

HIGH ADVENTURE IN THE BOUNDARY WATERS

Boy Scout Troop 729 Scoutmaster Tom Schnepel, Life Scout Ben Schnepel, and Eagle Scout Barrett Chambers reported on their trip to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness near Ely Minnesota. There they spent time canoeing and camping while testing their skills as scouts in this unique boreal forest landscape within the Superior National Forest. Scoutmaster Schnepel noted there were six adults and eight scouts from Troop 729 in their party. They had to travel in two groups as Forest Service rules only allow 9 to a campsite as well as a canoeing group. However, Schnepel explained, the camp sites were only about a quarter mile apart and the two canoe groups kept each other in sight on the lakes most of the time. Camp sites were first come-first served and one time they were separated quite a distance camping overnight. Schnepel said they had the opportunity to earn a 50-mile canoeing patch on the trip as well as sharpen camp cooking skills. He noted there were no hazardous encounters with wildlife. Even the infamous Minnesota mosquitoes were not a bother. The outfitters of the boundary waters take care in providing equipment to contain food and food scraps to keep wildlife from camp sites. Generally while canoeing on the lakes you do not see many others as access is controlled through use permits from the Forest Service. Schnepel stated the only time you see many others is at the portage sites where the canoes and camping equipment have to be carried to the next lake. The next time they will try to pack lighter he noted. Water does not have to be packed as it can be obtained from the lakes, and the fish caught along the way supplemented the meals.

Scoutmaster Schnepel, who has been a scout leader for ten years and scoutmaster for four, said he was very grateful for the support of the Optimist Club through the Can Kennel to help fund the high adventure trip for the scouts. They are looking forward to another trip next year.