

SYLVANIA

CAMPERS:

Harold Jesser

Dean Becker

Dennis Cole

Steve Hirsch

Barry Robbins

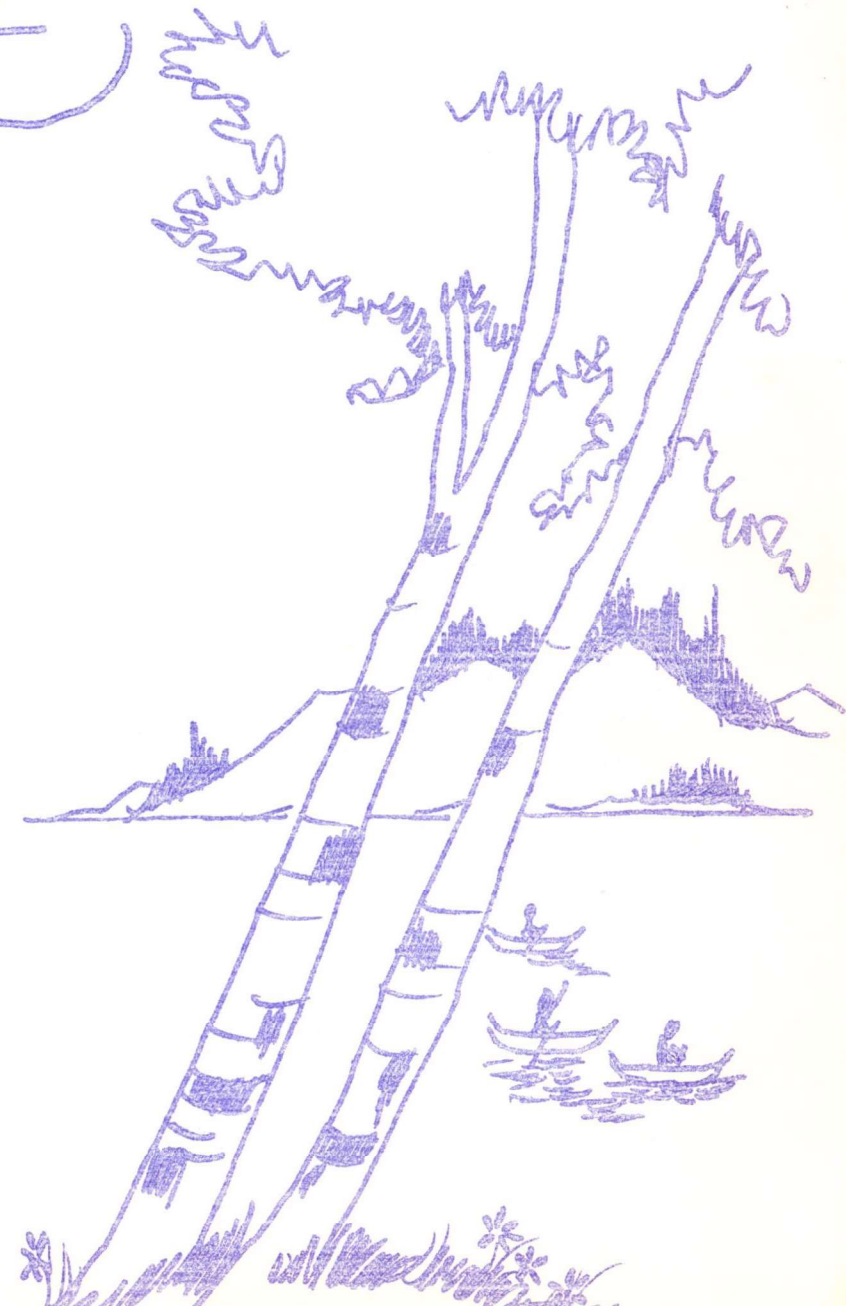
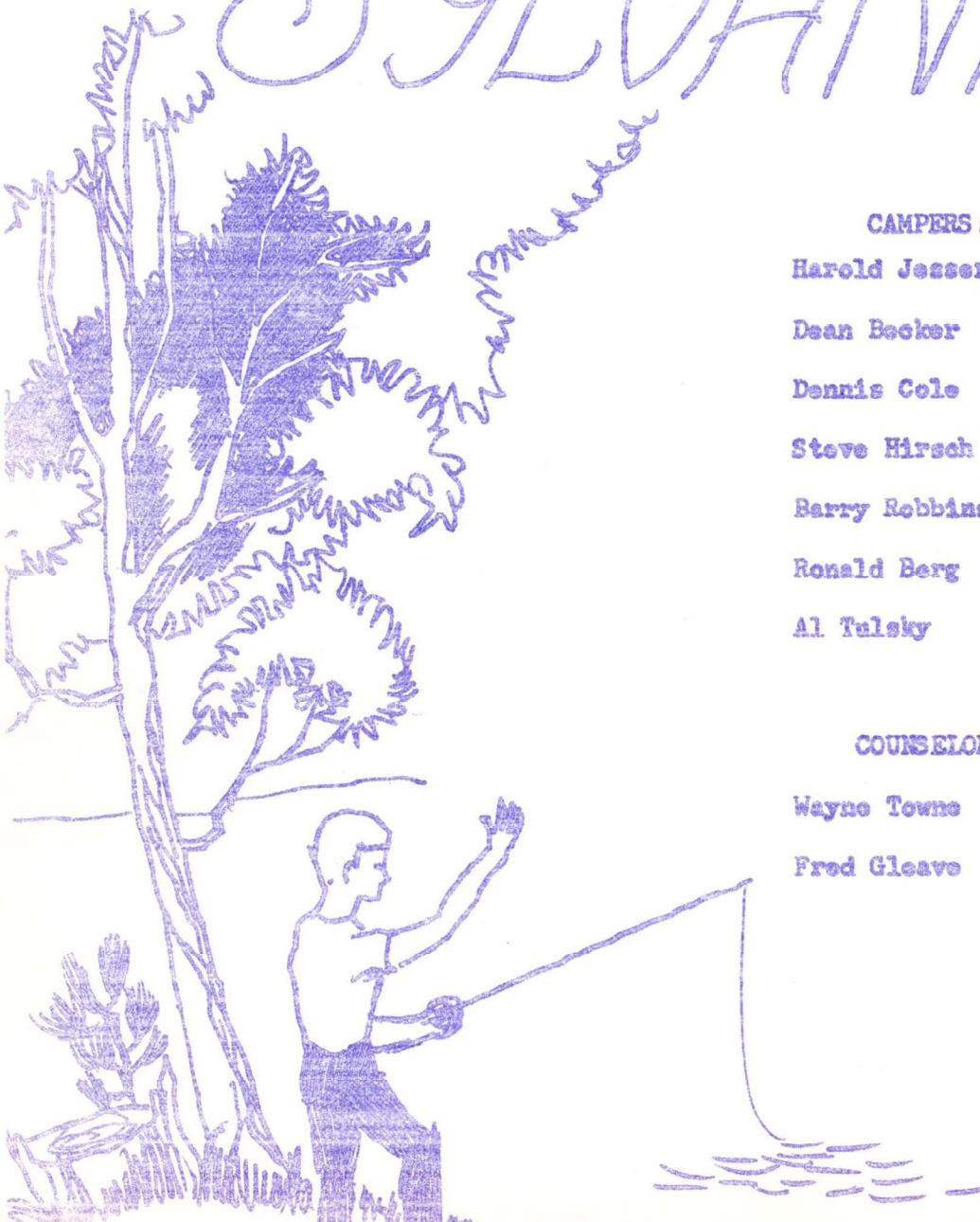
Ronald Berg

