



Dixie Doings

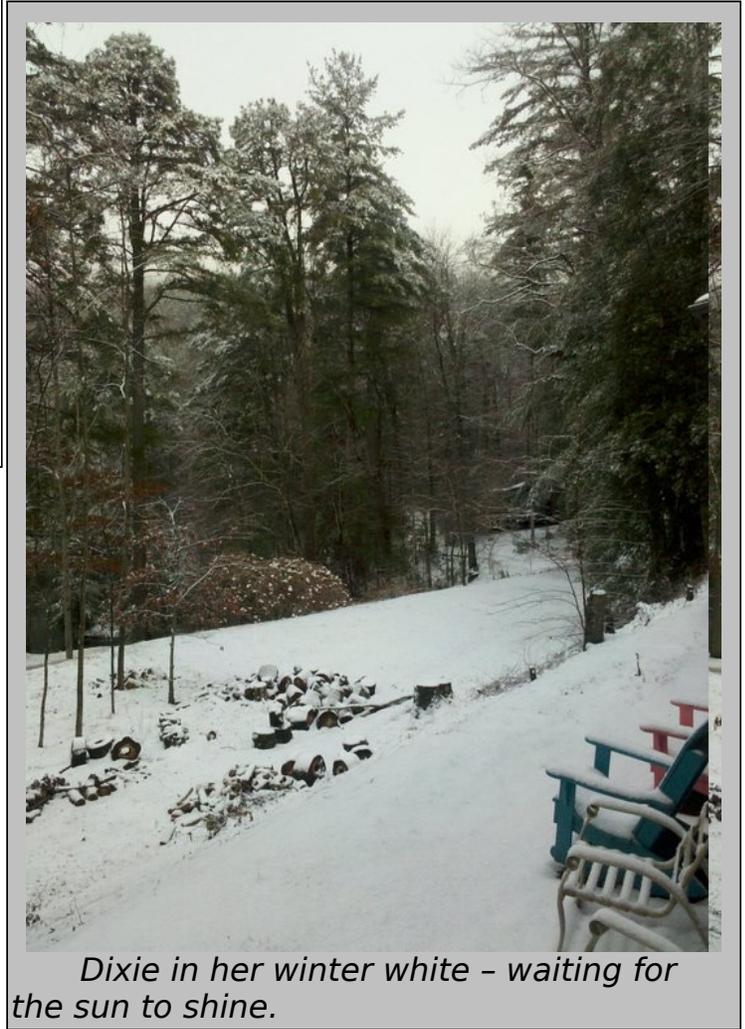
Camp Dixie Newsletter – Christmas 2010

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old trailer removed/recycled, the stable roof repaired, and camp surveyed. We also got camp a new furry friend – Chuck Finley. A chocolate Lab with lots of personality.

Yes, 2010 has been a wonderful year.



Dixie in her winter white – waiting for the sun to shine.

Director's Message

Dear Friends,

I cannot believe another year has almost come and gone. This makes 27 enjoyable summers I have spent at Camp Dixie with each one being very special. And this year was outstanding. One that will long be remembered.

We had such a great time with all of our campers, staff and alumni and not to forget our friends of Camp Dixie. In no particular order – we had 3 different camp mom's, a great group of campers, several returning staff members, a spring work weekend, a new riflery range, the ceiling in the kitchen raised, a new chlorinator installed, some of the kitchen re-wired, the ovens refurbished, the stable area cleared, 7 weeks of camp, several outside groups, the 1st Babes in the Woods, fall work weekend, new stairs put in to the Rec. Hall, several trees removed, the

As Jason and I prepare to celebrate the Christmas holidays with our families, we would like to take this opportunity to say “Thank You” to our special Dixie friends – all of you wonderful people who help and support Camp Dixie. Jason and I are truly blessed to have you in our lives. Your love and support for Dixie is a wonderful gift that we truly appreciate.

We have had an amazing time this year working and carrying on the Dixie tradition and we look forward to 2011 which will be our 97th camping season.

We hope to see you in the New Year. Best wishes for a wonderful holiday filled with family and friends, laughter, love, peace and happiness.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Following the Gleam,
Rhonda Conrad, Director

Christmas in July: A Camp Dixie Tradition

David Albright: Camper / Counselor 1974 - 1979)

Christmas in July, a Dixie Tradition, began long before I ever arrived at camp the first time. A strange holiday as perceived by a young boy Christmas decorations, party and exchanging of gifts in the hot of July. Evergreens abound around camp for use as decorations amidst the sweat of campers. This "holiday" was a favorite of Aunt Dorothy, Ann Taylor's mother. Since she never had any biological grandchildren, she seemed to adopt all of the campers, especially the boys.

