

Camp Good News



SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2011

What's up with Camp this summer?

This summer we find ourselves reorganizing just about everything at camp. It's also a time for friends and alumni to visit. There's a lot going on, and we'd like to keep you in the loop. First a letter from the Deputy Director:

Dear Friends of Camp Good News,

Thank you for your interest and support of the work of Camp Good News over the past 77 years. It was in 1935 that Dad purchased the first 25 acres for \$500, which he paid over time. He knelt down and dedicated the land to some day having a camp in order that boys and girls would be presented with the Good News of Jesus Christ at a non-denominational Christian camp and turn their lives over to Him. This purpose has not changed.

Certainly you have heard about the heartbreaking challenges that Camp Good News faces at this time. As yet we do not know many details, but the thought that counselors may have victimized any of our campers is devastating. All we know is what the media has broadcast. They have printed some damaging and slanderous accusations, but we are constrained by legal considerations from responding in a public manner. We have been as aware and as careful with our hiring and training prac-

tices as anyone working with children can be. From what has been released in the press, we are anticipating civil claims against the camp. We have received hundreds of letters, emails, and phone calls from all over the world. Their message is the same - many says that it was the happiest days of their lives; others have said that it was where their lives turned around and they too are shocked. Sadly, a few are telling a different story.

In order to defend us from frivolous claims and guide us through those that are legitimate, we have contracted with an excellent PR firm and lawyers. We chose to close camp for the summer; however we plan to re-open in the near future, maybe even in 2012. If we are guilty of any oversights or legally responsible for the wrongdoing of some employees, we will do right by victims, state our deep sorrow and learn how to better protect campers in the future. Sexual abuse of children is a very serious risk inherent to all camps. We will do everything in our power to guard against this risk as we continue our work here.

Blessings to you,
Hope Willard Brooks

"Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness." Isaiah 41:10

Who's at camp this summer?

A dedicated group of volunteers now serve at camp this summer. When considering how busy they must be with their own families and work, we are truly grateful. Alfredo Alvarenga is the president of Cape Cod ReUnited. CGN has freely hosted their soccer practices and games for many years. These teams now enjoy our peaceful, wooded setting 2-4 hours a day, six days a week. What's different this summer is that Alfredo has organized a group to maintain the fields at their expense. It's wonderful to see the A-fields so well cared for and utilized for young people.

Two other men working on camp property are Carlos Certuche and Todd Giampietro. They plan to live on site and help maintain the building and grounds. Todd is manager / mechanic at a local auto shop and serves as the deacon of youth ministry at Forestdale Baptist Church. Carlos has been a tenant in Faith's house for years and programs machine computers as a CNC leadman. Please pray that these men can learn to do the camp work and ministry well.



Thoughts from our alumni

"As an 8-year veteran camper of Camp Good News (back in the 70's), I have nothing but fond, positive, exciting memories of the camp. Along with my incredible experiences at Camp Good News, I also was a member of the First Presbyterian Church in Waltham, MA where Mr. Willard was pastor. My family knew the family well and we still talk about the delicious dinners and challenging scrabble games we used to have with Mr. & Mrs. Willard! I even have the very first Bible that was given to me by them, which I took to camp every summer.

Although I live in North Carolina now, someone must have let the Boston Globe and Herald know that I was a camper there because I have been receiving numerous phone calls from them. I have yet to speak to them but if I do, I will do my best to convey the incredible effect Camp Good News had on my life and the lives of many of my family members. One of the reasons I became a foster parent is because of the kindness that Camp Good News showed to the children of Bangladesh as well as many other places.

Please let me know if there is anything I can do to help you all through this time. Our prayers are with you.

Sincerely,
Cheri Ann Lee
(Formerly Cheri Ann Nicolo, granddaughter of Lewis and Lela MacLeod)"

Another former camper wrote:

"Hello,

My sister and I attended your summer camp as children and we also went to the pediatrician office affiliated with the camp. And now my children are seen at that office too. I really just want to let you know that you have a wonderful camp. We loved going to your camp. We always felt safe and loved while there. Actually we never wanted to leave. The best memory I have of your camp is the staff. I had a big fear of sailing, but your staff did a great job of helping me kick that fear and get out on the water. I'm also very thankful for your camp. You helped my sister in ways no one could. She wasn't a very popular girl and she got picked on a lot more than any kid should. It would go as far as people throwing shoes at her on the bus. Not a day went by that my little sister didn't come home crying until she went to your camp. Your camp was her safe house. She waited all year to spend a couple weeks there because no one judged her or made fun of her; she felt wanted there and she felt loved. Your camp was a god sent for her. For that I could never thank you enough. Your camp and your camp alone kept her going. No matter what anyone says or what I see on the news it will not change my feelings and supports towards your camp. I know what it was like to stay there first hand. Keep up the good work Camp Good News!!!! Your camp truly does save lives.

