



Camp AkeelaSM Circular



A Letter to Our First-Time Campers

(... And Veteran Campers Too!)

Dear Akeela Camper,

Summer is almost here and we hope you are excited about camp, even if you're also feeling a little nervous about it. Many kids go away for part of the summer. Some visit family, some go on teen travel or community service programs, and some go to sleep-away camps. Almost everybody worries about how they will like a place that's new to them. It's OK to feel that way and we're here to help make your transition to camp as easy and smooth as possible. We think that one way to do that is to help you know what to expect...



When you arrive at camp on your first day, you will meet your counselors and the other campers in your bunk. All of your belongings will be unpacked and organized for you so you can easily find your bed and see where you'll be sleeping. Then, you will have a chance to see what camp looks like and enjoy some planned activities with your bunkmates. We will all have dinner and Evening Meeting together as a community. Then it will be time for our opening campfire and evening snack. Before bed, you, your bunkmates, and your counselors will all talk together about your "bunk expectations," so that everyone knows what to expect from each other. You will preview the next day's schedule and then Debbie or Eric and your Head Counselor (Rob, Mike or Katie) will stop by to say good night. Before you know it, your first day will be over and we will all be getting ready for bed!

Many campers worry that they might be sad or homesick on the first night of camp. That is very normal. All of your counselors will be right in your bunk with you to help you. In addition to talking to them, you might want to look at photos from home, write a letter to your family or read a book. We know that after a short time, you will be having such a great time at Akeela, it will feel like your second home.

We can't wait to see you at camp. We'll see many of you at Akeela for our Open House on June 3rd. If you're not able to join us, you'll be able to see photos of the event on the camp website.

We're so excited for an amazing summer at Camp Akeela. See you soon!

Fondly,

Debbie Eric

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OPTIONAL OUTDOOR ADVENTURE TRIPS



Campers looking for a little extra adventure in their summer can sign up (in advance, with parental permission) for one or more Outdoor Adventure Trip. Each session, we are offering a bike ride along a scenic rail trail, a canoe trek down the Connecticut River and an overnight camping trip. Spaces are filling fast so call for availability!



CAMP FORMS

Most of this year's camp forms are available online only.

TO ACCESS THEM:

1. Go to the camp home page, www.campakeela.com
2. Near the top right corner, click on "Parent Log In"
3. If you don't know your password, click on "Retrieve Password" and enter your email address; it will be sent to you
4. Log in and click on "Forms and Documents"

Forms with a computer icon are to be completed and submitted online. Those with a downward facing arrow are to be printed, completed and mailed back to the camp office (PA before May 28th, VT after that). Please note that the Physician's Examination AND the Medication Information Form BOTH require a physician's signature. If you haven't already made a doctor's appointment, please do so right away. (These forms don't necessarily require an additional physical if your child has had one already this year; however some physicians won't sign the form based on a previous physical.)

In addition to these online forms, you should have received in the mail: a Parent Handbook (with packing list), the Cloz catalog and the very important CampMeds registration information. Please be sure to look carefully at these items.

We know you understand that all of this information is collected to ensure that your child has a safe and rewarding summer at camp. Thanks for your cooperation and let us know if you need any help!



PEN PALS

It's really helpful to know someone before you arrive at a new place. Approximately a month before you arrive for your camp session, we will send you the email address and phone number of one of your bunkmates. (It will get sent to an adult in your house and he/she will share that information with you.)

We know that it's not always an easy thing to do, but we ask that you please make contact with your pen pal so that everyone at camp feels connected to someone else.

NOTE TO PARENTS & GUARDIANS: If you would NOT like us to share your contact information with other camp families, please call or email us as soon as possible to opt out of the Pen Pal program.

Open House Reminder - Please RSVP

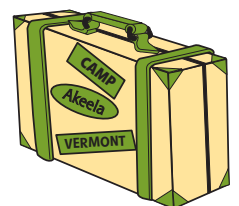


We hope to see many of you at this year's Open House on Sunday, June 3rd between 10AM and 4PM. Please note that you do not need to arrive exactly at 10AM. In true open house fashion, there will be on-going activities taking place until 12:15, at which point we'll stop for a BBQ lunch on the main lawn. After lunch, join us for some "work projects" to help get camp ready for opening day! This is a great opportunity to meet other camp families, for your campers to see their new bunks, and for new campers to get oriented to the camp setting.

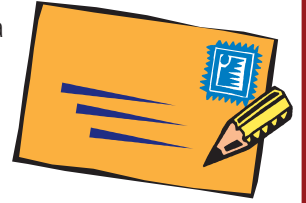
There are two ways to RSVP for this event. One is a quick online form, available on the Forms page of the Current Families section of our website. The other is to mail back the bottom portion of the orange flier we mailed you in your forms packet. Thank you!

