

ACT

AMPUTEES COMING TOGETHER

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EIGHTH ANNUAL AMPUTEE KIDS CAMP NOT DAMPENED BY RAINY WEATHER!!!!

Good times pour along with the rain.

Well, it finally happened. We were due to get rain one year, and we did! The amazing thing was that it did not seem to matter. We slogged ahead with our plans and our fun. I want to thank every camper and volunteer who endured the rain and kept a smile on their face. The good news is, now I don't have to worry anymore about the weather. We just do it!

This year we had the biggest camp yet, with 30 campers who came from: Illinois, Michigan, Georgia, Tennessee, Florida, North Carolina, Alabama, Virginia, and South Carolina. Our volunteers came from Tennessee, Georgia, Virginia and North Carolina.

And what did we do? We river rafted on the wild Nantahala River and the calmer but rainy Tuckaseegee River. We played on the high Ropes course and the Alpine Tower. We went water skiing, swimming and gem mining. We watched movies, talked. Played games, and ate very, very well.

Thankfully it did not rain while we were on the ropes course and everyone who wanted a challenge was able to find it. Some campers harnessed up and climbed to the 20 foot level and others went all the way to the forty foot level. It was inspiring to watch campers, at any level, testing their nerve and ability across the ropes elements. The culmination of the ropes is the 40 foot swing from the tower. Many campers found the nerve to "fall" off the platform and were actually speechless. Imagine what a surprise that was – as some campers had not stopped talking since they arrived at camp! The Alpine Tower is a challenging tower of logs and rope and many of you went higher and swung further than last year. A few people added their name to the book at the top of the tower. Congratulations to everyone! The NOC people once again, made this a spectacular day.

It was Saturday that really soaked us. The waterski volunteers from the Patricia Neal Rehabilitation Center in Knoxville, the Knoxville Ski Club and UT Ski Team were out again, to get us in the water, any way possible. So we did not let a little thing like torrential downpours stop us from sit-skiing, tubing, knee boarding, kayaking, and dunking as many counselors as would get in the water under the water. Yes, we were soaked and cold and still smiling. A hardy applause goes to those who tried something new this year.

And before you knew it, Sunday was upon us and we were once again at UT Knoxville meeting those very big and friendly UT football players. Some of you got to see the weight room, practice field, locker room and stadium for the first time. And I know we came away with autographs and pictures of us with these kind and talented fellows.

There are too many campers this year to mention individual achievement, but I hope you will share with your family and friends all the things you accomplished at camp this year. It was a wonder and a joy to behold. See you next year (in the second or third week in July)!

(Things I found after camp: a CD in Bob's van. Is it yours?)