



CYMCA Camp Carson

An Experience That Lasts A Lifetime!

Fall 2010
Volume 4, Issue 2



REFLECTIONS . . .



Heather is pictured here with her Dad, Wayne Fiester (also an alumni), her husband James (also alumni as was his father) and their four children left to right – Abby, Matthew, Silas and Caleb.

from former staff member Heather Fiester Cullen on Returning to Camp Carson this summer as Camp Nurse

As I was walking through the home neighborhood of my “real life,” taking in the aromas of freshly mown grass and the hot, hot days of August, my thoughts suddenly rushed back to a simpler, care-free time in my life...my years at Camp Carson. I spent many summers there from 1985-1989 as I progressed from junior staff to senior staff. Boy...those were the days! Hot, hot summer days filled with hard work followed by spontaneous jumps in the lake when I tried to get down to the ‘still, really cool’ spots at the lake’s deep parts! Working at camp was one of the toughest jobs I ever held and to this day remains an experience I hold dear in heart.

These feelings and thoughts are fresh in my mind because I had the wonderful opportunity to return to Camp Carson for 2 weeks this summer as the camp nurse. During my stay, I noticed some things have changed - for the better! I had air conditioning in my nurse’s cabin! I had a golf cart to retrieve ill or hurt kiddos quickly. But, the

longer I stayed at camp, the more I realized it’s the same. The core values, Wednesday cookout, Hootenany, and most of all, the feel of camp is still there.

One of the most exciting aspects of my return to camp was that my husband, James (whom I met at camp and who was a counselor with me) and I, got to see our four children Caleb 13, Matthew 12, Abby 9, and Silas 7, experience camp for the first time. From Silas’s bug-eyed ‘blooper’ plop into the water for his first swim test, to Abby’s eyes of wonder as her counselors became the all-knowing, all-powerful girls in her life, to my older boys’ mudcaked, sweat-soaked smiles that said “I’m so cool, look-what-I-can-do” after motorcycle riding, to the ears of James and I ringing with dining room songs and chants and our tummies filled with Jerri’s awesome cooking. I can honestly say - the more camp changes, the more it stays the same. Great confidence builders, great times, sooo care-free - it was hard to come back to my “real life”.

Those two weeks this summer contained other surprises. I got to work with Susie Kolker Bala, also

an alumni, who was volunteering and imparting her passion and expertise with art to the children. However, we went way beyond the arts and crafts that I led at camp. We made clay whistles, made beautiful recycled paper, and clay mardi gras type masks, just to name a few! My biggest surprise, however, other than witnessing again how brightly those stars really shine at camp, happened when a parent approached me after the closing ceremony. Heather Stahl-Pierce, one of my CITs from long ago, was there picking up her son from his camp week. We cried ‘happy-camp-family’ tears as we recalled those great times and memories.

Camp Carson, for me, still proves to be a special and beyond wonderful place to make great, long-lasting memories, now for my children too, accomplish the unexpected, and to know that the core of what makes Camp Carson Camp Carson is still and always will be there.

Heather Fiester Cullen
Staff 1985-1989, Camp Nurse Summer 2010



Enjoy and share some of the comments below and throughout this newsletter from our camp families. When speaking with prospective camp families, we as camp directors know our former and current camp families say it best!



*"Please try not to make it so fun. My daughter did not miss us at all. But I guess that's a good thing. Ha Ha."
– Parent of an 8 year old*

*"YMCA Camps are inspirational and allow my boys to grow into young men. Thank You!!"
– Mom of 12 & 15 year old*

*"We feel blessed to have the opportunity to send our kids to Camp Carson. Thank you for being there for them. We also love the Christian environment."
– Parent of 15 year old*



*"Our son enjoyed camp so much this year, it was definitely a growing experience for him. All weekend after we picked him up, he talked about the different activities, and it was clear that he stretched himself beyond his normal comfort zone. As a former camper and counselor, I could tell that this year he truly 'got it' and felt the camp spirit. We could not be happier about his experience, and look forward to next year."
– Mother of 11 year old camper*

*"Our son wants to return for 3rd summer, and our daughter hopes to be a counselor in training next year. Thanks for a second awesome week for our kids!"
– Mother of a 13 and 16 year old.*

*"This is our daughter's 3rd year and she loved it! She talked so much when we picked her up that she would fall asleep midsentence."
– Camper was 11*



Despite the turbulent economy, camp's mission is not in recession. In fact, our core values: caring, respect, responsibility, honesty and faith, are always in play. We strive to be a place in the community where no child is turned away and where each person who passes through our gates is valued for who they are, not what others believe they should be.

