

2018 Northern Adventure



Special Military Active Recreational Travelers

S*M*A*R*T

2018 Northern Adventure

July 3 – 31, 2018



This Journal was prepared through a collaborative effort of several members of the travel group and contains photos from many of the 44 individuals. The contents are solely for the entertainment and enjoyment of the 2018 S*M*A*R*T travel group and are not to be used for any commercial purposes.

Errors, omissions and misspellings are purely unintentional and solely our responsibility.

Introduction

This Journal captures only a few of the events and memories of the adventure. Each family will have many more stories and photos to share with family and friends.

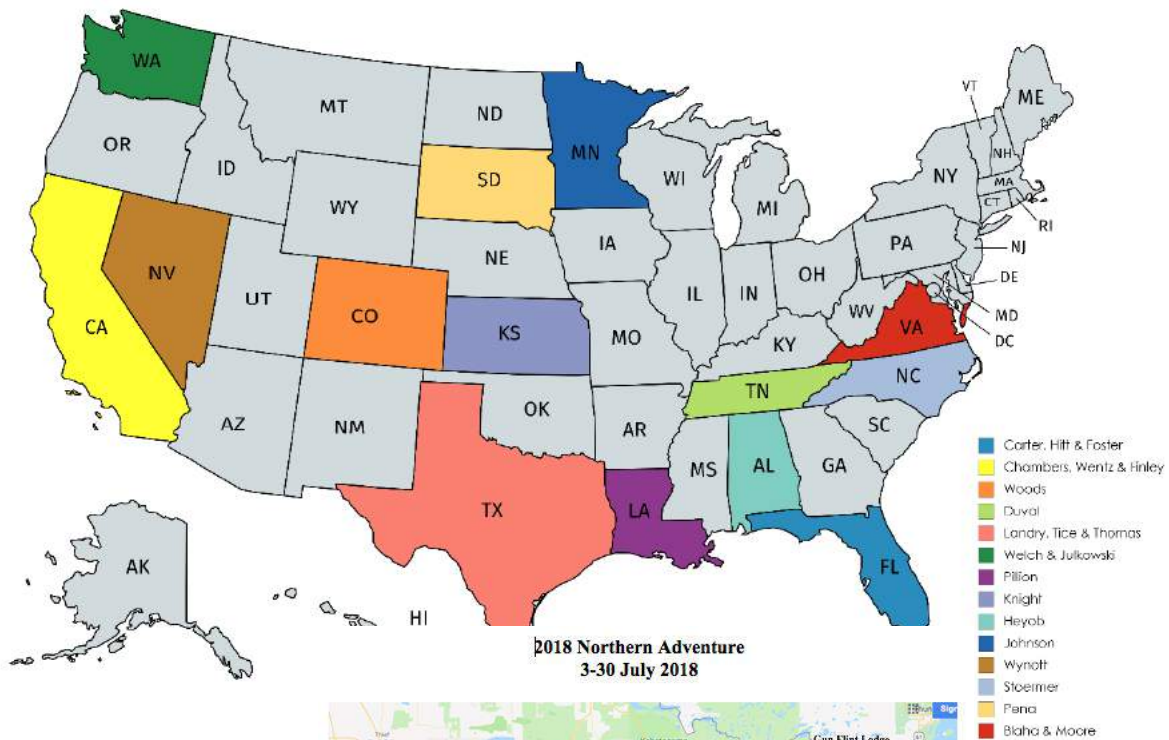
The Journal is intended to jog our memories of where we were and what we did and contains only a small portion of the thousands of photos taken. Our group assembled thousands of photos from a variety of cameras. We encourage members to utilize other technological wizardry such as Facebook, Dropbox, Flickr, etc to make more photos available to all. Please post your best photos on SMART's Facebook page.

Soon this Journal will also be placed on the SMART web site Caravan section so you can notify your friends and family where they can read it.

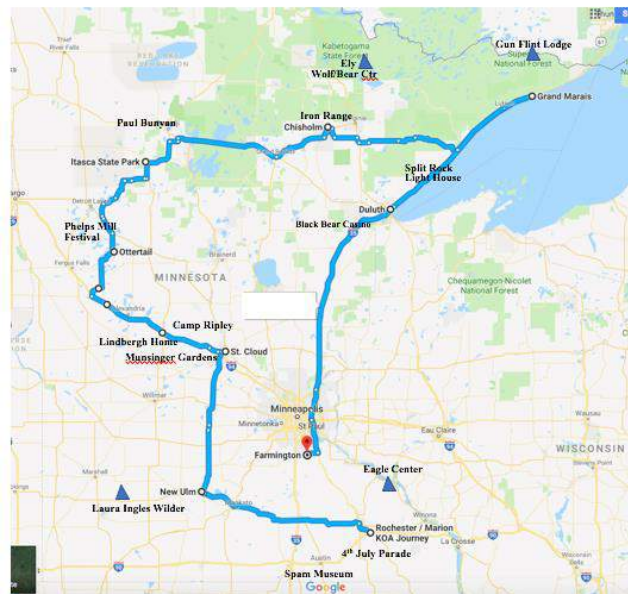
For most of us this was an unforgettable experience and one we will remember and talk about for many years. We love our country and enjoyed experiencing the wonderful State of Minnesota.

We all owe a special thanks to Wagon Masters Doug and Lila Blaha and Richard and Kitty Moore for their superb planning and execution. They have been planning this for more than a year. Their experience and familiarity with the entire region was invaluable. No one could have led us better.

We Came From Many States



Created with mapchart.net



2018 Arriving Northern Adventure

Arriving from all over the USA, 22 rigs gathered at the Rochester/Marion KOA in Rochester, Minnesota the first week in July 2018. Most of the group arrived early. After an organizational meeting where we all introduced ourselves, we went out to nearby Stewartville, MN to a Pizza Ranch for a Welcome dinner.



