, but I didn't want somebody else taking my place to pay for that wrong. It was a terrible time of incredibly mixed, deep and passionate emotions. Arguments over it were common and ways of avoiding those arguments were part of the personality of each of us. We wanted to indulge our passions for the woods.

We were a quirky bunch as a result. I never realized it more than during the time I spent at the beginning of the training for the 2004 season. The people on the staff were just so sociable and nice. We weren't that way, folks. We were fighting within ourselves and trying to fight our ways out from those preoccupations to allow our passions for what we were doing to govern our actions. Quirky is what we were and it was a fight to achieve that. The ones with really strong personalities actually managed to be sociable. The rest of us just met the requirements and stumbled through the rest.

My draft number was drawn while I was on some Quetico lake. The loons had been calling, the crew had caught fish, the sun had gone down red and gorgeous and I had curled up comfortably in my sleeping bag. I received a letter from my parents when I returned to base. I knew what to expect from it: a newspaper clipping of the draft lottery with my birth date circled. I had not drawn the last number that would be called (much to my sarcastic surprise, given

my very lucky birth date), but my lottery number was 352 – nearly the 356 I'd sarcastically expected. It meant there was no chance I'd be drafted. I would not be volunteering for death, thank you. I knew I would be greeted by news of which friends of mine would be risking death when I returned home. Just so you know, a few of them actually died. Also, some of the guys who were drafted and killed were damn jerks and it wasn't real hard for me to accept their deaths. I felt sorry for their families, though.

In the summer of 2004 a building came down at the Charles L. Sommers Wilderness Canoe Base on Moose Lake. A lot of people work very, very hard to make that place be highly reputable and many more work just as hard to make the rest of Northern Tier be highly reputable. Most of them think of that building as the former bay post and it wasn't much of a building, really. When I was there, though, it was called the Tee Pee and it was the staff area. My locker with my personal stuff was there and that's where I was sitting when I opened the letter that I knew would tell me what my draft number was. It was such an intense moment that it will live permanently in my memory. I'm there, right now, as I write this. This summer I tore up the floorboards that were beneath me when I opened that letter. I was there, opening that letter, along with other events, while I did it. If that building had to go, I was glad I was the one doing it. It took a while to pull those boards up (and I had help). If it means anything to you, we were thinking that a lot had happened in that building as we tore it apart and we did it with respect. ■

SAA Establishes Member's Voyage and Exchange Program With PSA

Do you want to paddle with SAA friends on a genuine Northern Tier Voyage? Did you pass up Philmont for the Far Northland? Do you want to see what you missed? If so, read on.

The SAA is excited to announce the establishment of a Voyage program for SAA members and immediate family beginning in 2007. Additionally, the SAA and the Philmont Staff Association (PSA) have joined forces to establish an Exchange Program which will allow SAA members and immediate family to participate in the annual PSA Trek at Philmont. In exchange, PSA members will be invited to participate in the SAA Voyage.

At a meeting between representatives of the SAA and PSA at Philmont on March 5, 2006, a joint recommendation to the boards of directors of each organization for the establishment of an Exchange Program was executed. Under the terms of the recommendation SAA members would be allowed to participate in the annual PSA Trek at Philmont and in return, PSA members would be allowed to participate in the SAA Voyage.

The PSA board approved the recommendation the same day; the SAA board approved the recommendation shortly thereafter. Since the SAA had not previously had an official member's Voyage, a SAA Voyage was established with Northern Tier management approval.

For the first time in SAA history, SAA members, together with immediate family, will be able to experience a

genuine 6 day Voyage originating from the Sommers Base. The SAA crews will be assigned a Northern Tier Interpreter and experience the same program as youth participants at the Northern Tier.

The SAA Voyage, together with the Exchange Program with the PSA, will begin in 2007. The Voyage dates are August 19-26, 2007. Eight members of the PSA will join the SAA Voyage. Crews will be integrated to include both SAA and PSA members.

Beginning in 2008, 8 members of the SAA, together with immediate family, will be able to join PSA members in the annual PSA Trek at Philmont. The dates and cost for the PSA Trek for 2008 are not yet established but it is estimated that the PSA Trek will cost about \$350 per participant. The Trek is normally in late July or early August.

The Exchange Program is the only way for SAA and PSA members to participate in these High Adventure Programs unless as an adult advisor to a youth crew. This is truly a rare and unique opportunity. Additionally, participants will receive the respective patch awards of the Northern Tier or Philmont upon successful completion of the Voyage or Trek.

