

AURORA

A NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN LIGHTS CAMPS' ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

SPRING, 2000

VOLUME 2 NUMBER 2

Ranger Phil is Retiring

After ten years as our Camp Wilderness Ranger, Phil Schorn announced he is retiring on November 1, 2000. Phil has become a great friend to all and will certainly be missed. Phil came to us stating he would "be here for ten years" and those of us that know him well, knew that was as good as gospel and that after the ten years, he would be leaving. We have not been looking forward to this date, but know that he has certainly earned his retirement. The last word is that Phil hopes to retire in the Park Rapids area. Make sure you stop by and visit with Phil this summer. I for one will certainly miss him. Good luck Phil and thank you.

A Note From Our Camp Director

As the summer is drawing nearer, it is time to start to think about warmer weather and being outdoors. I am looking forward to going back to camp again this summer and I hope that all of you are planning on coming to Camp Wilderness to visit. There always seems to be new things happening at camp to make it a better environment for the scouts. I encourage you all to stop in this summer and say hi. Please let us know in advance if you are planning on coming. Our doors are always open for you to visit.

Brad Olson

Summer Camp Director

Remembering

By Byron Clark

Here I sit in the Black Building this evening. Camp is empty and I am the only one here - I guess that there are two of us if you count George over there on the wall. Came up here cause I had to get out of dodge. You all -that can't do this go ahead and eat your heart out- I won't mind.

The stars this evening are a bright as they ever were, I can hear

the loons through the windows, and camp has that kind of feeling that it is full of ghosts - and memories. Memories of the best job I ever had. I can't help but let my mind wander over the years that I worked up here. All of the countless scouts and camp staff that crossed my path and have since gotten lost. But, I remember.

I remember stuff mostly. Stuff like the practical jokes that were played in countless years. Things like the camp directors car in the black building, the camp directors car in the quartermasters shop, the camp directors car on blocks, the camp directors car ... Well you get the idea.

Flamingos - I remember the flamingos. Curt Prom and I stole one and left a ransom for some thing I can't remember and Tianctin. The bird took on a life of its own and flew the coop. It made its rounds of camp died and was buried (and later melted) only to be resurrected as two instead of one. Almost religious in some weird twisted kind of way. That night I also learned to never run through the woods - in the dark- without a flashlight. The trees are everywhere out there and you never know when you might meet one kinda quickly. That tree isn't there anymore - the only sign that it ever existed is a stump over by cabin 12. Musta died from impact.

I also remember the fellowship that one got working with other people that you respected - and all of the good times you had. The annual camp staff Christmas parties and the 4th of July reunion week. The foster family fireside chats, catabawa evenings, and hanging out in the Laundromats in PR and Bemidji. I also remember the vacations - like the trips to the BWCA after the season (These are for those who were there "just were are you from anyway?" "Kiwishiwi" "Baby and momma", "RUN AWAY - RUN AWAY", and "look at that rock --I'VE NEVER SEEN A ROCK LIKE THAT ONE BEFORE").

And I remember those things we used to say. Our own English lingo that only we understood. The code words for certain problem individuals, and the phrases we made up just cuz. Dino and Et Enna (did I spell that right?), Brick, Shapeshifter, Giltwell Old Folks Home and more. Who could forget those soundtracks from the summer blockbuster hits. I can still recite most of Good Morning Vietnam - and I still don't wish to see it again! I haven't worn my Batman shirt since I saw the movie.

Continued on page four

AURORA DEADLINES

November 1 - Articles Due

November 27 - Aurora Mailed

If possible, e-mail your articles to Ron as a Word attachment, otherwise send us a hard copy.

Schneids@att.net

or

Ron Schneider

1608 South 17th Street

Moorhead, MN 56560

218 236-5072 Home Phone

Mark your calendars!

Annual Summer Camp Reunion Week!

July 2 to 8 , 2000

This is the week that many former camp staffers and campers return to Camp Wilderness to help out the summer staff, hang out together, and just plain have a great time. Call Brad Olson, Summer Camp Director, at 218 732-4674 for more information.

See you at camp this summer!

Capital Campaign Update

The capital campaign for Camp Wilderness continues to grow steadily. Phases one, two and three are completed and the final phase, phase four is well under way. To date, **\$ 1,028,549.00** has been raised. Thanks to all that have helped out. If you would like more information about the campaign, please contact Mark Holtz, Council Scout Executive, 301 South 7th Street, Fargo, ND 58103 or call him toll free at 877 293-5011.