Before the official start of our Caravan, several members visited the Spam Museum and explore the history of this iconic meat product created in 1937. Most of us who have reached a certain age have eaten Spam as children. Many more flavor varieties are now available today.



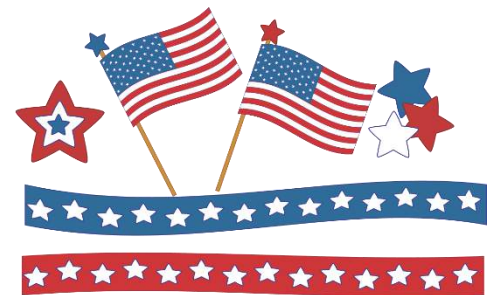
Happy 4th of July

Our celebration of our Country's Birthday started with a memorial presentation at the magnificent Soldiers Field Veterans Memorial in Rochester, MN. Wagon Master Doug Blaha began the program with an invocation and the pledge of allegiance. He then introduced our guest speaker, Command Master Sergeant, US Army Retired, Harry Kerr, who gave a very inspirational and motivational presentation. Many eyes were a bit misty before he finished.





The weather for the 4th was quite hot and steamy, but we wouldn't have missed a moment of the Memorial Service. Following the presentation, we enjoyed a picnic in the park adjacent to the Memorial. Our picnic included hamburgers, brats with all the fixings and potato salad. Our thanks to all our cooks and helpers for a great meal. But as we ate, the clouds were gathering. Just as we were almost finished, the rains arrived.





The day continued when the trolley picked us up to go down to Stewartville for the annual 4th of July Parade. Doug brought flags, poles and banners for the decoration of the trolley, all hands set to helping with the decorations. We were all amazed at the turn out for the parade, the streets were lined with people who stood and clapped as we passed by. The flags of all the services marched in front of the trolley and SMART flyers were passed out to veteran



All of the flag carriers and many of our other marchers made the whole 2.5 mile trip. It was a great finale to the 4th of July Celebration. A jam packed July 4th.



Our day began when two buses arrived to pick us all up for journey to Whitewater State Park & Visitor Center. The scenery in the Park is beautiful, lush and green. We saw the area where there was a German interment center during the war.



We continued on through Whitewater until we arrived at Lock & Dam #5 on the Mississippi River. All exited the buses to look at the locks, dam and the river.



Boarding the buses again, we continued on the next stop at Lark Toys & Carousel Ride. Many of our group took advantage of the Carousel and felt like kids again. Several members of the group also enjoyed ice cream and fudge. The Toy Museum reminded us of toys we played with as children.



Our adventures continued at the National Eagle Center, where we enjoyed an eagle presentation by Anna who introduced us to Angel. The eagles that are on display at the Center have been injured, treated, but are unable to fly and can't be released into the wild. Angel ate lunch.



After watching Angel eat lunch, we all were anxious for our turn. The buses took us across the Mississippi to Wisconsin for lunch at the Nelson Creamery. Sandwiches, chips and drinks awaited us and ice cream cones were included with lunch. Everyone sure enjoyed the ice cream which was served in very generous portions!





Unfortunately, when we began to continue our journey, it was discovered that one of the windows on the bigger bus had shattered when the bus pulled in to Nelson's Creamery. It shattered into a million little pieces and then began to fall out (and in) when the bus began to move. So a stop was required to deal with the issue. As our driver tried to tape cardboard over the broken window, he fell and cut his arm. Paramedics were called and took him to the emergency room for stitches. It was decided that the smaller bus would return to the camp ground and that those of us in the larger bus would wait for the driver to be released from the emergency room so he could drive us home. We were parked near a park and beach – and Slippery's Tavern and Restaurant. Several of us availed ourselves of comfort at Slippery's while we waited. Our thanks to the Police and Paramedics in Wabasha, MN for taking care of our drive, Rick Anderson. After a little over an hour we were back on the road to the campground.



The trolleys picked us up about 1:00 pm for a tour of Rochester and surrounding areas. We learned quite a bit about the history of Rochester, the creation and development of the Mayo Clinic and toured the new VFW Lodge building. A highlight of our tour was Assisi Heights, the convent of the Sisters of St Francis of Assisi. Many of us were amazed at the size of the Mayo Clinic buildings in Downtown Rochester, it is almost the whole city. And of course, the Corn Water Tower. The trip out to the new VFW Lodge showed us where to go for the Friday Fish Fry at the Lodge that many of us enjoyed. Hadn't been to a fish fry in years.



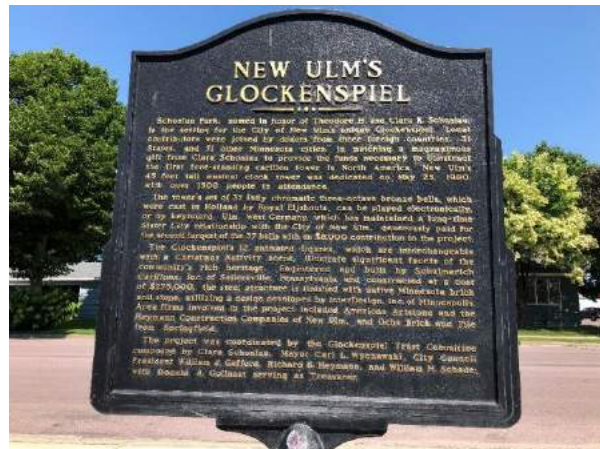
Our hosts at the Rochester/Marion KOA insisted that we gather for a group photo. Thanks to all the staff and owners for making us feel so welcome



This was a travel day as we made our way to New Ulm, MN. We were supposed to attend the Laura Ingalls Wilder program and visit the Wilder Museum, but the recent rains swamped the performance and closed the museum. All arrived in New Ulm, MN safely and that evening we enjoyed a delicious German meal at Veigel's Kaiserhoff.



