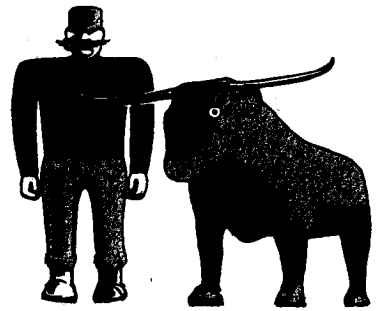


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Club No. 3790

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BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

May 1, 2006

This Week's Program

Let's Go Fishing – Terry Matson & Dan Posner

Next Week's Program

4-Way Test – Caitlin Oestreich

Important Dates to Remember

*Rotary International Convention –
Copenhagen, Denmark & Malmo,
Sweden, June 11 – 14*

*Lake Bemidji Dragon Boat Festival
August 4 & 5*

May Birthdays

Kevin Erpelding	May 1
Jim Smyithe	May 2
Wayne Hoff	May 3
Larry Young	May 4
Cliff Tweedale	May 5
Jim Hess	May 14
Ray Carlson	May 21
Robert Welle	May 21
Bob Vaadeland	May 25
Paul Hunt	May 28

Venezuela Outbound – Insights

Following are some comments received in a letter from Erin McDonnell, our Outbound Student, who is currently living in San Cristobal, Venezuela:

▪ I think more than anything so far, this year (has) taught me to appreciate what I have . . . my friends and my family. I never realized how incredibly much they mean to me. I am also realizing how much I do like Bemidji and the small town life with nature all around . . . I was so determined to get out of Bemidji as soon as I possibly could, and now I plan on attending BSU in the fall.

▪ Almost everyone here speaks or understands at least a little bit of English. The US media has such a huge effect on this country. There are tons of

movies, music, TV shows from the US. And pretty much everything is imported from the US too. I don't even buy clothes here because it's all the same as there but more expensive.

▪ They don't seem to have much problem with racism, which is cool, though some of the exchange students get annoyed by being called "gringo", which is their term for white foreigners. I don't have much problem with this since I have dark hair and eyes. They do love anyone who has blond hair and blue eyes though.

▪ I really appreciate the freedom (in Bemidji) that I was allowed with my own car, going out with friends almost everyday, and even just the freedom to go walking around town alone and be safe – not to mention the availability of beautiful places to walk around the lake or even just in the city – it's so clean! Here is interesting too though. I do walk around the city near my house; it's very crowded. There is always tons of traffic – and the traffic is absolutely crazy! I'm pretty used to it now, but I would still never want to drive here!

▪ Here on New Years, the whole family gets together – they are very family based. They even close all the shops for a few hours around midday to go home and eat with their families and nap. Everyone gets together fairly late in the evening to talk and dance. I'm learning to dance merengue . . . There is a tradition of holding onto a suitcase as the year changes so that you will have the luck to travel a lot in the next year.

▪ Thank you for everything you've done for me. I am very thankful to be where I am right now and to have this experience! Thank you for giving me this opportunity. I look forward to seeing you all again. . . That peace may prevail over all men . . . Spreading hope!