

Summer Camp 1974

by WILL FREDREGILL

During the winter of 1973-74 with the energy crunch being felt by all, the forestry department sought a location for camp nearer to Ames than those previously selected by the department. After much searching and negotiating, they selected the University of Wisconsin's Civil Engineering camp near Cable, Wisconsin as the site of ISU's 1974 forestry summer camp. Located in the Chequamegon National Forest, it had originally been a CCC camp but was eventually purchased and improved by the University of Wisconsin for their engineers, although it had remained idle for a few years prior to ISU's arrival.

Upon reaching the camp, the 43 Iowa State students in attendance found a very pleasant setting: several metal barracks, maintenance buildings and dining hall surrounding a "central campus" type lawn, all overlooking peaceful Taylor Lake which abounded with granddaddy bass and monstrous muskies. The forests of the area were diverse, dominated by the northern hardwood and aspen-paper birch types, with red and jack pine, spruce, fir and swamp conifers also present.

Dr. George Thomson, the camp director, was joined on the staff by Dr. Fred Hopkins, Ole Helgerson, and last but by no means least, Dorothy, the camp cook.

The courses of study at camp included forest ecology, forest resource measurements, wood

utilization and multiple use operations. In forest ecology, taught by Mr. Helgerson, students became acquainted with basic concepts of forest soils, dendrology, forest biology and silviculture. This course took the group to Rhinelander, Wisconsin to visit the genetics research lab of the U.S. Forest Service. While enroute students toured stands owned by Owens-Illinois and the Forest Service to learn first hand some of the hows and whys of forest management.

In forest measurements, with Dr. Thomson in charge, students ran head-on into elementary surveying, mapping, photogrammetry, timber cruising and many related topics. Having surveyed and cruised, the campers will always recall fondly those pleasant, carefree summer days when their only worry was to make sure that their field book came out right and to keep a Jacob's staff ready to pommel any giant-sized mosquito who might be trying to chew off an arm or leg.

Field trips in wood utilization, handled by Dr. Hopkins, took the troops on many journeys around Wisconsin and into adjacent states. In Duluth, students observed hardboard production at a Superwood Corporation plant and viewed plywood production in Bessemer, Michigan at the Ironwood Products plant. Students also visited the Flambeau Paper Company in Park Falls, Wisconsin, various logging operations and sawmills around the state,



and the Koppers Preservation plant.

In multiple use operations, the varied field trips led the forester to the Apostle Islands area on Lake Superior where they talked with a Bureau of Indian Affairs official. A National Park Service naturalist told of the Apostle Islands and the creation of a National Lakeshore. Iowa Staters toured surrounding areas of Hayward with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources official, including a forester, hydrologist, wildlife specialist and a landscape architect. An assistant district ranger of the Forest Service showed students a few of the many problems, accomplishments, and challenges which the organization faces. The group accompanied a National Park Service official to points of interest on the St. Croix River and Nemekogan River as he informed them of land acquisition, development and bureaucratic problems of the federal river system projects and the Park Service. Students also visited with industrial foresters and learned the story behind the development of the plush Mount Telemark area from some of the people involved in its design and creation.

Camp was by no means all work and no play, however. The excellent facilities at Taylor Lake included a tournament pool table and horseshoe court, which often saw Dr. G. W. "Killer" Thomson and son demolish many a foe. Taylor Lake was often enjoyed as the "old swimmin' hole" by students who found a cool dip to be a welcome treat after a long hot day in the woods. A skilled few found success at trout fishing in the many nearby streams, while others enjoyed fishing for most any creature that would grab

the bait. With sportsmen like Mike "Curt Gowdy" Merritt and Jim "Virgil Ward" Carter out wetting their lines you know there had to be some big ones being caught.

While frolics about the woods, the aspiring foresters came to know the surrounding woods well and were fortunate enough to experience sphagnum moss beds and view some of the good looking wild-flowers that flourish in the area. Many students got close-up peeks at some of the many critters from large to tiny that make those woods their home.

Another certain highlight of the camp was the softball game played by the ISU team against the Grandview Wisconsin city champions. The "Cyclones" managed to masecrate the home team easily, even without the services of a couple of their star players (like Will Fredregill) who so graciously played for Grandview in a sparkling effort to even the odds.

The episodes at camp are of course, far too numerous and funny (you just had to be there!) to write about. There are hundreds of things, like those goofy wood stoves in the cabins, Rodger's bad driving, and the good sounds of Ole's banjo pickin' at night that will be remembered and retold by those involved for many days to come.

So in spite of all the bad things like problems that wouldn't work, boredom, aggravation, sore behinds, rainy days and fish that wouldn't bite; all will remember the good people, the good country, and the unique learning experience they found in the Chequamegon National Forest of Wisconsin.



Bumps on a log



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