With no planned events, everyone started exploring New Ulm. A must stop was the Glockenspiel, that plays several times each day. It has 37 bronze bells that were forged in Holland.



Many of us also visited the Hermann Monument which was dedicated in 1897, a project of the National Sons of Hermann Lodges.



The weather in New Ulm was hot and steamy. Several of our group found their way to the Beer Garden at Schell's Brewery Sunday afternoon. Cold beverages provided welcome refreshment.



The next morning was free, so 5 quilters and sewers from the group made their way to the three quilt shops in town to explore. We did three shops in an hour and a half and returned to camp to leave for the tour of the Schell Brewery in plenty of time. We will keep the amount spent at the shops secret for a while!

The group carpoled to the Schell's Brewery for a tour. The tour began in the Museum of Brewing where our guide related the history of the Brewery.

In 1860, German immigrant August Schell broke ground for the August Schell Brewing Company and paved the way for a 158-year-old family tradition. With five generations of Schell descendants to operate the brewery, the August Schell Brewing Company claims the title as the second-oldest brewery in the nation and the oldest brewery in Minnesota. Schell's still specializes in brewing German-style lagers. In addition to the many craft beers that Schell's produces, they also adopted the Grain Belt line of beers into the family in 2002, preserving another legendary Minnesota beer.

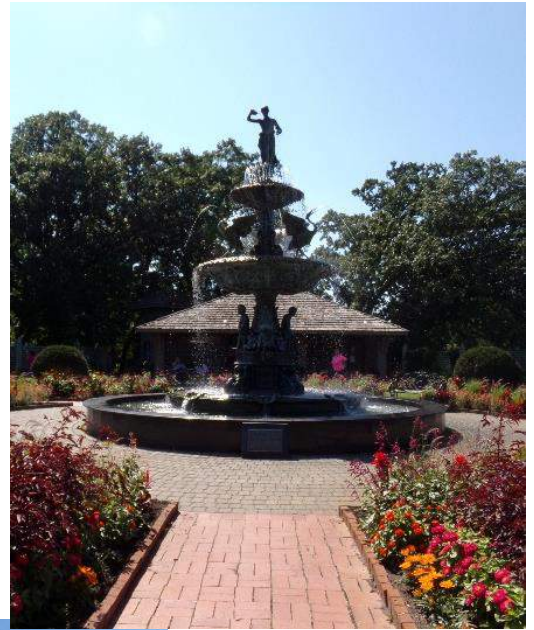
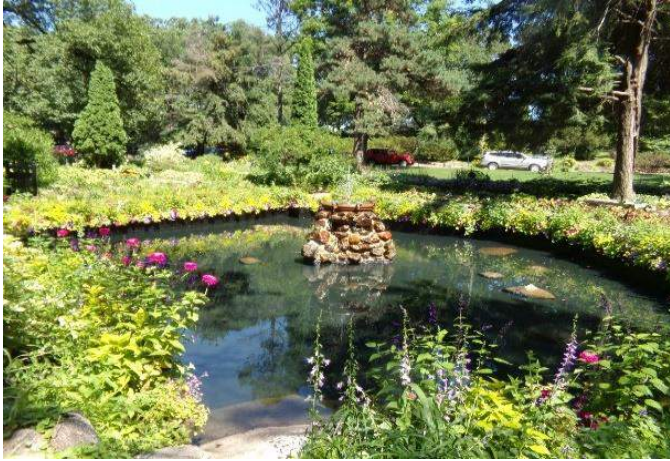


The tour ended with tasting five of the Schell's beers in the Rathskeller Tap Room. And of course, a visit to the Gift Shop.



Our visit to New Ulm, MN ended with a pancake and sausage breakfast at the Fairgrounds Campground prepared by our Wagon Master, Doug, and Asst. Wagon Master, Richard, and helpers. This prepared the well fed groups to depart from New Ulm and travel to Clearwater RV Park and the St Cloud/Clearwater area.

After arriving at the RV Park in Clearwater, many of our group carpooled to the Munsinger/Clemens Gardens in St Cloud, MN, along the Mississippi River. The Munsinger Gardens feature winding rock-lined paths, ponds and fountains with thousands of annual bedding plants and perennials. Resident peacocks strutted for visitors and the wishing well and gazebo were enjoyable stops in this more informal garden. The Clemens Gardens are the much more formal garden, featuring five distinctly different settings. The Virginia Clemens Rose Garden features over 1,000 roses and the Janney Crane Fountain. The 24-foot tall Renaissance Fountain with Cranes and the Clemens Memorial Dome, along with the gift shop, are represented in the Rest Area Garden. The Formal Garden, with its uniform design, features the Windsor Court Fountain. The White Garden, is modeled after the White Garden in Sissinghurst Castle in Kent, England. Cold hardy perennials and the replica Pre-Civil War Georgian Fountain are featured in the Perennial Garden. The Treillage Garden, features a 100-foot cast-iron arbor dome and the Three Graces Fountain.



Camp Ripley Visit – From Doug Blaha’s Journal

This morning we car-pooled 57 miles to Camp Ripley near Little Falls, MN. A very large old base for National Guard training. Impressive stone fence around the camp and a very impressive main gate.



We assembled in the Environmental Center and spent lots of time admiring the taxidermy in one large room...what seems to be every specie of fish, animal and bird found in Minnesota. The guide lists 137 birds, 48 waterfowl, 5 reptiles, 7 fish, and 56 mammals. Incredible displays.



