



# The Royal Page

November 2006

Royal Family Kids' Camps, Inc.

Vol. IV



Camp is a summer activity, but Christmas Reunion parties give children something to look forward to in the winter.

## Christmas parties with a *royal* twist: Camp Reunions

**W**hen the church which hosts the Pittsburgh, PA camp wanted to get the kids together for a reunion at Christmastime last year, an anonymous benefactor donated Steelers hats, gloves and signed photos for each boy — “essential gear to fit into the crowd of those rooting on the Steelers to the Super Bowl,” says the Camp Director.

At the Christmas reunion party in Bellingham, WA, children individually select the gift they would like to receive — then the gift is wrapped during the party. When the children leave, they received a wrapped gift to take home and put under their tree ...

or for those who can't wait, they can open it immediately!

Although the primary Royal Family Kids' Camps program is in the summer time, many sponsoring churches have found it helpful to get the children together mid-year. They get the opportunity to catch up on the youngsters, reach out to their families, correct contact information for next summer's application process, and just enjoy a time of celebration.

Often the reunion parties are held around Christmas, and church members get involved with planning

activities and providing special gifts; sometimes even for the siblings of campers who haven't attended camp yet.

In Beaverton, OR, invitations to the reunion party were sent to entire families who had been part of Royal Family Kids' Camps over the past four years — as well as all of the camp's volunteers! And when the families arrived, the children's names were placed in a drawing for a chance to win door prizes.

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## Christmas parties with a *royal* twist: cont...

Church members at the Madison, AL, camp stuff gigantic stockings full of gifts and treats for each child, and the activity they provide for the party is building gingerbread houses.

The Camp Director says, "You'll see children who couldn't sit still for five minutes at camp spend 35 or 40 minutes decorating their houses."

So many camps have mid-year parties and reunions, it's tough to name all the traditions and activities they provide — bowling, rock climbing, ice skating, and more. And not all the parties are Christmas parties. Some are held in the spring to help prepare children for camp, and some in February.

Counselors and Camp Grandparents also staff the parties, and they agree one of the most touching things about the reunion get-together is re-establishing old relationships — between the campers and counselors, and between the campers.

Says one Camp Director, "The kids act like the other kids at camp are their long lost friends. It's so neat to see them reconnect with their fellow campers. It is a reunion for them, also."

Many of the churches also invite Royal Family graduates — those who are too old to attend camp — to the reunion party. It's a way for them to reconnect with the children, and also to establish relationships with parents and families, too. One camper's grandma who stayed for the Bellingham party wept when she saw the love lavished on her grandchild.

While Royal Family Kids' Camps is the highlight of a child's year, it can seem like a long time between summers ... so reunion parties provide the youngsters with something to look forward to — it's a great program all around! One camper asked her counselor on Friday of camp, "Can you please send the Christmas Party invitation next week so I can hold it in my hands?"



A Christmas surprise at a Reunion party can brighten a whole holiday season!

## Give thanks!

**Wayne and Diane Tesch**

*Co-Founders of Royal Family Kids' Camps, Inc.*

It's a season for gratitude, with Thanksgiving just around the corner! We're thankful to you for your support of the Royal Family program! And we have lots of other reasons to be grateful, too.

- We thank God for allowing us to be part of this vision for bringing joy and hope to hurting and hopeless children.
- We thank the volunteers who give their time and often money, too, to be part of Royal Family and make the camps possible.
- We thank the churches for sponsoring Royal Family Kids' Camps for the children in their area.

What a privilege to owe a debt of gratitude to great churches and great people like you. We are grateful to be able to join hands and hearts as we work together to give kids happy memories, changed lives and hopeful futures.

Thank you! And may you and yours have a blessed Thanksgiving!



Wayne and Diane Tesch

# Fifty years of marriage and fifteen years of Royal Family Kids' Camps:

## Camp Grandma Phyllis and Grandpa Jim Quist

Fixtures at the Bellingham, WA camp, Grandpa Jim and Grandma Phyllis Quist have made quite an impact on the children served over the years — in 2007, they will serve in their 15th camp, and celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary!

According to Camp Director Tammy Berg, the pair have a genuine love for the kids, and truly regard the youngsters as their own grandchildren. "They have t-shirts with the names of the children written on the back, which they cherish. One time Grandma told me she was trying to see if she could determine how many grandchildren she has had through the years!" She came up with about 400!

Unlike many grandparents, Jim and Phyllis are not yet retired, but they don't mind giving their time to the Royal Family Kids. Says Phyllis, "When we see how much the Lord loves these kids ... we feel we must give all of ourselves to extend His love. One week is really so little to give."

One moment from camp etched in their minds is the evening they were making the rounds, saying goodnight to each set of campers.

They knew that a little girl named Allie reacted violently to any human touch, because of the abuse she had suffered in the past. Of course, the Camp Grandma and Grandpa give hugs — it's part of the job descriptions. But after saying goodnight to Allie, Jim told her, "We understand you don't want a hug, and that's OK."

