



The Spirit of Camp Kenan

By: Elizabeth (McGuire) Millen, Secretary

On Wednesday July 4th, 2012, on the eve of my 34th birthday, I was invited to go to Camp Kenan to share my thoughts on what the “The Spirit of Camp Kenan” means with this year’s staff during training week. I was honored to be able to have this talk with them, and also thought what a perfect time for me to do so. As you might already know, over the past few years that I have been serving as Secretary of the Friends of Camp Kenan, I have often written and closed my communications with “In the spirit of Camp Kenan, Elizabeth (McGuire) Millen, Secretary”. Before I began to write that, I thought, what does this really mean? Am I living up to that statement? It is a little hard to explain, but as I sat down on the hearth of the fireplace in the Mess Hall, with all eyes on me, I did my best.

It’s such a broad yet personal statement, so I decided to start the conversation off by sharing my story of why I

came to Camp Kenan in the first place. It was 1988, I was a ten years old, and I was convinced by my older brother Tim McGuire, who had been previously convinced by his best friend Mike Tobin, that Camp Kenan was the best place on Earth. Tim said I *had* to go. I would have so much fun, he told me. I pretty much believed everything Tim told me, so I went. It was Olympiad Week, another recommendation my brother made for me, saying it was the coolest theme and the best week to go. I was a junior in cabin #5 and our country was Trinidad & Tobago (up until that day I hadn’t ever heard of Trinidad & Tobago).

I don’t remember where we placed at the end of the week, but I do remember feeling really overwhelmed by all the sports (I was not a very athletic kid by nature, more of an artsy-type of girl). However, I also remember feeling impressed with the little athletic ability I did have, that the 50 yard and 100 yard dashes were definitely my races, but that the cross country was



The Camp Kenan Directors, from left: Mary Gorman, Luke Kantor, and Scott Literman

not my event to win, at all. I remember being so excited for the opening ceremony and not knowing what to expect, the wonder and awe I felt of watching the torch being run down the driveway, loving our specially designed, silk screened t-shirts, practicing and performing our skit, and crying my eyes out after the closing campfire and Sunday brunch - knowing that my life had been forever

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In late June, the Millen and Flaherty families went to Camp Kenan to see how the Chapel and plants held up over the winter. They cleaned up the flower beds, planted a few new things and freshened up the mulch.

GS2012 Countdown!

By: Rachelle Hathaway, Goosestock Chairperson

OLYMPIAD THEMED GOOSESTOCK!!!!

done by the Goosestock committee the weekend cannot, WILL NOT be a success without YOU!

36 Days

It’s hard to believe that in just over one month, Goosestock will finally be here. It’s been almost a year of planning from my end, there have been a few bumps in the road, those are to be expected. But no matter how much planning and running around is

Registration has begun! We cannot stress the importance of registering your family early this year. This fun filled weekend will be packed with

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5 weeks

As of August 2nd, we officially have 36 days until The FIRST EVER



Letter From the President

By: Mark Natemeier, Board President



Summer of 96...

Nothing is better than the years the CK Olympiad took place in a real Olympic year! Thinking about GS12 and our first attempt to bring the Olympiad back for us, and the fact that the Olympics are taking place in London, brings me

back to the summer of 1996. The Olympics had a certain buzz at CK that I had never witnessed before. I think most of it had to do with "the Olympic torch" that Goose carried around from the torch relay he had participated in that summer in Lockport. Our country and our camp were ready for the Olympics in Atlanta, and CK was ready for their own Olympiad weeks!

I can still remember running out of headquarters cheering USA after Tom Dolan won the 400 IM, the first gold medal of the games for the US. The US took both gold and silver in that event, and Dolan had been one of my favorite swimmers. I looked up to him because, like me, he was a distance swimmer who also had asthma. What a great way to kick off the games!

For the next two-weeks, I watched the Olympics on my fuzzy and not always in color TV, at the top of Headquarters. It was the end of an era as American swimming legend Janet Evans failed to make the finals, and new stars were born like Kerri Strug, who managed to keep both feet on the mat after her vault, despite an injured ankle, to win the first USA women's team gold medal.

