

#30

# Red Arrow Camp

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Dear Paul,

FINALLY!!! I apologize for the delay in getting this to you, it has been in my mind and my heart ever since I talked with you way back when.

We are sorry that we could not be with you at the reunion but our camp ended on Wednesday, August 8 and we were still picking up the pieces a week later. Seriously, we had a terrific camp: great weather, a super group of campers and a fantastic staff! Now that we are back in Steamboat my first project here was to get this off to you.

Too many memories, too little space! I have gone over it several times and so has Sue and so here it is. Feel free to edit, delete, whatever to make it fit into the year book. One favor we would ask of you though would be to send us the completed Trail's End since so much of our life now began with Camp Waupaca and Skipper.

Best of luck as you put this all together, if you have any questions please don't hesitate to call on us.

Take care and...

God Bless!

Bob & Sue Kirk

Phone / Fax #: 970-879-7081

"Don't wait to become a great man. be a great boy"

## MEMORIES OF CAMP WAUPACA AND SKIPPER KUKLIN:

### CAMP DIRECTOR, MENTOR, COLLEAGUE AND FRIEND

I FIRST MET SKIPPER KUKLIN IN 1957 WHEN I WAS ATTENDING NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY. SKIPPER WAS A PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER AND MANUAL ARTS INSTRUCTOR AT AVOCA SCHOOL IN WILMETTE. I WAS INTERESTED IN GAINING EXPERIENCE IN WORKING WITH CHILDREN AS A PRELUDE TO MY STUDENT TEACHING REQUIREMENT. WHEN INTRODUCED TO SKIPPER, WE HIT IT OFF IMMEDIATELY AND HE WAS EAGER FOR ME TO HELP IN HIS AFTER SCHOOL SPORTS PROGRAM. HE ALSO TOLD ME HE THOUGHT I COULD GAIN EXPERIENCE WITH KIDS BY WORKING FOR HIM AT HIS CAMP IN WISCONSIN - CAMP WAUPACA. I DECLINED ON THAT SINCE MY SUMMERS AT THAT TIME WERE FOCUSED TO BE IN THE CITY. NEVERTHELESS, I BEGAN WORKING WITH HIM IN THE AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM AND LEARNED A GREAT DEAL FROM HIM ABOUT ORGANIZING GAMES AND CONTESTS, COACHING CONCEPTS AND, IN GENERAL, WORKING WITH THE CHILDREN. HE ALWAYS KEPT ENCOURAGING ME TO COME TO WAUPACA AND SO I DID AN INTERVIEW WITH HIM AT HIS HOME. I ALSO INTERVIEWED WITH SEVERAL OTHER CAMPS BUT MAINTAINED THAT THE CITY WAS WHERE I WANTED TO BE.

THEN, ONE SPRING I GOT A CALL FROM SKIPPER - HIS ATHLETIC DIRECTOR OF MANY YEARS WAS BATTLING CANCER AND COULD NOT BE AT CAMP THAT SUMMER... COULD I HELP HIM OUT? I AGREED AND SO BEGAN A SEVEN OR EIGHT YEAR EXPERIENCE AT CAMP WAUPACA. MY FIRST IMPRESSION OF CAMP WAS THIS: JUST BEFORE WAKE UP EACH MORNING YOU WOULD HEAR THE CLICK OF THE P.A. SYSTEM IN THE MESS HALL, FOLLOWED BY THE SCRATCHING OF A PHONOGRAPH NEEDLE ON A RECORD, FOLLOWED BY THE REVEILLE BUGLE CALL AND THEN - "EVERYBODY UP, IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY AT CAMP WAUPACA - RISE AND SHINE" - SKIPPER'S POSITIVE, ENTHUSIASTIC PRONOUNCEMENT OF WHAT THE DAY HELD FOR ALL OF US. HIS ENERGY WAS BOUNDLESS THROUGHOUT EACH AND EVERY DAY. HE WAS A GIFTED ATHLETE (BASKETBALL, GYMNASTICS, TENNIS, GOLF, YOU NAME IT) IN HIGH SCHOOL AND IN COLLEGE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA. HE MADE RIPLEY'S "BELIEVE IT OR NOT" BY GRADUATING FROM UNIVERSITY AND HIGH SCHOOL ON THE SAME DAY. HE ALSO WAS A PERFORMER HAVING BEEN ON THE VAUDEVILLE CIRCUIT FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS AS A DANCER, PART TIME COMEDIAN, PART TIME MENTAL TELEPATHIST, PART TIME SALESMAN. HE SHOWED MANY OF HIS TALENTS AT CAMP WHEN, ON RAINY DAYS, HE WOULD ENTHRALL AND ENTERTAIN THE ENTIRE CAMP WITH HIS TAP DANCING, HIS STUNTS AND HIS MEMORY GAMES UNTIL THE RAIN STOPPED.

