

**Saturday - May 4, 2002**

The pre-planning and anticipation for the ninth annual Becoming an Outdoor Woman began months ago, but now, just a week away, I can hardly wait!

**Sunday – May 5, 2002**

only 5 more sleeps!  
start packing, making lists etc.  
Stephanie (my daughter) is finally old enough to attend  
snowstorm happening – pack sweatshirts

**Monday – May 6, 2002**

only 4 more sleeps!  
lost my list – make another one  
Steph tells me to relax – she'll get packed in time  
weather is ok!?!  
Darlene calls in a panic - almost a 50% increase in participants, can we pull this off?

**Tuesday – May 7, 2002**

only 3 more sleeps!  
continue making list  
weather is pretty nice – pack t-shirts  
Steph is shaking her head (She thinks I'm nuts)

**Wednesday – May 8, 2002**

only 2 more sleeps!  
call Darlene to let her know it's raining snowballs – she's not impressed!

**Thursday – May 9, 2002**

only 1 more sleep!  
8 inches of snow on the ground – take out t-shirts – pack winter boots!?!  
Darlene's not taking my "weather report" calls anymore (says I am harassing her)  
hubby calls - road impassable, need to find alternate route home  
finish packing, checking lists, and buying groceries (we gotta make pies!)

**Friday – May 10, 2002**

5:15 a.m. - couldn't sleep!  
It's finally Friday – Yippee!  
pack the car and get Steph out of bed, have to get an early start while our country roads are still frozen.  
8:15 a.m. – Hit the highway, now we're on our way.  
9:30 a.m. – We're here!  
get unpacked and man the registration desk as all our new friends begin to arrive.

12 noon – lunch.  
the majority of the participants have arrived  
the weather is great  
stress level for organizers has peaked and is starting to level off  
the dining room is full and buzzing with excitement; everyone is itching to start!  
1:00 p.m. – anxious women arrive half hour early for workshops, scold instructors  
for arriving only 15 minutes early  
1:15 p.m. - all of a sudden its like a ghost town, everyone is gone except Darlene  
and I - several deep breaths and we're ready to check out the classes.  
Nancy and Lloyd are impressed with the new bows, as are the women, lots of  
hits on the 3D range  
check in on Shelley, women too busy reading maps to notice our arrival (and  
could care less about our departure)  
barely an hour into the shotgunning class and already breaking clays  
consistently, much cheering going on, women having way too much fun  
Larry, Marie and Roger have rifle range under control, not needed here either  
remote possibility we might have low blood sugar, better head out to the cooking  
class and sample the food, just in case  
really wanted to yell "there's no fish down there" at the women practicing their  
casting on the lawn, but decided against it - want new instructor (Kelly) to come  
back  
5:00 p.m. - supper and everyone is heading in  
if possible, the buzz is even louder than at lunch  
talking and laughing, the camaraderie has begun. Hard to believe that you can  
take 90 or so people, with different backgrounds and interests, put them together  
and get the perfect mix.  
9:00 p.m. - More food courtesy of the Campfire Cooking class, awesome wild  
game dishes. (Thanks Diane)  
12:00 Midnight – time to fall into bed, its been a busy day with another yet to  
come

### **Saturday – May 11, 2002**

6:00 a.m. - Who needs an alarm clock? Way too much fun stuff going on.  
7:00 a.m. -The geese (Dale) start honking. The dog (Timber) starts howling and  
all our sleepy heads start rolling out of bed – gotta go, go, go!  
8:00 a.m. breakfast (there's that "buzz" again)  
9:00 a.m. - everyone is off - backpacking, shooting, finding their way and carving  
time to take some pictures  
12:00 Noon - food again, I'm starved.  
Richard fills in as instructor at last minute, Darlene relieved  
1:00 p.m. - workshops starting and its time to get the raffle tables ready.  
(incredibly generous donations) Ran out of table space and draw buckets, time to  
improvise - use chairs, piano and floor, very creative  
It's raining, but not enough to bring anyone in (well, except the muzzleloaders,  
Pat and Mae mutter something about wet powder)  
5:00 p.m. - Supper, the buzz of enthusiasm and excitement is nearly deafening  
6:00 - 9:00 p.m. - hayrides, trail rides, birdhouse building (British style) etc., etc. -  
everyone is busy  
time to get the fire going for the pies (cherry, blueberry, peach - YUM!!)  
10:00 p.m. - Raffle time

Steph puts one ticket into a draw for an overnight stay at a lodge – if she wins, it's Happy Mothers Day to me.  
YES!!! Happy Mothers Day to ME!! (I was a little excited - I think everyone caught on to that fact)  
lots of other prizes up for grabs - somebody yells "shake the bag", I shook Nancy (guess she meant the paper bag h-h-m-m-m!?)  
MIDNIGHT, AGAIN!  
Time to hit the hay – I am so tired!  
Nancy apparently is too, even though she keeps me talking till 2:30 a.m.  
Oh well, I can always sleep next week.

**Sunday – May 12, 2002**

6:30 a.m. - not quite as bright and perky as yesterday morning  
8:00 a.m. breakfast - it's amazing how much food a body needs when you're having this much fun.  
9:00 a.m. - everybody off one last time  
dozen or so taking their Hunter Education course with Reg  
Dallas teaching the finer aspects of fishing while Anne Marie has her students master backing up a trailer  
Dale teaching others the goose serenade wake-up call under the guise of a waterfowl hunting class.  
Tina treks off with HUGE following for Survival Skills, hope she survives  
9:30 a.m. - brief coordinators meeting, re-cap amazing weekend - great people, great food, things have gone well!  
12:00 noon - lunch  
last of the door prize draws  
group photo, need w-i-d-e angle lens to get everyone in  
gotta pack up and head home  
it's rather sad watching the vehicles drive away  
gonna miss our new friends  
stop to take some pictures on our way out  
looks like rain so we better hurry and get home  
Steph asks if she can come along next year again, sounds like she had a good time too!

**Monday, May 13, 2002**

only 362 more sleeps 'til next year's fun!

This weekend has been one of the best and craziest times! My heartfelt thanks to Darlene and Nancy who allow me to participate in the organization of this weekend. Thanks to the Circle Square Ranch staff for welcoming us once more and feeding us all too well!

Last, but not least, thank-you to all the instructors and the participants! You are the ones who not only make this weekend possible but a joy to attend. I hope that each of you will use your new-found skills and enjoy the great outdoors. Remember – HAVE FUN AND BE SAFE.

If you have never joined us for a Becoming an Outdoor Woman weekend and this sounds like a blast (and it is!!), contact the Manitoba Wildlife Federation at 204-633-5967 for information on future Becoming an Outdoor Woman events or check out the Workshop Schedule.