

Bethel Camp for the Arts

Kaleidoscope

C'Mon, Let's Get Happy! 😊

Everyone's talking about it... "Positive Psychology," "Authentic Happiness," even laughter yoga. Wanna get on board?

It's funny, because many people think that camp is not the real world. How many devoted counselors have been asked when they plan to get a "real" job? It's quite the contrary, though. Camp is a slice of life that can serve as an important incubator for issues that shape the lives of everyone touched by the experience: campers, various levels and ages of staff, and the families and friends we all go home to. This was quite evident to several of us who attended a recent New England camp conference. We had the privilege of learning from a number of camp and child experts about a plethora of subjects including inter-generational communication; staff interviewing and training; marketing; event planning; camp songs; how the media affects girls' images; and how to raise children to lead happy lives.

Clearly, happiness was a hot topic at the conference, addressed in several sessions including the keynote speech. At the airport, it hit us that it's actually a hot topic everywhere when we saw a segment on the news about happiness while waiting for our flight home. The

show featured Dr. Martin Seligman's studies in "Authentic Happiness" and the new branch of psychology he founded at the University of Pennsylvania: "Positive Psychology." In addition, they covered growing practices such as laughter yoga, laughter clubs



and more. According to keynote speaker, Dr. Edward Hallowell, author of ADHD books including *Delivered from Distraction*, and recently *The Childhood Roots of Adult Happiness*, there are five steps to happiness: connect, play, practice, gain mastery and receive recognition. Isn't camp the ideal setting

for these steps to occur? Of course, there are challenges to be faced within the steps, but with the proper support, this progression can be achieved. At Bethel Camp for the Arts, we feel our non-competitive, inclusive environment adds a healthy component to this mix.

As Dr. Hallowell argues, we don't need statistical studies or complicated expert opinions to raise children. "What we do need is love, wonder, and the confidence to trust our instincts."

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Hallowell encourages us to reconnect with the moments in our own childhoods that made a difference, which is what camp is all about. It's clear that the best counselors and camp staff are driven back to camp year after year for this very reason: connecting with campers to recreate the happy, endless summers that sweeten their childhood memories. 😊

Bethel Camp for the Arts Mission Statement:

To provide a non-competitive, nurturing environment in which children can explore and enjoy a balance of fine and performing arts, technology, enrichment activities and individual/lifetime sports as part of a small, inclusive community.

Our approach to the camp experience:

We are a non-traditional camp with no team sports or color war. Campers create their own schedules, choosing from a wide variety of activities. At Bethel Camp for the Arts, we are committed to offering the highest quality program, staff and facility. We welcome all children to join us and celebrate being who they are!

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Staff

CONTINUING IN our quest to find the best staff, we have some fine additions since our last newsletter.

Who else is coming back?

We're happy to report that several staff who were unsure about plans as of our last newsletter will be returning:

- ◆ Brett Hine - Tennis
- ◆ Billfred Leverette – Robotics, tech
- ◆ Mike Wilson - Photography

Additional new staff members:

- ◆ M-J White – Martial Arts
- ◆ Jamie Andrade – Art
- ◆ Alison Corke – Theater
- ◆ Chris Cole – Nurse
- ◆ Anna Goodbaum – Martial Arts
- ◆ Ben Taylor – Rocketry

We're still hiring staff, so check out our web site staff pages to keep updated. 😊

CAMPER NEWS....

MANY OF OUR campers have been busy doing lots of exciting things throughout the year. Here's what we've heard...

Kalena Miller: In fall of 2006, her middle school robotics team placed 2nd in their regional competition; and she also played the role of "Gwen" in "King Artie and the Knights of the Rad Table." In spring of 2006, Kalena performed as a soloist and as a member of her dance team in numerous Texas dance competitions.

Ben Thompson: Ben's basketball team won the District Championship and is headed to regional playoffs. He had the most steals for the entire high school.

Livia Harkow: Since camp, Livia joined the fencing club at her school. She had never fenced before, but beginner fencers were welcome so she decided to give it a try. Livia says she has found that fencing is an interesting and very enjoyable sport. Also, she and 50 other

freshmen were chosen to take part in a sophomore level art class—thanks to the skills and knowledge gained at camp, according to Livia.

Ben Stevens: Ben was on a Lego Robotics team at school this year. They went to the State of Maryland's First Lego League (FLL) Competition in January and got the Judge's Award for overall good work. This year's competition topic was Nanotechnology.

Hannah Stevens & Rebecca Harth: Their cheerleading team, the Seacoast Titans, became National Champions in their cheerleading division this year! It began in late October, when they placed 1st in their State Competition, followed by the Regional Competition, in which they were up against 17 other teams and placed 2nd, moving them on to Nationals. Nationals were held in Tampa, FL on Dec. 9th. They were up against 7 other teams from around the U.S., and they came in 1st place! This was very exciting and a once in a lifetime experience for most on the team and something Hannah & Rebecca will always remember!

Mason Placock: Mason has been accepted into Duke Tips and took the SATs this year. He saw "Rent" and got a part in "The Music Man" and is auditioning for "Rent" and "The Who's Tommy," which he says should be awesome. Mason also had his Bar Mitzvah this year!

Mica Thompson: Mica has been doing so much since camp...she's in a play that's telling a version of King Arthur's story (Sword in the Stone, Excalibur, Knights of the Round Table). The thing about this play is that the whole eighth grade gets to perform—they write the script and make the dances and some of the songs. What great fun! A new thing that she's trying is dance, recently becoming interested in break dancing and hip hop. Mica says she was so excited when she found out that hip hop was a new course option at camp! "I can't wait for camp this summer!"

Simon Quayle: Simon has just finished

up a hectic year with The Haunted Forest, a local not-for-profit Halloween event. "My next endeavor," says Simon, "is stage managing a play, 'Once on this Island.' This will consist of 10 weeks, 57 actors, 15 feet of set... and one me!"

Romeros: Francisco and Victor's family is stationed in Bolivia (South America), where their parents work for the American Embassy. Over Christmas and New Years (which is summer in this part of the world) they went to the Galapagos Islands in Ecuador, and also visited mainland Ecuador, including Quito, which is the capital. The Galapagos were made famous in the 1800s by the British naturalist Charles Darwin traveling in his research vessel, "The Beagle."

They explored the islands on a cruise ship, retracing the voyage of Darwin, and then spent three days on the only island with a significant population (snorkeling, exploring, dining, etc). In Quito they took tours getting to know the local culture and traditions, to include a trip to the exact location of the equator.

Anna Gross: Anna Gross spent 12 weeks in Lenk Switzerland this winter. She participated in Chalet Hohliebi's Winter Term. It is an English speaking school made up of about 40 7th and 8th graders. She studied hard and skied hard. It was a great experience! 😊

PARENTING RESOURCES:

CHECK OUT THE NEW PARENTING RESOURCE PAGE on our web site. It's has links to helpful sites on how to help children and teens deal with social challenges, health issues, and more. We'll be utilizing some of these resources to enhance our staff training.

**THANK YOU FOR
YOUR REFERRALS!**

