

## **A Through-Paddle from Ely to Atikokan**

Rod Franz

**Troop 214 Canadian Adventure**  
**Ely to Atikokan Through-Paddle**  
**Crew E070902A**

From 7/7/02 through 7/20/02, Troop 214, Salina, Kansas sent four crews (32 people) on a high adventure trek through the Boundary Waters in Minnesota and Quetico Provincial Park in Ontario, Canada. Two crews started in Atikokan, and paddled south, and two crews started in Ely, MN and paddled north. The account below is the log of one of those crews. While details vary, the experiences are probably typical of other crews.

Crew Members, E070902A: Andrew (Crew Chief), Daniel, Matt, Chris, Zack, Levi, Mike (Adult), Rod (Adult), Frank (BSA Base Interpreter).

### **Day One** 7/7/02 Salina to Albert Lea

We gathered at South High parking lot, and after loading gear and a round of picture taking, departed at 8:15 AM or so. The target time for departure was 8:00, so we did pretty well by typical Scout time.

The adventure consists of 4 crews--23 youth and 9 Adults packed into 2 15 passenger vans, a pickup truck, and a mini van. Sack lunch at rest stop north of Kansas City, and arrived at Methodist Church in Albert Lea by 5:00 PM. Highlight of the day was a traffic jam caused, we think, by a semiload of pigs that was being sprayed down by a couple of fire trucks just south of Albert Lea--in the middle of a construction zone! High adventure is what you make it!! Dinner at various fast food joints.

### **Day Two** 7/8/02 Albert Lea to Virginia

Out of the Church by 7:00 AM. Breakfast at Micky-D's. High point of the day was the visit to Cabella's. Spent about two hours in the store, which was about \$100 to long. Talked to some folks from Lindsborg on the way home from the Boundary Waters. Traffic in Minneapolis area was intense, but arrive at the Church in Virginia by 4:30. This church not air-conditioned and the night was warm but not uncomfortable. We went over last minute crew instructions as a group, and organized our 'off water' gear, so it would go to Atikokan. The adults traded keys to vehicles.

### **Day Three** 7/09/02 Virginia to Ely

The crews split this morning, with the two crews scheduled to start in Atikokan splitting off to go up through International Falls. We had to split the Gear--The Ely Crew 'off-water' gear had to go with the crew to Atikokan, and vice versa. 'Off-water' gear is essentially clean clothes to change into after we get off the water. Breakfast at Mickey D's again. Arrive Ely about 10:00 AM--had to kill some time, so we turned everybody loose to go to the various outfitters headquartered in Ely. Once again, an opportunity to spend more money on 'essentials'. Lunch at Burger King (do we sense a pattern here?), and after a brief visit to the International Wolf Center, down the road to the Base we went. Arrived base at about 12:30 (a bit early), and cooled our heels for a short period of time in a shelter house. It is already clear that the fly population is going to be significant.

We discover on check in that they have our crew scheduled for a loop route, which is a problem, since all of our stuff, as well as our transportation home will be in Atikokan. After some 'discussion' and a phone call to Atikokan, we work it out. Turns out they had scheduled one crew at each end for a loop, and they just rescheduled both of us.

We met our interpreter, Frank. Since most 'through paddles' get assigned to senior staff, Frank was

elated to discover that this had fallen in his lap. This was not normally a trek he would have been assigned. The afternoon was spent in orientation, packing food for the trip, and collecting gear.

We also did a shakedown of personal gear to get rid of everything we did not need, or stuff that could be shared. Rod chose not to bring rain pants, and the crew consensus was that this was going to bring a rain curse down on the expedition.

Spent night in new crew cabins, which were pretty crowded and warm.

**Day Four** 7/10/02 Day one on the water. (Moose Lake, New Found Lake, Sucker Lake, Prairie Portage, Birch Lake, Bayley Bay, Burke Lake, North Bay.)

Up at 5:30 AM to pack and go. Breakfast at 7:00, but departure delayed until 9:00 pending arrangements for pickup at end of trek. Nine crewmembers in three canoes. Each canoe is loaded with one food or kitchen pack, and one Personal Gear pack. The two food packs start the trip at 80 to 90 lbs. with the kitchen pack marginally lighter. Each personal gear pack weighs in at about 65 to 70 lbs. The bow and stern positions paddle, with the 'duffer' occupying the center position. Positions rotate on a regular basis to give everybody a shot at the duffer position. We will find later that the duffer can often help paddle, particularly in headwind situations.

