



## Wabun Summer 2009 Logs

### Wabun A-G



Much of the summer's success cannot be summed up in a few moments sitting around this camp fire this afternoon. The look in all of the eyes of the campers tells more about this summer in the bush than a thousand words. As a trip staff I want to thank all of the parents, grand parents, in-camp staff and friends who allowed us this opportunity. As a parent of a young camper I am, indebted and grateful to all of the canoe-trip staff at Wabun for their work with my daughter and all of the campers.

This summer was an extraordinary one for the young guys who were in my group. I planned a challenging trip into some remote country of the Nishnabe Aski Nation in Northwestern Ontario. I had anticipated this trip would allow our section the opportunity to travel in some new country. We had a few glitches at the start that delayed our departure, but once we were dropped off at the end of the road at Windigo Lake, the magic involved with spending a summer in the bush began.

We started off heading up the Windigo River to Upper Windigo Lake catching fish and watching moose feed in the shallows. I guess you could say this was a common theme for the summer as we went on to catch lots of fish and saw our share of moose. One afternoon as we worked our way down the Windigo River, we saw 9 moose in an 8 mile stretch of river. The wind was in our face so, we were able to paddle up close to a cow moose with her calves by her side.

The Windigo River is a beautiful river running through the boreal forest of mixed black spruce and jack pine. The Windigo is one of the few large rivers in the Northwestern Ontario that is not in a Provincial Park, so it is not protected. However, its remote location so far has discouraged any mineral extraction and the timber industry is not interested in the small trees in the region. The whole area was once homeland to the Ojibwe people; their trails, and grave sites still exist all over the land. The old trails around the falls, while overgrown with tag alders and hard to see, could be easily followed as the ground was beaten into a hard packed trail from centuries of travelers on the land. Canoeing down the beautiful Windigo River, we were treated to some beautiful waterfalls, some wild rapids that could be run safely, tasty fish, and the opportunity to bush out a camp site every night.

From the Windigo River we cut east through a series of large open lakes to Waweagamow Lake. While on Nikip Lake we saw a flock of white pelicans fly overhead, something that I had not seen in the north before.

The North Caribou First Nations community is located on Waweagamow Lake. We visited the Health Clinic and the new boys got their first treat on the Northern Store as well as northern hospitality. On this large round lake we were wind bound for a day and a half bringing the total of wind-bound days for the first two weeks to 3 ½. While wind bound at the narrows of Waweagamow Lake, we helped some community members out by rescuing their boats from the surf beating on shore. At the narrows we were visited by all sorts of folks checking up on our safety, and a local woman whose boat we had pulled from the water, Margaret Brown. Margaret is quite a woman. She grew up in the bush on North Caribou Lake and has already killed 45 moose that help to feed her community.

From Waweagamow lake we headed up the North Caribou River to Eyap lake and crossed over a water shed into the Shade River, a small river system that Jason had run a few years back. We spent a week working our way down the rain-swollen rapids of the Shade River to Severn Lake. From Severn Lake we planned to head up the Severn River to Bear Skin Lake First Nation for reoutfitting and to pick up some mail. We paddled and lined 5 miles up river to the community and spent 20 minutes coming back down what had taken us ½ a day to go up. We descended the western most channel of the Severn river cutting trails around some huge falls and large rapids in anticipation of crossing over to the Black Bear River. Seeing the Black Bear River on a map is one thing, but getting there by canoe is another. I had been given some information about a trapper's winter trails that could be followed part way over to the Black Bear River. The cross over from the Severn took a few days of hard work but the country was beautiful. Wild back country is what we were after, and we were treated to a very remote small river system full of fish, moose, and wild rapids. The entire group had a great time on this river cutting portages around big rapids, running the smaller ones, and fishing at the swifts. Making our way down river, progress was slow as the river had not been traveled recently. On the upper portion of the river we made 6 mph down river other days 8 as we were dropping off the Pre-Cambrian shield onto the Hudson Bay lowlands. The lower Black Bear River

meets up with the Shebatic Channel and the current increases to 6 miles an hour without large rapids so our distance traveled each day increased significantly. Just when we thought we had the best of times traveling in Omushkego Cree lands, our fortunes got even better as the current picked up even more. The wind let up and the scenery was incredible. Bull moose, bald eagles, sand hill cranes, beaver, otter and a black wolves were some of the wildlife we saw in the last few days of the trip down river. Mostly our good times were due to the friendship of the group. These boys respected each other and enjoyed each other's company all summer long and became a close knit community; the Cree word for this is pimadzowiin translated to "The Good Life".

Our last days were back on the Severn River. At this point the river is a mile wide and its rapids were a mile long and very powerful. We passed the Sachiago River junction, the Rocksands River junction, both areas rich in Cree history as these are the old homeland for the people that now live down river at Fort Severn.

En route to White Seal Rapids, we passed the Fawn River junction and Limestone Rapids, a large series of rapids that are beautiful when lit by the morning sun. The boys were treated with seeing a large bull moose swimming across this large rapid.

The roar of White Seal Rapids can be heard 5 miles up river even with the wind blowing hard. This rapid is huge and marks the last large rapid between the upland country and coastal waters. We met up with the Cayuga section and spent some fun times with them at White Seal Rapids. At Fort Severn, we were treated like royalty by all in the community.

Many thanks to John and all the boys in our group for working together for the common good!

Thank you  
Meegwitch...

### **Cayuga A**

There are strange things done, in the land without sun,  
By the folks who live 'round the Bay.  
But the strangest sight they ever did see,  
Was the bush craziness of Cayuga A.

The Severn women have their secret tales,  
That have made them brave and bold.  
As we stand here today, just back from The Bay,  
We can tell you our summer's been richer than gold!

Now the KOA, of Thunder Bay, is more than simply a place to stay.  
It was filled with adventures and fun

A visit to Old Fort William, fireworks for Canada Day  
And even time to go for a run.

Tamiflu found, we were north-woods bound  
With Norm, Dick and Tom at the wheel.  
Making record time, cruising through the b-bye line,  
The wind we were ready to feel.



Finally all alone, we were on the Pipestone,  
With rapids and dark rocks galore,  
Though the water was a flowin', the wind she was a blowin'  
So on breaks, we grabbed onto shore!

With daily fires at lunch,  
We were beginning to get a hunch  
That the arctic blast was here to stay,  
Long-johns came on and out the came the songs  
While the code of Samurai honor guided our ways.

Reading the water and following Sarah's line,  
Quick off the site, we were making good time.  
So at night with tent wrestling we tested our might,  
And began the unending polar bear vs lion fight.

Our rest day feast was filled with yeast,

Calzones and English muffins filled our bellies  
While morning sunshine gave us cleaning time  
Making our clothes and ourselves much less smelly.

As the water continued to rise, we found out with surprise  
Willy's Creek we were able to paddle,  
So off to Kingfisher, a hot day at last,  
Towards the Asheweig we did scaddle.

Playing "redlight/greenlight" to get close to a moose and otters on the loose,  
The wildlife we began to count.  
With eagles we lost track, but Kiera's knack to remember all the numbers  
No one could surmount.

The Asheweig was fun, lots of rapids to run,  
Including rides down big stacks without fear.  
We filled all our nights, chillin' on the campsite,  
Delighting in Catherine's good cheer.

Clad all in green, Katie was our queen  
Of bannock boxes and an impressive gun show.  
We all learned new songs, with three right-handed pot gloves got along,  
And found *Riesens* to lift our woe.

