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EWRT 1A Honors

26 October 2017

Lake is Life

“If you want to know where your heart is look to where your mind goes when it wanders.” While daydreaming in a boring lecture or class discussion I often find myself in a familiar place; a peaceful dock on a calm out cove of a lake. In the distance you can hear faint laughter, or the occasion speed boat whizzing by just far enough away that the noise is noticeable, but does not distract you from the book you are reading, or the sun rays that you are soaking in. The water slowly drifts back and forth, causing small waves to push up against the rocky shore, or to provide you with a subtle splash. As if the lake is trying to keep you from drifting off because it knows that its beauty should not be squandered with a nap. Although this may seem like a far fetched fantasy that my overactive imagination has created, I am lucky enough to say that not only does this place exist, but is where I am fortunate enough to visit each summer. Due to the angelic view, the calming atmosphere and the sense of love that my cousin’s cabin on Long Lake Wisconsin encompasses, makes it the most beautiful place in the entire world.

The picture perfect view that can be seen from the dock is one of the most beautiful sights ever created. Early in the morning steam slowly seeps up from the calm waters, as you sip a warm cup of the strongly brewed coffee that the cabin is known for. If you listen closely you are able to hear and if you are lucky enough see the occasional loon drifting by with their fuzzy

ducklings not far behind. As the sun becomes more present other animals slowly slip out of their slumber and go about their daily lives creating an ecosystem that works like a well oiled machine. The toads begin to croak in harmony with one another, the herons join in from a distance creating a hushed musical masterpiece unique to the lake alone. As the day goes on the view from the dock only its more magnificent. As you lay in the warm sun the clouds form into various shapes right before your eyes, creating beautiful pictures that only you can see. You believe that the view can not get better than what it is at this point in the day, but that is wrong. As the night drifts closer the sky begins to shift and various pink, orange and red hues transform the sky into the most beautiful watercolor painting you have ever or will ever see, you will not want to look away for fear of missing this remarkable sight. Once night has fallen, the world is lit up by the moon, stars and the campfire. The lack of light pollution allows for you to see the sky it is supposed to be. The stars form beautiful patterns and connect to replace the images that the clouds had formed earlier in the day. You can not help but feel small when looking up and trying to comprehend true size of the big dipper that shines above you.

Besides being breathtakingly beautiful, the lake also provides an extreme sense of serenity. When you are there you are truly immersed in nature and almost become one with the earth. As cliché as it may sound the feeling you get when you are at the cabin is unlike any you have felt before, you do not know true happiness until you have spent a week in this paradise. Because of the absence of cell service, television, and other electronics that often times consume our day being at the lake gives you the change to detach from the stress that you may be facing in your life, and allows you to spend some time on self reflection. The tranquility of the surrounding area provides a safe space where you are free to express yourself with whatever

creative medium you prefer—personally I enjoy filling the alone time I have by sitting out by the water and journaling—without interruption or ridicule. The peaceful vibe that is greatly noticeable gives off a wonderful sense of solitude and allows your body to refuel and destress.

The final and best part of the lake are the people who are there to take in the beauty with you. The group of 20 that spends their summers at this cabin are like none other. An eclectic group—ranging from doctors, plumbers, and students—all come together as one cohesive unit. Getting 20 people to get along in a fairly small cabin may seem like a difficult reality to obtain, but it is different at the lake. Perhaps it is because of the magical feeling that the lake provides, or simply because we only get one week together each year so we try our best to not annoy one another. Whatever the reason may be the beauty and tranquility of the lake are only second to the wonderful people who you get to experience it with. Nights are filled with hours and hours spent by the campfire, discussing life and how lucky we are to have each other. The taste of sweet, gooey marshmallows in s'mores, mixed with uncle David's famous moscow mule end every night, and admittedly at times start every morning.

Due to the angelic view, the calming atmosphere and the sense of love that my cousin's cabin on Long Lake Wisconsin encompasses, it is the most beautiful place in the entire world. The wonderfully calming setting along with the immaculate view and loving community that encompasses the entirety of the lake allows it to be a safe space where everyone can go and have a life changing experience. Besides being my happy space this lake has provided me with some of my best memories, and spend all year looking forward to returning. The words, "lake is life" are often times muttered throughout this week—and has even been tattooed on a few peoples ankles. This phrase perfectly encompasses the lifestyle that is not just accepted, but actually encouraged

while at the lake. The lake is not just a fun vacation spot, or a get away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life, but is in fact so much more than that. Quite simply, it is a lifestyle.