

Malory Savoie  
Age 16

### “Caddo Lake”

As we sat by the fire on that cool June night, I doubted that any of us knew that our lives were forever going to be different from that day on. We, like most people, had not expected our lives to have such a drastic impact from a mere camping trip. I look at my friend Lexie to my right and Simone to my left and think about all that we have conquered and accomplished to be here in this monumental moment.

During our eight years at Camp Fern, this is the first time the option of going on a wilderness survival camping trip was offered to Lexie, Simone, and me out of all the other girls on camp. It had to be earned. We, of course, accepted the invite and began planning the trip three weeks in advance, which was not a particularly easy task because not only did we have to pack basic camping equipment, but we also had to pack enough food for three meals for the all day and overnight camping trip. Next, Lexie, Simone, and I all had to have the meals approved by the head of nature, Emily, and the camp owner, Mrs. Margaret. Everything was approved and a few weeks later we were ready to leave on our survival camping trip.

On June 24, 2014, we left camp at six in the morning and arrived at Caddo Lake about an hour later. The view was beautiful beyond words with the sunlight gleaming through hundreds of towering cypress trees with moss dangling off of them like angels clinging to the branches. Trying not to be severely distracted by the beautiful landscape, we began packing our canoes with supplies, placing them into the water, and eventually starting our journey through the vast unknown of Caddo Lake. Lexie, Simone, and I were each given a compass and a map to navigate through the tranquil water of Caddo. The scenery along the way was simply stunning and awe-inspiring; it was the kind of landscape that could inspire poets to write vivid poetry that oozes with imagery. After five miles of canoeing, we finally reached our destination of Hamburger Point where we set up our tents and began cooking dinner on the fire pit. It was impossible to stay clean, so we soon went swimming in the sparkling waters of the bayou. After that, Simone and I lashed a clothesline to hang our wet clothes while Lexie lashed a cutting board holder.

The next morning we cleaned the camping area, packed up our supplies, and began our departure from Hamburger Point. When we left our bags felt lighter, but our hearts felt heavier as we canoed farther and farther away from the place that was so dear to our hearts for the great bonding experience it gave us. As we left our sanctuary of Hamburger Point I felt a sense of appreciation for toothpaste, toilet paper, soap, basically anything that kept me clean, but most importantly I felt a sense of appreciation for my wonderful friends who were essential to the camping trip, the environment, and the comfort it provided. This was more than just a camping trip; it was the moment in my life where I found in myself a greater admiration of the nature that surrounds us everyday.