



Howdy Friend!

By former Camp Joint Adventure camper and current Camp John Marc Assistant Director: Bre Loveless

After several years as a Camp Joint Adventure camper, I eagerly awaited the opportunity to return to camp as a volunteer counselor. This gave me the opportunity to work with campers going through a similar diagnosis and connect with campers, as well as horses, as a lead walker. As a lead walker, I walked alongside campers and played games of musical stalls under the beautiful sky and hot Texas sun. Like the campers at the pool, we would all lather up in sunscreen, but instead of diving in the deep end, campers rode off on new adventures. The sun, sweat, and sand never deterred the campers from trying a round of Red Light, Green Light or building a friendship with a horse. The campers sat high on their horses with their shoulders back, demonstrating confidence as they steered for another pass by the water misters. For the campers, horseback riding has always been more than an opportunity to overcome a fear or gain a feeling of accomplishment. The real power of the program is the opportunity for the camper and horse to connect. For one hour, the camper's furry friend bonded with them, listened to their stories, and taught them something new.

After my summers as a volunteer counselor, I was able to return to camp as a summer staff member. This meant several summers with my boots in the arena sand. And now, as an Assistant Camp Director, I am grateful for all the effort and sweat that has gone into making our horse program the high quality that it is today. The addition of the covered riding arena in 2010 not only made the experience much "cooler", but also improved how campers mounted their horses with the addition of the mechanical lift and ramped chute. Now, campers walk or roll up to the chute under roof and fan, relax on a bench, and ask a never-ending chorus of questions about their four-legged friends: "What is Cat's favorite food? Where do they sleep? Can Prince ride the bus home with me? Can I give Jack a treat?"

Some of my most cherished memories occurred when introducing campers to their horse. As a result of their diagnosis, some campers lose their independence, but at the horse activity they are given the chance to regain independence and help a friend navigate an obstacle course or win a game of "musical stalls." Whether a camper chooses to leave their wheel chair and ride for the hour or sit on the chute petting and feeding a horse, they focus on the needs of their horse. I have seen many campers turn down the chance to ride the zip line or get in a boat, but at horseback riding they saddle up and take the chance to ride because of their relationship with the horse. They make a friendship with a horse that may equally struggle to wake up in the morning without stretches, or they giggle over the idea that apples and carrots are the best foods.

In 2018, Camp made an exciting addition to the horse program through the acquisition of a new piece of property adjacent to our current horse pasture. Campers will have the chance to view this new green grass pasture as they drive down the winding country road to Camp John Marc. This new property, which is approximately 30 acres, is being prepared for the horse herd to live at Camp year-round. This new pasture will help us care for the horses by rotating their grazing pastures, feed regularly under cover, and keep a watchful eye on the horses all year. I am grateful to those who helped make this pasture possible. The care given to the horses directly impacts the care the horses provide for our campers. I look forward to campers telling me who they saw as they made the turn into camp and being able to show the campers where the horses call home.

If you are interested in volunteering with the horse program, please contact Bre (bloveless@campjohnmarc.org) or 214-360-0056 at the Dallas Camp office for more information.

Miller's Musings:

A Note from Outgoing Board Chairman Scott A. Miller

As the seasons begin to change and we move ever closer to another year of camping, I have had a chance to take stock of my time as Board Chairman of Camp John Marc and reflect back on the last two years. What struck me is how blessed we are as an organization to have such great leaders that came before me and that currently reside on our Board of Directors and within our incredible staff. Beyond their forethought and leadership, it is their passion for the mission of camp that continues to inspire and drive me.

Since my last report, many significant events have transpired that will have lasting impacts on the future of Camp. Here are a few of the highlights. I am pleased to announce the addition of our new General Counsel, Thomas Laughlin, a partner with Kirkland & Ellis. It is great to have a former camper as part of our officer team, as Thomas was a camper at Camp Broncho back in the 1990s! We are elated to welcome him back to the Camp Family. I am also excited to share that Camp John Marc purchased an additional piece of



property that borders our current property. The purchase of this land allows us to improve overall security and safety for our campers; allows us to bring back on our property different aspects of managing our equine program; and ensures room to grow for future camp programming and activities. Many thanks to Marc Myers, Gifford Touchstone, and Don Snell for ensuring that camp was able to acquire this new real estate. We have also added a new Risk Committee to our board structure to ensure that we continue to assess, manage, and mitigate risks holistically and in a continuous manner. Many thanks go out to Dean Renkes and Bob Spurgin for recognizing the need for this committee and for proposing its formation.

Even with warmer temperatures in 2018, camp was a huge success again this summer with many happy campers and many happy memories made. Theme night this summer was Super Heroes and this theme proved to be a huge success with campers and staff alike.



