



CHRISTMAS SPARKS



BEST WISHES FOR THE CHRISTMAS SEASON & NEW YEAR!
FROM CAMP KAHDALEA AND CAMP CHOSATONGA

ADVENT SEASON GREETINGS

Vol XXX, No. I

CHRISTMAS 2017

HOME FRONT



Dear Friends, Things here are busy and have been pretty hectic but nevertheless, we find time to enjoy the beauty that resides here at camp. You know that one of the greatest treats we have tucked up here in the mountains is the amazing night sky. I take time to stop and view the beauty often. A week ago, during

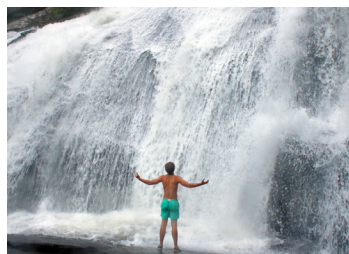
the Geminid meteor shower, I grabbed my winter sleeping bag, found a spot off the snow and snuggled in to watch the show. I think I saw more than twenty meteors in less than the first ten minutes. Beautiful. What else is beautiful! SNOW! We had a dozen inched of beautiful SNOW!!! That is always so fun and enchanting. It makes this special place even more special. Jeffrey and I walked the 2+ mile ridge trail in the snow and we got a lot of pics around camp. (See more: Go to Facebook and search Camps Kahdalea and Chosatonga.) Wish you were here. However, the big news now is Christmas and what a beautiful gift that is for us.

This Christmas season (and the whole year), let's not forget to ponder about, perhaps, kindness, patience, joy, friends, family, fun, prudence and love.

Some Trufant family scoop! FIRST, we all got together for Gran Trufant's 90th birthday! What a blessing. Even Andrew made it from Vietnam. We are tickled that the whole family (sadly, except Andrew) will be here at times during the Christmas holidays including the grandchildren! Family is one of God's greatest gifts while at the same time being one of His greatest foundations. Anne and I are so grateful for ours. • Sarah and Patrick announced that they are with child! That's a big, wonderful thing. • Elizabeth, husband Jake and our 3 grandchildren are only a few hours away for at least another year! That's a gift. • Andrew is in Asia planning and running trips for Backroads Adventure Travel. Fascinating! • Adam & Jeffrey plan to be here in the summer! Adam's working this spring as a campus minister at LSU! He's running an adventure retreat climbing Orizaba • John & Levee Daze continue to release music and John traveled the Pacific & Asia for half the year. He's back! • Jeff and John are taking care of business here in the spring. Jeff was a leader with Backroads in Ireland this past summer. • And Joe just signed a music contract with a great management group in LA. He's been writing music for about 5 years now and getting millions of hits. Record companies began to call him. You should be hearing about him soon. • Anne and I are doing well! Camp is such a worthy mission. We are overwhelmed with the grace and gratitude it fosters here and in all of our lives. We are so grateful for you believing in and understanding what we do here. Thank you.

God bless you, your family, and your Holydays.

Anne & David



And when we give each other Christmas gifts in His name, let us remember that He has given us the sun and the moon, and the stars and the earth with its forests and mountains and oceans, and all that lives upon them...and to save us from our foolishness, He came down to earth and gave us Himself. - Sigrid Undset

Stay in Touch with Joy and Wonder...

By an unknown author:

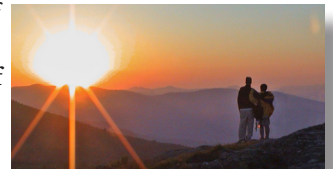
Do you ever feel like you're losing your joy for Christmas? I used to, about this time each year. Then one year, just before Christmas, a teacher friend sensed I was troubled about something, so she began sharing with me how excited her young students were about Christmas and how they all were chattering about the Christmas story and "baby Jesus." It made me remember the wonder I had as a child at the telling of that story.