Each year camp asks people in the Camp Carson family to consider making a financial contribution so others, less fortunate than them, might have a camp experience. We are truly grateful for the support extended to thousands

of families over the years. Understandably, this year was noticeably tougher for many families and as always, we were committed to ensuring as many children as possible received a camp experience.

Camp Carson's Annual Fund Campaign embodies that mission by giving a gift to the community – a gift that shows children that there is hope for a brighter future. For children, camp is a place where they are surrounded by caring, positive role models. They spend a week in an envelope of safe, fun adventure. The activities are more than opportunities to just try something new, they are opportunities to face challenges, build character, conquer fears, work with others, build confidence and self esteem, experience God in their lives, solve problems, develop new skills, build friendships, experience success, and build memories and life skills that will last a lifetime!

Trusting that we would reach our 2010 campaign goal, we helped families in a variety of ways. Sometimes the financial aid was a small portion of the fee, sometimes it was half the fee, and in some situations of special need, the aid provided the full camp fee. Contributions to our Annual Fund campaign range from \$100 - \$10,000. Unfortunately, although the funds were awarded, as of the beginning of October we are still approximately \$20,000 short of our campaign goal. Please consider making a contribution to this important cause. On behalf of all the kids who were able to benefit from a week at camp as a result of donor help, THANK YOU!



MOUNTAIN BIKE WORKSHOP UNDER WAY!

As we shared in the spring newsletter, Dr. Jim Brooks sponsored an entire mountain bike program in memory of his brother, Dr. Tom Brooks. The bikes, bike racks, helmets and other safety gear were purchased this spring.

This summer many campers had a blast riding the forest trails and grounds of camp. The construction for a workshop for storing and maintaining the bikes is under way.

We look forward to sharing more photos with you once the building is complete and the bikes are "moved in"! We're even looking into offering some day trips off site for older campers interested in a more lengthy bike riding experience.



CRAIG FENNEMAN – Inducted into the YCMA Camp Carson Hall of Fame

On Tuesday, June 1, 2010, we had the distinct pleasure of inducting Craig Fenneman into the YMCA Camp Carson Hall of Fame. If you have been receiving our newsletters, you know Craig as the Chairman of our Camp Board and as a tremendous benefactor for camp in so many ways.

His wife Mary, step daughter Tori, father Robert Fenneman Sr., brothers Scott and Brian and spouses were all able to attend the induction ceremony. Unable to attend, his three children – Brett, Katie and Emily prepared a touching audio recording which was played during the ceremony. His brother Scott gave a brief speech and Tori shared her thoughts and those of her sisters. While many of his camp associates were also unable to attend the ceremony, Don Ingle, Greg Faith, Dr. Bob Winchell and Mark Fraser all sent us their camp anecdotes and best wishes. Mark Peterson did a fantastic job of presenting the stories and Hall of Fame award. All who attended were well entertained as the chronicles were a bit embellished at Craig's expense. Mark Scoular, Exec. Director, shared with the audience our own



“Craig's List” of the many ways in which Craig has contributed to camp with his time, talent and treasure.

CAMP BIOGRAPHY THEN AND NOW...

Craig's camp connection began in 1956 when he first became a camper at Camp Carson. He attended camp for 9 years as a camper! Even as a young camper, Craig was exceptional. In the 1950's and 60's, each year the staff would nominate a camper as the outstanding camper of the year. This was known as the Downey Kerr Award. (Mr. Kerr was the President of the Evansville YMCA at that time.) In 1962, Craig received this award making him one of just a few special campers recognized at camp in this way. Following his camper years, Craig also served on the staff from 1965 – 1967.

Craig is currently Chairman of the YMCA Camp Carson Board



of Directors and as with all aspects of his life, he is a visionary who has been passionate about insuring that camp is still thriving for years to come. It is he who strongly encouraged us to begin a bi-annual newsletter to keep alumni and camp families connected with camp. He personally saw to it that we established an alumni and development staff position at camp and he also personally made the first donation to establish our Endowment Fund at camp. He not only understands the importance of the financial and alumni development portion of camp but he has also invested in all the other vital aspects of camp such as the facilities, the programs and camper scholarships.

PERSONAL BIOGRAPHICAL OVERVIEW

Craig grew up in Evansville and now lives in Martinsville, Indiana. As we gathered information about Craig for the evening, it was quickly apparent that he is a self motivated individual who set high expectations for himself. Among his many pursuits as a young man, Craig became an Eagle Scout and continues to be very involved with scouting today. He credits scouting as providing him with his initial opportunities to learn leadership skills.

