



MOSQUITO EXPRESS



MANITOU SUMMER NEWS FOR OUR MANITOU FAMILIES

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THE DIRECTORS' CLIPBOARD

Each summer we look forward to the boundless energy and enthusiasm our staff show when the campers actually arrive. Well we are absolutely astonished this year by our staff for their dedication, spirit and sense of humour. Each summer, camp takes on a certain character thanks to the staff and that personality then trickles down to the campers. This year it's taking advantage of every minute, and showing humour whenever possible.



Camp started off with a bang thanks to some wonderful hot weather but as the end of this week approached we had to deal with a little bit of rain. Well we are thrilled to say that we had kids sailing, waterskiing, wakeboarding, and canoeing in the light rain and enjoying every minute of it. In fact the only activities that had to be curtailed were basketball hockey and tennis but they joined up at other land activities. We even had an impromptu dancing in the rain/wakeboarding on main field party with almost the entire camp running into the rain and dancing to the latest of Britney Spears and Miley Cyrus. Luckily it has been warm here so the kids have not been held back by this damp weather.

But the dedication of staff to making the most out of any situation has also been met with a commitment

LOTS OF CAMP DRAMA

Yes there's been plenty of Drama early in the camp season... but we mean the good kind... the stuff on stage or in front of a camera. The kids have quickly taken to our new Drama Inc. program working not only on their own infomercial performances that have found their way to Flagpole, but assisting other activities such as Radio/Media doing all of the comic submissions for our in-camp edition of the Mosquito that hit newsstands this morning. Matt also unveiled the "Poetree" tonight, a giant tree that will soon be covered in poetry submissions from our up and coming creative writers.



to follow through on routines, providing incredible care to the kids. Before you know it every camper was rushed back to the cabin to change to dry clothes and then were in raincoats and boots to enjoy their evening activity. The sense of humour that is permeating camp is most evident in the dining hall and flagpole with the junior unit picking a word of the day and repeating it every time an announcement is made. Other units are spelling the word out loud and making it a challenge to finish an announcement while we laugh with amusement.

As always it's a privilege to have your child(ren) at camp. We never take for granted the joy that we have being here every day, seeing the smiles on these kids faces and seeing so many kids already in just a few days overcome their typical homesickness because of a connection they have made with their counselors and cabin mates or by the feeling they had of getting their first hit at baseball or getting up on skis for the first time. What is better than campers running up to us saying "I am no longer homesick anymore. I love this place!"

Looking forward to week two, we have loads on the schedule including intercamps, our first play, the legendary Manitou carnival and tomorrows big excitement with the arrival of our favorite Toronto Argo football players and cheerleaders to do some drills with the kids! It's gonna be great!!

STUFF GROWIN' IN THE GREENHOUSE

One of the cool new activities we've been talking about all year has definitely "sprouted" and become an early hit with both campers and staff. It is now common to walk through camp and see teams of people tilling the earth as well as constructing garden boxes and other earthy hardware. We've already had the first produce from the garden hit the salad bar in the Dining Hall with some tasty organic lettuce and strawberries. Jay and his campers are expecting corn and sunflower crops to sprout shortly. While the team has been hard at work, they've been entertained by a radio powered only by a solar panel. So The Moose 92.3 FM now goes anywhere the sun does!

CAMPERS ARRIVE

One of the high points of energy each and every summer is camper arrival day. Over 100 counsellors spread across main field wearing colourful costumes holding up decorated cabin signs. They sing, dance and cheer until the first camper bus appears over the hill and hundreds of eager Manitou campers come pouring out. Yes, campers made it to camp safe and sound kicking off our 51st season at Manitou. The opening night featured a new Activities Fair giving campers the chance to meet each of the Activity Heads and learn about some of their exciting plans before picking the activities for their schedules. One lucky cabin that met with all 30 Activity Heads also won a cabin sleep-in. By the next afternoon after health checks, swim checks and cabin photos we were fully into our Manitou program. Undoubtedly, it's going to be a great season.

THE SPORTS REPORT

While the weather has been a bit wet, it hasn't slowed down our Manitou athletes who have hit the fields and courts hard already in this first week at camp. Tennis has seen a huge amount of energy as Jose has brought his "No Stress" tennis coaching techniques to Manitou. The focus has been on fun and having campers learning new skills through playing and having a great time. In the early stages, the philosophy has seemed highly successful as campers have been showing up in droves as early as 7 AM to get in some extra practice.



Other activities have already started their tryouts for our first intercamp challenge next week. Basketball, Volleyball and Hockey among others have had campers taking to the courts to practice their skills and prepare for competition. At Soccer, Oren has "kicked" things off with his Sharks and Minnows drill getting campers used to working as a team. They have also been working on target practice and shooting techniques. Baseball has started things off in the batting cages getting kids hitting the ball right "off the bat." They are also getting campers excited about our upcoming Canada vs. The World Baseball challenge. Finally both the MHL and JMHL have taken off as well as campers and staff show their stuff on the hockey rink.

On the waterfront, the big news is the re-naming of "Amigo Island," the most popular destination for our paddlers heading down the river in canoes or kayaks.