It is a goal that this Exchange Program will become a permanent feature of the benefits each association offers its' members. It is also a goal that the SAA and PSA participants in these High Adventure programs will "spread the word" in their local councils and units about the programs offered by the

Northern Tier and Philmont and act as local resources for the Northern Tier and Philmont.

Philmont is located at Cimarron, NM. Philmont also operates an adjunct program at the Double H Ranch near Datil, NM. The PSA is an organization similar to the SAA. The PSA maintains a website at www.philstaff.com.

See below for further information about returning to the Far Northland "where you see the loon and hear his plaintive wail..."

SAA Voyage August 19-26, 2007

Be on the first SAA Crew for 5 days and nights of canoeing in the Boundary Waters originating from the Sommers Base. You will be paddling with SAA friends and family and PSA members. You will be assigned an Interpreter and have the same experience as youth participants. Re-live your Northern Tier experience with friends old and new...

Participants must:

1. Be an SAA member or immediate family.
2. Be a current member of the BSA.
3. Have a completed Northern Tier Health and Medical Form.
4. Provide written certification of swimming ability (non-swimmers not allowed)
5. Be in good enough shape to carry a canoe or pack.
6. Youth participants must be at least 14 years of age by January 1, 2007, or have completed 8th grade and be at least 13 years of age.

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Cost will be \$350 payable to SAA and is due by June 1st, 2007. Contact SAA for more information and an application form.

Additionally, you will be responsible for your own round-trip transportation to and from the Sommers Base. We will rendezvous in Ely at 11:30 a.m. on August 19, 2007, eat lunch and meet the PSA partic-

ipants. We will arrive at the Sommers Base between 1 and 2 p.m. We will begin paddling on August 20 and return to Base on August 25. You should plan on leaving the Sommers Base after an early breakfast on August 26, 2007.

Questions about the Voyage or Exchange Program? Contact Butch Diesslin at butnlucy@cpinternet.com. ■

(Continued from page 3)

Northern Tier Seasonal Staff Scholarships for 2006

Northern Tier attendees, demonstrated leadership to the program and has exhibited a strong work ethic. The scholarship recipient is selected by the professional staff. The 2006 recipient of an Erickson Memorial Scholarship is 3rd-year staff member Scott Phillips, Check-in Officer. The \$1,000 scholarship will support his studies at the Texas A & M University.

Second-year staff members who received \$500 scholarships and their institutions are: Michael J. Bentsdahl, University of Wisconsin-Platteville; Dan N. Boser, Southern Illinois University; Charles W. Evangelisti, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University; Eric D. Faust, University of Minnesota-Duluth; Ashley J. Gramlich, University of Arkansas-Fayetteville; Mary C. McMullan, Indiana University; and Robert C. Neil, Southeast Missouri State University.

Third year staff members who received \$1,000 scholarships are: Nathan J. Brenner,

University of Nevada-Reno; Karl Huemiller, St. Olaf College; Joshua M. Robinson, Lakehead University; Jeffrey A. Simmons, University of Michigan; and David E. Warner, III, St. Mary's University of Minnesota.

Fourth and fifth-year staff members who received \$1,500 scholarships are: Israel S. Andrasko, University of Texas Pan-American; Margaret G. Brown, Wichita State University; Ashley Clement, University of Toronto; and Bradley J. Ellis, University of Florida Levin College of Law.

Northern Tier seasonal staff members who have completed at least two years with the program, are enrolled in college or university programs, are students in good standing at their institutions, have worked on staff for at least 10 weeks in the year they apply, and are staff members who would be rehired if they apply for the next season are eligible to apply for the scholarships. Scholarship applications are available from the professional staff. Applications for 2007 scholarships, including transcripts and essays, are due no later than August 1, 2007. ■

Forty Years is a Long Time to Wait

Forty is a number of Biblical proportions: it rained on Noah for 40 days and 40 nights, the Israelites wandered in the Sinai for 40 years, Jesus was tempted in the wilderness for 40 days, and the list of Biblical "40's" goes on and on.

Forty has significance for me, too. It was nearly 40 years ago that I was a camper at the Charles L. Sommers Wilderness Canoe Base. The year was 1967, I was a member of Crew 703 C from Southeast Missouri, and Owen Gibbs was our Charlie Guide.

At the age of 14 I aspired to become a world traveler and when, on July 4, 1967, my crew crossed the international boundary at Prairie Portage, I knew I was on my way to achieving my aspirations. For a teenager whose international exposure was limited to reading National Geographic, the border crossing at Prairie Portage was *terra sancta*. The travel genie was out of the bottle for this 14 year old voyageur.

