



NEWS FROM ECHO HILL CAMPSHIP FUND

FALL / WINTER 2009

VOLUME XXI

LETTER FROM THE BOARD 2009 - What a Great Depression!

As far as depressions go, this one has been a humdinger. Gotta like a downturn that doesn't discriminate. This one has hit every industry, every social and economic group, and every donor to EHCF. It really beats the heck out of the last one which, judging from the pictures we've seen, was experienced in black and white. (Pardon the gallows humor, but as Wavy Gravy once said: If you don't have a sense of humor, it just isn't funny anymore.)



2009 was a year of growth, change, adjustment, reconnection, and diminished fundraising (not necessarily in that order).

In response to our request for new board members last year, **Kyle Jossi** and **Kiersten Henry** stepped up and offered their time and skills to help forward the Campership's mission.

Kyle has been a full time and part time nurse at Echo Hill Camp for a number of years. She brings with her a solid understanding of Echo Hill, the emotional and physical needs of the campers, and a wry smile that reflects her having seen it all (and we mean, ALL) at Echo Hill. She is also a mother of a former camper, round

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FROM THE ECHO HILL NURSE'S OFFICE

For the past 20 years, I have had the great fortune of attending Echo Hill as a camp nurse, first with my daughters, Kiersten and Meredith, and then with my granddaughter, Sydney. The first year it was pouring rain when we arrived and frogs had invaded the infirmary. I admit, a midnight escape crossed my mind. But my daughters had the time of their lives, and we were drawn back year after year.

Not much has changed over the years. There are still campers who think that hanging out in the nurse's office is an organized activity. Shoes are considered a fashion felony and campers always want to show me the cuts in their feet just as I am sitting down to eat. Even so, Miss Honey's cooking still makes me look forward to every meal. The creativity and energy of the counselors during activity announcements never cease to amaze me. And evening activity – I've laughed more at some of those productions than I have at events I've paid lots of money to see. Adults and parents, you don't know what you're missing!

The complaints of the kids haven't changed much over the years. What I couldn't cure with Pepto-Bismol, a Betadine soak usually took care of. The only patient that stumped me was a turtle with a hurt leg. When there was actually something more serious than a minor cut or an upset stomach, I was always amazed at how well the Echo Hill staff performed. To this day I vividly remember an evening that made me realize just how prepared and competent the staff is. Late that night, just as I had drifted off to sleep, my walkie-talkie woke me with the news that a 12-year-old boy had sustained a possible neck injury down at the "mansion." I don't know if the mansion is still there, but in those days it was a camp site for overnights about half a mile down the beach. Everyone swung into action. Since the quickest way to reach the scene of the accident was by boat, six of us ran to the beach, grabbing radios, flashlights, a spine board and other emergency equipment. The boat's motor shattered the silence. Darkness enveloped us as we headed out on choppy water. After a short ride we reached the mansion. Although my exam turned up no obvious injuries, we still decided the accident warranted a trip to the ER. We carefully immobilized him on a backboard while we waited for 911 to arrive. Fortunately, the ER did not find any injuries either, and the camper was out playing soccer the next day. It was almost 2 a.m. before I crawled back into bed, too tired to do my customary check for snakes.

Dell was another of my favorite activities. It was amazing to see 125 kids sitting quietly on blankets in the woods. Sometimes a child would break the silence to say something heartfelt. One spoke of the pain of his parents' divorce, another talked of his pride for his mother's career successes. Someone else became quite tearful as he talked about how he had grown over the summer and how much he would miss camp. I felt embarrassed for his tears until I realized that in this setting no one would dare make fun of him.

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Another wonderful memory – the Last Dance. The girls ask the boys, and by default the nurse is expected to ask the boy that no one else wants to take. This particular year, I was asked to take "Bobby." Bobby had tried the patience of the entire staff and I was dreading the experience. But on the big night he showed up at the infirmary freshly showered (first time all summer I believe) with a bouquet of wild flowers for me. He stayed by my side the entire evening to make sure I had a good time. I called his parents the next day to let them know what a delight their son was, and they insisted I had the wrong camper.

Last year, my daughter Kiersten and I volunteered to serve on the board of the Echo Hill Campership Fund. It seemed only natural since Echo Hill has been important to our family for decades now. It has provided such healthy experiences for my children and opportunities they might not otherwise have had. We wanted to support an organization that offers less fortunate kids the same opportunities. Echo Hill lasts long after you head home down that bumpy Camp Road at the end of summer. It lasts a lifetime. To be a part of the Campership Fund is a privilege for both of us. And so far, there haven't been any frogs or snakes at the board meetings.

It can be incredibly rewarding when your vote has a local impact. Chase is giving away \$5 million to various charities and needs you to help pick which ones. Simply vote for your favorite nonprofit (Echo Hill Campership Fund) and then get friends and others on Facebook to do the same. Give EHCF the recognition it deserves and needs with Chase Community Giving.

It's so easy! Go to - <http://apps.facebook.com/chasecommunitygiving/charities/1039092> or to **Chase Community Giving** Facebook page.

It's a new Way Forward for giving.

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FROM ONE OF OUR KIDS ...

