MR. MOON SHINES ON ...
JUST CALL ME “DOR”

Long, long ago I learned to read in books featuring the characters Dick & Jane on the cover of this card (that this letter was written in).

I grew up and became a teacher and had the opportunity to teach and touch the lives of kids from second to ninth grade. I am now retired and am writing books of my own. But somewhere along the way, I paused for nine summers at a camp on a lake called Sunnen ... and my life has been enriched and blessed because of it.

When I was 13, I arrived at Camp Lakewood, skeptical that it wouldn’t be “all that fun”. What I experienced instead was a nearly mystical acceptance and camaraderie with my fellow campers and my counselors. A return session at age 14 proved more difficult. Many of my fellow campers were from the “cool crowd” and they let everyone else know it. In desperation I did my best to fit in - including cruelly mocking a girl who wasn’t socially “with it” - making fun of her publicly.

What happened at dinner one night after I had been particularly cruel earlier that day changed my life forever.

Eight of us from the past summer sat around the table with our beloved counselor Victor Cheng. He began speaking of the difference between last summer and this. He said, “I know you’re not like those other kids. I know you’re good girls.” My heart sank. Here, the coolest counselor at camp didn’t value popularity - he valued kindness. The truth dawned on me - I wasn’t created to be cruel and I saw it: NO ONE is better than anyone else!

AROUND THE CAMPFIRE
THE CAMPERS ARE COMING ...

Punxsutawney Phil is calling for an early spring this year, and if you come out to camp during one of the gorgeous sunny days we’ve been having lately, I think you will agree. Camp Lakewood is already bustling with activity as we prepare for the Outdoor Education season, and that means summer camp is just around the corner. We are very excited about all of the great new offerings we will have at Lakewood for the summer of 2016. Here are some of the highlights.

The big new offering for 2016 is known as “Specialized Smorgasbords”, a period during the day when campers choose from an array of non-standard clinic activities. New in 2016, campers may sign up ahead of time for certain specialized smorgasbord activities. Options this year will include:

Banana Boat Ride: A high-speed spin around the lake on our banana-boat sled.

Ceramics: Create a ceramic mug, animal figure, piggy bank or other piece in the Arts & Crafts Center.

Special Agent Zip: Ever try firing paintballs at a target while riding a zip line? We think kids should!

Paintball Party: If a full week paintball clinic is too much, then the paintball party offers a perfect one period introduction to the game.

Specialized Smorgasbords have an extra program fee, and a registration form comes with all parent packets. This form is also available on the website with all of the other camp forms.

In addition to the new offerings, we are also moving several of our programs off the paid elective list and offering them as regular clinics that any camper may sign up for when they come to camp. Digital Animation will now be open to all campers, with specific clinics for young beginners and a double period for East Camp. Digital Journalism will also be moved off the paid elective list and will be open to all East Camp campers.

But wait, there’s more! East Camp is also getting some improvements. Thanks to a grant from Y of the USA and the dedication of our wonderful volunteers, East Camp will have all new doors, shutters and screens in 2016. Think you’ve outgrown all of our climbing courses? Then you’ll be super excited to hear we’ve added a real rappelling wall. And of course, no one is going to believe what we’ve done to the AV system in the dining hall!

When I say YMCA Camp Lakewood is “My Camp!”, I say it with pride. We know you do too, and that’s why we are so proud to call you a member of the family. So shine up your coin and brush up on your camp songs, because it’s almost time to call the family home for another incredible summer around the campfire!

Dorothy Frick
Camp Lakewood Alum

This is a truth I have carried with me and have taught to students of all ages. This truth is just as fresh to me today - two months shy of 61 years - as it was that evening in the dining hall.

I came back to camp at 15 as an LIT. I went on to become a CIT, a JC, a SC, a Ranger Director, and concluded my camp career with two summers as a leadership counselor.

My students called me Ms. Frick, my family and friends call me Dorothy, but from age 13 to 21, I was Dor!

And I will always be grateful for the powerful impact that the camp by the lake had on a young woman named Dor.

Matt Garcia
Camp Lakewood Director
The Alumni Work Weekend 2016 is right around the corner! As we do every year, the Camp Lakewood and Trout Lodge staff will descend upon East Camp May 13-15 to help get camp ready for the summer season, and celebrate friendships past and present.

In addition to our usual work weekend projects, we will also be holding a memorial service on Saturday, May 14 for Ed Pears, who was a beloved Camp Director in the '80's.

Alumni will be welcome to stay at East Camp - as always free of charge for the weekend - and meals will be provided Saturday breakfast through Sunday breakfast at Lakewood Lodge. Alumni who are not comfortable with East Camp accommodations have the option of reserving a main camp Lakewood cabin for the weekend, or making a reservation at Trout Lodge. Lakewood cabins will cost $30 per person per night, and Trout Lodge reservations will be handled normally through the Trout Lodge front desk.

All alumni wishing to attend the weekend should e-mail Kelly Adams at kelly.adams@gwrymca.org. Please make sure you include the names of everyone in your group, arrival and departure times, where you intend to stay (lodging) and a phone number in your e-mail. If you request to stay in a Lakewood main camp cabin, Kelly will be in touch with you to sort out the reservation details.

