

# Pemigewassett Newsletter

Summer 2010 Number Three

Greetings yet again from Zip Code 03282, where we are enjoying our third straight week of clement weather. The long spell of sunshine has allowed the full program to move along at a great pace and, even if the emerald luster of the grass has morphed ever so slightly towards brown, we're liking it all pretty well. Polar Bears are anything but chilly, bringing to mind, well, seals lounging on a marina dock in Monterrey. Today's occupations unfolded seamlessly, including new offerings like Sam Seymour's innovative "All about Lower Baker Pond" (a "pan-eco" study of our lake that would make Al Gore proud) or Anna Ciglar's "Celtic Knotwork," and we look forward to Deb Kure and Cody Ladden's equally innovative Nature offering "In the Night," entering its second iteration once the sun has set over Pemi Hill. (No, not shades of *True Blood* and *Twilight*, but a rich combination of astronomy, optics, and nocturnal zoology.) Trip leaders Peter Scheuermann and Paige Wallis are finishing up an 8-mile paddle on the Connecticut River with Peter Montante, Owen Grey, Jonathan Kenkel, Ian Lewis, Owen Ritter, Oren Wilcox, Andy Kradjel, Nate Kraus, and Gus Walsh.

Meanwhile, Lower Seven is setting up their tents at the Eliza Brook campsite in the Kinsman Range, as part of their three-day; various denizens of Uppers One and Two look forward to a stream-side repast at the Rattle River Shelter, first stop on their four-day in the Carters; and Upper Three is sitting down to an honest-to-goodness dinner table at the Greenleaf AMC hut high on the shoulder of mile-high Mt. Lafayette. To quote the ubiquitous t-shirt, "Life is Good."

Last Saturday was Kingswood Day, as teams in four different age groups competed in soccer, baseball, and basketball with our neighbors from Lake Tarleton. As Athletic Director Charlie Malcolm summed it up afterwards, it was an extremely friendly affair, and even though Pemi came up short on aggregate wins, 5-7, the contests were close, spirited, and conducted with flawless sportsmanship.

Sunday began with Danny Kerr delivering an inspiring meditation on heroism, striking while the LeBron James iron was still red-hot to speak about the kinds of people who have influenced him the most, in terms of

consolidating the values and perseverance one needs in order to live a productive and ethical life. First among them was Eunice Kennedy Shriver, founder of the Special Olympics, who memorably said that the mark of the mature man was not the wish to die nobly in pursuit of a great cause but rather the desire to live humbly in pursuit of one. Danny followed with somewhat more private tales – about Dick Hoyt, a father who has participated in over a thousand races (Iron Man competitions among them) as the "teammate" and motive force for his disabled son Rick, and about Barnes Boffey, the legendary director of Camp Lanakila – before ending with a vignette on Martin Luther King. The boys were spellbound, and when Danny had finished, more than a few were moved to forget our longstanding tradition of "no applause" for Sunday meeting messages.

Danny's thoughtful and clearly inspiring musings were delivered just after breakfast, making room in the evening for, yes indeed, the airing of a tape of that day's World Cup Final between The Netherlands and Spain. The Lodge was full of both orange and blue shirts, as Charlie Malcolm had earlier enjoined all attendees to don the colors of their favorites. But in the buzzing crowd (sans vuvuzelas, thank goodness) were actual representatives of the two countries involved – Max Van Paasschen and brothers Kai and Per Soderberg hailing from the land of windmills and superior skaters and the trio of Diego and Pepe Periel and Rodrigo Juarez joining us from Iberia. It's not often we let current events find their way so quickly and directly into the life of the camp, but when Andres Iniesta slotted the ball into Spain's net in the 116<sup>th</sup> minute and the Pemi crowd went wild, it was clear that plugging back in for this particular event was a pretty acceptable idea. Diego, Pepe, and Rodrigo are still on "*nube nueve*" (does it translate?), and word is that Max, Per, and Kai haven't sighed deeply for at least twenty-four hours.

Other bits and pieces of what has been a great week since our last communique? Thursday last witnessed the institution of what may become a new Pemi tradition: "Chillin' with Lit." After four days of temperatures pushing 90 degrees (*very* rare in these parts), the thought was to do something that capitalized on the heat rather than simply enduring it. Tom Reed, Jr. announced in the messhall that he would be reading a story down at the senior beach at 8:15pm, and that

everyone was free to come and listen from the water, immersed up to their necks in the cooling billows of Lower Baker. Expectations were that maybe twenty or thirty boys would be lured down to so elevated a cultural event. But when the assembled crowd was finally counted, one hundred souls had gathered to hear Tom's reading of W. F. Harvey's "August Heat," a finely-crafted tale in the Poe vein that documents the dire effects thermal stress can have on the human psyche. (If you've never read the piece, check it out at [www.donaldtyson.com/august.html](http://www.donaldtyson.com/august.html).)



