

Through adventure, we build young leaders who serve

Newsletter November 2005

SALT is a collaborative effort involving WMEP, Edina Public Schools, Volunteers of America High School, Richfield High School, REI, other community organizations and individuals. Using high adventure activities, we teach leadership through service to others. By building relationships with young people from different backgrounds, as well as mentors and leaders from the school, community and business world, SALTeam members will positively impact their schools and communities, now and in the years to come.

*All men die ...
few men ever really live.
~William Wallace in Braveheart*



REI Rock Climbing Retreats

During the 2004-05 school year we partnered with REI on 3 rock climbing retreats. The SALTeams from EHS and VOAHs climbed the Pinnacle at the Bloomington store, and had lunchtime seminars with wilderness gurus and marketing leaders at REI. These experts discussed REI history and provided education in equipment, wilderness first aid and backcountry safety. A special thanks goes to Don Begalle, Director of Special Events, for coordinating these sessions and for providing two of the events at no cost to SALT.



SLEx Service-Learning Expedition May 27-30, 2005

Over Memorial Day weekend, 16 SALTeam members from EHS and VOAHs spent 4 days backpacking and building boardwalks and bridges on the Lutsen to Lake Agnes section of the Superior Hiking Trail along the North Shore of MN. Funds for the SLEx were provided through a Learn & Serve America grant, and the work was directed by Ken Oelkers, Trail Maintenance Coordinator for the SHT. Members learned hard work and the value of humility as they carried materials and pounded nails to construct walkways over streams and swampy paths, realizing that the thousands of hikers using the boardwalks and bridges to keep their feet dry will never know the names of those who did the work.



BWCA Expedition June 11-16, 2005

We embarked on our first BWCA Expedition this year, as John Flaten (Edina resident) lead us on a 6-day adventure starting at Snowbank Lake out of Ely, MN. After our first night at his lake home, we set out for several rainy and overcast days, covering six lakes and eight portages. The guys remember the colorful stories and good meals John provided to make the rain seem insignificant. Our last day was BWCA picture-perfect, and the guys that went want to go again! He and his wife, Betsy, provided canoe, gear and hospitality, and made the whole thing possible, and we thank them for their generosity.



**Wild River Leadership Retreat
October 14-16, 2005**

Our first SALT event of the 2005-06 school year was a weekend leadership camping/canoe retreat to Wild River State Park near Taylor's Falls, MN. Although it was chilly, we had a blast facing the wild rapids of the mighty St. Croix River, and sharing meals and stories around a campfire. Charter members from VOAHS and EHS renewed friendships, and made new connections with students who just joined SALT this fall. The groundwork was laid for newcomers to learn what SALT is all about from the guys who have been there since the beginning, as they prepare to pass the baton to a new "generation."



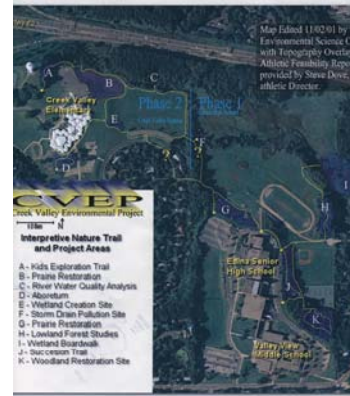
**All-Things-Canine Dog Sledding Expedition
February 24-27, 2006**

Are you ready for a HOWL-ing good time? EHS and VOAHS will be taking a trip into the wild at the International Wolf Center located in Ely, Minnesota. The IWC advances the survival of wolf populations by teaching about wolves, their relationship to wild lands and the role of humans in their future. Exploring the world of the wolf, tracking radio-collared wolves, snowshoeing in the Superior National Forest, and howling to local wolf packs will be featured. Run Silent will then be leading an all-day dog sledding adventure in the BWCA, providing each student with their own team of sled dogs to lead through the north woods.