Many popular Super Heroes made an appearance on this special night and demonstrated their super powers for all to wonder. The overall theme for camp this year was Belonging. One of my favorite things to witness is older campers going to extraordinary lengths to look after younger campers who may feel out of place and ensure that they feel like they belong. These simple but intentional acts are evidence that camp is a place where everyone has friends and all campers feel comfortable being their authentic selves.

In closing, thank you to all our dedicated volunteers, medical staff, facilities staff, and summer staff (our true Super Heroes) for their incredible contributions to make camp a fun and safe place for our campers where they have a true sense of belonging. I also thank our donors and hospital partners who have blessed us with the resources to make Camp John Marc the most super place on earth!



— Scott A. Miller

Did You Know?

2,732 campers were served in 2018 through twenty-nine different camping programs.





Boo’s Treehouse

By Camp John Marc Volunteer from 1999-Present: Tim York

From the vantage point of a Camp John Marc volunteer, the 2018 season proved to be another rewarding year. Each visit I become aware of a renewed cabin, an upgraded program, or a totally new addition to the facilities that adds to and enriches the bountiful coterie of Camp John Marc’s programs. But while ever-improving facilities and growth are cornerstones to Camp’s success, I offer that my true calling for being at Camp has to do with campers’ break-through moments; those instances in which a camper is at once stronger, more hopeful, and happier, than even a moment prior.

During Camp Esperanza, Camp John Marc’s program for children and teenagers with cancer, the oldest boys and girls (ages thirteen to fifteen) typically come together for a teen social. This often occurs at the Star-Gazing platform with music, conversation, occasionally some dancing, and a school of glow-sticks swimming bright against the starry night sky. Arriving at Camp this time, we learned of the recent completion of Boo’s Treehouse, named after the special character in Harper Lee’s To Kill a Mockingbird, and designed for all children at camp to access, regardless of their challenges. Wanting to structure something of a more substantive celebration, our plan was to convene at Boo’s and hopefully encourage campers, if they so chose, to share some of their stories.

While walking down the winding path to Boo’s for the first time after Sunday evening’s activities, there was an immediate feeling of excitement as the campers passed through large trees on a wheelchair-accessible path. Each turn moved the campers closer and closer to a large area of planked decking built between the limbs of oak trees, a structure shrouded in foliage, just waiting to be discovered. There are no steps, no stairs, and no climbing is needed. The two-storied structure is complete with an upper courthouse section (connected by wheelchair ramp), a bench swing with a white picket fence, and an area overlooking an incredible nature bowl feature that flows with water during certain times of year.

Our cabin entered the tree house to strums of ukulele in the air and the warm, amber glow of string lights in the trees. This subtle addition to the design pushed back the darkness, and illuminated the setting, as well as the mood. There was no noisy jam-box or glow sticks. As the campers settled in, another song was performed and a conversation began. I asked, “Does anyone know who Boo Radley is?” Hands went up. I asked, “What novel is he from?” More hands went up. Then I spoke briefly of

who Arthur “Boo” Radley was and how he was somehow just different from most folks and hence misunderstood by the residents of Maycomb. We talked briefly about the Finch family and the special tree, of the taking of things, as well as the need to give things back. We talked of how Atticus had once said, “You never really know a man until you walk a mile in his shoes” and how Miss Jean Louise had said, “Just standing on the Radley porch was enough.”

The group was intrigued, and they understood. The setting was comfortable, so I felt it offered a unique opportunity. It was a special time, being at Camp, but I asked how many of the campers would be graduating and moving forward with their lives. I asked the campers to take a moment and reflect on their lives, their battles with illnesses, and their times at camp. After several moments of silence and reflection, a hand went up and there was a question: “Can we share some of our stories?” Another hand went up, and then another, and another. I estimate twelve or more campers stood up and contributed a story, anecdote or advice.

One of the young men in our cabin spoke of his cancer, how he had been very ill the previous year and how much improved he was this year. His heartfelt contribution seemed to bring fully into the group’s consciousness the spirit of the moment and that here, in Boo’s Treehouse and at Camp, all were safe to be, and to share and to give. A counselor let the young man know how brave he was to share so deeply. He beamed with appreciation from the warm acceptance he received from the assembled coalition. And so, on it went, story after story. Anecdotes. Laughter. Tears.

I feel the years more with each passing season. I move slower and struggle some with fatigue and aches and pains, but at Camp, I am sustained. With each trip to Camp, I endeavor to rise to the occasion for this simple experience; this sweet experiment from which each of us takes something away — and to which each of us gives something back.

Next year and the year after that, there will be more camps and more evening adventures at Boo’s Treehouse. The campers will come, and I am heartened by the promise of this legacy. That here, children will heal and grow and thrive—as will the Counselors and Staff and Medical Teams who so selflessly give their time and talents. And that each time—for a brief moment—in one little corner, on one little speck in this chaotic cosmos, all will be good and vibrant and true. It is my want to be here, always.



