

VENTURING MAGAZINE

Northern Tier Adventure of 2012 by Melinda Buck

March 2013

In July 2012, 38 members of Troop/Crew 506 traveled to Canada to experience Northern Tier's Canoe Base. We split up into 6 crews of 6-8 people for this trip, and each crew paddled between 125-150 miles in a period of 10 days from Atikokan, Ontario to Ely, Minnesota or vice-versa. Mileage is dependent on the various excursions that your crew chooses. For those of you who have never been, this is an opportunity of a lifetime to camp in the wilderness, learn to portage your canoe and all your gear between many beautiful lakes that are accessible only by canoe. The scenery is breathtaking, and there is nothing like getting on the lake first thing in the morning and being the first to "break the glass" (which is what it is termed at Northern Tier when you make the first ripples in the stilled water). For the majority of the 10 day period (until we entered the boundary waters of Canada), we saw no other people.



Crew D (as our crew was labeled) is pictured to the left. We paddled 132 miles on this trip, and can each say that it was the experience of a lifetime! What to expect? Upon arrival, your crew and your interpreter discuss the route that you would like to take. Your course is plotted on a huge map so that you can see which lakes you will be crossing, approximately how far you will need to paddle each day in order to reach your chosen destinations, and the distance of each portage trail. Gear is packed, and you spend the next 10 days in awe of this beautiful place. Our interpreter for this trip, Brian Bittner, joked that he has an amazing job where he gets to spend time at Northern Tier, "and get paid for it!"



The sunrises/sunsets, waterfalls, wildlife, mirrored lakes, and swamps, are like nothing you can see anywhere else in the world!



Christina and Anna having portaged their canoes over a beaver dam.

Our crew traversed nearly 30 lakes on our trip from Atikokan, Ontario to Ely, Minnesota. We saw many beautiful waterfalls, including Rebecca Falls, Curtain Falls, Lower Basswood Falls, and Louisa Falls. The picture to the right shows members of our crew in the "bathtub" at Louisa Falls.