A note about... BAGGAGE

Please remember that ALL baggage must be sent to camp before your camper arrives. Baggage should arrive five days before the start of your camper's session. If you prefer not to use R&B shipping or if they do not pick up in your area, feel free to use UPS or FedEx instead. We will be happy to assist you in having your child's bags shipped home AFTER camp as well. (We ask that you bring your credit card with you on closing day so that we can use that information in arranging delivery back to your home.)



LETTERS FROM OUR HEAD COUNSELORS



We are very lucky to have three outstanding Head Counselors this summer. All three are Akeela veterans and we are thrilled to have them back. The Head Counselors are responsible for managing 4 or 5 cabins – they support and supervise the staff and really get to know our campers. They will be in contact with parents at home and will fill families in on the many successes (and any struggles) your camper is having. Please don't hesitate to contact your Head Counselors if you have any questions or concerns while your child is at camp. In addition to the three "HCs", we are also lucky to have two Assistant Head Counselors working on our team this summer. Christine Babcock (returning for her third summer) will be working closely with Mike while newcomer Rachel Foys will be working with Rob.

A NOTE FROM MIKE DEUTCHMAN

I had the opportunity to work at Akeela as a cabin counselor two years ago. I was a very late hire; I was offered



the position and flew in from Minnesota in the same week. Within that whirlwind of change I found Akeela was the perfect fit for my experience and passion with children developing life skills. I was fortunate enough to be invited back as an Assistant Head Counselor last summer and gained valuable lessons in interacting not only with children and staff, but communicating with families as well. During this year I have been working as a social pragmatics instructor and residential assistant at the Middlebridge School in Rhode Island. Coming back to Akeela this summer as a Head Counselor I am very excited to see all the returning children and meet some new ones as well.

Summer camp is an opportunity for your child to grow in a unique setting. My number one goal is to help your child have fun, but working as a teacher and interventionist during the school year, I also place a high priority on your children learning new skills. Parent communication is vital in this role because you have the insight into your child's mind and I want to make sure learned skills thrive long after camp. I am looking forward to working closely with you and your camper.

A NOTE FROM ROB GLYN-JONES

For the non-summer parts of my year I live in England, where I am an actor. A lot of my work is in theater and radio, but I also spent a great deal of my time touring into schools with shows and running workshops with a huge number of students aged between 10 and 18. Some of these are acting classes, and some are more "issue-based" - covering a wide range of topics from career development and educational opportunities to anti-social behavior and alcohol abuse.



This year will be my 17th working at a summer camp in the US. Before coming to Akeela, I worked at Summit Camp where I was a counselor for 6 years before becoming a Unit Leader for the oldest boys. Summit taught me a lot about working with children in a camp setting, and this is experience that I am now proud to bring to Akeela to share with our wonderful campers.

I believe deeply that to give our campers the best chance of their own successes this summer, it is vital to create an atmosphere in which they feel safe and comfortable - only then will they be able to grow and make the most of the program that we offer. I'd love to see every single one of our campers take home something really valuable this summer... whether it's an increase in self-confidence, a new hobby, more independence or a new friend.

Also really important during the summer is the open communication between Akeela and the campers' families. My aim will be to give regular updates throughout the summer... sometimes that's not so easy though (as I'm sure you can imagine, we get REALLY busy at times!) so if you ever want to call and leave me a message then I'll make sure I get right back to you. Rest assured too, that if there are any issues, we will make sure that you're aware of them - I'm a big believer in the fact that families are an invaluable resource. This will be my 3rd summer at Akeela, and as good as the last two have been, I know that this one is going to be the greatest yet!

LETTERS FROM OUR HEAD COUNSELORS *Continued*

A NOTE FROM KATIE FARRISH

I am thrilled to be returning once again to beautiful Thetford Center this summer. This will be my 4th summer at Akeela and I think I get more excited each spring as I count down the days. This summer will be a new experience for me as I take on the role of Head Counselor for the girls' cabins. I am looking forward to working with the counselors, parents and our wonderful campers. This summer I hope to support our campers as they develop amazing friendships within our community. I believe Akeela is an incredible place where individual campers come together and are able to become a part of a larger community. During my time at Akeela, I have truly enjoyed watching our wonderful community grow and develop. Every summer our incredible staff inspires our campers to be their best, to try new things and to become more independent. Akeela always brings a new adventure each summer and I can't wait to begin this new one with all of you. I am looking forward to meeting all of you soon.