New Staff Join EHS SALTeam

We're excited this year to have additional staff joining the SALTeam at EHS. Along with Steve Sanger (Science Teacher), Will MacPhail (Media Tech Assistant) and Josh Grenier (Arts Teacher), Kelly Preusse (U of M Youth Studies Intern) brings fresh energy and enthusiasm. All are helping to plan future events, and Kelly is actively learning all about SALT.



**Forest For The Trees:
Service-Learning in Section K
National Youth Service Day, April 21-23, 2006**

This service-learning event will bring together leaders from the community with the guys and girls SALTeams from EHS, VOAHS, Creek Valley Elementary, Richfield HS and, possibly, Southwest HS. As part of the ongoing Creek Valley Environmental Project (CVEP), this is Phase III in the creation of an environmental learning center on the grounds below EHS. In a section of the forest known as Section K, we will be removing buckthorn and creating a succession trail. The event will take place on the weekend of National Youth Service Day, and will feature camping out on the school grounds, working with school and community members, and a celebration bonfire and barbeque on Saturday night. Julie Rogers-Bascom, the Service-Learning Coordinator for Edina Public Schools, has been working with the members to organize, obtain supplies, seek funding, publicize and coordinate logistics for this event. This project will benefit students in classes such as Biology and Environmental Science, and will be an ongoing service project of SALT.



SALT Girls Teams Start at EHS & VOAHS

In November, under the leadership of Doug Eischens and Kelly Preusse, the SALT Girls Team was formed at EHS. VOAHS already has a Girls Team, led by Nellie Frimml. Together they gathered for the first time for a luncheon and brainstorming meeting at EHS, and then had a team-building leadership retreat at snowy Camp Iduhapi on December 22.

Richfield HS and Southwest HS Join SALT

In the true spirit of SALT, we are seeking additional schools to partner with for 2005-06 and beyond, in hopes of creating what Jake Horns refers to as a “web” or network of SALT teams. EHS has coordinated many trips with VOAHS and now is hoping to join forces with Richfield HS and Southwest HS. “We get big by staying small,” a former colleague used to say. We hope that, by partnering with more schools, there will be more opportunities for expeditions and service-learning projects.

Year of Evaluation

2005-06 marks the 3rd official year of SALT, the first “cycle” of three years, as many charter members are now seniors and we will seek to add new members this year. We will be evaluating the project extensively this year, asking ourselves the questions “Did we do what we said we were going to do?” and “Are we still on track?” and “Should we continue to move ahead?”

Special Thanks to...

- REI for providing free rock climbing sessions and wilderness guru expertise
- John and Betsy Flaten, for the donation of their home in Ely as our base, canoes and gear, and John for his time and expertise as he ventured with us on the BWCA Expedition in June '05
- Julie Rogers-Bascom, for her time and energy working with us on preparing for the Forest For the Trees: Service-Learning on Section K
- Edina Rotary for their \$1000 donation in November
- VOAHS for providing all of the funds for the Wild River Leadership Retreat in October
- International Dairy Queen for \$1000 donation for 2006
- Edina Diversity Council for \$1000 for All-Things-Canine Expedition in February
- EHS Parent Council for their \$500 donation to start up the SALT Girls Team at EHS in January



Special Need

SALT is looking for two seven-passenger vans in good condition to meet our ever-increasing need for accessible, affordable transportation. If you or your organization could help us locate or purchase these vans—or if you'd consider donating them to the cause—we would be able to provide more students the opportunity to participate in SALT events and lower the costs of expeditions which often take us way outside the metro area.



SALT on the Web

VOAHS maintains a shared website with photos, videos, newsletters, forms, info and links regarding all of the SALT events. Check it out at www.voahs.org/salt/



For more info, contact:

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MEN WANTED FOR HAZARDOUS JOURNEY.
Small wages, bitter cold, long months of complete darkness, constant danger, safe return doubtful.
Honor and recognition in case of success.

~Ernest Shackleton, in a London newspaper advertisement in 1900 in preparation for the National Antarctic Expedition. He later said that “it seemed as though all the men in Great Britain were determined to accompany me, the response was so overwhelming.”