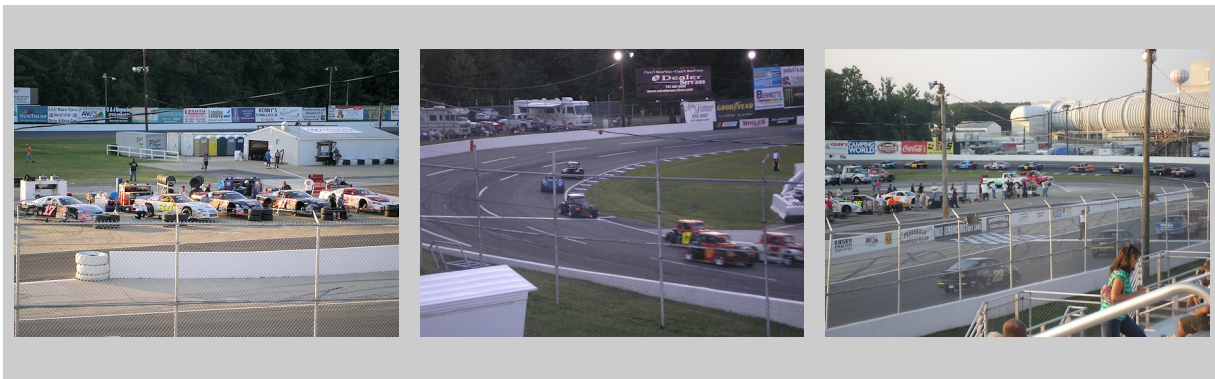


## Day 1

Isn't life, progress, and technology a trip? I am flashing back to sitting on the patio of a guesthouse I stayed in Siem Reap, Cambodia, in 1994, while visiting the [Temples of Angkor](#). (See my pictures [Scott's Pictures of the Temples of Angkor](#).) I was then listening to jams on a CD-Man and writing my trip notes with pen and paper. I am now camping at [Watkins Glen State Park](#) listening to Core by STP on my admittedly antiquated but free and functioning MP3 player and typing my trip notes on my laptop. Should my batteries run down whilst I am on the road, I can recharge with the car adapter I just bought.

*Step back briefly to last weekend...* After another depressing job interview rejection, I went down to my sister Kim's to see her and her husband Don. A visit with them always clears my head and is very relaxing. I drove down on Saturday with the intent to paddle at [Hog Island WMA](#) en route. Unfortunately, I blew a tire and had to put those plans on hold. I was able to get the "tiny tire" on and decided I should just head down to Kim's and see what I could do about getting a replacement tire.

I was able to get a deal worked out with Kim's car shop though the tire would not be in until Monday. No big deal. I hung out with Kim in the pool and we went to the races at [Langley Speedway](#) that night. I love watching the [Legends Cars](#).



Don and his dad, Rick, helped a friend set up his car to race and spotted for him during the race. Rick also helped a friend set up his go-cart to for the first race. Unfortunately, the go-cart's set up wasn't very good and the driver couldn't compete. Don's friend, Robert, had fun and made a decent showing in his Grand Prix but finished eighth or so. It was a good time.

Sunday I got out and paddled on [Bennett's Creek](#) which is about two or three miles from Kim's house and is always a good paddle. I saw plenty of Great Egrets and Great Blue Herons. Meanwhile, Kim and Don were at church. Kim plays in a Christian rock band at the church. I need to go and see her perform on of these days...

In the afternoon, we hung out, ate a late lunch, and lounged in the pool. We had a late dinner of Bratwursts and dessert at a local ice cream place.

On Monday, I intended to paddle at Hog's Island on the way home but by the time I got my tire replaced, it was about 12:30. I decided to bag it and just head home.

Home was a quick turn around to leave on Thursday to head up to New York en route Vermont to see

the Devino's and attend the VUHS 30 year reunion.

## Day 1, Continued

I left this morning from DC headed up Rt. 15 to Harrisburg and eventually to Watkins Glen State Park. I wanted to paddle on the Susquehanna River en route but wasn't sure where to put in. Not long after getting on Rt. 15 from Harrisburg, I came to Marysville and saw [Blue Mountain Outfitters](#) on the right. I stopped in to get some info and see if they had any recommendations on where to paddle in the area.