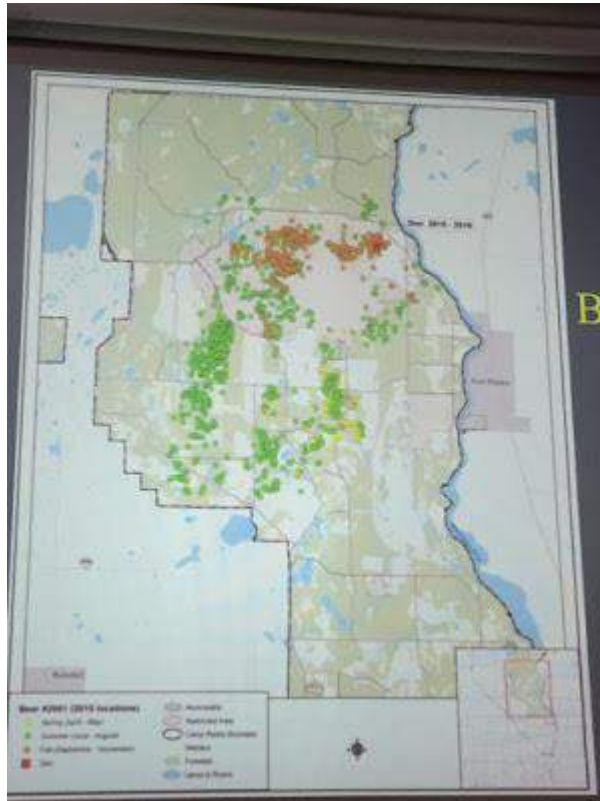


Just one wall...the whole room was filled.

Trumpeter swans



Ripley has a full time Animal biologist that is responsible for managing, researching and controlling the animal population over 19 square miles, 53,000 acres from Bears and wolves to bats. Wonderful slide show and briefing.



This is the movements of one black bear within the confines of Ripley. The color code represents the various times of year.

Next we toured the base in an Army bus for about an hour and then had lunch at the command dining facility. \$7.75 for all one could eat. Salisbury steak, salad bars etc. Great meal.

It was a very hot and muggy day in the 90's F again. When we returned to our campground multiple folks lost electrical power...old CG too many electrical loads. Local Heat Advisory in effect.

In spite of the heat and loss of power everyone seems to be really enjoying themselves.



[Tom Wentz](#) is at [St Cloud Clearwater Rv Park](#).
[July 11 at 8:39 PM](#) · [Clearwater](#) ·

Today we left early at 8:30 in the morning and drove to Camp Ripley which is a national guard training camp is comprised 53000 Acres one side is bordered on the Mississippi River which provides 8 miles of uninhabited area along the river the longest stretch on the river. Our first stop was at the environmental building where we had a briefing on all the different types of animals on the camp that are tracked to ensure that the training activities don't hurt the wild life. They have quite an extensive collection of mounted animals native to Minnesota, part of the collection came from a collector that he donated them to him. After the environmental briefing we took a bus tour of the camp with all the training areas the vehicle maintenance areas the recreation area ending up at the dining hall or we had a nice lunch. After lunch we drove over to the museum which was interesting focused on Military accomplishments in Minnesota during all the phases of the different Wars. Have pictures of the environmental display and the museum and maybe one or two of the base it was hard to take pictures out the bus window. One of the attached pictures is of rail car which is called a 40 and 8 car they were used during the war in France to haul either 8 horses or 40 troops. France in appreciation of what we did for them during the war sent one of these cars packed with memorabilia from France to each state in the United States as a gesture of appreciation for what we did for them

On Thursday, the group carpoled to South Little Falls, MN. To tour the childhood home of Charles A Lindbergh at 1620 Lindbergh Drive S. The famous aviator lived in Minnesota between five-weeks-old and eighteen. We toured the fully furnished home which highlights Lindbergh's youth. Charles Lindbergh is best known as an international hero for completing the first solo, nonstop flight between Ne York City and Paris. The son of C.A. Lindbergh, lawyer and Congressman, and Evangeline L.L. Lindbergh, chemistry teacher, Lindbergh was raised in Little Falls, MN on a farm on the western banks of the Mississippi River. As you tour, imagine the Lindbergh family living there between 1885 and 1920.

The site has a museum with interactive exhibits covering Lindbergh's whole life, operated by the Minnesota Historical Society. The Charles A Lindbergh is located across the street from the Lindbergh Home and is comprised of over 400 acres, 93 of which are from the original Lindbergh farm.

The tour and museum were very interesting, showing the kitchen, where we tasted Lindbergh's favorite cookie, and the screened porch where he slept. The museum had numerous exhibits that showed various stage of Lindbergh's life, along with his wife, Anne Morrow Lindbergh.





The next day was a travel day as we traveled in groups to Ottertail, MN to the Thumper Ponds Campground. All arrived and set up in this great campground. The only problem was the heat and humidity as there was no shade.

Then we departed for a dinner at the Ottertail Supper Club. Prime Rib, Sirloin Steak or Walleye were featured on the menu. We enjoyed a delicious meal and great fellowship.



On Saturday afternoon, we carpoled to the Phelps Mill Festival, a craft festival and local food. At first the parking seemed far from the festival, but turned out to be quite comfortable and free. The Lions Club provided wagons with padded seats pulled by large tractors. It made it easy to get to the festival. A large number of arts and craft vendors were offering their wares for sale. Food was available from local clubs and school groups. A magician was entertaining in the amphitheatre.



On Sunday, we traveled in groups to Itasca State Park, Park Rapids, MN. With only a few missed turns, we all arrived safely at the Pine Ridge Campground, Spruce Loop. Our usual social hour included pulled turkey sandwiches provided by our Wagon Master, Doug, and Asst. Wagon Master, Richard, and their wives, Lila and Kitty. The rolls were baked by the bakery in Ottertail and made the sandwiches extra good.

Established in 1891, Itasca is Minnesota's oldest state park. Today, the park totals more than 32,000 acres and includes more than 100 lakes. Walk across the mighty Mississippi as it starts its winding journey 2,552 miles to the Gulf of Mexico. Stand under towering pines and visit landmarks of centuries gone by throughout the park.

