



The Council

Of Birch Rock Camp

Fall Issue 2006

Dear Fellow Parents,

If you made it up to Birch Rock for visiting day last summer, I hope you felt a little more plugged in after The Council meeting in the grove. We hoped to answer questions like, “What does my son do in camp craft? What do the boys discuss at Tree Talks?” Our aim is to help parents see daily life at camp a little more vividly.

Once the summer is over, The Council shifts gears and focuses on giving parents the bigger picture, including Birch Rock’s goals and accomplishments. I believe our success at Birch Rock lies in holding fast to tradition while pushing ahead in critical new directions. At the heart of everything we do, ‘Help the Other Fellow’ is much more than a slogan. It has a meaning made real each summer when a veteran Birch Rocker offers friendship to a newcomer, when a swimmer finishes his Whale to the cheers of the whole camp celebrating at the waterfront.

‘Help the Other Fellow’ evokes our tradition, but just as importantly prompts us to think about who we are and how we are evolving as a dynamic community. How *are* we helping in the broader sense, and who *is* the other fellow?

We at Birch Rock knew the right thing to do, and the way we needed to go. We can all take pride in the remarkable result: in the summer of 2006 scholarship money jumped from the prior year’s \$5,000 to \$23,000, 12 boys attended camp on partial scholarships, and three boys from the inner city in New York came to Birch Rock on full scholarships. Board member and former camper Mike Herzig took the lead in making this possible for the Bronx kids. Mike devoted himself to making sure it would be a successful camping experience for St. Ignatius School students Josias, Julian and Steven (Mike even ordered rain gear from L.L. Bean for the guys!).

Here is what 15 year old Julian had to say: “Thank you for sending me to the best camp ever. Birch Rock camp is very fun because we get to do all our favorite sports...I really want to come back next year because now I am part of the community...the days here have made me into a man because they teach you a lot of great things...”.

We parents have chosen an exceptional place for our sons, and we play a critical role in keeping the camp strong. Birch Rock is a small camp with big goals, both for the individual boy and for the whole community. To preserve our uncommon, old-fashioned, nature-oriented mission, we need campers. Each of us can act as ambassador and encourage families in our home towns to consider camping at Birch Rock. Rich Deering and Mike Mattson are always eager to assist parents with recruiting and to send out our stunning new brochure. I wish us all continued success in raising good men.

Yours,
Francie Campbell
The Council
(Charles and Harry Netzer’s mom)