



Camp Tecumseh
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Dear Camp Tecumseh Family,

It has been an amazing ride for the past year culminating with an unbelievable summer in 2015. We will, no doubt, be riding that momentum into next summer. The staff was diligent and enthusiastic, translating into an amazing experience for campers. A large majority of the staff at Camp Tecumseh has been in the shoes of the campers, and all they want is for the experience to be even better than it was for them. The example set by staff members is commendable and a major reason why I am so glad that my own children are campers. What follows are a few observations from this summer that I think capture just what the boys enjoy most about Camp Tecumseh.

First, the boys all want to be good at something- really good at something- and there are so many opportunities for this to happen at Camp. There are so many words of wisdom that we want to pass on to our children, but it is often difficult to get through to them as parents. However, when they hear the same messages from the counselors whom they idolize, the ideas resonate more powerfully. From instructions on the soccer field to personal hygiene tips to lessons about empathy, I watched as eager campers soaked up all the words and actions of their counselors. Specifically on the athletic fields we have a large number of counselors that have played or are currently playing high school, college or professional sports. This gives our campers something to strive for as well as someone to talk to about the experience. Incredibly, we have had a few staff members (who are former campers) switch sports while in college. This speaks directly to the well-rounded environment we provide at Camp. I believe strongly that sport specialization all too often leads to burnout and injuries that will rob children of the fun that is supposed to be had while playing sports. Camp provides an incredibly competitive environment for boys to learn many different sports and figure out, when they are ready, which sport they would like to pursue. At Camp, boys have the freedom and space to strive for excellence in personal and athletic endeavors.

Secondly, the boys want to feel connected to others. Camp Tecumseh provides this connection with its small community and the messages we give to the boys on a daily basis. With twelve to twenty boys per cabin and four to five counselors per cabin, each boy automatically has a group he can cling to. Additionally, with morning huddle, evening prayers and countless other opportunities to make oneself better- High Noon Club, Bald Peak Club, Cross Fit Club, Yoga- Camp Tecumseh helps to instill positive character traits that are fostered for a lifetime. The aforementioned clubs and activities offer the boys an opportunity to pursue personal growth during free time in small groups with like-minded campers and staff, fostering not just personal improvement but also connection to others. Evidence of the connection made by the boys is apparent on the final Sunday of camp. Eight year olds all the way up to grown men are crying and hugging because they do not want Camp to be over. The bonds formed during seven weeks are so strong that boys come back year after year. As Director I have heard from countless alums about how powerful their experience was at Camp, and how



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experiences at Camp shaped the person they are today. We have hosted many alums for very short visits simply to show their girlfriend or wife the place they talk so much about!

Finally, the boys desire freedom and independence. There is no better place to get this than the safety of Winnepesaukee's wooded shores! Undoubtedly, Camp provides boys with an opportunity to be on their own, but it also provides structure and supervision. Boys are free to make choices about whom they would like to be around, what activities they would like to participate in and how hard they want to work to make themselves better at something. These choices help them to understand who they are and who they want to be. It is not uncommon to see a pack of boys the same age running a Tecumseh Warrior together or a few boys of differing ages playing 2 ball together on the hoops court. Each age group learns from the other in so many ways, and that is one of the many unique things about Camp. One of our staff members spoke of this phenomenon at the start of camp when he quoted a saying that was outside the library at his school.

“He who knows only his generation remains always a child” - George Norlin

While we all wish our boys could remain children forever to some extent, it is without question that they grow up, mature and become men at Camp Tecumseh. The perfect balance of freedom and structure that they have at Camp creates the brotherhood of love that helps provide our boys with confidence as they move towards independence and adulthood.

I chuckle every time someone asks me how the summer was because it is impossible to put all of this into a brief statement that answers that question. Amazing, incredible and extraordinary are three words that I use most often, and then try to explain as best I can why so many boys benefit from their summers at Camp Tecumseh. The opportunities to strive to be really good at something, to feel connected to others, and to gain independence are readily available for every boy that attends Tecumseh. I look forward to spending many summers at 'The Greatest Place on Earth!'

Please feel free to reach out to me at any time.

Sincerely,

Doug

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