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PANP's trails challenging and fun

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DAILY HERALD

A Saskatoon family turned a summer vacation into an exploration of Prince Albert National Park and, in the process, became the first to complete the park's 100-kilometre challenge.

Louis Reed-Wood, 10, and his brother Michael, 6, accompanied by parents Bruce Wood and Maureen Reed, walked and biked several of the trails at the park during a two-week visit in July.

The boys kept logs of their walks, which were recorded by park staff, and were rewarded for their efforts with 100-kilometre challenge award pins from the Friends of Prince Albert National Park.

Michael said his favourite trails were the Boundary Bog and Treebeard trails, which reminded him of the Lord of the Rings movie.

"It was real fun," he said. "Sometimes we ran and jogged. But then we stopped and rested. It was fun."

While the youngsters were accompanied for most of their walks by their parents, they were also joined by a couple of friends for some of their treks.

"It was a lot of fun when our friends came up to visit," Louis said.

"Sometimes it was very hot and there were lots

of mosquitoes. Some of the trails were pretty long. "I'm pretty proud that we were able to do the 100 kilometres. And I like the pins. They are pretty cool looking."

The family rented a cabin at McPhee Lake for their vacation and visited the park nearly every day.

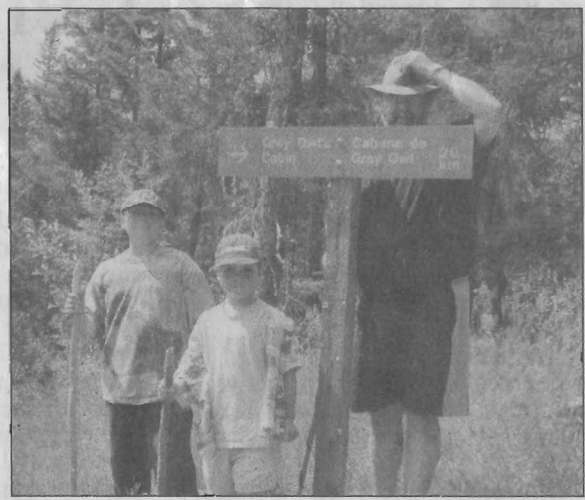
Reed said the family usually visits the park once a year but decided this year to spend their annual vacation exploring locally rather than travelling elsewhere.

She said they found out about the challenge by "a fluke" when they visited the Friends of the Park centre to get maps of the area and decided to give it a try.

"One day we rented bikes and cycled, but most of the trails we hiked," she said. "It took us the full two weeks. A couple of the short trails we did a couple times to build up the mileage.

"Having a couple friends come up near the end helped, too. It gave the boys new energy and helped them keep on going."

The 100-kilometre challenge is organized by the Friends of Prince Albert National Park, a volunteer organization made up of individuals, organizations and businesses dedicated to the stewardship of the natural and cultural resources of the park.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

HAPPY HIKERS — Louis Reed-Wood, 10, left, stands with his brother Michael, 6, and his father Bruce Wood by the sign for the Grey Owl trail at Prince Albert National Park. Louis and Michael were the first winners of the 100-kilometre challenge award put on by the Friends of Prince Albert National Park.