

# Of Paddles and Purpose

Photo by Flickr user The Cut

## Grand Portage: The next adventure in the Extreme Challenge series

by MICHAEL TESDAHL

Director of Resource Development

**Anticipation.** The feeling of “not yet” has been with me from the beginning, through the planning, the friend-raising and fund-raising, the praying, the equipping, the travel, the waiting. Until, at long last, because of some intersection of Providence and serendipity—and time and timing—it has all come together. I walk and smell the sweetness of early fall over the tang of my camp coffee. Wilderness canoeing is an exchange, a quiet negotiation. We voyageurs must bring something to the river before we can take anything away from it. Am I up to this? This is private water. There is no fence, no signs, protected only by distance and terrain. The wilderness is both fortification and fortifying. The wet air and extreme exertion might discourage others, but we who have persevered will be strengthened, marked, even changed this weekend. The morning fog lifts just enough to awaken the senses required for navigation, and we push into it.

**Day 2.** This is a physical day, to be sure. For hours we are led on by what may be the defining allure of a small stream: curiosity—the reward at the next bend, next plunge, next pool. A serious portage confronts us that will take all morning. The stream gets steeper and navigation sometimes seems sketchy. But we’re rewarded the longer we slip through places with names like Stew-



**GRAND PORTAGE**  
ADVENTURE

art River, Swamp Creek, White Feather Lake, Dahlgren River, Lac La Croix, Nina Moose River. I’m surprised that such things exist, and that I am allowed to see them, as if I’m being shown a secret meant for someone else. And over me washes a feeling I only can describe as grounded. The streams laugh louder, the loons wail and yodel and hoot; they have taken “not yet” with them. Dip, dip, swing.

### How can you get involved?

**Be a Voyageur Team Captain.** Captains are both voyageurs and fundraisers; they will usually represent the team on the trip. Captains find donors from within their circles of influence, recruit other Team Members, and shepherd the team toward its fundraising objective.

### What is the Grand Portage Adventure?

OCF is hosting another “extreme challenge” initiative over this upcoming Labor Day weekend to raise well over \$250,000 toward breaking ground on New Fort Shine this year. In keeping with OCF’s 70th anniversary theme, this event draws on the 1950s “Of Paddles and Purpose” legacy of Cleo “Buck” Buxton, and will assemble as many as fourteen fundraising teams committed to raising \$25,000 per team. The culminating event is a four-day, twenty-six mile, four lake, five river and fifteen portage canoe adventure on the boundary waters of Minnesota, reliving a thirty-mile stretch of the region made famous by French trappers and their associated voyageurs. The route includes “Warrior Hill,” used by both the Cree and Chippewa Indians in their rites of passage to manhood, where braves would race up the granite slope from the water line.

**Be a Voyageur Team Member.** Each Captain needs three Team Members to shoulder a portion of the fundraising responsibility, to build prayer support, and to maintain the momentum of the main effort. Not everyone can make the trip, but the canoe adventure will not be successful without you.

**Be a financial supporter.** If you can’t participate in the actual trip or as a member of a fundraising team, support your favorite team with a pledge or a one-time gift.

**Mentor the next generation.** We want every team to sponsor a cadet/midshipman or newly commissioned officer to go along with the team’s designated voyageur.

For more information and to get involved, contact COL Mike Tesdahl, USA (Ret.) at 303-761-1984 or [mike.tesdahl@ocfusa.org](mailto:mike.tesdahl@ocfusa.org).

# Giving shows obedience and evidence of God's love

The Executive Director's Annual Fund Drive began in April and proceeds at a full-court press through June to identify the lion's share of our annual donations, comprising 72 percent of our budget, as early in the year as possible. This has a couple of advantages, among them, we can predict support income and adjust early to budget challenges or opportunities; and a short, focused drive unites us with extraordinary community, energy and intentionality.

You can even make a pledge for the remainder of 2013, stating your intentions now but paying over the coming months. If each of us did nothing more than to identify our average giving habits over the past year or two, maybe round up, and declare our intentions, we will have done a good thing.

Simultaneously, we are conducting a series of OCF Capstone Forums regionally with three purposes: gathering members of the OCF community to hear from and spend time with the Executive Director, celebrating OCF's 70th anniversary, and igniting the local OCF ministry by introducing the local Field Staff and showing what God is doing through their sacrificial efforts.


