

July 11-15, 2012 Camp Newsletter



a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation

Nantahala Outdoor Center

Adventure Amputee Camp

Welcome to our 18th Annual Summer Camp

The number eighteen in many ways can often be associated with monumental events in life; graduating high school and starting on a new path in life, old enough to vote and even old enough to be a volunteer counselor with AAC! This year is no exception for Adventure Amputee Camp (AAC) as it marks our 18th year of amazing and incredible adventures. As the magic hour approached, volunteers and counselors anxiously awaited the arrival of campers at the Nantahala Outdoor Center (NOC). They're here, they're here!



With great excitement, we welcomed 34 campers (12 new, 22 returning), most by bus from Atlanta and some were driven by their families, to what would be our home over the next 5 days

First things first, let's get down to business; it's time to make introductions and go over those very few yet highly important camp rules. Remember, safety first ensures fun always! With business out of the way, campers and volunteers are ready to meet the most important people at camp; our Kitchen Angels. HOORAY! What an incredible team of Kitchen Angels there were this year. With great enthusiasm and a wealth of healthy meal choices, the kitchen angels filled our very hungry stomachs with delicious goodies and sent us on our way. To the river we go! Wouldn't you know it; the sun was hiding from us again this year. That doesn't stop any of us from braving the waters. As usual, rain or shine, the rafting trips turned out to be quite an adventure for everyone.



Whether on the Tennessee River or on the Nantahala River, tremendous fun was had on the river trips this year. I'm pretty sure some of our counselors should probably take some paddling lessons from our campers as they seemed to have "operator error" on the Tennessee River when paddling their own raft. We're still trying to figure out how the back of the boat became the front in just seconds and how their raft became wedged between two rocks so easily.

After a very wet rafting trip, campers and counselors were treated to a presentation by a very special guest, Scott Rigsby.



Scott Rigsby is known for being the first double amputee in the world to finish an ironman distance triathlon with prosthetics. Scott shared his compelling story with the campers of how he faced and overcame obstacles in his life. The campers were very enthused and inspired by his story and were very happy to

have had him come join us at camp for the day. A special thank you once again to Scott Rigsby.

Following the presentation, everyone headed to Relia's, NOC's onsite restaurant, for dinner. As usual, Relia's never fails and provided us with an absolutely delicious meal followed by an even more incredible dessert.



After dinner, we finally had some time to get to know each other and ... wait... what is that? Is that... A Golden Leg? Yes, indeed it is. The now new official emblem and coveted trophy of AAC Camp Olympics was unveiled to all. There was much excitement in the air for camp Olympics. Everyone was anxious to see what team they would be placed in and just what Camp Olympics entailed this year. Rules were given, games and activities were explained and teams were created; Prestige World Wide, Swagger Badgers and White Ninjas. By the end of the night, three teams were formed but only one would win the Golden Leg Award at the end of the week. Who would it be?



Day 2—Waynesville Recreation Center

Thursday morning came quickly and with it a very busy day. A delicious breakfast was prepared for us and off to races went the campers. The new day brought a number of new activities as campers and counselors headed to the Waynesville Recreation Center in Waynesville, NC for a fun packed day. The rain once again tried to ruin the day but it most certainly did not slow us down. Upon arrival at the recreation center, campers headed in a number of directions to participate in all that the facility had to offer. A running clinic was conducted on the indoor track where the campers were instructed on conditioning and running skills. Campers were taught how to exercise, prepare for running as well as run with their prosthetic limbs. Disc Golf was held outside in spite of the rain. Under the direction of a professional disc golfer, campers learned the rules of disc golf and how to play the game. Some of the campers really got into the game and made some pretty fancy shots! Way to go guys! After a round of disc golf, each camper received a golf disc of their own to take home. In the meantime, another group of campers were inside playing handball, Wally ball, ping pong and basketball. There was some unbelievable talent in the group this year as we saw campers duck, dodge, spike, hit and shoot in every different direction through the various activities.

A SCUBA clinic was held for selected campers ages 12 and up. Thanks to the skilled staff of



Bermuda Triangle Scuba, campers learned the basic skills of scuba diving and were given an opportunity to experience SCUBA diving in the indoor pool with one on one instruction and support. What an incredible and fun activity this turned out to be. We were even able to get some under water shots of the campers!

As the campers rotated throughout the various activities during the day they also had an opportunity to have free swim time in the pool. Campers went flying down the water slides, played a multitude of water games, or just had fun being in the pool. Oh but it wasn't over quite yet.

We couldn't possibly leave the recreation center without doing a camp activity, together. Guess what that meant? DODGEBALL!!!! The energy and excitement level in the gymnasium was through the roof as the game rules were decided; 34 Campers vs. 14 Counselors. GAME ON!! What was supposed to be a 10 minute activity became a 45 minute battle filled with extreme demonstration of incredible athleticism from the campers and uncontrollable laughter. Although in the end the counselors beat the campers, credit must be given to the campers as they gave the counselors a run for their money and beat them several times. Everyone had a phenomenal time at Waynesville Recreation Center. We definitely look forward to coming back next year! Back to base camp we went after a very action packed day. Kitchen Angels to the rescue with a very exciting theme dinner;

Mexican Fiesta! Dinner was exquisite. One-by- one campers lined up for several helpings of the amazing meal prepared for them. Base camp was decorated top to bottom with fiesta related party favors and décor. Who knew camp dinners could be so fun and healthy. After dinner, it was time for a Camp Olympics activity; Candy Top Chef. Nutella, graham crackers, dots, sour patch kids and twizzlers were the ingredients of choice. The objective was to build a standing structure with the ingredients given to each team.