Moderate headwinds through morning, reach Prairie Portage about 11:30, right behind our other crew. This is the entry to Canada, and we have to do the customs thing, pay the camping fees, purchase the fishing licenses, etc. The Ranger lectures us on low impact camping, makes sure we know how to take care of the bathroom arrangements (dig at least a 6" hole at least 200 feet from the water), and warns us that problem bears have been reported in the Batchewong Bay area at the north end of our trek.

We paddle on. Relieved to see that Bayley Bay was well behaved, despite some wind. Bayley has a reputation of getting rough pretty quickly in windy conditions, and on my first trip 4 years ago, it had been dreadful. Ate lunch at an island in Burke Lake. Found a good supply of blueberry bushes. Berries are small--about the size of small peas--but are very sweet and tasty. Daniel in particular developed a taste for the berries.

At the North end of Burke Lake, before the portage into North Bay, we paddle through a shallow area--lots of reeds and almost swampy. We eventually come to call these areas 'little Vietnams'. We did a quiet paddle through this area to try to see some wildlife. We did see a couple of deer.

After portage into North Bay, we set up camp on island. Everyone pretty exhausted. Estimate of 12 miles and 4 portages: 20 rods, 84 rods, 16 rods, and 30 rods. (A rod is 16.5 feet or 320 rods to the mile).

Everyone eventually falls into a routine--when we get to a portage, the bowman jumps into the water to stop the canoe before it hits the rocks. Everyone out, and grabs a pack and heads down the trail. Last guy picks up the canoe and carries it. Everybody carries at least one pack or a canoe, and this allows us not to walk the portage twice. Because we use the wet foot technique--the canoes are never supposed to touch bottom or land, everybody's feet and legs are wet all of the time. The loose gear--fishing poles, water bottles, paddles and the like are usually the most troublesome because they don't pack up and have to be carried in the hands, or lashed to something else.

We always wore PFDs, although we saw many people who did not. An absolute rule was that if your feet were in the water, the PFD was on. The water at shore was often shallow, but was just as often very deep, and dropped suddenly. In addition, footing was not sound, and a fall in even shallow water could be dangerous because of the rocks and weight on our backs.

Sometimes we could '6-man' instead of a regular portage. This involves leaving everything in the canoe and lifting it through a short shallow area. Still difficult, but still easier and faster than unloading and loading everything. We had to take special care not to damage the canoes in these circumstances.

Usually the bow-man paddles and provides the bulk of the power to the canoe. The stern man steers and provides supplemental power. Typically, the guy in the middle--the 'duffer' rides and rests, although on a few lakes we did three-man paddle to deal with the wind.

The bugs are thick, and there are more kinds of flies than we thought possible: Horse Flies, Black Flies, Common Flies, and then there are the beasts we christened 'triangle flies' because they look like stealth bombers. They like to get into the hair, and suck blood--they are persistent and good at it, and they are also good at avoiding being slapped. We were later told these were deer flies. The good thing is that the bugs don't bother on the water--they are strictly a land phenomenon.

**Day Five** 7/11/02 Day two on the water. (North Bay, South Lake, West Lake, Unnamed Lake, Shade Lake, Dell Lake, Grey Lake, Yum Yum Lake, Kahshahpiwi Lake) This day consists of 9 portages totaling 553 rods and about 9 miles of paddling!! Hard day planned today. Everybody up by 5:00 AM and had breakfast cooked, eaten and cleaned up by 6:30.

The first couple of portages were short (less than 20 rods apiece, and rough but not unusually difficult. The first long portages were 80 rods into unnamed lake and then 100 rods into Grey Lake, where the crew took a break and ate lunch on the water. The 115 rod portage from Grey lake to Yum-Yum Lake was difficult to follow (easy to lose ones way, get lost) and challenging. More overgrown and narrower than typical in some places and waist deep moose muck in others. Some of the moose muck had logs laid over them, but balancing on a shifting log with 80 to 90 pounds on ones back is an interesting experience. In fact, it might be outright amusing, presuming it is someone else you are watching. Mike lost the heel to his boot in the moose muck, and it had to be repaired with duct tape. We are somewhat concerned that it lasts the remainder of the trip--being without shoes in these conditions would not be good.

Rod twisted ankle seriously twice!! early today, and is having difficulty walking.