Heading northwest we began not moving too fast,  
As we started our upstream travel.  
Though the rapids could be walked, we all remarked  
How some shoreline would have helped our battle.

With Fano in hand, the trails we began  
To clear until the bog stopped us dead.  
Wannigans came down as we all fished around  
For Gini's shoe in cold skeg almost to her head!

As the sun came out, we were searching about  
for the famed height-of-land and crossover.  
And with hardly a path, but the GPS's quick math,  
It's now cleared and marked all the way over.

The downstream run was tons of fun.  
And we made it to Big Trout in spectacular time.  
As we soaked in her size, the storm clouds did rise.  
But they all passed us by just fine.

Nadine's breakfast bar kept our bellies far  
From boring morning cuisine,

Added goodies and treats, we all loved to eat and  
At killing the pot we're supreme.

Before Angling Lake a swim Steph did take  
To retrieve a stray pot from the water.  
Though her dry clothes were soaked,  
Her optimism's no joke, and the episode didn't get the best of her.

In Wapekeka we stopped for mail, which never does fail  
To bring smiles to our faces,  
News from home, goodies to consume and  
Trinkets to festoon our future spaces.

Off the river and on,  
Our section had crown or tiara you might say  
For a variety of feats, from strength, kindness or good eats  
Each of us earned it for a day.

But listen real quick, for every carrot a stick,  
The bacon pillow a perpetual threat.  
When dishonor occurred, or Ellen's wrath incurred,  
A slab under the pillow was a sure bet!

Down the Fawn we descended, new friends having befriended,  
We began the last leg of our trip.  
The falls were divine, thought the bugs thought us FINE,  
And into the mud it was easy to slip.

As our time flew by, the 10 of us did try  
To stretch it as much as we were able,  
As we floated five wide, trying not to hit the sides,  
We laughed and on carepackages munched from our wannigan table.

Sunshine overhead, then breakfast in bed  
Our days on the Fawn began with a bang.  
Our five red canoes, down fast current they flew,  
While sometimes off the side we would hang.

Site after site, we found with delight,  
Wabun fireplaces from sections before.  
Although a bit overgrown they soon made good homes,  
Setting up camp was rarely a chore.

Along the way, sometimes we would say,  
"That spot we NEED to explore!"  
Turns out the Fat River's a creek, mud banks are quite steep,

And limestone rocks have fossils of a time before.

The Fawn was sweet, but it sure was a treat,  
To make the turn toward the famous Severn.  
When we reached it's great might, we toasted with delight,  
Stripped off our raingear and all jumped in.

While floating at lunch, we heard a bunch,  
Of advice from staff Kathy and Natty.  
They pointed out happy trees that were eager to please,  
All in a tone quite chatty.

We were approaching the end, but around every bend,  
Came something new and exciting to see.  
Scampering high for a view, or island hopping for a few,  
The Severn is a great place to be.

So here's to you all who have also heard the call,  
To roam round the north in canoes.  
Although each summer's unique, this group chose to seek  
Silver linings in all that we do.

Despite saying goodbye, I know we will try,  
To stay in touch with one another.  
There is no one I know, or could ever really show,  
How much we mean to each other.

## **Wabun A-L**

The staff arrives at Wabun a week before the campers in order to prepare for the summer adventures. Gear is put together, canoes are readied, and trip routes are discussed and planned. It is also a time in which we take part in first aid training, water safety certification, and several other endeavors meant to ensure safe and enjoyable summers for the campers. This year, we were fortunate to be joined by Dr. Michael Thompson, a renowned child psychologist and New York Times bestselling author who has a firm understanding and appreciation for what a Wabun experience provides children. He led a workshop on children's development, their confidences and competencies, but also their anxieties and fragilities.

At the end of day, Dr. Thompson revisited a long-established and well-regarded theory regarding the four stages of group development. Without turning this into an Intro to Child Development course (I know that we have been sitting here for a while), the gist of this thinking is that groups, after first coming together, will go through four phases that will eventually define how they will interact.

The day passed quickly and it was soon time for Dr. Thompson to leave. As great as the workshop was, I was slightly disappointed that I did not have time to sit down with him to chat afterwards. For I have been doing some of my own sociological research over the past few years, and I was hoping to pass it by a trained and accomplished professional. I call it the four stages of Bay Trip development, and I feel that I have collected a statistically significant bounty of information. Unfortunately, this opportunity to share it with Dr. Thompson did not arise; therefore, I will present to you, for the first time, the conclusion to my study.



### **STAGE 1 – Vanning also known as KOA’ing.**

One of the key elements in the theory of the four stages is that the time frames are not concrete and can often be shorter or much, much longer than planned. This was most certainly the case with our first stage. The combination of Dick abandoning his softball glove in the Bear Island game to catch a line-drive using only his sternum, along with a set of camper illnesses, turned our two-day beeline to our drop-off points into a multi-day, all-inclusive tour of Thunder Bay and their KOA establishment. The Thunder Bay KOA is a lovely place, inhabited by lovely people. We had the opportunity to explore every square centimeter of it, and if you are interested in planning a vacation to spend some time with your family there, I would be happy to suggest several alternate destinations that you might otherwise consider.

Despite the extension of Bay Trip Stage I, we persevered and Wabun A-L was soon pushing off from the shores of Kapkichi determined to follow our original itinerary despite starting off four days behind schedule.

## **STAGE 2 – Oh My Godding**

“Oh My Godding” refers to the thoughts and exclamations by both campers and staff in reaction to the various environmental conditions that we faced this year. But, before we explore the tenets of this phase, I feel it necessary to make a slight adjustment to its name. I understand that the use of the term ‘God’ is delicate and, not wanting to seem religiously insensitive, have decided to substitute this word so as to reduce the possibility for discomfort. The challenge lies in finding a pronoun that carries the power without the pitfalls. I feel that I have successfully sidestepped this issue. From this point on, “Oh My Godding” will be replaced with “Oh My Marging”. I am confident that the message will not be lost despite this change in verbiage.

On our trip, this stage officially began at 5:00 in the morning on day one as the staff were awakened by some noisy rustling under the fly. “Oh Marg, Bear!” was our initial reaction and we could not believe that our first morning out on trip would involve chasing it away. Much to our relief, it turned out to be a mischievous marten (a large weasel-like creature) that evidently took a liking to our freeze-dried beef. We emerged from our tent to scare away this vermin only to find that it was not to be easily scared away. The war was now officially on!

In one corner, weighing in at roughly two pounds was the perpetrator, on the other, with a combined weight of approximately three hundred and seventy-five pounds (it was very early in the trip) were the staff clad only in boxer shorts. The marten saw us and stood raised to its hind legs, attempting to significantly increase its level of intimidation . . . it worked very well. We armed ourselves with sticks and planned our attack. Stef launched his, missing by inches. I had target-lock and fired mine, resulting in a direct hit. However, without my glasses, I soon realized that I had in fact missed my mark by a significant distance and had managed to mortally wound one of our pot gloves that was located a good two wannigans over from the infidel. Oh, and this action also made it mad . . . it briefly lunged in our direction at which point we screamed, “HOLY MARG!” and tripped over each other in retreat to the tent. Freeze dried beef is not that good anyway.

