

# LIFE Pioneer Weekender

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Photos by Polly Scotland

Lee and Polly Scotland are pictured with Mont Blanc in the background from this 2013 adventure, a 105-mile hike that circles the snow-covered mountain and crosses the borders of France, Italy and Switzerland. It's one of 21 trips chronicled in Polly's new book, "The Adventurer and Her Husband."

## THE COUPLE THAT HIKES TOGETHER

Scotland's new  
book details  
worldwide  
adventures

By Dennis Doeden  
The Bemidji Pioneer

Lee Scotland often hikes by himself, way ahead of his wife, Polly. Together, the Bemidji couple has undertaken some of the world's most challenging treks.

While you might say that Polly tends to dawdle, taking photographs and mental notes, Lee sets out on the road or path ahead, most times getting to a campsite long before Polly. When she arrives, everything is set up for the evening.

And Lee wouldn't have it any other way.

"I feel so sorry for those husbands who are stuck at home watching football while my wife takes me out somewhere," he said.

You can join the intrepid Scotlands vicariously on 21 of their trips in Polly's recently published book titled "The Adventurer and Her Husband," which is available on Amazon and in Bemidji at Four Pines Bookstore and Bemidji Woolen Mills. It costs \$24.95 with color photographs and \$14.95 with black-and-white photos.

It's a second book for Polly. The first one, "By Foot, Pedal or Paddle," was published in 2012 and included adventures from 2000 to 2010. The new book chronicles trips from the last decade.

"The biggest compliment to me would be if people would take these adventures," she said, "because I wrote them as a learning tool. Do one, teach one, take one."

The Scotlands met when they were students at the University of Minnesota and have been married for 47 years. Their adventures began when Lee was enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and stationed in Alaska, where weekends off became excursions into the wild.

Both are retired now. Lee was a dentist and Polly was a dental assistant, working on opposite ends of the Scotland Dental building in Bemidji. While they kept their work separate, on the trails, lakes and mountains, Lee and Polly have traveled both near and far together.

"Lee has amazing survival skills," Polly said. He has horse sense. Every trip we have taken he has saved me at least once."

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**Above:** Members of the Scotland hiking party take a break in Jordan Hot Springs in the Gila Wilderness of New Mexico during a 2016 trip. Polly's brothers, Kent and Pete Keith, joined in on the adventure. **Left:** Polly and Lee Scotland celebrate during a "rest" day in Manang, Nepal in 2018. In the background is the snow-capped peak of 17,770-foot Thorung La Pass, three-day hike from here.