Changes at Camp Wilderness

The new 3-D archery range will be up and running this summer. Scouts will have the opportunity to test their archery skills on a variety of animal targets placed in the woods. The Venture Fishing Program has been eliminated, but the boats will continue to be available for check out for fishing. The new Nature building will be under construction this summer, as well as about 20 new campsite and program area latrines. In addition to the above, visitors to camp will notice that the logging and re-forestation operation has begun through-out the camp.

The *Aurora* is the official publication of the Northern Lights Camps' Alumni Association, 301 South 7th Street, Fargo, ND, 58103. It is published three times per year. The purpose of the Association is: to preserve and promote the camping opportunities at our council camps, to inform the membership of the camps current progress, to provide support for the current operations with our time, talents and assets, and to organize gatherings of the association. Membership is open to all past camp staff members, campers or anyone with an interest in the camps. Association dues are \$ 15.00 per year for annual membership, \$ 25.00 or more Sustaining memberships or \$ 150.00 (one time) Life Memberships. The Association's dues year begins June 1. Send any comments, article ideas or questions to Ron Schneider, 1608 South 17th Street, Moorhead, MN, 56560 or call 218 236-5072.

One Mans Experience

(Editors Note: Below you will find an article that Charles Challey, wrote, at our request, about his experience with the Peace Corps. This is Scouting at its best. Charles is 25 years old and live in Fargo. He has been on the Camp Wilderness Summer Camp staff for a number of years. He has been: '93 Commissioner Aide, '94 Commissioner (Cooking), '95 Scoutcraft Assistant (Cooking), '96-'97 Shooting Sports Director. Charles is returning to camp this summer as the Shooting Sports Director. Be sure to look him up when you are at camp this summer. You will be glad you did.)

When I graduated from college three years ago, I made the decision to join the Peace Corps. I spent the summer of 1997 at Camp wondering exactly what I needed to do in order to be prepared for the experience. Would I need a tent? What sort of clothes should I bring? I knew that I was going to be teaching, but I had little idea where. The three years since that summer were about education. It was part of the education of the three hundred "learners" that were in my various classes and it was also my education. I learned that "prepared" means more than what you pack, and found that the lessons of Scouting were the most important things that I carried.

My assignment was to teach English in Namibia, a country on the Atlantic coast of Africa, just north of South Africa. It is about 318,000 square miles, the size of Texas and North Dakota combined. The country is dry, hot and home to only 1.6 million people. Namibia was controlled by South Africa until 1989, and so is recovering from the affects of apartheid. This policy of extreme racial separation existed in South Africa until 1990, and was the reason that Nelson Mandela was in prison. The national language is English, but that had only been the case for eight years. The country and its people and problems were totally beyond anything that I had ever experienced. The Peace Corps assured me that they would help me prepare.

When I was invited to serve in Namibia the Peace Corps sent me a packing list. It told me to bring clothes suitable for a professional environment, as teachers in most Peace Corps countries dress quite formally. The list said that I would need other clothes including a jacket, a sweater, gloves, pants, shorts and a few t-shirts. It told me that I might want sandals, sunglasses, a coffee maker and whatever else I felt I would need for two years. And it said that all this could weigh no more than eighty pounds. I brought all of those things, only to find that I didn't need three suits, that I did want a laptop computer and that sweaters are pretty useless when it's 95 degrees every day.

The Peace Corps said that I would need to be flexible and adapt to the local customs. I found myself teaching English, physics, chemistry and math. I had to convince my students that beating them was not a good punishment. I had to pass students who earned 35% for the year, and fail students who had come to me for help at least once a week. I did technical support for the school's new duplicating machine, as well as for the machine in the "district office" nearby. I taught computer basics to people who don't have running water. Irony was a daily fact. My beliefs about fairness and justice were challenged.

I was the minority. The school had about six hundred students, seventeen teachers, a secretary, a shopkeeper and two cleaners. I was the only white person for six miles, the nearest being another Peace Corps volunteer. I did not speak the local language fluently and I did not have any family in the area. I was, in many ways, a novelty and a curiosity. Small children came to my house asking for candy. Other people came asking me to take their photograph. No one came to ask where I had come from, or how I felt about being so far from home. I was simply different. I did not have a wife or children. I did not even fit their idea of what a white person

See back of page for the remainder of the article

One Man's Experience continued

should be. I had no car, little money and did not hire people to do my washing and cooking. At the end of my service, though, I left many friends. In some ways, leaving Endola village was like leaving home.