Then, real tragedy struck. On July 27, 1996, a pipe bomb exploded at the Olympic Park, killing one person. I remember as news circled around Camp of the explosion. But, the Olympics continued and thousands returned to the Olympic Park just four days after the bombing and Carl Lewis won the gold in the long jump. At age 35? Someone older than Dan Doctor won a medal? What?

Who can forget Michael Johnson's gold shoes as he set the world record in the 200 meter dash, becoming the first man to win both the 200 and 400 in the same Olympics? Does anybody else still remember Dan O'Brien? Come on, you know the Dan and Dave commercials from 1992? In 1992

Dan failed to make the team after a big marketing push by Reebok and he came back to win the Olympic gold in the Decathlon.

A year later, the Associated Press remembered the Olympics and reflected on "a closing ceremony marked by sadness and relief, Atlanta extinguishes the flame that burned throughout the biggest games ever." The AP also wrote: "Withholding the "best ever" praise given to past games, International Olympic Committee chief Juan Antonio Samaranch calls Atlanta's games "most exceptional."

That is what Olympiad weeks were almost every year at Camp to those participating—"the biggest games ever" and "most exceptional". Think about your CK Olympiad experience. As a staff member and as a camper, remember how drained you were at the end of the week? It didn't matter if you were 1st, 5th or last, almost every person at camp was mentally, physically and spiritually drained. From the start of training week to your Olympiad week, counselors would research and decide which country to represent at the games. Counselors would spend hours at night making the coolest and craziest shirts for their countries, painting rocks, building borders around their cabin, and writing and designing the skit. The passion shown by all during the Olympiad week was and is the true spirit of the Olympiad experience. This must be the same feeling that the athletes around the globe feel when they compete in the "real Olympics". I couldn't be prouder of my time at CK, and especially of all the work we put in during Olympiad week. Not only did we develop memories for ourselves, but I guarantee that those weeks helped shape the character, personality, and work ethic of our campers for years to come.

The picture on the right represents my strongest memory from my time on the cabin line during Olympiad week. This was probably the best cabin of kids I ever had athletically, but more importantly, personally. This was Cabin 9, in 1994. We were Mexico. Marty Newton and I were in the cabin together, and we won just about everything we could win—well,

I say ALMOST, because due to some very bias judging by certain "not to be named members of Top Staff", you know who you are [kisseey,kisseey], we had a poor showing during skit night and lost the Olympiad by less than a point! Sure, I may still be a little bitter, but really, who doesn't like to see Goose trying to sneak into the USA/Mexico border because he had to "paaark the caaaars in the paaaarking looooot"? The point isn't if I am over it yet [because I am not!]. The point is that I remember! That I cared! And, that I believe all of us have very found memories of Olympiad week at Camp. So, the Goosestock committee is giving you the chance to come back and relive those memories. Who knows when the next GS Olympiad will be, because it took us over 15 years to have the first one!

It's not about winning at Goosestock 2012, it is just participating at the event that you will remember for years to come. Get to CK in September 2012! Put the event on your busy calendar now....



GS2012 Countdown

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COUNTRY COMPETITION. The committee is asking that families register before August 10th so we have time to get country assignments set. Besides, the sooner everyone registers, the sooner the countries (you and the other former staff) can start planning what country decorations and rainy day supplies to bring!



That's right. When packing for the Olympiad, don't forget to grab some items to decorate your area of the Mess Hall or to use in a Dutch Auction. While we're mentioning the chance of rain, be sure to have your favorite tunes ready to go in case of an impromptu lip sync or skit performance.

Go to www.friendsofcampkenan.org to register today! Also, check out the the 2012 Goosestock t-shirt design below—register and reserve yours today!

Also, we are still looking for donations of nostalgic Camp Kenan items for the live auction. Contact **Rachelle Hathaway** at rachelle.hathaway@friendsofcampkenan.org for more information or with questions.

Friends of Camp Kenan Mission

To provide supplemental support for the continuation of Camp Kenan as a summer resident camp for young people.

To support the philosophy of Dr. William Rand Kenan in providing the initial foundation for Camp Kenan: "That all children may grow in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man."