Come to find out, they had a launch point right there that gave me access to a relatively smooth section of the river. I set up and launched. I paddled up the west side of the river to the rapids and then cut across to where there was located a pseudo "Lady Liberty" in the middle of the river. I stopped to have a quick nosh and wandered around to get a few pictures.

After negotiating my way through that, I continued to cut across the river to the east side from where I followed the river south to the next set of rapids right above the railroad bridge. En route, I followed a cut which I thought would take me around an "island" but couldn't make it all the way through without portage. I decided to paddle back out of it.

I cut across from there to the west side paralleling the rapids. I kept getting sucked into the currents and had to continue to work my way upstream whilst going across the river. Once I made my way to the west side, it was just a good paddle back up river to the launch point.

Once there and landed, I secured all my gear and. There, after eating a bit of lunch, I prepped to take the supplements I am taking to lower my cholesterol and dumped them all over the ground. I think I picked them all up but had to reallocate them according to a schedule that I did not bring with me.



Lady Liberty



I got back on the road and made it up to Watkins Glen at about 5:00 PM. I checked into the park, got my campsite, and set up my tent. Of course after that I had to head back into town to the [The Crooked Rooster Brewpub](#), a stop I always enjoy, and sample their current brews. Their Summer Sky Hefeweisen was as good as ever and the Dogtooth Pale Ale was not bad at all. The IPA was crap though. I think they had a brewing error and should have trashed it and started over.

I met a couple from Big Flats there, the woman graduated from Horseheads High School in 1978. I asked them if they knew the Ramelmeiers or the Kimballs, who are old friends from the area. The dude knew of Rose, Kimball, and Baxter but the Ramelmeiers did not ring a bell. Then I also met a dude from Philly who used to sell big products for Verizon but was in the area to teach amateur drivers how to drive on the racetrack. Sounds like fun!

I had a few more beers than I intended to that night but what the hell. It rained overnight, stopped for awhile, and started again not long after 6:00 AM. I stayed in my tent reading hoping the rain would stop so I could break camp in relative dryness but it never did. Fortunately the rain was not that heavy and I had already stowed most of my gear in my car. I took my tent down underneath the fly so I was able to keep it fairly dry but had to stow the tent, tarp, and fly in the car loosely hoping that they would dry.

## **Day 2**

From Watkins Glen I drove up toward the town of Cayuga with the intention of taking Rt. 20 East to Utica, picking up Rt. 12, heading north to Rt. 8, which I intended to take through the Adirondacks to Vermont, and paddling somewhere along the way. Rt. 20 turned into a traffic and trucking nightmare so I broke tradition and got on the NY State Thruway until I hit Utica.

Unfortunately, the weather was pissy all day and I never really encountered a good spot en route to launch my kayak so I never did get the paddle in. Since I was running a bit early for the Devino's, I drove over to Basin Harbor and had a Long Trail Lager at the Red Mill.

At the Mill, the woman tending bar was a micro-brew aficionado from Idaho who had worked for ten years or so in the ski resorts there. Apparently her time in Vermont was getting her around to the 13 or so micro-breweries/brewpubs in the state as part of a "microbrewery" tour. She said she was heading down my way to Virginia at some point so I suggested a few breweries for her to check out on the way down; ABC Brewery in Harrisburg, Brewer's Alley in Frederick, and Vintage 50 in Leesburg, the "PA/MD/Va Rt. 15 brewpub tour" as it were.

My timing was good because I got to the Devino's shortly after Little Ed got home. Linda and Cassie, who had been in Middlebury and Big Ed, got home not much later. The evening things, as they often do at the Devino's, got a bit crazy. Ed had parts of four chickens on the BBQ's. Linda recruited me to grill the squash and someone did baked potatoes. Attendees included: Bobby Brigand, Selina and Rene, Sara and John, and who knows who else...I lost track. When I finally ate, I put a chicken breast with wing, a potato, and some veggies on my plate and proceeded to eat the wing and go to bed....

## **Day 3**

I had the chicken breast that the wing I ate the night before was attached to for breakfast. Yummy! Not long thereafter, I headed off with Linda to meet Selena, Peter Smith, Andre Bolduc, and Wendy Dickerson to set up tent/canopies to provide extra shade for the reunion. That was great fun...like a chainsaw circumcision. Linda's canopy was easy to set up but the one Peter had was a bit more complicated. We had it totally erected before we realized a couple of joints had been switched around and we need to re-work it. It went pretty smoothly overall though.