Campers would draw names for the gift exchange. Aunt Dorothy would be abuzz around the camp and town. The old Mercury Bobcat Station Wagon, AKA her "Santa Sleigh", would make many trips to town for supplies and special gifts for a campers' sweetheart. Gifts were supposed to be made during Arts & Crafts, many times with "secretive" extra help provided to the boys by Aunt Dorothy. Gifts were exchanged after the "Christmas dinner" for which dress uniforms were the required attire.

All decorations were made by campers. Strings of popcorn, chains of construction paper rings, and evergreen needles glued to construction paper bells adorned the dining

hall along with a Christmas tree. Many times at the old boys' side of the camp, the boys would decorate a small tree outside the cabins. For this annual event the original Sutton Center was also the recipient of special adornment, usually provided by the boys.



Erin "Salty" Boyd and Sydney Romer bringing Christmas cheer to the party.

If only a card, everyone gave Aunt Dorothy a gift of some sort. The year I was a CT, not allowed to participate in the regular antics of campers, I wanted to give Aunt Dorothy something special...I decided to clean the station wagon inside and out. Miss Ann helped get Aunt Dorothy away from camp to run errands in the truck, which Aunt Dorothy hated to ride in by the way. This allowed me time to clean her precious station wagon. Many years later as I visited camp one Saturday with a friend, Aunt Dorothy was in ill health but still remembered my gift of cleaning her station wagon.

You always hear people say that it is better to give than to receive. I believe that this is one of the many character traits taught at camp. It is always better to give of yourself and give to others than to receive material things. You never know what you will receive in return when you give such as friendships and values that last a lifetime and beyond. May Dixieland and all connected to her be blessed this Christmas and remember the reason for the season.

|Amelie Middlemas

Camper/Staff

As I prepare for the holiday season, rushing around to buy and wrap gifts for my loved ones, it is refreshing to stop and think that the best Christmas present I ever received was not a material possession. When I was about ten years old my Grandmother gave my cousin Carleigh and myself the gift of two weeks at Camp Dixie. She wanted us to have the typical summer camp experience, and where better to have it than the place where she was a counselor many years ago?

Little did she know, she had created a monster. Of course, Carleigh and I immediately fell in love with camp, and each year another Middlemas family member was added to the "Dixie Christmas Club." For a few years, all of my cousins and I were receiving two weeks tuition at Camp Dixie as our main Christmas gift. My friends at school could never understand why I valued my time at camp over something that I could unwrap on Christmas morning and play with right away. They didn't know that my whole school year was spent waiting to go back to camp. I played the Wake up CD ad nauseum, to the annoyance of my parents. I couldn't wait to see my summer friends, who eventually became my summer family.

At camp I got to spend weeks at a time with cousins that I didn't see very often. I was able to hike up Millionaire, swim in the lake, and catch salamanders. I got to fall

asleep to the sound of frogs singing every night. These memories are priceless to me, and I will always cherish them.



Serious game of spoons.

Many Christmas gifts have come and gone. I have received dolls, clothes, and electronics, all of which have been broken, thrown away and forgotten. The summers I spent at Camp Dixie will always be with me. Without a doubt, my experience at camp was the best Christmas present I could ever receive.

|Nicola Smeaton Hack

Staff member 2000 -2006

Many years ago while I was a sophomore in College I came home to a piece of paper on the kitchen counter. My parents informed me that a summer camp wanted me to come and work for them. With this statement I had visions of a huge sprawling summer camp with hundreds of staff members and a huge lake surrounded by cute little wooden cabins.

Apparently my parents bumped into their representatives at North Point, got to talking and somehow my parents had offered my services as a riding instructor.

I completed the application and thought what the heck, it could be fun ya never know

and I mean what else am I going to do all summer long? The next step is a bit of blur, but the next thing I remember was picking up the phone to call a Miss Anne (still all this time envisioning an office full of full time camp staff...never knowing who I was actually calling)!

We scheduled an "interview" the day after a concert at my school and my parents accompanied me. My father told me to make sure to dress presentably, no jeans, maybe even a skirt. We were told to follow their instructions and NOT to Google Map the directions (yup you guessed it my parents didn't listen)

That day I dressed in my favorite brown skirt and a nice white tank top with my new brown flip-flops. I figured it was presentable while not being overly dressy, ya know being at a camp and all.

talking about running boys underwear up the flag pole and the like. I started to fear the worst, then Miss Anne mentioned the pollen, Oh my the pollen, we happened to be standing next to the big pine on Flag with a branch hanging LOW. Miss Anne made the disastrous comment that if you touch anything pollen goes flying...well my dad, don't know how - got the idea into his head...grabbed the branch and shook for all his life! A yellow cloud flew across Flag.

