

CONNECTIONS

EL CAMINO PINES * YOLIJWA



Spring 2008

Did you know?

- El Camino Pines hosted over 1,100 students this year, from 35 different schools, who attended Outdoor School?
- Nearly 70 % of ELCA seminarians — especially those going directly from college to seminary — list church camp as a major influence on their decision to go to seminary.

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How Camp Changed my Life *by Meredith Gardner*

LRCC has been a part of my life for the past twelve years. When I was nine I attended summer camp at El Camino Pines, and I didn't know how much it would impact my life. I was a dorky kid, but from the moment I walked on camps dirt I never felt judged or like an outsider. My counselors were loud and crazy, which made me feel comfortable to be myself.

El Camino Pines was where I felt the presence of God for the first time, it was where I realized I wanted to be a pastor, where I had my first job, and where I was given the opportunity to share God's love and Grace with so many children.

I worked at LRCC for five years. I started as "Staff in Training (SIT)" where we did lots of dishes and got to take care of the camp I loved. I was given the opportunity to be a role model to the girls in my cabins while learning more

about God and myself in the process. I remember once having to sweep pine needles 50 feet away from each building, but even though we worked hard, I always remember having fun doing it.

Then I became a counselor where I appreciated my two years as an SIT because I felt confident to teach children about God. More than that I showed God's love through myself to my kids, and was known as a crazy counselor who loved to have fun. I took all of the things I remembered about my favorite counselors, and made them my own.

After just one year as a counselor I was surprised to be asked to be a part of El Camino Pines Leadership Staff. I became a Program Specialist at just 19 years old, and the work got a little more stressful, but I was able to share what I had learned through my three years working at camp with other

counselors. This was rewarding because I was able to give the support and guidance to other staff, which I had always appreciated in the past.



Meredith Gardner

I was delighted to find out that some of the girls who had been in my cabins were going to be working that summer as "Support Staff." I was excited to work with them to see them grow as I had grown while working at camp. One of them even told me that because of one night when I had listened to her troubles at home, I was her
...Continued on page 2...

Yolijwa's numbers doubled for Winter Retreats! *by the Andersons*

It has been a very exciting Winter and Spring at Yolijwa. Our Winter Camp weekends were filled with twice as many kids as last year who experienced first-hand what it means to live out *Godswilla*. Many of them were first time campers who are now looking forward to their next chance to come back to camp! To top things off, everyone received an extra blessing, as we received fresh

blankets of snow for each of our Winter Camp weekends!

Our number of retreat groups have doubled since last year. Between Luther Glen and the cabins, there have been between two to four groups retreating each weekend through the end of May!

Yolijwa has also welcomed many new congregations who have made Yolijwa their retreat

destination for the first time.

There is also a lot of excitement surrounding our upcoming Confirmation Camp this summer, where we will have five or six new congregations joining in!

It has been a huge blessing for us to serve as the Yolijwa Camp Directors. We will be leaving at

...Continued on page 7...

“Many people think our ministry is completely focused on youth...Our Focus is on the whole family of God.”



Meredith is a Junior at San Francisco State University, majoring in Sociology. She plans to go to Seminary at PLTS (Berkeley, CA) after college.



Anthony’s Corner

Every year I find myself thinking how much I love the spring! That is mainly because LRCC is getting ready for the approaching summer camp season. Just this morning, however, I was having brunch with one of our retreat groups at Luther Glen, our adult retreat center at Yoli-jwa, thinking about our many blessings all year long...not just in the summer.

One guest said, “I got so sad as I was packing to leave this morning, I wish I could stay for a whole week”. This mother of three had just spent a weekend with her church’s women’s group relaxing and rejuvenating. They had a weekend of enjoy-

ing great food, studying scripture, and exploring their theme, “How is God calling me”?

I know that God is calling each of us to slow down, enjoy time away and spend some time reconnecting with God. Our adult groups who have annual church retreats know just how important coming to camp is...for all ages.

Many people, when they think of camp, assume that our ministry is completely focused on young people. And while it is true we have many programs for youth, our focus is on the whole family of God. We know that healthy children come from healthy families.

And we all need to get away from the daily grind to rejuvenate and re-connect with our Creator.

When was the last time your church came to camp? Come to relax, rejuvenate, and see how God is calling you! Hope to see you soon!



Anthony Briggs

Peace!