Linda and I had an hour or two back at her house before we had to go back to help finish up the rest of the preparation with the prep crew. I grabbed a brew and jumped in the pool! That must have been a bit too relaxing because I suggested to Linda that she move the reunion to her house so that I could stay in the pool... That obviously did not go over well so I showered and we went back over to the park.

I am sure I was not very helpful with the rest of the set up. Wendy picked up Mike Livingston in Middlebury so he was there early with us as well as Andre. We laid low and caught up on the times.

The reunion was awesome...there was a fortunate break in the weather after weeks of rain...the day was mostly sunny in the low eighties. The food was great; roast pig, beans, corn, slaw, pasta salad, rolls, fresh cut French fries, cake, etc, thanks to the "Pig Dude," Don and others.



1979 VUHS Class Picture...30 Years After

**People I talked to included, in no particular order:**

Dennis Senesac - still in the area working at Ryan's Auto for 30 years

Andre Bolduc - still in the area working for various hydraulics operations over the years

David Emerson - living up near Jay Peak

Danny Mack - still around Helena, MT, after all these years, working in restaurants, writing, and taking pictures

Mike Livingston - still in the area, working at Martin's Hardware

Wendy Dickerson - living in the Atlanta metro area working for Ikea

Kristie Oxholm - still in the area, fireperson/EMT extraordinaire apparently

Greg Browe - living in Ashburn, VA, not far from me, laid off from the security business, contemplating retirement

Kim nee Smith

Helen Swenor, nee Loven - still in the area, self-employed

If I have offended anyone by not mentioning them, spelling your name wrong, or getting your information wrong I apologize. Update me and I'll fix it.

*Quick aside...why do people start fires in the summer time at camping areas? It is cooling down nicely at night but still? Get a Citronella candle going to keep away the bugs. Use a lantern for light. I am still on the same gallon of white fuel that I have had for about eight years for my lantern. That contributes a lot less to global warming and uses up much fewer resources!*

The reunion ran from 1300 to 2100 and we used up all the time which is not to say that everyone was there all the time for the whole time. I thought that eight hours for a pig roast was a long time but apparently I was wrong. We managed to get things broken down, put away, and packed up by the witching hour. I, and a few others, went over to Linda's where we were going to do a bonfire. For whatever

reason, the bonfire bombed and we just hung out on the porch drinking and getting noshed on by mosquitoes.

There only a few of us left at 0200 when we called it a day/night. Wendy headed back to Peter's camp where she was staying, Greg headed back to Ferrisburg (and apparently unfortunately got a speeding ticket en route), and Mike, who had no ride, crashed in the other bed in the room I was staying at at Linda's.

#### **Day 4**

The AM was not pretty. Wendy and Selena came back over...people were drinking Bloody Mary's which looked very inviting but I didn't know whether Wendy or I had to take Mike home so I didn't have one. As it turned out I did take Mike home so I am glad I stayed away.

We had a bunch of leftover baked potatoes from the reunion so I fixed those up for hash browns while Linda did eggs and bacon. We all ate, albeit halfheartedly...the bacon got consumed but a bunch of the potatoes went to the chickens and since Linda won't feed the chickens leftover cooked eggs that we got from the same chickens, the eggs went in the compost heap.

We all just hung out... Kelly Barrows stopped by with two guys from Starkton. They had just killed and quartered an 800-900 pound bull and wanted to hang it in Ed's cooler. Kelly planned to be back on Wednesday to process the meat, mostly into burger because it was apparently quite a tough beast. Kelly said he had to sharpen his knives about twenty times while he was skinning the creature.

Rene called Selena to let her know that he was on the way to the hospital in Middlebury with their son who decided to punch the house and broke knuckles and two bones in the back of his hand while doing so. Needless to say, that was not welcome news. Big Ed went over to pick up Selena's daughters so they could hang out with us.

After that it all gets a bit vague. I took Mike home and came back. We had left over roast pork and BBQ'd chicken for dinner. I had intended not to drink but needed ice for my cooler so I of course had to by beer. People were posting reunion pictures so I broke down and started working on mine. It took me about three hours...I was up till nearly 0100, but I processed and posted 50 some pictures to my photo gallery and made an entry on Facebook pointing people to the album.

Linda hung out with me and we tried to figure out why gay guys had a tendency to lisp.