My First Time Going to Echo Hill

Have you ever been to Echo Hill? I have! Echo hill is a summer camp and I was there for two weeks. I met a lot of new people and I saw my friend from My Sister's Circle. I met four people that I became good friends with. They had an outdoor learning center and a lot of activities. I got a scholarship to go and I had a lot of fun.

When I first got to Echo Hill I was scared. I missed my mom and my family. Then the camp counselors took us to a campfire and we sang songs. It was cold that night. Later on, I started to feel more at home. My friend Ikema saw how sad I was and helped cheer me up.

For the rest of the trip we got to choose the activities we wanted to participate in. My friends and I went water skiing, swamp mucking, and belly boarding. We even went sailing, motor boating and made ceramics. At night we slept in cabins and we could hear deer running and raccoons fighting. We always heard birds. It was a lot of fun even though I would still miss my family at times.

The most exciting part of the experience was playing the evening games. We played a dating game and had races. I was chosen to participate in every evening activity. There was a lot of laughter and cheering from the other counselors and camp kids. It was so much fun. Every day we had a new evening activity.

To leave Echo Hill I had to do a lot of packing and say bye to my new friends. We had a ceremony where the counselors gave certificates for the activities we participated in the most. I got one for sailing. I also got an award for being good at ceramics. The counselors gave us gifts of bay water and sand to say goodbye. I was sad to leave my new friends but at the same time I was happy to go home to see my family.

Looking back it was a good and fun experience. A lot of people do not get the chance to go and my scholarship helped me to go. If I had the chance to change something, I would not have gone swamp mucking. It was disgusting. Overall it was still a great experience and I plan to go back this summer.

ing out her perspective -- which is both unique and recent, in that she logged a bunch of hours near the bluff this past summer. Her stories are hilarious, her heart is huge, and her skillz are mad.

Kiersten is an EHC alum with great energy, attitude, and organizational ability -- which makes her stand out from most of the board. She works closely with Jordan to grow our Online presence, does things with our database we don't understand but appreciate, and essentially ran the reunion at Echo Hill this past summer. The rookie showed the rest of we veterans that Old School is really just old. And she didn't even point-and-laugh.

We are both lucky and grateful to have them on the team.

As you'll read in these pages, EHCF has enjoyed a year of connecting with Camp alumni, working with children of real need, and raising the money necessary to fulfill our community's pledge to sponsor both old and new campership kids.

Put another way, we've acted as the vehicle for your generosity.

To all who have given or helped out this year - a big, warm hug from all of us.

To those who have yet to donate, please do not delay any longer. The kids are counting on each of us.

For a variety of reasons, EHCF did not host a corporate fundraising event this fall, which leaves a big gap (about 27k) in our resources for next summer. Adding to that deficit is the bad economy, which has reduced the average size of our donations this year.

The only way to combat the negative impact on our bank account is to find more donors. That's where you, dear readers, come in. We need your help. Together we will forward our mission, lift up our community, and make a real difference in the lives of more than 20 young people.

Now is the time. Join us, today. Be a difference-maker with EHCF.

With love and gratitude,
Your Board and your Campership kids

We (STILL) Need YOU!

We would like to find one or two more brave souls to join the Board, particularly those of you with web site management abilities. We meet about once a month in Bethesda. If you are interested, please email us at camperships@ehcf.org.

A CAMPERSHIP PROFILE

Normally this column is dedicated to a list of impressive statistics about how the Campership Fund has sponsored a growing number of kids, year after year, for an increased number of Campership "weeks." While this was true yet again, and you'll see the details elsewhere, I wanted to profile one particular recipient.

This child has special significance to me because I met him and his mother at a Big-Brother-Little-Brother event, shortly after I joined the EHCF Board, over five years ago. He had just turned eleven and was playing in the field with his younger brother and sister. His mother was recently divorced and was struggling to provide for her young children. I told her about the Echo Hill Campership Fund and she filled out an application immediately. Thankfully, this little boy was chosen by the Selection Committee for a two week Campership in 2004.

His first few days living in the woods were a major adjustment, but by the end of his stay he was begging to come back the following year. The next summer the Campership Fund sponsored him for four weeks and he has returned for a half ever since. He enjoyed the wide range of activities and spending time on the water. He has learned how to swim, sail, and waterski. He has made friends with people he never would have met without Echo Hill Camp. He has grown up from a timid young boy into a mature young adult who was an integral part of the Echo Hill Camp community.

Last summer was special for two reasons. First, it was his CA Summer and second his nine year old brother was able to join him. When I asked his mother if I could write an article about her sons, she was elated. She was genuinely interested in helping any way she could since Echo Hill Camp and the Campership Fund had done so much for her family. She told me how camp was the one thing her sons looked forward to and their reward for working hard at school and staying out of trouble. She commented that our chance meeting over five years ago had come at a pivotal point, as her son had just lost his father to divorce. Echo Hill had been a stabilizing force, one that had helped keep him focused and allowed him to excel at school. Today he is a junior in high school, doing well in school, and hopes to work as a camp counselor. His mother attributes most of that to Echo Hill Camp.

