

VOYAGERS SPRING CANOE TRIP ITINERARY 2026

1. Departure Friday MAY 1st 8:30 AM - 2663 East M-43 Hwy

- a. Breakfast Served from 6:30 AM – 7:30 AM
- b. Attendee Fees will be \$30.00 per attendee. This covers ALL items for this first trip. Checks are accepted, payable to Voyagers Canoe Trips – or ONLINE with **PayPal**.
- c. Validate emergency & medical items with attendees
- d. Each participant will have gear checked.
 - i. ANY ITEMS NEEDED will be issued along with a **canoe pack & dry bag**. **Sleeping bags, clothes, gear / Camp Chair & Waders** will all go into the large canoe packs – one canoe pack per person. One Pack, One Sleeping Bag per attendee.
- e. WE encourage that all eat some breakfast, no meal until launch.
- f. **Fill up all canteens** – NOT EXPECTING POTABLE WATER AT LAUNCH SITE...
 - i. **WATER SHOULD BE A MINIMUM OF 32 OUNCES / 1 LITER**
- g. Introductions by Carl Howard.
- h. Read Proverbs 31 – starting with verse 10.
- i. Be a man speech.

2. Voyager Axe or Fly Rod & Reel

The Voyager Axe/Fly Rod Award given through Character/Relationship/Task.

3. Arrival at Launch - Put in Approx. 12:00 Noon.

Put In: Croton Dam DNR Boat Launch - C8MM+XJ, Croton Township, MI 49337

Take Out: New Bridge DNR Access - C58Q+5G Newaygo, Michigan

- a. **Upon Arrival to Croton:** Gear will be unloaded from vehicles and brought to the launch area in the following order:
 1. All attendees carry their own personal gear bag to a selected area (Canoe Pack) at launch area – line up all gear, teams remain together (wait until further instructions are provided)
 2. Guides and select helpers will unload canoes and crates/gear
 3. Guides Choose Canoe Teams (experience – proficiency necessary)
 4. Guides hand each attendee a PFD, and assign paddle based on height
 5. Guide/select helper to feed the attendees lunch (Meat, cheese & crackers)
 6. Guides/select helpers bring Canoes down to river, staging canoes, paddles
 7. Guides/select helpers load freighter canoes first
 8. Guides will assign each team to a canoe, then each team will load their canoe
 9. Guides will assist and perform final inspection

4. Go over canoe safety with all members – Perform 10 minute canoe 101 course (Guides)

- There are three components involved in proper paddling technique for canoes and kayaks. They are **boat efficiency, paddle efficiency, and body efficiency.**
 - Paddle Efficiency – This is Long, Deep & Wide strokes with the paddle as vertical as possible.
 - Boat Efficiency – This is paying strict attention to the position of the boat, keeping it straight with the current.
 - Body Efficiency – Sometimes called the “paddlers box” this refers to the space immediately in front of the paddler from the shoulders to the outstretched hands on the paddle, and all the way down to the deck of the canoe. This means there will be a systematic rhythm when paddling. Remember, if the paddler is manipulated by the paddle, there is something wrong.

*****IMPORTANT*****

The Paddler in the Stern of the Canoe Steers the Canoe. Therefore, no yelling or blaming the man in the Bow of the Canoe. Follow instructions, be willing to learn, stay relaxed, maintain a teachable spirit, and the trip will remain very enjoyable for all.

- a. **Be sure all gear is properly loaded and CHECKED OFF list** – this demands all guides.
 - Be sure all gear is SECURED properly.
 - Point out ‘Throw Rope’ and location
 - Medical Kit to be highlighted. Bag, Red Cross. Identify where it is, who has it.
 - **Ask who has a card for CPR, or is medically trained...**
 - Be sure all members have their life preservers PFD’s and paddles.
 - Be sure ALL members **recognize the trip’s purpose** therefore:
- b. **Orientation on what to expect for this Voyagers Trip.**
 1. Ask some questions – what each person is expecting
 2. What are some concerns we’ve had prior to the trip?
 3. Open map(s) and illustrate the planned course
 4. Detail the importance of staying together, not passing critical points
 5. Picture of group
 6. Prayer
 7. Launch

Point (Boule – Boo-Lay) man will take the lead

The Spring 2026 Voyagers trip will involve a paddle into camp.

Launching as earlier as possible.

