



**Camperships
For
Nebagamon**

Making Camps A Place of Welcome For All

NebagaNotes

The newsletter of Camperships for Nebagamon • Summer 2010

CAMP PROVIDES GIFTS FOR CHRIS BATES

BY CHRIS BATES

To explain the impact Camp Nebagamon had on my life, I need to explain where I came from and how I was raised. I was born in Gary, IN in the early 80s. Gary was, and still currently is, a predominately African-American community. My family is racially mixed as my mother is Caucasian and my father African-American. Even though I had a mixed family, I rarely saw any other race than African-American.

My family was poor and received government assistance until my late teenage years. When I was about ten years old, we moved from Gary to Minneapolis. The contrast in racial make-up of these two areas is great. In Minnesota, I was living in a predominately white area, but my family was still low-income so not much had changed in terms of the type and culture of people I was exposed to. I give this background because the two greatest gifts I received from camp were the ability to work with people different than myself and the drive to pursue higher education. I would not have developed these traits had I not attended Camp Nebagamon.

I was 12 years old my first summer [1997] at Nebagamon. It was not easy to fit in that year being one of the only persons of color and coming from a lower economic background. I did make friends and participate in the programming, but I felt like something was wrong. Coming home that fall, I remember reflecting on some of the conflicts I had with my cabin mates. I remember thinking that it was my own actions that caused the trouble in the cabin.



After three years as a camper, Chris Bates was a stalwart on the staff for another four summers.

When I returned the next summer, I made a great effort to be more open. I really focused on learning how to accept the differences between myself and the other campers. After opening myself up in this manner, I had a much more enjoyable time at camp and forged friendships that have lasted through the years. I now attribute this process to helping provide the skills that I still use today in working with people from all backgrounds. This ability has

served me well in my academic pursuits and will continue to do so in my future career as an attorney.

The second gift I am thankful for happened when I was a counselor [2001-04]. At the time, I had never given much thought to pursuing education after high school. To my peers, it was not a question of *if* they were going to college, but *where*. My parents did not attend college and, as a result, I never received the message that education was important. After leaving camp, I went on to attend community college and finished my undergraduate degree at a university. I then went to law school and am now completing my last semester.

I would be remiss not to mention the impact camp also had on my family. My parents and I still discuss our first meeting with Roger and Judy Wallenstein at the Boys and Girls Club in Minneapolis. The meeting changed our lives. Not only was I given a full scholarship to attend camp for three years, I later was given a job as a counselor for four years. My parents have always attributed camp for setting me on my right path. Their only regret is that they could not send my sisters!

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

By Jill Kiersky Marcus

Last year turned into a banner year for Camperships For Nebagamon, both from a fundraising standpoint as well as the program's progress towards attaining our goals. You may recall from my update last November that CFN is at a turning point; camps are finding more campers needing financial support during an economic downturn during which fundraising is more challenging.

Well, you all stepped up to the plate. Thanks to your generosity, CFN raised nearly \$144,000 in donations in 2009, an increase of 33% from 2008 donations and the highest level of donation income since 2000, when CFN spearheaded the MJL Endowment campaign. The endowment now stands at nearly \$1.2 million and generated enough income in 2009, combined with donations, to enable CFN

rest of the camp community and eventually their communities back home.

That's a tall order! And it's one that CFN has made a conscious effort to pretty much leave in the camp directors' hands. Who better to determine which kids are the right fit with camp than the directors themselves?

CFN's role, in addition to providing financial assistance, is also to support our partner camps in their endeavor to reach our common goals (for a full recount of our mission, goals, and desired impact, read the Winter 2009 NebagaNotes at our web site). One way we do this is to provide funds for camps to use in staff diversity training. We also look for school or community counselors and social workers as a source for finding campers.

CFN is also in the beginning stages of building an advocate program whereby local Camp Nebagamon friends or alumni can build and maintain relationships with campership campers and families in their area before and after the camping season. Advocates would play a significant role in keeping campership families connected with the camp community over the long term. We hope the advocate program will help these kids return to camp for many summers, come back on staff, and remain engaged throughout their lives.