Managing the application process for the Campership Fund, I can assure you this story is not unique. I am proud the Campership Fund has such a positive impact on the children we touch and their families. I am hopeful we will send this child's younger brother back to Echo Hill until he is a CA, in six years. Please help us raise the funds to continue to benefit this family and the others we support.

Thank you,
Peter Boyd

REUNION 2009!

This May, the Echo Hill Campership Fund held an alumni reunion for former campers and staff. Over 70 alumni and their families attended. It was great to reconnect with old friends and meet new ones who share a common love for Echo Hill. It was also an opportunity to introduce the next generation of campers to Tie Dying, The Waterfront, showers in the Taco Bell, sleeping in platform tents, meals at "The Whip", Pete & Penny, running bare-foot through the grass, campfires (complete with storytelling), and of course the unforgettable Echo Hill sunset.

We had a great turnout and a good time was had by all! As an added bonus, a small portion of each participant's reunion fee has been donated to EHCF. Thanks to all those who helped make this event a success. If you were not able to come, here's some of who you missed:

Martin Anderton
Meryl Viess Berdinka
Hugh Beshers
Peter Boyd
Michael Boyd
Elizabeth Brooks
Derek & Sarah Bupp
Jordan Chasnoff
Vicki Hurdle Chew
Marisa Crandall
Lisa Betz Cruz
Jody and Clayton Evans

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Glaudia Ghigliotty
Ruben Ghigliotty
Liam Gilbert
Patrick Gorman
Philip Graham
Mike & Liliana Grossman
Jennifer Harr
Seth & Julie Hassett
Kiersten Henry
Jean Hultkrans

SUMMER 2009 CAMBERSHIP STATISTICS

This year the Echo Hill Campership Fund sponsored twenty kids for sixty total weeks at Echo Hill Camp. This required over \$50,000. Next year many returning campers would like to increase their stay from two weeks to four.

Can you help? Can you find a friend or three to pitch in? How about family members? 25 bucks? Sure, we'll take it! How about donating the equivalent of a night on the town? Do you own a company? Hit us with your pre-tax dollars. Maybe the company you work for matches your donations. It's worth checking out. Join our Facebook page. Post your support on your Facebook page and ask your friends to follow suit. Tweet your support to the world. Donate to EHCF in lieu of a gift to someone. Any way you can help will be returned in karmic currency, which you can't spend, but feels oh-so-good.

Thank you.

Kyle Jossi
Meredith Jossi
Nick & Jamie Kirsch
Carol Levin
Jennifer Costello Lifsted
Christina MacLean
Ben "The Boob" Martin
Mike & Sandra McCabe
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THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION!

HAVE YOU HEARD ...?

Gossip!!

2009 has been another busy year for the Echo Hill Family. We tried to catch all the juicy news and gossip but are sure some things slipped through the cracks. So keep us in the know on all the things that are new with you and your Camp friends by dropping us a line on Facebook!

Speaking of Facebook, EHCFC now has 484 friends (and growing!) so we were able to keep up with a lot of great news from our friends. Here are some of the Highlights:

Jennifer Fishman married James Borzumato on October 31, 2009 (Boo!). **April Davis**, Jenn's BFF and Green Cabin roomie was one of the bridesmaids. Another CA of '98, **Christine Bennett**, married Keith Bowley and now lives in North Carolina. **Kim Klein Weichert** also caught the wedding bug – she was recently engaged and is planning a November 2010 wedding. There were a lot of fireworks in 2009, especially on the Fourth of July when **Belle Keller** married Bretton Hornblower in Las Vegas during a tour stop (Bretton is the bassist for The All-American Rejects). Belle and Bretton's wedding was well attended by EHC (BTW: The Wynn has a policy of no shirt, no shoes, no problem). **Lizzy Brooks** and **Kristen Knutson** were bridesmaids and **Caitlin Coslett** and **Hanna Raverby** were in attendance. **Katharine Hope** married Sebastian Gordon. Attendees included **Ronna Gradus**,

from Miami, **Glenna MacGregor** and **Carey Robertson** from Washington DC, and **Suzanne Bunniss**, from Glasgow, Scotland.

EHC Alumni did more than ring the wedding bells in 2009. There was also a lot of work in the "Future Campers" Department... **Emily, Mark, and Nora Porter**, now living in Myanmar, are expecting their second little one due in the winter. **Marti Gilbert** and her husband are also expecting her 2nd child. **Jen Stephenson** Mathews and her husband Jeff are expecting twins this spring, joining big brother Spencer. **Christine Lusk** Jones and her husband David are expecting their first baby this winter.

TW Dutton and **Arit Altman** had a baby girl named Zahra in October. Zahra has climbed the Zip Line three times since her birth, but still has not mastered the Tower. **Matt Lowy** and wife Kim had a son Xavier Milton Dudik Lowy in August of 2008. Xavier will be AHBS (Assistant Head of Boy's Side) in August 2010.

In other news: **Katie Rice** is "Team Jacob" and **Julie Rice** is "Team Edward" (obviously), **Michael Boyd** is studying for a masters of hip at American University, and **Sam Clark** is in love.

That's all for now. Remember to check us out on Facebook and share all the juice!



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