Camp will be down river (MM 4) and our camp site will be remote, with no amenities.

This Spring paddle will be from our launch point, down to Canoe Camp, taking the afternoon.

Reaching camp, We will then set up camp for two nights.

Departing Sunday, we will then paddle down to the selected Takeout point.

Expect to arrive home evening of the 5th.

5. Arrival at Canoe Camp begins with all persons pulling up to shore, single file, meaning some should 'hold up' so as to avoid swamping one another & pulling their canoes safely up on the shore to be unloaded and secured – doing so in orderly fashion.

- One canoe at a time – this way directions may be given properly.
- The canoes to be emptied of all contents and then “turned” over and emptied of all water.
- Camp gear will be carried to “campsite” and each member of the group will receive their orders.
 - **Gear will be lined up in two rows.**
 - Personal Gear (first) Canoe Packs – off to one side, clear of where picket line to be established (Camp).
 - Camp Gear
- The group’s orders will be:
 - (2-6) Muster up small kindling and firewood (muster enough for two meals and evening fire) – This should be **stacked between two trees – dimensions being 18” long X 4’ wide X 5’ High.**
 - (2) Set up and establish campfire
 - (2) Set up campsite (Sleeping under Canoes) – This group will lay out canvas and distribute sleeping bags/personal gear by placing all canoe packs under the up-turned canoe, at the head of the canvas.
 - (3) Camp Kitchen Set Up – Start with Ridge Pole / Rope between Two Trees (Ratchet on one end)
 - Cut Two Ridge Pole Support Logs – 9’ (Cut to fit by those setting up)
 - (2) Facilitate/prepare and cook food and distribute dishes.
- After supper, (2) Attendees may be responsible for cleaning/washing their own dishes and utensils or may accept volunteers to do the dishes.
- Each member will bring them back for packing/storing in the prepared crate – this will make them ready for the next meal.
- Then each member will get their gear and sleeping gear set up and prepared for bed. Then free time until the evening talk.

This constitutes the camp chores – members are free to roam until the evening fire.

6. Evening fire will be:

- Devotional reading
 - The topic of manhood. Definition – examples and responsibilities.
 - **Want to be treated like a man? Act like a man.**
 - **Action** – Getting Started, and Staying in motion
 - Reading verses of choice – See content printed.
 - Questions from the group
 - Answers will be Bible-based viewpoints
 - Voyagers Stories – 77th Battalion – Others
 - The Value of Plain Speakers – Men who say what needs to be said
 - Tougher the circumstances, forge the man

Then we’ll allow those to turn in or enjoy fire till bedtime.

- Around the campfire – lets be encouraged to talk with one another and get to know something about one another. This could be important throughout the trip.

Ideas to share around the campfire:

- How to use Crickets to tell the temperature
- Finding the North Star
- Compass Truisms

7. Activities

- a. Fly Fishing
- b. Pole Boxing & (Conventional) – Boxing 101
- c. Survival (Shelter building exercise) Select teams, each team has 1.5 hours to build.
- d. Mock Rescue / Orienteering
- e. Archery

8. Sleeping

(Guides) will be sleeping on flanks or in a position to oversee the group, sleeping bags on canvas. This of course is an option for everyone but not required. No tents are used on Voyagers Canoe Trips.

If pleasant weather, we will NOT hang the rain fly but instead have it at the ready in case of rain. We will try to set up camp in Voyager fashion.

9. Sunday Departure

Sunday will be the last day on the river. We want the members of the party to have a lasting Great memory of this trip and the best way to do this is to make the last run to pick up enjoyable and stress-free. Provided we've done a good job, we'll have a leisurely paddle to the pickup point.

The paddle to the takeout is estimated to be a 2 HOUR paddle. Windy conditions could add 15 minutes.

Depending on River Levels, and Current Speed, we will plan to arrive back to the take out in the mid afternoon.

Make sure each member carries their own pack to the vehicles when picking up – the guides will be responsible for ensuring the same manner of carrying of the supplies and other gear is done in order and that proper management is in place. No leaving of gear or items behind.

10. MEALS

Friday Morning Breakfast

- Breakfast at 2663 East M-43 – It will be D-licious!

Friday Noon

- Meat, Cheese & Crackers at Croton

Friday Evening Meal

- Brisket, Scalloped Potato, Beans, Fruit, Nuts

Saturday Morning Breakfast – 6:30 Am,

- Coffee, Milk, Juice (Pineapple) Eggs, French Toast or Pancakes & Sausage, Fruit.

