

Jayson's Campfire Chronicles

Stoney Point Camp Dec 2024

Abandoned! My coworkers, the people I've grown to so completely trust and rely on for the last year, had absconded me!

In the beautiful, sun-drenched, bronze-gilded early October autumnal wood, the symphony of bird and beast and wind rustling tall wisps of brown grass, I found myself.....abandoned!

My coworkers, the people whom I've grown to so completely trust and rely on for the last year, had absconded from Science Camp's last lesson of the day. To explain...

The day started harmless enough, with Vanessa checking in campers and greeting parents. There was the unfortunate circumstance of one camper falling prey to carsickness from the ride to camp. After cleaning the camper's violent exit of breakfast, settling stomachs, and settling into seats, the bumble of the campers quieted as they drew the nectar of apiology with a dip into the sweet world of honeybees. Campers became junior beekeepers, abuzz with questions, learning at a honeycomb full of knowledge from a successful apiarist without the risk of stings.

Following that, campers took flight to the woods, learning from Camp Director Tom the different types of birds in the forest. Using common hand tools, Mr. Tom demonstrated their function to the kids, and let them discover how they might correlate to the beaks of the birds and their diets. Did you know some woodpeckers peck a tree with up to 1000g's of force? Humans get concussions at less than 100g's. Woodpeckers sustain no damage, and can actually "drum" a tree with their beak up to 25 times per second! God's creation is certainly worth studying!!



A bird-related scavenger hunt was my enjoyable contribution to Science Camp. Checklists in hand, campers took off into a murmuration of calls and excitement like a flock all their own. Discovering habitat, hunting for bird foods like delicious berries and squiggly grubs, and even finding the most common sign which birds deposit on windshields; droppings.

Science Camp's educational time concluded with the ever-important camp-style free time. Running through the woods to wobble across the rope bridge, clamber up the cargo net, inspect the stick-and-branch-and-mud forts that summer campers constructed, and balancing on the

huge teetering platform named "Noah's Ark."

I suppose you could say it was during the playing on "Noah's Ark" that my coworkers decided to "abandon ship." Only moments before, I saw them speaking to parents of the campers off in the distance. Panic began to set in, as I realized with my coworkers gone, the camper's parents were preparing a picnic lunch.

The only thing between the "ark" and mealtime? ME.

Avoiding eye contact with what I now imagined to be a feral bunch of ravenous children, I knew I needed to shrink away as best I could. From nowhere a parent scoops up a toddler from the "ark" and announces lunch. This was my moment of narrow escape. Running off into the distance, hearing the noises behind me of the demolition of Lunchables containers, the ravaging of Welch's Fruit Snacks bags, and the crushing wrinkles of Capri Sun juice pouches being drained dry.

I kept running, making my way back to Base Camp for lunch. I found my coworkers enjoying their meal with merriment, pausing only briefly to raise a brow at my tattered, weak, out-of-breath appearance. "You left me for dead!" I said.

"I thought someone told you it was time? We wondered when you'd come to lunch?" They said.

I was quick to forgive. Any given day at camp is such a fun and rewarding adventure. Camp is full of learning experiences, adventure, calculated risks, meaningful friendships, and rich opportunities to draw closer to God. What a fun morning at Science Camp!

Jayson Jongquist



What We Do

Here's the list of most of camps we hosted this summer:

Science Camps are short, half-day adventures that we supply for charter schools, private and public school groups, and homeschool groups. As a Christ-centered ministry, these science camps present an excellent opportunity to study nature in God's creation and share the truth of God, His word, and His love, sometimes to groups of children, teachers, and parents who don't have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Horsemanship Camp - 25+ campers turn into wranglers as they learn horse biology, equine behavior, saddle and tack, memorize Bible verses, learn calf roping, play games, and build a craft. There's four phases of Horsemanship Camp, so each year campers build on their previous years' horsemanship learning. This year I worked with the campers during craft time to make wooden tool boxes. Top quality craftsmanship came from that group! 🐾