Here's What's Cookin'....

Welcome back, **Chef Grant (Akeela '10)** and **Chef Kevin ('11)**! We are thrilled that they will be heading up our amazing kitchen staff this summer. Head Chef, Grant Swados returns to Akeela after a summer away. Those who were at camp in 2010 will remember his amazing smile, generosity, fun-loving spirit and his fresh-baked bread and goodies! We are so lucky to have him back...we missed him! Kevin Taylor will be back for his second summer as well. He joined us last summer and loved camp – including his time cooking up fresh-caught fish from our campers! He is an extraordinary addition for our vegetarians and we are thrilled to have him back!



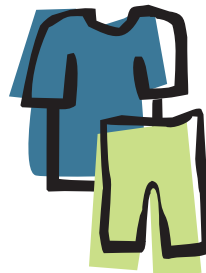
POISE-A-THON

We are delighted to tell you about the second annual Camp Akeela POISE-a-thon. This will be a fun and exciting community service project offered as a special event in each of our two camp sessions. Campers will choose their method of participation, all of which will help raise money in support of a great cause. Details and pledge forms will be coming in a separate mailing.



POISE

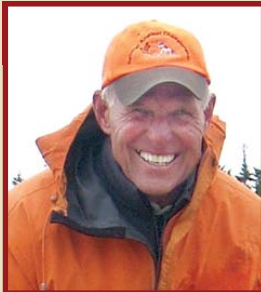
CLOTHING ORDERS



We want to clarify that campers are only required to have ONE t-shirt (grey or white) ordered from the Cloz Company. If you were told that you need to buy two and would like to return one, please call Debbie and she will help you with that. You do not need to purchase anything else from Cloz – it is all optional.

IF YOU HAVE NOT FILLED OUT THE T-SHIRT SIZE FORM, PLEASE DO SO TODAY OR YOUR CHILD MAY NOT GET THE EXACT SIZE HE/SHE WANTS. (We are placing our Camp Akeela t-shirt order this week!)

MEET SOME OF OUR KEY STAFF



JOHN HALPIN, *Aquatics Director*

John has lived on Miller Pond for over thirty years. Ten years ago, he married Terry, a Texas native and now Camp Akeela's summer office manager. They both feel fortunate to live in such a magical and beautiful place. As a young child, John was introduced to Miller Pond through fishing trips. After serving 4 years in the Marine Corps, one of the first places he visited was Miller Pond. He turned sixty five this past year and continues to be in awe of waking up each day on the pond. He loves the wildlife, changing scenery, and in the summer, the sounds of activity and the children's laughter coming from Camp Akeela.

John has been a blacksmith, a police officer, Vermont States Attorney's investigator, and director of a residential treatment center for boys with various challenges, including autism. Water recreation, including ultra distance triathlons, boating, windsurfing and fishing have been activities in which John has competed & taught over the years.

After watching Terry come to work at camp every day last summer and seeing how quickly she was made part of the camp community, John is very excited to join our staff. He looks forward to a summer of fun and good memories with great staff and the Akeela campers, who teach us all how to have fun!

FAVORITE BOOK: Profiles in Courage by JFK

FAVORITE CAMP FOOD: Return trip to Ireland with my wife

PLACE I'D LIKE TO VISIT: Hot dogs & potato salad



KEITH YOUNG, *Assistant Program Director*

Keith is from the emeralds isle of Ireland and is currently living in Limerick City while completing his PhD at the University of Limerick. This will be Keith's fourth year at camp, having worked as a cabin counselor, woodshop specialist, ropes specialist and the head of woodshop. He describes his first summer in 2009 as "life-changing".

After his first summer at Camp Akeela, Keith found a new passion for working with youth; his PhD research is on the creation of a professional

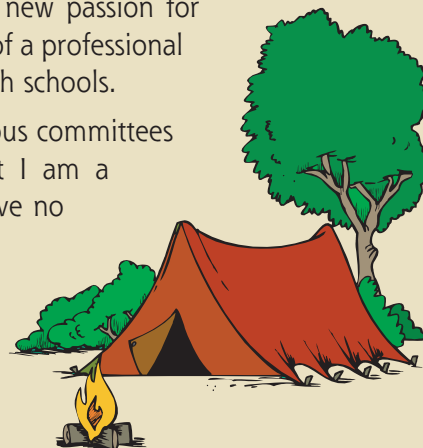
development program for teachers working with children with Asperger's in Irish schools.

He loves to go hiking and climbing around Ireland, travelling, serving on various committees and watching movies with friends. He also adds, "There are rumours that I am a Leprechaun, but there is no evidence to support these claims and I swear I have no gold.....har tee tar tee tar."

