

HOW I REMEMBER IT

By Rick Love

The year was 1968, the time of year was early summer and this was my first trip away from home. And what a trip it was for a 9 year old boy going fishing and camping in the wonderful lakes of Minnesota with his Dad (Jay Love), and my Uncle Jim Love .

How I remember it was, I acted the oldest of the group..... yes I was only 9 years old at the time. I am sure I would remember many more things than I am about to write down here for your reading pleasure if I hadn't suffered through 4 concussions and too much whiskey during the years since this wonderful experience.

How I remember it, Jim always made the coffee at the camp sites each day. Well, he called it coffee any way. I am sure it may have been classified as such in some third world primitive country..... But not in the United States. And surely not after the 1700's. Anyway, his coffee stuff went down much easier if you poured it through your underwear to sift out the grounds first. Or maybe just used a spoon and ate the stuff. I really don't remember how his cooking tasted due to being so emotionally scarred from the coffee stuff.

How I remember the early mornings and nights on the trip are wrought with nightmares of 6 inch long mosquitos which swarmed the campsite as soon as the sun wasn't on us. The noise they made at night was unbelievable! The only thing that could possibly drown out the unbelievable racket was when Jim and Jay fell asleep. Then the snoring muffled the noise of the monstrous blood sucking beasts wings. I just call it snoring because Webster doesn't have a good word to describe the noise those two make when sleeping. That's another story that deserves more detail at a later time.

How I remember it, Lake Winnie, was a lake just a bit smaller than the Atlantic Ocean. Waves several feet high, at least it seemed like it when Captain Jim and First Officer Jay put the back of the boat into the wind and waves desperately trying to get to shore. Even at the age of 9, I thought this was a crazy thing to do. But who was I to say anything to these two seasoned outdoorsmen. I would have come in at an angle so as to keep the waves on the side of the boat. But, that's just how kids think, I guess. No, our crew made the choice to head directly to shore, be damned the waves. Needless to say as the boat sank and I watched our stringers of fish swim off, and the gas can float away I noticed just how cold the water was. Let me tell you something: you do not have to worry about sharks in Minnesota. The reason for this is because the damn leaches are so big and nasty they apparently have chased all the sharks out a long time ago.

How I remember it, the day before the captain sunk our boat we had taken it up a creek. We were watching two large Northern Pike swim in front of the boat for several yards. Once we got up the creek a ways and it narrowed at a beaver dam the fish could go no further. These were large fish with teeth clearly visible. Any smart person would stay in the boat. Well, this day I apparently wasn't in the company of anyone like that. I am told by the adults (a term used lightly) "Stay in the boat, we are going to catch us a fish". Well, you know these "Fish" are some bad ass fish because they eat those nasty leaches I just told you about. Well, long story short..... They didn't get a fish, the fish about got them. The sight of all that water splashing, the screams and mayhem were a sight to behold for sure. I have yet to experience such a sight as that again.

How I remember it, this was one of the best times of my life. I wouldn't give up that summer trip as a kid with my Dad and Uncle for anything. I know you are all thinking about how unfair it was for a 9 year old boy to actually be the adult in the group. But that's okay, I have forgiven them both. The sad thing is, neither one of them have changed. Now all three of us act like silly kids and need adult supervision.

Buckskin Jim says:

Well, Rick, that's about the way I remember it, too. Except for the snoring: I don't think your Dad or I have ever snored. I'm sure I'd remember.

Uncle Jim