



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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Celebrating 52 Years of Camp and... 25 Summers with the TRUFANTS!

Back in 1988, just over a quarter of century ago, David & Anne Trufant visited a friend at Camp Chosatonga. His name was Bill Bailey and he was the boys' camp director at the time. We had a nice visit. We toured, did the slide and had a great time. It was so nice to see Bill in his element. Oddly enough, for Anne and me, it had also been a dream



of ours to own a camp and to challenge and inspire both counselors and campers in a fun and adventuresome atmosphere. So it was especially nice to see Bill doing this. He told us that Camp Kahdalea for Girls was available for purchase, but we knew it was far beyond our reach. Nevertheless we dropped into Kahdalea for a brief visit.

Anne & I were in our mid-thirties and we

both had great summertime experiences at different camps. After a decade in our respective vocations, Anne was in social work where she had been inspired to open a home for unwed mothers and I was in commercial photography. I was also teaching photojournalism at LSU and running adult wilderness trips to the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Canadian Rockies on the side. We knew that our camp experiences had been an amazing advantage in our lives, and an inspiration to keep challenging ourselves with big dreams. It was only natural



that directing a camp would be one of our dreams... but alas there was little doubt in our hearts that this opportunity would probably never be a reality.

Nearly a year later, in April 1989, I answered the phone to hear Bill Bailey's voice on the other end. He said "They're getting

Continued on Back

On a ROLL!

WELCOME BACK PRO-GRAM DIRECTORS!

Sara Bergeron and Adam Trufant are returning to head our summer management team for another season!

What can we say? These two did a terrific job last year, they work together well and they know the camp family. Sara's been a camper, counselor, tribal leader, APD and here for 16 years. She is a professional social worker in Tennessee, but camp keeps calling her. Adam's been at camp for a very long time... say over 25 years. He's a graduate of Belmont Abbey College and National Outdoor Leadership School. He's has hiked, climbed, paddled in places like China, Thailand, Nepal and New Zealand. He's a trip leader, a singer/songwriter and a holy and inspirational leader. We are thrilled and DELIGHTED to have this great leadership! (STAFF - You know it!) Another inspiring summer, no doubt.



PARENTS - see page 2 COUNSELORS - page 2 Lots Going On!

Oh my goodness!! We have been busy. First, be sure to enjoy the 2013 Video Scrapbook! That has kept us busy for a while. We got eighteen more of those nice Adirondack chairs! Some are rocking chairs. We also have about a dozen new BIKES to go



Continued on Back

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"



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." And I ask "What are those 'things'?" They are some very destructive things.



What is missing? HOPE. The hope that comes from seeing so many young people 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 is 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. Thank God.

Lots Going On! - continued

with the new and awesome new bike trailers from last year. We have some new kayaks, a new shower house at Chos and much more, not to mention some awesome new staff. Don't worry, we have lots of old-timers joining us again. REMEMBER, it's still not too late to bring a friend or send a counselor. We have a waiting list in at least one session as of this writing and we are still waiting on a just a few Chosatonga staff. We can't wait to see you!



Celebrating 25 Years and Counting - Continued

some activity on the camp and you and Anne should come up to the mountains to visit Kahdalea and meet Monty and Julie Oates, the owners." For some reason... go figure... (I should have know that God had his fingerprints all over this.) I thought we should plan a visit. When I suggested it to Anne, she said, "No way!" By then she was not interested. She had so many good friends and was loving life in Baton Rouge. I said, "Oh c'mon. It's not like we are going to buy the camps! But it's always been a dream of ours, and one day, if we ever have the opportunity to buy a camp, we'll know more about it..."

Through some amazing miracles... (AMAZING!!) we closed on the purchase of both Kahdalea



and Chosatonga in April 1990 and 25 years later we are still here with a lot more stories and even more incredible miracles that we are so grateful for. But most of all... it's been *you*, our camp friends and believers in the dream. You who have been believers in the mission, and believers in what camp can and has done in your lives. AMAZING. Anne & I stand together and thank God and you for being in our lives.



Staff Notes

The staff is shaping up well! There are just a few staff positions left at Chosatonga so it is not too late to send a friend. So many are returning! Buck Beatrous, MC Robichaux and Susannah Robichaux, Josh Ault, Anja Roy, Chris Colclough, Mike Crosby, Kelly Briggs, the Pergolas, Anna Holleman, Blake Spruill, Raul Doria, Maggie, Francis and Bit Thompson, Marybelle Bates, Len Holland, Michelle Dalton, Sam Chasuk, Austin Ashcraft, Robert Fleichel, Christie Peaslee, Ben Longenecker and so many more will be back, as well as Jeff & Adam Trufant... We are so excited for our staff!

SCHOOL GROUPS!

Join us! Sign up now for LAKE HIGHLAND PREP,

MAY 18-20. 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.



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