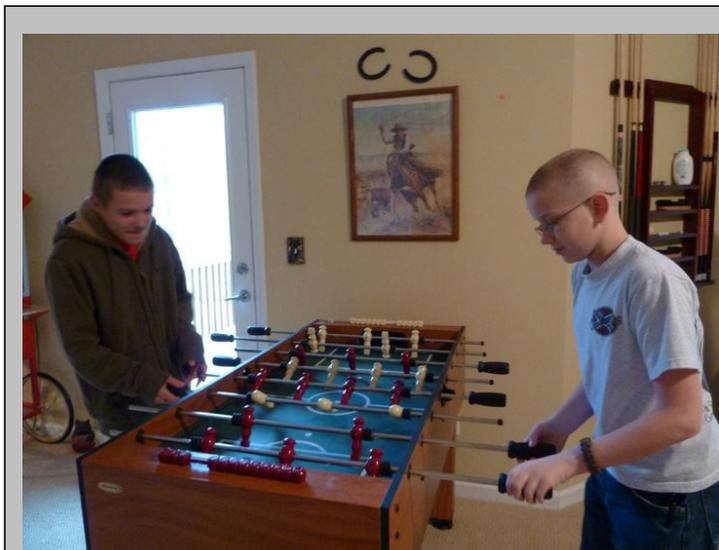
I left that day thinking that I'd never see these people again! I graduated in 2005, I worked my last summer in 2006 and I still go over in March to help with a school group. I met my best friend that day, who knew??

Memories from a Staffer and Camp Mom

Connie Robinson Strickland, '55, '56, '58, '65-'69

Many Christmases have passed since I was enrolled or employed at Camp Dixie, but I still have memories that are, in some cases, as clear as yesterday, and they warm my soul with joy when I recall those experiences.

I had the privilege of attending camp at pivotal points in the camp's history. My first year as a camper was the last year that Pop J and Dr. Sutton were associated with the camp. As I remember it, they would alternate weeks coming to camp because it was a time-consuming drive from Atlanta to Clayton in those the days "before interstate highways." On the Sundays that Dr. Sutton was at camp, he would speak at the Boys camp at Chapel and at the Girl's camp at Council Fire. I can still see him with his thick shock of white hair conducting the council fire program. His talks were always memorable. He made vivid use of Bible stories to get across his messages. We truly loved his enthusiastic portrayals of such stories as "Joe and his fancy colored coat." I also remember how approachable he was, and how the girls would sometimes walk out



Sergey and Will waste no time to get in a game of Fooze ball.

We arrived at Dixie later that day after a few wrong turns (thanks Google!) to be met with a small yet beautiful camp along with Rhonda and Miss Anne.

Dixie was nothing like I'd expected, a beautiful like, cute cabins (oh so much better than the ones I'd expected) and two (I'd later learn) great women.

Sadly the "interview" didn't go quite as I'd expected, my dad managed to act up, the whole time. Imagine a 50ish year old man

of Council Ring with their arms around him.

In my first summer---between the third and fourth grade---I grew up, and never again thought it unnatural or hard to be separated from my parents and my home

The next year the Kotilas took over the running of the camps, but I don't recall great changes, except that Miss Stokes was no longer the Director. My favorite activities were still swimming, horseback riding, camp-outs, and making bowls and bookends in arts and crafts.



Great food, great friends and a great time had by all at the Dixie Christmas party.

Being an only child, I really needed camp. Sometimes it wasn't easy learning those early lessons---how I really wasn't the most important person in the world, and that other people had ideas that were just as good as mine. I learned how to work together with my cabin mate--- keeping the cabin clean and even keeping up with my own stuff! I also remember learning that Christmas is more about giving than receiving. One year I spent a whole week working on a Christmas-in-July present --- a sitting donkey whittled out of a bar of Palmolive Soap. How proud I was to present my best work to my Christmas pal.

Though I learned a great deal in my years as a camper, that learning paled in comparison to education I received as a counselor. That's when I really learned about

responsibility, flexibility, and can do. The Kotilas placed a great deal of responsibility on all of us. I've often stated that being a counselor at Dixie taught me more about being a teacher than eight years of college and grad school.

I really tried to be conscientious in all my assignments, but there was still a big streak of kid in me, which often showed up in practical jokes I played on fellow counselors and campers. Emily Kling loves to tell the story of how one of my jokes turned on me. She was a CT when I sent her out in the dark to retrieve something from the flagpole. As she returned and was crossing the bridge over the creek, I reached out from under the bridge and grabbed her ankle---not counting on her heavy flashlight which found its way onto my head in her effort to escape.