Ready, Set, GO! Teams worked together furiously and quickly to put together a solid



structure that could also be transported. Oh but there is a twist! With just two minutes left to build, each team was given marshmallows and a chocolate bar to add to their structure. The pressure was on and the teams worked hard right up until the very last second. Our wonderful Kitchen Angels were the contest judges. Deliberation took place and it looked serious. In the end, it was the Swagger Badgers that took 1st place for best structure overall.

Many Thanks to all of our 2012 Donors

2012 Gold Sponsors

Autumn Hall
Cheryl J. Collins
Disabled Sports USA
Dunedin Kiwanis Foundation
Elnor P. Williams
Elizabeth Kossler
Eskimo Escapades of Knoxville
Jamie J. Zank
Joseph M. Cestaro
Nantahala Outdoor Center
Environmental & Humanitarian Gift Fund

Northeast Exchange Club of St. Petersburg
Orthotic & Prosthetic Assistance Fund
Patricia Neal Rehabilitation Center
Prosthetic Care Inc
Rehabilitation Practitioners, Inc
Richard Smith
Ruth Garner
Soroptimist International of
Camas Mashougal
Stanley C. Orczyk CLAT Pamela Orczyk
Charitable Trust Center
Thomas J. Stacy

2012 Silver Sponsors

Charles T. Call
Charles Veatch
Colleen Coulter-O Berry
Eric H. Conn, M.D.
Freddie Ackley
James Ballard
Karen Hall & Bren Herrera—Fundraiser
Lisa Anne Hamilton
Melissa W. Burke
Progressive

Day 3—Ropes Course, Zip Lining, Horseback Riding and Tennis



Friday morning greeted us in a very soggy way. Though the rain had ceased (momentarily), everything was wet. By this point, we were experts in handling rain and still moving right along and so we did just that. The kitchen angels filled our bellies with yummy goodness and sent us on

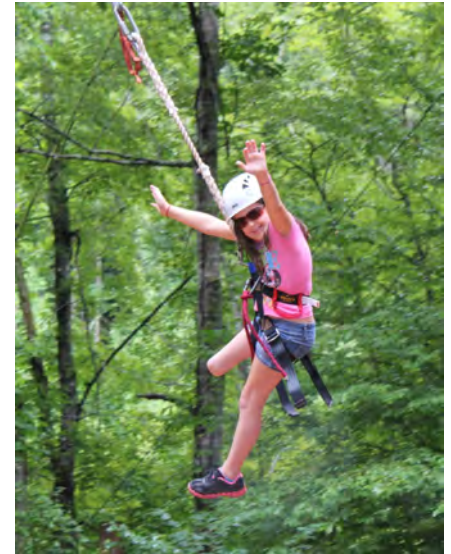
our way to the various activities for the day. In order for the day for the campers was a tennis clinic with OPAF First Volley, horseback riding and a very new and exciting challenge course onsite at NOC, including a zip line! Every camper was given an opportunity to go through the course. What a special treat! Even more special was knowing that when the challenge course was created, it was done so with AAC in mind! How awesome is that!! Thanks NOC! The rain put a slight damper on the other outdoor activities as the tennis courts were too wet

to play on but that didn't stop us from playing. Games, relays, activities and contests were played at Kleinrath Hall without any problem. Campers had a blast as they learned tennis skills and put them to the test in individual and team contests. Many campers walked away with prizes won throughout the day!



Activities began to wind down and it was time to get ready for dinner, but not before we did a little shopping down at Rivers End store. Campers shopped and browsed through the store for gifts and memorabilia from their adventure at the NOC. After shopping, campers and counselors spent a few moments just enjoying some down time by the

water; that is until it started to rain again. Everyone to the bus!! Up the hill we went and back to base camp for yet another theme dinner. Friday night's theme was a Hawaiian Luau. Can you imagine what incredibly mouth watering food the Kitchen Angels prepared. You just had to be there to believe it!



Day 4—Fun on Fontana Lake

Rise and Shine everyone! It's Saturday! You know what that means! LAKE DAY! Campers, counselors, Kitchen Angels, everyone is moving at the speed of light. The energy at base camp can hardly be contained as everyone rushes around preparing to head out to Fontana Lake for the most anticipated day at camp. With everyone fed and loaded up on the bus, we're off to the lake where we are greeted by the amazing crew of Patricia Neal IRC and the Eskimo Escapades. Off the bus and onto the pontoons we go with life jackets securely fastened. As always, the day at the lake is absolutely amazing, full of laughter smiles and new challenges.