Then again, maybe God intends even more from us. Psalm 126:5 tells us, "Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy." What a strange passage—unless you

have any farming experience, and unless your family has known lean times like the historic Depression or the recent recession. Farmers always set aside a few bags of grain and protect it as seed for the following year. As the winter progresses and stocks dwindle, there can be a strong pull to "eat your seed corn." After all, the family is struggling, hungry, and just one bag of the seed could provide relief for weeks.

I have an image of the farmer sowing in tears, thinking of what that seed could do right now. Still, the wise farmer sows obediently, and he sows generously because he knows that he will reap far more than he sows—he will reap in proportion to what he sows, and in the end he will not only have enough for his own needs but also enough to be generous (2 Corinthians 9:6-11).

Pastor Ben Simpson asks in *40 Devotions for a Generous Life*, "How beautiful is your conception of God? How deeply have you come to know and appreciate the love of Christ? If you have yet to see God as the most magnificent, benevolent, and gracious being in the cosmos, keep looking. The more fully you come to grasp God as revealed in Christ, the more you will grow in your desire to give. You will find 'whatever you have decided to give in your heart' begin to change. You will discover greater joy in giving, for you will know the One to whom you give. And your discipline of financial giving will not be regarded as an act of begrudging obedience, but an act of deep joy and worship. ... This kind of transformation, if it takes hold in your life and in your church, will have manifold results. What would be said of your church in your town if your generosity became widely

known? What if your church really was comprised of 'cheerful givers,' those who gave freely and with concern for the poor? What if your church gladly served the needs of many, and constantly sought to bless others without any expectation for return? What would this say about our God?"

What if all these things were said of OCF? We have one month to go in the Fund Drive. What gift of service from your time, talents and treasure could you offer the Lord today that would give YOU the greatest blessing and joy? Go and do that, abundantly and cheerfully! 



**MICHAEL  
TESDAHL**

Director  
of Resource  
Development

## IN HONOR OF...

The OCF Honor Fund gift is a meaningful way to honor or remember someone special in your life while also supporting the ministry of Officers' Christian Fellowship.

**Carolyn Goad  
Herluf Kjeldgaard  
Doyle Cooper  
Charles Hoke  
Berry Robun Jr.  
Bobby Newman  
Roy Thompson**

By CDR & Mrs. O. W. Camp Jr., USNR (Ret.)

**CDR Don Cruz**

By LCDR & Mrs. Barthol Talaasen, USN (Ret.)

**Kenneth H. Barber**

By COL & Mrs. Robert Ward, USA (Ret.)  
LTC & Mrs. Robert Graf, USA (Ret.)

**Reverend Samuel Gerace**

By LCDR & Mrs. Robert Watson, USN

COMMAND® is a registered trademark of Officers' Christian Fellowship of the United States of America. Copyright © 2013 All rights reserved.  
COMMAND® (UPS 014-736/JSSN 0010-2474). Title © U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (Ser. No. 76-136, 392/Int. class 016) First use 9-0-1957.

Published four times a year, March, June, September, and December, by Officers' Christian Fellowship of the United States of America, 3784 South Inca Street, Englewood, Colorado 80110-3405. Distributed free to OCF members and some military agencies. Subscription price for others is \$20 per year, \$30 for two years, \$40 for three years. Periodicals postage paid at Englewood, Colorado, and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to Command at 3784 South Inca Street, Englewood, CO 80110-3405.

COMMAND June 2013, Vol. 62, No. 2. Articles from readers are welcome. Authors are not paid for articles published. By submitting letters, e-mail, photos, and other materials to Officers' Christian Fellowship, you agree that the materials submitted become the property of OCF and will not be returned, and

you agree that OCF has been granted the non-exclusive rights to use and/or reproduce the materials in any manner and for any purpose. Our agreement is made in Colorado, and controlled by Colorado law. Articles and other items published in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Officers' Christian Fellowship of the United States of America, its governing council, staff, or of the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Scripture quotations are from THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2010 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Home office address: OCF, 3784 S. Inca St., Englewood, CO 80110-3405  
OCF website: www.ocfusa.org Phone: 303-761-1984 Fax: 303-761-6226  
Toll Free: 800-424-1984 e-mail: ocfdenver@ocfusa.org  
Publisher/Editor: Michael.Edwards@ocfusa.org  
Associate Editor: Karen.Fliedner@ocfusa.org  
Web and Graphic Designer: Josh.Jackson@ocfusa.org

  
CFC# 10531