

# Best... Trip... Ever!

BY ALEX REED

## A 10-year-old recounts her favorite summertime journey aboard a Ranger Tug 27.



Me and my mom.

### Day 1

The time my parents and I went on a Ranger Tug was amazing! At Michigan's Torch Lake, we took the boat to a sandbar. We anchored and I looked down at the water. It was amazingly clear; much clearer than the lake back home. I felt the soft sand. My mom and I threw the football and we saw other people throwing assorted balls and playing on the beach on that clear, sunny day.

I dried off on the deck of the boat. At first I felt cold, but then warm and cozy. I sat down on the seat. It was extremely comfy. The boat wasn't rocking a lot, which was nice. I went inside and sat on the seat opposite my dad, who was driving the boat

out of the sandbar. I looked down as the Ranger Tug cut cleanly through the clear, sparkling water. That was something so beautiful that I just had to take pictures. The water sprayed up a tiny bit, making it look magical.

We headed towards the dock, as it was almost time for dinner at a nearby restaurant called Dockside. Dad and I hopped off the boat (by now it was like second nature to get on and off the boat smoothly) and headed towards the car. We got in and drove to Dockside. There were delicious sweet potato fries and excellent fish dishes.

After dinner, Dad and I walked on the dock. There were pretty cool rocks and lights that lit the area up beautifully. It was dark by now, but the water still sparkled a bit. We drove back to the marina and went into our beds. The small, round waves gently rocked the boat in a rhythmic pattern, relaxing me until finally I was asleep.

### Day 2

I woke up the next day on the comfy mattress. I got up and saw Dad on the deck. I stepped out. The air was crisp and I liked the smell. It's a much different smell than if you were to travel to New York. The lake smelled good.

We were out on the boat again and the sun was shining, making the lake sparkle like a thousand diamonds. It was still crystal clear as the Ranger Tug cut through the water and waves like there wasn't anything that could stop it. I heard the gentle splash of the water through the screen. I knew that soon we'd be going to Charlevoix.

Mom, Dad and I got in the truck with the boat on the trailer. We drove somewhere near Charlevoix and put the boat in the water. We got to Charlevoix and pulled into the dock we were renting. Both the



Docked at the harbor. The boat was super easy to get on and off of!

Hard at work writing my story!



drive and short boat ride were beautiful. The big, black building was the first landmark I saw. Its curved roof looked amazing, kind-of like a dome or a snow globe. I got off the boat and climbed onto the dock. After a few trips on and off the boat that day, I had developed a system.

Mom and I went up this one staircase to a cement platform near the new marina and I saw the lake sparkling in the sunlight, just beyond the parking lot full of cars in red, silver and black. I saw all the docks lined up perfectly. In the afternoon, Mom and I went shopping. The stores are all great in Charlevoix.

For dinner, my parents and I went to a fabulous restaurant in the downtown area. I got the delicious jumbo coconut shrimp with a nice sauce that wasn't too spicy. Afterwards, we all went to this one store. It had some candy, ice cream and pies. I got Swedish Fish. We went back to the boat where it gently rocked back and forth, just like at Torch Lake.

### Day 3

The next morning we decided to scope out some sandbars and beaches. We found a few sandbars, but they looked crowded. The boat cut through the water like a knife through cheese, creating a smooth ride.

We found another sandbar that was shallow. Dad and I threw the football as Mom relaxed on the deck of the boat. Dad and I were laughing. I admit: Not all my passes were perfect, but it was still lots of fun! Dad threw some high ones, and I made some amazing catches. Then Mom gave it a go. Now Dad was watching the two of us. Before we had to go back to the marina, I shuffled my feet in the crystal clear water and it made a sandy cloud. That was pretty cool.

In the evening I went to a place where kids can go and there's this system that shoots water out of small holes in the floor. They look like tall geysers on land. I decided to try it. I got in my bathing suit and Dad took me over. I saw a pond and there were goldfish swimming in it. There were two levels: An upper shallow area and a lower, deeper area. There was a mini waterfall connecting the levels that was pretty cool. Another amazing thing was the lights making the water glow neon colors as it shot up into the starry night sky. I tried it, and it was pretty awesome.