To provide for the continuing fellowship of Camp Kenan staff.

Camp Kenan Events to Remember:

FAMILY CAMP »

August 31– September 2, 2012

15TH ANNUAL POLAR BEAR RUN»

February 27, 2013

TOGG Tales

By: **Bill Neidlinger**

In the mid 1960's The Old Gray Goose was Program Director at Camp Kenan, which also meant that he held Chapel Service on Sunday's. During the '60's, Camp was all male and we had three two week periods and a one week period.

One cloudy Sunday morning, Goose was giving the sermon, and at a dramatic point in the sermon, he mentions that the clouds parted and the sun shone brightly through. At that moment, the cloudy skies above the Chapel at Camp Kenan opened and the sun came out. Goose later mentioned that he had, "kind of played it up for the effect".

The rest of us at Camp were in awe of TOGG, thinking he had powers far beyond mortal man. Truly, Goose's popularity and influence on young men at Camp were at its greatest.



Do you have a "TOGG Tale" that you would like to see appear in future issues of "The Torch"? Please e-mail Elizabeth.Millen@friendsofcampkenan.org with yours today!

The Spirit of Camp Kenan

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changed. I do remember it was super cool to wear men's boxers as shorts and have them sag a little bit off your derriere, and I do remember that "the" cute guy on staff was the maintenance man (boy) who mowed the lawn during rest period, and shall also remain nameless. Oh, and best of all.... it was GIRLS CAMP!!!! Ah, those were the days....I have to say, though I was overwhelmed, and at times defeated, sports wise, there was so much more to the CK experience that was positive than I could have ever imagined. Campfires, new friendships, the Craft Lodge, rockin' Mess Halls, the love...it was all so magical. I could not wait to go back the next year, and I really couldn't wait to be old enough to work there some day.

When beginning my explanation of why I was there with the 2012 staff, I expressed that I wasn't there to tell them what they should think the "Spirit of CK" means, but only what it means to me, and maybe my feelings would ring true to them, or inspire their own ideas. To me, the Spirit of CK encompasses a few very important qualities, which are respect, kindness, love, team work, legacy, friendship, as well as health and well-being regarding all aspects of nature, the campers, each other as staff members, and the CK environment -from the lake front, to East fields, through the cabin line, all the way to the end of the Great Woods and back. I also went on to

say that at the time I was a camper and counselor, I did not realize the impact that experience would have on me and how the skills I learned over those years would carry through the rest of my life, especially into adulthood and motherhood. I found that if I could get up in front of my peers, sing, dance and act crazy, then I could also get up in front of a boardroom and make a confident presentation without a problem. Or, if I could get 7-10 tired little people tucked safely into bed to the tunes of James Taylor playing on my boom box after a long, hot, exciting day, I can tuck two little tired girls into bed, easy as pie, after singing some of my favorite Sunday songs, of course.

It takes real skill to be able to care for 7-10 children

24/7, on top of making sure they have the same amazing experience that I did as a camper, hoping they would want to return again, year after year. I also explained that it takes incredible trust as a parent to drop your babies (no matter what their ages) off and leave them in the hands of two friendly, seemingly qualified teenagers, the cabin counselors, for a whole week. I mean, major, ridiculous amounts of trust that I could never have understood until I was a parent. I also went on to say that now as a member of the Friends of CK, I understand why this group exists. We are here not only to support the program of CK, and to raise funds to send kids to CK but also to keep you connected to the roots of why you are who you are today, because of Camp Kenan. I shared with them how after a few years of being a counselor I decided to move on from CK because my life was going down a different path. I was working on my career, in college, my focus shifted, and I didn't get back into touch with the spirit of CK until I began to have a family of my own, almost ten years later. When my husband Andrew and I started to have children I longed to show them the best of me, and

