

CAMP OUTLOOK

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Reflections on Outlook
- Death of a bus...
- Find out the truth
- Crazy campfire songs

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THE VIEWS

FALL / WINTER 2008

THE OFFICIAL CAMP
OUTLOOK NEWSLETTER

Reflections on Summer Outlook

By Carly Ainlay, Summer Co-director 2008

The end of an Outlook summer is always an oddly surreal time. The last trips are returning as the house has already begun to be packed up. The staff members have developed into a tanned, muscled and well-oiled machines, who are experts at debriefing and food packing, and delight in comparing notes on portages, battle scars and camper anecdotes. Within only a few days, the Science '44 co-op house is back to being just another house in the city, whose inhabitants have no idea that they are living among the ghosts of countless batches of chili, a room full of buckets of dried foods, a basement full of camping equipment, a backyard full of canoes and the parking spot of a little yellow bus. There is a sense among an exhausted and satisfied staff that it could have been no more than a dream: with the physical markers of the summer packed away, it is as if the whole summer has become shared secret.

The thing I find so interesting about an Outlook summer, is that while we are offering an incredible experience to the campers, it undeniably changes the staff as well. This summer, we took 18 staff mem-



From L-R: Richard Doyle, Brandon Blanchard, Ryan Doyle, Cody Manual, Nicholas Branton, Meredith Vezina (staff), Sheryl Yip (staff), Marc Li Loong (staff)

bers, some of whom had never even been in a canoe, and watched them develop into incredible leaders and skilled wilderness adventurers. We saw astonishing amounts of determination, passion, commitment and creativity. We saw them manage emergency situations with ease, rescue two capsized tourists with a canoe-over-canoe rescue, keep our campers safe and happy during a very rainy summer and go above and beyond to make sure Outlook was the best it could be.

I learned some very fundamental lessons about leadership this summer. I had always believed that the higher purpose of leadership was to develop other leaders. However, this summer taught me that the *method* of developing leaders is to give people an opportunity to find their own lesson.

Our staff members committed to a month of training during June – they earned their certifications in Wilderness First Aid, Bronze Medallion and Bronze Cross and canoeing certifications. They practiced communication skills, learned techniques in Non Violent Crisis Intervention, memorized songs, games and how to pack food for trip. However, it is throughout the months of July and August, that the real learning happened. We used to tell the staff that there was no “prescription” for an Outlook trip. The essence of a particular trip would emerge as a result of the conditions, the circumstances and the personalities of the people involved. An Outlook canoe trip is something that is created, nurtured and eventually disbanded within a 9 or 15 day span. During the summer, not one staff member would have an identical experience to another, yet we were all part of a larger team.

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DEATH OF THE BUS

MAKE THE TREK TO KINGSTON JANUARY 15TH-17TH!

brought to you by the 2008-2009 fundraising committee

Earlier this year, we were confronted by the news that our beloved bus will not make it through this year. The bus served us valiantly, wisely, through thick and thin, rain or shine, for eleven long years.

She is survived by a host of dear friends, staff, and campers, those she selflessly carried across this great land. The bus was ever faithful, offering her rows unconditionally to many a tired bum. She would have wanted us to turn this sad occasion into an opportunity to gather; Outlookers new and old together in Kingston to commemorate her journey and ours alongside.

We heartily invite you to a reunion, to retire the bus and to celebrate Outlook and the people that have made all of it possible throughout the years.

Mark your calendars and come out for an epic weekend of Outlookesque festivities, January 15-17th, 2009!!!

The agenda is as follows:

Friday the 15th Evening

If you make it into town on night of the 15th, come out to the Kingston Brewing Company (the Brew Pub) for some socializing

Saturday the 16th Day

Mid-afternoon hike at Lemoine Point Conservation Area

Saturday the 16th Evening

Memorial service and Dinner

Memory swapping/storytelling/slideshow (send us pictures!!)

We hope to see you then!

Please R.S.V.P. by January 1, 2009 via email at deathofthebus@gmail.com

And send us Pictures!!



