

AURORA

A NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN LIGHTS CAMPS' ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION

FALL 2001

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 2

Dear Alumni,

Fall is here again, and I am experiencing those cold 75 degree November days in Kansas City. I was in Fargo for the first snowfall and found it refreshing to have to scrape four inches of snow from my rental car in order to go to lunch. I had the opportunity to attend the camping committee meeting and could hardly restrain myself with all the exciting things that are occurring at the Northern Lights Council Camps. Ron Schneider announced that he is phasing out of the chairman position and Joel Hecktner is phasing in. I recall the cold January day in the Fox building when most of us first met Ron. We knew little about him or his background but one thing struck us as promising. He listened to the staff and the volunteers. Ron has been a tremendous driving force in the facility improvements over the past ten years. Please take some time to thank Ron when you get a chance for his hard work and dedication. Many of you may not remember Joel. I have known Joel for over ten years and believe he will continue to lead the camping committee and Wilderness in a forward direction.

I am anxious to see the remolded dining hall and the growth around the new campsite between Gilwell and Delaware. The rifle range is also near completion, from what I hear. Other changes that are coming to Wilderness include: the new campfire area to be located between the Trailblazer area and Greatwater campsite and the new permanent year round water line to the dining hall. Look out flag field!

The alumni association committees have been developing through this fall and I hope to start laying out bylaws this winter. Please help spread the word about the alumni association to past staff members that you know. We would like to increase our membership and have a good showing this summer to support the staff, to be present at the annual meeting, and to spend time back at home remembering what it was like to have our dream jobs.

Yours in Fellowship,

Chris Soper

WILDERNESS ROMP

The Wilderness Romp is fast approaching us. On February 9, 2002, Packs, Troops, and Venture Crews will have the opportunity to participate in what is shaping up to be a fun filled day. This is the 3rd annual Wilderness Rendezvous Romp, so come for the weekend or just for the day. Have fun and an adventure in the beauty of winter at Camp Wilderness. Registration starts at 8 a.m. in the morning and activities start at 10 a.m. Lunch is provided during the day for your hungry Scouts. Activities will end sometime around 5 p.m. The only activity that will be later is the night vision goggles and this will take place after dark.

Saturday's activities include: Fishing seminar with a fishing derby, night vision goggles training with a night vision walk that night, Cross Country Skiing, Snow Shoeing, Sledding Hill, and shooting at the Rifle Range. You can learn Global Positioning System (GPS) and run a GPS course or a go to a Quincy seminar and then build your own snow fort to be slept in that night.

Cost: The fee for this action packed day is just \$5 per person. The fee includes an event patch and a noon lunch of Sloppy Joe's, chips, cookies, and a beverage.

Cabins: All of the cabins for this weekend are full, but you can still come just for the day.

Registration: To register for the day, contact the Fargo Service Center toll free at 1-877-293-5011.

So come join me, your host, Bob Torkelson, for a day packed full of fun!