Craig earned his Economics degree at Butler University and shortly after completing his education, he founded two Hoosier-based businesses – Fenneman and Associates, a real estate development company, and Southern Bells, Inc. one of the largest Taco Bell franchisees in the country. He continues to work both businesses today. In 2007, Craig was named a finalist



CONNECT OR RECONNECT WITH CAMP – *Links available via our website gateway page*



FACEBOOK - Become a Fan – join us on the Official Camp Carson Facebook site



YouTube Channel – view our informational DVD, summer slide shows and more!

ALUMNI WEBSITE created by alum Lance Morton (Thanks Lance!!) – Enter the camp website and then click on the Alumni Tab. Take a fantastic trip down memory lane – camp songs, camp stories, brief bios on camp pals and “where are they now”.

WE INVITE YOU TO VISIT CAMP ANYTIME!

When did you last visit camp? Consider this a personal invitation to visit camp and see what's happening and also keep track via Facebook. Drop in or call the office about a tour. We look forward to it!



for Ernest and Young's Indiana Entrepreneur of the year. His civic activities include serving as Vice Chair of the Butler University Board of Trustees, Regional Vice President of Marketing for the Scouts and a Board Member of the Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board. Other pursuits include interests in travel, art collection, painting, golf and hiking.



*"Our son really enjoyed his time with Luis, especially learning about his language and culture. He learned a lot from the other international counselors as well, and liked that experience."
- camper Mom*

Once again, we offer our thanks to Craig and take great joy in honoring his commitment to camp through the induction to the YMCA Camp Carson Hall of Fame. **CONGRATULATIONS CRAIG!**

WISH LIST and WAYS YOU CAN HELP

- Volunteer to help organize two annual **workdays at camp** (Spring/Fall)
- Volunteer to be a **Host Family** for a 2011 Camp Informational Night to introduce other families to the magic of camp
- Join or create a team of **campaigners** for our 2011 Annual Fund Campaign
- Used **Station Wagon** or Mini Van
- Sponsor a **Student Life Application Bible(s)**. It is our desire to make a Bible available to any camper upon request.
- Sponsor **NYPUM program (National Youth Project Using Minibikes)**

You can **Sponsor...**

- **GPS Cross Country** orienteering program
- **Digital Photography and Video Program**
- **Tree House or Tree House Village**
- **Frisbee Golf Course**
- **Fort in the Woods**
- Purchase of **Canoes or River Kayaks and Trailer**
- Purchase of new **Western Saddles**
- **Hammock Village** ☺

2010 KNIESE SCHOLARSHIP

Established by camp alum, August Neal, in memory of Mark Kniese and his incredible passion for kids and life, the Mark Kniese Memorial Scholarship is a \$4000.00 academic scholarship awarded to one Camp Carson staff member each summer. Our summer counselors are asked to nominate a peer who most exemplifies the core values of the YMCA – Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility and Faith. **We are pleased to announce the summer of 2010 recipient, McKensie Crabtree.**

McKensie is a bubbly, kind and giving person with an infectious laugh. Could there be any better description of a great camp counselor? We had two McKensie's on staff this year, so McKensie said "Just call me Carl," and we did! Do you detect a great sense of humor to go with all the other positive qualities? McKensie worked at the climbing tower this summer and her patience and encouragement were appreciated by the campers she taught. Throughout the rest of camp, McKensie was always completely accessible to campers and shares that she finds it very rewarding... "Being looked up to by the campers. It's an amazing feeling when a camper tells me that they look up to me or that they want to come back next summer and be in my cabin again. It's also really rewarding to see the campers grow and open up throughout the week." Her camp favorites: "The people. The campers and counselors both become one giant family by the end of the week. Everyone is really supportive and accepting of each other. It is really awesome to bond with and get to know so many kids in such a short amount of time. Also, all of the games, activities, and songs we do. There is never a dull moment."



Back Row: Mr. & Mrs. Skip Kniese, McKensie Crabtree, Marti & Norman Knise
Front Row: August Neal, (Ryan Spall & Jenny Smith - former scholarship winners)

*"None of the counselors ever seem "ho-hum" about the job or being there. They are all so friendly and seem genuinely excited to be there with the kids."
- Parent of a 9 year old.*

McKensie is currently attending the University of Southern Indiana and is seeking a degree in Elementary Education – no surprise there! Congratulations McKensie and thank you for epitomizing the magic of camp and for investing your life in so many campers and staff.

