



SPARKS

The Newsletter for Camps Kahdalea & Chosatonga
In the Beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina



Real Kids ♦ Real Adventure ♦ Real Growth ♦ Real Value ♦ Real Fun

Spring Newsletter

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HOME FRONT

The stars are still one of the most satisfying things about being here at camp. I like to stand outside at night and savor the stars. The cool air and the night sounds, including the creek, make it really important time and I find that I am compelled to utter a prayer of thanksgiving and praise.



Things are AMAZING!

First we are so excited about the work we do here

at camp. There is no easy description of the magic here, but here we “unplug” with an amazing blend of care, respect, challenge, laughter (...and I mean laughter!), adventure, mountains and rugged gorges and, most importantly, a community that one can rarely find in life. We all agree that the Kahdalea-Chosatonga experience is truly life-changing. Little did Anne & I know that this recipe would generate a synergism that makes what happens here far greater than we could ever imagine. The consequential blessings far exceed the dreams we had as we started upon this mission twenty seven years ago. It has been miraculous.

Gratefully, there is the miracle of the staff. We have not actively recruited staff for over a decade and here we are in March and the staff is essentially full. It is not only full, but nearly nine out of ten are “old-timers” here at camp. These are young women and men who give of themselves create the fabric of a deep and wonderful community. You know our staff and you can be confident of another summer of challenge, growth adventure, fun (...so much fun!), creativity and heart friendships. We can’t wait to have the camp family back together in May as they begin the many clinics they attend to prepare for the greatest treasure of all... the campers!

David & Anne



Welcome PROGRAM DIRECTORS!

Jen Pommerenke and Austin Ashcraft are returning to head our summer management team!

What can we say? These two have been here perhaps a million years! Actually, Austin has been since he was a pre-small child and has a camper, JC, coun-teacher, assistant pro-director and now he the Chosatonga PD. a similar history here. done everything, including editing the video scrap-



book you are about to watch. She’s passionate in whatever she pursues, incredibly creative and a tremendous gift to our program. These two know the campers, the programs and the camp family. We are *thrilled* and DELIGHTED to have this great and experienced leadership! (STAFF - You know it!) Another inspiring summer, no doubt.

The NEW Sessions are Working Great!

There are some relatively new sessions that have rounded out the traditional June (3-week) and the Main (4½ week) Sessions. These are the Junior Camps which are great 2 week introductory visits and the Mini-Session which lasts about a week. We recommend the regular sessions for the best experience but

we know that some campers (or parents) might prefer to test the waters. These sessions are working out great for them and enhancing our camps.

The goal is to build community... family. It takes *time* to do that. It’s not a short process for campers to really settle in, feel comfortable and at home and to be fully involved in challenging activities and, more importantly, friendships and connections. The June Session is as short as we can make it and still build that community that lasts. We’re glad to see our introductory sessions work so well. Children have an opportunity to learn more about how capable they are and how wonderful camp can be. Parents get to know our staff and the gifts that a little “being on their own” and away from “screens” can offer their young ones.



Independence Day

Hey Parents! ...for you.

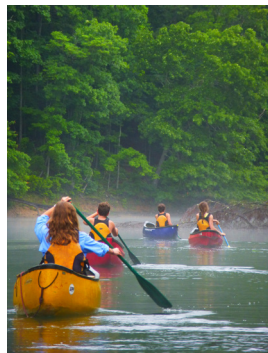
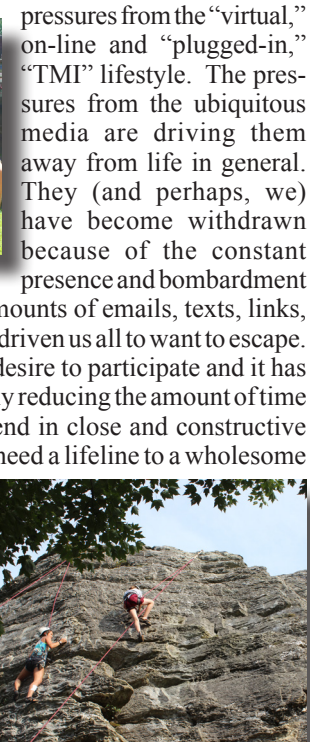
Kids Today NEED Hope as They Grow Up

I know a bit about the pressures that kids have nowadays but it is hard for us adults from a previous generation to have real insight into today's challenges facing our precious young ones. They not only live with radically different social pressures than those their parents had to deal with, but they have the added stress and unknown pressures from the "virtual," on-line and "plugged-in," "TMI" lifestyle. The pressures from the ubiquitous media are driving them away from life in general. They (and perhaps, we) have become withdrawn because of the constant presence and bombardment of information. Massive amounts of emails, texts, links, screen advertisements have driven us all to want to escape. That affects our children's desire to participate and it has the added effect of potentially reducing the amount of time that we parents have to spend in close and constructive time with our children who need a lifeline to a wholesome community.