#### **Day 5**

Ed, my brother-in-law, who was visiting his parents in Rutland, and I went up to the [Moosalamoo National Recreation Area](#) to hike. We hiked up a trail off of 125 between [Breadloaf](#) and [Middlebury College Snow Bowl](#) that I had hiked before. We did not go as far as I did, up to [Blueberry Inn](#) property, but did get up to the side trail that went up to the Long Trail. We were looking for a good place to stop and have lunch and finally found a decent spot along the trail where a creek crossed. Of course, after eating lunch, and heading up the trail bit further, we found a bridge crossing a larger creek, with good seating options, and another creek with just as good seating options.

I camped at [Button Bay State Park](#) that night. It is a nice park on Lake Champlain near Basin Harbor but it was wet. For some reason, it was comical watching people try to find the bathrooms...they kept

going into the showers.. And they had just mowed and didn't bag so there was standing water in places and wet cut grass everywhere. Otherwise, it was a great park. I paid \$20 for a prime tent site with lake view. The view wasn't the greatest, nowhere near like those of Grand Isle State Park but I wasn't complaining.



Button Bay



Button Bay

Oddly, as I was driving down there, Danny Mack, who was going to come down for a visit at 11:00 AM the next day, saw me cutting off on to Button Bay Road as he was coming from Vergennes on Pantou Road. He followed me and caught up with me as I was entering the park. I paid my fee and got my campsite and he followed me in so we could chat for a bit. We intended to meet at 11:00 AM the next day.

## Day 6

Due to my kayaking plans with Mike Livingston that gelled about 8:00 AM and the change in plans for Danny's brother's ride to work to Vergennes, Danny ended up coming out at about 09:30 AM. We chatted until about 10:00 AM and split up, he to his Mom's in West Addison and I to Mike's in Middlebury.

At Mike's, we loaded his kayak up on my car and headed up to his camp in Ripton so he could mow the lawn. Mike didn't have the keys so we couldn't go inside but that was no major deal. I sat on the porch and read. Mike was finished in no time.

After that we headed down the mountain to Ripton where Mike could get a sandwich and something to drink for lunch, I had brought food with me in the never ending cooler. From there we took the back way to [Fern Lake](#), south of [Lake Dunmore](#), to do some paddling. We were on the lake taking it easy for about 1.5 hours. It wasn't a strenuous paddle by any stretch of the imagination but the scenery was great and it was very relaxing. I got a few good sprint workouts in also.



Fern Lake



Fern Lake

Coming back from the trip, I asked Mike what he had planned for the day to which he responded "not much." Mike ended up finding the keys to camp in his apartment, I took a quick shower there, and we

headed to [Greg's Meat Market](#) to get something to drink and some dinner. We hung out sitting at camp on the porch, looking out at the Green Mountains toward the [Middlebury College Snow Bowl](#). It was good until the neighbor started it up with the chainsaw...

We've noshed on steaks and kicked back. Mike read a book and I tried to chronicle. The weather was awesome. It was about 75 with a bit of a breeze. The chainsaw stopped. We watched the moon rise. I took a few moon pictures. I never chronicled. The next thing I know I woke up cold and having to pee. I walked out to my car in the wet freshly mowed grass to get my sleeping bag but it wasn't there.



Mike's Camp "Lost Acres"

So I returned to the cabin, feet covered in wet grass, wiped off, and tried to wrap myself up in the comforter that was serving as top and bottom gear on the bunk. Later in the morning I woke up again and realized I had brought my sleeping gear in earlier so I broke out my flannel and got more comfortable. I was up before 0800 reading. Mike slept in until about 10:00 AM which seems to be normal for him at camp. I can rarely sleep in that late.

## Day 7

We packed, quickly cleaned up, and headed down the mountain. I dropped Mike in Middlebury and went to the library to get the phone number for [Lake Carmi State Park](#) where I hoped to spend a couple of nights. While in Middlebury, I went to the [Otter Creek Bakery](#) where I got an awesome cup of coffee and what turned out to be an incredible sub (try the Otter Creek Sub) that I had for lunch north of Stowe.

I stopped in New Haven Junction off Rt. 7 to call Lake Carmi to check on the camp site situation. Had it not been good, I would have been able to take Rt. 17 down to Linda's to get online to research other camping possibilities.