Confident that the worst of the summer was behind us, we continued along our journey that would have us travel on six rivers, a series of very large and complicated lakes, ultimately reaching the community of Peawanuck at the end of the Winisk River. The first week was very hard. In the first five days, we had made up two of the days that we had lost due to our late start as we went down the Bow River and then up both the Otoskowin and Williams Rivers. We were on the water early and traveled until dinner. On one particularly long day of up-river work, our energy was waning and it was necessary to replenish calories, as we were still several hours from our intended site. We pulled over to the shore and broke out the prunes in order to give us a little boost. I am not sure if it was the specific species of prune that we consumed or if there is some unknown rule that prunes are not supposed to be eaten in the rain, but “Dear Marg”, the gastrointestinal results from our prune-binge were significant. There is no doubt about the effectiveness or expediency that these shriveled little fructose bombs can have on the

system. As a result of our afternoon delight, we do, however, have several new recipes to be added to the Garden Island Cookbook. We strongly suggest Pruna Pea Wiggle, though you cannot go wrong with King Ranch Pruna. Lastly, for those of you who really want to fine-tune your culinary chops, there is the delicious RCP – rice, cheese, prune. Suffice it to say, day four was the last day that prunes came out of our wooden boxes, and just to be sure, apricots were also categorized under the label of “Do not eat until all other foods, including boiled tumplines” have been consumed.

At this time, I feel like I would be remiss if I did not mention that it was a little nippy and a touch damp this summer. As you have already heard, and many of you experienced, the weather systems that made their way through the area this summer were not exactly the kind that you associated with the summer months. Dick has a favorite saying that he often shares, “You know what they say, weather is between the ears,” implying that no matter what the environment around you is like, it is your outlook that really matters. I had the opportunity to think about this a lot this summer and I have come up with two thoughts, which are actually both the same . . . he is wrong. Here is why: weather is what shines or falls from the sky, it is what pushes with or against you in the canoe, and it is what causes you to unzip or fully mummify yourself in your sleeping bag at night. What is between your ears is a series of trillions of neurons that make up complex structures with funny names like the cerebellum, the hippocampus, and the medulla oblongata. The funny thing is, I distinctly recall that the last time that I heard Dick say the “between the ears” comment, it was raining, but he was in his housecoat, sitting in his favorite chair, sipping a cup of coffee.

But, for every twenty thousand dark, ominous, water laden clouds there is a silver lining. And, we did have several of those Wabun DVD moments where all was right with the world. On a cold and windy day seven when it seemed like the beating rain could not get any worse, we reached our most picturesque site on the Morris River. As if on cue, we looked to the west and before us was a foreign and almost forgotten image. “Thank Marg!” The blue sky and sun arrived as if from nowhere to bless us with a beautiful rest day that allowed swimming, a walleye fish fry, and the ultimate in Boston cream bannocks.

These breaks in our rainy and buggy days just went to show us that Marg truly does work in mysterious ways.

### **STAGE 3 – Rocking**

With the rain comes water, with water comes a rise in the river, and with the rise in the river come great rapids. The Pipestone, the Winisk, and the Winiskisis Channel provided us with fantastic whitewater and these boys knew how to shoot it! Even when we were paddling on lakes such as Wapikopa, Chipai, and Wunnumin, the narrow paths between these bodies of water produced incredibly exciting shoots. In many places we were shooting down shorelines next to trees whose bases had more than four feet of water above them. It is a very strange feeling to be paddling through forest. In addition to the

great whitewater, the river level also reduced our need to portage. In fact, in our last 15 days of traveling, we only had 2 carries.

The “rocking” stage, however, refers to more than just the current and the rapids. Despite our size of 14-strong, we were, and are, an incredibly organized and fast-moving group. We breezed through the town of Webequie on Winisk Lake on day 20 where we picked up some food and got the report from the elders that the water level was more than high enough to travel down the Winiskisis Channel.

This waterway lies about 40 miles west of the Winisk River and provided us with our most remote travel. We had one morning during which we shot rapids for a solid three hours straight. Some were the long, sinuous shots that we could scout from the sterns of our canoes, while others provided heart and canoe-pounding rides around and through sizeable stacks to the calm eddies below. The combination of good current, hard work, and long days had returned us to our scheduled itinerary and we were able to finally have another rest day. Having been 17 days since the last one, we took full advantage of pancakes, swimming in the rapids, and what would end up as a favorite activity, making massive pots of popcorn. To add a little flare to the exercise, the designated ‘popper’ who was responsible for shaking the pot over the fire, had to dance to the Chicken Dance song, which was played by our resident Jummy Page, Stef. This is what serves as entertainment when you are four weeks into a Bay Trip.

The high water and spirits carried us down the remainder of the Winiskisis Channel and Winisk Rivers, where we marveled beneath the Limestone Cliffs, before reaching Peawanuck and the conclusion of the trip and for all intents and purposes, the summer.

Now I am sure that there are some detailed note takers out there who have realized that I have completed our trip, and yet have only discussed three stages. The fact is, Stage 4 does not start until tomorrow morning and therefore has yet to be written.

#### **STAGE 4 – To be determined**

It would be incorrect to believe that the Bay Trip starts on June 26<sup>th</sup> and end on August 7<sup>th</sup>. There is no way that someone can travel over 1,000 miles in the course of 5-weeks, experience adversities and accomplishments that are not in the realm of possibility in the ‘real-world’ and simply return to school ready for math and science classes.

Stage 4 is based both on reflection and on finding ways to weave the fabric of the Bay Trip experience into our non-Wabun lives. There are three ways, whether you realize them yet or not, that you have changed.

The first is your belief, conscious or not, in your individual abilities to face challenge. This trip was not easy, and while it may not have seemed it while we were out there, you did not have to do the work that you did. Think about day 14. Think about

winding our way through the perpetual headwind and pounding rain throughout the miles that we covered, but also think about how good the chili tasted that night as we gathered under the fly. You made a choice and persevered through obstacles that required both your physical and mental efforts.

The second is your outlook toward what it means to be part of and work as a group. We started as 14 and there was no way that we were going to finish with anything less than a united 14. When someone needed help, you helped, and when you needed help, it was returned.

Lastly, is your relationship with the environment through which we traveled. The water carried and sustained us, the trees provided us with much needed shelter and fuel, and the fish, moose, wolves, bald and golden eagle kept us company as the kilometers passed. I am going to be honest; this is going to be the hardest aspect to carry with you in your school lives.

Richard Louv writes: “Immersion in the natural environment cuts to the chase, exposes the young directly and immediately to the very elements from which humans evolved: earth, water, air, and other living kin, large and small. Without that experience, ‘we forget our place; we forget that larger fabric on which our lives depend’ ”.

It is easy to return to entertainment provided by flat screens, and hard to get yourself and your family out into the wilds, into a place that is not dictated by bandwidths, blackberries, and big screens. But it can be done. You do not need to travel above the Arctic Divide to make these connections. You just need the desire and motivation.

So Stage 4 is up to you. Hopefully we can meet on June 26<sup>th</sup> next year and you can tell me how it went. Good luck in all that you do this year.

## **Wabun B**

This year was a very special year. We were absolutely thrilled to be doing the Missinaibi River. After hearing awesome things about the trip from one of last year’s B section, that was the first Wabun section to ever do the trip, Andrew and I jumped at the opportunity to do the trip ourselves. The river, a historic fur trading route, the Missinabi is the most direct waterway between Lake Superior and James Bay, and was a veritable moneymaker for the Hudson Bay Company. Even prior to European contact, the river was of great navigational and spiritual importance to the Ojibway and Cree peoples who did, and still do, populate the region.

