

Band Camp Blog 2008

Good evening from Lake Ann, Michigan! I'm pleased to bring you the 2008 Band Camp Blog. Each evening I'll be sharing the experiences of the day for those of you back home unable to join us as chaperones at band camp. (Maybe next year!)

The 4 ½ hour trip up north went very smoothly. The report from the bus riders was "a smooth ride with no glitches". All four buses made it safely. The kids arrived to a nice hot, sunny day at Lake Ann. After locating their luggage, band members found their cabins and quickly moved in. The girls' cabins already look festive with many adopting a Hawaiian Paradise theme. (I'll have to check out the boys' side tomorrow for a full report.)

At 3:00 pm, the kids headed off to the team challenge courses where each section tackled multiple challenges organized by the Lake Ann staff. Fun was had by all.

Most kids seemed to enjoy dinner which was ham, scallop potatoes, and green beans. Then it was back to the cabins for their instruments and equipment, and off to evening rehearsal. Everyone should sleep well tonight, particularly the parent chaperones. Most chaperones drove up separate from the bus to unload the cars and set up camp. I'm not sure if the kids are tired yet, but this chaperone is!

Until tomorrow, have a great night.

Peggy Fenwick
Rookie chaperone and Camp Blogger 2008

Day 2, Monday

Another warm and sunny day greeted our campers. Monday was fun, and packed full of activities. The campers enjoyed wonderful weather as they made their way through the day. Monday was the first day for the kids to head down to the Lake to enjoy the waterfront activities during their afternoon recreation time. Many enjoyed the 'blob' (a big balloon like structure that looks like a stunt mat used in the movies), the giant 'glacier', and the waterslide.

The evening rehearsal started out with a cool Northern breeze which resulted in a steady rainstorm. The amazing chaperones sprang into action and cleared the dining hall as the entire wind and battery sections filed in. The Pit moved all their equipment back inside their boat house and practice continued on.

The highlight of the day though, is certainly the dance. The kids were bused down the road to the Township Hall. Within seconds, the place was rocking....literally. The wooden floor bounced along with the dancing kids. Even the chaperones got into it when the DJ played AC/DC's "Shook me all night long". There were lots of sweaty kids with big smiles on their faces as they boarded the buses back to camp. Fun was had by all!

Until tomorrow,
Peggy

p.s. Please note that all blogs will be sent the following morning, rather than night time as originally reported. (There's no wifi in the cabins and Mama Fenwick cannot leave her girls at night.)

Day 3, Tuesday

Well Monday's rain brought in chillier temperatures on Tuesday. The high was only 73 degrees, but sunny all day. Despite the cool temps, several kids still made it down to the lake. The best blobbie of the day was Elliot Stout. He was flown quite high by a few different blobbers.

I promised in blog #1 to give you a report on the decorating job of the guy's cabins. Well, after two guided tours, the only creativity I found was one strand of green lights on a porch, a blowup shark caught in a net, and some pop cans hanging from the ceiling of another cabin. I think this is one of those major differences between guys and gals. Gals like to decorate their cabins, most guys don't. Enough said on that subject! We did have a report of visiting chipmunks on the girl's side.

(We are getting a late breaking morning report of a raccoon in one of the boy's cabins...we're sending out one of our best reporters for a full report.)

During Tuesday's dinner, the entire camp was treated to the encore presentation of the Senior Guard Dance. Between that and the Rice Krispy® treats, all enjoyed Tuesday's dessert. The evening ended on a high note, with the first full ensemble practice. Except for the Battery, the entire band performed the first selection of this year's show, Kaleidoscope on the big field. With several anxious chaperone parents bringing out their lawn chairs, the band presented us with a taste of what's to come this season. Based on the parent turnout, it's obvious us grownups cannot wait until September 13th!

The final activity of the night is the traditional Senior/Freshman Bon Fire. The conditions were perfect, with the moon rising over the pine tree canopy and stars sprinkled throughout the sky. My undisclosed investigative sources said this year's bon fire was heartfelt yet humorous. We are lucky to be experiencing some beautiful weather this year.

Until tomorrow,

P. Fenwick

Wednesday, Day Four

Wednesday – day of woe for many, but the sun shined brightly here at Lake Ann. Once again, we had picture perfect weather. The kids are working hard, but enjoying their many varied activities too. You can see sections really starting to bond. Friendships are being made and shyness is disappearing. It's fun to watch seniors blossom into leaders as they guide the younger members along. Everyone is giving it their all, and its exciting to watch new faces blend into the old traditions.

Lunch time was extra special with the chaperones arriving in full costumes. The kids witnessed a baseball player, butterfly, Mozart, and dust bunny....and a rare appearance from Duct Tape Man. Then the all male rock band known as the Inflatables made their entrance into the dining hall, sending cheers loud enough to be heard across the lake. Hopefully it was just the right tone to lighten the day. (Apologies to every kid at camp who has a parent here chaperoning. With time, healing will occur.)

I'm pleased to report that the raccoon report from yesterday was a false alarm. However, there was a saran wrapping incident that occurred in the Girl's Mesquite 1 cabin. Over 1000 feet of clear plastic splendor was found inside the cabin around bunks, doorways, the bathroom, etc. Only those with great flexibility, and a few yoga lessons, were able to enter the room with grace. Rumor has it that several Mellaphones were responsible. Watch out boys.