Anthony

Executive Director for LRCC

You may reach him at:

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...Camp Changed my Life... *continued from page 1*

favorite person and she became an SIT to follow in my footsteps. I became a counselor for the same reason, because I had always had amazing counselors, but hearing that I had been that person for someone, made me realize that camp is an amazing place.

The next summer I was ready for a new challenge away from El Camino Pines and was given the chance to be the Day Camp Director. I was able to bring our programs at camp to Lutheran

churches in Southern California to spread God's love to their communities.

Camp is a place where all children can come and not worry about their lives outside, and learn about God in a fun way that is more understandable than going to church.

I am so grateful that my bosses at camp saw something in me. They pushed me to do more throughout the years. I am in debt to camp for all of the

laughs, and memories shared there. I have made life long friends at camp, and have grown to be the strong Christian woman I am through camp.

Sadly summer 2007 was my last, but LRCC, will always have a special place in my heart. Camp is a place that I will never forget, and will always remember how loved I felt while being there.



Earn money for LRCC by browsing the web! www.GoodSearch.com

GoodSearch is a search engine which donates 50-percent of its revenue to the charities and schools designated by its users. It's a simple and compelling concept. You use GoodSearch exactly as you would any other search engine. Because it's powered by Yahoo!, you get proven search results. The money GoodSearch donates to your cause comes from its advertisers — the users and the organizations do not spend a dime!

In 2007, GoodSearch was expanded to include GoodShop, an online shopping mall of world-class merchants dedicated to helping fund worthy causes across the country. Each purchase made via the GoodShop mall results in a donation to the user's designated charity or school – averaging approximately 3% of the sale, but going up to 20% or even more.

Yes, it's that simple!

1. Go to www.LRCChome.com and look for the GoodSearch button or
2. Go to www.GoodSearch.com and select Lutheran Retreats, Camps and Conferences (Camarillo, CA) as your designated cause.

Every time you use GoodSearch.com or Goodshop money will be donated to LRCC!





Fighting Nature Deficit Disorder *by Pastor Glen Egertson*

One of the great blessings of my childhood was the experiencing of God through the access I had to wilderness. My family lived in a subdivision on the outskirts of Las Vegas. From our front door, it was a five minute walk into our primary playground, the wide open spaces of the Nevada desert where we chased lizards, threw dirt clods, built forts and turned over rocks in search of scorpions.

We witnessed the harshness of the desert, but also learned to appreciate its hidden beauty. The summer rains had a distinct smell and we loved the occasional electrical storm that filled the horizon with lightning.

It was a few years after my family

moved from the desert to the suburbs of Los Angeles that I realized how fortunate I was to grow up in a wild place. And it quickly became my dream that I would be able to provide access to the wilderness for my children. That's just one of the blessings of living at El Camino Pines in the midst of an amazing forest.

Introducing people to God's creation is one of the important ministries we provide at camp. Kids who are raised in a smoggy area often marvel at the true number of stars in the night sky. Adults and children who visit in the winter have never seen the snow fall. One author recently coined the phrase nature deficit

disorder to describe the condition we find ourselves in, where children (and adults) are overexposed to indoor activities and underexposed to the wonders of nature. If there is such a thing as nature deficit disorder, we think we have the remedy.

Fifty years ago, El Camino Pines was set aside as a place apart. We are situated in the midst of the sights, sounds and smells of a pristine pine, oak and fir forest. The air is clean, the water is pure. Rabbits, squirrels and mule deer wander through camp everyday. Some say that the still, small voice of God is louder here. We invite you to come and listen for yourself.



Mark your Calendars!

May 16 - 18: Work Weekend at Yolijsa

Friday, May 23: LRCC Links at Summerly Invitational - Postponed until further notice

May 24 - 26: Family Camp Memorial Day @ El Camino Pines

Sat., September 13: 2nd Annual San Diego Open (Golf Tournament to benefit LRCC)

September 26 - 28: Men's Advance 2008 @ El Camino Pines, Cost: \$ TBA

Friday, October 3 : Christian Camp Classic (Golf Tournament to benefit LRCC)

Saturday, October 4: Applefest @ Yolijsa, Cost: FREE!

(please see www.LRCCHome.com for detailed information or to register)

Goodbye to the Andersons, Camp Directors at Yolijsa



Lando and Jessica

Jessica and Lando Anderson, Camp Directors of Yolijsa, accepted a call as Youth Directors at a Lutheran church in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

At the end of May the LRCC family is saying farewell to two very important and much loved

members of our team.