Yours in Scouting,

Robert Torkelson
Scoutmaster Troop 41
Rendezvous Chairman

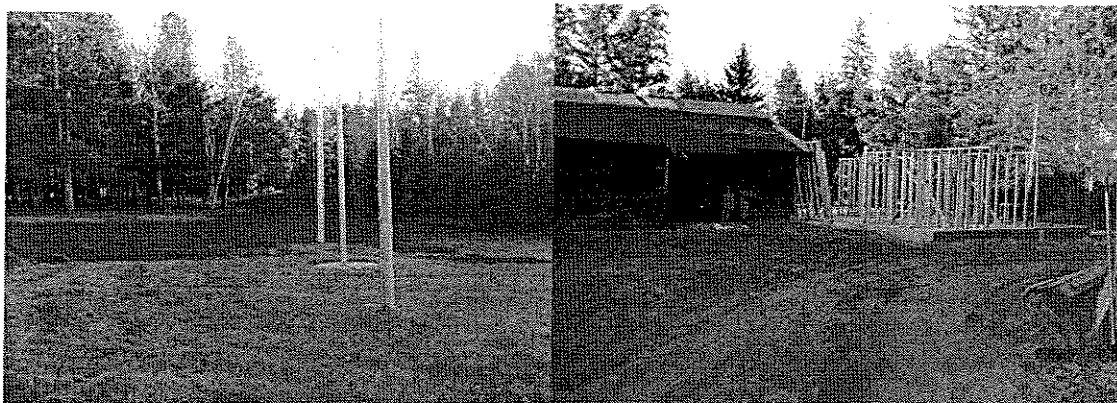
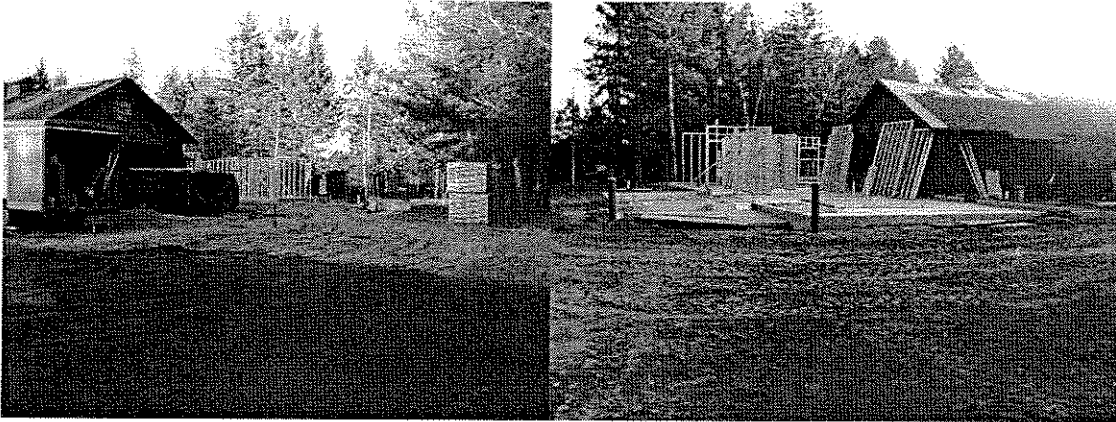


UNDER CONSTRUCTION

The addition to the Dining Hall at Camp Wilderness is starting to shape up. The foundation has been poured, walls are being put up, and the deep water line is put in. By the time you read this, the new addition should be enclosed for the winter. Completion date for this project is scheduled for April 1, 2002. If all goes as planned, Pat Gaffney should be ready to use the new kitchen for the first time during the work weekend in May. (I think that someone is getting married that weekend as well.) The Bell Tower that once stood next to the Dining Hall has been taken down to make way for the water line, but we are planning on building a new one that is higher than the previous one in the same spot. The old water towers next to Cabin 16 have also been taken down. If you have a chance and stop out to camp, I am sure that Andy would be happy to give you a small tour of the construction. Pictures were taken on November 6, 2001.

Yours in Scouting,

Brad Olson



GREETINGS FROM THE INCOMING CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL CAMPING COMMITTEE

By Joel Hektner

After many years of dedicated service, Ron Schneider will be phasing out as chairman of the Council Camping Committee. I have been asked to join the committee and will gradually be assuming the duties of chairman. I am sure all of you join me in congratulating Ron and the committee for their leadership role in planning and implementing the vast improvements that have been made at Wilderness over the past decade. Scouts for generations to come will reap the benefits of their vision and dedication.

For those of you unfamiliar with me, I was a member of the staffs of '84, '86, '87, '89, and '90, serving as commissioner aide, commissioner, and program director. Before that, I was a Scout camper coming with my troop from Wahpeton. Throughout most of the nineties I was away from camp, living in Chicago and Minneapolis. A year ago, a job opportunity brought me and my wife Kristin back to Fargo. I am now a professor in the department of Child Development and Family Science at NDSU. Of course, one of the perks of living here is that I can be more involved with camp.

One of our first priorities will be to develop a new long range plan for the camp. Some of you may have received a survey asking for your input, but whether or not you got a survey, I want to encourage all of you to take some time to think seriously about the future direction of the camp. Across all aspects of camp, from infrastructure to program activities, we need to take stock and ask ourselves what our priorities will be for the next decade. Please consider these issues and then make your ideas known. Contact me or Brad Olson, the camp director, to give us your input.