Plenty of campsites were said to be available so I took 17 East across the mountain to Rt. 100 in Waitsfield from which I took Rt. 108 near Stowe through Smuggler's Notch up to Rt. 105 East in Enosburg Falls. From there it was just a hop, skip, and a jump to Lake Carmi located off of Rt. 236. I couldn't get a lake front campsite but I was only two sites from the lake and could see it from my site. That was good enough for me.

After setting up camp, I got on Lake Carmi in my kayak at about 3:00 PM. The lake is said to be 7.5 miles around. I did the whole perimeter in about 2.5 hours. The last 1/3 of the trip was tough due to paddling into the wind through 12-15 inch swells. I should have brought and used my splash skirt. I found out later, on the Missisquoi Bay, the next day, that having that extra sense of security, i.e. not shipping tons of water, was a very good thing.



Lake Carmi

In camp, about every other campsite was filled. The occupants were mostly Vermonters, families, and as such it was pretty quiet...nobody from Pennsylvtuckey. Quiet hours started at ten and other than some woman with what sounded like a TB cough, it was eerily quiet.

## Day 8

The weather had been pretty good since Monday with no rain and temps no higher than the mid-80's. Last night was particularly good sleeping weather.

I got up at 0700, brewed some tea and had some cereal before heading off to the [Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge](#) to paddle. I had paddled there a few times in the last couple of years and really enjoyed it. There is a loop I had wanted to take but had been unable to do so the last two years because I had been up during duck hunting season. This time I made it happen.

I am not quite sure how long the trip was but when looking at the map and measuring it out, I figured it to be 10-12 miles. I started heading down river on the Missisquoi River to the Missisquoi Bay from Louie's Landing off of Rt. 78. Once I hit the bay, I headed back SSE into and through two very large bays, Gander and Goose, before I came to Dead Creek which took me back to the Missisquoi River up river from Louie's Landing.

That took me about 4.5 hours or a little less. I was surprised to see that it took me nearly 1.5 just to get to the bay since the current was moving so well. Once I hit the bay and headed south, things got a bit dicey. There was a wicked southerly wind and I was paddling into 12-18 inch swells. There was some white and brown capping going on for a while... I decided it was time to try out my never been used splash skirt.

I pulled into an opening in some reeds in which the water was relatively calm. Of course, I had never tested the splash skirt so I had no idea what I was doing. I had not even thought of the ramifications of using it with the life vest and such. I was able to get it over my head and arms without too much difficulty. Securing it wasn't too bad until I realized I had the back secured around my seat rather than the cockpit. Once I got it properly secured I managed to get my PFD back on after only dropping half of it in the water.

The splash skirt was the ticket for me! Without having to worry so much about shipping water, I could concentrate on paddling and watching the waves to get the most out of my forward motion and to minimize turbulence. I was then able to better enjoy the scenery and the experience.



I had a bit of a scare trying to find the entrance to Dead Creek. I have come out from it to the bay a couple of times and had a map but there came a time when I was at the very end of the bay and I was beginning to think I had missed a turn. Thankfully after another bend or two, I found the entrance. Paddling up was a bit slow and quite a good workout since I was working against the current. Nonetheless, it went by smoothly and I was soon back on the Missisquoi heading back downstream.

All in all it was an excellent paddle. I didn't take too many pictures nor did I see many birds. I did see a huge beaver lodge...not to be confused with a "beaver barge." More on that another time... I have been on the river and creek so much that more pictures seemed superfluous and the conditions were such on the bay that I didn't want to break out my camera. I wasn't sure if I would be able paddle the next day though, my arms pretty worn out!



Paddling the Missisquoi NWR

I was back at camp thinking that I had only three more nights on the road before I should go home. I wanted to have another night with the Devino's and two more camping but we would have to see how that goes... I had people calling me about jobs...

I took a walk around the park to dump my garbage and walk the nature trail. The natural trail should have been called the "Mosquito Trail." The further I walked away from the park road the worse the mosquitoes got. It got to a point where I kept flailing my arms up and down and around my head as well as pulling my t-shirt off my back to keep the mosquitoes off my shoulders. I was not sure how far the trail went but between the mosquitoes and the sighting of what looked like a private home, I decided to turn back.

There were reports of rain for the evening and as I looked west over the lake, I began to take the reports to heart. For some reason I did not bring my canopy with me but did have a good sized tarp that I draped from my kayak on my car across the picnic table and propped up with my crutches. That gave me enough protected space to hang out and cook under even if it rained.