Saturday Noon Break [lunch]

- Lunch: Meat Sticks (Hunter Sausage-Hot & Spicy), Crackers, Cheese – (Fresh & Dried Fruit/Nuts)

Saturday Supper (Follow/repeat Rules #2)

- Dinner: Steaks, Scalloped Potato, Vegetable Variety, Dried Fruit, Nuts

Sunday AM Breakfast:

- Coffee, Juice, Pancakes, Eggs, Sausage, Fresh Fruit & Possibly Bacon or a Bacon Derivative

11. OTHER NOTES

- Limited Private Snacks are permitted 'BUT' remember the **NO BEAR CLAUSE**, which will be explained. **If the snacks are in A Person's bag or gear – that is precisely where A bear will go first.** AVOID this by NOT packing extra candy & sweets. Don't worry, one weekend without those tasty snacks will do all men good.
- Voyagers maintain a neat and tidy camp – this includes hoisting foods up at night. Add your snacks to this cache.
- As mentioned earlier, Each participant will be issued a canoe pack & dry bag. Sleeping bags, clothes, gear will all go into the large canoe packs – **one pack per person**.
- Canoe Packs will be placed in each canoe, secured UPRIGHT, and kept out of the bilge. The packs soak up water, and this works to deteriorate the leather, stitching and canvas. This also mandates longer drying periods when we return.
- Each canoe will have two persons. The most experienced will take the stern.
 - In your canoe, you will carry your water and your snacks – flashlight, and any other small items.
 - Each canoe will be the sole responsibility of its crew when beaching or pulling ashore to camp. The canoes will all be "keel up" when at camp.
 - Persons who do not know how to swim will wear life preservers – we will ask.
- Waxed Canvas is provided – crews will assist in setting up and tearing down – packing of freight prior to departure each morning. Voyagers Men's groups do not use tents, but rather a rain fly when the weather does not cooperate.
- Meals will consist of Breakfast – lunch – and supper. Snacks during campfires.
- Camp will be made Saturday evening at a select camp along the river. Breakfast and supper will be served while at camp.
- Pit Toilets may NOT be available at camp – we will use Ranger Style privy. Some Pit toilets are found at select canoe camps along the river. All necessary items for personal use should be packed in your personal gear. Before we depart, **Make sure you "GO" before you go!**
- The Boule will have a first aid kit in Supply Canoe Pack which includes medicine, aspirin et cetera.
 - Medical Kit is found with RED CROSS on it.

- **WATER-WATER-WATER...Be sure to drink lots of water but conserve it! We use the GRAYL water purifiers, very excellent quality, and highly recommended.**
- No phones, electronics or items not appearing on the 'to bring list'

Many other small details and camp remedies will be offered along the trip so no worries.

Remember, we are to have a genuine great outdoor experience while working together as a team of men. We welcome any questions you may have. If so, please call me at 269-838-6410.

Being A Fighting Man

Being a Fighting Man could mean several things. To the untrained eye or ear, a fighting man may conjure up all everything from action movie stars, historical gun fighters or perhaps modern MMA fighters, either way, without definition, we can misunderstand the difference between a fighting man who is righteous and a fighting man who creates many problems, the proverbial 'Raging Male'.

First off, we do not know what we do not know. Which often leads to 'conventional wisdom', or people who believe the 'What got me here will get me there'. This is a dangerous choice for a young man. This choice will no doubt prove the fact that we become the average of the five people we spend the most time with. Brawlers look for trouble to cloak their own inadequacies or idiosyncrasies. They may become very good at fighting, but will likely never control it (rage), often times suffering for it later in life.

On the contrary, the man who recognizes he does not know what he does not know will seek out men who do know something, perhaps something they wish to learn. They will approach those men and inquire about this or that, gaining wisdom in the process. The older more experienced men, who wish to see those with less experience succeed, will be known by their ability to project the possibilities in the minds of those they mentor. They will say things and expect things. They will set examples and goals. They will encourage and correct you. They will however add value to you if you decide to remain humble.

