

Camaraderie

Les communiqués des camarades de Canoe Island French Camp janvier 2017

NEWS FROM THE DIRECTORS: THE SOUND OF SILENCE



This past October Joseph and I canoed the Upper Missouri River Breaks in Montana often with the only sound being the waves churned by our wooden paddles. Mostly there was silence, beautiful white cliffs to view, and our personal thoughts. A far cry from the 15-hour days of laughter, planning, questions, phones ringing, emails, and eating with 75 happy people that is our life during the summer.

My cell phone was with me, but packed in a dry bag for safety and because there was no signal for it to be of use to me. A few times we hiked above the cliffs and while there, checked email and the weather to see if the wind would be at our backs or in our faces the next day. I forwarded on emails to be handled back at camp, and realized I had no control over the wind anyway.

I began to think about how valuable, and necessary, this quiet, un-busy time is. Tim Kreider wrote in the New York Times (June 30, 2012), "Idleness is not just a vacation, an indulgence or a vice; it is as indispensable to the brain as vitamin D is to the body, and deprived of it we suffer a mental affliction as disfiguring as rickets. The space and quiet that idleness provides is a necessary condition for standing back from life and seeing it whole, for making unexpected connections and waiting for the wild summer lightning strikes of inspiration — it is, paradoxically, necessary to getting any work done."

Although summer camp is filled with activities, we strive to make it a stress-free time for campers. Camp mornings are slow — campers can get up quietly at 6:30 am and come individually to the dining hall for hot cocoa. Some read in the adjacent library, some chat, some play cards, the piano or guitars. Those who need something more active head to the dock with Joseph for some quiet kayaking or canoeing. Two hours slide by with "nothing" to do and they are happy to do it.

Omid Safi, of Duke University, in his online column for On Being said in his November 6 2014, post: "Whatever happened to a world in which kids get muddy, get dirty, get messy, and heavens, get bored? Do we have to love our children so much that we overschedule them, making them stressed and busy — just like us?"

I admire these campers who give up their cherished social media for weeks so that they can immerse themselves in a world they rarely find at home. Although they excitedly await the return of their devices on the last morning, many tell us that they are thankful they are forced to have this experience — one they wouldn't do on their own.

This summer Program Director Sarah Stephens started a silent walk for the campers as part of our day on Shaw Island. For 15-20 minutes the campers walked silently through a small woodland, slightly separated from each other, and were given clues to observe, listen, and reflect. "That Friday on Inspiration Point there were so many things they wanted to share; they went on and on and on about what they saw on the silent hike," said Sarah.

Sometimes we have to be forced into having time to listen, think, reflect and to be bored. It might be a wilderness vacation or a summer camp. Everyone should seek these moments that can bring them wisdom, give them answers to questions, or just to let them listen to the wind.

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With great reflection, Joseph and I have decided that, after 37 years of directing youth camps, it is time to move on to new adventures. Summer 2017 will be our last camp season, and, while we will miss this wonderful, amazing camp community, we are excited about our next journey. The CIFIC Board of Directors is searching for a new director to start fall 2017. We look forward to passing on our vision and enthusiasm to the team who will be directing the continued success of Canoe Island French Camp.

~ Connie Jones, Camp Director

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Visit us online to:

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- request more brochures
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REBIENVENUE CHARLOTTE LEAD COUNSELOR 2017

Chers lecteurs,

Here I am sitting on the grass in a park in New Zealand, looking back at all the amazing times spent on Canoe Island last summer. Who would have known that this summer would turn out to be one of the best summers of my life. There is something about short term experiences that make them very special. I have found that the bonds I created with people on those experiences are always the strongest and are the ones that impact me the most. I feel like I have spent a lot of my life meeting new people, going on amazing adventures with them, and then leaving. It is definitely a bitter-sweet feeling but I obviously love it!

I was born in New Caledonia (a small French-speaking island in the Pacific) and then moved to the South of France where I spent most of my childhood. While growing up, I have had the chance to go to school in England, Ireland and Australia. I believe that being able to experience different school systems and to live in different cultures have allowed me to widen my horizons and to become a very curious person. That is probably one of the main reasons why I decided to study language education in Canada.

