



Annual Report -2011-

How the Stars Came Down

by Pat Schneider, Sherwood Forest Camp alumna

Night. How the stars came down arching over us, and the only name we had for them was shooting stars. Why there were so many was anybody's guess. My great grandmother thought the world was coming to an end when Haley's comet flared across the sky. I lay flat on my back and watched the night sky falling all around me and I wanted more than anything, never to go home. I did, of course. They put us campers into busses and drove us back to tenements, asphalt and streetlights in the city. What I didn't know that night in my bedroll at Sherwood Forest Camp was that when I got home, home wasn't my real home any more. . I had a new home in my remembering and it was dark and safe and beautiful with shooting stars still falling all around.

> © Pat Schneider Amherst Writers & Artists

> > Photo by David Carson

A message from our leadership...

Since 1937, Sherwood Forest Camp has been fulfilling its mission of transforming lives through camp experiences! We help children realize a future beyond anything they could imagine and provide them with the tools to achieve it. Sherwood Forest Camp creates healthy, caring communities where children develop character and competence.

Every year, we hear from dozens of former campers, staff members, and Leadership Training Program graduates who get back in touch with us to say thanks for their camp experiences. One such alumna is Pat Schneider, who was living in a one-room basement apartment when she was placed in care at Edgewood Children's Center in Webster Groves in 1945. She returned to a two-room apartment in a tenement on Olive Street in 1947, but continued going to Sherwood Forest as a camper from age 12 through 16. During her last year at camp, she was an assistant counselor, leading wilderness trips and overnight camping trips. Pat wrote the poem featured here in honor of her counselor, Jan "Happy" Com.

Today Pat is a poet, playwright, librettist, and author of nine books. Founder/director emerita of Amherst Writers & Artists, she is an adjunct faculty member of the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California. She credits Sherwood Forest with "saving my sanity, if not my life." Thank you for your generous support which makes amazing stories like Pat's possible!

With gratitude, Mary M. Rogers Executive Director



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Children who attend camp beginning at the age of seven have the opportunity to grow up with us for the next ten years. Along the way, they make lifelong friends and learn lifelong lessons. Our three sequential summer camp programs are geared to campers' abilities, interests, needs, and skill development.

Mini Camp

This program, for children who have completed 1st or 2nd grade, is designed as an introduction to residential camp. Children this age have not spent many nights away from home or family, so Mini Camp helps them take their first steps towards independence. Campers participate in activities with their groups and are exposed to a wide variety of the activities we offer, such as aquatics and arts.





Boys and Girls Camp

Campers who have completed 3rd through 5th grade participate in this program, which gives them the unique opportunity to choose their own activities. Campers make decisions and take responsibility for their choices as they participate in activities that build character, skills, and competence in a fun and active learning environment.

Leadership Training

Founded in 1942, this program is for 6th through 9th grade campers. Through hands-on activities, they master skills that help them plan and make good choices in order to build promising futures. In addition to completing challenging wildemess trips in the Ozark wildemess, they develop plans, budgets, and itineraries, and raise funds for extended trips through the United States to visit colleges and volunteer with service organizations. Graduates participate in our Counselor in Training program.



In the process of participating in fun activities, from cooking over an open fire to zooming down our zipline, our campers are also learning. They are learning to try new things, to master new skills, to work cooperatively with others, and to discover and develop their strengths. These are the skills they need in order to further their education, to pursue a career, and to build strong and healthy relationships.

Today, approximately 80% of our campers are from families living in poverty, and for many of these children, the Sherwood Forest Camp experience serves as their only summertime enrichment and learning opportunity.

Our campers say Sherwood Forest is

...their home away from home. ...where their best friends are. ...where they can be their truest selves. ...where they can experience independence. ...where they feel safe and loved.