Our crew successfully completed an itinerary which included North Bay, Isabella, Ducky, Crooked, Lower Basswood Falls and other locations which are now lost to my memory. What has not been lost are memories of Owen Gibbs making reflector-oven pizza at Isabella, beef stroganoff at Ducky and his contraception talk at Lower Basswood Falls: *soaking the male genitalia in very hot water before engaging in the act*. Owen claimed this was the method used by certain Amazonian tribes.

After Sommers I did two

Philmont Treks and served several years on the Philmont Staff in the 70's. However, I always wanted to go back to Sommers but never could find a way.

Since my Philmont staff years I have been active in the Philmont Staff Association (PSA), an organization similar to the SAA. Twenty years ago I established the PSA Trek. This is an opportunity for PSA members to take a Trek on Philmont during the regular camping season. The PSA Trek is the only way adults can take a Philmont Trek unless as an advisor to a youth crew.

Two summers ago, while hoisting beers following a PSA Trek, myself and another PSA member, who had also been to Sommers as a youth, began discussing the Northern Tier. It was then that I conceived the idea of establishing an Exchange Program between the SAA and PSA whereby SAA members could participate in a PSA Trek and PSA members could participate in a Sommers Voyage.

I got in touch with Pat Cox and Butch Diesslin of the SAA proposing an Exchange Program and the rest is history. The SAA has established a Voyage for its members and the Exchange Program has been established. In 2007, after fully 40 years of waiting, I will return to Sommers for a Northern Tier Voyage. The Israelites waited 40 years to enter the Promised Land, I also have waited 40 years.

I still remember the international boundary crossing at Prairie Portage with rever-

ence. I have since achieved my aspiration to be an accomplished world traveler, but it all began at Prairie Portage with my crew and our Guide.

And speaking of our Guide, what made my 1967 Sommers experience so special was our Guide, Owen Gibbs. He was a one-man program: *what teenager could forget his contraception talk?* But for his great job in 1967 I would have never clung to the dream of returning to Sommers and would have never proposed the Exchange Program.

Forty years later the knock-on effects of Owen's performance has resulted in the establishment of the SAA Voyage and the Exchange Program. This will allow a whole new generation of SAA members and PSA members to experience the Northern Tier and Philmont.

All this proves, once again, *that a Charlie Guide makes a difference.*

(Lee Huckstep is heading up the Exchange Program for the PSA and is working with Butch Diesslin who is heading up the Exchange Program for the SAA. Lee has joined the SAA as a non-voting Lifetime Member. He still has his Sommers paddle and patch which he proudly displays in his home.) ■



Just a reminder

that the deadline for the next issue is April 1st, 2007! Next issue, we'll be featuring articles on Listening Point and a recent alumni trip by voyageur canoe to the arctic ocean via the MacKenzie River.

Charles L. Sommers Alumni Association, Inc. 2006 Annual Membership Meeting Minutes

The Annual Meeting of the membership of the Charles L. Sommers Alumni Association, Inc.; was held at the Charles L. Sommers National High Adventure Base, 14798 Moose Lake Road, Ely, Minnesota 55731; on the 2nd day of September A.D. 2006 at 1:30 P.M., pursuant to Article III, Section 2 of the Bylaws of the Corporation.

The meeting was called to order with a Holry! by President Pat Cox.

There were approximately 42 members present. The members present and the properly executed proxies received constituted a quorum.

Scholarships: Mike McMahon reported that the SAA Directors approved up to 20 scholarships totaling \$18,000 for 2006 staff. Ten weeks on staff is required for the award; however, five individuals who had nine weeks of service left the Base early to attend the National Order of the Arrow Conference at Michigan State University this year and did promotional work for the Northern Tier. Upon the recommendation of Doug Hirdler, these staff were awarded an additional week of service so they were eligible for the scholarships. Recipients of the endowed scholarships were Travis Anderson (Breen), Kyle Ford (Wall), and Scott Phillips (Erickson).

Lodge Renovation: Holdgrafer updated the membership on the preservation and maintenance plans for the lodge including plans to include museum displays and technology. The SAA has agreed to pay \$25,000 for renovation work (to be done in

spring 2007). The Northern Tier management will reimburse the SAA from the Northern Tier budget over two years. The SAA agrees to invest \$25,000 for the museum displays. SAA volunteers Roger Clapp, Dave Hendrickson, and Greg Richter spent the previous week doing repair work on the exterior of the lodge's windows, they were thanked for their service.