On our first evening at Itasca, there was a special program at the Douglas Lodge. A performance by Unpolished, a four-piece group playing an eclectic mix of roots, Americana and Bluegrass

music on Bass, Guitar, Mandolin and Banjo. Several members of our caravan group took our chairs and sat on the front lawn of the Lodge to listen. Very enjoyable.



The next day nothing was scheduled until noon, so some of us headed to the Headwaters of the Mississippi River. The great River flows out of Lake Itasca on its way north to Bemidji and then east and south on its way to New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico. At the Headwaters the water is narrow enough that you can walk across and wade and splash in the waters, which are surprisingly warm.





After our morning of exploration and playing in the headwaters, we met at the Douglas Lodge for a lunch with choices of sandwiches and blue gill baskets.



Next following our delicious lunch, we made our way down to the boat dock behind the lodge for a Lake Cruise on Lake Itasca aboard a large cruise ship brought up from Louisiana. We enjoyed watching eagles circle and dive and spotted Osprey fishing too.



On Tuesday, some of our group carpoled with Doug and Lila to Bemidji to meet Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox. Many of us also found wonderful restaurants and grocery stores in Bemidji.



On Wednesday, July 18, we bid farewell to Itasca State Park and began to travel in groups to Chisholm, MN in the Iron Belt. To start our misadventures that day, the Wynotts managed to lock themselves out of both their car and 5th wheel. So they had to stay behind as the rest of the group traveled until a locksmith could get them back into their vehicles. Then along the way, a time blew on the Tice's tow car. The rest of the group stopped with them and helped them change the tire to the spare. The Tail Gunner sent Group 3 on without the Tices and with Anne Heyob. Richard and the Woods caravanned with the Tices and arrived safely in Chisholm. The Wynotts got unlocked and traveled by themselves, arriving just before the 6:00 pm delayed Happy Hour. On Thursday, we were to visit the Minnesota Mining Museum, Discovery Center and Trolley Tour. The Mining Museum was next door to our campground, so Doug led us there only to find out that we were supposed to be at the Discovery Center instead. Most of us had started taking pictures of all the large equipment, but we had to jump back into the vehicles and drive a couple of miles to the Discovery Center. We began the tour of the Center with displays of geology and anthropology and dinosaurs.



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After touring the Discovery Center, we went back by the entrance to board the Trolley for a ride down into the mine to the site of a reconstructed “Location.” Locations were towns with boarding houses for the miners and homes for miners with families. Rail lines connected the Locations to bring the ore out of the mines. The mine owners wanted their workers to be close to the mining operation.



Thursday evening was a pot luck dinner back at the campground. Naturally, there was way too much food, but all of it was delicious. No one went away hungry! And everyone was so busy eating that only one took any pictures.



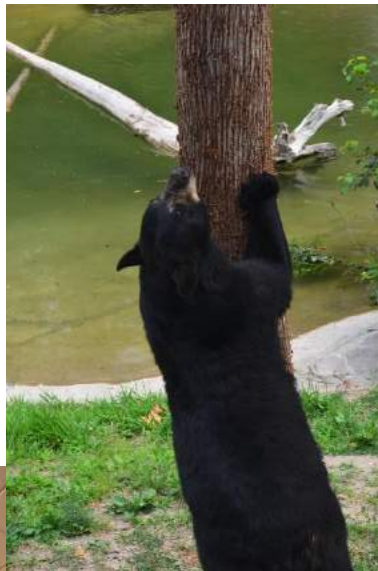
On Friday, we carpoled to Ely, MN, to visit the International Wolf Reserve and the North American Bear Center.

When we arrived at the International Wolf Reserve we were escorted into an auditorium for a presentation by a member of the staff. She explained the different types of wolves. Wolves exist in many different countries throughout the world. They are basically a pack animal, traveling in family groups. The wolves in the Reserve, like in other animal reserves, are those who were injured or too aculturated to humans and could not be released into the wild. Human have varied reactions to wolves, from viewing them as good and natural, to viewing them as bad or evil. Battles have been fought between cattlemen and wolf lovers.





After everyone refreshed themselves with lunch in downtown Ely, we gathered at the North American Bear Center. Since the sky was darkening and a storm was approaching, after a short introduction we were encouraged to see the outside part of the tour first. We walked to the outdoor areas where the bears habitats were located. The bears that are resident there each have their own enclosure and are rotated to the larger acreage where they can roam free. First, we met Ted, the oldest bear in the Center at age 21. He loves to come out and greet visitors because he knows he will get peanuts. Then we met the female bears Tasha a younger bear and Holly the older dominant bear. Last, we met Lucky.



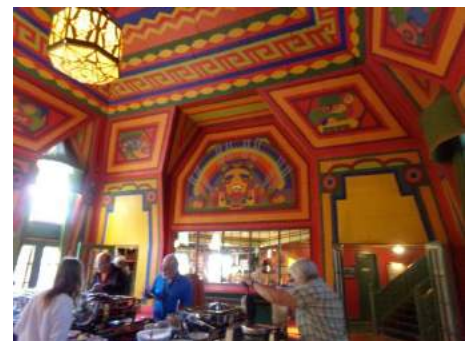
Saturday was another travel day as we departed from Chisholm and journeyed to Grand Marais, MN. What a beautiful sight on the banks of Lake Superior. All arrived safely and settled into the campground. A few rigs need to move to different sites tomorrow. Our social hour was very special as we enjoyed fresh corn on the cob donated by friends of Richard and Kitty Moore.

On Sunday morning, we carpooled to the Nanaboujou Lodge for Sunday brunch. What a magnificent and breath-taking site on the banks of Lake Superior. The Lodge is painted inside and out in patterns of the Cree Indiana Tribe. Beautiful bright luscious colors! And the brunch was wonderful, so many great things to eat from cedar planked salmon to luscious bread pudding.