BY THE END OF THAT FIRST SUMMER I HAD LEARNED A GREAT DEAL MORE FROM SKIP BUT I THOUGHT THAT WAS MY LAST. UNFORTUNATELY I UNDERESTIMATED SKIP AND THE NEXT YEAR HE CONVINCED ME TO RETURN TO WAUPACA AS HIS PROGRAM DIRECTOR, GIVING ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO GAIN GREATER EXPERIENCE IN WORKING WITH STAFF, CAMPERS AND ALL ASPECTS OF PROGRAM. BEING IN THE MINORITY AT CAMP - I WAS A GENTILE, A LUTHERAN - I LEARNED A GREAT DEAL ABOUT MY JEWISH FRIENDS AND SOON I WAS INVOLVED IN THE FRIDAY EVENING SERVICES GIVING TALKS, READING PRAYERS AND OTHER INSPIRATIONAL EXCERPTS, MANY OF WHICH I STILL HAVE IN MY FILES FOR CHAPEL SERVICES AT MY OWN CAMP, RED ARROW. FRIENDS??? I MADE SO MANY FRIENDS FROM CAMPERS TO COUNSELORS TO PEOPLE LIKE JOE ROSEN, SKIP'S PARTNER WHO WAS A PRINCIPAL ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF CHICAGO.

EACH YEAR I VOWED IT WAS MY LAST AND EACH YEAR I RETURNED AND THROUGH ALL OF THOSE YEARS I NEVER HAD A CONTRACT WITH SKIP...IT WAS ALWAYS - "BOB, MY WORD IS GOOD AND SO IS YOURS SO I'LL SEE YOU AT CAMP" AND THEN WE'D START TALKING ABOUT NEW IDEAS, PROGRAMS, EQUIPMENT AND STAFF. HE WAS ALWAYS A STEP AHEAD WITH NEW AND AMAZING IDEAS, YET THE BASIC PROGRAM WAS WHAT MADE WAUPACA SO SPECIAL: THE SIGN UPS FOR CLASSES, THE SPECIAL DAYS, CABIN NIGHTS, CAMPFIRE, THE COLOR WAR AND MANY OF THE PEOPLE WHO WERE REGULARS: CHUCK COOPER, EXTRAORDINARY STORY TELLER,

WAYNE TOWNE, RIFLERY AND SHOP INSTRUCTOR, HIS MOTHER ANN, A SUPERB COOK AND KITCHEN MANAGER BUT EVEN MORE, AN AMAZING LADY. THEN THERE WERE PEOPLE LIKE WALLY TOMCHEK WHO COULD COME UP WITH A GREAT PLAY EVERY SUMMER, BOB MOWEN - "MR NATURE" AND A GROUP OF COUNSELORS I'LL NEVER FORGET: HERBIE BELLER, BARRY SHANOFF, AL SORKIN, MEN WHO WERE VERY GOOD WITH THE KIDS, THE PROGRAM AND WITH SKIP, LORETTA AND ALL OF THE GREAT CAMP FAMILIES. SOON SKIP ASKED ME TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE C.I.T. AND J.C. PROGRAMS AT CAMP AND SO I MOVED OUT TO THE SMALL GROUP OF CABINS THAT LATER I BELIEVE CAME TO BE KNOWN AS THE "VILLAGE". WORKING WITH THOSE FUTURE COUNSELORS WAS BOTH A CHALLENGE AND A WONDERFUL AND FUN EXPERIENCE WITH THE LIKES OF STEVE KUKLIN, GARY RAND, LARRY ROSEN, TERRY RIFKIN, RICKY SINGER, MITCHELL EX, MARC RINGEL AND OTHERS. WE HAD FUN AS A SMALL CABIN GROUP WHO HAD BOUNDLESS ENERGY AND SOME REALLY CRAZY IMAGINATIONS - BOTH THEM AND MYSELF. WE HAD GAMES LIKE "FALL", "KEYS", "BROOM" AND OTHERS THAT WERE PERHAPS FORERUNNERS OF THE TRUST GAMES THAT DEVELOPED IN THE 70'S AND 80'S. WE DID LEADERSHIP TRAINING, WE VISITED OTHER CAMPS AND WE SPENT TIME TALKING ABOUT COUNSELING TECHNIQUES. WEDNESDAY AT CAMP WAS ALWAYS CABIN NIGHT AND IT WAS OUR JOB TO MOP THE MESS HALL WHICH INVARIABLY ENDED UP IN SOME FAMOUS WRESTLING MATCHES. IT WAS ESPECIALLY GRATIFYING TO SEE THESE GUYS STEP INTO REAL COUNSELING ROLES AT WAUPACA AND DO FANTASTIC JOBS, EVERY ONE OF THEM, AND ALSO A TREAT TO WORK WITH THEM AS FELLOW STAFF MEMBERS.