Glued to the television set, absorbing every scene as the story unfolded. Straining to look down the aisle of the church to get just a glimpse of the "baby Jesus" during the Christmas play. Asking my Dad questions about the things I didn't understand. Listening intently to his explanations and his retelling of the story on Christmas Eve as he put us to bed. Staring at the Nativity set on our mantle, the figurines almost coming to life as I relived the story in my mind. Reaching out to touch the Christ child as if it was really him. Each brightly wrapped present under our tree, a reminder of the precious gifts the wise men brought to the baby. And how very special the "baby Jesus" must be to have angels and kings worshiping him. And somehow, because he was a child and I was a child, we shared a common bond together and that meant I was special too. In the midst of reliving those precious, childhood memories, I rediscovered the joy of Christmas and was taught a valuable lesson too. Revelation 21:5 And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Merry Christmas.

Every Little Bit Makes Important Changes

Every year we accept a number of children who are in need of a place to flourish as a part of a camp family. **If you would like to help with this special mission there is an avenue.** You may donate through Change Lives



Now, Inc., 501(3)(c) and put Kahdalea or Chosatonga in the memo. Please consider assisting a hopeful camper when you give.

For many years past, also through Change Lives Now, Inc. we've



been helping Mogra Star Academy, a school in the Mathare slums of Nairobi, Kenya. Now, we are sponsoring some of their premier graduates with college tuition and an excellent 3 month intensive life-skills training course through Tanari

Trust. Please consider helping impact the life of a child by sending, here to camp, a donation to Change Lives Now, Inc, either for a camp experience or educational advantages in Nairobi. We are so grateful.



Reflections on Our Staff during this Holy Season

It's a time to think back over the year and the years and be grateful for the amazing and great staff and campers who populate our camp in the summer. These counselors are wise for their years and dedicated through thick and thin. They're people we can count on in sincerity and for the long haul. We respect them and are grateful to work with them. Here are some excerpts from letters we receive during the year. (This is for everyone to enjoy, but this is especially to you staff. The work you do is so powerful in these campers lives. God bless you!)

I have to admit I was slightly sceptical when I read the testimonials of other parents about the transformations their kids had gone through after spending time at your camps. We are true believers now. The changes in our child are all we hoped for and then some. He has the confidence and maturity we had wished for him. He has the good judgment we prayed for and has regained the joy of life he had lost during the challenges of the past few years. With his new found confidence he is trying out for the honor band! With his new found interest in sports he is playing on the football team. Last year we had to drag him out of bed to go to school. This year he goes enthusiastically. Last year homework was a real battle. This year he just gets it done! He's regained his positive attitude which is a gift we all cherish. All of these changes are a direct result of experiences at camp. WE are eternally grateful to you and to the counselors who spent so much time with him. We thank you for the amazing work you do and especially thank you for helping our son find himself.

I want to thank you all for camp. It's hard to express the impact that you all, camp and the counselors have had on my children's lives. Camp has been the place for them to slow down, have so much GOOD fun, and a place where it is safe to be yourself. I think it is also a place where they see others pursuing holiness, where they can think and pray, and begin to let God make changes in them. Thank you for being prayerful and purposeful in your choice of counselors. My children have been

richly blessed by the mentoring and friendships found at camp. What you are doing is so much more than you can know or see. Thank you.

We are settling into our new house and as I was packing all my worldly possessions, I came across scads of letters from camp friends. Some of them were 10 years old. As I contemplated whether they made the cut to be moved, I wondered why they had been saved in the first place. I realized that the people who knew me at Kahdalea knew the best me. The environment we work to create fosters the desire to live as Jesus called us to. Camp is a place where it's ok to share, to laugh to play and to love. Sometimes the world tells us that those things aren't cool, and that we should want to acquire, to achieve and to WIN. While those things aren't bad in and of themselves, they can hurt our relationships with other people. The letters I saved recognized my feelings and desires not just my accomplishments or my appearance. They reminded me that I am created in God's image and that, with His help, I can have a positive impact on the people around me. Camp is the training

ground, but it is possible to live and act this way all year round and in all places. It can be a tough order because it is easier to live down to the world's expectations. THAT'S why I saved those letters. They helped me live up to God's expectations. That's why those letters got moved. Many of them hadn't been read in years, but I cherish the friends who saw me as I could be, and I cherish the place which allows us grow in ways that change our lives."

