

11-27-00

Paul -

Here it is, hot off the presses. My wife, Lynda, wrote this up after listening to Scott & I talk. Thought it was pretty cute - you decide - you're the Editor.

I'll Be back in Omaha this Spring. Scott & I will use his slide scanner & see what we come up with. Saw a Few of them. Boy, were we young then!

Hope I can make the reunion - Lot depends on what is happening here. Obviously, Labor Day wknd. is a tough Time - But we'll see.

Let me know if there is anything else I can help with. See you @ Lake Stratton!

Lee

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A Tale of Two Brothers and One Camp **by Lee and Scott Sloan, Omaha**

"Camp Waupaca eventually became the most important experience of my life. It gave me direction, as to what would make me happy as an adult," says Lee Sloan.

Our dad was looking for a summer camp in which to send his sons. He wanted something not overly religious, but one which would build body, mind and spirit. As fortune had it, Skipper Kuklin had relatives in Lincoln, Nebraska, and made a point of soliciting Omaha boys. Learning about Skipper and Camp Waupaca, our dad invited Skipper to the house to talk about the camp.

Obviously impressed with what he heard, our dad turned to Lee, the oldest, and said, "Lee, how would you like to go to this camp?" Later that year, Lee was on his way to Camp Waupaca.

Lee recalls the plane flight was a North Central Airlines "cooked duck" propeller plane. Some of Lee's neighborhood friends were also on the plane - Bob and Dick Bernstein, Buzz Malashock, Harlan Rips, John Rosenberg and Jimmy Harris. After "puddle jumping" a few times, they arrived in Stevenspoint, Wisconsin. From there, Lee and his group were driven in station wagons to the Camp. Cabin assignments split up the small town Omaha boys who were then assimilated with the big city Chicago boys. He says everyone became so close, like a large extended family.

"What a great place!" was Lee's first impression. "A huge sports field, real guns for riflery, real arrows for archery, a great swimming area in the lake, real boats - canoes, sailing, rowboats. There were so many activities to choose from - this was a real boy's dream!" And, he recalls, the instructors seemed to really know what they were teaching.

Lee enjoyed the tent cabin, deep in the treed forest, which he shared with Bob Bernstein, Stu Zemel and another camper. He thought the cold nights in there made for great sleeping. He

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also enjoyed the food. "I remember the mess hall - Saturdays were burgers, fries and bug juice," Lee says.

Looking back, he recalls finally being selected for the secret organization on "Brave Night." Though now, he reflects, everyone was probably selected once they had been there long enough. And, he remembers he and Glenn Pollack stealing the counselors' cigarette butts and smoking on the hill overlooking the sports field. Other memories include:

- the canteen - where your parents put down some money so you could buy snacks
- the trip to the paper mill in Appleton - freedom from camp and on the loose
- swimming across the lake and back, wondering if the turtles would bite
- the CIT cabins and being a CIT - it gave us a feeling of being important
- the Blue & White War - the best of our skills put to the test
- And the ultimate - Capture the Flag!

Probably the highlight for Lee was Bob Mowen's nature program. He remembers live trapping coons and possums and whatever else lurked, studying them and releasing them back into the woods. Combined with the rest of the outdoor activities, Lee found his niche. "I was Mother Nature's son."

Scott's recollections of going off to camp include being a very young boy placed on a plane (by himself) headed to Chicago on his way to the camp. (This was in the day where kids from Omaha did not worry about traveling by themselves.) Once off the plane at O'Hare, all Scott could remember about his travel through the airport were the tall, round, orange tables. Surprisingly enough, it was not until Scott was in his twenties that he remembered that his vision of these tables were, in fact, the snack bar tables at the O'Hare Airport.

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Nevertheless, Scott successfully landed at camp. Making ice cream, learning how to shoot a rifle, archery and swimming remain vivid memories for Scott. "Remember the canteen? green duffel bags? dopp kits? bunk beds? dinner time? . . . and the girls camp across the lake?"

He still remembers Larry Malashock asking him to go back a second time. Scott did go to Camp Waupaca twice . . . and each time, it was a positive learning experience . . . "I learned I positively hate camping!" he says.

Lee, on the other hand, credits his Waupaca experience for directing him to Yellowstone Park. "When I arrived at Yellowstone National Park to work, I remarked, 'It's just like a big kids' summer camp.' We lived in cabins and had three million acres of wilderness to play in. They even paid us to be there (I worked at Old Faithful in the gift shop). My Wisconsin experience in the woods made me, at age 30, feel especially comfortable in the back country of Yellowstone. I'm still here today and happy and enchanted with the forest. I owe a lot to Camp Waupaca!"

"All jokes aside," Scott says, "I thought camp was a valuable learning experience; one I wish my sons could experience." After the death of their mother, he and Lee found all those postcards they were forced to send home from camp. "Those postcards brought back very fond memories . . . of a very fortunate youth," Scott says.

Looking over his copy of his 1966 "Trails End" and the large rolled photos, Lee says, "I'm amazed at how many names and faces I actually remember."

Both Sloan "boys" are looking forward to seeing everyone at the reunion. "In fact," says Scott, "we hope to bring one of my sons to camp with us so he can experience some of the sights his father and uncle saw when we were his age."

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