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1981 Summer Camp

by

SUZIE BERREGAARD

Cloquet, Minnesota; tree city of the U.S., nestled discreetly somewhere southwest of Duluth and the beautiful North Shore of Lake Superior and northeast of Blandin (home of Grand Rapids), smack dab in the middle of some of the best rough grouse and woodtick habitat found, and the home of a McDonalds that offers ice cream delights for only 19¢ every Sunday. Now, could there possibly be a better place for two vans and a grain truck full of ISU forestry students to spend six weeks of their summer? The starving woodticks and mosquitoes didn’t think so, and after some convincing and weakening due to the loss of blood, we did not think so either.

Getting to the camp, which is owned and operated by the University of Minnesota and is located approximately three miles from Cloquet, which is settled in the middle of primarily Red Pine-Jack Pine and Aspen stands, was an adventure in itself. Many of us drove our own vehicles, but by the time we arrived weren’t sure if driving or canoeing would have been most appropriate. Unfortunately for those who didn’t have adequate rain protection, the cloudy skies only managed to give us brief periods of relief for the first four weeks of our stay. Thank Good for hot showers, blowdryers, and semi-dry socks.

The facilities left very little to be desired (except maybe a jacuzzi—try to work that out for next year Dr. Hopkins). Three student living cabins, faculty cabins, a modern library and classrooms, a mess hall, and for our recreational enjoyment, foosball, pingpong and pool tables each housed in its own little cabin. Basketball, softball, volleyball, and frisbee areas all made the physical surroundings quite adequate. It is our personal belief that it was for this reason that our instructors felt the need to keep us occupied, and because of this we led a very systematic life of tromp, dry out, eat, and study. Dr. Hall, motivated gentleman that he is, led us fearlessly day after day through young pine plantations, aspen stands, up and down the most severe topography in Minnesota, through mudholes, bogs, and tick infested swamps to prove his points and familiarize us with the diverse Minnesota landscape and vegetation. Thanks Dr. Hall, your intense field approach to forest biology was intriguing. Good thing for our bodies that you were only around for three weeks.

When the name “Dr. Mize” is mentioned around campus, 1981 summer camp student’s minds recall vivid images of yellow flags tangled in tree branches and bright orange stakes driven in the ground. Mensuration is a truly amazing aspect of the forestry trade and after two days of hand-to-hand combat with thick hazelbrush, bird-size mosquitoes, wet fieldbooks, and a week of latitudes and departures, elevation calculations, and plotting road locations and forest types, Dr. Mize’s “it should only take a few hours” boundary traverse project had done a very sufficient job of instilling this thought in or soggy minds. But surely there must have been an easier way.

Breaks in the fieldwork were supplied in part by Dr. Manwiller. His attitude of “what could be more important than wood utilization knowledge” led us to many examples of the industries which forestry supports. We toured flake and hardboard plants, observed different pulping processes, came face to face with several giant fordriniers, learned railroad tie sorting and grading techniques, and memorized the creosote boulting process from start to finish. On top of that, we watched logs getting debarked, veneer being peeled, mulching being processed, studs being cut, and the high “light” of the tours—a trip through Diamond Match plant. Let it be known that each time anyone strikes a wooden Diamond courtesy match that one piece of Cloquet or area aspen has just given up its last life. Detailed “Dear Floyd” reports of these trips were the only drawback the wood utilization course, but we would like to thank Dr. Manwiller for donating the motivating “excused from one report” prized for the McDonalds Sundae eating contest. The lucky winners were Sharna Robinson and Lee Bender consuming 10 and 12 sundaes respectively in eight minutes. As you might have guessed, they weren’t in very good shape to enjoy their extra time.

The multiple use operations class was under the direction of Dr. Hopkins. Field trips were the emphasis
of this class, too, much to our enjoyment. Over the course of the six weeks, we had the opportunity to talk with a district forest ranger, rangers in the different branches of the Department of Natural Resources, watershed researchers, state park rangers, Environmental Protection Agency personnel, a USFS state nursery manager, an economist for private industry, and many other specialists dealing with different segments of the diverse forest resource. Dr. Hopkins was also the camp coordinator and he and "Mrs. H." did a very good job of keeping things running smoothly throughout the course of the six weeks. He also acted as mailman and bank, which made him everyone's favorite person.

Another of everyone's favorite people, Dr. Thomson, managed to grace our lives by showing up for a couple of days and he even treated us all to a well-deserved watermelon feast. (You see, we all had to wear shoes to the mess hall during his stay.)

Any spare time that we did have was spent doing laundry, traveling, swimming, fishing, relaxing around camp or snipe hunting. One weekend a small canoe trip turned into a large expedition as nearly half of the camp took off for a trip down the whitewaters (calmed by flooding, unfortunately) of the Cloquet River. Jogging past the goshawk, hiking to the fire tower, and making DQ runs were also favorite passtime activities.

After all of the trips were done, the finals were completed, and the vans and truck were all gased and loaded, each of us said our personal goodbyes, some more hastily than others, to the environment which had managed against all odds to be accepted as home. Camp Cloquet was quite an experience, (and expense), but we all felt good deep down. After all—who else would have kept all of those woodticks and mosquitos alive?