RECENTLY READ BOOK: The Rogue by Trudi Canavan

FAVORITE CAMP FOOD: Pigs in a blanket

PLACE I'D LIKE TO VISIT: New Zealand



Welcome New Campers!

One of our favorite parts of camp is having so many campers return summer after summer. We love what that tells us about how they feel about each other, our staff and the Akeela community. At the same time, nothing excites us more than being able to share the Akeela experience with first-time campers. Soon, there will be no distinction between "old-timers" and "first-timers", as we all become one community. In the meantime, we wanted to welcome the following campers to the Akeela family:

FIRST SESSION

Joshua A, Armonk, NY
David B, Florence, MA
Elizabeth B, Newtown, PA
Will B, Pacific Palisades, CA
Max B, Brooklyn, NY
Nick B, Newtown Square, PA
Haley B, Bristol, VT
Emma B, Saint Louis, MO
Sam C., Cape May Courthouse, NJ
Zach D, Bethesda, MD
Lara E, Durham, CT
David F, Long Valley, NJ
Richard G, Hollywood, FL
Austin G, Boynton Beach, FL
Ethan G, Los Angeles, CA
Andres G, Mexico, NL
William H, Reston, VA
Jasmine J, Newport, RI
Nicholas J, Carlisle, MA
Joshua K, Ridgewood, NJ
John Erik K, Forest Hills, NY
Nicholas L, Bethesda, MD
Rebecca L, Brooklyn, NY
Jake M, Encino, CA
Sammy P, Mount Kisco, NY
Sophie P, Trumbull, CT
Ezra P, Brooklyn, NY
Mariel R, Saint Louis, MO
John R, Oceanside, NY
Jesse R, Chestnut Hill, MA

• Wil S, Wilmette, IL
• Edward S, New York, NY
• Christian S, Craryville, NY
• Daniel S, Los Angeles, CA
• Chloe S., Arlington VA
• Ben T, Warwick, NY
• Elizabeth T, Chester, CT
• Tyler T, Columbia, MD
• Ariel T, Houston, TX
• Caroline T, Wellesley, MA
• Somtochukwu U, Yonkers, NY
• Alexis U, Rye Brook, NY
• Jonah W, Rockleigh, NJ
• Daniel W, Carlisle, PA
• Charlie W, Brookline, MA
• Chace Y, Sagaponack, NY

SECOND SESSION

• Amelia A, Weston, MA
• Benjamin A, Urbana, IL
• Phillip B, New York, NY
• Ethan B, Cherry Hill, NJ
• Luke B, Bedford, NY
• Anik B, Brooklyn, NY
• Graham C, Milford, CT
• Bradley C, Summit, NJ
• Gavin C, Tarrytown, NY
• Bret C, Stone Ridge, NY
• Gregory C, Reading, MA
• Jacob C, New Rochelle, NY
• Lydia D, New York, NY

• Noah F, Watertown, MA
• Spencer F, Brewster, MA
• Alec F, Wynnewood, PA
• Eli G, Needham, MA
• Jacob G, Brookline, MA
• Douglas G, New Milford, CT
• Noah G, Marblehead, MA
• Abe G, Brooklyn, NY
• John G, Andover, MA
• John H, Hillsdale, NY
• Caleb K, Dobbs Ferry, NY
• Nina K, Keene, NH
• Gideon L, New York, NY
• Abigail M, Baltimore, MD
• Roarke M, Chappaqua, NY
• Jake M, Chappaqua, NY
• Jamie M, Hailey, ID
• Gavin M, New York, NY
• Jay N, Little Silver, NJ
• David O, Newtown, CT
• William P, New York, NY
• Jasper R, Kent, CT
• Lily R, Newton, MA
• Aaron R, Southington, CT
• Spencer S, Auburndale, MA
• Ryer S, Charlestown, NH
• Zach S, Trophy club, TX
• Zachary S, Parkton, MD
• Hailey S, Braintree, MA
• Hope T, Sag Harbor, NY
• Joseph T, Framingham, MA
• Adam T, Ashburn, VA
• Joshua V, Marlborough, CT

GEOGRAPHY UPDATE



For the past 3 years, we've published articles listing all of our campers' home states. In 2009, 2010 and 2011 we found that our campers represented approximately 25 states and 1 or 2 non-US countries. Well, we're proud of our diversity so we counted again this year ... and we got almost the same result: 25 states, the District of Columbia and 1 other country! Here's the entire list, as of May 1: Alabama, California, Colorado, Connecticut, DC, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Maine, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Mexico!