The last year the Kotilas owned the camp was my last year at Dixie, and it was the first year that Miss Ann came to the camp. I had recently become engaged and was too busy with camp duties and plans of my own to see things that were happening right under my nose---specifically that Miss Ann was doing more than just spending her summer as a head counselor. She was seriously planning to buy the camp. Secretly I had envisioned the camp as being mine one day, and was totally shocked to find out what had happened at the end of that season.

My last Camp Christmas was a Christmas/Thanksgiving party given by Miss Ann and her mom, Aunt Dorothy, that same year. They invited my new husband and me, along with other staff members, to their home in Atlanta to share a Thanksgiving feast, a Tech-Georgia Freshman game, and the Lighting of the Great Tree atop the Rich's bridge. It was a special time. By then I had forgiven the Kotilas for not telling me about their plans, and I began to see how the camp would be in the good and capable hands of Miss Ann and Aunt Dorothy.

Though I visited camp from time to time over the years and even sent my children to camp, I never again was part of the work of camp---until this year when I asked to serve

as Camp Mom while my grandchildren had their debut at Camp Dixie. And now, each time they remember their summer fun and say, "I hope I can go to camp again next summer!" I smile, and say to myself, "Me to!"

| A Parent's Perspective

Sandy Diekroeger

Many have crossed the bridge into the land of Camp Dixie over the years. Many ask "what makes Camp Dixie so special?" Words don't always express what each one of us experiences when we are at Dixie. Something magical happens to you when you pull into the gravel driveway at Camp Dixie. That magic is different for each person but the magic seems to do exactly what it needs to for each individual person. What did Dixie magic do for you or what did you experience for because of being in Dixieland?

- create lifelong friendships
- try something you never thought you could do
- overcome a fear
- learn to relax
- become a leader
- learn to be a team player
- see stars for the first time
- learn to relax
- try a food you never would have eaten before
- learn to support others
- learn to listen or learn to open up to someone
- laugh, cry, skip, jump, hop, hike, run
- be silly just because
- be accepted for who you are, just the way you are
- have unconditional support

- learn to swim, canoe, kayak, hike, shoot a rifle or a bow & arrow
- learn to start a fire
- know what real peace & quite is

I hope that once you have been to Camp Dixie that you will always return. The more often the better. For me, just pulling into that gravel driveway unloads all the stress & trouble resting on my shoulders. I know that everything will be okay because I am in Dixie..



Sandy Diekroeger, Amelia Brown, Carrie Hartshorne, Steve Mullin and Rhonda

| What I'd Like to do at Dixie

This is the time of year when all the special plans for next summer are being made. We always like to know what your suggestions are in order to make your summer a special time to remember. We would like to know what your favorite activities were; what special events did you enjoy most; and most importantly, what new ideas you might have for next summer. Email your thoughts and ideas to info@campdixie.org.

|2011 - Here we come!!

Campers, Parents and Alums,

We need your help in getting the word out about Camp Dixie. If you have friends or family, who might be interested in sending their children to summer camp, send their names, phone numbers, email addresses to Rhonda and we'll be happy to talk with them. If you have several, who are interested in DIXIE we can arrange a special showing of the 2010 camp pictures. They can see first hand what a great place DIXIE is to spend the summer and you can earn credits towards your camp tuition.

|What's happening in Dixieland

October 8 - 10

Fall Work Weekend - Alumni and staff helped with repair around camp. The Stricklands and Kling rebuilt stairs to Rec. Hall.

December 18

Camp Dixie Christmas Party

January 22

Camp Fair North Point Mall

February 13

Camp Fair Town Center Mall

March 7 - 11

Private Group at Camp

March 19

Camp Fair Perimeter Mall

May 13 - 15

Babes in the Woods 2

May 20 - 22

Spring Work Weekend

|Christmas Wishes

Janis Jones

My Christmas wishes for Camp Dixie: a soft blanket of snow dusting the trees and

rocks, a scrim of ice along the edges of the streams and the lake, the smell of pines, fireplace smoke encircling the chimney, the bright red flash of a cardinal as he flies by the feeder, happy tracks of Chuck, Lily, Owen, and Hot Stuff. A big bow of love surrounding all of camp.

My Christmas wishes for campers: stockings filled with treats, boxes spilling out crocs, t-shirts, and jeans, an application to camp ready to be sent in, cards, letters, and e-mails of friendship and love, the laughter, and joy of the season.

My Christmas wishes for Rhonda, Jason, and staff: cards, letters, and e-mails of love and gratitude, stockings filled with treats and chocolate, cups of Coke and glasses of sweet tea, boxes of crocs, t-shirts, jeans, shorts, and strange outfits, sunglasses and whistles, applications filled out and overflowing, the love of Dixie past and present surrounding them.

And my Christmas wish for you Rhonda - quiet time with Jason, Jason's healed leg, a time in the sun at the beach, lots of laughter and joy, time with family and friends.