Memorials

Margie Adams
Karen Adams (Esperanza Camper)
Zach Alvarez (Esperanza Camper)
Dorothy Arnold
Kierrah Boykins (Reynal Camper)
Karla Sue Briggs Clack
Boogerman Brooks
Matthew Burroughs (TLC Camper)
H. Thomas Byrne
Karen Campbell (CJM Staff 1992-2016)
Rod Cook (CJM Staff 1991-93)
Bellanne “Bel” Coonrod
(Sanguinity, Hands Down Camper)
MaLisa Cotton
Joyce Nell Darr
Katelyn Davis (Esperanza Camper)
Almeiry DelaRosa (Esperanza Camper)
Peter Denker
Ryan Dickerson
Margaret Edmonds
Grace Eubanks (Esperanza Camper)
Jorge Garcia (Night Owls Camper)
Jimmy Gilmore
Sherman Goodwin

Page Hagemann
Lil Hawley
Lucy Heller
Jade Henderson
Wayland Hicks
Desmina Hoant-Davis
(Sanguinity Camper)
Don Houseman
Rolene Humphrey
Katherine Kay Janke
Brandey Johnson (CJM Staff 2000)
Harry H. Johnson, III
Nadia Jones (Esperanza Camper)
Jim Kinder
Bertha Kissinger
Gene Lopez
Don Madsen
Maggie Mathis
Kaylen McBroom (Esperanza Camper)
Jimmy McCoy (SOAR Camper)
Andy McMullan
Damian Medrano (LIGHT Camper)
Edgar Medrano-Torres (LIGHT Camper)
Dr. Lance Miller

Silvia Miranda
Jacob Mowl (Moss Camper)
Sokvannada Muong (Reynal Camper)
David Oesterreicher
John Owens (Esperanza Camper)
Mavis Powell
Hayden Pruett (Esperanza Camper)
Kurt Rathjen
Miguel Rodriguez (MDA Camper)
Eliseo Romero (Esperanza Camper)
Susi Rowe
David Rutledge
Lee Shaftoe Partida (Night Owls Camper)
Timothy “Tim” Stone (TLC Camper)
Jaren Suber (Esperanza Camper)
Preston Tarrant (MDA Camper)
John Vorhies, MD
Victor Walker
Brendon Ward (Moss Camper)
John Allen Ward
Dorris Wilson White
Mr. Rick White
Carl Edward Zellers, Jr.

Honorariums

Nurse Ashley
Luis Barbero
Lucy Bobzien
Jean and Dick Cantrell
Dr. Morgan Coleman
Lucky Cullum’s Birthday
Merrimac Dillon
Bill Duvall “Father of the Year”
Cheryl Engelmann
Vance and Karen Gilmore
Courtney, Trevor, Hana, Walker, and
Linda Golden
Jay Goldstein
Kay and Bob Goodman
Dianne Hawkins
Deborah Hayner
Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Heins
Ralph Hein’s Birthday

Julie and David Hensel
Barb and Mark Hocamp
Joanne and Tom Hurtekant
Mark Jacobson
Andy Jones
Wade and Vivian Kines
Corey Ladd Becoming CJM Chair
Corey Ladd’s Birthday
Brook Landrum
Rebecca Lucey’s 19th Birthday
Linda Leonhardt and Will Mathews
Ellen and John McStay
Camp MDA
Zadie Merriman
Scott Miller
Dian Moore
Hurr Murtaza
Jan and Marc Myers

Mrs. Neath
Jackson Nowlin
Randy Perry’s 70th Birthday
Billy Petty
Jane and Chick Pierce
Michal and Loyd Powell
Jodie and Carolyn Ray
Dean Renkes
Judy Schandler’s Birthday
Scott Schwob’s Birthday
Zachary Ryan Shapiro
Tom and Staci Simon
Mike Tanner
Megan Thomas
Gifford and Carol Touchstone
Jan and Ley Waggoner
Renee LaGarde and Rob Morris Wedding
Rick White



Camp John Marc (CJM) Trivia

- What year did summer camps begin at CJM?
 - 1984
 - 2000
 - 1991
- Which of these diagnoses are served through weekend camps at CJM?
 - Solid organ transplants
 - HIV/AIDS
 - Upper-limb differences
 - All of the above
- The name of the legendary catfish in Crow Lake at CJM is: _____
- What percentage of CJM's 28 Spring/Fall weekend camps are family camps?
 - 5%
 - 80%
 - 50%
- CJM has served __ , __ __ campers all-time (fill in blanks using a 3, 6, 7, 6, & 1)



Answers: 1. C, 2. D, 3. Netter, 4. B, & 5. 63,617



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