The seniors enjoyed an afternoon of fun and reminiscing at a special trip to Pyramid Point. Be sure to check out www.pcmb.net later today for pictures on the photo share system. Many photos are being snapped this week, and chaperones are trying to post them as we go.

Wednesday night's activity was Pizza Night! As if there isn't enough food around Lake Ann, over 71 pizzas were delivered to feed the troops. (Nothing like two pieces of pizza at 9:30 pm; it's fine if you're 16, not when you're 40!) Then it was off to bed....but wait, what do we hear coming across campus towards the girls' cabins? Yes, the traditional Drumline Serenade! Here they come! With hundreds of stars overhead, the male entourage of the Drumline came over to entertain the female campers. A little comedic at times, the drummers delighted the girls with this old time Plymouth tradition. They even threw in a little choreography in between the drumming.

After much excitement, the campers finally settled in for the night. NOTE: Tumbleweed #1 (my cabin) apologizes once again to Tumbleweed #2 (Michelle Zaluzec's cabin) for disturbing your prompt bedtime. It must have been the excitement of the drummers...)

Until tomorrow,
P. Fenwick

Thursday, Day Five

Well we're more than halfway through camp, and this reporter is excited to blog that our kids are doing great. I caught up with Mr. Montoya outside the dining hall moments ago. "Mr. Montoya, how is the week progressing?"

"It's been a fabulous week. The kids are doing wonderfully and growing stronger each day," said Martin. "I'm very pleased with our progress this week." Martin Montoya, Jennifer Leseth, and the entire staff are also doing a fabulous job this week with the kids. Because of all their hard work and contributions for our kids at camp, a special steak dinner was prepared for all the instructors/staff for Thursday evening.

On Thursday, the rain held out, and we had our warmest day yet. (Wolverine #1 is finally getting its use from the air conditioning unit Ken ported up to camp!) During afternoon recreation time many kids took out canoes at the lake, in addition to waiting in line for the blob. The waterfront continues to be the favorite rec time locale.

I've heard from very credible sources that the boys 'got their due'. I have two reports of crepe papering over at the boy's cabins. It was also discovered that several chaperones left campus in the evening for a very special Moomer's run. (Google Moomers in Traverse City to learn more.)

Yesterday was a very important day in terms of cabin etiquette. We had several inspections of our camp, so in order to make it worthwhile, the cabins each participated in a semi-competition for which cabin was cleanest on inspection day. Our fine nurses served as judges for this highly competitive sport. I knew my Tumbleweed #1 didn't have a chance, but I was quite confident that my co-cabin mom (Michelle Zaluzec) would take the cake. Sure enough, Tumbleweed #2 won the top prize. Over on the boy's side, it was Badger #3 (Dan Phillips' cabin). I understand several Chaperone Dads are demanding a recount.

The evening activity Thursday night was "Movie" night. Rather than a theater run flick, we had a custom-built production directed by Ginger Bitter, Amy Torok-Swartz, and Jeff Wohl. The kids enjoyed a video presentation of their own ensemble run-through then viewed a photo montage of hundreds of pictures snapped here at camp by all the chaperones. We will try to post those pictures today on the PCMB.net. (Technical difficulties prevented us from posting photos yesterday as first reported. Sorry if you looked.)

Then after the 'movie', all kids headed back to camp for lights out. Around 10:30 pm, the girls were treated to a special saxophone serenade (another PCMB long-standing tradition) with candles. Be sure to ask your daughter about this special event. Tomorrow will be the last blog since we roll up camp at 3:00 pm on Saturday. We look forward to seeing all of you on Saturday.

Until tomorrow,

P. Fenwick

Friday, Day Six

Well the final full day of band camp is upon us. It was a sticky one, with very high humidity. The kids had a good morning visual rehearsal out in the fields, and then came in for lunch.

Today seemed to be the day to cram in all the 'cabin pranks', as you could see girls and guys darting across camp usually at meal time. Not to worry folks....cabin moms and dads always communicate and know when their cabin is about to be hit. (Someone has to get the kids out!) Mesquite 2 did a great job on Badger 1 (Matt Zaluzec's cabin), saran wrapping their shoes to trees! But paybacks are grand at band camp. By mid afternoon there was pantyhose and men's jockey shorts strung across the patio of Mesquite 2 (Ginger and Amy's cabin). Very creative trickery going on here. (For me, this is such a cool part of camp. The kids really love this!)

Our luck with the weather ended today at lunch time. As we headed back to the cabins for our 45 minute rest period, the storms rolled in. It poured for a good hour, causing the afternoon music rehearsals to be brought indoors. The sun came back out at 4:00 but all waterfront activities were closed for the day because the skies still looked threatening. No more blobbing.

As I'm typing this final blog entry, the band is preparing for its final ensemble practice before Saturday. Tonight is the final night at band camp. We have an ice cream social and the special circle ceremony where each band member will be recognized. I have to say I'm a little sad to leave. For me personally, I've grown to know 10 great young ladies who are quickly becoming productive members of PCMB. I had a wonderful cabin and we had lots of fun getting to know one another. This is a great experience for the kids and the parents alike.

So I say farewell to you through the Band Camp 2008 Blog. It's been my pleasure to share the experience of band camp with all of you back home. Although this was my first year as a chaperone, I'm quite certain it will not be my last. Hopefully I will see many of you tomorrow at the 1:30 pm performance. (Pray for no more rain!)

I hope you enjoyed reading this blog as much as I enjoyed writing it.

Until next summer,

Peggy