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Financial Overview

| | Revenue | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | 2010 | 2011 | | 7 | | | | | 1 |
| Contributions | \$ 584,339 | \$ 604,325• | • • • • • • • • • | | | 46% | | | |
| United Way | \$ 363,932 | \$ 387,060 • | • • • • • • • • • | - | 30% | | | | |
| Grants | \$ 145,090 | \$ 166,687• | ••••• | 13% | | | | | |
| Program Fees | \$ 157,674 | \$ 145,385• | • • • • • • • • • | 11% | | | | | |
| TOTAL | \$ 1,251,035 | \$ 1,303,457 | : | \$0 \$100,00 | 00 \$200,000 | \$300,000 | \$400,000 | \$500,000 | \$600,000 |

| E | xpenses | 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|--------------|----------------|-------|---------|---------|--------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------|----------|-------|-----------|-----------|
| | 2010 | 2011 | r | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | |
| Program Services | \$ 853,890 | \$ 921,276 ••• | ••••• | | | | | | 75% | | | | | |
| Fundraising | \$212,303 | \$ 223,271 ••• | ••••• | 1 | 8% | | | | | | | | | |
| Management | \$ 72,593 | \$ 83,666 ••• | ••••• | 7% | | | | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | \$ 1,138,786 | \$ 1,228,213 | \$0 | \$100.0 | 100 \$2 | 00.000 | \$300.000 | \$400.000 | \$500.000 | \$600. | 000 \$70 | 0.000 | \$800.000 | \$900.000 |

| | 2010 | 2011 |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| End-of-Year Net Assets | \$ 1,189,752 | \$ 1,264,996 |

Summer 2011 At-a-Glance

Total number of campers: 390

| Gender | | Household Income | |
|--------------------|------|----------------------|------|
| Girls: | 50 % | \$0 to \$9,999 | 17% |
| Boys: | 50 % | \$10,000 to \$14,999 | 12 % |
| | | \$15,000 to \$19,999 | 11% |
| Age | | \$20,000 to \$29,999 | 25 % |
| 7 to 9 years old | 41 % | \$30,000 to \$39,999 | 16% |
| 10 to 12 years old | 47 % | \$40,000 to \$49,999 | 6% |
| 13 to 16 years old | 12% | \$50,000 + | 13 % |
| | | | |

66 % 24 % 6 % I % I % I % I %

Race

| African American |
|------------------|
| Caucasian |
| Bi/Multi-Racial |
| Hispanic/Latino |
| Native American |
| Asian |
| Other |
| |

Counties

| St. Louis County St. Louis City Other Missouri Counties | 49 % 31 % 10 % |
|---|----------------------|
| St. Clair County Madison County Other Illinois Counties | 6 % 2 % 2 % |

Photo by David Carson

Program Spotlight: Library and Literacy

In 2011, we implemented the second year of the summer camp Reading and Library Program to address summer learning loss, which is especially prevalent among children from low-income families. As a result of this program, campers' enjoyment of reading has increased, as have their reading skills. The program significantly boosted campers' vocabulary, and in fact, campers experienced an 87% increase in vocabulary knowledge as a result of reading activities. Our formal reading program helped campers read more books (both at camp and when they went home) and gave campers access to a highly-qualified reading teacher in a fun, small group environment.



This innovative opportunity at Sherwood Forest helped change campers' attitudes towards reading and exposed them to new literature, different from what they see at school. As one parent noted, Sherwood Forest Camp is "aimed at the whole child" and the Reading and Library Program fits well with this holistic philosophy. Campers received books to revisit fondly and reread over and over again, to recreate the fun and wonder they first experienced at summer camp. Parents reported that when campers returned home, they read more, made more frequent requests to visit the library, and were better at choosing books that fit with their interests and skill level.

Ongoing participation in Reading and Library activities at Sherwood Forest Camp helps campers progress through our camp programs and their schools. They enter middle school as proficient readers and are more prepared for high school. Ultimately, they are better able to successfully seek and complete post-high school education or training, to positively contribute to our community as adults. The results of the reading program speak to the transformative nature of summer camp!

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