Sent into the water by Ken Moore, with the oldest campers closest to the lane lines and the youngest closest to shore, the boys took a comfortable and cooling pose and listened with a rapt attention that evoked the wedding guest enthralled by the Ancient Mariner. One of the nicest things about the whole affair was that it could just as well have been done at camp a hundred years back, in its opening seasons: no electronics; nothing trendy; just scores of over-warm people listening to a good yarn in a truly cool setting while the sun set tranquilly in the west. Should we again be hammered by heat, be it in July or August itself, we may just repeat the event, and we welcome your suggestions for appropriate readings.



Sunday, Jeff Greene re-energized one of his most successful brainchildren; his account follows.

*In the real world, there is no such thing as Quarter Century Doubles, but it's an idea that makes a lot of sense at camp. In our version, the age of the two doubles partners must equal 25 years – no more, no less. At camp, this creates a unique tournament format, where you end up with some very interesting combinations, although some are naturally better than others. Usually, as in all other doubles, the best-balanced teams who work together and communicate effectively on the court tend to do the best. However, we always get some surprises, and Sunday was no exception.*

*The event went very smoothly, with both the main draw and a consolation draw for first-round losers to ensure that everyone got to play at least two matches. Twenty-one teams entered our tournament, which meant that forty-two players overall participated in the event – almost 25% of the population at Pemi. To get that many campers playing in one afternoon event on just five courts required coordination and precise scheduling, but it all ran like clockwork and was an impressive collective feat indeed by players and staff alike. An executive decision was made to play the finals of both divisions a day or two later so that we could hype the events conclusion. The finals, conducted on Tuesday, pitted the top seeds, Arthur Root (12) and Sam Davitt (13) against the unseeded combo of Nick Barber (15) and George Enman (10).*



*Meanwhile, in the finals of the consolation draw (or "back draw"), we had Dana Wensberg (14) and Leonard Schmitz (11) vying for the title with*

*C.J.Klinsky (13) and Adair Simpson (12). The results? Nick and George defied the odds-makers to triumph in the main draw, and a rare shower halted play in the back draw before the winners could be determined.*

*Any time that we run an in-house event, we're looking for active participation on a broad scale, solid competition rather than lopsided matches, and exemplary sportsmanship all-round. By all accounts, this event (which had taken a year's hiatus) lived up to all expectations. Keep up the good work, fellas. (And many thanks to Jeff both for running the tourney and giving us this account!)*

Finally, we'll hear from Zach Barnard on an event that, every year, anchors our efforts to have the oldest boys at Pemi take the youngest campers under their wings as mentors and friends.

*Junior One and Lake Tent, properly known as the "bookends" of Camp Pemi, took a trip to the Flat Rock Café on the evening of July 12, 2010. Four canoes, firewood, three boxes stuffed with sloppy joes, buns, PB&J, cookies, juice and marshmallows, eleven paddles, eleven life jackets, and eleven hungry bodies later, we found ourselves paddling across Lower Baker Pond. Nick Barber steered Jack Hahn and Quinn O'Keefe; Teddy Gales steered Spencer O'Brien and Darren Mangan; and Zach Barnard steered Harrison Potts and Henry Seebeck. Mason Challinor and Chris Dollman, future Alagashers, led the group with their spectacular canoeing skills. The lake was bright gold, energized by the evening sun. We arrived at Flat Rock in great time and enjoyed some fun games.*



*We bonded over the famous "One Duck" and Teddy started a fantastic fire. Chris cooked the sloppy joes over the fire, and Nick, Mason, and Zach helped with serving, including a stellar PB&J performance by Mr.*

*Barber for Harrison. We ended the evening with roasted marshmallows by the campfire, a thorough search for trash in and around the campsite, and a quick paddle back to camp to catch Bean Soup. The evening was a blast, and Junior One's bonding time with the senior-most boys far exceeded prior expectations. The boys of Lake Tent showed a maturity and patience that was perfect role-modeling for the Juniors. We are all certainly looking forward to more excursions together, learning about our surroundings and each other on future trips.*



We'll close with that snapshot of camaraderie across the camper generations. We are looking forward, though, to seeing a number of you parents of full-season campers on the first of two visiting week-ends, beginning this Saturday morning. Travel safely to your rendezvous. *A bientot.*

-- Tom Reed, Jr.

