

September 2013

## Gary's Camping Newsletter

### *Continuous Improvement for Great Camp Leaders*

[\(CLICK HERE to view as a printable PDF\)](#)

*"A life without love is like a year without summer." -- Swedish Proverb*

**"Last of the Grand, Old, North American Summer Camps."** –That's how Adirondack Camp describes itself. One of the most persuasive websites I've ever seen. By being so detailed, they show they're not for everyone; but as a result show they could be the best for your child. I especially recommend you scroll through their "Great Secrets." <http://www.adirondackcamp.com/profiles/type/staff>  
*-- (Thanks to Mark Young)*

**Going To The Dogs** – You've probably heard of successful mother/daughter and father/son camps; but how about one designed for you and your dog? It's like an overnight dog-park!  
<http://campunleashed.com/Berkshires.html>

**Teambuilding for Couples** -- How come nobody's thought of this before? Adult couples doing adventure/challenge teambuilding activities together for day-long "fun and insight."  
<http://adventureworks.com/adventures/couplesadventure.php>

**Making Better Choices** –These print-your-own posters of nutrition concepts and action steps might be just what you need to help campers (and us adults) take advantage of the mutual support available at camp: <http://myplate.gov/healthy-eating-tips/ten-tips.html> (That is, if you *offer* good choices! And if you don't some of these could provide targets to aim toward.) – *Editor's note: I'm posting some in my kitchen at home!*

**See Gary Live** – I speak fairly often in the northeast (most recently at the Maine Camping Association earlier this month), but it's been a while since I've presented out west. So, wagons ho! ...

- **YMCA Camp Horsethief Reservoir**, northwest of Boise, Idaho, is one of the most unique (and newest) camps you can visit. Consider joining me October 27-30 for the YMCA Western Camping Conference. <http://www.ymcatvidaho.org/programs/y-camp/groups-and-conferences> (scroll down when you get there for the description.) A bargain at \$150. Note that Southwest Airlines flies to Boise.
- **Oregon Trail ACA's Fall Event**, November 7-8, at Camp Collins (east of Portland OR near Mt Hood!). <http://www.acacamps.org/oregontrail>. Only \$145 to stay in a camp with both treehouses and Hobbit-homes!

**Video of the Month** – Not your typical camp video, this one focuses on what is truly unique about summer camp, and this camp in particular. Director Rick Mades writes, “It was done over the summer in-house by Kade Hill, one of our head boys’ dorm counselors. In 6 minutes it gets across who we are as a camp.” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-gCFREIjcbY>. -- Reach Rick at [campfinders@mindspring.com](mailto:campfinders@mindspring.com); and see his camp at [www.maineartscamp.com](http://www.maineartscamp.com)

**Tom Sawyer Clears a Field of Rocks** – Innovator George DeTellis of Camp Woodhaven (MA) writes, “I bulldozed an area for a new playfield. After I York-raked the two acres I built a rock throwing range on the downhill side facing the woods. The Tom Sawyer in me figured I could trick the campers into picking up the rocks in the new field and throw them into the ditch for me! Our rock throwing range is roped off like an archery range. The campers can only throw each rock once (so they have to collect more!) It’s been a big hit with the campers. Our targets include used cracked cymbals I bought on EBay and Craigslist for about \$20 each.”—reach George at [george@campwoodhaven.com](mailto:george@campwoodhaven.com)



**Cruise Ship Virus Plagues Camps, Too** – Norovirus is tough to beat. One British scientist [called it](#) the "Ferrari of the virus field" for its ability to spread rapidly. Fewer than 20 virus particles are enough to infect someone. There's no particular treatment or vaccine against norovirus. The best defense is good hygiene — wash your hands frequently and well. A thorough cleanup of the resulting vomit with [an effective disinfectant](#), such as a bleach solution, is a must. <http://www.npr.org/blogs/health/2013/01/25/170249648/new-norovirus-strain-rips-through-the-u-s?sc=17&f=1001>

**Told You So** – One of the questions I ask camp staff during my visits each summer is, “Do you know what the Norovirus is?” Less than 2% say yes, even after staff training. No wonder these headlines keep appearing in the news: “Officials had hoped to reopen Camp last Sunday, but too many staff members were still ill from an outbreak of nausea believed to be caused by a norovirus.” (<http://bit.ly/13K5s9B>) Plan now to include the CDC’s recommendations into your 2014 training. <http://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/>