Staff Training: Holdgrafer stated that the incentives (gifts and scholarships) provided by the SAA have had a big impact on the retention of quality staff. He also described the format of training, basic skills, canoe trip, and specialized seminars. Butch Diesslin also emphasized that Alumni presence was beneficial to the staff as much informal "training" takes place. Pat and Butch described the staff "perks" provided by the SAA: First year staff receive a trading post gift certificate for \$35 (so they can buy appropriate "guiding" gear), second year staff receive a custom, unfinished XY paddle, they are encouraged to put a brand on their paddle and then finish it, third year staff receive a Kondos Guide Pack with the SAA log and their name embroidered on it, and fourth year staff receive a Grohmann fillet knife. Fifth year and greater staff receive a variety of artwork from artists such as Bob Cary and Joel Sheagren.

Charlie's Guide: Bill Erickson described "Charlie's Guide," 780 entries of trail information (portages, campsites, locations of eagle nests, etc.) compiled from the staff

over the past few years. A former advisor has printed the books at a very reasonable cost. A two year supply of 450 books cost \$1347.

Proxies for director elections were passed out at this point in the meeting.

Triple Crown Award: The Triple Crown is awarded to Scouts and adults who have attended the three National high Adventure Bases (Northern Tier, Sea Base, and Philmont). This past year, 3" participant patches and 6" patches were made available to applicants. The result has been a dramatic increase in applications (expected to exceed 600 this year). Net profits on patch sales are about \$10 per applicant, the funds going to the scholarship program.

Wilderness Voyage: Lee Huckstep and Butch Diesslin introduced the Wilderness Voyage program, a joint venture between the SAA and Philmont Staff Association to allow adult members to go on trips through these Bases. The initial trip will be at Northern Tier, August 19, 2007. They will also work with the Sea Base to develop a similar program. Profits from the Northern Tier treks will go to the seasonal scholarship fund.

Finances: Cooper stated that the SAA has about \$220,000 in various investments; \$75,000 is in endowed scholarships. Annually, the SAA spends about \$5000 on staff perks, \$8000-9000 on newsletters and office supplies, with other expenses, about \$17,000 is spent each year. The Crossing Portages

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giving campaign takes in about \$25,000, some of which is earmarked for scholarships.

Northern Tier Management Report: Hirdler reported that 184 staff (122 US, 62 Canada) were employed this past summer. Attendance was 4910 Scouts and adults, the 4th highest total. Reservations for next year are currently at 4954. Among the challenges of the summer were fires in the Boundary Waters, Quetico, and Manitoba. Crews from the Bissett Base had to be rerouted to Atikokan for two weeks during the summer.

Election Results: The following were elected as SAA directors with terms expiring in 2009: Paul DeWitt, Allen Rench, Steve Spencer, and Dick Shank.

Old Business: There were no items of Old Business.

New Business: There were no items of New Business.

Adjournment: There being no further business, Cory Kolodj led the group in singing *The Far Northland* the meeting adjourned at 3:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Chuck Rose,
Association Secretary ■

An Almost True Story

by Chris Clay

Pat Cox, Dave Hyink, and Chuck Rose ended up on a mid-west game show in the 1970's and it was down to the final round for the grand prize.

The moderator said, "OK, this is the big moment to answer a two part question and win the \$10,000 prize.....complete the following phrase: Old McDonald had a"

Pat went first and said "Old McDonald had a combine?" (the audience let's out a disappointing sigh)

Dave went next and said "Old McDonald had a chain-saw?" (the audience let's out a big groan)

Chuck goes last and said "Old McDonald had a farm?"

(the audience goes wild with cheering and applause) Chuck just stands there like a deer caught in the headlights with the shock of being one answer away from the grand prize. He's thinking about what all that money will buy.

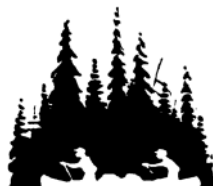
"OK, OK everyone..... settle down and let Chuck concentrate on the second part of the question." The moderator tells Chuck, for \$10,000 spell "farm".