maker for the campers. The next question was who was my favorite counselor and why? My answer was easy, Luna Velasquez. I was in Luna's cabin several times as a camper, she was (and is still today) a fun and spunky lady, and was really into all things nature. She loved to get us involved in any and all nature related activities, like building lean-to's, exploring the Great Woods, or even venturing out of Camp Kenan on a nature hike. With Luna, you could tell she really loved the company of her campers, sincerely enjoyed little things we said and did, really wanted to know more about us, made us feel cared for in the absence of our parents. All were signs of a good counselor and qualities I tried to hold onto as a counselor myself. Also, it didn't hurt that her boyfriend at the time was a "cute kitchen guy" and he would give her cabin a few extra smiles and nods our way. I was also asked what my favorite week was, and why? My reply was "Christmas in July and/or my birthday week". Christmas in July was a classic. Who wouldn't love a story line for a special day where Christmas is in jeopardy because Santa is lost or taken hostage, and then found just in time to celebrate

with a fancy, traditional Turkey dinner served up by the kitchen guys wearing ties and a Christmas themed dance to follow where the evening ends with everyone singing Silent Night by candle light??? And if it so happened to also be my birthday week, then my ultimate CK crush and favorite cutie-pie guy on staff brought me my birthday cake and kissed me on the cheek, too! Hubba-hubba!



The 2012 YMCA Camp Kenan Staff poses for a photo during Training Week.

the best of me started as a camper at Camp Kenan. As we all know, it is a unique place, it is where I personally first got in touch with how easy it was to just be me, and the first time in my life where I felt comfortable and accepted for who I truly was.

After I was done talking, and felt I had said all I could, they had a few questions for me. The first was if there were "all request Mess Halls" when I was on staff? Heck yes! The campers LOVED it! The counselors did too, but in a different way....because that usually meant someone was getting pudding in their face or singing a silly/embarrassing song, or getting thrown in the pool. But it was all in good fun and definitely a memory

The last question I was asked was, in one word, what does Camp Kenan mean to me? Easy - home. My answer, and I know the answer for many of you, was home. CK has my heart and I love being able to share the experience with my family and relive the memories with old and new friends. I am grateful that 15 or so years ago Goosestock began, and it's a tradition that is being carried on. I hope you come home to Camp Kenan this September, experience a little of those good old "Olympiad Week" days, and leave feeling rejuvenated and ready to return again the next year and the next year and the next!

In the spirit of Camp Kenan, Elizabeth (McGuire) Millen, Secretary.

Announcement: New Board Members Needed

The Friends of Camp Kenan are looking for two members to cycle onto the Friends of Camp Kenan Board of Directors at Goosestock 2012. We are also especially in need of someone with an IT background or ability who can help with the website updates and maintenance.

Being a Board Member is a two-three year commitment, so we are seeking active participants to attend all web conferences/meetings (approximately 8-10/yr), assist with Goosestock planning and preparation, assist with maintaining adopted responsibilities at Camp Kenan, and promoting the Gilbert J. Mosher Friends of Camp Kenan Campership opportunity.

Living locally to WNY is not a requirement as much of the work throughout the year can be done online, via e-mail or on the phone. If you are interested, please e-mail Mark Natemeier directly

at mark.natemeier@friendsofcampkenan.org explaining why you want to be on the Board and what value/experience you could bring to the Board.

Voting of new Board Members will take place on Saturday September 8, 2012 during the business meeting held before dinner. If you are not able to attend GS this year, then still write in to Mark and your bio can be read aloud at the meeting. Please note that attending future GS weekends would be a requirement if voted onto the board.



Barker • New York

Contact Us!

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GOOSESTOCK 2012: OLYMPIAD

September 7, 8, & 9, 2012

Special Thanks:

To all the Board members who contributed articles, as well as Bill Neidlinger, for his TOGG Tale.

If you have an article idea that you might like to contribute in the next issue of "The Torch" please contact Elizabeth (McGuire) Millen by September 15, 2012 directly at Elizabeth.Millen@friendsofcampkenan.org. We'd love to hear what Camp Kenan has meant to you! All thoughts, articles, photos, and TOGG Tales from Goosestock 2012 will be appreciated as the next issue will summarize this year's Goosestock.

The 8th Edition of "The Torch" is due to come out in October 2012.

Thank you!

J. Shepard, Publisher & Co-Editor/ E. Millen, Co-Editor/L. Flaherty, Co-Editor

Think green before you print.



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