What does this have to do with fighting? Everything. The two extremes we discussed have many variations. You may be a hybrid. A man who wants a mentor, but then judges their mentors, eventually believing they are smarter – usually trying to compete with them. Perhaps you will be a living example of the man who believes he needs no one else, but fails to complete the many successes in life because of it. Or, perhaps you will decide to follow the path so many successful men have followed in life, accepting your circumstances, remaining humble in the company of men who have more experience, and showing your respect by listening (Not hearing), and applying what has been taught to you.

Remember this, however. Choose wisely. Those who you decide to listen to, or follow should have 'fruit on the tree'. Avoid taking advice or following the example of a man who cannot manage a relationship with other men, or a wife, hold onto a job, or who cannot manage himself with responsibility, which includes money.

Proverbs 29:22 An angry person starts fights; a hot-tempered person commits all kinds of sin. Pride ends in humiliation, while humility brings honor.

Matthew 12:36-37 I tell you the truth, on Judgment Day people will give an account for every thoughtless word they have uttered, because by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."

Lastly, carefully choose the company you surround yourself with. Bad company corrupts good character. This is what we learn in the book of 1 Corinthians. Being a good man, who allows himself to be influenced by men of poor character, will prove to be tough. Proverbs teaches us that a hot-tempered man must pay the penalty; rescue them, and you will have to do it again.

This brief discussion is essential in teaching young men how to fight. Fighting is essential in life, fighting with your fists may never be essential, but being prepared makes good sense.

The Fighting Men of the Bible

We are created in God's image, so by definition, we bear a likeness to God. In Genesis Chapter 6, we see mankind becoming so wicked that God decides to destroy the man he has created. Why? Because in all of their ways, they were doing wrong on a growing scale. Doesn't this reflect that bad company corrupts good character? Equally, there were giants in the land during this time period who were certainly not helping matters – teaching and doing wrong as they themselves were the fruit of wrongdoing (Fallen Angels). God here states that he will move to act against evil – this is the takeaway. Righteousness is the act of doing right, thinking right, and pursuing right things. When we say please and thank you. When we forgive and forget. When we seek to meet in the middle or overlook an offense. These are all righteous acts.

Some men in life will need to work at becoming a fighting man, while others it will come to naturally. Some, however, will find fighting easily, and it will master them. They will become acidic, violent, hurtful, and filled with malice. Those who know them, will know what they are capable of, and it will be tough for their spouse and children... Therefore, we must recognize the differences between the two polar opposites. Between the man who does not fight, and the man who fights all the time. But what examples are there? We will discuss a few.

➤ Samson - 1118 - 1078 BC (Book of Judges)

- Samson was given/granted power through the Holy Ghost. The requirement was that he did not cut his hair, and this in addition to his mother not being able to drink anything from the vine or eat an unclean food.
- God had a purpose for this man (if they followed His direction). His mother did and Sampson did...until:
- Sampson rips a lion into pieces (Judges 14) with his bare hands.
- Kills 30 men at Ashkelon – takes their clothes because they 'plowed with his heifer'.
- Ties the tails of 300 Foxes, sets them on fire, and into the wheat fields of the enemy.
- Killed 1,000 men with a new jawbone of an ass (Donkey).



It is here that God does something very unique. God causes water to come out of the jawbone – for Samson. What a victory, leading to Samson leading/judging Israel for about 20 years. And here he decides to go to a Harlot, in Gaza. Nothing good happens when Jews go to Gaza.

Now he still has the strength, and he rips off the doors to the city when the Philistines lay in wait for him, but again, he becomes distracted by another woman in the valley Sorek. This is Delilah, who is a Philistine. (Discuss).

Discuss the end of Samson – pros and cons. God was glorified, His will prevailed, but how might Samson have done better?

Marshall Segal - “Some have made shipwreck of their faith,” the apostle Paul reports in his first letter to Timothy. In fact, the language of leaving is all over 1–2 Timothy: men were wandering away from the faith, departing from the faith, swerving from the faith, being disqualified from the faith (1 Timothy 1:19; 4:1; 5:12; 6:10, 20–21; 2 Timothy 3:8). There seemed to be something of a small exodus already happening in the first century, perhaps not unlike the wave of deconversions we’re seeing online today.

We shouldn’t be surprised; Jesus told us it would be so: “As for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature” (Luke 8:14). Those same thorns are still sharp and threatening to faith in our day. In fact, with the ways we use technology, we’re now breeding thorns in our pockets, drawing them even closer than before.