Al Talsky

COUNSELORS:

Wayne Towne

Fred Gleave





THE SYLVANIA TRIP

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Seven valiant boys and two brave counselors set forth for the wilds of Sylvania. Sylvania is a recreation area maintained by the U. S. Forest Service near Watersmeet, Michigan. The area was owned by the Fisher Body Corporation for exclusive use by their employees. Many of the lakes were never fished and much of the forest is virgin. The U. S. Forest Service bought the property, and Mrs. L. B. Johnson officially opened the area to the public in October, 1967.

We left Camp Waupaca Monday, August 11, 1969, at 10:30. The boys were Harold Jesser, Dean Becker, Dennis Cole, Steve Hirsch, Barry Robbins, Ron (Skinny) Berg, and Al Tulsy. Fred Gleave and Wayne Towne came along to guide and drive us.

At 12:30 the truck slowed and we suddenly pulled into a wayside. Wayne yelled,

Handwritten note:
A truck on the left side of the road.

"Everyone out, this thing's about ready to blow." The truck was only heating up, and the radiator was boiling. We waited until it cooled and then went on until we came to a small water hole (swamp). Using Harold Jesser's tackle box, Wayne and Fred filled the truck with (ugh) water.

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Everything went smoothly as we moved on to Eagle River. About 1:30 we stopped for lunch. Wayne gave us each a dollar, and we headed for Zempleman's. Most of us had a hamburger, malt, and a banana split. In about one hour we were on our way again.

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Our next stop at Watersmeet gave us our last look at civilization for three days. We picked up supplies and headed to the park headquarters to sign in.

Our campsite was about five miles from the road by canoe. By six o'clock our tents were up. While Ron Berg cooked, some of us fished. No one had any luck, not even Ron.

The next day, August 12, we fished and canceled the small circle. We had to portage our canoes into the various lakes. We went to Mountain Lake, East Bear Lake, West Bear Lake, Kerr Lake, High Lake, and back to our campsite on Creeked Lake. It was alot of fun.

We fished each of the lakes with no good luck. At High Lake we stopped to swim. It was really great to open your eyes under water there. The water was so clear you could see a long way.

Our campsite, named Chipmunk, really looked good to us. Dean Becker gave up his bear watch and went to bed. He even let his tent mates sleep!

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August 13. When we woke up we could hear the wind blowing in the trees. It was a very pleasant sound. We had a good breakfast and off we went, headed right into those pleasant breezes. Boy, was it rough!

We went to Thomson Ledge first. It is a giant log cabin. It was built by Thomson in the early 1930's. He wanted to show off for the ambassador from Poland who was going to visit him. The building has a full-size gym and a bathroom for each of the fifteen master-size bedrooms. There is a whole wing for servants and an overseer's house. The Polish ambassador never came, and the big building has never been used for anything. We may be the last group from camp to see it, as the forest service is going to seal it to someone who will tear it down and move it off.

Next, we went to Leon Lake. The water looked real rough so we didn't think we could go on. When Wayne and Fred came along they said we were going on. The white caps seemed to push us back faster than we were going forward. To our surprise, we did go forward.

We stopped at an unusual campsite for lunch. The rangers came along and talked 38
to us. They told us that people who were careless with their food had been having
alot of bear trouble. He told us we should always hang the packs at the end of a limb.
Everyone said, "Wayne." Our packs were hung near the trunk of a tree.

After lunch, Dennis Cole, Ron Berg, and Al Tulsy went out into their canoe, and
you guessed it, splash. The most of the afternoon, they spent drying off.

About three o'clock, we caught a wave and rode it in. All we did was steer.
Boy, that was great!

For dinner we had beef stroganoff, made by Jesser and Becker. It was great. There
was too much so we threw some in the garbage. That night, raccoons and a bear finished
it off.

August 14. Skinny dip bath time. We all had to take a bath in the lake before
we dressed for the trip back. We sat on our life preservers and tossed the soap back
and forth to one another. Nobody really wanted to get out. When we did, we took
down the tents and packed.

After checking out, we went looking for a fire tower to climb. We got lost and
never found the tower. We had lunch at a very nice, little wayside in Michigan.

At Woodruff, Wisconsin, we stopped for gas. Wayne and Fred told us to all get out and walk through town. We met them on the other side of town. There were some neat tourist stores there.

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Our next stop was at Tonahawk, Wisconsin. We stopped for one hour. There we found an old-fashioned candy store and a soda fountain that gave us giant root beer glasses for a dime.

We saw Rib Mountain on our way back. There are a lot of ski trails on it. Dinner was at the Point Club in Stevens Point. After that, we got home at 8:30. We all agree that it was a great trip.