In addition to our normal summer prep projects, the Alumni Work Weekend will also have a special building event. Thanks to the donations of some generous alumni, we will be building a Memorial Pavilion for Ed Pears on the far side of the lake to be used as the new hub of our overnight programs.

To make this happen, we will need to have an extra work day on Saturday, April 16 to tackle all of the foundation and concrete work. Larry Criscione and Eric Work have gathered a small group of volunteers, but we are always interested in more help.

If you would like to join us on April 16, please contact Matt Garcia at matthew.garcia@gwrymca.org.

Mark these dates on your calendar and try out that Dutch oven recipe one more time. It's time to get ready for another great weekend at East Camp!

DEPARTURES & ARRIVALS

After almost 20 years of dedicated service to the YMCA of the Ozarks, Rex Isgriggs (Food Service Director) has moved on from our camp family. Someone had the nerve to make Rex an offer that was too good to refuse, and we will truly miss our beloved Food Service Director. Everyone at YMCA of the Ozarks wishes Rex the best of luck on his next adventure. Remember Rex, you will always be family at the Y!

Congratulations to Glen “Jacko” Jackson, who has joined our full-time staff as our TEAM Works Director! Glen began his camping career in 2008 as a counselor, and has worked virtually every job a camp has to offer in the summers since. Glen has been a part of the Camp Lakewood seasonal team since 2014, and we are thrilled to welcome him to the full-time family.

Since our last Flickr, we have a few new literal additions to the family! Please give a huge Lakewood welcome to Emmett Engel, son of Matt “Scope” Engel (Outdoor Education Director) and Jill “KC” Engel (Camp Lakewood Program Director), born in November of 2015.

And most recently, please welcome Abby Garcia, daughter of Matt “Mufasa” Garcia (Camp Lakewood Director) and Monica Garcia (Group Sales at Trout Lodge), born in March of 2016.

Congratulations to all of our growing camp families - we can’t wait to see them around the campfire.
GONE BUT CERTAINLY NOT FORGOTTEN

This spring’s annual alumni work weekend on May 13-15 is being dedicated to former Camp Lakewood Director Ed Pears. Ed was the Camp Director at Lakewood for three summers (1983-85). He unexpectedly passed away on August 27, 2015, after contracting meningitis. He left a profound influence on his former camp staff and is greatly missed.

A memorial service has been planned for the May 13-15 weekend. Additionally, alumni are raising funds to build a pavilion on the east side of Sunnen Lake to be dedicated to Ed (see “Spring Alumni Reunion & Service Weekend” article to the left for more information on this project).

Alum, Larry Criscione, is spearheading the efforts for this memorial, and specifics are still being worked out. Please let us know if you would like to be involved with this event.

MARTY’S “FRIENDS OF FERGUSON” UPDATE

2016 marks the second year that Marty Pliske has spearheaded his personal “Friends of Ferguson” campaign to help more kids from that community in St. Louis come to Camp Lakewood this summer. Last year, with a grant from the Y-USA, plus a gift from Emerson located in Ferguson, plus Marty’s campaign, 60 NEW campers were able to attend a week of resident camp. It was just an awesome summer for those new campers. Just read what a Ferguson Police Officer said about the influence of camp on his son...

“My name is Rick, and I am a police officer in Ferguson, MO. Last year my son C attended camp with you on the generous scholarship you provided for Ferguson officers. He had the time of his life, and still talks about his camp experience.

I was wondering if there was a similar offer for the kids of Ferguson this year? The gesture last year was so generous, and I feel like it really helped C. Even though I make a concerted effort to keep work at work and not worry my family, I am sure that he feels the stress and pressure indirectly that I bring home with me each day, and the worry that my wife has as well.

Again, I cannot thank you enough for the experience C had last year, and we all look forward to him attending camp again this summer.”

This year, Camp Lakewood has again received a grant from Y-USA in addition to the $1,375 that Marty has raised so far. Marty is about halfway to his goal. Have you made your gift yet to “give back” to another young child who needs a camp experience? Help us again bring “C” and 59 other campers back to Camp Lakewood this summer. Let’s get Marty to his goal. Every gift is important!

If you would like to continue Marty’s campaign, please send to: Renée Godinez, YMCA Trout Lodge & Camp Lakewood, 13528 State Highway AA, Potosi, MO 63664. Just note “Marty’s Camp Campaign” in the memo line or call to pay by credit card at 573-438-2154 ext. 220.
UPCOMING EVENTS

April 16  FOUNDATION WORK FOR ED PEARS MEMORIAL PAVILION
April 10  CAMP LAKEWOOD OPEN HOUSES FROM 1–4 P.M.
May 1    SPRING ALUMNI REUNION & SERVICE WEEKEND
May 22   FIRST DAY OF SUMMER CAMP AT CAMP LAKEWOOD
May 13–15  CAMP LAKEWOOD OPEN HOUSES FROM 1–4 P.M.
June 5    FIRST DAY OF SUMMER CAMP AT CAMP LAKEWOOD

If you don’t already receive this newsletter via e-mail, contact us at matthew.garcia@gwrymca.org, and we will add your name to our e-mail list. You will then get the full experience of reading this publication in color. You may also visit our website at www.ymcaoftheozarks.org, click on “Connect” at the top of the home page, click on “Alumni” and click on “Newsletters.”