

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Are America's Youth Lacking a World View?
Adventure travel is critical to education and character development**

MILWAUKEE, WI—Reflection. Adventure. Growth. Confidence. Travel by kayak, canoe, train, air and rail. Colorful characters populating such diverse locales as Vietnam, Africa, Cuba, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Philippines, Alaska, Thailand and South America. Are we referring to the latest video game, or Indiana Jones movie? Not hardly. If local author Jon Helminiak had his way, by the time each American graduated from high school, he or she would have a taste of soulful exploration with adventure travel as the conduit.

Helminiak, who worked with youth for several years, says conventional trips just don't measure up as character-building experiences. "Try volunteering in Laos for a month or trekking in Nepal instead," he said. Helminiak believes rich, cultural experiences outside of America helps individuals to fully develop their character and potential.

Helminiak vividly recalls a summer spent leading a canoe expedition of four youth, who had earned the trip, in the Canadian wilderness. A fierce and unpredictable river current toppled one of the canoes, its paddlers, and packs. After the group successfully reclaimed their canoes and supplies, Helminiak recalls a mutual feeling of exhilaration. "That experience was a great lesson in teamwork, managing the unexpected, and pushing physical and emotional boundaries, and adjusting to circumstances outside of our 'comfort zone.' Just like most will have to do in their adult lives."

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Helminiak's adventure travel memoir, *Nothing Routine* released in April, 2006 captures his enthusiasm for remarkable adventure travel.

Helminiak laments the fact that many children aren't encouraged by their parents to explore other worlds. "Families who can afford to travel often take the typical American vacations, such as Disneyland, or perhaps spend a week on a cruise ship. Few seek out unspoiled travel. "Adventure travel and wilderness exploration can result in not only a fun holiday, but provide important growth in perspective, spiritual development, and confidence. Things that schools don't usually provide," said Helminiak. "Most adventures helped me to learn more about myself, and gave me skills that I use everyday."

Helminiak has independently traveled to more than 58 different countries, and captures several of these adventures in *Nothing Routine*. Published by Seaboard Press, the travel memoir is receiving accolades. "Jon Helminiak's narrative voice in *Nothing Routine* has a philosophical lyricism, humor, sagacity, and unselfconsciousness which allows him to reflect on certain experiences as an 'everyman,' but with a distinct and accomplished literary voice. The subtleties in his narrative are extraordinary, and make it apparent that his work is that of a natural," said K.J. Wetherholt, Producer/Writer/Director and Chairman of Manitou Films, LLC, New York and London.

Nothing Routine pays homage to American writer Mark Twain by referencing one of his memorable lines: "Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the earth all one's lifetime."

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Helminiak acknowledges that limited finances prevent the nation's less privileged children from venturing beyond the corner of their own city. He hopes to one day start a non-profit organization to encourage and subsidize adventure travel for these youth and their families. "My goal is to have every parent view adventure travel, or wilderness travel, as being equally as important to their child's future as a college education," said Helminiak.

Nothing Routine is available at all four Harry W. Schwartz Bookshops: Brookfield, Mequon, Milwaukee, and Shorewood, and also through the publisher at <http://www.rockpublishing.com/noroutine.htm>.

Read more about Jon Helminiak at <http://www.adventurequestproductions.com>.

Helminiak is the former assistant chancellor for development and alumni relations at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He's served as assistant director at Camp Manito-wish YMCA in Milwaukee and Boulder Junction, WI. He's also an instrument-rated pilot with over 1800 hours flight time, a certified open water scuba diver, and professional photographer. He graduated from UW-Madison in 1979.

Note to editors: Slides are available.

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