We are optimistic about last summer's successes, but also know that we still have a long way to go to reach our goals and have the sustainable impact I outlined last year. We can't thank you enough for your ongoing support. CFN has been able to enrich many lives because of your generosity! We welcome your questions, suggestions, comments, and advice because we rely on our camp community to continually improve upon our successes and make camps a place of welcome for all.

***2009 donations increased
33 percent over 2008.***

***CFN helped send 58 kids
to camp last year.***

to break even for the year. That means we were able to support all 58 campership campers without having to dip into our unrestricted assets.

In addition to CFN's fundraising successes, both partner camps have met our goal to have 15% of their camperships receiving financial support. Camp Nebagamon and Camp WeHaKee are both making great strides in identifying successful campership campers. Successful campership campers are, in part, those who not only thrive at camp, making new friends, taking on leadership roles, and becoming a part of the camp family, but they also have a positive impact on the camping experience for the

NEW CN CHARITIES WEB SITE PRESENTS SEVERAL GIVING OPTIONS

Camperships for Nebagamon, in conjunction with the Camp Nebagamon Scholarship Fund, has revamped its web site at www.cncharities.org. Here you can learn about our missions and goals, learn the differences between the two funds supported by the Camp Nebagamon community, join our Legacy Society, and find new and exciting ways to contribute.

Camperships For Nebagamon is a 501(c)3 charitable institution. We have recently expanded our donation options, which are outlined below.

Immediate Financial Contributions

As always, you can make a one-time credit card payment online or send a check to our office. This can be a general donation or in honor/memory of someone else.

Make a recurring gift. You can contribute as little as \$10 per month, or set up monthly or annual giving at any level. The amount will automatically be charged to your credit card, and you will receive a tax letter at the end of the year.

Purchase gift cards, which make great hostess, birthday, or thank-you presents. A pack of four only

costs \$100 but goes a long way toward sending kids to camp.

Long-Term Financial Contributions

Transfer stocks or other appreciated securities to CFN and potentially save on income and capital gains taxes.

Join our Legacy Society. Include CFN as beneficiary of your will, living trust, life insurance, retirement plan or other estate plan, and you will receive invitations to special events, recognition in CFN publications (if desired) and a thank-you from our president.

We are also working to simplify other options for community service and in-kind donations. These include providing sample letters for bar mitzvah service projects, listing supplies that CFN kids may need, and developing an advocate program to help campership campers in your area stay connected with camp.

And don't forget to check with your employer's matching gift program to see if your donation can be doubled. Thanks again for your generosity and support!

ROLFE GOLF OUTING SCHEDULED FOR SEPT. 13

This year marks the 11th anniversary of the Michael N. Rolfe Golf Outing, which CN alum Andy Rolfe and his consulting firm, The Keystone Group, created and organize every year. The winter 2009 NebagaNotes article Rolfe Golf Outing Celebrates 10th Year pays tribute to Andy and the way he honors his father's life by sponsoring the event, proceeds from which go to Camperships for Nebagamon.

This year, the Rolfe Golf Outing is on September 13th at Seven Bridges Golf Club in Woodridge, IL in suburban Chicago. If you live in the area, please join us in a fun day with camaraderie and friendly competition.

If you aren't a golfer or don't live in Chicago, you can help support Andy, Mike's memory, and campership kids across the country in the following ways:

Corporate or individual sponsorships—get your name in front of potential clients across many industries.

Donate raffle prizes—we take anything, from gift certificates, apparel, travel packages, tickets to sporting events, etc.

Continue your regular contributions

Watch for an email or contact Jill Kiersky Marcus at jkiersky@mindspring.com to take part. Thanks in advance for your support!

GOING GREEN

CFN now publishes all NebagaNotes newsletters on our web site, so if you'd like to stop receiving paper newsletters, visit us at www.cncharities.org/cfn or send an email to CFNInfo@gmail.com. Sign up to save trees, save carbon, save money, and receive periodic (don't worry, only 3-4 per year) electronic updates in addition to our regular newsletter.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



*“This Shall Be a Place
of Welcome for All”*

INSIDE...

- Chris Bates reflects on camp experience.
- 2009 is strong year for CFN.
- New CN charities web site launched.