

Camp Anticipation

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“My application for camp just came in the mail” Judy's voice yelled from the phone. “Why don't you and Karen come too?”

I was doubtful. “I don't know, what's it like?”

“We swim in the lake every day, go boating, hiking, play baseball and make up skits. We sleep in cabins in bunk beds and the counsellors are terrific. I know you'd love it. It's in Barry's Bay, for two weeks, and we go on the train!” Judy's excitement was contagious.

“How's the food?” I asked the very important question.

Macaroni and cheese, shepherd's pie; sometimes we have hot dogs and Kool-Aid around the campfire, it's absolutely great.

“I'll talk to Mom and Dad. Call Karen and see if she can go.”

My dad told me to find out the cost, and Karen's parents said camps were expensive and they probably couldn't afford to send her. Judy found out that campers paid only what they could afford. All our parents agreed and the three of us were in.

While we rode the number 2 bus downtown to pick up applications, Karen was reading the list of things to bring. “I'll have to find a sleeping bag somewhere, mine ifds too small.”

“Dave or Mike might have one you can borrow. If not, Canadian Tire down on Richmond Rd will have sleeping bags. We can walk down there tomorrow,” I suggested.

Karen preferred to have a new sleeping bag, so the next morning we headed for Canadian Tire. We bought bug spray, suntan lotion, flashlights and batteries. Karen found an inexpensive sleeping bag, and we carted everything home down Wellington Street in the broiling sun.

That afternoon we hit United Stores and picked up little plastic boxes for our toiletries, film for Judy's camera and a new bathing suit for me. We each bought a new tee-shirt and went home with our loot.

“There, we're done shopping.” Karen flopped down on our front steps.

“No, not yet.” said expert Judy. “We'll need to bring snacks. It's a long trip on the train .”

We dragged ourselves to our feet and headed for the corner store to stock up with Humpty Dumpty chips, cheezies, chocolate bars and life savers. Judy suddenly remembered just one more thing, Fizzies.

We had never heard of them, but Judy explained that at camp they were a necessity. At lunch we would be given water to drink, but Fizzies were little sugary tablets that, when dropped into water, fizzed into a drink something like fruit punch. We would be the envy of the camp.

Our final shopping trip was to Malham's Smoke Shop to pick up several flavours of Fizzies. After that, all that remained was to pack our suitcases and wait for the day we would leave Ottawa from Union Station downtown, on our way to Barry's Bay and two weeks of fun, games, and new friendships.