

Lake Superior, First Camping Memories

By Natalie Atwell, 15 years old

This piece is about my first memories of camping on the shores of Lake Superior. I've been camping there since I was a baby, but these are the earliest memories that I have, probably when I was about five or so.

Pulling into Herbster, hearing the light waves crashing. Pitching the tent in the sand, toasting marshmallows by the fire. Listening to the water slapping lightly on the sand from the darkness of our tent. Mom singing *Barges* to me. Drifting off to sleep with a light breeze and the smell of outdoors.

Morning oatmeal, going to the island and the Big Bay State Park office to get a Nature Sheriff badge and workbook, identifying oak and maple leaves, and listening to the birds and the afternoon buzz of bugs turning into chirping crickets. Another day by the lake done.

Splashing in the cold waves, wearing shoes so we don't get cut on the rocks. Mom dips her head in, but I'm not brave enough to do so. Freshly clothed, sitting on the bumper of the car, watching the wind on the water. Mom reads me a story while Dad cooks eggs for dinner. Another day at the lake coming to an end.

The last night there, Mom singing *Barges* again in the tent, drifting off to sleep. Waking up to rain in the dark, falling into the lake. A huge storm on Lake Superior. Thunder booming, sleeping cozily in our van, listening to the pattering of the fat drops. Our tent filling fast with inches of rain. Camping gear floating. Dad says he can rough it, sleeping in the tent. The next few thunder crashes, and he's in the van with us.

The next day, driving home, ground wet and muddy. Till next time Lake Superior.