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## Facebook: Bringing Generations of Campers Together



Facebook has changed the way we keep in touch with campers, alums, and parents. For those in our Camp community who are not yet on Facebook, we thought we would share a sample of our weekly Facebook posting called: "THROWBACK THURSDAY." Each Thursday, we post old photos and invite discussion from alumni and campers. If you are on Facebook, we welcome you to add us as a Facebook friend: [www.facebook.com/gwc.bwb](http://www.facebook.com/gwc.bwb). Alums, keep sharing your own Throwback photos, it has been so much fun. Here's a recent Throwback Thursday post and alumni commentary:



### Michael K. Smith:

"I remember the big bulky station wagon, the big bulky coat that smelled like the road and the big heart of a great man who warmed up our house..."

### Richard R. Mackey:

"I recognized him right away from 42 yrs ago."

### Dennis C. Smith:

"Jim taught us the trick of reaching between your legs and he would grab our hands and flip us over... We loved the Jim visits with the projector!"

Camp's Founder, Jim Bredemus

# Bear Tales

Camp Birchwood for Boys • Spring Newsletter 2011



## Ooooooh...Baracuda!

Below: WaterWorld Exhibit & Inspiration for The BARACUDA



Uncle Dan Bredemus (the original Dan Bredemus) has been responsible for many of Camp's treasures: Gunflint House, River Swing, Land Swing(s), Waterslide(s), and new in Summer 2011: THE BARACUDA, the latest lightbulb to burst above Uncle Dan's head. Dan and daughter Ashley Bredemus were visiting the WaterWorld exhibit at Universal Studios in California this fall, when the idea to build Camp's new 30-foot, two-story pontoon barge hatched. The BARACUDA also features a portside wooden "beach" allowing campers to ease into the water, board a canoe/kayak/windsurfer, or just hang out with feet dangling. Campers might also enjoy sliding down the fireman's pole from the 2nd story of the vessel. We look forward to greeting campers and alums at the end of the Gunflint Trail with the BARACUDA and all her bells and whistles. If you know Uncle Dan, you know the bells and whistles are more like cow bells and air horns.

## Returning Staff & Campers- turned-Staff (so far) for Summer 2011

The following *returning* staff members and/or new staff who were *previous campers* will be joining us this summer as lead Voyageurs:

- Matt "Inca" Cookman
- Paddy "Dunder" Cullen
- Michael "Mort" Dougherty
- Taylor "Uffda" Eide
- Mat "Crouch" Helsby
- Allyn "Giggles" Kelley
- T.J. "Professor" Kneebone
- Daniel Learner (former Camper)
- Brent Louis (former Camper)
- Russell Pildes (former Camper)
- Adam "Chef" Papilion
- Hannah Martell

The names above are just those who have committed to us by March 1st. Camp's Directors are currently interviewing and making plans to hire a few other familiar names that just aren't official yet. We have an incredible staff joining us for Summer 2011. Camp can only be as good as our staff, and based on those joining us this summer, we know Summer '11 will be another BSE, (Best Summer Ever)!

**Summer 2011 Sessions are filling up!**

*In This Issue of Bear Tales:*



Pg 2: Whatcha doing Sarge?



Pg 3: Sail Superior in 2011

**Enrolled Campers: Forms are due May 1st!**

# Where in the World is Kurt "Sarge" Grunzke?



Recently, we had the chance to catch-up with everyone's favorite counselor, "Sarge," who has been spending the last few months in Juba, the capital of South Sudan. Sarge is teaching swimming and boat driving lessons to the Sudanese at a camp on the Nile river. Between hanging out with Jimmy Carter's Secret Service Agents on break, a George Clooney visit, and teaching waterfront activities, Sarge took some time to chat with us online from an Internet cafe in Sudan:

BWB: Where are you living over there in Sudan?

**SARGE:** Where I stay is actually just like BWB. I live on a camp at the end of a trail and a river (the Nile). I teach waterfront activities every day. I don't have to cook, and the food is amazing (like Camp). I also have a strict rest hour--Anybody from my cabins at BWB will appreciate that.

BWB: So, you said that to get to your camp, you take a boat down the Nile, do you swim in the Nile too?

**SARGE:** I swim in the Nile everyday, but I do have two rules:

*Don't be first in, and don't be last out of the water, because first in and last out have a greater chance of getting eaten.*

Sarge, pictured here with his Sudanese students, one of which is donning a homemade lifejacket fashioned from waterbottles.

