



WINTER 2007-2008

6 South 2nd Street, Suite 802
Yakima, Washington 98901
Office: (509) 248-2854
Fax: (509) 248-5505
Email: primetime@nwinfo.net

A SPECIAL EXPERIENCE FOR SPECIAL FAMILIES

Scenes From Camp

By Shirley Thietje, Camp Manager

Being Camp Manager for Prime Time is, in itself, a very rewarding experience. Occasionally, however, it transcends rewarding to become exceptionally special. Such is the case in watching the interaction between camper Ryan Ball and Volunteer Bob Coker.

Ryan first came to camp last year, on a weekend in which Bob was volunteering. Ryan knew immediately that Bob is special and made every effort to be around Bob as much as possible. He would sneak out of his cabin in the middle of the night and go to the lodge so he could be there in the morning when Bob got up to start breakfast for the campers. Bob would find him sleeping on the sofa in the lodge. "Hey, Bob" was heard from Ryan so much that, by the end of the weekend, all of the volunteers were saying it, too. On the final day of camp, Ryan informed us he was moving to Camp Prime Time so he could work with Bob.

This year, Bob and his wife, Clarice, were again scheduled to volunteer for Ryan's group of campers. They wondered if Ryan would be there. At the same time, Ryan and his mother were driving toward camp, with Ryan fretting about whether or not Bob would be there. His mom tried to prepare him for the possibility there would be a different set of volunteers this year, but, fortunately, Ryan got his wish

and, once again, "Hey, Bob" became a familiar refrain at camp.

Ryan is a very loving young man, quick to give smiles and hugs to all the volunteers. The entire group of campers he was a part of this year were a joy to work with and all the volunteers left at the end of the weekend with light hearts and smiles on their faces. No matter how much joy he may give to any of the other volunteers, Ryan's special friend at camp is volunteer Bob Coker. Who knows how or why the bond developed, but it is truly special. At the end of Ryan's camp weekend this year, he still wanted to be a volunteer, but, instead of living at camp, decided he wants to live with Bob and Clarice. Thank you, Bob, for making a difference in a young man's life and being Ryan's special friend. You truly understand the rewards of volunteering.

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Director's Dialogue

I recently read a book, "Last Child in the Woods" by Richard Louv, which has a fresh viewpoint on how we need to save our children from what the author calls "Nature-Deficit Disorder". I also had the opportunity to hear Louv speak in Seattle shortly after I finished the book.

Louv suggests that there is a direct link between the "absence of nature in the lives of today's wired generation to some of the most disturbing childhood trends: rise in obesity, attention disorders, and depression." He supports his conclusions by citing a number of research projects from which he uses quotes throughout the book, as well as a number of examples and personal experiences.

When I first heard of these childhood trends and the resulting discussion, I was intrigued. While reading the book I found myself discussing the issues with others and one of my recurrent questions was: "When you think of your childhood and the outdoors, what do you remember?" My childhood was spent in a small town with parents who often sent my little brother and me out for the day saying, "Check in at lunch and be back by dinner." Other than that, we were free to create our own adventures and explore the fascinating world of nature, though at times I didn't think it was so fascinating (yuck, it was often dirty!) We explored the empty lot next door, building a fantasy world out of the weeds and dirt. We loved the community park across the street, and the fact that the swimming pool was on the other side of town created more opportunities for adventure during the journey.

Based on your own childhood experiences, what do you see happening with our children of today? What are they busy doing? What is our role in their growth and development? Can most of the blame be placed on the electronic age? Not all kids spend time in front of the TV or with video games, though that is a significant issue. There is also the stress of a busy, two-career family and organized, extracurricular activities, where there is always too much to do in a day, and not enough time to refresh and recreate outdoors. Then there is the issue of safety. What parent in today's world would dare send their child out for half a day without keeping them within sight? We face a different world than many of us knew growing up.

The questions need to be asked, and I would encourage you to consider reading Louv's book and join the discussion of how a nature-deficit lifestyle may be harming our children.