We were also incredibly excited to be traveling with a small section of only 8 total. This year’s crew was a veteran bunch, with all returning campers and deep roots into Wabun’s past. Along with the staff, ventured a salty team of trippers, scallywags one and all, it is my honor to present them to you now; there was Alvaro “Big Al”

Cuenza, “Mustang” Marc Foster, Michael “wiz kid” Finnegan, Marco “Major Moisture” Grant, Colin “Klangarang” Hartzell, and “Good ol’ Tom” Romans.

Our first 10 days had us slugging up the Goldie River—golden in name only—completing a long series of portages, during which we crossed the height of land, from which all streams flow north to the Arctic. We made short work of all this, making the difficult seem easy, and the easy routine. On day 8, after our first rest day, we began our journey downriver, a course from which we would not deviate for the next three weeks.



Our first taste of whitewater was on the Little Missinabi River, which provided some stern, though invaluable, lessons which would serve us well in the countless rapids that lay ahead. What were not bouldery and ledge-laden shots, were waterfalls and swift moving currents cascading through narrow canyons and decade old burns. The Little Miss ushered us into Missinabi Lake, where we spent the night knowing the next morning we would begin our sojourn down the Missinabi, where we would spend the lion’s share of our trip.

Coulonge and Dumoine she is not, the next two weeks the river showed us many faces. The first rapid, Quittagene Rapids, less than a kilometer from the river’s headwaters, proved to be a harbinger of things to come. Already at the start of the river, before the countless tributaries and rains would engorge her further, the water level appeared to be at record levels. In order to handle the rapids and portages ahead even a

section as swarthy as ours would need special help from the outside. And so we called forth the man who would become our spirit guide, emotional leader, and comic relief. Well known amongst Temagami canoe trippers, our ally was none other than Hap Wilson, a legend in his own time, and as we read his guidebook, a legend in his own mind. Consistently understating portage lengths and difficulty, while at the same time underplaying rapid difficulty and volume, we soon learned to take Hap's advice with a healthy serving of seasoned salt. There were exceptions, Greenhill Rapids, one of the largest of the trip, even made Hap pause and consider the portage trail. Where Greenhill Rapids was concerned, Hap recommended spray covers and adequate life insurance before going on to describe the water beast as impossible to scout, meaner than a junkyard dog, and littered with shattered canoes, even sporting a real canoe graveyard. Not eager to push the limits of our own mortality we took the portage.

Battered by torrential rains for the entire trip, Hap also buoyed our spirits, with his constant musings upon certain supplies unique to his style of canoe tripping, for him lakes were as smooth as fine whiskey, coffee was supercharged with cognac, and waterfalls best enjoyed with a glass of Chateau Pavie. All this left the entire section, especially this intrepid section thirsting for more...whitewater.

This we enjoyed in copious amounts. As we neared one of the most spectacular highlights of the trip, and Camp Wabun at large, that being Thunderhouse Falls, we had already shot nearly 60 rapids including Sun, Calf, Deadwood, Swamp, Devils Shoepack, Albany, Crow, Little Beaver, Black Feather, Beam, and Barrel Rapids. Some offered raw power with enormous stacks and quick drops, while others were long rock gardens following the continuous curves of the river. We often found ourselves enjoying bannock and the after wash of adrenaline in large eddies or perched on rocks between ledges with massive whitewater all around us. Still, some of the best whitewater was that which we could not shoot; for almost a week straight we were camped, perched above, or at the base of large waterfalls or rapids.

As previously mentioned, the undisputed highlight of the trip was the massive gorge and four set of drops that comprise Thunderhouse Falls. Camped on a cliff over 80 feet above the third falls gorge and conjuring rock, a 75 foot jut of rock towering amidst the froth and boils which served as the pilgrimage site for countless shamans, we enjoyed our second rest day. There we were mesmerized as the night's rains saw the falls become even larger over the course of a few hours, noticeably rising over two feet. Knowing that nearly 250 kilometers, or almost half the total distance of our trip, lay between us and James Bay, with only 6 days of trip remaining, we prepared for what would be one of our most intense days.

Leaving The Falls behind, we took the historic long portage around Hell's Gate Canyon. The rapids after Hell's Gate were simply massive. Taking several hours to scout and shoot, we by far shot our biggest water of the trip. The shot following Hell's Gate proved to us all that a special force was guiding us. Some of us stayed on the first floor, but the rest of us went down to the huge cellar half-way through the rapid to check things out below. It seemed as if only divine intervention kept the red side down, but I

am happy to say we kept her like that all summer. The remainder of the rapids saw us drop off the Pre-Cambrian shield and into the James Bay lowlands, where the river changed dramatically from bedrock cliffs to sandy poplar lined banks. The river gradually widened, sometimes reaching over a kilometer wide, and the current was unbelievable. Knowing we would have to do 50 kilometers a day for the rest of the trip, we thought we would have some serious beater days ahead. That being said, after traveling 20 kilometers in our first hour and a half of paddling, we knew that it would be smooth sailing ahead. I would estimate that of our last 200 kilometers we were able to float and enjoy each other's company for at least 70 kilometers. With 3 days remaining we bid farewell to the Missinaibi as it merged with the Matagami to form the Moose River, which whisked us the remainder of the way to Moosonee. The water was so high that where last year's section could barely get a full paddle blade in the water, we never touched the bottom once. Arriving in Moosonee, Ontario's oldest town and only salt-water port, we boarded the famous Polar Bear Express and chugged our way home. It was a fabulous summer and truly a pleasure. Thanks a lot guys, look forward to seeing you next year.

### **Cayuga C**



Good morning everyone. My name is Rebecca and I am one of the two staff of Cayuga C 2009. I stand before you today to share with you the tale of our summer. Our section of 10 completed three trips in total, the first two of which were chosen to prepare us for the third. First, we woke our legs up with a portage-heavy trip taking us to the northeast of Wabun. Thus began the season-long leg workout that would be our summer.

Our second trip down the Temagami River would prepare us for the whitewater to be encountered on the Sturgeon River on our way home from Wabun Lake.

With the dress rehearsals behind us, Cayuga C commenced the main event: the journey to Wabun Lake. We chose a route suggested to us by Dick Lewis, the route he took in 1968, which turned out to be gorgeous and afforded us four moose sightings (including one with a mommy and baby). Before we knew it, we'd battled the "slippery when wet" portages of the Trout Streams...while wet...and found ourselves resting in Makobe Lake. Our muscles needed the break, as the walking-paddling saga was not yet 1/3 finished. Cayuga C marched onward, brave warriors that we are, toward the prize: Wabun Lake. We arrived on day 10 with a feeling of accomplishment that can only come after 10 days of tenacity and hard work. We needed another rest so took one and ate delicious cinnamon buns.