While we will miss them greatly, we are happy that they will be closer to home and family as they prepare for the birth of their first baby, a girl, in early August.

Camp Yolijsa has been truly blessed by the Anderson's many gifts. From much needed facilities improvements, greatly increased retreat participation and fresh new youth programs the Anderson's have accomplished much in such a short time.

Please join us as we thank the

Andersons and wish them well as they journey on.

Yolijsa is in good hands! Chris Smith, LRCC Program Director, will be serving as Interim Director, joining Kevin and Priscilla O'Brien, who have been serving at Yolijsa for the past year and a half, to round out the Yolijsa year-round staff. Chris has a passion for the ministry of LRCC and will compliment the gifts of Kevin and Priscilla (the Jack and Jane of ALL Trades at Yolijsa) very well while the search for a new Yolijsa Director takes place.



NEWS BRIEFS

COME TO CAMP THIS SUMMER!

You may register now for any of our summer 2008 Programs.

Register on our website.

DONATED VEHICLES

PROVIDE TAX BENEFITS

LRCC welcomes donations of gently used vehicles. Donors receive tax benefits - certain conditions apply. For info. contact us at 818-243-8700 or Desta@LRCCHome.com

THRIVENT FINANCIAL FOR LUTHERANS MEMBERS?

Get your donations matched

Thrivent Financial will match gifts of \$10-\$600 per Thrivent member (16 years and older), per year

Thrivent's match is \$1 for each \$2 gift

You can get the matching gift forms off our website under "Your Support", "Thrivent", and download/print the GivingPlus form.

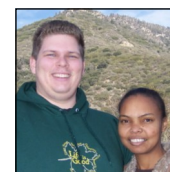
Or just let us know you are a Thrivent member when you make a donation and we'll send you a form in the mail! Thank you in advance!

WISH LISTS FOR CAMP

Please check out our website under "Your Support" to see what our camps could use to better their facilities and ministries. If you can help fill a need please contact camp



Chris Smith



Kevin and Priscilla

"...the mission and ministry of Outdoor Ministries is an integral part of the mission and ministry of the church as a whole. Lives are changed by "Church Camp".

Greetings from the Board of Directors

The Mission and ministry of LRCC is to provide a place where we can find Christ in ways we could not otherwise do in our everyday lives. Prior to our recent Board Retreat, I thought of camps and retreats as extra curricular activities. Now I realize the mission and ministry of Outdoor Ministries is an integral part of the mission and ministry of the church as a whole. Lives are changed by "Church Camp". Lives are changed by adults participating in retreats. Lives are changed by working at the camp either as paid staff or a volunteer. Lives are changed by working on the Board of Directors.

Are we fulfilling our Mission and Ministry? You bet... We do have an opportunity at El Camino Pines, Luther Glen and Yolijwa to find Christ in ways we cannot find Him in our everyday lives.

A good friend of mine shared her hopes that LRCC will continue to provide a place for her grandchildren to experience "Church Camp". Each time one of them goes to camp or a retreat weekend, they come home enthusiastic about all they learned and did at camp. My friend also has been able to participate at our annual women's retreat weekend. The sharing of faith that

occurs in that small group environment helps her deal with the challenges she faces when she comes back down the mountain.

Can we do a better job? You bet. We are better than we were last year. With God's help and guidance and your support and prayers, we will be better next year.

Please keep our staff and board in your prayers as we work to accomplish the ambitious goals we set at our retreat.

Yours in Christ, *Lynn*

Lynn McCarter
LRCC Board President

Just for Life! Summer Camp Theme

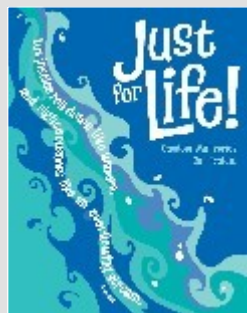
Our theme for summer camp is "Just for Life," an exploration and celebration of what the Bible has to teach us about fairness, God's way. Each day we will examine a different one of Jesus' parables. Parables function as metaphors challenging or inviting the audience into a new or deeper experience of God's

dominion, a dominion often identified with those who are the last, the lost, the least, the little, and the lifeless.