Joel Hektner
Joel.Hektner@ndsu.nodak.edu
701 297-9498
3507 44th Avenue SW
Fargo, ND 58105

OPEN HOUSE AT CAMP WILDERNESS

The annual open house for parents, staff and alumni has been set for July 5th. We will again set up a registration table out side of the Black Building on Friday afternoon. Tours will be available and everyone is encouraged to attend the outdoor evening meal and the closing campfire.

WHERE'S OLD WHAT'S HIS/HER NAME NOW?

- Joel Hektner recently bumped into Brian Landsem at Itasca State Park. Brian is married, has two little daughters, and lives in Perham, where he is going to school in the computer field. He is also in the Reserves and was recently activated, but was not sure where or when he would be sent.
- Jeff Ronning is a Lutheran pastor in Marshall, Minnesota. He and his wife Cathy are the proud parents of two boys, Isaiah and Zaccus, whom they adopted a couple years ago.
- For those of you who are wondering, Mike Szczys has moved once again. His new address is:

Mike Szczys
8407 North Virginia Circle
St. Louis Park, MN 55426
612-961-8019

AURORA DEADLINES

March 1 – Articles Due
March 15 – Aurora Mailed

May 1 – Articles Due
May 15 – Aurora Mailed

If possible, e-mail your articles to Jon and Sara as a Word attachment, otherwise send us a hard copy.

sahendrickson@yahoo.com

or

Jon & Sara Hendrickson
1731 E 6th St
Duluth, MN 55812
218-734-2529 (Home Phone)

HOME SWEET HOME

By: Matt Saari

Over the past 8 years I have moved four times to various locations around the Midwest. Each place I moved to brought new experiences and adventures, but none of those places ever felt like home. Sure I had many great memories, but these places felt temporary. However, there is one place that is permanent part of my life and it always feels like home. Wilderness was my home for many summers and still continues to be my home.

Every time I head up to camp I can just feel the excitement build. As I drive up highway 71 toward Park Rapids I think about many things and think about the memories that I have shared with the people at camp. I think and wonder who is at camp this summer? Has it been a busy year for the staff? How have the scouts been? All of these questions will be answered in just a few miles.

Driving through PR brings back lots of fond memories.....Staff Banquets at Rocky's.....Getting food at Festival for the Outpost Trips on late Sunday nights.....Hopping into the dryers and spinning around and around at the laundromat (yes, a quarter goes a long way for entertainment!).....Memories of eating a "slider" at the Dixie after a bike trek from Cass Lake to PR.....Making a pit stop at Rapids Spirits for the last campfire at the landings in late July.....And of course.....the go-carts at the corner of Lake George Road.

Heading north on County 4 is always the hardest part of my trip home....Camp is so close yet miles away. As I get closer and closer the speedometer tends to climb, with the exception of when my car behaves erratically and wants to turn right onto county 18. Neil, why does my car do that? Finally, Emmaville is in sight and camp is just around the corner. At the corner of county 24 and Jewel Drive (county 118 for us old folks) I always yell bingo at the Mantrap Conservation Club and laugh about the times the "Nature Boys" used to do that on the way to Companero's. I also recall that same group of guys going 75 around the next corner in Jonny's blue '69 Firebird. When I pass Isle of Dreams I think back to the Water Carnivals and then heading over there for Hybercones. The brain freeze was always worth it!

The best part about the trip to Wilderness is the camp road. I always think to myself.....What new things are here this year? Have new areas been logged? Is the Cub Scout camp being worked on? How about the other buildings in the capital campaign? What program areas have moved? Even with the new changes there are 14 things that have remained the same. Yes, the scout law is always there and the gateway before the ranger's cabin. After I pass through that gateway, I know I am finally home.