Everybody is now very tired, and we took a little time to rest once we were on the water and away from the bugs. Only a short paddle through Yum-Yum Lake to the final portage of the day--220 rods. This one is named: Yum-Yum portage. It is tough: narrow, rocky and very hilly with steep up and down slopes, as well as a share of moose muck. At one point the trail goes up a rock face of probably 45 degrees, if not steeper. The only way up was to scramble on hands and knees, and you had to find the footholds to do even that. Single rock steps of 2 feet or more vertical distance are common. About the only way over these is to sit on them, rotate the legs up, and then try to stand on top. We ended up double teaming on the canoes, and pushing and pulling each other up the rock face. We started this portage at about 3:00 and finished at about 6:00. (An average of about 1/4 mile per hour!)

We took a picture at the start of Yum-Yum, and were going to do an 'after' photo, but were too tired to care at that point. Notice the roots and rocks just waiting to reach up and grab a careless foot. I have no doubt that this portage seemed more challenging to us because of our fatigued state. A long day, and not out long enough to have adapted to the conditions yet.

After a brief rest, we paddled until about 6:30, and set camp in Kahshipiwi Lake. Dinner was beef stroganoff with little beef and lots of peas, but not a complaint was heard, and there wasn't anything left, either. We broke out the M&M's we brought for special occasions, and enjoyed those. To bed 9:00 or so, after the daily thorns and roses. Everybody seems to feel good about getting through Yum-Yum.

Frank tells us that it is probably the most difficult, if not the longest portage in the Boundary Waters/Quetico Park area. True or not, the guys feel pumped about it, even though exhausted.

**\*\*Moose muck defined:** It really has nothing to do with moose. It is water, mixed with a share of rotting vegetation to the consistency of sloppy ice cream, with a few chunks added for good measure. Once disturbed, the smell is akin to a bad septic tank, with some rotten eggs thrown in. It is typically the color of road tar, and apparently permanently stains clothing.

**Day 6** 7/12/02 Day 3 on the water. (Kahshahpiwi Lake, Keefer Lake, Kahshipiwi Creek, Cairn Lake) 13 miles and 3 portages.

We slept in this morning until 6:00. Great weather today. Everybody is still very tired from the stress of yesterday. The duffers in two of the canoes are trolling, and caught a small Walleye and a couple of Smallmouth Bass, but no keepers. Set up camp a little earlier than normal on Cairn Lake. The boys did some swimming and jumping off of a low ledge (4 feet or so) into deep water. This seemed to help relax and renew them. Daniel, Matt, and Andrew went out in the canoe, and caught a good-sized Northern Pike. They all got real excited, and almost dumped the canoe. They did lose the Pike, but not until after getting up close with it's teeth.

Great dinner tonight--some sort of spiced rice concoction with lemon poppyseed cake for desert.

Rod now officially on disabled list and light duty--the ankle is swollen and foot is black and blue.

Mike's knee is also giving him some problems.

Considerable discussion of possible routes to avoid camping more than one night in the problem bear area. Considering a detour west through Sturgeon and Quetico Lake to see Indian pictographs, but this will add at least 15 miles to the trek, and eliminate possibility of layover day. Concern over fatigue level. We will make final decision tomorrow.

Typical Camp Routine:

When we arrive at a campsite, the canoes are unloaded, and the three tents are erected, typically by two crewmembers each. The remaining two scouts will be setting up the cooking area, will collect personal nalgene drinking bottles, and the water buckets and paddle out into the lake to collect drinking and cooking water. These are then purified with iodine drops or chlorine bleach. Even though the water here is very clear and clean, there is still a potential for 'Beaver Fever' or Giardia, so we faithfully treated the water.

A couple of the scouts cook, while at least two others attempt to find a bear tree set up the bear rope to hang the bear bag before we go to dinner. There is typically some time to fish, wash clothes (as best we can), or just chill for a bit before supper. There is always a rope strung with wet clothes from the day hung on it. One of the first personal orders of business is to get out of wet socks and into dry socks and camp shoes. The campsite usually has a somewhat littered appearance, with gear and clothing spread around to dry or for convenience.

A couple of nights the crew would swim in the evening, which was always refreshing.

Bedtime was early-by choice and necessity. By choice because we were typically ready to rest, and by necessity to avoid the bugs that would invade the campsite in droves at about sundown.