I am always up for new adventures so I have had the opportunity to teach in very varied educational settings from teaching teens in Hong Kong and Japanese students on a world cruise, to teaching at summer camps. I am now convinced that successful language learning is closely linked to positive experiences. I have found that when my students are having fun, learning happens without them even realizing it! That is why I absolutely love summer camps! I taught English in camps in France before coming to Canoe Island, and it was all about the fun. The kids were having such a great time, they did not even realize they were doing everything in English. Canoe Island French Camp takes this idea to another level by combining language learning with cultural experiences and with life-changing human lessons.

My experience at Canoe is one of the reasons why I love to travel. When you are abroad, you are constantly stepping out of your comfort zone and learning something new everyday. I recently have been spending a lot of time in *Polynésie Française* since my parents live there. In my time there, I was overwhelmed by the people's kindness, generosity and passion for their culture. I learned so much about *Tahiti Ori* (their traditional dances), tattoo cultures and their love for *Moana* (the ocean).

Traveling brought me so much as a human being and as a teacher. It has helped me grow and that is why I keep hitting the road, so that I can keep growing. I am often asked if I miss home, but I realize that I have a hundred "homes" around the world, places where I have made long-lasting friendships and memories, and Canoe Island is one of them!

Merci et à bientôt!

Charlotte Megret, CIFIC counselor 2016 and 2017



"...I realize that I have a hundred "homes" around the world, places where I have made long-lasting friendships and memories and Canoe Island is one of them!"

MERCI A NOS BENEVOLES ET DONATEURS

In 2016, our camper families and friends supported Canoe Island French Camp in many ways. They attended our adult events such as Yoga Benefit Weekend, they registered at higher tuition levels, and they gave generously. Donors listed made contributions between December 11, 2015 and November 17, 2016. If you donated after that time, we thank you and will honor you in the January 2018 newsletter.

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Help us raise the roof!

Thanks to generous families and alumni, we have raised over \$15,000 in support of our new art facility. At a projected cost of \$60,000, we still need your support to raise the roof. The construction of the atelier will offer a beautiful, enclosed work space for art students as well as a second floor for French classes. These improvements will have a huge impact on our campers for generations to come. We plan to break ground in September 2017 and have the new space ready for campers in the summer of 2018. Please consider making a donation to our Facility Fund in support of this project.

CALENDRIER 2017

FRENCH CAMP

SESSION 1	LA RÉVOLUTION FRANÇAISE	AGES 9-16	JUNE 25-JULY 6
SESSION 2	LES VOYAGEURS	AGES 9-16	JULY 9-27
SESSION 3	LE MONDE FRANCOPHONE	AGES 9-16	JULY 30-AUGUST 17
SESSION 4	LES CHEVALIERS	AGES 9-16	AUGUST 20-AUGUST 31

FAMILY AND ADULT EVENTS

SPRING WORK PARTY	ALL AGES	APRIL 21-23
VICTORIA DAY WEEKEND FAMILY CAMP	ALL AGES	MAY 19-22
MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND FAMILY CAMP	ALL AGES	MAY 26-29
ADULT YOGA BENEFIT WEEKEND	ADULTS	JUNE 2-4
OPEN HOUSE	ALL AGES	JUNE 24
LABOR DAY WEEKEND FAMILY CAMP	ALL AGES	SEPTEMBER 1-4

For 10 years Canoe Island French Camp has raised money for camper scholarships via its annual Yoga Benefit Weekend. Kris Lowe, yoga instructor at Gold Creek Tennis and Sports Club in Woodinville, WA, responded to an invitation from past board member Dayna Stern in 2007 to lead an adult spring weekend focusing on yoga and all the fun things we do at camp: sailing, kayaking, paddle boarding, swimming, stargazing, etc. In the past 10 years participants have donated more than \$26,000 to the CIFC Scholarship fund, enough for 13 full scholarships for children who otherwise couldn't afford to come.

Kris Lowe
Celebration Weekend
June 2-4, 2017



2017 will be her last yoga weekend on Canoe Island, and we want to celebrate her and what she has brought to Canoe Island. If you've come to a past Yoga Weekend, please come again – whether you want to take part one last time in Kris' energetic and restorative yoga or just relax on Canoe Island -- and thank her for the years of support she has given to Canoe Island campers. Anyone, of course, is welcome to register. We hope to continue the tradition in the future years as we look for a new instructor.



Contact Us!
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