Thank you for your time,

Theresa"

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres." I Corinthians 13: 4-7

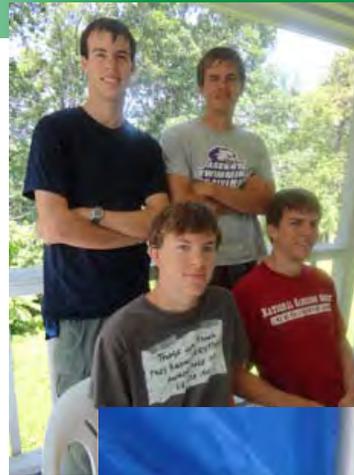
Brothers

This summer a number of brother teams are enjoying camp. The "Ball Boys" and Sutton twins live in walking distance from Good News. As part-time staff for the camp, Russ and Will Ball help with the day-to-day work of mowing lawns, moving brush and cleaning buildings for our renters.

The Suttan brothers work as carpenters and to repair broken doors, windows and the like. There are plenty of jobs to keep them busy. Brendan never attended camp, but he loved walking through its beautiful property as a boy.

Three of the Keeler brothers were campers at Good News. This week they came with their parents to enjoy Taj 1, swimming, boating and sailing on Snake Pond. Andrew (back left) was an excellent counselor last year and planned to return in 2011.

I can't help but think some of the problems facing Good News this year involved "brothers" in Christ and in conflict. Let us pray for the camp family to come together as they never have before to heal and love one another.



*"How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!"
Psalms 133:1*



Visitors Page

It would be impossible to list all those who have passed through our doors this summer. Dr. Alys Holden, Andrea Flores and Rodrigo Morales came from far away Mexico.

Andrea '04-'10, Kat Roland '09-'10 and Anne LeBlanc '09-'10 enjoyed an overnight in Taj 1. Do you recognize Cathi Schneider '80-'85, Scott Smith '76-'84, Pamela Maranzino '80s' and Jenny Pettee-Frost '74-'82, '84 in this picture? They stayed for a few days and ended by roasting marshmallows around a campfire on the beach.

These ex-campers shared some personal stories about what camp meant to them:

"I came from a single mom home who was an alcoholic. CGN was a safe haven for me for the summer. This is where I received Christ in my heart and it truly has helped me become the person I am today."

Why are some with similar stories not bitter or defeated by their circumstances? How are they able to embrace the next challenge? These people all testify that Christ, who they found at CGN turned them around and changed them forever.

All these special guests and Rodrigo too! We were so looking forward to meeting him, but after deciding to close for the summer, Rodrigo wrote us "tell me it isn't true!" Well he decided to come for a visit anyway! What an amazing young man. He writes:



"... I would like to thank you for the fantastic week. ... Your mother is an angel, you know that, so is your aunt. You certainly are very fortunate for having the relatives you have. But there is one thing for which I admire you: during the small period of time I stayed you had more visitors I can count from different places, just to remind you they love you as much as you love them.... So, the time has come for me to say good-bye, but always bear in mind that it is for things like what you have given me this week that life is worth it ...

Rodrigo Andres Morales Mendoza"

Many people have written to ask how they could help. In order to reopen the gates for campers, we need your help. First and foremost please pray with us about this incident, which has been published round the world. My grandfather used to call camp "a work for God on old Cape Cod". We are very saddened by the allegations, but feel strongly that, with your help, we can weather this storm and be better and stronger in the future.

Our camp insurance will not cover all expenses; donations are gratefully accepted. Before we reopen, there are a number of projects that need to be addressed both structurally and relationally. Regaining the public's trust begins with the support of the camp family. Key staff positions are being prayerfully considered and filled in time. There are some key projects that need to be completed before 2012: the waterfront and kitchen equipment and the new guesthouse renovation.

1. The ventilation hood in the camp kitchen is no longer legal. Now would be a good time to refurbish the ovens and replace the ventilation hood and dishwasher. Carlos will be trained to maintain this equipment.
2. The camp purchased a dozen sunfish many years ago, and it is time to replace the fleet.
3. The new guesthouse on Route 130 was smoothly passing through the legal loops of permits and licenses. A local contractor has agreed to continue this process so that the building renovations can be completed when funds are made available. One family has already offered to cover the cost of the kitchen equipment.

Do you remember how Paul Warren used to come with his team from Texas to work on a big project? Why not pick a project for your team or family to take on? The infirmary, Boy's or Girl's Rec Hall, Shamlain, roofs, bathrooms, cabins, the sky's the limit, so please come for a visit and let's talk! There's plenty of room for you and your friends, and lots of fun things to do in your spare time.

Thanks to Drs. Steve Brooks, Alex Heard and the rugby team, and Alfredo and the soccer team, the camp docks are out and being used by our renters and visitors.

In His service,
Jane



How can you help?

This hood no longer meets code



Three busted sunfish bows in a row



I think my grandfather used these oars!

These dagger boards have hit ground one too many times



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