



Camp Nokomis Chatter

October 2013



NOTES from the CAMP DIRECTOR... Can you believe those Red Sox? As I write, they have the best record in the Major League, have won the Eastern Division, and are in the play-offs. Who would have imagined this from looking at the unfamiliar roster in the beginning of the season?... And the Yankees won't make the post season this year. One never knows what to expect – but you can believe I am both hopeful and excited for October. Yes, I am back in Connecticut and in the heart of Yankee land. Many of my local friends are nowhere near as thrilled as I am, but that's O.K.

I've actually been home for slightly more than a week. I miss the beauty of the mountains and lake, but not the chilly nights! Before I left, the office, cabins, and program areas had been checked out and closed up and Laura had mowed the ballfield one last time. The day I left camp, Marty and Laura had just finished cleaning out the walk-in, were preparing to seal floors, repair some shutters, and stain Cabin Nine and were gradually closing

things down and removing the diseased trees in the Middle Unit. Just like last year, one day the pileated woodpeckers completely stripped the bark from a giant red pine along the shore near Cabin Fourteen and the next day it was obvious that tree was history. Those woodpeckers do have a talent for unearthing trees in trouble! Once the above projects are under control we have exciting plans for some facility renovations including the installation of hot water in the Junior John. It will be a busy fall on the island.

We certainly had a fabulous camp season! Except for the rotten weather. Take your pick – you could dodge a wall of raindrops or just plain fry in the heat – everything else was wonderful. We had a first rate staff, terrific campers (once again, the operative word was “nice”), minimal health issues, innovative new programs, and the best food in memory. We even got Spiders as an “extra” at the final banquet and the salad bar was to die for. Thank you, kitchen folk! It boggles my mind to review the amazing list of program offerings including Alien Space Race Day, Circus Day, Broadway Day, Olympics, the Aides “Game of Life” event, The CIT’s, “Polar Express” Cit Fair and Quidditch Tournament on Sunday morning, the festive Banquets: Monsters, Inc. and Under the Sea, Staff Skit, “Peter Pan,” two fantastic Broadway Junior Musical plays: “Godspell” and “The Little Mermaid”, and the hugely popular surprise appearance of Chris Wallace at our Fourth Session Social, thanks to the efforts of a former Camp Lawrence Program Director. Who would ever have imagined a genuine celebrity in our midst, or the spectacular classical piano performance of **Mikhail** from our kitchen at third session’s Summerfest. It had a surprise “Ta Da” ending that you had to be there and hear the camper cheers to fully appreciate. For the second time in recent years, we had a rare Sky Water Skiing Award earned by **Kirsten Rudberg**.

Too many exciting things happened during cabin and unit program times to be able to mention them all. So here are some things that caught my attention: The Juniors had a “who stole the cookies from the cookie jar” hike; Middlers experienced a tour of the Island on the Bear, narrated by **Caroline Higley** who introduced them to a lot of Island lore; and The Seniors had a unique “Senior Week” complete with finals, yearbook activities, a prom, and so on. Many campers made pet rocks, ice cream, banana boats, fern shirts, tie-dyed shirts, and friendship bracelets, played parachute games, wrote rainbow letters, had a spa day, built fairy houses or forts, and attended waterfront beach parties. Our Happy Hikers continue to promote the truth that they are “big, bad, and buff.” Eager nature lovers in increasing numbers participated in star-gazing nights and power trail walks.

As we all know, special people are what life is all about, and Camp Nokomis has long been blessed with many of them. Each year staff select our “Best Camper” and our “Leadership” Award winner. Making these decisions is probably the toughest choice we make all summer, given the number of excellent possibilities. Our Best Camper offers a Princess quality example, breadth of activity skills, and is a “Poster Child” Nokomis camper. The Leadership Award winner provides a model we want to encourage future camp leaders to follow. This year’s Best Camper was **Jane Higley**; and the Leadership Award went to **Jane Hayes**. Our Best Sailor was **Maeve Wurtz**. We also had wonderful choices for “Spirits of the Month.” In July, we had our first ever six way tie for Cooperation when campers chose these people: Thoughtfulness, **Taylor Kaufman**; Cooperation, **Isabella de Buy Wenniger, Sheryl Ehlbeck, Carolyn Fisk, Alice Huth, Emma Purinton, and Leah Scheidmantel**; Enthusiasm, **Delaney Sullivan**; and Princess, **Hannah Fitts**. In August, campers selected **Cam Mesinger** as Thoughtfulness, **Maggie Zarlengo** as Cooperation, **Maren Durant, Evan Keare and Kirsten Rudberg** as Enthusiasm, and **Lila Dolan** as Princess. It is very rare to have so many ties, but this was a rare and wonderful year! We also gave out 45 five year pins, nine ten year watches, more than a dozen Full Lakes, and three Full Hills (14 activities) to **Sheryl Ehlbeck, Melissa Hiatt, and Lea Rice. Nicole Sallah** earned the Silver Bow Award.

Beyond all that, campers enjoyed the traditional Evening Programs, especially Counselor Hunt, Dutch Auction., and Summerfest, plus new and different offerings like Build a Bear, Find the Fishes, Wheel of Fortune and Guess Who. There were also two more excellent plays: The Wishing Tree and Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. The cleanest cabins for the summer, unit by unit, were Cabin Two in the Seniors, winning three weeks out of seven; Cabin Seven and Eight in the Juniors, two time winners; and Cabin Fifteen, Middlers - three weeks of victory. Once again the office won the paddle three times, defeating each unit once. July Cabin Skit themes were a different challenge, each cabin selecting an object, place and phrase from a hat and framing the skits around those. In August the skits evolved around some key camp leader who had been hired to do a bizarre job. Winners were Cabins 10, 12, and 1 in July and 9, 15, and 5 in August, plus honorable mention to Cabins 7 and 5. I need to say that I am always astounded by the talent we have in camp – in plays, the craft shop, dance shows, improv and just in every day goings on. After camp, I loved revisiting the village fashioned by some Juniors out of pine cones, bark, acorns, and other natural ingredients near the stumps on the path between the infirmary and the Senior Unit. (Continued on back...)

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(...Continued from front) That's it, Camp Nokomis 2013. Now, **DON'T FORGET**, applications for next summer have poured in and as I write we are 3/4 full. We want you back, so check with your parents and make sure we have yours. Given the number of campers and staff who plan to be with us next summer, camp can only get better and better! And in the spirit of every summer, I add this thought: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." Our next camp season is only nine months away – and it is bound to be a time for joy, laughter, lots of fun and new friends galore. Good things last forever. The next "Chatter" will be written around the holiday season, so send me your news: 45 Clover Hill Drive, Stamford, CT 06902, and have a great school year. Love,

Debbie

DON'T FORGET:

Priority Registration for the 2014 summer
began on September 9, 2013

Registration for all began on October 1, 2013.

Sessions are filling up fast!
Call the Camp Office at 978-975-1330
before it's too late!



Lastly, if you would like to share your photographs from the summer, please email me at csoohoo@mvymca.org. I am always looking for calendar and chatter pictures.