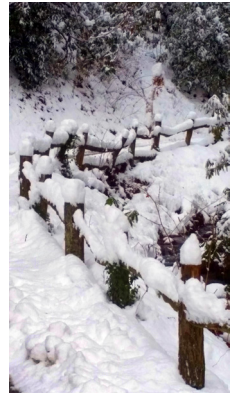
The most beautiful things in the world are not seen or touched - they are felt with the heart. ...
Helen Keller



So many counselors affected me over the years, by doing the little things that nobody noticed. I saw how amazing everyone was and realized I needed to step it up myself! Even now, thinking back to who I've known at camp challenges me to be a better person every day. Camp changes lives! All of our lives... every kid, counselor and staff member. All of us are better because of camp. And those who wanted to be closer to God became closer to God because of camp. I often wonder, without camp who would I be?"

When I returned to school I was happy to tell stories about my summer to anyone who asked. I laughed when my friends' mouths gaped when I told them about paddling the Nantahala, biking at Tsali, and star gazing in the high mountains. In a few weeks, nature's wonders turned into the local backdrop of my life!"

I received two mommy letters from my children's counselors. Where do you get these amazing young women? Their insightfulness, thoughtfulness and spirituality is so awesome. Every summer I am so incredibly overwhelmed with them and the entire staff at camp. It just gets better and better."



Thank you for giving me this wonderful opportunity to be here this summer and to work on staff. Simply the atmosphere of gorgeous trees, mountains and water alone would've been an experience in and of itself. But no, you had to go and hire the most fabulous group of counselors too! The love, support, friendship, confidence, inspiration and awesome faith that I had the chance to share with the counselors here will forever be in my heart. Camp came at the perfect time in my life when I was struggling with the true meaning of friendship. Camp, and now my new wonderful friends have taught me so much more about myself than I thought I had to learn. I am a stronger person, especially with a deepened faith in God. And I haven't even touched on what my campers have done for me!"



COUNSELOR NOTES!

- 1) Now is a great time to get with your best friends... your *best* friends, and let them know that it's a good time to apply for the summer.
- 2) INTERNSHIPS: When Anne and Dave were younger (before they knew each other), they spent some time working at their respective camps during the off seasons. Few distractions, no tv, and amazing time of peace was there. This time was, for each of them, some of the most formative time in their lives. Because of that, we offer a few limited spots to share in that peace and growth. If you are seeking to learn and some time away from the busy-ness of life, drop us a note.
- 3) Save the Date! Lake Highland Prep is tentatively scheduled for May 20-23. Join us on staff for this fun, all high school seniors group.

During this Christmas Season, may the peace of that first holy night be in your homes and in your hearts. May you seek the silence and simplicity of that tiny stable...and prepare a place in your own heart to receive Him... May you take time to count your many blessings, offer thanks, and make a deeper commitment to live and give the love that has been so generously poured on us from above. And may you continue, like the Wise Men, to seek Him.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!



Once again the magic of Christmas is upon us. This year has been another gift. As we think of our campers and counselors, we remember your youthful smiles, deep forest hikes, riding on the ridges, sliding down Turtleback Falls, climbing, hiking and sharing the splendor of Black Balsam sunsets... We think of the sounds of the rain on the cabin roof and spending time with cabinmates... Life more abundant. These rich moments together with friends are part of the very essence of this gift called LIFE. With time to listen to our hearts and to recall friendships, we grow in understanding of the message that came to us two thousand years ago... Just as the Christ child came simply and humbly to teach us how to love and to live, we too, are offered the chance to reflect that simple, higher way to each other. And as the dazzle and busy-ness of the season threaten to overtake us, let's take time to be still ...to listen for the song of the angels ...and to remember:

There are many things in life that catch your eye, but only a few will catch your heart -- Pursue those...

Merry Christmas everyone! This Christmas, may the peace of that first holy night be in your homes and in your hearts. May you seek the silence and simplicity of that tiny stable...and prepare a place in your town heart to receive Him...

God bless your holidays and we look forward to spending time together again!