

## **Magic is Alive**

**When we were young**, we believed in magic. The magic of the first warm day of spring when we could finally get outside with our friends again. Of the final day of school when the long summer lay out before our eyes. Dreams of ice cream, hot dog vendors and fireworks. Topped off on a Saturday night with party plans where it had been whispered that the guy or girl of our desire might just make an appearance. Trips or cottages or adventures with our family. Driving in the backseat of our parent's car at night with the warm breeze coming through the open window reminding us how good it was to be alive. Being mischievous, pushing the boundaries, testing the limits. Listening to Elvis Presley, the Beatles, Bruce Springsteen or Queen ... our parents hearing from their vantage point feeling the whole world was spinning out of control and us listening with all our hearts while our minds saw possibilities we had never dreamed of before. Magic defined our lives and made us brave in life. Not that there wasn't some significant level of angst for many ... that was part of being young.

**As we know**, somehow along the way, the trappings and responsibilities that come with growing up descended, covering up our young souls with the complexities of life. Our new role became providing the magic for our families - certainly a most honourable endeavour. It is so much fun becoming swept away with young hearts. And yet, sometimes, we could get trapped in feeling that for us the magic somehow diminished. So came our search for ways to keep the magic alive and to wrangle complexity down into simplicity.

**So here is the secret** ... canoeing is by far the best way to find that long ago magic. The rhythm of the river and people creates magic that feels like those moments when we were young. Life on the river makes us remember what it was like to feel so intensely, so unfettered, so unrestrained. It reaches deep inside our souls bringing forth not just the memories but the essence of when we were young. Life on the river is simple ... everyday things are sorted out, already prearranged ... food, a place to sleep with a roof over our heads, exercise, comradery, entertainment. All worked out so that life can be vulnerable, simple, kind and fun. The warm feelings of friendship, closeness and loyalty shared with those who love the wilderness while paddling a canoe.