Post script: The retirement of our current bus means that Outlook will soon be required to shell out the funds for a new one. Please keep this in mind, whether you are able to attend or not! When you make a contribution to Outlook, you can write "bus fund" on the cheque, or write to us that you want your gift to go towards the bus!!

Reflections on Summer Outlook (continued from page 1)



Camp Outlook offers an opportunity for experiential learning for our campers, but it is equally beneficial to our student staff volunteers. During the 2007 convocation address at Queen’s, we were advised that we, with our privilege of higher education, had a responsibility to make an impact in our communities - that we had developed the skills to think critically about our environments, motivate others to action, and to take steps toward change. In the academic world, university students entertain grand ideas, learn theories, write essays and complete equations. We learn the stories of those who have made a difference. We learn about problems – we talk about poverty and inequality and we propose critiques and solutions on paper. Some of us even go overseas to learn more about the world and try to make a difference to people living in conditions vastly different than our own.

Camp Outlook, however, gives students the opportunity to do more than theorize: to take action and make a really formidable impact right in their own backyard. As one of our staff member remarked to me this summer, he had learned that “DO – ing (not just thinking), is key.” Throughout the summer and beyond, staff members jokingly referred to being “on Outlook time” when describing the incredible amount of things we realized we could accomplish in a day.

In Randy Pausch’s bestseller “The Last Lecture”, he reflects on Coach Graham, his former football coach who pushed him to his limits. I think that he succinctly illustrates the value of Camp Outlook, for both campers and staff:

“There’s a lot of talk these days about giving children self-esteem. It’s not something you can *give*; it’s something they have to build. Coach Graham worked in a no-coddling zone. Self esteem? He knew there was only one way to teach kids how to develop it: You give them something they can’t do, they work hard until they find they can do it, and you just keep repeating the process”

Quote from a referral

partner:

“I have seen Camp Outlook do things for campers that years of therapy hasn’t been able to do”

By Stephen Sagar, Fall/Winter Co-Director 2008/2009

The End Of An Era:

After 11 years of faithful service the once-shining Outlook bus has departed to the junkyard in the sky. The bus has helped transport hundreds of excited campers and staff to and from experiences that would change their lives forever. Piled high with large red tumps and dragging a rustic trailer with dented Grumman canoes, the bus quickly became recognizable in the Kingston community as the symbol of the community work done by Camp Outlook.

On one winter trip, I remember, the rear right wheel began to spin in the loose snow. All the campers and leaders, save for the driver, moved their body weight over that wheel, allowing the bus to take off and get stuck again ten meters down the road. Several more shifts in weight the bus was ready to be unloaded and head back to Kingston.

The bus’s many quirks were endearing to those who drove it and often, a ritual involving duct tape, cajoling, pleading, panicked phone calls, and cursing was required to start the bus on cold winter mornings. The Outlook bus will be missed greatly by all, and I am sure everyone who has taken a ride on the bus has some great stories to tell about their trip and the friendships that began as the engine rumbled to life.

Soon we hope to acquire a new bus so that many more people can enjoy all that Camp Outlook has to offer.

To bike or not to bike?

By Jen Vos

This past August I went on my first ever bike 'touring' trip with a friend. The plan was to cycle from Rocky Mountain House to Lake Louise Alberta, a 270km voyage. Staring down at pavement for 6 hours a day offers ample time to think about things and to make lists about those thoughts . . .like the pros and cons of bike touring.



PROS

- Bikes are faster than walking**
- Going downhill is like, really really fast**
- Excellent scenery, many fantastic photo opportunities**
- Finding and eating wild strawberries in the roadside ditch**
- Tailwinds reduce cycling effort and increase speed**
- Unlike canoe trips in Algonquin, you can buy ice cream cones**
- Burning through kilometres = burning through GORP**
- German tourists and their RV motor home**

CONS

- You quickly discover why mountain bikes are not intended for road cycling**
- There seems to be 2 uphills for every downhill**
- Excellent downhills, do I really care about those fantastic photo opportunities?**
- Realizing that the strawberries are covered in car exhaust. Also that berries attract bears.**
- We only had headwinds**
- What do you mean that will be 15 dollars?!**
- Burning through kilometres = burning through your knee joint**

All in all? Totally worth it. Maybe not those ice cream cones though . . .

