



The final North Pole journal entry

Date: May 21st, 2009

Location: United States of America

John and Tyler are committed to raising funds and awareness for [CaringBridge](#).

By: Tyler Fish

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Audio Transcript:

"Good evening. This is Tyler calling in from Ely, Minnesota. I believe it is the 20th of May. I think so. Anyway, I wanted to title this blog, "The Long Road Home".

I thought I would fill people in on what it's like, actually, trying to get home and getting home after the North Pole expedition.

Well, coming home is not as easy as one might think. In fact getting there can take a long time, sometimes by design. It'd be easy to fly from the pole to Oslo and then the next day to Minneapolis. But thank goodness we didn't do that. That would have been *shocking* amongst other things. Well after the Fram event, John spent time with his family in Oslo and then he was off to Chicago for 8 hours before flying east again to New York. I journeyed over the border to Sweden, in the meantime, spending time with friends, family. And then eventually I flew to New York. And there we rendezvoused.

And then there were two exciting events. The TODAY Show with Kathy Lee and Hoda. and some, well the second event would be the really great food. It's pretty fun to eat anything you want when you can use the expedition and being in New York City as an excuse. We ate a variety: from stops in the Italian district to gourmet cupcakes to street vendor hotdogs. It was pretty fun. It was kind of like just fulfilling parts of the expedition that we weren't able to do. We talked about it a lot but all of a sudden there we could do it.

Well eventually John flew home to Chicago and I went off to upstate New York to be with family. About 3 days later I flew to Minnesota, spent an overnight with family, drove north, spent a day with friends along the way, and finally I was home in my house, in my bed for 24 hours before driving south again to Minneapolis for media and business for about three days. John and I were in the Twin Cities together. Interviews with the University of Minnesota for the Psychological research component of our expedition and there were TV appearances, yet to air, radio, and not to be overlooked, throwing out the first pitch for the Twins game. John is warming up for the White Sox - I believe that is this week.

John and I said good bye again in his car and he sped off to Chicago where, for all I know, he'll be for the foreseeable future. We meet again on occasional phone interviews and of course on the internet or when we call each other to see how we're doing.

So I'm back home. I went straight into work the next day for 6 days straight and now I've come out the other end and this is my first official day off and I can tell you it's not easy coming home. Expeditioners that go on long trips like we did; we are the sailors, soldiers or maybe the study abroad students. We leave home but the world continues without us. We return and we need to fit in to that world. In the meantime no one understands what we've done and I guess it would be wrong to expect that of them. Yet here we all are together trying to relate, both sides wanting to understand.

John and I left home in early February. So in some ways we've only been gone for a number of months but, considering each of our lives for the past 2 or 3 years, we have been partially gone for much longer than that. People ask, "How does it feel to be home? Is it good to see your family? What did it feel like at pole? What's next? How do you top that? Are you gonna pull any tires this summer?" Well, the answer to the last question is easy: no. If you want any real answers to the rest of the questions, well those are difficult.

So, John and I are in transition. I think it's good it took us while to get home rather than taking the easy, quick flight home. We need to honor the experience by giving it space and by giving it time. We will continue to do this as we unpack, journal, answer questions, and figure out how to be in this new place called home. If the Arctic Ocean taught us anything it is, yes, to be optimistic but also to be patient and to be good to the people around us. And if we do this now,

in the last steps of this journey, then we will feel as positive about this part of the expedition as we did in the first days, in the middle, and now at the end."