The auditorium is so silent you could hear a pin drop and the audience is hanging on their seats. Chuck looks out at the audience with a blank stare and sweat rolling down his face as his lips begin to move....."E-I-E-I-O". ■

An Apology from the Editor

Sometimes we write things that get away from us a little bit. In the Winter edition, I wrote a brief note about Dave

Trampe's article that he had written about his adventures Ron Walls. As part of that article I mentioned that I love how I love how Charlie Guide stories can live out of time and how we've all done things that might be considered unscoutlike – like rolling vehicles or "borrowing" base equipment (mattresses, etc.). This was never intended to question Dave's integrity – it was however intended to underline how much I enjoyed his story. I deeply regret that Dave was offended by my comments and hope that he accepts my apology. ■



Mark Nordstrom Memorial Fund

Paul Reitemeier (Guide, 1970-73) writes:

"Mike,

I would like to request that a notice be placed in the Reflections newsletter alerting SAA members to Mark Nordstrom's (Guide, 1971-73) memorial fund at the school where he was a faculty member. I led a few remarks remembering him at a memorial service at the reunion over Labor Day, and promised I would share this information with the people there and elsewhere who remember him well and fondly.

Here is the response I received from a colleague of Mark's at Truman State University in Missouri.

"Here is information from our Dean, from an internal email, regarding the scholarship fund. I've added a mailing address below that info...a memorial service is planned on the TSU campus sometime this fall...no day/time has been scheduled..."

*Those of you who wish to honor Mark's memory in another way should consider making a contribution to the Journalism Fund here at Truman; in order to do so, please write a check made out to TRUMAN STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION * JOURNALISM FUND with "For MARK NORDSTROM" clearly printed on the "Memo" line on the check.*

This way of honoring Mark reflects the wishes of Mark's family in the event that people would like to contribute something on his behalf. Submit your check to the Advancement Office here at Truman, located in MC 100; they will keep track of all donations made in Mark's name. If you have

Check your mailing label

On your mailing label, there should be a code in the upper-right corner. See the key below.

C Charter, you joined when the SAA was established in 1991	A (at end of code) Affiliate member, usually advisors or other supporters
L Life member	
SU Sustaining annual member	HC Honorary Charter member
A (at beginning of code) Annual member	HON Honorary member
R Regular member, generally those who once received a paycheck from the Base	NOK Next of Kin
	NTC Northern Tier Committee
	ST Staff, current employees
	COMP Complimentary copy, usually sent to media outlets

The largest categories of membership are CLR (148), LR (108), AR (93), and AA (47).

If there is no code, then you are receiving this newsletter compliments of the SAA. Please consider supporting the SAA by becoming a member by filling out the application in the newsletter or online at www.holry.org. Questions? Typos? Please contact Chuck at clrose@stcloudstate.edu.

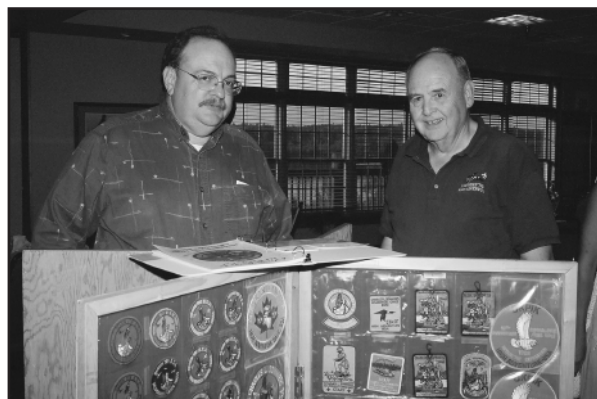
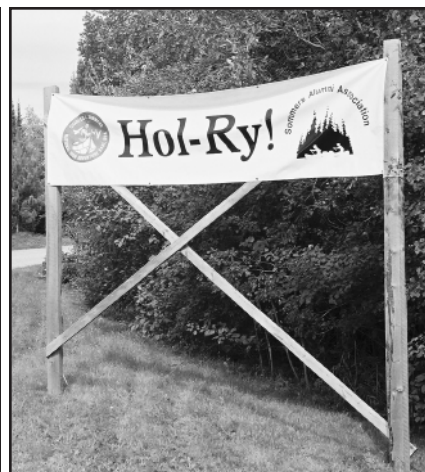
questions, please call Peggy Stepanek at 660 785-4125.
 Advancement Office,
 Truman State University,
 McClain 100,
 100 East Normal,
 Kirksville, MO, 63501
 Best, Mark Smith ■

Notes From the Portage Trail Hol-Ry!

Just wanted to let you know that the Midwestern Sommers Alumni Reunion/Rendezvous that we had tentatively scheduled to meet in Kansas for the spring of 2006 has been delayed until the spring of 2007. This prevents any overlap with the summer Rendezvous (reunion) at Sommers up in Ely. Our current plans are to host the Midwestern Reunion in the "off" years. If you have any questions, please let us know! Otherwise, we look forward to seeing you in 2007!!!

Steve Spencer
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Rendezvous 2006





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