I could not have been prepared for any of these specific conditions. There is no way that I could have understood what it would be like to be a minority, to be a teacher, or to live in the only house with electricity and running water for a mile in any direction. But I was prepared for challenges. I did not tie a single bowline in Africa. I never used first aid, and I pitched my tent four times. Perhaps those are not the true skills of Scouting. Patience, hard work, politeness, compassion, frugality and faith were the skills that were most in demand. I lived on \$200 a month, and had savings. I learned to wake up at six every morning and spend most of the day trying to teach classes of thirty-five or more ninth graders how to use capital letters, or explain the properties of electricity to tenth graders who only saw it at school or the nearby shops. I learned that education is more than grades and tests and report cards, but that those measurements are all that I could show the students sometimes. I learned that being the only one who does not believe in beating students takes courage. And I learned that faith is strong enough to support even one believer.

Scouting is, I believe, a tool that is used to show people how to work together and how to survive alone. It is not really about the skills that we teach, but about the way that we teach them and the example that is set by those teachers. In my years as a Scout I was fortunate to know many good teachers. As a staffer I worked with many more. I hope that Scouts at Wilderness will continue to have those examples to follow, and that they will leave Camp a little more prepared for life.

REMEMBERING---Continued from page one--

Metigoshe! I remember Tent City, campin' in the scrub brush, and the electrical outlets that made it as good as the Hilton - well the Hilton with bugs anyway. Sleeping in the Pringle, mad dashes across the border, and leaches in water so thick with weeds you could hardly paddle through it. Not to mention the floaties in the drinking water - nuf said.

I remember the Scouts. The good feeling after a long day in which you worked hard, and slept hard. The good feeling when you just know that you made a positive difference in a scouts life - the feeling that you got from making him believe in himself, and doing the impossible. The knowledge that you made a difference in someone's life. And it was good.

But most of all I remember the friends. I still try to keep in touch with some - but I'm not real good at it. Life is kinda funny that way. You get to meet some of the greatest people and them get to leave them at the end of the season - some of which you will maybe never see again. But for the ones I do keep in touch with, it often seems like we never left. Camp staff is kinda funny like that. You just pick up where you left off. No one seem to care that you've changed - lost some hair, put on a few pounds, or even have a new wife with kids in tow. I think Pitzer said it best. It was the end of the season and we were all going to go home. There were lots of good-byes from a really good summer and nobody really wanted to go. Ptizer exclaimed, rather of factly, "Tomorrow I return to my place of Winter residence, but Wilderness IS MY HOME." I couldn't have said it better myself.

New for 2000

A number of improvements are being made to Camp Wilderness in 2000. When you arrive at camp this summer, you will be greeted with a number of newly completed projects and with construction of a few more. Improvements that are being made are:

- New 3,000 square foot Nature building
- Metal storage building (105' x 28')
- Twenty new latrines in campsites and program areas
- New program shelters in Blackfoot and Tail Beaver
- Six new metal framed dining shelters for campsites
- Eight new CIT tent platforms and frames
- Six new picnic tables
- New 14 foot Lund boat for the waterfront
- Eight new heavy barreled .22 target rifles
- New archery netting and backstops
- New 3-D archery range
- New boat ramp on Bad Axe Lake
- New Trailblazer area storage shed
- Newly completed Winter Trading Post/Training Center
- Remodeling of Cabin 7
- Remodeling and expansion of the ranger's residence
- Two new 40 KW generators for power outages
- New 773 Bobcat and attachments for trail maintenance
- Newly cleared Cub Camp area
- New range/convection oven for kitchen
- Additional parking areas
- Gravel on road into the camp
- Additional rock to cover the main parking area
- New fire hoses for fire fighting
- Newly created Cross Country ski and hiking trail

PASS THIS ON TO A FRIEND!
Northern Lights Camps' Alumni Association
Membership Application

The purpose of the Association is: to preserve and promote the camping opportunities at our council camps, to inform the membership of the camps current progress, to provide support for the current operations with our time, talents and assets, and to organize gatherings of the association. Membership is open to all past camp staff members, campers or anyone with an interest in the camps. The Aurora is the official publication of the Northern Lights Camps Alumni Association, 301 South 7th Street, Fargo, ND 58103. It is published three times per year.

