

# ACT

## AMPUTEES COMING TOGETHER

P.O. Box 31437

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### Seventh ACT Camp Tops Them All "Challenge by Choice"

It seems like every year when I sit down to write this camp summary letter, I come up with the same headline: "Best Camp EVER!" I wonder how one year can surpass the previous one, but somehow it does. The counselors and wonderful NOC staff outdid themselves again; the weather and campers could not have been better. And so it goes that this was "the best camp ever!"

As usual the campers came from many different states, 7 to be exact. By the time we all got together at the Nantahala Outdoor Center (NOC), had a quick lunch and changed to our swim clothes we were old friends. Many campers were returning for their 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and dare I say 5<sup>th</sup> year (Go James). These "old" campers helped the new campers "learn the ropes" (so to speak; more on that later). The weather was perfect for an exciting trip down the Nantahala river or a more relaxed one down the Tuckaseegee river. Waterfighting, swimming, splashing and laughing were the required activities of the afternoon. Continuing with the action packed day, everyone met at the NOC restaurant and were satisfied by a wonderful meal and amazed by the antics of our repeat performing magician. Where does that bunny come from; and where do those doves go?

Some campers thought the alarm went off too early the next morning (except for the older boys who for some strange reason were up and at 'em early. Was it Phil?) when we roused ourselves with another wonderful Cracker Barrel style breakfast by Charlie (with help from Phyllis, Ron and Bob). We spent the entire day on the world-renowned NOC high ropes course. This year we also had the Alpine tower and all the campers proved they could go higher and further than they imagined. It was inspiring to watch many of you master things you thought impossible a minute ago or even a year ago. Ask Toya, she was one of the champions on the ropes this year! And for Abby and Frog, they will have to build a higher tower next year. Another wonderful dinner and movie night completed the day and everyone went off to bed.

For the second year in a row we had the remarkable good fortune to have boat-loads of volunteers (that's what Tennessee is famous for) from the Knoxville water-ski club, the University of Tennessee water-ski team, Patricia Neal Rehabilitation Center and other friends. These kind folks spent their day with us and shared their time, boats and talents getting all the campers into the water one way or another. Whether you were pulled in a tube, by a boom, a rope; on a Kan-Ski or jet ski; or paddling in a kayak everyone got wet and had a great time. Once again, it was magnificent to see everyone trying something new or something old in a new way (Autumn, Mark and Delicia have

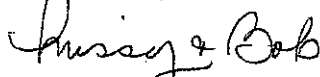
stories to tell). We spent over 7 hours on the lake and that was not enough. But it was dinner and we had to hurry to town to Anthony's Pizza for a great meal and some laughs. It was a fantastic day, made special by the skiers who volunteer for the camp and the wonderful spirit and enthusiasm of the campers and counselors.

Hard to believe it was the last day of camp. Packing, cleaning up and saying our good-byes took place Sunday morning with most campers coming back to Knoxville for the University of Tennessee and ACT welcome back party. The highlight of that day was of course, meeting some of those famous UT football players. Once again, we were treated to autographs and tours of parts of UT that many people never get to see (the indoor practice field, the weight room, THE stadium). And we got to try and tackle some of those football players. (I think I saw one of the players carrying Ryan, Franklyn, Corey, Scott and Gabe at the same time.) And so the camp ended with hugs and exchanging of addresses and emails. Many campers headed back to Atlanta with Colleen as guide, or fell drowsily into their family car for a long trip home (and the prize for distance traveled is tied between Jarrod and Mark).

The theme of this year's camp became "Challenge by Choice" as each camper chose to challenge himself or herself in various ways. Everyone did something they thought they could not do; whether it was even coming to a camp or swinging from a 40 foot tower.

I heard again how, "the camp has to be longer, pleeeeeeaseeee!" Well, do what you can this year to raise money, promise me you will go to bed at 10 pm and we'll see what we can do. You can find us at [mwolff@su.edu](mailto:mwolff@su.edu) or 540-545-7238. We can't wait to see you all again next year for the next "Best Camp Ever!!!"

Best Wishes,



Missy and Bob Burke  
Directors ACT Children's Amputee Camp