

Doctor's Orders

By JoAnna Gellerman
cabin 18, Hay Lake

In 1975 my husband, Ron, was given a scare by his primary doctor; he could continue his present life style (Advertising Executive), but it would cost him several years shaved off his life. Or, he could consider slowing down a little with some good old fashion R & R. With already four children & another one on the way, I'm happy he chose the wiser decision, that being the latter of the two. Since we both grew up in families that enjoyed vacationing in Northern MN, the search was on.

We were set to buy a resort on Leech Lake with a few other friends; in fact, Ron was instrumental in organizing this investment. However, because his father passed away, he let go of the Leech Lake adventure. As it turned out, when one door closes another opens and we ended up purchasing the cabin on Hay Lake. But, before the final commitment, he wanted me to have a look. So, in the dead of winter we headed up north.

Some of you may remember that back in 1976 our road off #49 was never plowed. And it being the case, we parked the car & started hiking in. We had been walking for quite some time & Ron didn't recognize any of the cabins. He had only seen the cabin one other time. He's now getting concerned about me because I am 6 months pregnant.

At this point, we both know we are in the middle of nowhere & haven't a clue as to where! Seems we were on Hand Lake, not Hay. Thanks to a couple of snowmobilers that Ron flagged down (they just happened to be our future neighbors from Hay, the Erickson's) we were driven directly to our potential purchase.

When I saw the view it was worth every step! We never doubted that this was where we belonged. The whole family still talks about the good old days. Our family looked at walking back to the cabin in the winter as an adventure. The older boys & their dad got back to the cabin first and would get the snowmobile & toboggan, driving back and forth until all of us were safely in. Of course, the snowmobile didn't always work so other times, cross country skiffs, or snowshoes were used to accomplish hauling in groceries. Warming up by the fire, & yes, even using the outhouse in winter was part of the fun. It is wonderful just being together to enjoy & appreciate nature.

The pristine water used for fishing, swimming, boating, canoeing & even washing up in the lake (cause the well went dry) was appreciated. Picking wild flowers & eating wild berries, watching the eagles soar, observing those little "hummers" are naming only a few of the memories. Just this spring, my mother (referred by her great grandchildren, as Rosebud) at 98, witnessed seeing her very first scarlet tanager! As exciting as that was, I still get a thrill out of seeing those

graceful deer, & even the clever beavers attempting to build a home under our pontoon. What compares to the melodious Loons call? Or some of the sunrises & storms that seem to take your breath away, I love it all & I think you get the picture. Nature is a treasure & a beautiful gift from God.

Speaking of treasure, by 1999 our little old cabin really needed *a lot* of fixing. Ron, being in the construction business, drew up the new cabin plans & we got started. Andrew our oldest son, who also owns a construction company in Backus, became our contractor. He coordinated much of the project; but, it was the efforts of many, mostly our children, who came up often on weekends to help finish our dream place. Even our youngest grandchildren contributed, by picking up rocks used in finishing the exterior walls.

When I drive some 150 miles to the lake it doesn't matter if its summer, fall, winter, spring, raining or snowing, day or night, I still get the same feeling as I did when I first saw it back in 1975. A great place to relax year-round! Thanks Ron for following *doctor's orders. Head north, bring plenty of beverages & food. Forget medicine; blood pressure will drop. Eniovy! Dr. Schultz.*

Respectfully submitted by JoAnna Gellerman, cabin 18, Hay Lake