**Clean Electricity** – Photovoltaic (PV) “solar” panels have always been a horrible investment. They’ve never come close to paying for themselves in energy savings even over a 25 year lifespan. That was true until this past year when China began dumping their new and efficient panels on the US market for half price or less. All of a sudden it’s not a stupid option any more. <http://www.greenbuildingadvisor.com/blogs/dept/guest-blogs/pv-systems-have-gotten-dirt->

[cheap?&lookup=auto&V27=&V28=&V29=&V30=&V31=&V32=&V33=&V34=&V35=&V55=&V56=&Taun\\_Per\\_Flag=True&utm\\_source=email&utm\\_medium=eletter&utm\\_content=20121022-skill-video&utm\\_campaign=fine-homebuilding-eletter](http://cheap?&lookup=auto&V27=&V28=&V29=&V30=&V31=&V32=&V33=&V34=&V35=&V55=&V56=&Taun_Per_Flag=True&utm_source=email&utm_medium=eletter&utm_content=20121022-skill-video&utm_campaign=fine-homebuilding-eletter)

**The Fundraising Coach,** [Marc A. Pitman](#) says “Studies are consistently showing that when it comes to fundraising, logic kills donations. Worse still, the evidence shows that we can’t mix emotion and logic.

“Telling an emotional story and throwing in even one calculation or statistic can have devastating results on your fundraising.

This is hard to believe, because in our professional lives, we strive to make decisions based on facts and statistics. Actually, that's largely an illusion. We *think* we make our decisions on facts. Mostly, our hearts drive us. Then we seek facts that back us up.

“Remember, donors don't give to solve problems because those problems are big. They give because they understand the problems (with their hearts) and believe they can make a difference. Statistics get in the way of that. So throw them out!” [http://www.futurefundraisingnow.com/future-fundraising/2013/06/why-using-statistics-will-kill-your-fundraising.html?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+FutureFundraisingNow+%28Future+Fundraising+Now%29](http://www.futurefundraisingnow.com/future-fundraising/2013/06/why-using-statistics-will-kill-your-fundraising.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+FutureFundraisingNow+%28Future+Fundraising+Now%29)

**What do you do the rest of the year?** -- Marc Cooper, Camp Director, Camp Tamarack, Ontario, Canada writes: “As a full time camping professional, I love getting this question from people I meet. I often reply with “vacation in the South of France” or “I’m a Starbucks barista.” I’m sure you can relate.

“I love this time of year for a few reasons. The first reason is that it allows me to reflect on the past summer. I think reflection is so important for improvement. In fact, I think it’s essential. The best way to do this is pull out your summer calendar and go through each date and make comments on all of the special programs etc. An incredible technique that I learned this year is START, STOP and CONTINUE.

“Here’s how it works. Print out your calendar and create a document 5 columns. In column one, you’ll put down all of the programs and events that happened at camp. This can include everything from the way you handled your buses and organized sports leagues to parent’s night. The next column you’ll put START. Followed by STOP. And the next column put CONTINUE. In the final column write WHY. As you go down the list of programs and events it’s essential to put an X in one of the three columns. For example, we had a Carnival day at camp this summer. I want to CONTINUE this tradition. So I’d put an X in the CONTINUE column and then in the WHY column I’d write “builds creativity, team building but, needs some new elements.”

“I also recommend sending a clean copy of the exercise to some of your key staff. It’s really interesting to see how everyone on your team views different events.

“As you go through this process and answer WHY to your START, STOP and CONTINUE list, it’ll shed some light as to what changes you need to make to your camp to make it better than last summer. And the next time someone asks you ‘What do you do the rest of the year?’, you can answer with “I start new camp projects, I stop some camp projects and I continue a few of the projects from last year.” -- *Marc Cooper; Camp Director, Artist, Husband, Daddy;* [marc@camptamarack.info](mailto:marc@camptamarack.info)

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"It will take you less time and less effort to do it the difficult way than it will to buy and try and discard all the shortcuts." –

*Seth Godin* <http://feeds.feedblitz.com/~45117767/0/sethsblog~The-selfdefeating-quest-for-simple-and-easy.html>

"The fun is in getting it done." – *Bob the Builder*

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Best wishes,

*Gary*

Gary Forster, LLC

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