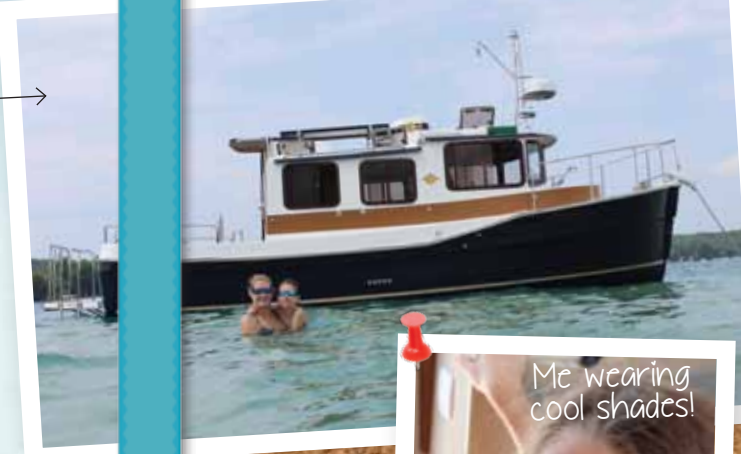
### THE JOURNEY HOME

After more amazing days of swimming at sandbars, relaxing on deck and eating at great restaurants, we headed to Elk Rapids. It wasn't too far, so Dad and I took the boat and Mom drove the truck. Before we left, I took one last look at Charlevoix and the sparkling lake waters. It was a clear, sunny day.

Soon Dad and I arrived at Elk Rapids. We got off of the Ranger Tug. There was a person from the marina in Elk Rapids helping Mom and Dad get the boat out of the water and onto the trailer. Finally, the boat was secure. Dad drove the truck up the ramp and Mom loaded our stuff.

I took one last look at the lake. Wow. This was really the end of our trip. It was awesome. I got in the truck and as we drove out of the marina, I saw the lake sparkling like a thousand diamonds. It was calm and sunny. It was beautiful and truly amazing. This was the best trip ever! LB

We swam a LOT on this trip! The water was beautiful and super sparkly.



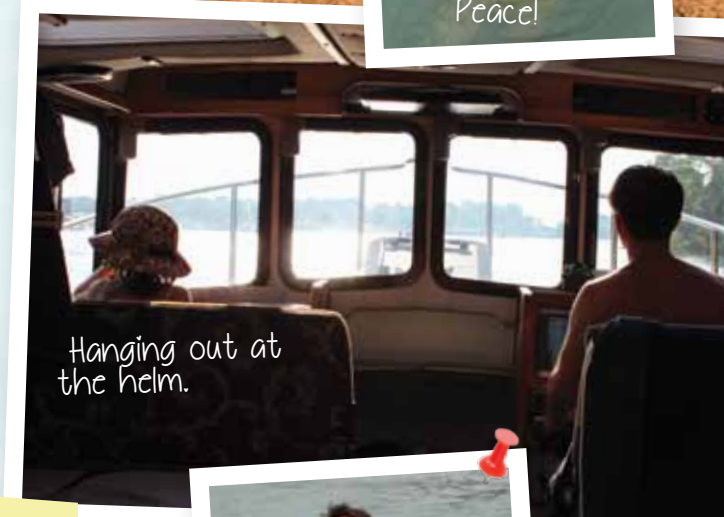
Me wearing cool shades!



Silly Dad!

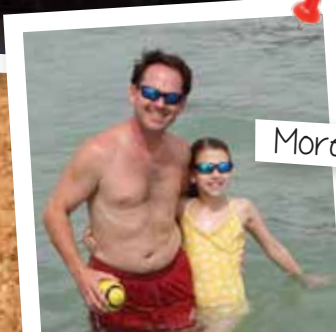


Peace!



Hanging out at the helm.

Alex Reed will be 11 years old on January 18, 2014. She's in the fifth grade and is an avid reader and writer... and boater!



More swimming.