Naniiboujou, the Cree Indian God of the outdoors, is a powerful, genial, and friendly spirit.

“Naniboujou is why the beaver’s tail is flat, why the deer carries a white flag why the skunk never lets go till he has counted five...and why the woodpecker has a splotch of red...”

You say a little prayer to Naniboujou, so he will lead you to game and give safe return from the hunting. You throw a pinch of tobacco in the fire to please Naniboujou, so that the fish will come to the hook. You douse the campfire with water before you quit camp, because the woods belong to Naniboujou.





Today, Tuesday, July 24, we boarded a great big bus for a trip to historic Gun Flint Trail Lodge that has been in operation since year round since 1930. Every season offers a different set of experiences at Gunflint but there are some things that never change. The Kerfoot family has been here for 3 generations. One of the reasons they have stayed is that everyone in the family truly enjoys welcoming guests to the Northwoods. They like to help you explore our forest and find those places that are special. Bruce and Sue still lead the business and enjoy talking with guests and planning excursions for them. After a leisurely bus ride, we arrived at the Lodge and lake and gathered to take a group photo. It is a beautiful setting with piers on the lake in front of the Lodge. We looked around, tested the water (cold) and looked through inside of the Lodge and Gift Shop. A lunch was served in the dining room for our group featuring sandwiches and cookies. After lunch, we wandered around the Lodge some more and then boarded the bus for a return to Grand Marais. What a beautiful site for a Lodge.





Wednesday morning we were treated to a Continental Breakfast in the Pavilion at the campground. Our Wagon Masters and helpers treated us to hot oatmeal with ice cream, muffins, bananas and orange juice. Could even make one learn to love oatmeal!



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While we were staying in Grand Marais we have two free days to explore as we chose. Some went exploring, some went to Canada, some went to State Parks, some went zip lining, some went to see a Light House. Here are pictures of some of the adventures that were found.





Eight brave and adventurous members of the caravan, Ron and Marlene Chambers, Hank and Brenda Landry, Paul and Melody Thomas and Richard and Brenda Hitt, went on a private zip line tour over the tree tops at Gunflint Lodge. There were 8 stations with the longest line being over 750 feet. It was the first time for several of the group. The views of the lakes and surrounding area, including across the Canadian border were spectacular. It was a thrilling and unforgettable experience for all.



On Wednesday afternoon, many members carpoled with Doug to see Split Rock Lighthouse, a must see destination. Split Rock Lighthouse was built in response to the great loss of ships during the famous [Mataafa Storm](#) of 1905, in which 29 ships were lost on Lake Superior.^[4] One of these shipwrecks, the [Madeira](#), is located just north of the lighthouse.

It is built on a 133-foot (41 m) sheer cliff eroded by wave action from a [diabase sill](#) containing [inclusions](#) of [anorthosite](#).^[5] The octagonal building is a steel-framed brick structure with concrete trim on a concrete foundation set into the rock of the cliff.^[4] It is topped with a large, steel lantern which features a third order, bi-valve type [Fresnel lens](#) manufactured by Barbier, Bernard and Turenne Company in Paris, France. The lens is rotated by an elaborate clockwork mechanism that is powered by weights running down the center of the tower which are then reset by cranking them back to the top.^[6] When completed, the lighthouse was lit with an incandescent oil vapor lamp that burned kerosene.



In order to have our Memory Book printed to hand out to all participants on the last day, it is necessary to send the document by email to a Printing Company in St Paul to be printed over the weekend. As a result, we have reached the “printing deadline” and cannot fully describe the last two events in our Adventure,

Arriving at Indian Point Campground in Duluth, MN on Thursday July 26th, our first event is the famous Seafood Buffet at the Black Bear Casino just 15 miles away. This buffet advertised as the best in Minnesota, features an unbelievable array of seafood from oysters, scallops, shrimp and all you can eat crab legs.

On Friday, July 27th, we will board a tour bus for a 4 hour “Duluth Experience” tour of the historic Duluth area and a visit to the Railroad and Immigrant Museums. We will enjoy the Skyline Parkway. This National Scenic Byway provides spectacular views of modern-day Duluth, the Duluth-Superior Harbor, and the beautiful St. Louis River Estuary. Unfortunately, the Glensheen Mansion is not open on our tour date.

The last leg of our Northern Adventure returns us to southern Minnesota and the Twin Cities area of Minneapolis and St Paul. Our last campground is at the Dakota County Fair Grounds in Farmington, MN, strategically located about 20 miles from the Mall of America. On Sunday, we will have an all-day bus tour of both cities with a very enthusiastic, experienced tour guide, Donna Loehrer.

Our Farewell Dinner on Monday, July 30th is at Doolittles Woodfire Grill in Eagan, MN features grilled chicken, ribs and top sirloin.



**YA SURE YOUBETCHA
(MINNESOTA NICE)**

**Caravans keep you on the run
So come along and have some fun.
Come to where the waters flow,
Everything is green, and ya sure youbetcha
The corn does grow.
If you want to taste something yummy,
Come to the Spam Museum and we will
Put some in your tummy.
24 flavors so good to eat, you gotta admit
Minnesota Spam just can't be beat.
A carousel ride can be lots of fun,
Age doesn't matter it's for everyone.
The Veteran's Memorial is a sight to see,
Where names inscribed gave their lives for you and me.
A picnic to follow with good food and friends,
Just wait now 'cuz that's not where it ends.
A parade with lots of floats and more,
Ours had music and Veteran's galore.
A boat cruise you could hardly resist,
So hop aboard or you'll be missed.
The air was cool and the company was great,
There were lots of loons, pelicans and eagles along the route to appreciate.
There were lots of places and good food to eat,
Oh my goodness how did that extra few pounds get on my seat??!!
Don't forget our quirky little sayings of "ya sure youbetcha and Uffda too,
'cuz if you do, these Minnesotans will come looking for you.
A huge thank you to our wagon master Doug for all of your planning,
reserving places to see and eat.
All of us think you are one heck of a guy who just can't be beat!!
A thank you too to our tail gunner Richard, who also is quite a guy.
He took care of all the leaders, tweeners and parking spots galore,
And without you Richard, things probably would have been in a big uproar.
Now our journey is coming to an end,
God's blessings and safety to you all and thanks for becoming our friend.**