By this time in the trek, the camp shovel has been christened 'Excalibur', and is typically in demand once we are off water and in camp. The process of going to the bathroom, or 'boom-boom' as our crew politely refers to it, makes one appreciate the convenience of porcelain. First, get Excalibur and the

'important papers'. Douse oneself with bug repellent, and then bushwhack 200 plus feet away from the campsite and water. Try to find a location without too many rocks or roots in the vicinity of a tree or rock to lean against. Dig the hole, with appropriate comments about the rocks, roots, and the bugs, which by now have apparently developed a taste for bug repellent. Take care of business, remembering that there are now exposed parts that were not covered with bug repellent, and then replace the earth removed from the hole. Try to make it look as if you were never there. Bushwhack back to camp, assuming you remember which direction it is. If not, shout, and someone will probably hear you. When you get to the campsite, you are leapt upon by one or two other persons, also searching for 'Excalibur', due to the high fiber content of the dirty and, we are told, the side effects of iodine used to purify the water. After several days on the trail, you learn to give it to the individual with the highest level of desperation in his voice and eyes.

Like I said, flush porcelain is nice.

The final event of every day was thorns and roses session, when everyone shared what they liked and didn't like about the day, then off to bed to get away from the evening bugs.

In the morning, we were typically rousing at 5:00 or 5:30. It typically gets light about 4:00 AM or so.. Pack personal gear, take the tents down, retrieve bear bags, get water again, prepare breakfast, clean dishes and pack everything. Finish by making the campsite look as if we had never been there. The morning routine would take from 1 to 2 hours, depending on the breakfast menu, and on how focused we were.

**Day 7** (7/13/02) Day four on the water. (Cairn Lake, Kahshipiwi Creek, Shelly Lake, Keats Lake, Chatterton Lake, Russell Lake.) Maybe 10 miles and 6 portages.

This was a pretty light day. Paddled through some narrows, and saw/portaged around Snake Falls (Have A Smoke portage) and Split Rock falls.

Highlight of the day was meeting one of our sister crews that had left Atikokan at the North end of Kahshipiwi Creek. They advised us to avoid Blueberry Island in Sturgeon Lake, as they had been displaced by a bear, and had to make a night move. They also advised us that the bear had been reclassified from 'nuisance' to 'aggressive'. This means that the animal tends to come back after being chased off once, and if this happens, you have to pack up and move at least five miles, immediately, no matter what the time or conditions are. It is an event to avoid. One of the adult leaders had a black eye resulting from being hit by the end of a canoe in the dark.

The boys got to body surf through some moving water at the end of Kahshipiwi Creek.

Set camp at about 3:00 p.m. on Russell Lake. Wind was coming up, and crossing to the island camp on Russell was interesting--quartering into the wind and rolling a little in the canoes. It was a great campsite, and the wind was enough to keep area fairly clear of bugs until late. By now, we are all pretty immune to the bugs--they have become just a part of the environment that we accept. I would note that the boys seemed distracted by the campsite across the lake, which consisted of 10 or so female trekkers. Scouts being prepared and all that--Matt had a pair of binoculars that they used to scout out the best fishing areas--and it seems like most of them were in the general direction of the ladies camp. Scoutmaster Mike provided guidance in proper binocular technique.

As a result of our conversation with our sister crew, and after an assessment of everyone's condition, it was decided that we would detour through Quetico Lake, and limit our exposure in the bear area to one night. This means no layover day, but the crew seems to be adapting to the physical effort, and appears to be more rested now. This will allow us to visit some pictographs in Quetico.

One of the activities on Russell Lake (in addition to girl watching) was 'gunnel pumping', which consists of taking a canoe out a short distance by one's self, standing with your feet bridging the back seat on the edges of the canoe and rocking it forward and back by a jumping action. This actually can propel the canoe forward, or, in the alternative, result in the participant taking a refreshing swim. The latter occurs more often than the former.

**Day Eight** (7/14/02) Day five on the water. (Russell Lake, Sturgeon Narrows, Sturgeon Lake, Rouge Lake, Budside Lake) 17 Miles and 4 portages

This is the fifth day on the water, and guys are starting to adjust to the effort. Up at 5:00 again, on water by 7:00. Paddled to Chatterton Falls (the downstream end) first to look at them and then out of Russell into Sturgeon Lake through Sturgeon Narrows. We were told that the Narrows can be a rapid in the right conditions, but the water was high enough that we were able to float through. There were a few whirlygigs that we had to avoid, however. One canoe did not, and ended up being 'nosed' into the bank by the current.

Sturgeon is a big lake, and despite starting early, we had an annoying and tiring headwind most of the way. The duffer helped paddle at least part of the way. Wave action just a little short of consistent whitecapping, and the canoes did take some occasional water over the sides. For someone who is not on the water much, it is a little spooky to see wave action that well exceeds the height of the gunwales, but when the canoe enters the wave, it lifts and goes over. Everybody made it ok, although paddling into the wind is always challenging. On a big lake, you often feel as if you are not making much headway, although you may in fact be moving fairly quickly.

