

A World Untouched by Man

Journey through Life and the Cold Rugged North

Great Lakes Hemophilia Foundation
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For three days Earl Stone, 50, visited a world untouched by man. In chilling 20 degree weather, Stone began his third annual snowmobile trek in Springstead, WI and journeyed through the Porcupine Mountains, Copper Harbor, Lake Gogebic, and many other places located in Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula, covering 520 miles.

Though this is a sizable feat to say the least, Stone had more than snow to worry about on his trip. He has been living with mild hemophilia since he was diagnosed at the age of 8. While bleeding disorders can be restrictive, Stone proves they do not have to control one's life. "Hemophilia does not necessarily have to limit you...but you have to take the proper precautions," he added.

Metaphorically, Stone looked before he leapt. He traveled with two other experienced snowmobilers, and carried a cell phone and GPS at all times. Because he takes his factor only as needed, Stone did not need to routinely infuse on the trip. However, his major concern was keeping his factor product from freezing. So Stone relied on his one constant source of heat, his body. "I carried my factor product inside my snowmobile suit to keep it from freezing," Stone said.

Stone realized he needed to be self-sufficient with his medical care, because of the remoteness of his location. He took precautions by wearing safety vests and other protective gear. Because of medical advancements, Stone said he felt confident enough to take on a trip of this intensity.

To educate himself on medical advances, Stone has looked to the Great Lakes Hemophilia Foundation for information and help since its founding in 1974. "Through their ongoing education, legislative advocacy, and volunteer opportunities, Great Lakes Hemophilia Foundation has supported me throughout my life."

When Stone is not out exploring the wilderness, he spends much of his time in Wauwatosa working at his Insurance Agency, or out playing racquet ball to maintain his strength and agility for next year's adventure.