Summer 2014

In looking through the OD Book, which acts as our camp log, the OD wrote, on June 30th, that the weather today is, “Cloudy with a chance of meatballs. Kidding! It turned out sunny and warm. The Flickers and Owls won the banners and it was our first night of Twilight Activities. We had a fire drill.” The next day was Feather Picking and it was sunny. This daily log captures the ordinary and the extraordinary of daily camp life. There are a lot of entries about food (all good!) and the weather and trips and visitors. Hikes, canoe and sail trips, daily inspections, team games and special events are all recorded in the OD Book.

Some of the many special events this past summer included the 4th of July, Christmas in July, Wish Upon a Star Night, celebrating Harry Potter’s birthday, Wishing Night and Smugglers. The 4th of July and one Super Villain Special Sunday included the always fun water slide down Archery Hill. We didn’t have a lot of rainy days but on those we did, cabin songs and cabin skits, with the winning cabins winning a trip to the “Tastee Freeze,” were always a hit. The “RO’s” found success in Smugglers this year. Did you know there is a “golden snitch” in play now? Weekly Les-Jolis kickball games gave the teams the opportunity to enjoy a little friendly competition while practicing their cheers. Various cleverly planned scavenger hunts manifested the themes of our Special Sundays.

Sundays have always been special at JDA. On our first Special Sunday we ran team games all day. Les won Capture the Flag and Jolis won the swim meet which included medley races, a newspaper relay, sandcastle building and a silver cup hunt. We usually end Sunday afternoons with Mass, our Inspirational Service and a full camp barbecue down at the waterfront or on the Hearth field. These weekly barbecues often end up with a huge football toss or Frisbee game and then an outdoor campfire either where the Old Owl used to be or on top of Archery Hill. On another Special Sunday we played Les-Jolis “Ditch,” which is a large hide and seek game in the woods, and had an ‘80’s themed dance party.

Our first “Wacky Wednesday” theme was Disney characters. Other Wacky Wednesdays included Twin Day and Animals. Some of the costumes and make up this year were pretty amazing. Every Wednesday night during Campfire the girls encourage extemporaneous dramatic, dance and singing performances. Some are full of giggles and some are powerful performances by truly talented individuals. Each act always starts with a loud, “Lights, Cameras, Action!”

Both Motor Trips this year went to Lake Placid with a first stop at the world famous Ausable Chasm. Boat rides down the Ausable River, picnic lunches and shopping in Lake Placid were enjoyed by all.

Alums who visited camp this summer included: good friend and longtime camper, counselor and staff member, **Christina Schibli Bartlett** (sister of **Bonnie Schibli Kuprecht**) who visited her niece, Emily Kuprecht, an Aide. **Sharon Lamont Charde**, an alumna from the 50’s, came and stayed for a few days. Ever since she visited camp for the 90th Reunion in 2011 she wanted to return to JDA to teach the campers the “Hearth Song.” She helped paint the colorful words to the song, “As Fuel Is Brought to Fire….” around the Hearth molding. **Kevin McIntyre**, his wife, Luisana, and young son, Scott, visited and spent a long afternoon with Jehanne on the Chalet lawn. **Kathleen (Kathy) Floyd**, a camper in the ‘60’s, now a Nurse Practitioner, visited for a few days and even helped out in the Infirmary.

We got many hikes, canoe and sailing trips off over the summer. A favorite hike in recent years is nearby Catamount Mountain which has a “chimney” rock and great rocky outcroppings at the top which offer huge panoramic views of the Adirondack High Peaks.

At the two week mark, a few campers left and a big influx arrived, including 8 boys for the Camp Lafayette program. They took over the T-Bird cabin and changed its name to the Dragon cabin. There are two teams at Lafayette: the green and silver Dragons. The Dragons spent every third night back at JDA and the bulk of their time at Lafayette. They slept in tents with camp cots and cooked over an open fire and grill for most of their meals. The boys told us their favorite activities were water-skiing and tubing, archery, soccer, xxx. The boys’ counselors, Zach, Oisin and Matthew (with a little help from “Mr. Mike” Edwards) guided and supported the boys through a host of other fun activities: diving for mussels, hiking xxx, bb’s and nightly chess games….

Another OD, this one a new counselor from China, wrote, “Everyday at CJDA is so beautiful, everyone in the camp can always taste the sweetness of friendship and caring from the others.”

Several years ago we introduced a running and swimming fitness program at camp that we call “Milestones.” We keep a poster board in the Hearth for the campers and counselors to keep track of their distances and then, at Award Night and Banquet, they receive decorated red painted rocks for running and blue painted rocks for swimming. It is good to have reminders of our accomplishments because they can give us the self confidence to set even larger goals for the future.

Last summer had no shortage of accomplishments at JDA! We had the most campers we’ve had since 2008 and we had boys attend our re-introduced brother camp, Camp Lafayette. We also had the nicest group of counselors and staff who made camp fun and memorable for both our first time and long time campers. We had a super Owl cabin and great Les and Jolis teams.

The Banquet theme, “Adventure Is Right Here!” captured both the excitement and opportunities JDA offered the campers, counselors and staff of 2014. A beautiful song, written by counselors **Caroline Brennan and Emma Witherington**, to the tune of “My Fault” by Imagine Dragons, had this as the first verse, “Looking back on our first summer nights, the memories made now make it all seem clear, adventure is right here,” and this as the chorus, “This is our time, this is our home, wish we could stay together, good bye is not forever.”