The transition from Sturgeon Lake to Budside Lake involved paddling through another 'little Vietnam'. These areas were always interesting because of the amount of wildlife. They were also somewhat challenging to paddle, as they required a good amount of steering to stay in water deep enough.

We saw some more wildlife today--couple of river otters, bald eagles, osprey, and the ever-present beaver dams and lodges. One of the dams had a hole in it that appeared to be inflicted by human intervention. What a stupid thing to do. We tried, on all occasions, to practice no impact techniques--meaning that we left things better than we found them.

Getting the canoes and gear upstream through and over the dams was interesting, but still better than unloading and carrying around the end.

Also saw some loon chicks. The Loons are omnipresent up here, and once the call of the Loon is heard, it is never forgotten. Loons are also interesting to watch take off and land. They are diving birds, and therefore more dense than is typical of birds. They take off by running across the water to get enough speed to lift, and land much as an airplane does, by skating across the water on touchdown.

We made camp in Budside Lake in mid afternoon right in front of a storm. Rod's curse came home to roost, we did get rained on a little, and everyone had to put rain gear on. It was, however, a brief event, but with some thunder and lightning. We were glad that we were off the lake.

Both Rod's foot and Mike's knee are somewhat improved.

Eating is important.

Relatively speaking, the trail food is good. When one paddles 10 to 15 miles daily, and carries the load on the portages, one needs calories. A typical breakfast would be granola or hot cereal and breakfast drink, maybe some dried fruit.

Lunch is peanut butter, jelly and crackers, a peanut bar, dried fruit, or sometimes a half roll or summer sausage, and granola. For three lunches we had the best lunch of all, Hudson Bay Bread, a high calorie concoction that tastes like maple flavored peanut butter. It was always eaten with peanut butter and jelly on top. Left over peanut butter and jelly were taken straight, right out of the container. Simply hold the squeeze bottle of jelly above the head, tilt the head back, and squeeze until mouth is full. Normally kool-aid was available for those who wanted it.

Dinner is usually a one pot meal — beef stroganof, spiced rice and chicken, etc.

**Day Nine** (7/15/02) (Day 6 on the water. Through Mary's Lake, Jenny's Lake into Quetico Lake. 13 miles, 4 portages

Slept in this morning. Up at 6:00 and on water by 8:00. Just about got trapped in Mary's lake. Spent about an hour looking for the portage out, and finally found it. Wasn't even close to where it was marked on the map.

Quetico is another large lake, and once again, we had a substantial headwind for the bulk of the way. As usual, fighting the wind is fatiguing for everybody, but overall we are in much better shape, and paddling and steering are much easier than the day we started. Camped on a point of land most of the way through Quetico. Tomorrow we get to see the pictographs

**Day Ten** (7/16/02) Day seven on the water. Quetico to Kasakokwog. 10 plus Miles, no portages. Pictographs were interesting, and some of them quite clear. Identified some antlered animals, and thought that we could identify a calendar. A pretty light day. We camped on Kasakokwog. As much as I hate to admit it, I have absolutely no memory of this campsite.

**Day 11** (7/17/02) Day eight on the water. Kasakokwog, McAlpine to Batchewaung Bay. 11 miles, 4 portages.

Our last full day on the water. Hard to believe it is over so quickly. Several of us are torn by the desire to stay, and the desire to go home. Crew works like a well oiled machine, with everybody pretty much knowing their jobs-which is doing whatever needs doing. Paddled through another 'Vietnam' from Kasakokwog into McAlpine Lakes. Saw a huge beaver lodge--probably 6 feet above the water and much wider than the length of a canoe. As we were paddling through McAlpine Lake, we heard helicopters, and as we got closer to Batchewaung there was a lot of smoke in the air. After the portage into Batchewaung, we broke mid day to let the wind settle.

Most of us took a midday nap. You know you are tired when you can sleep easily on exposed rock.. We had to figure out where we were, which ended up being not where we thought we were. We weren't lost, just a 'mite bewildered' for a short period of time, to quote Davey Crockett.

After supper, we paddled on to get a little closer to the ranger station, which we have to make tomorrow morning by 11:00

Camped on the end of an island in Batchewaung Bay. Bugs were terrible tonight. No trees suitable for bear bagging, so we built a 'bear fort' with the canoes. A Canoe Fort is where food packs, garbage and 'smellables' stashed under the canoes. The theory is that if a bear tries to get at them, the collapsing canoes, paddles and cook pots will make enough noise to scare the bear off. It would probably cause the rest of us to suffer cardiac arrest from the noise. Fortunately, this was never put to the test. It is not a recommended practice and is an option of last resort. We have done this before, but we are now in the area we were cautioned about. It is probably my imagination, but it seemed that the tents were pitched closer together than was typically the case.