This context gives the charge in 1 Timothy 6:11–12 all the more meaning and power, both for Timothy’s day and for ours:

As for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Discussion about Samson

➤ Highlights:

- Samson was born to a righteous family (Mother & Father)

- The family was Jewish, from Monoah (Manoah) describes a place or condition of rest. They were of the Tribe of Dan (Danites).
- Samson's mother was a good woman, visited by an angel.
- Samson only had a few things he could not do.
- Samson's father was righteous, but a soft male.
- Samson liked doing what he wanted, self-centered.
- Samson paid little regard to his family heritage, beliefs and statutes.
- Samson was a gambler.
- Samson was a 'raging male'.
- Samson had low character – lacked character.
- Womanizer – Samson had a low view of women.
- Samson dies wifeless, childless, blind, broke, in prison by suicide.

Chapter 13

1 And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years.

2 And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren, and bare not.

3 And the angel of the Lord appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son.

4 Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing:

5 For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.

6 Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible: but I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name:

7 But he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, neither eat any unclean thing: for the child shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb to the day of his death.

8 Then Manoah intreated the Lord, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born.

9 And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field: but Manoah her husband was not with her.

10 And the woman made haste, and ran, and shewed her husband, and said unto him, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the other day.

11 And Manoah arose, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said unto him, Art thou the man that spakest unto the woman? And he said, I am.

12 And Manoah said, Now let thy words come to pass. How shall we order the child, and how shall we do unto him?

13 And the angel of the Lord said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman let her beware.

14 She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing: all that I commanded her let her observe.

15 And Manoah said unto the angel of the Lord, I pray thee, let us detain thee, until we shall have made ready a kid for thee.

16 And the angel of the Lord said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread: and if thou wilt offer a burnt offering, thou must offer it unto the Lord. For Manoah knew not that he was an angel of the Lord.

17 And Manoah said unto the angel of the Lord, What is thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honour?

18 And the angel of the Lord said unto him, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?

19 So Manoah took a kid with a meat offering, and offered it upon a rock unto the Lord: and the angel did wonderously; and Manoah and his wife looked on.

20 For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground.

21 But the angel of the Lord did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was an angel of the Lord.

22 And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God.

23 But his wife said unto him, If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at our hands, neither would he have shewed us all these things, nor would as at this time have told us such things as these.

24 And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson: and the child grew, and the Lord blessed him.

25 And the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol.

Chapter 14

And Samson went down to Timnath, and saw a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines.

2 And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines: now therefore get her for me to wife.

3 Then his father and his mother said unto him, Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines? And Samson said unto his father, Get her for me; for she pleaseth me well.

4 But his father and his mother knew not that it was of the Lord, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines: for at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.

5 Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother, to Timnath, and came to the vineyards of Timnath: and, behold, a young lion roared against him.

6 And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he had done.

7 And he went down, and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well.

8 And after a time he returned to take her, and he turned aside to see the carcase of the lion: and, behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcase of the lion.

9 And he took thereof in his hands, and went on eating, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they did eat: but he told not them that he had taken the honey out of the carcase of the lion.

10 So his father went down unto the woman: and Samson made there a feast; for so used the young men to do.

11 And it came to pass, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him.

12 And Samson said unto them, I will now put forth a riddle unto you: if ye can certainly declare it me within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty sheets and thirty change of garments:

13 But if ye cannot declare it me, then shall ye give me thirty sheets and thirty change of garments. And they said unto him, Put forth thy riddle, that we may hear it.

14 And he said unto them, Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness. And they could not in three days expound the riddle.

15 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they said unto Samson's wife, Entice thy husband, that he may declare unto us the riddle, lest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire: have ye called us to take that we have? is it not so?

16 And Samson's wife wept before him, and said, Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not: thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people, and hast not told it me. And he said unto her, Behold, I have not told it my father nor my mother, and shall I tell it thee?

17 And she wept before him the seven days, while their feast lasted: and it came to pass on the seventh day, that he told her, because she lay sore upon him: and she told the riddle to the children of her people.

18 And the men of the city said unto him on the seventh day before the sun went down, What is sweeter than honey? And what is stronger than a lion? and he said unto them, If ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle.

19 And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon, and slew thirty men of them, and took their spoil, and gave change of garments unto them which expounded the riddle. And his anger was kindled, and he went up to his father's house.

20 But Samson's wife was given to his companion, whom he had used as his friend.