As they turned to leave the room, a small voice called them back: "Sometimes I give hugs." She gave them a hug goodnight, and later learned her foster mother could hardly believe it — or the positive change in Allie when she arrived home.

"To be the Camp Grandma and Grandpa, you need a heart big enough for every child to take a little piece with them each year," Phyllis says, "But there is no way you can ever give back as much as you get from having the privilege of ... seeing miracle after miracle of healing and restoration in children's lives."

Tammy says, "The consistency of our Grandma and Grandpa has been an incredibly positive influence on our campers and our staff. They are solid rocks — and quite fun, too."

In addition to being great Camp Grandparents, Phyllis and Jim are also active horseshoe players and are in the Horseshoe Hall of Fame! You can't get more fun than that. Thanks, Grandma and Grandpa, for all you do for the kids you serve.



Camp Grandma Phyllis and Grandpa Jim are a mainstay of the Bellingham, WA camp.

## She's a Champ!

### First year camper Loly's poetic tribute

Ten-year-old Loly, a first year camper, wrote the following poem for the camp talent show. She proudly proclaimed, "It took 20 minutes," which was a very long time, in her mind.

*Anyone who goes to RFK camp comes out being a champ.*

*At camp, there are lots of flowers and trees and I love to do the archery.*

*There's lots and lots of bumblebees. I love it because all I have to do is be me.*

*I really, really love to do art, but looking at the birds is my favorite part.*

*The food here has a little spice, but Grandpa and Grandma are the ones that make it really nice.*

*The tea party was divine, but it was the birthday party that was soooo fine.*

*Gold panning was in the planning, but the treasure was the pleasure.*

*I made lots and lots of friends, and I never want it to end.*

*Thank you, God, for bringing me to this camp, now I will come out being a CHAMP!*



Mike and Tammy Keech have adopted 12 children, and as foster parents, they have served over 600 needy youngsters through the years.

## Alaska 2006 Parents of the Year

### Royal Family Kids' Camp volunteer and spouse honored

Tammy Keech is the volunteer placement coordinator for the Anchorage, AK camp, and recently she and husband, Mike, were honored as 2006 Parents of the Year by the Alaska Parents Day Committee.

The couple has provided a foster home for over 600 children in the state system over the years, and have legally adopted 12 needy youngsters. Their latest recognition, as Parents of the Year, follows many other awards, including: the National Foster Parent of the Year Award from the Child Welfare League of America, and a local Light of Hope Award and Excellence in Parenting Award by the Parents Day Committee.

We feel privileged to have such partners on the Royal Family Kids' Camps team! Congratulations, Tammy and Mike!

## Major Mike misses camp – but finds his own way to help kids, in Iraq

Major Mike Kelley was a counselor at the Madison, AL camp in 2004 and 2005, and he was disappointed to miss camp in 2006 because he was stationed outside of Mosul, Iraq.

Nevertheless, he found a way to help kids there: He wrote to his Royal Family friends and asked if they could send coloring books and crayons for poor children in Mosul. The whole church (Asbury United Methodist) got involved! Now Major Mike can brighten children's lives, even far from home.



Stationed in Iraq, Major Mike Kelly, an RFKC Camp Counselor, distributes the coloring books and crayons his Royal Family partners sent for Iraqi children.



Our newest staff member, Jeff Juhala.

## Royal Family welcomes Jeff Juhala

Jeff and Janet Juhala have been Royal Family Kids' Camps Directors of the Concord, CA camp for six years, but now they've taken a step toward even closer involvement: Jeff has come on staff to be developed for his future position as Director of Training.

We're excited to welcome Jeff, Janet and their children: Jessica, Janae, Jonathan and Judy.

Jeff has served as Safety Director for Contra Costa Electric, Inc. with 14 years' experience in important skills such as safety training, training and program development, conducting seminars and public speaking.

"I love training and developing programs," says Jeff, "I love God, I love adventure and I love camp. This year is my 24th year of attending some kind of camp as a camper, counselor or RFKC Director. It's a great fit for a new job."

## What a difference!

Mission Viejo, CA Camp Counselor Brad Robitaille reported that during his first year of training he was told to prepare for spending a lot of time chasing after his two campers, and keeping them together.

Veteran counselors said often one child would run, and it was critical to keep both boys with him. Brad assumed this would happen with his charges, too, because one, Mark, seemed to be a laidback, mellow boy from a foster home, and the other, Derek, a tough kid with a "cool" demeanor. Having such different personalities, they may not want to stick together.

"A couple days into the camp, Derek abandoned all pretense of being cool and aloof. While I had prepared to keep him from wandering away from Mark and me, instead I found both of them glued to my hip!" Brad says. And with all of the games and activities provided at camp, Derek was most content when he and Brad had the time to throw a baseball back and forth.

This past summer, Derek was assigned to a different counselor, but he remembered Brad, and during activity center time, made him a necklace which spelled out, "Brad is cool."

Says Brad, "He also wears one he made for himself which says, 'I love God'."