At this point I should take a moment to talk about Wabun Lake, which is named after the camp, not vice-versa. It is a beautiful lake that is not seen by many. It is hard to get to and those who have travelled there will most likely mention something along the lines of "I swear someone once told me canoes were made to be paddled," when describing the nature of the travel there. It is no lie: there is much portaging. But some might say that is precisely what makes the trip so unique. Portaging-intensive trips tend to provoke the tripper to ask "is this worth all the work?" more often than other trips. And I think all the girls of Cayuga C, if asked, would tell you that it is. Someone wise once told me "you gotta give to get" and I think that the Wabun Lake trip is a quintessential example of that fact. We gave: we gave our energy to move our loads up hills and over rocks and through rain. And we got, we were rewarded with priceless memories, with scenes witnessed by an esoteric few. Each one of these girls has become a link in the chain connecting those who have traveled to Wabun Lake. A manifestation, of sorts, of this chain exists tucked away in an old pot on the Wabun Lake campsite. In the pot are birch bark scraps containing the names, dates, and stories of people who traveled to Wabun Lake over the years. The morning after our rest day as we sat around the pot reading the past, we all felt part of something bigger than Cayuga C 2009 and it was very special. We penned our own piece of birch bark and wrote on the bottom a quote by Robert Frost: "we took the road less-traveled and that has made all the difference."

We bid farewell to Wabun Lake, our walking paddling saga now ½ over and headed west towards the Sturgeon. The Sturgeon greeted us with some raging rapids, which we were more than prepared to tackle. We played in the whitewater and it was marvelous. Before we knew it, we were off the river and back on Temagami, feeling the mixed emotions that the conclusion of a Wabun summer brings.

Now, with the initial intention of a short, sweet log in jeopardy of becoming a reality, I will say thank you to all the young women of Cayuga C for a wonderful summer. I know I will look back on it fondly.

## Wabun C



For our first trip we went south through Cross Lake to the Temagami River to obtain some whitewater experience. Our first shot was quite technical, seeing as a motorboat had capsized in the middle of it. Experience is what we got.

For our second trip we ventured east to the fabled dead lake, McConnell Bay. We began the trip with high hopes of sunny weather and easy days, but our hopes were soon crushed. As we paddled up the Sturgeon on the second day of our trip, our troubles began when Ben's paddle snapped under the stress of his powerful strokes. We thought we were out of luck, literally being up a river without a paddle, however, thanks to the diligent handiwork of the staff we persevered and "Robo Paddle" was born. The repaired paddle held up as we continued to our destination with clouds looming overhead the whole way. Soaking wet from sweat and rain, we arrived at the crystal clear waters of McConnell Bay, where we enjoyed a well deserved rest day that included a birthday bannock for Carlos and a fun new way of bathing that we called *Staff vs Campers* (which consisted of a 10 on 2 wrestling match, the object being to dunk the opponents' heads under water). The final score: 50-2, staff. Feeling well rested we continued north back on to the Sturgeon River, where once again, Ben's paddle broke. The staff's engineering skills were put to the test, but after a 1/2 tube of Ambroid, 3 pieces of nylon tape, 2 screws, 2 metal cans that we smelted on with fire and axe, 5 feet of tump, 2 scotch fasteners, 2 zip ties, a wooden splint, and a bungee cord, "Robo Paddle" was back in action and indestructable. With the newly repaired paddle we made our way back to camp safely.

Our final excursion, with “Robo Paddle” off-line and off-duty, was to Wabun Lake. In our groove, we soared north to the Lady Evelyn River to Gamble Lake, where the Wabun C Michael Jackson Memorial Poker Tournament began. The phrase, "I see your two leaves and raise you a pebble" took on a harrowing quality. At Kaa Lake, one camper hungry for escargot settled for the lakes available resources. With Jess Lewis's awesome trip report, we easily got to Wabun Lake, where we had a surprise rest day, to the mild chagrin of the pre-rollers. The tough part of the trip was the upper part of the Lady Evelyn South Channel, where we walked our canoes down and eased our way through upwards of 30 beaver dams on our way to Florence Lake. The section cruised through the Pinetorch route to Hortense, and from there it was a relaxing, easy trek home to Temagami, brushing up on our quantum physics along the way. This section exceeded the expectations of the staff in every way and I am so pleased I had the opportunity to spend the summer with you.

#### Camper Notes:

Cam Alden: Cam adjusted to his first year at Wabun very well, carried his canoe with pride, and kept the section entertained with his light-hearted spirit and optimism.

Chris Douglas: Chris's name was associated with his strength as a paddler and his good manners, even in the midst of the worst conditions in which we found ourselves.

Reece Echelberger: Reece, one of our more experienced campers, was the man to look for if you wanted to see a good tump job on a wannigan or duffles. He also contested for the distinction of having the largest appetite of the section.

Oliver Getch: Oliver took a big step in his Wabun experience, skipping from Chippy to Wabun C. But he transitioned seamlessly and proved to be an excellent camper stern, guiding his canoe skillfully through the water while managing to keep the red side down for the entire summer.

Wyatt Grant: After a year-long sabbatical, Wyatt returned to Wabun ready to conquer the challenges that awaited him. He contributed greatly to the section by leading the other campers by example in site preparation and distinguished himself as a great portager.

Jens Hybertson: Jens brought his previous Wabun experience to the section and frequently educated the section with his random facts of life. He also kept us laughing with his comic antics.

Paul Lindseth: Paul appointed himself the section guide, being that he was a staff bowman and therefore was always the farthest ahead of the group. He performed this job with great finesse, and also challenged the staff intellectually with debates of calculus and quantum physics.

Carlos Mata: Carlos, hailing from Madrid, Spain, was the section's foreign import. During the season he developed his mastery of the English language, and his great love of bannock.

Sam Traver: Sam enjoyed his first year at Wabun and became known as both, one of the strongest campers, and the undisputed king of loose stuff.

Zach Traynor: Despite being thrust into the position of a first year camper stern, Zach excelled at both navigating and portaging his canoe. He also astounded the section with his intellectual contributions to our daily conversation.

## Cayuga D



Hello everyone. We're Cayuga D, and we would like to first introduce our section and then briefly describe our two recent trips.

Our head staff is Margot Moses, otherwise known as "Margod." This is not just referring to her last name, but to the fact that she is truly the goddess of the woods. In her bow is Rocio, our camper from Spain. She is a little spitfire and has a few very frequent sayings such as, "No problem, no problem" when she does something wrong, or "Ees horrible!" when she is asked to do pots in the mornings. She is extremely polite and sweet, but she can be very blunt at times. One rainy morning after having a rough day the day before, she came out of her tent all flustered and I said, "good morning Ro", to which she responded, "NO! No ees not good morning!"

Then we have our first camper canoe, with Sarah Grace Longworth in the stern. She is quite the tripper herself, and is also very intelligent. She read a 600-page novel in one day, and she always wins at Bannock Trivia. In her bow is Maria Rinehart-Jones, who is a truly good sport. She reacts to bug bites like nothing I have ever seen before, and still paddles and portages along through all her pain. Maybe it's because she knows that the Bear Island post office is filled with copious amounts of packages for her once she is back at base camp.

Our second camper canoe has Mary Therese Snyder in the stern, otherwise known as MT. She is a wicked paddler and portager, although you wouldn't think so from the

night terrors she has about portaging which we can all hear from our tents every night. At base camp she climbs the wall with her feet yelling, "RANGER NANA! RANGER!!!" I think she underestimates her ability, at least in her sleep. In her bow is Nana Goodman, who is a beastly paddler when her head is not in the clouds. MT, her stern, said one day in a very endearing way, "You know, sometimes I worry about Nana's sense of direction." She has gone in the completely wrong direction on portages at least twice on these past two trips, but when she is paddling or portaging in the right direction she is a great camper and a wonderful helper, even if it's not her job.