BY 1958 I WAS INTO WORKING AT NORTHWESTERN IN THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND WORKING ON MY MASTER'S DEGREE AS WELL. I WAS STILL AT CAMP WAUPACA AND IT WAS THAT SUMMER I VISITED CAMP TALAKI THE YWCA GIRLS CAMP OUT OF MILWAUKEE ON GILBERT LAKE IN NEARBY WILD ROSE ON MY DAY OFF. I MET THE WATERFRONT DIRECTOR WHO WAS CALLED "RIVETS" BY STAFF AND CAMPERS ALIKE. I HAD SEEN HER SEVERAL TIMES ON THE PORCH AT THE CASINO AND SHE TOUCHED MY HEART. WE HAD OUR FIRST DATE AFTER CAMP CLOSED AT SIMPSON'S INDIAN ROOM AND TALKED A LOT ABOUT CAMP, HERS AND MINE. WE CONTINUED TO COMMUNICATE AFTER GETTING BACK TO SCHOOL - SHE AT WISCONSIN, ME AT N.U. AND OUR RELATIONSHIP FLOWERED. WE WERE MARRIED DECEMBER 16, 1961, BY THEN I WAS WORKING AT EVANSTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL. THAT SUMMER SUE WAS NAMED DIRECTOR OF TALAKI AND I WAS AT WAUPACA - WE JOKINGLY CALLED IT OUR "TRIAL SEPARATION" THE NEXT SUMMER SKIPPER AGREED TO HAVE SUE WITH US AT WAUPACA AND SHE LIVED WITH SKIP AND LORETTA AT THE WHITE HOUSE. SKIPPER HAD BEEN VERY HESITANT TO HAVE A WOMAN ON HIS STAFF BUT BY THE END OF THAT SUMMER HE TOLD HER SHE COULD RUN HIS WATERFRONT ANY TIME AND THEY BUILT A SMALL CABIN FOR US AT THE SOUTH END OF CAMP. WE LOVED THE NEXT TWO SUMMERS AND LEARNED A GREAT DEAL MORE ABOUT THE CAMPING BUSINESS. IT WAS SKIPPER'S HEART ATTACK IN 1965 THAT REALLY BROUGHT OUR FUTURE INTO FOCUS. I WAS PLANNING TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL TO GET MY PHD IN ADMINISTRATION BUT WHEN WE VISITED SKIP IN THE HOSPITAL WE ASKED HIM WHAT WE COULD DO TO HELP HIM - HIS ANSWER - "COME BACK TO CAMP AND RUN IT FOR ME". WE NEVER HESITATED AND WE LITERALLY TOOK OVER RECRUITING CAMPERS, MAKING HOME VISITS WITH THE SLIDE PROJECTOR, HAVING REUNIONS, STAFFING, THE WHOLE THING. SKIP HAD APPROACHED US SEVERAL TIMES ABOUT US BUYING CAMP BUT WE WEREN'T SURE OF OUR FINANCIAL PICTURE OR OUR READINESS SO SKIP TOLD US HE HAD A BUYER, MANNY DESNET, WHO WOULD BE WITH US AT CAMP TO LEARN WAUPACA'S PROGRAM. THAT WAS IN 1966. WE HAD A WONDERFUL SUMMER AND WORKED VERY WELL WITH MANNY BUT WE HAD TOLD BOTH SKIPPER AND MANNY THAT '66 WOULD BE OUR LAST YEAR AT WAUPACA. WE WERE READY FOR SOMETHING NEW! DURING THE SUMMER WE PUT TOGETHER A RESUME AND RAN IT IN CAMPING MAGAZINE IN THE HOPES WE WOULD GET A JOB WITH A CAMP OUT EAST. AS FATE WOULD HAVE IT, ONE CAMP FROM WISCONSIN FROM OVER 100 RESPONSES CONTACTED US AND IN OCTOBER OF THAT YEAR WE SAT IN THE HOME OF CHARLIE BOESEL AND HIS WIFE, THE OWNERS OF RED ARROW CAMP IN WOODRUFF, WISCONSIN. WE AGREED TO COME TO CAMP THAT SUMMER TO SEE IF RED ARROW WAS WHAT WE WANTED AND WE HAD AN OPTION TO BUY. SKIPPER KNEW CHARLIE THROUGH THE PRIVATE CAMP ASSOCIATION AND HIS RECOMMENDATION WAS ENOUGH FOR CHARLIE. UNFORTUNATELY CHARLIE DIED OF A HEART ATTACK THAT LABOR DAY AND ALL OF A SUDDEN WE BECAME THE NEW OWNERS OF RED ARROW! THAT WAS 35 YEARS AGO AND IT ALL BEGAN WITH A

PERSISTENT IRVING "SKIPPER" KUKLIN'S DESIRE TO HAVE ME COME TO CAMP TO WORK. WITHOUT THAT OPPORTUNITY I WOULD HAVE NEVER MET SUE, WE WOULD NEVER HAD THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT SKIP GAVE US OR THE WONDERFUL FRIENDSHIPS WE MADE WHILE AT WAUPACA.