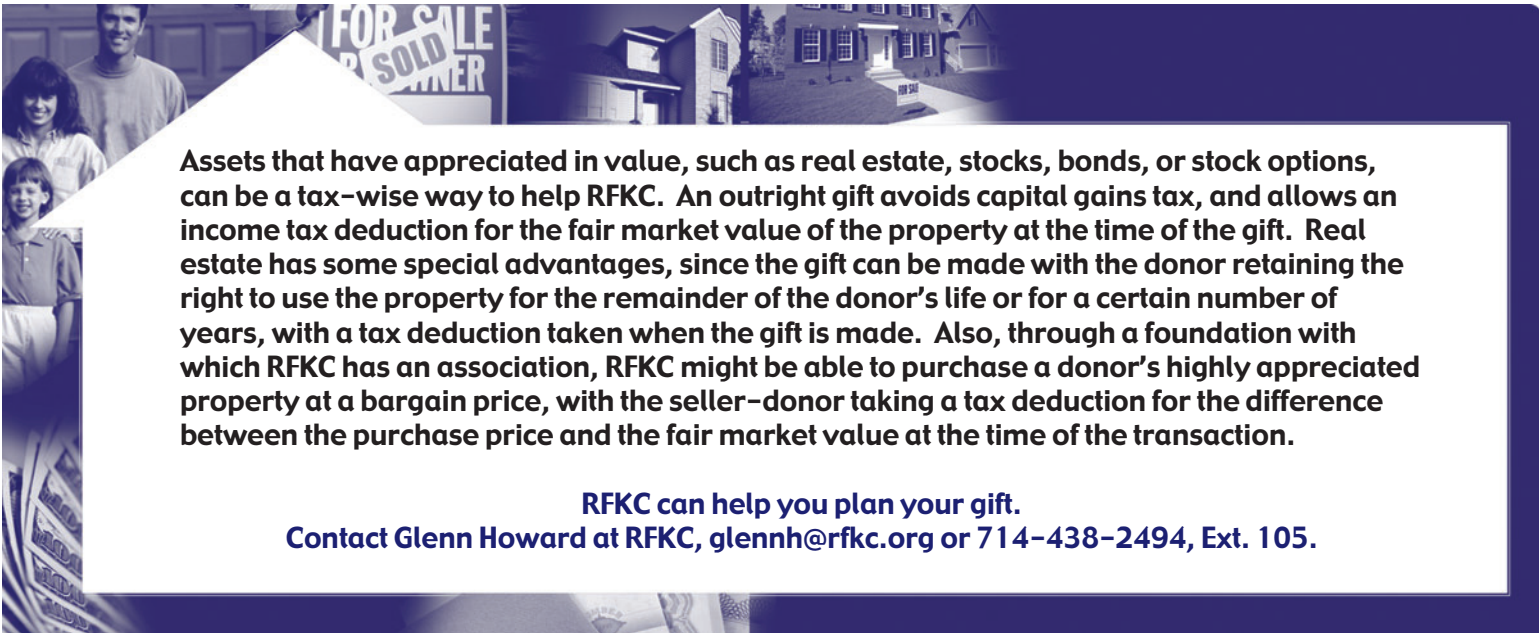
Brad found that although his two campers were vastly different, it was easy for them to stick together.

# A letter from Laura

Last year, Laura attended camp with her sister. This year, though, she was over the age limit to return. But knowing her sister would attend camp again this year, she wrote a letter to everyone at camp, sending it with her sister. Her words show very clearly what camp means to the children we serve.

R.F.K.C. counsellors  
+  
staff...

Royal Family Kids Camp was a memory full of joy! the reason I'm writing this note is because I wanted to thank you all so much, so many kids are blessed just to get to go to kid's camp. I really love the way counsellors act with the campers, so much love and care is expressed when that is done! the CITs are good examples for any camper that is a graduate that wants to come back! Thank you for them, because when I turn 16 that is probably the first thing I'll think of! I'm going with my daddy in 3 months + I am really glad for that he loves me so much and cares for me! I will be the happiest girl ever to be with him! I'm glad I can share that with you! and for anyone else that puts RFKC together... thanks, and I love you are the only way I can put that! Love God Bless you!  
XOXOX=LAURA!



**Assets that have appreciated in value, such as real estate, stocks, bonds, or stock options, can be a tax-wise way to help RFKC. An outright gift avoids capital gains tax, and allows an income tax deduction for the fair market value of the property at the time of the gift. Real estate has some special advantages, since the gift can be made with the donor retaining the right to use the property for the remainder of the donor's life or for a certain number of years, with a tax deduction taken when the gift is made. Also, through a foundation with which RFKC has an association, RFKC might be able to purchase a donor's highly appreciated property at a bargain price, with the seller-donor taking a tax deduction for the difference between the purchase price and the fair market value at the time of the transaction.**

**RFKC can help you plan your gift.**  
**Contact Glenn Howard at RFKC, [glennh@rfkc.org](mailto:glennh@rfkc.org) or 714-438-2494, Ext. 105.**



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