*"My son loved his counselors and thoroughly enjoyed his experience there. The positive reinforcement given to him was wonderful. He is a very self-conscious and it tends to take him a while to open up to new people. But it seemed that within minutes of us showing up the counselor had paired him up with another boy and my son was comfortable even before we left. AWESOME!!! I wish he could have this experience every year. Keep up the great work!!! God Bless you and all the counselors and staff there who dedicate their time energy to enrich this children's lives."
- Parent of a 9 year old*



Dear Alumni, Parents, Campers and Friends of camp,

It seems like only yesterday that camp was in full swing and we were listening to the laughter, songs and cheers that bring so much energy to summer camp. Crazy Hootenany skits with guest appearances by the likes of a “leprechaun” or “Avatar”, intense games of Gaga, “gotcha” as a camper lands a big bass, the sounds of the horses in the pasture or coming through camp, the “zing” of the zipline or “wumpf” of the blob, or the emotions tied to hugs, smiles, and tears at the end of BMS as we left to go our different directions at the end of each session. Now, except for the days we have an on-site student group or company picnic, camp is very quiet and a peaceful scene greets me as I drive through the camp gate. The lake is still, the leaves are changing color and turkey and deer of all sizes run the grounds. We as a staff often smile at the courageous ground hog that has taken up residence under the lodge porch and frequently comes out on the deck to sun himself!

The Camp facility may be looking calm on the outside but inside our offices lots of excitement is stirring as the planning for summer 2011 is already under way. The Camper/Parent evaluations have been a great resource and inspiration. We’ve taken time to carefully read through each one. While we love the terrific validations of the summer staff and the comments about our great facility and program, we’ve also taken to heart the suggestions parents and campers made for opportunities to modify, grow or develop various aspects of our operation. Watch the mail in the upcoming months for updates on new activities, camp sessions and off site trips.

Many of you have already submitted applications for next summer, and we have already begun a wait list for one of our leadership programs! We appreciate your loyalty to Camp Carson and the willingness to tell others about your child’s experience here. Each year as campers age out, “graduate” from camper to counselor or other ventures, we seek new campers to keep camp full and vibrant. We appreciate your enthusiasm in spreading the word about Camp Carson.

It is always a pleasure to hear from you, so please keep in touch with us throughout the upcoming months as you plan for next summer! Until then, we wish you all the best this autumn season and always.

Mark Scoular
Executive Director



7th Grade Science Sensation Sparks Students’ Interest in Science

Every fall we are excited to host the Science Sensation at Camp Carson so that students really learn while utilizing our outdoor setting. This educational event is coordinated by Cathy Boerste – Purdue Extension Educator, Purdue Extension – Gibson County. Here is what she had to say about this year’s



3 day event. “This year’s 7th Grade Science Sensation was a great success. Over 400 Gibson County 7th graders spent a day outside at YMCA Camp Carson learning about science while having fun. After a day filled with activities and experiments on topics such as forestry and the natural environment, climate change, aquatic life, insects, and food science, they left feeling excited about science. While some may not have realized that they were learning science concepts, their teachers will help them make these connections in the classroom.”

Funding for this program is provided by the National 4-H Council and Toyota.



“Our son has attended Operation Purple Camp before in a different state and by far your camp had exceeded his experience there. Camp Carson was well organized and prepared to deal with military children, organizing ahead of time programs geared for their issues not just regular camp schedule so kudos to the person who does the planning and organizing. I will always be a fan of Camp Carson. I now sport a Camp Carson sticker on my car to do so. This military family will always hold a special place in our heart for the week our son had there. He hasn’t stopped talking about how much fun he had and that in itself is enough. (Very impressed with the camp grounds. Very Clean A+++)”

– Parent of a 13 year old

YMCA Camp Carson

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Executive Director

Mr. Mark Scoular

DATES TO REMEMBER

Summer Camp Registration 2011 Now Available

Registration is available online at www.campcarson.org or by calling the camp office.

Winter Camp – December 17 – 19, 2010

Call the camp office for more information.

Go to our website at www.campcarson.org for more information on these events.



The YMCA of Southwestern Indiana, Inc., following the example of Jesus Christ, responds to community needs by serving all people, especially youth, through programs that promote healthy spirit, mind, and body.

When Grandparents (and family) ask . . .

You know how grandparents often ask what the grandchildren want for Christmas or their birthday? How about suggesting something that has long lasting value: a week of summer camp at Camp Carson! If you let us know about it, we will be happy to provide a special “gift certificate” showing that a week of camp has been reserved for your child by name.



THANK YOU!

Thank You to the many volunteers who joined us for the Gibson County United Way Day of Caring!