**Mary Johnson
7/23/18**

#1 Doug and Lila Blaha



Doug and Lila Blaha were born and raised in Minnesota and met at the U of M. Doug spent 31 years in the U.S. Navy. Doug served aboard six nuclear submarines. They are blessed with four grown children and nine grandchildren. The first great grandchild is arriving in January. Moving to Virginia nine times over the past 57 years, Virginia has become their retirement home. They have been SMART members since 2004 and this is their eighth caravan.

#2 Richard and Kitty Moore



Richard and Kitty Moore live in Gloucester, VA. Richard enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served for 22 years, then worked another 20 years in Submarine Design. Now he is a certificated Recreational Pilot and manages a local neighborhood hunt club. Kitty grew up in New Market New Hampshire. She retired from working as a professional nanny and now writes short stories of her childhood growing up in NH. Her stories are published in the Gloucester newspaper. Between them, they have a daughters and family in NH, in NC, in VA and KS. Richard and Kitty have been RV'ing since 2002. They are on the road 3 – 5 months every year.

#3 Allen and Judy Carter



Allen was in the Air Force and the Air National Guard for 21 years. He was a school business administrator and sod farmer among other things. Judy was a teacher of the deaf, special ed and school administrator. They have been married 36 years have 2 children between them and a total of 6. They have 5 grandchildren, the youngest just graduated HS, 2 just graduated college, one still in college and one in the marines. They live in LaBelle, FL, spend summers traveling with great friends in SMART and visiting home in NJ.

#4 Ron and Marlene Chambers



Ron and Marlene live in Denair CA. They have been together 7 years and married for 1 creating a blended family. They celebrated their first wedding anniversary during this trip on July 4 in Rochester. Ron served in the US Air Force for 20 years, and they worked 14 years in the US Postal Service. Marlene worked for City & County government in various clerical and accounting positions for over 30 years. Ron loves NASCAR races and Marlene enjoys quilting, genealogy and gardening.

#5 Robert and Joy Duvall

Robert and Joy, married for 47 years, reside in Chattanooga, TN. They have been RVing since 2002 and SMART members since 2010. They both grew up in Mississippi. Robert served 32 years service in the Navy, serving a tour in Viet Nam as a shipboard engineer, and in TN in administration. He continued in the reserves while working for the TVA. Joy worked in Personnel Admin, retail and shop ownership. They have 3 children, 4 grandchildren living close by. Joy creates southwest jewelry and Robert volunteers on a WWII combat ship memorial, the LST 325.

#6 Richard and Brenda Hitt

Richard and Brenda joined SMART in 2015. Their first caravan was the Canadian Maritime Provinces. After the Northern Adventure, they are looking forward to the balloon festival and The Mighty 5 and the next Alaska trips. They have been wandering in their motorhome with their shelties, Piper and Timmy, since 2000. They enjoy boating, scuba diving, skiing, golf, biking, hiking, and discovering new places and making new friends. Richard served as a transportation officer in the US Army Reserve landing craft unit and retired from a 40 year law practice. Brenda retired from a 34 year career as a hospital pharmacist.

#7 Hank and Brenda Landry

Hank and Brenda are from Harlingen TX. Hank is a 32- year Navy veteran and Brenda has retired from her bookkeeping business. They enjoy traveling to see the country and visting family.

#8 Richard and Joan Tice

Richard and Joan grew up in small towns in Iowa. After Richard retired from the US Air Force, they settled in San Antonio, TX. Richard spent 26 years in the military. Joan was a stay at home Mom and later became a Registered Nurse. They have 3 grandchildren. They have been RVing for 10 years and this is their 5th SMART caravan and have made many friends from all over America the Beautiful thanks to the camaraderie of SMART.

#9 James and Fay Welsch

Jim and Fay Welsch live in Bremerton, WA. Jim served in the Navy for 8 years, then attended Memphis State University and graduated BSET Cum Laude 1977 then he developed and taught Sub sailors on Trident Systems. In 1984 he returned to college, getting a Masters in Teaching, taught junior high, and finally retired in 2014. Fay worked as an LPN for 47 years before retiring in 2014. They have two children and two grandchildren.

#10 Bob and Arla Pillion

Bob and Arla Pillion met in 1994, married in 1995 and started RVing in 2012. Their home is in Lafayette LA. Bob joined the Navy after high school and served for 4 years, was released and started college where he joined the USNR local unit as an instructor. Later he joined the US Army for flight school. He served in Viet Nam, Carolina and Germany. And finished in the USAR. His service totaled 35 years. Bob finished his flying career flying helicopters in the Gulf of Mexico for the oil industry until 2004. Arla went to Capitol School of Nursing in Washington DC and became an RN. She worked in various hospitals across the country

#11 Bob and Kay Knight

Bob and Kay Knight live in Hutchinson, KS. They have two children, seven grandchildren and are expecting their first great grandchild in August. Bob served in the US Navy for 22 years and worked for the FAA for 20 years, retiring on Christmas Eve 2005. Kay worked as a seamstress at a company making church pew cushions. Bob and Kay have been camping for over 20 years and joined SMART in 2007. They have caravanned to Albuquerque NM, Alaska, and this trip. They have spent most of the past four years working as guards in the oil fields of Texas and New Mexico but have stopped this due to health issues.

