

ADVENTURE AMPUTEE CAMP 2009 – Our 15th year!!!!

What a happy anniversary year we just had! Perfect weather (almost), wonderful campers (absolutely), amazing volunteers (no question), new activities (bike riding anyone?), and a bus!!!! Could it get any better?

This year is our third under the name Adventure Amputee Camp (previously Amputees Coming Together Kids Camp). A core group of folks have kept the camp going since it began in 1995 and on this momentous occasion they deserve mention here as the backbone and guts of the camp: Bob Burke, Phyllis and Ron Frohlich, Ed Jeffries, Colleen O'Berry, and Julie Suttles. We all have benefited from their commitment and enthusiasm for the wonderful fun we have had year after year. Thanks to each of you!

There are many other volunteers and donors who give a little or a lot of time or money to make camp happen. Please know that camp could not go on without you and accept our heartfelt thanks for your commitment of time and love.

SO - what did we do this year? Well, 35 campers and 17 volunteers enjoyed themselves immensely for four full days of the following fun: rafting white-water, playing cards and board games, climbing the high ropes course or the tower, playing tennis, water skiing, tubing, kayaking, swimming, biking, building amazing Lego structures, displaying hula-hooping/writing/acting abilities in the talent show, eating wonderful meals, and living the good life by being transported in a state-of-the-art bus (courtesy of Mike Bayliss and Premier Transportation of Knoxville, TN)!

Now about the weather – if it has to rain, the first day of camp is the day to have it as we are on the river and are going to get soaked anyway. And soaked we did get – it poured, really poured! We arrived back at the Nantahala Outdoor Center (NOC is our home-sweet-home for camp) cold, wet, and happy. The remaining weather was perfect for the ropes, the tennis courts, and the day on the lake. We got a little drizzle on the last day of camp, but pressed ahead with sit-volleyball (instead of more tennis) and the newest camp activity – biking. We were very grateful to receive hand-bicycles courtesy of The Adaptive Sports and Adventure Program of the Carolinas Medical Center. We rode on a trail near NOC and some campers, who had never ridden, found a joyful new way to get from here to there. Tennis was again sponsored by the Orthotics and Prosthetics Assistance Fund with generous help from the USTA of North Carolina. We have some budding tennis players in the group thanks to these dedicated volunteers. The folks at the Fontana Village Marina provided the very comfy pontoons that took us out on the lake. Eskimo Escapades and the Patricia Neal Rehabilitation Cooperative created another amazing day of water skiing. What a thrill it is to see some of our campers go from never having been in the water to flying over it, in a sit-ski, in a tube, or in a boat. This day is always a camp highlight and we are very grateful for the financial and personal support of these groups for about 10 years! And on top of all that – Kelly and Joe feed us after our day on the water. Satisfying over 50 hungry AAC folks is quite a job and they have shown themselves to be up to the task for many years.

We went uptown this year by having a bus and a driver! The entire Atlanta group came to camp on the bus, and then we were chauffeured to and from our various activities out of camp by our wonderful driver, Reggie. (He was made an honorary AAC volunteer as he pitched right in AND did things he never thought he would do – just like all the campers!)

As usual, the NOC staff went above and beyond to be sure we had a safe and fun time on the river and on the ropes. We enjoy seeing the same NOC staff year after year, and Stefan and Cindy have been with us so long that they are truly a part of the AAC family. We were treated once again to ice cream at Slo Joe's and say a thanks to all the folks at NOC who go out of their way to make this days memorable and easy for all of us.

In closing, these past 15 years of directing and growing the AAC have been spectacular for my husband and me. We now leave the day-to-day directing of camp in the very capable hands of Karen Hall and Matt Court. We'll still be here, raising money and spreading the word about AAC to anyone we can.

So to all of you, past and future campers and volunteers, we say, "Thank you for the fun, find something you love to do, and a way to make others happy. That's the ticket!" Love, Missy and Bob

2009 Adventure Amputee Camp Achievement Awards

Ryan	Best man scream
Sage	Best smile
Erik	Best high flyer
Alvin	Ropes course master
Mitch	Most likely to win an Oscar
Kaleigh	Best females athlete
David	Most courageous
Sean	Best tennis swing
Emily	Happiest helper
Kay	Most accomplished
Malik	Most improved skier
Nathan	Best skit designer
Kaitlin	Best big sis
Jasmine	Most determined
Black J	Most polite
Carina, Felicia, Tatiana	Best trio
Jordan	Most improved swimmer
Reggie	Most adventurous
Chrissy	Best game inventor
Darius M	Most likely to be the next American Idol
Luis	Most cooperative
Teddy	Best New York accent
Darius P	Most likely to make you laugh
Corey	Director-in-training
Blake R	Most inquisitive
Alex	Need for speed
Matthew	Best wipe out
Chris	Most punctual
Matthew S	Being Matthew the great
Asher	Most genuine
Andrew	Best body guard
Michael	Most improved tennis player