I am willing to bet that many of you have the same feelings about Wilderness. Many of us have formed some very strong feelings about Wilderness and the people that make it special. It is truly a great place! I look forward to seeing you when we are all home. Our home....Wilderness

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CAMP WILDERNESS FELLOWSHIP WEEKEND

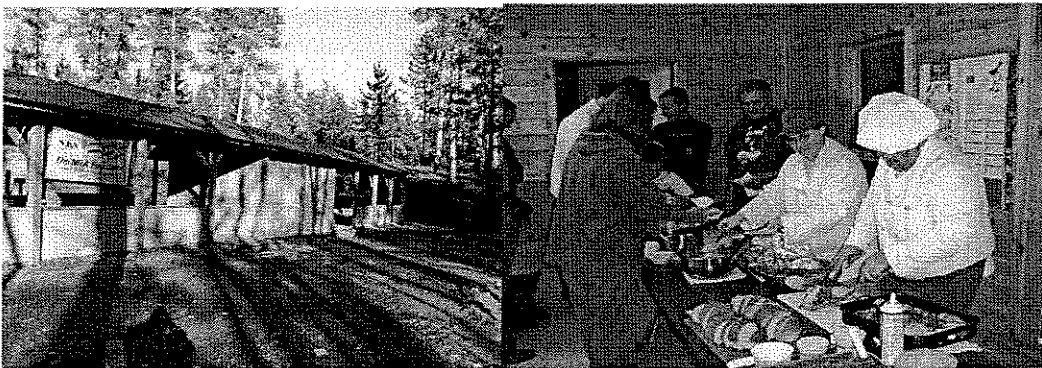
By: Mike Melby

Fellowship weekend was 'born' about three years ago when we combined the wood cutting weekend with the weekend slated for Camp Master Training. With the calendar always more full of events than scouts can always support, it made good sense to combine these events into one weekend. The following year proved to be a tough schedule also because the only weekend available turned out to be the Halloween weekend. With troops supporting 'haunted house' events and parents monitoring Halloween programs and hoards of kids, we still managed to muster a larger crew than the year before.

Pat Gaffaney volunteered to come and prepare a better than average camp meal for Saturday evening and also a cracker barrel for Friday night.

This year, the Alumni Association agreed to sponsor Fellowship Weekend and 'chiseled the date into stone' – the second weekend in October. Two major projects are the foundation for fellowship weekend – filling the wood shed and Camp Master Training for those who will be camp masters during the winter camping season. This year we also had some scouts that wanted to work on other projects as well. We completed some more trim work on the Art Christopherson Rifle Range, repaired some walls in the youth latrine, repaired some snow shoes, filled in the stairwell area on the Lavold Nature Center deck as well as finishing the trim fixtures in the bathrooms, sealed and waxed the Blackfoot cabin floor, and installed a garage door opener for the ranger's garage door.

Pat and Elaine Gaffaney 'out -did' themselves again with a Cornish game hen feast that would rival a Thanksgiving meal anytime. Even with all the 'parlor chats' among all the scouts, you could not call anybody – late for chow! Many friendships were rekindled throughout the weekend. Twenty eight scouts and family members thoroughly enjoyed our Fellowship Weekend at camp this year.



PASS THIS ON TO A FRIEND!
Northern Lights Camps' Alumni Association
Membership Application

The purpose of the Association is: to preserve and promote the camping opportunities at our council camps, to inform the membership of the camps current progress, to provide support for the current operations with our time, talents and assets, and to organize gatherings of the association. Membership is open to all past camp staff members, campers or anyone with an interest in the camps. The Aurora is the official publication of the Northern Lights Camps Alumni Association, 301 South 7th Street, Fargo, ND 58103. It is published three times per year.

Association dues are \$ 15.00 per year for annual membership, \$ 25.00 or more annually for Sustaining memberships or \$ 150.00 (one time) Life Memberships. The Association's dues year begins June 1. Send any comments, article ideas or questions to Ron Schneider, 1608 South 17th Street, Moorhead, MN 56560 or e-mail them to Schneids@att.net. Please complete the information requested below and mail to:

Northern Lights Camps' Alumni Association
301 South 7th Street
Fargo, ND 58103
PLEASE PRINT

Name _____

Home phone _____

Address _____

E-mail address _____

Year(s) at camp: Camper _____
 Leader _____
 Staff position(s) and year(s) _____

Count on me to help with the association.

I'll help with membership _____ steering committee _____
newsletter _____ whatever _____

Tell us something about yourself (this may get printed in a future issue of the newsletter.)

Enclosed are my membership dues and/or contribution: \$15___ \$25___ other___
Lifetime Membership \$150___ Lifetime paid in full ___ or 3 annual payments of \$50___
Make checks payable to the Northern Lights Camps' Alumni Association