The parables examined will include the unjust judge, the laborers in the vineyard, the rich man and his manager, the mustard seed and Pharisee and the tax collector.

Our theme verse, is Amos 5:24, "Let justice roll down like water, and righteousness like an ever flowing stream."

We ask all our friends and supporters to pray with us that God's Word flows through our counselors and into the hearts and minds of our campers.



Outdoor School hosts over 1,000 students

The 2007-2008 Outdoor School year was a great success! We had over 1,100 students attend our environmental education program from 35 schools in Southern California. Heavy snowfall in January gave our staff the opportunity to teach students in snow that was over 3 feet high!

Recent updates and additions to the curriculum and program have made the OS program stronger than ever. Fire Ecology, which is one of our newly

developed classes, is a study on the role of wildfires in the ecosystems of Southern California. Students learn the physical science of combustion, that fire is an important natural process in many forests, and that native plants and animals have ways to survive or reproduce after fire.

This year's OS Instructors are Josiah Canto, Erik Nelson, Michelle Meulemans, and Alaina Rice. All four have brought immense experience and will be

staying with LRCC during the summer program.

The 2008-2009 OS year begins in September and we are looking forward to another great year. If you are interested in attending or know a school that would like more information, please contact our office at (661) 245-3519. As always, thank you for your continued support that makes the ministry here at El Camino Pines possible.



Fire Ecology class added to curriculum

Summer Camp 2008 Schedule

For detailed information see our website and/or the Program Brochure



	El Camino Pines	Yolijwa	Beach Camp	Day Camps / Off Site
June 22 - 27	Explorers, Pioneers, Discoverers	Confirmation Camp	X	2 Day Camps
June 29 - July 3	Explorers, Pioneers <i>* This week of camp ends on Thurs., July 3</i>	Department of Children's Services Youth Camp	Discoverers @ Pacific Beach	1 Day Camp / Opening for a Day Camp!
July 6 - 11	Confirmation Camp	Department of Children's Services Youth Camp	Teen Beach Camp @ Pacific Beach	2 Day Camps
July 13 - 18	Explorers, Pioneers, Discoverers	Explorers, Pioneers, Discoverers	Discoverers @ Pacific Beach	2 Day Camps
July 20 - 25	Explorers, Pioneers, Discoverers	X	Teen Beach Camp @ San Clemente	2 Day Camps
July 25 - 27 (Friday-Sunday)	X	Explorers Weekend at camp! \$150	X	X
July 27 - August 1	Explorers, Pioneers, Discoverers	X	New Covenant Lutheran Church from Scottsdale, AZ	WSYG: the LRCC Experience / 2 Day
August 3 - 8	Explorers, Pioneers, Discoverers	Deaf Camp	Discoverers @ San Clemente	1 Day Camp / Opening for a Day Camp!

Registration

Registration is online at www.LRCCHome.com

If you have registered online with LRCC before, make sure to select "returning user" and access your online account. Otherwise please select "new user".

If you are not comfortable or able to register online: You can download the Summer Camp Registration form on our website at www.LRCCHome.com under "Forms/Resources". Fill it out, send it to the camp your camper will attend, with your \$75 non-refundable deposit and you will receive a confirmation of this registration. There is a \$10 internal registration fee that applies to applications that are not done online. Your balance for camp can be paid in a check mailed to camp or by calling camp with your credit card information.

For **Frequently Asked Questions** and to help you prepare for camp please visit our website and select "Getting Ready", you'll find everything you need to help your camp experience be the best it can be!

If you have questions, please contact camp.

Day Camp (campers currently in Kindergarten – 4th grades), Cost: \$79/camper

Explorers (campers currently in grades 1st - 3rd), Cost: \$215

Pioneers (campers currently in grades 3rd-5th), Cost: \$330

Discoverers (campers currently in grades 6th-8th), Cost: \$330

Confirmation Camp, Cost: \$330 - Must come with your church

Beach Camp (campers currently in 6th-12th grades), Cost: \$365

Teen Camp (campers currently in grades 8th-12th), Cost: \$365

Wired: Live Connected, the LRCC Experience (campers in grades 9th – 12th for 07-08)

Staff In Training (Campers currently in grades 10-12), **Free, 4 week commitment required**

June 29 – July 25 - To apply fill out application on our website under "Employment".