Abbie Felix here is our other assistant staff, who has never been to Wabun before but whose family has been on the lake for generations. The Clemenshaws campsite is named after her family, and she finds herself quite at home at Wabun. In her bow is Sophie Najjar, an extremely strong camper who can already carry the canoe and load and unload by herself. She is always one to jump up and do favors, no matter how tedious or hard these might be. However, she does have her blonde moments. She has been quoted as saying, "I am one fourth Iraq" and "What kind of name for a trip is Diamond-Wakimika-Obabika? I mean, it's a cool name and everything, it's just really long!"

Then there is my canoe. I am the third assistant staff and have been at Wabun on and off since 2002. In my bow is Marcy Shappy, who is becoming better and better by the day. She is no longer leading me off the trail on portages, and when there is sugar in the mix she is like the energizer bunny. She is using muscles she has never used before, and we now call her "The Hulk" because of her bulging quads. That completes our unique, wacky and entertaining team of the girls in Cayuga D.

Our first trip was supposed to be Aston-Turner-Eagle-Little Eagle, but after Margod got lost on an overgrown portage with no indications of where the trail might lead, we decided not to take our campers on that. If Margod can't do it, it must be impassible, especially with our campers' questionable sense of direction. We backtracked and did Diamond-Wakimika-Obabika to Kokoko, which proved to be a much better idea. It was not too hard for a first trip, and there was always about an hour's extra time at the end of the day to bond and get rested, and of course eat good food. Our campers love to cook, and often fight over who gets to help prepare dinner. Halley avoids cooking like the plague but indulges in setting up camp and chopping wood while I cover food and the fly and Margod cooks her AMAZING meals over the fire. We all found a special niche on the first trip, and were basically a well-greased machine for the start of the second trip, with only a few minor glitches here and there.

Halley had a family emergency she had to fly home for, so we had a Northwaters staff fill in for the first 4 days of our trip to Florence Lake. Unfortunately, Halley missed out on rock climbing up the infamous cliff with a canoe on her back at Center Falls. But she did make quite the entrance on a float plane on Divide. We made our way up the south channel of Lady Ev, and the sun made an appearance for our long-paddling day to Florence Lake. We had a Rest Day on Florence where we baked cinnamon rolls and played gunwale wars... which resulted in a canoe-over-canoe rescue and SG's canoe becoming about 10 lbs heavier for the tough portages to come.

The days ahead were challenging, but rewarding. The day following our Rest Day we embarked upon a portage with extremely low water levels and about 700 yards of muskeg. It was quite a scene when SG lost her shoes and I fell waste deep in muskeg. It only took about 5 campers and 30 minutes to dig me out. Then we had to make an assembly line of canoes to load up and get out of the skeg. The next few days were followed by some long and steep portages, which were complemented by the pouring rain and slippery trails. Despite the cold, Hortense and the Numbered lakes were still beautiful. On our last long paddling day, the sun made its second real appearance of the trip, and we all paddled back to Garden Island in great spirits and are looking forward to our next trip.

Our third trip to Wolf Lake started out with a 14 day forecast of rain, which proved to be correct. We were forced to take refuge at a hunting camp when a lightning storm hit the very first night. The rain came down so fast, our canoes were practically swamped and our gear was soaked. The rain continued to greet us everyday, especially during our 2 mile portage known as "The Kelly". What looked like a nice trail was more like a river, but we finished in an afternoon and the rest of our portages proved to be much easier thereafter. Before we reached Wolf Lake, the sun made its appearance during our portage into Sylvester. This portage encompasses a waterfall and a private turquoise bay known as "Paradise Lagoon ". We rock climbed and crawled across logs spread over a current to reach this beautiful spot, where we swam, cliff jumped, and got massages from the falls. Upon reaching Wolf Lake, we visited the old silver mine and prowled around looking for core samples.

Unfortunately, our head staff, Margot, had to be evacuated the next day. Sporting bright orange helmets and mud on their khakis, Nibby and Julie came to the rescue on an ATV and whisked Margot away. Despite her sudden departure, we still enjoyed a coco party with Cree R that night. After the boy staff bribed the girls for candy and told us about their dinosaur spotting, AC and I narrated some hilarious games of Mafia. The next day the sun graced us with its presence again while we paddled up Chiniguchi to McConnell Bay. Since we were one man down, Halley soloed a canoe and Sophie and Nana traded off on sterning Margot's canoe. We were anxious about losing our head staff but luckily our girls stepped up even more than usual and we pulled it off together. On McConnell Bay we had another rest day as we awaited a plane to be flown in with another staff so we could finish our trip. Everyone cheered as we spotted Margot sitting in the passenger's seat, coming back to rejoin our section. Nibby even got his loafers and khakis wet once again, jumping down off the float plane to greet us. Unfortunately our relief of having the group reunited was short lived; two more campers had to be evacuated the next day. Our trip was quite unusual to say the least. We saw Darren and his float plane one too many times and when he came to Rawson Lake to evac our campers, he greeted us with "You again??" Our last four days were push days to get back on schedule, but the wind and weather were both in our favor. Our tight-knit group ended up on Lake Temagami on the 5th, where Nibby graced us with his presence one more time, bringing Sophie and Nana back to us, happy and healthy.

Our summer ended with our section of 10 fully whole once again. We basked in the sun, gorged ourselves on care-packages, and listened to Disney and Titanic sing-alongs for our last day together.

## Cree C



### Campers

John Hunger: From John, we learned that Captain Obvious is no longer shrouded in the fog of urban legendry and actually lives and breathes among us. We were all surprised to find out that although seemingly difficult, John possesses the sharp observational insight to narrate the minutiae of a day's events in borderline excruciating detail. "Hey Alden, you're on a rock." "Hey Jesse, it's raining." "Hey Holden, you just fell." "Hey John, you did great this summer." A powerful sternman, John is just as fast in the canoe, right behind the staff of course, as he is to chime in on a conversation, right behind the staff. Of course.

Lucas Rooney: It's a train. It's a herd of small but fast animals. No, it's just Lucas passing you on the right side of the portage trail. No matter when he starts his daily treks through the bush, Lucas is always first to greet you at the end with a maniacal grin. Pete Gwyn's mantra of "walk the walk" has surely taken hold on Lucas, as he is the manifestation of all that phrase represents. He also more than capably translates the staff's directives into "CamperSpeak", which we apparently have completely forgotten. And if you think you see Frank Sinatra walking around camp today, don't worry, it's just "Ol' Blue Eyes" Lucas.

Drew Sarno: Although his ratio of bug bite scabs to clear skin is far below the ideal (although it did improve over time), Drew is an excellent bowman. I should know; I am also an excellent bowman. However, knowing his right from his left is not the least of Drew's skills. He packs a mean K, carries a mean K, and possesses romantic intuition enough to make Romeo blush. His tongue's placement on his lower lip a meter with which to gauge his level of concentration, Drew has more than earned Wabun's highest, if only, accolade: the coveted two year pin. He is as much a delight on trip as he is for the Wenonah's at a cocoa party and is a welcome addition to the Wabun tradition. Go Hastings.

Charlie Sipp: Ah, Charlie. At the beginning of the season, Charlie's father and I apparently made a bet as to who would grow the best moustache this summer, Charlie or I. Although the victory was hard fought and won by the prominent display on the upper lip of yours truly, Charlie more than made up for the shortcomings of his facial hair in countless other ways. From portaging to filling Nalgenes, Charlie makes himself available to help before the rest of the section has time to find an excuse not to. Last year, I compared Charlie to the foundation of a house. This year, such a comparison scarcely comes close to describing Charlie's contribution to this section. If you've ever wondered what Wabun legends are like when they're thirteen, look no further than Charlie Sipp.