It did rain and I did stay dry. It rained on and off from about 8:00 PM until the morning though at times it was hard to decide if it was really raining or if the wind was just blowing moisture from the trees. Either way, it stayed wet. I was able to do breakfast and pack up with out too much trouble but everything was wet so I packed it loosely in the car.

I was not really sure what to do for the day but decided to head down through Burlington to pay my respects to my paternal grandparents whose ashes are interred at the [Cathedral Church of St. Paul](#), the Episcopal church presence in town. I parked downtown and walked up Church Street much of which has been pedestrian only for years. I got some coffee at [Speeder and Earl's](#), which was mediocre, took

some pictures and people watched.

From there I walked down to the cathedral, Battery Park, and the lakeside where I took more pictures. My goal was to head back up to where I had parked which was adjacent to not only an [American Flatbread](#) but also the [Vermont Pub and Brewery](#) and have a brew and some lunch. I looked into American Flatbread in hopes that they would have a particular beer on tap, the name of which escapes me, might be Windjammer, but they didn't.

I walked from there less than 1/2 block to the Vermont Pub and Brewery, checked out the beer list, and decided to sit out on the patio there, have a beer, and eat lunch. I asked the waitron (generic for waitress/waiter in my lexicon) if the IPA was very heavy. She replied that it was so I decided to go for the Bitter. The Bitter was good so I ordered a chicken Caesar Salad and a sampler of the IPA. I should have asked for a sampler of the salad... I was not impressed with the dressing at all. I am not sure it was even a Caesar dressing. It seemed too sweet.

The IPA however was money! I wish I had ordered that to start with. It definitely was not heavy. It was clear, crisp, hoppy, and righteously fruity. I ordered one to have after my lunch and took it into the bar to free up the patio table. The place was doing a very good business. Of course it was a beautiful Friday in Burlington, VT.... I grabbed a spot in the bar that looked over the intersection at which the brewery was located and watched the world go by.



American Flat Bread



VT Pub and Brewery



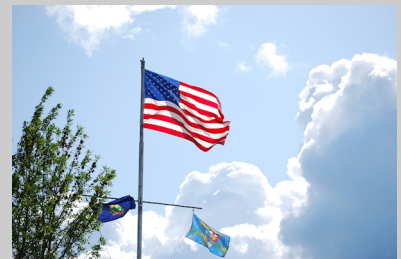
Church Street



Church Street Again



Cathedral Church of St. Paul



Water Front Flags

From there I took Main Street (Rt. 2) out of town to Rt. 89 from which I picked up 116 to Hinesburg. I could have gone right down Rt. 7 from downtown Burlington to Vergennes and from there to Rt. 22a and Rt. 17 to West Addison but decided I really did not want to deal with the signal light hell all the way down from thru Shelburne. I'd done the Hinesburg route before and it was good.

Unfortunately, I missed a turn, apparently unmarked, in Hinesburg that would have taken me to Monkton and from there to Vergennes. I ended up going all the way through Starksboro, Bristol, New

Haven, New Haven Junction, and Addison en route West Addison. I thought that there was going to be a positive there since I wanted to stop at the [Bob Cat Bobcat Cafe & Brewery](#) in Bristol. That had been recommended to me by the bartender at the Red Mill in Basin Harbor. Unfortunately, they did not open until 4:00 PM. I was pissed!

So I jammed right on down to the Devino's. In New Haven Junction, I got caught up with a train crossing Rt. 7 that slowed me down. After that I had to wait for everyone else to get through the intersection before I could get back on Rt. 17w. By then I was stuck behind a gaggle of cars all of which stopped and got off at Field Days, which pleased me. It was a quick trip from there.

Meantime, I had been in touch with Ed, who was going to hook up with his college buddy Rocky Fucili in Orwell, and asked if I would join them. I did not see why I shouldn't so I stopped at the Devino's for a bit, called Ed, and got directions. From the Devino's I thought I had a quicker shot to Orwell but I think that I was thinking of Cornwall.

Nonetheless, I took Rt. 125 to Rt. 22a and headed south. I thought that I was going to head east on Rt. 74 but actually had to head east on Rt. 73 to Orwell. Once in town it was about a 4 or 5 mile drive into the back country to Rocky's place.