One of a kind

by Donovan Ashby

It seems at times that there exists an endless list of worthy charitable initiatives towards which funding is directed, be it in the form of public funding, corporate grants, large scale fundraising efforts or perhaps most importantly individual donations. From a strictly monetary perspective, it is clear and comforting that many people in the world who are in the position to give do so with such generosity. It is certainly not my opinion that the larger initiatives that exist; disease research, international wellness aid and such are deserving of less money than they receive. Rather I believe that there are unique merits in small-scale charities that are sometimes overlooked.



I have been involved with Outlook for four years. One thing I can say with certainty is that Camp Outlook does not always put the 'organize' in organization. However from my experience with Outlook, I have gained a healthy appreciation for the very important role community based charitable organizations play; in providing opportunities for those in need, in providing a rewarding venue for those who want to contribute, and in establishing a sense of community for those in it.

Community charities are in a unique position to cater to local needs. A camping program like Outlook may not be as effective or appropriate in every community (though in my biased opinion, a little canoeing and campfires does every soul good), or it may not be as feasible to run. This allows a natural diversity of programs to emerge where they are effective and to be available to those who want them.

It is also sometimes easier to ensure that real change is being effected on a local scale with a small-scale program. When charities get large, by necessity they get bureaucratic, and this can muddy transparency for both those involved with the program and those that donate their money. This issue extends to one's sense of accomplishment for those involved with the organization. Anyone who chooses to become involved with Outlook can, simply by the act of being involved, have a real say in the direction and operation of the program. This not only allows wonderful people with wonderful ideas to put them into action, it stimulates involvement by putting everyone in the drivers seat: you put in the time, you deal with the challenges, you reap the rewards of success. There is no greater stimulus for hard work than having that work be recognized as important, and no greater detriment to hard work than to have it ignored.

"I will always value the experience I have gained from working with Camp Outlook"

Finally, small-scale charities, very much more so than large charities, help to develop the community in which they operate. Most charities like Outlook do not receive government funding. What we do is entirely contingent on the donations of individuals who believe what we are doing is worth their money. Every dollar that is donated is an endorsement of what we are trying to do, and our time and effort reflect our opinion that what we do is worthwhile. In this sense we are all investing in our community, and very rarely have I found that an investment in a community is a poor choice.

I will likely be leaving Queen's, Kingston, and Outlook at the end of this year, and though my plans are anything but concrete, I hope to find other organizations like Outlook wherever I end up. Most importantly I will always value the experience I have gained from working with Camp Outlook, and I think it is proof positive of the importance of Outlook that this sentiment is shared nearly universally by those who have been involved with the program.

Quotes from campers:

Male camper, 13 years old: "I thought I couldn't do this, but I did it. Next time I have to do something hard, I'll think back on this and remember how I could do it."

Male camper, 14 years old: "I learned that if I try really hard, I can achieve."

Female camper, 14 years old: "My favorite thing is portaging - I just like knowing I can do it."

The Truth

By Stephen Sagar, Fall/Winter Co-Director 2008/2009



Quotes from

Campers:

Male camper, 13 years old: "I think I'm done with this wilderness thing, but it is a nice pocket of memories that I'll keep."

Female camper, 16 years old, about portaging: "I was MADE for this."

Would you like to know the Truth? Of course you do, everybody does. Well here it is.

On the X-Files, Mulder believed that The Truth was out there, somewhere in the stars. Well, he missed the point by several light years. There is in fact Truth all around us, in our forests, in our streams and in all of nature. And to find that truth, we just have to get "out there".

And everyone can find that truth if they are given the opportunity and the guidance to do figure it out. The opportunity to experi-

"The world around us is an enormous classroom..."

ence the great outdoors can make us all better. Studies have found that even such a simple thing as a walk outside will help children focus, help them learn better, and help them gain an appreciation for everything around them.