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Junior Day Camps -

Two weeks of Jr. Day camp happen; week one and the second week are the same camp activities but with different campers. Because of the number of campers, it has to be held twice! Campers check-in, and there's a contest to see who can find Theo hiding in the woods. Theo is a small, plastic bear that is kinda the camp mascot. Once Theo is found, everyone gathers at the bell for the Pledge of Allegiance and morning prayer. Then to the Longhouse for morning chapel and divided into four separate age groups: Newts, Beavers, Foxes, and Coyotes. Then starts the

rotation through the day's many activities of crafts, outdoor science and exploration, slingshot training and target course, missions time to hear stories of God's faithfulness to and through missionaries and other people in the world becoming followers of Jesus, archery range, lunch, organized games, free time, chapel, memorizing bible verses from "The Big Fifty" book, and more. I was happy to be head up the slingshot course, the archery range, participate in morning prayer, run flag duty for the Pledge of Allegiance, lead the safety and camp boundaries hikes, open afternoon chapel with the campers, do "Joke of the day", and provide other behind the scenes preparations for games. Over 80 campers participated each week of Jr. Day Camp!

Teen Girls' Adventure Camp -

Also known by the acronym TGAC, this camp is one of the two overnight summer camps provided for open registration camps. The girls arrive on Monday and leave Friday. Teen Adventure Camps use all of the elements of Precision Skills & Training, such as slingshots, archery, and tomahawk/ax throwing. Other activities include horsemanship training and horse riding, learning "calf" roping by lassoing saw horses, craft time, chapel time, missionary testimonies and sharing, bible verse memorization, free time for games, reflection time to get set up a hammock in the forest, and more. During TGAC, the male counselors serve as camp staff in the kitchen, do garbage detail, clean the bathrooms for the girls, and inspect cabins daily for order and cleanliness. Points are assigned to each cabin based on how clean and orderly they are, and, they have fun decorating for extra points. They occasionally may leave out some hospitable notes and candy to "coax" a few extra points from the inspectors. This week of camp I was the trainer and instructor for the Precision Skills & Training events, did craft time, as well as helping with the camp duties assigned the male counselors as listed above.

Teen Boys' Adventure Camp - TBAC.

This is the other overnight summer camp for open registration camps running Monday through Friday. Fort building, capture the flag, Precision Skills & Training (the slingshots, tomahawks, and archery adventure activities), horsemanship, horse riding, "calf" roping, Bible verse memorization, craft time, chapel, free time and hammock hang-out time. All of the girl counselors have their turn this week to become the judges for the cleanliness of the boy's cabins, and they also serve in the kitchen during meals, keep camp garbage empty, and clean the camp restrooms. This year, I served as a counselor, as well as did the Precision Skills & Training adventure activities, and served as the speaker that week for chapel services.

Sportsmen's Expo -

We took part of PST (Precision Skills & Training) on the road to a local Sportsmen's Expo. The expo is held every year by a local church. Many ven-

dors come to the event, and many people come and enjoy the day; some come from New York State. We set up a large party tent, archery targets and, a kevlar backstop, a standing line for archers, and a safety perimeter all around us. Participants went to register at the Stoney Point Camp booth under the main tent, and then came to shoot for prizes. My best friend and his fiancé volunteered to help at the event. Several archers from ages 11 and up enjoyed their chances at shooting bullseyes and telling stories of hunting adventures. My friend and his fiancé really connected and shared a great conversation with a family there, and their grown son was having a great time shooting a bow and arrow. Later on, it was so amazing to see that grown son answer the altar call after the gospel message, and even get baptized on site that day! What a thrilling kingdom experience for my friends, for me, and for the camp to play a part in making meaningful connections with someone who came to saving faith that day! I am very blessed with awesome friends, co-workers, and a mission/ministry/job focused on Christ and His Kingdom!

Men's Retreat - Camp hosted a men's retreat at the end of summer that went awesome! Not everyone could stay onsite and participate for the whole weekend, but the peak count was 22 men participating in seminars on spiritual growth, enjoying free time, and enjoying meals and fellowship together. Precision Skills & Training was a key element to their fun and activities for the weekend, with an addition of a full afternoon of pistol shooting at the Camp range - engaging targets made of self-healing polymer, steel gongs, and clay targets dangling from a string. Reactionary targets are so much fun, and give instant positive feedback for a shot well placed! Two NRA-certified Range Safety Officers were at the pistol shooting event. Feedback from that group was amazing, and we're very excited to host more retreat-type events.

Summer Concert -

Camp hosted the Needham family band for a midsummer concert in our beautiful outdoor amphitheater. This is the second year we have had the opportunity to see people saved at this event. Two weddings were also held in the amphitheater this year.

Custom Retreat -

A large family enjoyed an almost full reunion of 30 members, together again for the first time in 13 years. It was really a blessing to meet and serve all those wonderful people. They trained to have fun with Precision Skills & Training, Sporting Clays Shooting, and pistol range shooting!