Andrew Norman: If there ever exists a school to teach the trade of "site management", I'd be surprised if Andrew was not selected for an administrative position. Already displaying the supervisory skills of a seasoned taskmaster at a young age, our own "Foreman Norman" is adept at letting his section mates know when, where, and how to do pots, although the why is still very much up in the air for some reason. However, Andrew is certainly not against getting his hands dirty. And his face. And his arms. And his legs. While most enjoy swimming in 100% water, Andrew makes do with just 10%, the rest being a cool 90% of foul mud. You did work this summer, Andrew.

Graham Yost: It is a real shame that the talent search for Jay Leno's replacement on "The Tonight Show" didn't lead them to Boulder, Colorado, because they missed their perfect host: Graham Yost. With Graham, each day transforms from a series of mundane events to instant material with which he expertly trims away the self-confidence of his staff. His scathing witticisms aside, Graham certainly learned his way around a bowseat this summer, and much to his chagrin, a mojo's duffel. Graham showed us his full potential this summer and makes our section complete. One final word to the wise: don't forget your rain gear when walking next to a fly that is primed and ready to dump buckets of water on your dry cotton clothing, because he'll never let you forget it. Trust me.

## Trip

With canoes as brushes, Cree C painted its *Mona Lisa* in red hues along the rocky expanse of our final trip through the Trout Streams. Though our first day was rainy, the rest of our trip was also exceptionally rainy. Mother Nature certainly has her share of mood swings, although I probably don't have to convince anyone who was on Temagami

yesterday of that. “Rain Gear!” quickly became our battle cry as we charged the North Channel of the Lady Evelyn River. Ascending Frank’s Falls in a driving downpour, our Crees proved themselves worthy of the trip, although we certainly faced our own special brand of mishaps. For example: Center Falls is now officially renamed Holden Falls, and Helen’s Falls? Holden Falls Even More Than He Did On the Last One. Portage by portage, rock hop by rock hop, we made quick work of the North Channel and prepared ourselves for the even more precarious downward descent of the South Channel.

A rest day at Shangri La gave us welcome respite from cliff faces, and we shared a relatively uneventful time with the Wenonahs. We did, however, learn the 3 rules of a Cree C rest day. Rule One: you do not talk about tomorrow’s portages. Rule Two: you **do not** talk about tomorrow’s portages. Rule 3: everybody fights. Quite a bit, I’m afraid.

The next day, down a staff and a camper, our weary group began the leg of the trip now known to us by the question, “Alden will carry the canoe down this part, right?” But we took care and made it down the river in one piece. With this hearty main course of trip fully digested, we decided to treat ourselves to a little Diamond-Wakimika-Obabika for dessert. Although certain members of our party believed Cree C had the chops to take DWO in one fell swoop, certain others of our party believed that was idiotic.

After this trip, each of us can honestly say that we have literally found ourselves between a rock and not just a hard place, but yet another rock. However, we can also say that we had a great trip to cap a great summer and we look forward to the memories of our time together.

## **Cree R**

Cree R departed on a 4-day trip to Bob Lake in June as a group of young boys, and emerged from the Dead Lakes in August as gentlemen and scholars.

Sinbad (Spencer from Hills on MTV) and I (Uncle Rico), had the pleasure of traveling with this fine group on trips to the Temagami River, the Trout Streams, and the Dead Lakes.

Sean Barnebey, a self proclaimed “outdoorsman”, and a man of many requests, finally realized his dream while on Skunk Lake, as I saved him a half pannican of plain rice.

Austin “Keith, Burt, Gonzales, Randy, Granny” Hovey, did not ask a single dumb question all summer.

The L.A. gang (Robby Carroll, Michael Larson and Will Reed) woke up every day before noon.

My trusty bowman, Bobby “the water boy Bouche” Turner.



Bobby's Rap:

*Now drop the beat, so I can talk about my favorite tastings  
The food that is the everlasting, see I'm not fasting  
I'm gobbling, like a dog on turkey  
Why, just the other day, I went to Grandma's house  
Smelled like she conjured up a mouse  
Eggs was fryin, ham was smellin  
In ten minutes, she started yellin (come and get it)  
And the gettin's were good  
I said, I shouldn't eat, she said, I think you should  
But I can't, I'm plagued by vegetarians  
No cats and dogs, I'm not a veterinarian  
Strictly collard greens and an occasional steak  
Goes on my plate  
Asparagus tips look yummy, yummy, yummy  
Candied yams inside my tummy  
A collage of good eats, some snacks or nice treats  
Apple sauce and some nice red beets  
This is what we snack on when we're Questin'  
(both: No second guessin)  
Chorus: I don't eat no ham n' eggs, cuz they're high in cholesterol  
A yo, Phife do you eat em? No, Tip do you eat em?  
Uh huh, not at all (again)  
I don't eat no ham n' eggs, cuz they're high in cholesterol*

*Jarobi, do you eat em? Nope, Shah, do you eat em? (Nope)  
Not at all*

Bannock master mixer Alec Hillmeyer, and the “Stonewall” Jackson Larrabee.

Joe Thomson, OATMASTER!

Our final trip took us through Jumping Cat Lake and Obabika, on a loop that would cross the Sturgeon River en route to our rest day destination at the sandy beach on McConnell Bay.

After a rest day, and being the of first humans to ever see a living dinosaur, we traveled to Wolf Lake, where a soon-to-be legendary story was told by Cayuga D.

In an attempt to evacuate Margot, a Navy Seal emerged from the bush, clad in body armor from head to toe, wearing a helmet and riding an ATV.

-So, I said, “It must have been Steven Segal, right?”

-They replied “No!”

-“OK, I said, “Jean Claude Van Dam?”

- Turns out it was Nibby!

Now, this is one of those incidents that happen in the woods, much like Sasquatch. You can believe it if you like, but there are no pictures to prove it.

After visiting the abandoned mines at Wolf Lake, we made our way back across the Sturgeon. Several miles south of where we had crossed days prior. With the last few days of trip we traveled home to Lake Temagami, dreaming of In & Out burgers, showers and family, remembering what we did about our respective homes, but it won’t be long until we are all remembering what we did about the home we shared this summer at Wabun and Cree R 2009.

## **Wenonah**

Our seven girls spent the first 4 weeks and 3 trips learning the Wabun basics, but they hadn’t yet grasped the full education that is Wabun tripping until our final trip.

On day 1, after paddling over 20 clicks and stopping only at the arrival of thunder, our girls, who’d had their fill of Mafia during lighting drill, were introduced to what Liz named and Q perfected, the art of Timbering. When you find yourself doing Wenonah Wood Crew, in the rain, deep in the woods, you may encounter billets too large to carry and woods too thick too traipse through. Fear not. Simply lift one end of the billet and push it forward, letting it fall. This not only moves the billet its own length, it also clears a nice trail through the bush.



Our lesson from day 2 needs no introduction or explanation, but our girls were able to complete a canoe-over-canoe rescue from which we lost only a handful of garlic, onions, and Carly's fleece. As the newly christened "wet campers" retreated to the warmth of staff sleeping bags, our "dry campers" decorated the campsite with tump lines and formerly dry clothes.