The truth is that the world around us is an enormous classroom and taking advantage of it is a great way to learn new concepts, better understand ourselves and to build on everything

we learn in the traditional classroom setting. Take this situation: when walking through the woods with a few kids you come across the bones of a deer. Now after getting over their initial reaction that it's "gross", you begin getting them to think more about it. That skeleton can help you teach your young group about engineering: the vertebrae and skeleton are almost perfectly analogous to the support system in a hanging bridge. The remains can help you teach about the life cycle and maybe even about predatory-prey relationships. You can teach about anatomy, history (for example how the deer was used by native cultures), hygiene (don't touch the bones bare handed), etc.

The truth is that simply doing something outside can be beneficial to children and adults alike. A walk with friends helps me con-

nect with others in a more informal way than sitting in a coffee shop. It allows for better communication than simply sitting next to each other and watching a movie. Even if I am walking alone, I can clear my head and refocus myself. It allows me to grasp what is going on in my life and come to conclusions I cannot reach while distracted by the fast pace of society.

My truth will not be yours. But we can all connect to our truths whether in paddling a canoe, hiking a new trail, skiing down a beautiful slope or climbing a challenging rock face. Your truth is "out there" just waiting for you. Head on out and enjoy it. And bring some friends, young or old, along so they can find their truth. You don't need to go far - even if you just go out your front door, it'll be worth it.

The truth is, you really have nothing to lose.



Campfire Songs!

The Toast Song

contributed by *Alex Wilson*

(repeat after me song, Alternating foot stomp-hand clap beat carried through out)

All across the nation coast to coast,
 People always ask me what I like most.
 Now I don't wanna brag and I don't wanna
 boast,
 I just tell'em I like toast!

Yeah TOAST!

Early in the morning 6am,
 Spread a little jelly, spread a little jam.
 Grab a piece of bread and put it in the slot,
 Press down the lever, watch the wires get hot.

Yeah TOAST!

Now if you're like me, then don't be shy,
 Just stand up straight and look'em in the eye.
 And if they say that toast is crummy,
 Shake your head you know it's yummy!

Yeah Toast!

Yeah Toast!



German Campfire Anatomy Lesson

contributed by *Sarah Ward*

One of the best ways to stay warm on those chilly winter nights around the campfire is by singing -preferably songs with actions. This song was a big hit with campers and staff alike this fall. It is best sung in a thick German accent which I will attempt to write out phonetically. I have also attempted to described the actions. As for the tune, it's sort of a polka - but do whatever strikes your fancy.

vees mine hand on mine self (hand on heart)
 vhat is das here? (point to your head)
 das is mine brain boxen
 ya mama dear (shake fist triumphantly)

brain boxen (point to head) ring a ding a do (make a lasso motion above head)
 das vhat I learned in mine school (spin around while dancing absurdly)
 Ya Ya! (more fist shaking)

Seems simple enough, but then you add more things in one by one:

vees mine hand on mine self
 vhat is das here? (point to nose)
 das is mine hornblower
 ya mama dear

brain boxen (point to head), hornblower (point to nose)
 ring a ding a do (same actions as before)
 das vhat I learned in mine school (more boogeying)

CAMP OUTLOOK

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Not enough can be said of the support that Outlook receives from its generous Alumni. Thank you for your donations, connections, time, energy, thoughts and well wishes.

If your views are currently just black and white and you would like to expand your horizons and receive this beautiful piece of human creativity in color form, please send an e-mail to outlook@queensu.ca to be switched to our e-mail contact list.

We are always on the outlook for new staff and more campers to join our party. So please pass on our name to anyone who you think would be interested in participating in the most stupendous, exhilarating, rewarding, amazing, incredible, spectacular, fantastic, genuine camp.

**Until next time,
Keep Kamping!
-The Views.**

SAVE THE DATE

Camp Outlook 40th Anniversary Celebrations



Planning is underway for a celebration in Kingston in May 2010 to commemorate Camp Outlook's 40th Anniversary. We want to bring together Camp Outlook alumni and friends of Camp Outlook. In the meantime, we are looking for "captains" to help us re connect with alumni throughout the years of Outlook. If you are connected with old Outlookers, or are interested in helping us re-connect, please email Carly and Liz at outlook.bod@gmail.com. In addition, if you have copies of old photos, memories, stories, slides etc. that you would be interested in sharing, please contact us with any ideas you have. Keep your eyes peeled for more information to come in the coming months!