Just out of the corner of my eye, I saw Ed's truck on a driveway and realized I had reached my destination. Rocky's place was righteous. It was all dark, natural wood on the outside with a porch on the front and one on the corner of the second floor. Later that night I set up my tent and crashed up there.

The interior of Rocky's house was all natural wood, floor, walls, ceiling, cabinetry, etc. The foyer was two stories with French doors opening to the master bedroom and a totally open area with a railing opening to the hallway. Part of a tree came up through the floor the branches of which formed the banister of the stairway. Rocky had all kinds of trinkets and relics and plants around the place that just made me feel so very comfortable.



We noshed on pizza and snacks and watched the Yankees/Red Sox baseball game. Ed and Rocky have a serious rivalry...Ed being a Sox fan and Rocky being a Yankee fan. This rivalry has been going on for years probably at least since they were in college at Lyndon State. The game ran 15 innings until Arod hit a homer to finish it off, if I recollect correctly.

I was not awake for that but comfortably ensconced in the fart sac in my tent on the upstairs balcony. The AM was kind of a blur. Ed got on the road home to Virginia at about 0730 and I, after watching Rocky run around his place cleaning up and dusting, decided I should get back up to West Addison before Rocky wiped my ass.

I went back to West Addison via Middlebury since I had had my gas light go on shortly after I headed off to Rocky's from the Devino's. I got gas in Middlebury and stopped again at the Otter Creek Bakery for a cup of coffee before heading back to West Addison. There I felt more wrung out than I should have but finally motivated to head out to kayak.

I went to an access point for the [Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area](#) that is not the one on Rt. 17. It is back down the road north and east from the old Mack farm. I have been there before and had a good paddle, albeit during duck season. The water was very high this trip. As I have noted, Vermont has had tons of rain this summer. I hoped to be able to get through the reeds south to the Rt. 17 access point but was unable to do so. The reeds blocked off the passage as they had last year..

There was one point where I thought I might have been able to get through but I decided to forgo it. Instead, I headed back north on the east side and tucked into a couple estuaries that provided for more interesting flora and fauna. By the time I had done that, I had been out for 2 hours. I had intended to head north to the next barrier but decided against doing so, headed across the creek, and crept through the sloughs on the west side before heading back to shore. It was a nice paddle for sure...about 2.25 hours.



Dead Creek

I jammed from there back over to Linda's where I intended to get a few things done but ended up hanging out at the pool for a bit. Before I knew it, it was time to get shit, showered, and shaved for the evenings festivities. I wasn't sure where it was going but it was likely to be good.

Sara came over with mass quantities of food including burgers, dogs, buns, salads, fixings, etc. Linda grilled a bunch of burgers and Sara said she would do the next round. I was sitting on the front porch, where the grill was, with a few people when I realized Sara hadn't checked the burgers in while. I caught them just in time, flipped them, and took them off the grill shortly thereafter.

Everybody ate but by then it was getting late to introduce the game of cornhole to everyone. As it was, I think that we were just in the first game when Sara packed it up and left. I think that she must have indulged too much while prepping all that food. We were nonetheless appreciative of her work! And sorry that she left so early.

So the cornhole proceeded on eventually underneath floodlights. Linda and I won the first game. Linda was hot...beginner's luck perhaps? Then Ed and Rene teamed up and they won! Ed was hot...beginner's luck again perhaps? Linda and I had a play off against Ed and Rene that dragged on forever.

Linda got cold and Rene was watching me and learning. On and on it went until it was 20/19 Linda and I. On Linda's last through of her turn she dropped a cornhole to win...thank God. I was done!

I took it easy on the beers and was on the road early in the morning headed home. It was, as always, a long drive, 555 miles. I made it home in 9 hours, 5 minutes but should have made it home in 30 minutes less. We came to a crawl a bit south of Wilkes-Barre, PA on I-81 due to construction...not that they were doing any since it was Sunday but the highway went down to one lane and it took two miles and thirty minutes to do that.

It was a good trip. I got to see some old friends at the reunion, hang out with the Devino's, chat a bit with Danny Mack, hang out at camp with Mike Livingston and paddle with him on Fern Lake, meet up with my brother-in-law, Ed Davidson, and his college buddy, Rocky Fucili, at Rocky's place in Orwell, hike with Ed in Moosamaloo, camp out for four nights, and get 30 miles of kayaking in.

Life is good. Now all I have to do is find a job.

See all the pictures from my trip [here](#).