Association dues are \$ 15.00 per year for annual membership, \$ 25.00 or more annually for Sustaining memberships or \$ 150.00 (one time) Life Memberships. The Association's dues year begins June 1. Send any comments, article ideas or questions to Ron Schneider, 1608 South 17th Street, Moorhead, MN 56560 or e-mail them to Schneids@att.net.
Please complete the information requested below and mail to:

Northern Lights Camps' Alumni Association
301 South 7th Street
Fargo, ND 58103
PLEASE PRINT

Name _____ Home phone _____

Address _____

E-mail address _____

Year(s) at camp: Camper _____
Leader _____
Staff position(s) and year(s) _____

Count on me to help with the association.

I'll help with membership _____ steering committee _____ newsletter _____ whatever _____

Tell us something about yourself (this may get printed in a future issue of the newsletter.)

Enclosed are my membership dues and/or contribution: \$15 ___ \$25 ___ other ___
Lifetime Membership \$150 ___ Lifetime paid in full ___ or 3 annual payments of \$50 ___

Make checks payable to the Northern Lights Camps' Alumni Association

So where is ole what's his/her name now?

Jeff Pastir is living in Plymouth, MN after short stints in Roseau, MN and Fargo, ND He is practicing Family Medicine for HealthPartners. He also teaches undergraduate Family Medicine courses for the University of Minnesota Medical School. Jeff continues his involvement in Scouting and is currently the District Vice-Chairman and District Camping Chair with Viking Council out of the Twin Cities. He also assists with adult leader training. Jeff and his wife, Beth, have a son, Jeremy age 4, one dog, "a house in the suburbs which still needs the picket fence. And I am STILL paying for my school loans. (The end is in sight.)" Years on staff: 77-78, 82-89, CIT Emeritus one year after that Encourage EVERYONE to join the Alumni Association. E-mail address: Jpastir@aol.com

Chris Tveitbakk is living in Minneapolis. He is a freelance Audio Engineer. He records, edits, and mixes audio for clients such as American Express, Best Buy, and the MN Timberwolves to name a few. He recently finished a commercial shoot with Kirby Puckett and also watched the Timberwolves lose they're last playoff game of the season.

Chris recently got married in Sweden. His wife's name is

Petra. They met December, 1998 while she was an Au Pair in the Twin Cities. She recently cleared her way through immigration and arrived in the U.S. on April 28th. Chris and Petra are planning on being at camp for the 4th of July weekend, so catch them there! E-mail Chris at: ctveitbakk@uswest.net

Much of the following was provided by Byron Clark...

Brodie Pederson is married and has two kids - that's all I know.

Tony Clark is running for Public Service Commissioner in North Dakota. He is currently the North Dakota Labor Commissioner. He is married to a nice lady named Amy and they have lots of cats.

Heard it through hearsay that **Matt Mahrol** is now married and a pastor in a Lutheran church somewhere in Minnesota. Based on the stories he used to tell the sermons should be entertaining.!

Byron Clark is seeking reelection to the North Dakota House of Representatives. He serves on the Finance and Tax, and Natural Resources committees during the legislative session. In the Interim, he serves on the Budget committee for Health Care and the Commerce and Labor committee. He will be

completing his MBA this summer - and its about time.

Neil Litton is still teaching in Casselton. We still see him on occasion.

Bill Mittberg is married and currently living in California with his wife Trisha and their son Gregory.

Kristin and Chuck Votova are announced that they hare having a baby.

Chris Soper is currently working in San Antonio, Texas. He still maintains his residence in Kansas and runs a good hotel business for ex-staffers passing through. The company isn't bad either, but you might want to go out to eat.

Phil Schorn announces his retirement from serving as Ranger at Camp Wilderness. He will stay with us until November 1. Thanks for you service Phil. You will be missed.

Tom Gobernatz where are you anyway?

Come to think of it - where are YOU. Write and let us know. Send in any comments to the association or to Ron Schneider - the guy who writes this stuff for the newsletter.

Alumni Association Members!

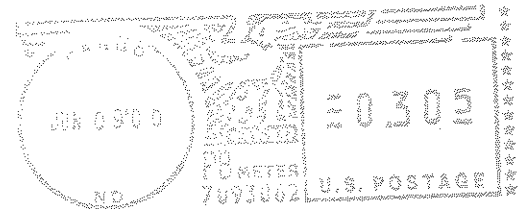
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