**Day 12** (7/18/02) Day Nine on the water. Batchewaung Bay, Batchewaung Lake, Nym Lake, Shuttle to Atikokan Base. 4 miles, one portage.

In the morning, the crew of ladies that we saw on Russell Lake came paddling past. Right after we left the campsite, Rod's canoe hit about his 6th 'Jesus' rock on this trip. (They are called this because if one stands on them, it appears as though they are walking on water.) This particular canoe (or perhaps it was the steersman) seemed to have an affinity for these rocks. This time, they hit hard, and the rock scraped along the full length of the canoe before it came to a halt, with the canoe hung up right beneath the rear paddler. There were some unkind comments made by some of the crew about how this had to do with the size of the rear of the rear paddler. There was a discussion involving 'lard' but it had nothing to do with lubricating our way off the rock. We managed to break free after paddling back and forth and rotating the canoe a few times.

A few hundred yards more and we saw our sister T214 crew from Ely. They had arrived quite a bit earlier than we had, and told us that the island out on the lake had caught fire the day before, and they got to watch the Canadian Forest Service drop in some smoke jumpers to contain it. After a brief conversation, we paddled on to our final portage--168 rods. This one was placarded with a warning not to leave packs unattended, as the bear (named Humphrey) was known to raid packs that were left unattended. They even had a mug shot of Humphrey posted.

To be honest, I think most of us hoped to see Humphrey--but at a distance. We didn't see him, and we had no problems. It seems worthwhile to note that this portage seemed much shorter than the 168 rods that showed on the map.

At the end of the portage, we left Quetico Provincial Park. The property around Nym lake is privately owned, and there are quite a few houses built on the lake. We had a leisurely paddle across the lake, and after a brief search, found the ranger station where the Atikokan shuttle was to pick us up. Our sister crew arrived about 30 to 40 minutes after we did, and the shuttles arrived a few minutes after that. The trip to Atikokan base took about 20 minutes.

Atikokan is more primitive than Ely in a lot of respects, but the staff was excellent, and very accommodating. The Camp director was Don McDonald. A really nice guy. Our two crews received a fair amount of attention, as 'through paddles' are fairly uncommon. We were told that only 11 crews did it this summer, and 4 of those were from Troop 214.

First item of business was finding our 'off water' clothes, showering, and rediscovering porcelain fixtures. We are all fairly ripe by now, not having had a real shower since leaving Salina. We visited the trading post, had a real meal for supper. There was a brief closing ceremony. The only other crew was a crew from New York whom had gone north out of Atikokan in Voyager Canoes. These are 6 to 8 man canoes weighing on the order of hundreds of pounds each. It sounded as if it had been a different kind of trek.

We got to sleep in bunk beds with real foam mattresses.

Frank recalculated our mileage from the maps, and figured we had completed at least 113 miles. Frank was our interpreter fore the trip. He was great--provided the leadership and advice necessary to do this safely and yet have lots of fun.

Quetico is a great place. The Canadians take great care of the area and attempt to maintain the wilderness environment despite a great deal of use of the area. All of the areas we visited were relatively pristine, and this is to the credit of the Canadian Rangers and to the many users of the area who use low impact techniques.

**Day 13** (7/19/02) Atikokan to Sioux City

A long drive. Crossing the border at International Falls was kind of interesting, but we had no difficulties. Fed the boys real food at a steakhouse north of Sioux City, and they seemed to appreciate it. Arrived Sioux City about dark--9:00pm or so. The other two crews were already there, and there was a good deal of conversation and probably a little one-upmanship (our trek was harder than yours, and that sort of thing).

**Day 14** (7/20/02) Sioux City to Salina

Another long drive, but pretty uneventful. Lunch at York, Nebraska, and arrived Salina mid afternoon. It is hotter here than we are accustomed to, but suppose we will adjust.

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For Housing:

Albert Lea United Methodist Church, Albert Lea, Minnesota

Virginia United Methodist Church, Virginia, Minnesota

First United Methodist Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Without these churches providing nearly free housing for the trip up and back, the trip would become much more expensive, and perhaps fewer Scouts could participate. We sincerely appreciate the contributions they make to the success of the trip.

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