"FLASHBACKS AND MEMORIES" SO MANY VISIONS COME TO ME AS I WRITE THIS AND MUST LIST A FEW: CAMPFIRES - CHUCK COOPER IN BUCKSKIN HOLDING US ALL SPELLBOUND WITH HIS STORIES, "WE ARE THE KIDS WHO COME FROM STRATTON LAKE", "THE GOOD SHIP TITANIC", "WE'RE ALL GOOD FELLOWS..", "ROUND THE CAMPFIRE NEATH THE STARS SO BRIGHT" AND "TAPS IN TEN MINUTES" WAYNE TOWNE ANNOUNCING THAT "SOMEONE HAS BEEN STEALING MY XACTO KNIVES", WATERMELON PARTIES AT LEE GOULDS COMPOUND THANKS TO BARRY SHANOFF'S CONNECTIONS, PARENT DAY AND HERB BELLER'S IMPROMPTU COUNSELING SESSION WITH MRS PLOTKE (SP??) IN A CABIN BATHROOM, NIGHT O.D. AND WALKING BED WETTERS, WALLY TOMCHEK DRESSED AS NERO FOR WAUPACA'S FIRST EVER OLYMPICS, WHEN ASKED HOW THE SKI PROGRAM RAN ONE MORNING AL SORKIN REPLIED WITH "THIS MORNING I DID 250 REVOLUTIONS", THE GREEN OF STRATTON LAKE AND THE OOZE OF THE MARL BOTTOM, BRAVE NIGHT, THE MAGIC FIRE, GOLD RUSH, FRANK BUCK DAY, A COOK OUT AT THE TOWNE FARM AND SEEING ANN TOWNE ON HER TRACTOR, WHITE HAIR BLOWING IN THE WIND AS SHE BROUGHT US FOOD, THE PORCH OF THE CASINO, THE WINDMILL, KINGS ROOST, THE OLD SOLDIERS HOME IN KING, "BIG STICK, LITTLE STICK", SIGN UPS FOR CLASSES, BLUE WHITE WAR - "WATERMELON, WATERMELON, WATERMELON RIND,- LOOK AT THE SCOREBOARD....", COLIN BURNES THE ULTIMATE CAMP PHOTOGRAPHER - "A ONE A TWO A THREE - SMILE" SO MANY THOUGHTS, SO LITTLE SPACE.

FINALLY, WHAT INFLUENCE DID WAUPACA HAVE ON US WHEN WE TOOK OVER RED ARROW? SIGN UPS, OUR ACTIVITY PROGRAM IS THE SAME BASIC ONE THAT SKIP HAD AT WAUPACA, CABIN NIGHTS, OLYMPICS, TREASURE HUNT, COLIN BURNES WHO WAS OUR CAMP PHOTOGRAPHER UNTIL HIS DEATH, GOLD RUSH (AT TIMES), THE MAGIC FIRE (TO SUMMON LITTLE JOE OUR CAMP GHOST), SINGING TAPS TO END ALL CAMP ASSEMBLIES AND SO MANY OTHER IDEAS THAT SKIP PROVIDED US.

YES, WAUPACA AND SKIPPER KUKLIN IS WHERE IT ALL STARTED. HE GUIDED ME, HE TUTORED ME, HE HAD CONFIDENCE IN ME, HE WELCOMED SUE AND THEN ENTRUSTED WAUPACA TO US FOR ONE SUMMER. HE WAS A WONDERFUL BOSS, AN INNOVATIVE DIRECTOR AND A TRUE AND DEAR FRIEND. WHAT BETTER WAY TO KEEP SKIPPER'S SPIRIT ALIVE THAN TO RING THE BELL EVERY MORNING AT RAC (WE DON'T HAVE A P.A. - I'M THE P.A.) AND ENTHUSIASTICALLY AND POSITIVELY ANNOUNCE TO THE ENTIRE CAMP "EVERYBODY UP, IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY AT RED ARROW, RISE AND SHINE" THEN TO GO TO EVERY CABIN AND GREET CAMPERS AND STAFF TO START THE DAY. AND I THINK OF HIM AS I DO IT AND EVEN NOW I STILL SAY: "THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU SKIPPER, WHEREVER YOU ARE IN GOD'S HEAVEN". AMEN!