Some time around high school, our kids face so many destructive messages coming at them that many of them look up and say something like "Wow, what's going on here? Am I the only one not doing all of these things? I've been left behind." They frequently give in. And I ask "What are those 'things'?" They are some very destructive pressures.

What is missing? HOPE. The hope that comes from seeing so many young people (our staff) making good decisions in this world and making it work. The hope that helps our campers to "know better." The hope that helps to provide with the strength to say "I don't have to give into 'that' behavior because I have seen better options in action!"

That is one thing we are blessed with at camp. We have the "unusual" culture here. We are blessed to attract staff who show us and our young people *the way*. These committed counselors are an antidote. They help make this community a place where our youth can learn to live it out a better way. Here, we spend significant time in real life with real challenges and real connections that give real meaning and hope. We are told over and over again by parents, former campers, and staff that this camp is life-changing. Thank God.



Lots Going On!

We've been busy! First, be sure to enjoy the 2014 Video Scrapbook! That's so much fun and edited beautifully by Jen Pomm. We have been adding new climbing shoes, gymnastics equipment, a dozen new canoes, riding equipment for a bit of a new twist for that program, a new van, some new mountain bikes and much more. We re-painted the office, hung up some more pictures of YOU and installed new carpet... and I don't want to forget that we are replacing a couple of the cabins. There is more to come!



Staff Notes - Who's coming? See!

The staff is GREAT! But first a little camp business. The clinics are in place and keep an eye on your email for the password to the "on-staff" page. BTW: There's still room for a cooks apprentice. **SCHOOL GROUPS!** Join us! **Sign up** now for LAKE HIGHLAND PREP, MAY 17-19. Get out into the early spring high mountains. Later on we have Family Camp and Envoy in Aug. IT'S NOT TOO LATE! Please keep spreading the word. Ntow...

here's the staff! **KAH-DALEA:** Bella Arbelaez, Sarah Ault, Elise Barbin, Marybelle Bates, Hannah Bernard, Sarah Beth Bernard, Maria Burns, Erin Calderera, Caroline Carmichael, Maureen Connelly, Alex DiLeo, Maggie DiLeo,

Hanna Draddy, Kate Edwards, Sam Elam, Ami Fish, Rosa Forget, Cecile Gay-DeCombes, Georgia Green, Ninon Guillot, Bethany Holden, Hailey Kater, Mary Campbell Kitchens, Abby Lallande, Andree Laville, Annabelle Laville, Marianne Leber, Ana Leija, Maddy Longenecker, Angie Martin, Maura McCarrick, Barbara Molitor, Corinne Newbern, Montana Newell, Bonnie Odom, Mary Catherine Pankus, Katie Pate, Christie Peaslee, Anna Pergola, Katie Pergola, Michelle Pitten, Tyler Pommerenke, Jen Pommerenke, Pat Pyrwood, Mary Kate Reid, Brooke Rickman, Jo Robichaux, Alexis Robin, Brenna Ryan, Rebecca Sigler, Holly Sperling, Virginia Stewart, Catherine Swope, Bitsy Swope, Zeph Swope, Emma Talbot, Frances Thompson, Maggie Thompson, Catherine Velasquez, Eliza Williams, Brigid Willson,

Alyssa Zingaro, **CHOSATONGA:** Austin Ashcraft, Josh Ault, Justin Bennett, O Bessent, Nash Bilisoly, Connor Carmichael, Mike Crosby, JP delaHoussaye, Matthew DePaula, Robert Fleishel, Kolbe Fletcher, Tyler Fontenot, Phillip Gordy, William Heintz, Len Holland, Daniel Kergosien, Peter Kobet, Theo Longenecker, Ben Longenecker, Miles Murphy, Andrew Nesbit, HAROLD Odom, Nick Otranto, Giordan Pergola, Jacob Rigmaiden, Gabe Salameda, Bennett Sherman, Blake Spruill, Cade Trufant, Jeffrey Trufant, Stirling Welsh FUN FUN FUN!



Keep your EMAIL address up to date for fun scoop & info!

