



Friends of Voyageurs National Park Honor Grim, Hilke and Przybylski at Beaver Club Dinner

At the Friends of Voyageurs National Park Beaver Club Dinner held at the Arrowhead Lodge January 27, Lee Grim, Bob Hilke and Kathleen Przybylski were awarded Beaver Club medals to recognize their contributions to the Friends of Voyageurs National Park and to Voyageurs National Park. Lee Grim has carried on a study of eagles as a seasonal biologist at Voyageurs National Park for over 30 years, and continues to be an important and committed member of the natural resource team at Voyageurs National Park as well as a willing volunteer for Friends of Voyageurs National Park projects. Bob Hilke and his wife

Mary are life-long stewards of the lands of Voyageurs National Park, have been members of the Friends of Voyageurs National Park since its inception, and were owners and operators of the “Pride of Rainy Lake” tour boat for several years, sharing their knowledge of the area with many visitors. Kathleen Przybylski, Voyageurs National Park Chief of Interpretation, has served as liaison with the Friends of Voyageurs National Park for many years. She has been instrumental in preparing Voyageurs National Park management plans and coordinating interpretive programs to meet visitor needs.

The first Beaver Club was instituted in Montreal in the year 1785 by voyageurs that had wintered in the “Indian Country” and had been in the Indian trade from their youth. Upon admission into the club, each member had a gold medal made, engraved with his name and the date of his first visit to Indian country and wore it on a blue ribbon. Today, replicas of those medals are given by the Friends of Voyageurs National Park as a way to recognize people who have made contributions to Voyageurs National Park and the Friends of Voyageurs National Park. The Friends of Voyageurs National Park hold Beaver Club dinners on a biyearly basis to celebrate the spirit of those voyageurs of long ago and to celebrate wintering in the north. This year’s program featured Bob Hilke’s telling of the 1960’s adventure he had accompanying 80 year old Earnest Oberholtzer on a canoe trip north to retrace part of Oberholtzer’s 1912 trip north to Hudson Bay. Lee Grim in voyageur attire served as master of ceremonies and led the five traditional Beaver Club toasts.





A short annual meeting preceded the program led by Friends president, Jo Kallemeyn, who outlined the projects the Friends have selected to support at Voyageurs National Park in 2007. These projects include continuing to provide supplies for the park visitor center children's activity centers, help with supplies and speaker costs for special interpretive programs, and supplies and prizes for the National Parks Week student's poster contest. The Friends donations will also help purchase more children's sized cross-country ski boots for the Rainy Lake Visitor Center ski loan program, and help with the cost of model production for construction of a new Kabetogama Lake Visitor Center animal model exhibit. The main source of funding for these projects comes from membership donations.

Anyone wishing to become a member of Friends of Voyageurs National Park can find information on the Friends of Voyageurs National Park webpage at www.nps.gov/voya/supportyourpark/joinourfriends.htm. or contact Jo Kallemeyn at 218-286-5302. The next Friends of Voyageurs National Park meeting will be Wednesday, March 21 at 7:00 p.m. at the Voyageurs National Park Headquarters, 3131 Highway 53.