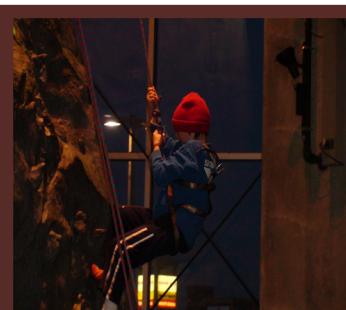
BWB: Really! What could eat you? Is there a lot of crazy wildlife in Juba?

**SARGE:** Crocodiles & Hippos are the biggest threat to unknowing swimmers. The locals say a crocodile lives down the river from Camp, so I'm careful. There is definitely crazy wildlife here. Recently some campers found a baby monkey who had lost her mother, and she has become my pet. I call her "Frank Lloyd Wright."

BWB: Frank Lloyd Wright the monkey, eh? There has to be a story there! Well, nice chatting with you Sarge, be safe and Hagie Bah Bah friend.

**SARGE:** It's a long story. I am hoping to see everyone back at Birchwood this summer for my 3rd summer. It all depends on whether they need me to continue teaching here in Sudan past March. I'll keep you posted though! Hagie Bah Bah to you guys and everyone else out there!

## Assortment of Photos from Reunion Tour 2011



Gunnar E. climbing @ REI

How did a Sven & Ole Sticker get here?

J.J., Melissa, & Bunyan in MN

Jack S. is ready for Camp!



30 more feet of vessel join the BWB fleet this summer!

# Sail Superior in 2011

Once upon a time, sailboats were allowed in the BWC AW, as many alums fondly remember. During the 70's, 80's, and 90's, Camp's Mariner sailboat was moored right outside of Camp on the Seagull River. Campers would troll right through the narrows out to Lake Saganaga. After years without a sailboat or option for a sailing trip, Camp introduced the Leech Lake Sailing Trip aboard Camp's thirty foot Catalina for the first time in Summer 2009. The Leech Lake Sailing Trip has been extremely popular, warranting the need for more sailing trip options. This year, the Catalina will be moving a little closer to Camp: Lake Superior in the Silver Bay Harbor. The move to the big lake will allow Camp to offer more sailing trips, ranging from a two day, one night beginner sailing excursion, just offshore, to an advanced trip to the Apostle Islands. We're excited for Campers to sail Gitchigumi in 2011!

## ..CAMPER NEWS..

**John (J.J.) C. ('06, '07, '08, '09, '10, '11)** is just a few hours short of obtaining his hot air balloon pilot's license, and should have it before Camp starts in June. It would be pretty cool if he came to Camp this summer via hot air balloon!

**Carter P. ('09, '10, '11)** reports that he has advanced to the next level in the boy scouts. Congrats Dr. Peterson!

**Dave H. (Apple Camp '10)** will bring a crew of film students to Camp during the first four week session at Camp to make a new promotional video for BWB. A virtual tour of Camp will also be a part of the project.

**Solomon K. ('09, '10, '11)** was bummed to miss the Minneapolis Camp reunion. He was busy preparing for the Citywide Wrestling Tournament. Pin 'em Sol!

**Jeff "Sal" S. ('08, '09, '10)** is using that one of a kind voice each Friday night on WNTH 88.1 FM on his own Radio Show! Tune in & hear a familiar voice if you're in the Chicago area!

Share your Camper News with us in May, October, & February each year to get published in the next newsletter!

## Directors' Corner



We're proud to provide that rare opportunity for our campers and staff to be truly UNPLUGGED and to build friendships and community through a different kind of *social networking*. Unlike Facebook or Twitter, at Camp, *Comments* and 'likes' are expressed not on a Facebook wall, but face to face at the Eagle's Nest campfire in the form of a Kudos. One's current *status* is best when shared with others before bed during "Log Time," a time in the cabin for journaling and debriefing.

*Friends* are added not by the click of a mouse, but simply through a game of Ninja Tag, the sharing of s'mores around a fire, or with each paddle stroke on a cabin canoe trip. Although we are thankful to be unplugged in the summer, we are equally happy to be so *plugged in* to our Camp community through social networking venues like Facebook. We have reconnected with so many old friends, and hope to recount memories with many more; but, we cannot lose sight of the fact that the connection was first made at a very special place at the end of the Gunflint Trail. Campers & alums, we hope to see you *unplug* with the rest of us this summer. We'd love to welcome you again to that little piece of paradise atop the granite rocks, for some good old fashioned *social networking*, away from it all.