From water/sit skiing, jet skiing and canoeing to tubing and swimming, there was never a dull moment at camp. Of course the day wouldn't



be complete without a torrential down pour, but that didn't interfere with the day as the rain came down during lunch. It was a perfect opportunity to sit back, take a moment to catch our breath and refuel our bodies for the second half of the day. Six hours later, we are headed back to the marina for an incredible meal put together for all the campers and volunteers on site by Kelli and Joe Thompson. Year after year they prepare a scrumptious meal for all after a long day out on the lake.

With plenty of food for all to enjoy, everyone sat back and relaxed as the campers decide to add a bit of entertainment to the meal by show-

ing off their talents in their annual Talent Show. Singing, poetry, comedy and hula hoop skills were shown off as courageous and confident campers stepped up to the "stage" to perform in front of everyone. What an awesome show it was! There was so much hidden talent in this group. It was definitely a surprise and treat for all to enjoy. Time for another surprise! It's Kelli's birthday! Out came the birthday cakes and everyone roared into the best birthday song ever heard, including a rendition in Chinese. Tears of joy filled Kelli's eyes as we sang to her on her special day! The surprises weren't over yet though. As if everything Patricia Neal IRC, Eskimo Escapades and Joe and Kelli Thompson do for AAC isn't enough, Joe Thompson presents the Camp Director with a generous donation to camp. WOW!! What an honor and surprise this was. AAC would not be what it is today without the donations and support of our sponsors and friends like the Thompsons. Thank you so very much Joe and Kelli!

The bus is loaded and the campers bid the lake and volunteers farewell, for now. On the road again, back to base camp we go for some much needed rest. The bus ride back is a rather quiet one as a movie plays on the monitors for some to watch while others sleep the entire way back.

Day 5—Camp Olympics and Award Presentation

It's Sunday morning already? Where has the time gone? It seems like just yesterday the campers were arriving at camp for their first day. Yet here we are, Sunday morning, the last day of camp. No time to focus on that though, we have camp Olympics and the teams are neck to neck with total points. We also have a beautiful day with not a rain cloud in the sky! Excellent! Back to business though, rain or shine, Camp Olympics was going to take place. Prestige World Wide, Swagger Badgers and White Ninjas were all so close it's too hard to tell who would win the trophy this year. Activity after activity the teams competed for the most points to put them in the lead and gain first place. From water balloon tosses and dizzy bats to relays using Ziplocs bags with holes and water to fill a cup, the competition was fierce. But in the end, one team prevailed. The 2012 Camp Olympics winner of the Golden Leg is... Stay tuned. It's time for lunch and awards. Everyone comes together for one final meal wonderfully put together by our Kitchen Angels! A heart-felt thank you to our Kitchen Angels for taking such good care of us all during our stay at camp this year with healthy and nutritious meals every day. We couldn't have made it without you, literally! Cabin by cabin, camper by camper, awards were given out to each camper in recognition for an incredible attribute displayed during their stay at camp.



Board President, Missy Wolff-Burke presenting Ben Tobias recognition to Jake

The Ben Tobias Outstanding Camper Recognition was given out for the second year in a row. This recognition was given out in honor and memory of a very special former camper who passed away. This honor was given to a camper who exemplified many of the same qualities and personality traits

that Ben was known for: always lending a hand, a cheerful and friendly attitude, and a leader, to name a few. This year, Jake, first time AAC camper, received the camper award for demonstrating similar qualities during his time at camp. Jake continuously demonstrated a positive and caring attitude while at camp and was always looking for ways to help, encourage, motivate everyone and put a smile on everyone's face. Congratulations to Jake for receiving this recognition.

At long last, the announcement everyone wants to hear. The decision was tough, numbers had to be crunched, counted, recounted, and re re counted! The 2012 Camp Olympics winner of the Golden Leg is... Drum roll please... **The White Ninjas!!!**



The "Golden Leg Award" was awarded to the Team with the highest point count at the end of camp

Congratulations to all the members of the White Ninjas on their 1st place victory as well as to the very close runners up, the Swagger Badgers and Prestige Worldwide. With such a close race this year, we can hardly wait to see what happens next year. Who will take the Golden Leg Award next year? Will the White Ninjas be kicked out



or will they defend their title? Well done to all the campers and counselors who participated in Camp Olympics this year. A special thank you to the Head Counselors for putting together an incredible Camp Olympics! With awards distributed and everyone fed, it was time for the final activity; the camp picture. With our awesome new shirts on display, everyone piled up together to take our annual picture. What a stunning group we are!

As is often said, all good things must come to an end. With tears of sadness and our hearts filled with great joy, counselors, campers, volunteers and all shared hugs and said their goodbyes. With new friendships formed, old friendships strengthened and lasting memories created, we bid farewell to the campers as they headed back home to their families. Another phenomenal year at AAC has come to an end, but don't you worry, we'll be back, and you better be ready! There is no telling what next year will have in store for you. Stay tuned, keep in touch and we'll see you again next year!



Like us on



Adventure Amputee Camp

176 Saddleback Lane Winchester, VA 22602

Email: adventureamputeecamp@gmail.com

a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation

Federal EIN 06-1772887

www.adventureamputeecamp.org