On day 3 our newly-dried clothes were soon soaked with sweat and rain as we were introduced to the first of the Trout Stream portages. Frank's and Center Falls proved difficult but with the leadership skills of Amanda, and the keen eyes of all the campers, we were able to pull as many blueberries off the portages as they left black and blue marks on our skin.

On day 4, as we continued up the Trout Streams, we weren't alone. Our old friends Mr. Cloud and Ms. Rain kept us company all through Helen's and the two other portages of the day, but when we wanted to invite them for dinner they were no where to be found. Instead we enjoyed the porcelain privy at our site on Divide, where Zoe was disappointed to find that the site was not clubbed out enough for a disco ball and strobe light.

On day 5 we made it to Shangri-la a day late but excited all the same. The girls were all pumped to see Cree C the following day but rather surprised to see them only an hour later. Still, we made room, and plans for cocoa and swim parties were drawn up.

On Day 6, yet another cocoa party with Cree C where Emma put on quite a show when she slapped Zoe and pulled her hair. All with their newly-found stage combat skills.

On day 7 with the Crees setting out for Fat Man's, and the Wenonah's aimed for Bridal Veil, we said our goodbyes. After waiting for them to push ahead we conquered Twin Falls and Bridal Veil with much more ease than their North Channel counterparts. And we spent our 5<sup>th</sup> and final night sleeping to the soundtrack of the Trout Stream waterfalls.

On day 8, ready to finish up the Trout Streams, we entered Fat Man's ready to conquer. Haley decided that Liz needed to fully understand the thought process behind naming this portage. Leading her over the trail, she managed to jam Liz and canoe 22 between two very large rocks, all so the Wenonahs could discover how many staff it does take to unstuck a canoe. It takes 4 by the way.

On day 9, much to the dismay and protest of the section, our head staff Whitney Bell, decided that we would attempt the Diamond 2 mile. This 2 1/2 mile portage shared many names over the course of our trip. In the days approaching what we nicknamed "D-Day", it started as the "Diamond 2 Mile", became the "Diamond Disaster", was shortly known as the "Mini Indian" and ended as the "Diamond Deathmarch".

Having taken their canoe halfway the night before, the camper canoe finished first, placed the canoe in what seemed like a stream, and went back to load their wannigans. Only 5 minutes later did Liz finish to find our camper stern Bo stuck waist deep in muskeg and her loyal bowman Haley trying to dig her out. Only 10 minutes later did Q finish to find our camper stern Bo stuck waist deep in muskeg and her loyal bowman Haley trying to dig her out. Only 15 minutes later did Tara approach Bo, who had somehow sunk farther into the muddy abyss so that it seemed she was stuck up to her shoulders. One hour later Bo emerged...we're still not quite sure how.

On day 10 – We made it from Diamond to Wakimika to Obabika where Tara and Whitney debated the meaning of Obabika. Tara, sure it meant Rough Waters and Whitney arguing for Shifting Winds. We decided it meant Rough Waters. The wind did not shift once but stayed in our faces the whole time. After a short break in a shallow inlet, Carly decided to jump out of the camper canoe to solve the mystery of the non-shifting winds.

On day 11 – We quickly decided that Northwest Arm must mean Shifting Winds. After 3 hours of wind from all directions and waves with white caps, 4 of our canoes found shelter on the Hartzell's island while one maneuvered its way to the Keevil's. After her prize of a Snickers, Kurtz declared that she was alright.

Safely on Lake Temagami we ended our summer in the same tradition in which we began. A cocoa party with Cree C.

## Chippy - First Session



I think we can easily call our first two trips shake-down cruises, but this last trip sums up for these Chippies, a classic Wabun experience.

There were of course, what we will call the ‘difficult times: head winds and rain squalls on Diamond, the rock-hop portage on the way to Wakimika, of course scrubbing the pot black, and the last wood crew (which I personally didn’t think was a big deal; it was the perfect chico, but several group members were less enthused with 16 lineal feet of 15” diameter white pine.) Somebody on Upper Cleminshaws will be very happy and very warm tonight.

But all these memories now will soon be eclipsed by fonder ones: sailing up to Lady Evelyn Hotel at 4.5, GPS confirmed mph after our record setting late departure. And no one will forget the triumvirate of Rocky-Road, Boston Cream, and Chocolate M+M bannocks.

We had some good long tripping days this summer, but it was only because these boys seemed to like to relax. The “work now/play later” mentality never quite sank in. We learned that rest days were more suitable to our “style”.

Speaking of rest days, passing up the beach site on Obabika was my mistake, but we entertained ourselves with pancakes, wrestling matches, and preparing for a cricket-match, only to forget the found tennis ball on the campsite!

Our final travel day, broke warm and dry, with a strong north-north west wind which we beat to the Obabika portage. The jubilation of completing the bowman's portage with all the bowmen taking a try at carrying the canoes, mixed with the tail-wind, soon resulted in a 20 minute 'orange' war that spontaneously evolved into water fights. Lunch at the Rock Thing on Obabika Inlet included consensual lakings that were rudely interrupted by a loud crash and splash and my melodious call of 'Wood crew!'

We finished the trip with rest-day doughnuts, cliff-jumping, baths, warm soup, and a large pot of mac and cheese. Our perfect, not a burned part on it, coffee-cake bannock, which was made for the parents who never made it, became breakfast and even Luca seemed to enjoy Evan's piece.

So who were the characters in this group?

Lyle Foster; Ring leader in the Boston Pair, a portaging and paddling machine. Willing to help out and lend a hand. Definately gets the care package award.

Evan Gilbert-Katz; I still don't know what Evan ate the first three days, but once he invented shish-kabobing apricots and summer sausage his appetite improved. The co-leader of the Washington Trio.

Charlie Nuss; The strong silent type. Second in the Boston Pair, and by the letters he has received from the Wenonah's, able to charm the ladies.

Toby Stansell; AKA 'Littlefoot.' Very pious. Always exclaiming "Oh God, Oh God, O God!" especially when any mosquitoes, spiders, pot-black, or the Cleminshaw's cliffs were involved...

Isaac Traynor; AKA 'Grumpy' despite never being grumpy. The champion of the wrestling matches. The first to show his appetite, and willing to go spoon for spoon with

Alden and the ham lo mein pot. Takes the golden fish-hook for his two dock bass between trips, on a fly much to my approval!

Thanks to you, boys – Great Summer!

### **Chippy - Second Session**

Matt and Alex liked the trip bacon. Jasper and Jake liked rapping about pancakes. Mauritz enjoyed the food and liked not having electronics. Brad, Will, and Alex enjoyed fishing and shooting for pancakes. Nikolai liked to play chess and climb trees. Matt carried the "K" and was happy about it. He also fell in the muskeg and was happy about that too.



Some highlights from our trips included:

- Climbing Devil's Mountain
- Eating sushi
- Paddling the Wakimika River
- Staying at the Wakimika Beach site
- Cliff jumping at Cleminshaw's
- Taking a trip to Bear Island where we went to their restaurant and store and heard Hugh McKenzie play guitar.

I would like to thank Alex Matthias for inviting us to visit him in Obabika Lake and for talking with our group. He was hospitable and kind to us.

We would like to thank the Tuck Shop for providing us with necessary items, Jessica Lewis for teaching Paul to make sushi rolls, parents, campers, staff, administrators, and everyone else who supported the Chippies this summer. Thank you.