

Pam Bowe: Ice Age Trail Thousand Miler Application COMPLETED: August 7, 2021

TOP TEN LIST OF WHAT I LEARNED WHILE HIKING THE ENTIRE ICE AGE TRAIL (in no particular order):

1. Camping out of and sleeping in my Ford Escape is actually quite comfy. Even though my family is a bit concerned about how much I like sleeping in my car now.
2. I have simplified my life because of the Ice Age Trail.
3. Nature is healing, hiking alone is healing, hiking with others is healing, and I needed some healing.
4. I can get three balanced and pretty healthy meals a day at Kwik Trip, and there are Kwik Trips everywhere in Wisconsin so planning IAT meals is easy-peasy.
5. I can hike an entire year without blisters, but when I had less than 100 miles to go to finish the entire trail, somehow I needed to pretty much completely cover both my feet with KT tape and moleskin.
6. I am strong and capable and independent (with much help from others).
7. I really like telling my family and friends that I am meeting strangers, who I have never met except via a Facebook page, in the middle of the Chequamegon Forest.
8. Wisconsin is a lovely and remarkable place to call home. I have grown to love it more and more.
9. I should never leave a cheese stick (my go-to hiking snack) in the bottom of my backpack for more than a couple of weeks as it will eventually turn into blue-green slime that smells really, really bad.
10. Ice Age Trail hikers and volunteers and Trail Angels and landowners are good, good people. The best people, in fact.

Thank you to those I now call friends because of the trail and those I only met briefly through the trail and those who I never met but who love this trail as much as I do.

Hike on.