

► Details for DNR deer population goals are now available online. Read more in Field Reports, B7

NorthlandOutdoors



Army veteran Bob Skare, who spends summers on Lake Vermilion, fishes for walleyes Thursday morning on Lake Vermilion. Members of the Lake Vermilion Guides League took 46 veterans walleye fishing to recognize their service to the country. Skare (below, left) holds a keeper walleye he caught during the outing.

Stars, stripes & walleyes

On Thursday, the fishing guides of Lake Vermilion gathered to take 46 veterans fishing to thank them for their service

ON LAKE VERMILION — Jim Charles of Tower served with the Navy in the Atlantic during World War II, patrolling for enemy submarines.

Bob Skare, who lives on Lake Vermilion, worked in counter-intelligence for the Army as the Korean War wound down.

Lloyd Lofback of Virginia was a Navy man who served in California during World War II, at a base repairing landing craft bound for the South Pacific.

All three of the vets were

on boats flying American flags Thursday afternoon on Lake Vermilion, trying to catch a few walleyes.

They were among 46 veterans being hosted for the day by 15 members of the Lake Vermilion Guides League.

It was a first-time event, based at the Fortune Bay Resort Casino marina near Tower.

“I think this is wonderful,” said Charles, 91, as he came ashore at midday.

Charles had been a conservation officer with the Minnesota Department of

Natural Resources at Tower for many years, retiring in 1982, and a former fishing guide himself.

“It’s great that the guides association has done this for us,” Charles said. “It’s a real honor for us.”

Veterans from World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam and Afghanistan were among the anglers, said Phil Bakken, a guide who helped organize the event.

“We want to do this every year,” he said.

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Veterans fish for walleyes from a pontoon boat on Lake Vermilion on Thursday morning with guide Rob Bryers (red cap) of Tower. From left are Darrel Lindgren of Virginia, Lloyd Lofback of Virginia, Lloyd Lamppa of Virginia and (background) Ray Anderson of Cook.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SAM COOK / S COOK@DULUTHNEWS.COM

Early taste of wilderness fuels lifelong appetite for adventure



Sam Cook

ELY — A convergence of Boy Scouts buzzed around the landing at Prairie Portage east of Ely, where Sucker Lake pours its clear waters into Basswood Lake at the Canadian border. A July afternoon, 2014.

The Scouts were up from South Florida for a week or more in 1.2 million acres of Ontario’s Quetico Provincial Park. Typical teenage boys, they taunted and jived each other as

they waited for other members of their group to arrive.

Waterproof map cases dangled from the necklines of their leaders. Each boy had a water bottle slung on a carabiner. All of them wore life jackets.

As more arrived, they stepped out of their canoes into knee-deep water. Standard procedure, protecting the Kevlar hulls from scratches.

They were as green as Tenderfoots, with no concept of the challenges and adventures that lay across that portage in the interior of the park. Thanks to the generosity of their adult leaders and their young leaders from the Northern Tier National High Adventure Scout Base on Moose Lake, they were about to encounter the wonder of a north-

ern wilderness.

I couldn’t help flashing back half a century to 1964. Exactly 50 years ago this summer, I was one of those Scouts, also outfitted and led by the same Scout base on Moose Lake. I was 15 years old, with no idea what this “Quetico-Superior” wilderness was all about. I certainly had no idea that something called the “Wilderness Act” was about to be passed by Congress.

I could wrestle hay bales in a hot Kansas barn, but I was over-matched trying to carry a bulging Duluth pack over a rocky portage. The first time I sat down to rest on a deadfall with my pack on, I kept right on going and landed on my back. Turtled in Quetico.

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Three Boy Scouts prepare peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for their group during a 1964 trip to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area and Ontario’s Quetico Provincial Park. From left are John Stone, future News Tribune outdoors writer Sam Cook and Bill Porter. Sam Cook photo