Camp Prime Time is in the business of provid-

ing a weekend of nature. We are all about getting the children and families back into the woods, experiencing the call of the birds, the fresh smell of pine, the adventure of finding small creatures, the smell of a campfire, the fun of "climbing" a treehouse, the joy of riding a horse, and the adventure of boating on the lake. That's what Camp Prime Time does.

As always, we hope you will support the mission of Prime Time. We have said it many times, but we truly couldn't do what we do without you - the many volunteers, the special families who come to camp, and those who give financially to our mission. Thank you!

Diane Eilmes, Executive Director

Fund Raising in 2007

The Board of Directors and Staff of Prime Time appreciate the support of the many businesses and individuals who raise funds and awareness for Camp Prime Time. These many partnerships help us get the word out about our mission and purpose, as well as raise needed funds towards our continued goal of providing the camp free of charge to our special families.

Here are just a few of the results that might be of interest to you:

- Two garage sales in Yakima - \$2,300
- A Teamsters sponsored Golf Tournament in September raised \$8,500
- Yakima Valley Credit Union sponsored fund raisers throughout 2006 for Prime Time and raised \$14,573
- Other major fund sources include: grants from individuals, foundations and companies; the biennial dinner/auction; Christmas Tree recycling; and memberships.

There are many ways you, too, can participate in fund raising:

- Become a member of Prime Time
- Give to the Endowment Fund, a perpetual investment to secure the camp's financial future for many years to come
- Use an Albertson's membership card when you shop. You can designate Prime Time as recipient of their donations.
- Tell others about our program
- Share your time - volunteer at camp and/or help with our fund raisers
- Encourage your employer to donate, or ask them to consider sponsoring Prime Time with a fund raiser

A message from the President

Tree House News Prime Time Tree House Project

Through several years of planning, fund raising, and regulatory approvals, the Tree House Project at camp is now nearing completion. The finishing touches will be completed in the spring when the snow melts. The Tree House will provide fun and adventure for everyone even to those of limited mobility.

With its setting deep in the forest, the Tree House will be a wonderful place to learn more about the fascinating natural things that surround Camp Prime Time. In addition to the natural features of the Tree House, a nature interpretive pathway winding through the surrounding area is planned.

The Tree House project has been made possible through generous grants, donation of labor and materials, and excellent cooperation from the various regulatory agencies.

Dick Haapala, Board President

Want to give a heart
warming gift at the end of
the year?

Give the gift of
Camp Prime Time.
\$150 pays for one
camper family for a
weekend.

Call the Prime Time office
to learn more.

7th Biennial Dinner and Auction “Building Memories”

Thank you! Because of your generosity and giving spirit, our “Building Memories” dinner and auction held on November 17th was a huge success. The Board of Directors and staff were honored by all who helped raise funds to cover our ongoing operating expenses - and what great fun we had! It looks like we were able to achieve the highest net income ever in our fund raising history - over \$104,000.

We especially want to take a moment to thank our sponsors, who helped to underwrite the cost of the event.

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Community Living
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Chalet Dental Clinic
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Yakima Federal Savings and Loan

...and many more individuals, companies and organizations!

Numbers You Might Want to Know

2007 Camp Season

1,069 - Campers
**20 - Sessions, which included two
mid-week sessions**
5 - New groups to camp
**4,000+ - Camp Session Volunteer
hours**

Christmas Tree Recycling

After you've eaten too many cookies and opened all those gifts, we hope you'll remember our tree-chipping project. We need trees! After the decorations have been removed of course! And we need volunteers to help us manage the drop off sites. Our schedule will be similar to previous years -

December 26 to January 6
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. daily

Drop Your Tree Off At:
Barnett Implement, 3110 Fruitvale Blvd,
Yakima

Donations received from this community service project help to cover Camp Prime Time operations.

Mark your Calendars!

Golf Tournament to benefit Camp Prime Time
Saturday, May 3, 2008
River Ridge Golf Course

Watch for more information!

2008 Prime Time calendars for sale

\$12/each includes shipping

Purchase your copy!
Pictures are of
campers
and volunteers up at camp!



6 South 2nd St., Suite 802
Yakima, WA 98901

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It is the mission of Prime Time to provide a recreational facility in a wilderness setting for those families who have a member who is living with a serious or terminal illness or disability and are able to enjoy such a setting.