ARTISTS' CORNER

Performers in camp this week were keeping busy with auditions and early stages of their acts. In the Theatre, Fresh and Soph performers quickly started into sing-along rehearsals for The Lion Kin. Fame and Annie Get Your Gun have also started very well with our older campers. Rock musicians have been queuing up for Mark Arbus' elite academy for advanced musicians and clinics in period 5 for our most dedicated bands. But Mark stresses that there's plenty to do for campers just picking up instruments for the first time as well. At Guitar, the theme has been "Bluegrass Attitude" with campers learning to jam with a medley of guitars and skill levels. The Dance program meanwhile has unveiled a new series of activity periods. In addition to our regular dance styles, Mel has added a Lyrical Dance period, as well as a number of "just for fun" dance classes. Not only will performers be rehearsing for our end of session show, but campers new to dance can come up and just have some fun with our dance staff if being on stage isn't their thing.

Of course artists that prefer to use their hands are also keeping extremely busy with their first week projects. In the Wood Shop, Dan has campers making anything from yo-yos to cars and skateboards. Acacia has kicked off preparations for the Manitou Fashion Show with kids making their own clothes, as well as "art from nature" projects and even sending teams over to paint the radio station. At Crafts, Taimi has been working on tie dye and face painting as well as fortune telling and preparing for a "crafty" outdoor concert. The theme at Pottery has been "Harry Pottery." Campers have been making their own magical creatures as well as tea pots, jewelry beads and piggy banks. That's a lot of creative energy!

HAPPY CANADA DAY



Campers and staff put on their red and white today to celebrate Canada's 142nd birthday. Flags were waving and campers singing as we played the national anthem at breakfast. Captain Canada made his annual appearance and was immediately challenged by some of our patriotic American staff. The Captain will be competing with our U.S. champions in a NASCAR go-cart and pie-eating contest. The loser of the contest will sport the colours of the winning country throughout the day on Saturday when we celebrate Independence Day on the 4th of July.

WHAT THE UNITS ARE SAYING...

As we reported in our last issue, Freshkids opened up their evening program season with a monster scarecrow making activity to keep each of our Freshkids safe from spooky spirits or bad dreams. The unit followed up with a video taped infomercial competition and then the classic Manitou program "Liar's Club" testing the campers' ability to sense the truth amidst a series of wacky tales.

Sophomores started their summer with a mess. A painted mess, that is. Paint Your Counsellor is always a favourite evening program and these counsellors certainly were more than just a little bit colourful by the end of the evening. Campers and staff all enjoyed a jump in the lake to get cleaned up at the end of the night. The unit's Thunder From Down Under program featuring a rotation of traditional activities lead by our staff from Australia and New Zealand was also a huge success. Finally their "Mock Beauty" pageant brought campers up on stage to compete in a series of strange categories you certainly wouldn't find in any other kind of pageant.

Juniors brought out the brass on opening night as Activity Heads Matt Brundage and Russ Piva pulled out their boot camp routine for a colossal human game of Battleship. Campers had to move fast from port to starboard and hit the deck when their orders were given or risk getting tossed out of the game by our drill sergeants. The unit followed up with Huckleberry Chan's Backyard Hoedown with all kinds of barnyard themed activities and games. Finally a Good Counsellor/Evil Counsellor hunt ended off their week.

The Senior Unit started out by testing the campers minds with a human game of Scrabble sending kids out to hunt down counsellors and bringing them back to form words with the letters the counsellors carried. The next night was the much anticipated return of the Manitou Gladiators program that incorporated not only the infamous Gauntlet run this year, but a game of speedball as well. Finally the unit participated in a counsellor auction with each cabin bidding on their favourite staff and their talents to bring special prizes to their cabins.

The CITs spent three of their first days in camp out on a canoe trip to Georgian Bay. The trip was a great opportunity for them to come together as a team and prepare them for the challenges of starting placements upon their return. They didn't waste any time getting involved on their return though. CITs were working with their first cabin groups within hours of their return and so far have been doing a terrific job.

WONKY WEATHER

After a blazing hot pre-camp and a beautiful first couple of days with our campers, Mother Nature decided to challenge us with a bit of rain. But we all know it takes more than a few raindrops to keep a Manitou camper down! Activities have been running full speed ahead. Mud football, wet weather sailing, adverse climate climbing and eco shelter building have been some of the highlights out of doors. Other activities are hunkering down and learning new indoor games to dry off and get warm before heading back outside.



On Monday night, we had our first rain party. As the skies opened up in the middle of dinner, campers turned the dining hall music into the soundtrack for an impromptu rain dance as they ran outside onto art house field. In truth, it was mostly the girls dancing. The boys you see had their turn at tuck that night, so they made a beeline to the tuck shop. A torrential downpour wasn't going to stand between our boys and their chocolate bars. But not to be outdone, after they had their evening snack, many of the boys put on bathing suits and pulled out wakeboards and were mud sliding and surfing on some of the giant puddles left on main field.

STAFF TALENTS



We are always proud of the many talents possessed by our staff. Kicking off the show season for 2009 was our Staff Talent Show on Tuesday night. From our Rock Music and Guitar staff to Dance and Theatre staff, with a few strange numbers thrown in by our counsellors along the way, it was another entertaining series of performances in the Manitou Theatre. Topping off the night was the Director band throwing out a Rolling Stones cover. Mark Diamond sure plays a mean tambourine but the pants gotta go.!

HEALTH /WEATHER UPDATE

Despite the last few days of cloud, the rain has held off and sunshine is on the way for the next week. The kids are as healthy as summers past but we are being proactive on all fronts with respect to our health protocols.