



Boundary Waters

Larry Taylor spoke at the Treynor Optimist Club on November 15. He and his brother moved to Minnesota several years ago to start a company. The youth pastor there asked him to take a group of youth to the Boundary Waters for a canoe trip. They left in early June and headed to Lake Agnes. It is a one day canoe trip to get there.

At the Boundary Waters, the theme is "Leave No Trace". That means you need to pack out everything you bring in. You need a permit to enter and have to watch a movie showing what you can do and what you cannot do.

The Boundary Waters covers 1.1 million acres in the US and Canada. It contains over 1000 lakes and has 2200 campsites. You can only camp at a designated campsite, but only nine people are allowed at one site. Larry has been there many times. His favorite lake is Iron Lake. To get there you need to cross 17 portages and 25 miles of lakes. Some portages are 0.5 to 1 mile.



Larry said you always want to pack light, because you have to carry everything over the portages. In his opinion, your packing is never light enough. Your only food is what you pack in and the fish you catch.

On his first trip they had a wonderful day of fishing. He and his brother caught two stringers of fish. The other group caught a stringer full of good sized fish, so they would have plenty to eat.

The other group gave him their stringer of fish because they were headed to camp and wanted to keep the fish fresh. Larry caught another good sized fish and added it to the three stringers. When he threw the stringers back out, all attached to each other, it kept going and they were not able to retrieve it, losing all three stringers. No one had much to eat that night.

For another adventure, he took a group on a father-son outing. There are a lot of bears in the area, so you have to tie your food from a rope in a tree at night. It needs to be at least 7 feet high and 4 feet from the tree trunk. You also never eat in your tent because the bears will smell it and enter your tent. On this outing, the group had to occupy two campsites. The other group was tired and tied their food high, but only two feed from the tree. A bear tore it down and ate everything. He also got a hole in the cooking oil bottle and sucked it empty.

If you encounter a bear, Larry said the best thing to do is make a lot of noise with sticks or pans. The bears don't want to be around you, so they will leave. However, they can smell food miles away.

A good map of lakes and information on the Boundary Waters is available at <http://www.paddleplanner.com/tools/lake.aspx?lakeid=1529>