

REPORT OF THE CANTERBURY HILLS SUMMER CAMP

The Diocesan Summer Camping Program which is located at and run by Canterbury Hills, saw almost 600 children come through our Residential and Day Camps in 2007. In unit groups of 8 (residential) or 10 (day), campers, along with their Unit Leaders and LITs (Leaders-in-Training), plan their own time at camp. They are able to take advantage of the craft cabin, archery range, the low and high ropes course, the pool, the chapel, day hikes, out lunches, overnight camp outs, evening programs, campfires, and an ever-changing variety of activities as they have fun, make new friends, experience living in a forest setting, all within the care and nurture of a Christian community.

In addition to the 'activities' of camp, the campers experience and hopefully learn consensus decision making, good communication strategies, problem resolution skills, reflection techniques, and planning models. These are the added bonuses of the unique model of decentralized, child-centred camping called 'unit camping' offered at Canterbury Hills. From parent feedback and full registrations, we believe that this combination of hard and soft camp experiences is appreciated by families from virtually every corner of our diocese and beyond.

In 2007 we continued our partnerships with Angel Tree (serving families of incarcerated parents), the Hamilton Children's Aid Society, Reach for the Rainbow (placing children with physical or developmental challenges in a camp setting with one-on-one staffing) and St. Matthew's House (providing a camp experience for children whose families cannot afford camp without financial assistance). Seeing these children integrated into cabin units and enjoying all the fun and benefits of summer camp is very rewarding and encouraging.

In 2007, the Canterbury Hills Camp program was coordinated very ably by Courtney Evers for a second year. Courtney and the other four members of the Resource Team (unit camping jargon for Senior Staff) supported a staff of seventeen residential cabin leaders and seven day camp leaders, along with providing training for twelve LITs. The energy, safety-consciousness, skill and dedication of this entire staff team is clearly what makes this ministry so successful and well-appreciated by the families who entrust their children to the summer camp program.

Courtney moved on to wedding planning (her own!) and instructing nursing at McMaster University in 2008, and Jason Blackwood assumed the Camp Coordinator position in the summer of 2008.

The allocation of DM&M monies to this child and young adult ministry, evangelism, outreach and leadership training, continues to benefit both local and parish communities across the Diocese of Niagara. We are also very grateful to the individuals and parishes who contribute each year to the Camp Bursary Fund, and to the members of our Camp Alumni group, who together provide several thousand dollars annually to help ensure that no child is denied a camp experience at Canterbury Hills due to financial constraints.

Respectfully submitted,
The Reverend David Linn
Executive Director, Canterbury Hills