Missions Conference -

For a weekend in August, I represented Stoney Point Camp and its ministry at a church's missions conference. As a donor-funded camp, it's always exciting to see how God provides and to give God the glory when He does!

Trivia Night -

This year's trivia had a dress-up theme: Western wear! Proceeds from the evening went to the camp's Horsemanship Program. Horse Riding Lessons - The camp's Head Wrangler, Paul, has blown the top off the Horsemanship Program this year. In years past, only about 30 campers would ride horses and learn aspects of horsemanship. This year, over 100 campers were on the back of a horse!! Campers learn about horses first, and Paul gives them a quality education about riding and wrangling. And the campers and horses love it!

Hymn Sing -

As a tradition here at camp, we end the season with a hymn sing. What a fun and glorious way to honor God for all He's done for and through the camp. I was sad for camp to end this year. If you've stayed reading this long letter, you're probably not sad it's coming to an end. Thanks for your interest and for hanging in there!

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Precision Skills & Training

(we use the acronym PST) - I love this program! Tom has charged me with running PST, and it has been a huge winner with campers! The first of the three features is archery using Matthews Genesis Bows, arrows, portable targets, and permanent structure targets that hold straw bales. After safety training, campers advance through the challenges of consistently executing 11 archery steps and increasing accuracy, advancing to bullseye competitions, balloon pops, or even "archery bingo!" Part two of PST is ax/tomahawk throwing. Safety is paramount in all PST activities; campers learn to handle and use equipment appropriately. When a camper hits the bullseye with an ax or tomahawk, they are so proud! Third, is slingshot shooting. We use simple, Crossman-style slingshots. After safety training, campers line up at the shooting line to release the most fun ammo -paintballs! Silhouette targets are set up at various ranges and sizes: silhouettes of bear, squirrel, ostrich, even penguin! And more! Campers challenge themselves as they get to be a better shot, trying for smaller and further targets. The amount of learning, safe handling, and using this equipment is a great development tool for the campers and is endlessly fun and challenging.

Here are some highlights:

The camp hosted over 500 campers throughout the season this year! Of all of those children, well over half are "unchurched." They came to a beautiful camp to witness the handiwork of our great Creator God, and to hear truth from the Bible. That is a huge blessing for us!! Over 3200 Bible verses were memorized this summer! With our "Big Fifty" book for each camper (a Bible verse memorization book that has fifty life verses from the Bible for campers to memorize) and incentives for verse memorization, the campers really moved my heart with their desire to put God's word in their heart. What an incredible ministry in and of itself!

Camp ministry expands beyond the borders of camp, from the Equine education to the public school, the Sportsmen's Expo, guest-speaking at events and church gatherings, etc. This is a wonderful community to serve and shine the light of Christ!

How can you be involved? If you're getting this letter, it is because of your significant role in my life, and I've asked you if I could send it, or you've provided the camp with your address or email. The ministry and mission I'm involved in here is a great joy for me, and I love to share it with you. You all are people that I value very much.

Here's how to be involved:

Please pray.

Pray for the ministry of camp as a whole, and my ministry role here at camp. Please pray that as a camp, we would continue to seek God and make wise choices in activities, facilities investments, curriculum, and would join God in the work that He would have us do, according to His plan and purpose.

Pray that every person that comes to camp property would catch a fresh glimpse of God.

Please pray that camp would be blessed with finances and other resources to maintain and grow camp.

Pray that I would be an effective, wise, and productive camp manager in facilities upkeep, event planning, ministering to campers, growing camp activities and services, and serving my fellow camp staff. Pray that my financial needs would be met as well.

Please give. If you're willing and able to give financially to my ministry here at camp, there's many options: A one time check or monthly check can be sent to the camp with "Jayson Jongquist" in the memo field, some supporters have set up monthly ACH deposits at their bank giving funds to the camp and designating them for "Jayson Jongquist," or there is a QR code that can take you to a webpage on our website, where credit card payments are accepted, and "Jayson Jongquist" can be written in the "write us a comment field." Thank you!

Expressions of gratitude in print like this may sometimes fall short of conveying the incredible value to me of your care, prayers, love, and support. I've been so blessed by meaningful relationships, encouragement, advice, and generosity. When you pray and give you become such a big part of what is happening here at camp and in my life. Thank you for loving God and loving me!

Sincerely,

Jayson

SPC Manager

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