

ISK Ladies Weekend

Lynette's Perspective

This was the first of a new type of event for ISK. The group was all women and the sleeping accommodations were a very comfortable condominium on the shores of Wynne Lake. Friday was spent either as a tourist or paddling on the Quarry Lake. The whole group enjoyed a dinner out on Friday night at the Lodge.

Saturday morning was spent relaxing or going for a hike. We then gathered for a paddle, guided by our leader for the event, Joan. Our tour of Wynne Lake, Sabin Lake and Embarrass Lake gave everyone the feeling that they would be back to enjoy the beautiful area.

Sunday continued what seemed to be the theme of the weekend, new experiences. Most of the group went for a hike in Jay Cook State Park enjoying the woods and water falls. The smaller group spent some quiet and reflective time touring the Paul Wellstone Memorial. We then met up for the last event of the weekend, white water rafting on the St. Louis River. This was a new challenge for the group. Everyone got wet, some more than others, but everyone was smiling, laughing and definitely ready to try it all over again.

Biwabik. In Ojibway means "valuable", and we found the time we spent together lived up to that name.

Fran's Perspective

It was an excellent weekend.

The weather looked ominous Friday morning, and we drove up through rain, but it eased off by early afternoon. We paddled on a quarry (600 foot deep - really amazing blue water) on Friday afternoon - a little rain, but no big deal, no downpour, very nice. We went out to dinner at the Timber Lodge, a short walk from our Villa. The Villas at Giants Ridge overlooked the lake. They have a nice kitchen, a terrific deck, a variety of sleeping areas over three floors, laundry accommodations and a Jacuzzi. There was also a pool and a hot tub by the pool. A luxury alternative to camping.

Saturday was beautiful. We paddled through a couple of lakes, Sabin Lake and Wine Lake, down a gorgeous stretch of the Embarrass River into Embarrass Lake. Sharell and I had not had enough so we paddled around the lake a bit more while others shuttled the cars back. There was an inlet to another river that connected with another lake, but we did not explore that far. We went back and sat in the hot tub, had Margaritas and dinner. Several of us went for a walk. Then some went to bed early while others played a rowdy game of Uno Attack! We had enough food to stay there a week.

Some early risers hiked every morning - I was not among them, but was part of the rowdy Uno players.

Sunday after breakfast we went to Jay Cooke State Park and hiked along the river. We had lunch, then went to the whitewater rafting. The weather was perfect, very sunny. We had some basic instruction ("if you fall out, keep your feet up", "keep paddling in the rapids"), then launched our rafts and had some brief practice steering them. Then on to the rapids - 6 sets of rapids. Some people went for unplanned swims going through the rapids. One of our rafts totally flipped. Then afterward we had the opportunity to see (and buy) pictures of it all. I was with Lynette and Mike and Sandy in the last raft for the roughest section and by then the guides were so busy with rescues they did not get pictures of us. Sandy washed out, the same wave knocked me back halfway into the next seat and knocked Lynette totally off her seat. But somehow we paddled through and Mike kept steering. It was great for everyone, whether you stayed in or

went over. You were soaked either way. With our raft being last, we saw raft after raft disappear down into it, while we waited our turn and we tried to catch a glimpse of the tops of their heads and their paddles as they went through. We had to wait through a few rescues of those ahead of us, so by the time it was our turn, the anticipation was almost too much.

Some of the spots on this trip were filled by some women from the Minnesota Rovers and by coincidence there was also a group of Rovers on the Whitewater rafting trip. I am in both groups, so it was fun for me and I knew a lot of people rafting.

Lots of fun, good company, good food.