#12 Anne Heyob

Anne's husband Bob retired from the Airforce and as a widow she has been able to continue to enjoy SMART. This is her 5th caravan. Anne is from Huntsville AL but now lives on Lake Guntersville. She has 2 children, twin grandsons and 2 step grandchildren in Huntsville, and 2 step daughters and 3 step granddaughters in Warner Robins, GA. Anne was an accountant for a large construction company and in retirement she enjoys reading, playing cards and traveling.

#13 Paul and Melody Thomas

Melody & Paul Thomas are originally from Long Island, NY. Melody served 31 years in the Army Reserve and was mobilized 4 times, the last in 2005 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. She and Paul are celebrating their 47th wedding anniversary this year. They began camping when their first child was born. Starting with stays in lean-tos on the hiking trails, then moving into tents, upgrading to pop-ups, and finally to 5th wheels, they have been camping for more than 37 years. Melody & Paul retired and hit the road full-time in 2013 with their dog, Bonnie, and cat, Sheba. They have 2 children and three grandchildren.

#14 Terry and Mary Johnson

Terry and Mary Johnson live in North St. Paul, MN. Terry retired from the US Navy as a tradesman who never went to sea. Mary went to the U of M for Medical Secretary degree. She worked for more than 40 years as a Med Sec, Receptionist, Medical Coder and office manager. They have 2 sons, 1 daughter and 6 grandchildren. This is their 3rd caravan and they enjoy traveling and meeting new people.

#15 Barry and Donna Wynott

Berry was a traveling Air Force brat and landed in Carson City, NV. He spent 4 years in the Air Force with stops in Utapo, Thailand, and Barksdale AFB. Barry has been and still is in the printing business. Donna grew up in Las Vegas, NV, moving to Carson City just in time to meet the love of her life. Donna retired from the state of Nevada. Barry and Donna have been an item for over 23 years. Between them they have 4 children and 5 grandchildren. They enjoy RVING and have been SMART members for 3 years. They reside in Dayton, NV, near Carson City.

#16 Tom and Sue Wentz

Tom and Sue live in Rancho Cordova, CA. Tom grew up in Milford Center, OH and served 30 years in the USAF. He then spent 13 years in the automotive industry. Sue grew up in Taunton MA. She was an elementary school teacher. They enjoy traveling and spending time with the family. They have 2 children, 4 granddaughters and 7 great grandchildren. Sue enjoys watching the Boston Red Sox and the New England Patriots and playing bingo. Tom enjoys his community activities when they are home. They have a calico cat Callie, that travels with them.

#17 Dave and Jan Woods

David and Jan woods have been in SMART for less than a year and this is their first caravan. David was in the Army in 1969 and 1970 serving as a computer programmer in Long Binh, Viet Nam. Both Dave and Jan grew up in Indiana but met in Colorado in 1974, were soon married and still call Colorado home. They have 1 son and two grandchildren. David worked in data processing until retirement. Jan started in accounting but followed her passion and became an educator in theater costume design and construction.

#18 Ed and Conny Stoermer

Ed and Connie Stoermer have been married 51 years and live in New Bern, NC. This is their 2nd SMART caravan and they have enjoyed both of them. Ed was in the Navy for 22 years. He worked as a Hard Hat diver and retired as an E8. He then continued working for a diving company as a safety officer. Connie worked as a LPN for 29 years with the VA. They have 2 daughters, 3 grandchildren. While they were stationed in Gitmo, Connie joined Beta Sigme Phi, a social sorority, and is still active in it. Ed enjoys gardening.

#19 Stephen and Dianne Pena

Steve was a Navy brat, spent 30 years in the Navy & Navy Reserve before retiring. Diane was born and raised in Arkansas, moved to Memphis, TN after completing computer courses. They met at Memphis USO. They have been married 47 years and Steve retired from Lockheed in 2010 after 24 years and Diane retired from data processing after 40 years. They are going into their 7th year as full timers and love saying "Home is where we parak it." The yorkies, Yoda and Obi Wan, travel with them and are the fur kids.

#20 Ted and Jan Foster

Ted and Jan Foster live in Ocala, FL in a 55+ community called "on Top of the World". They met and married in Okinawa, Japan where ted was stationed at White Beach with UDT21Seal2 and Jan was teaching with DODODS. Ted retired after 20 years of Navy service and then taught high school Navy ROTC in Tennessee. Jan worked as a teacher, tour guide, small business owner and Fraud Investigator. After retirement they were campground workers for 6 seasons in Colorado, Nova Scotia, Arizona and Michigan. They have 3 children and two grandchildren. Ted enjoys golf and Jan is a bead weaver. Follow their adventures at: <http://rockytopramblers.blogspot.com/> <http://beadsbaublesandbacelets.blogspot.com/>

#21 Ed and Charlene Julowski



Ed and Charlene Julowski live in West Richland, WA. Ed served in the US Marine Corps for 30 years, worked for computer science Corp. for 9 years in San Diego, CA, then 10 years for Battle National Laboratories for 10 years. Charlene worked with IBM computers. Ed has 4 sons in Minnesota. He volunteered with Habitat for Humanity building homes for 10 years.

#22 Donald Finley



Donald H Finley born in 1935 in Lockport, NY (Buffalo/Niagara Falls area). He Dropped out of the 10th grade in 1953 and “bummed” around the US in a 1946 Ford, earning money along the way, including pickin’ cotton in AZ. Completely broke in San Diego, he joined the USMC and was assigned to the Korean theater of operations immediately after boot camp. During the Viet Nam War he was selected for a Warrant Officer program. He purchased a home in Carlsbad Ca in 1976 and still considers it his home base. He retired in 1981 after 28 years of service, resumed his continuing education, and worked in various jobs working for the Navy, The City of Carlsbad, Snap-on Tools and teaching in California schools. After retiring in 2001 he resumed “bumming” around in his truck camper.