Vista Society Members

Charter Members of the Vista Society from 2007

Thank you to everyone who supported the 2007 Annual Fund at all levels. Your gifts ensure that LRCC is kept affordable for all, provide campership assistance for those in need and help facilities stay safe and beautiful.

Our heartfelt thanks to the following friends of LRCC who became Vista Society members from a \$300 or more donation in 2007. If you find that your name has been omitted from this list, please contact us so that we can correct our error. Thank you.

We are grateful to the 64 congregations who share their financial blessings with us, along with the ELCA Southwest CA and Pacifica Synods for the grant money with which they gift LRCC.

Gold Circle (\$1,000 or more annually)

Pastor Rich and Margy Ajer, Spring Valley, CA

Dorothy Bowen, Long Beach, CA

Pastor Glen and Lauri Egertson family, Frazier Park, CA

Yale & Elvie Gieszl, Palos Verdes Estates, CA

Shawn and Susan Howie, Irvine, CA

Karsten and Kirsten Lundring, Thousand Oaks, CA

Warren & Jeanette Parr, Rowland Heights, CA

Terry and Kathleen Schroeder, Yorba Linda, CA

Janet Simmons, Claremont, CA

Stephen and Linda Smith, Tustin, CA

Jim and Suzanne Swigart, Rancho Sante Fe, CA

Elizabeth Wolfe, Ventura, CA

Dr. Ralph & Gladys Black, Rolling Hills, CA

Anthony Briggs, Oak Glen, CA

Pastor John and Marsha Embree, Anaheim Hills, CA

Lawrence and Astrid Hammett, Santa Barbara, CA

Ella & Pete Loschky, Murrietta, CA

Dennis and Sue Oliver, La Crescenta, CA

Tom & Denise Pulte, Redondo Beach, CA

Lyle & Lois Schroeder, Anaheim, CA

John Richard Smith, Newbury Park, CA

Scott and Sherith Squires, Thousand Oaks, CA

Jean Tuohino, Downey, CA

Silver Circle (\$500 - \$999 annually)

Eric and Betty Amundson, Apple Valley, CA

Rev. Paul and Shirley Egertson, Thousand Oaks, CA

Lynn McCarter, Santee, CA

Daryl and Jacqueline Nolen, Santa Rosa Valley, CA

Dennis and Sue Oliver, La Crescenta, CA

Meghan Pulte, Redondo Beach, CA

Elizabeth and Mark Rickertsen, North Hollywood, CA

Darrell & Tammy Wagstaff, Anaheim, CA

Ronald & Janet Clark, Westminster, CA

Eric and Pauline Gruenler, Redlands, CA

Rev. Carl and Susan Nielsen, Santa Maria, CA

Rev. Bill Norman, Placentia, CA

Katie Pulte, Redondo Beach, CA

Richard Ray, Oxnard, CA

William and Lori Splinter, Palmdale, CA

Dave & Linda Witham, Ventura, CA

Bronze Circle (\$300 - \$499 annually)

Ruth Elaine Andersen, Fresno, CA

Jennifer and Jeff Brown, Newbury Park, CA

Grant Christenson, Phoenix, AZ

Robert Dreher, Simi Valley, CA

Eric and Pauline Gruenler, Redlands, CA

Kirsten Hagan, West Hills, CA

Joel and Vicki Lindquist, Fullerton, CA

Rev. James L. Proper, Long Beach, CA

Philip and Mary Stephanus, Manhattan Beach, CA

Carolyn Thompson, La Verne, CA

Steve & Rev. Susan Wolfe-Devol, Burbank, CA

Rolf Bohman, Redondo Beach, CA

Ben and Deanna Caudill, Powell, OH

Mike and Loretta Clark, Oak Glen, CA

Jim and Karen Gramacki, Camarillo, CA

Gina and David Hagen, West Hills, CA

Paul & Donna Kasper, Torrance, CA

Richard and Margaret Palmer, San Diego, CA

Richard Sayther, Burnsville, MN

Rev. Gary and Corrine Stevenson, Simi Valley, CA

Carolyn Voss - *The Larry Voss Memorial Fund*, San Luis Obispo, CA

Our sincerest apologies to: Dorothy Bowen, Rev. John and Marsha Embree, Rev. Rich and Margy Ajer, Eric and Pauline Gruenler, Philip and Mary Stephanus, Jim and Suzanne Swigart, and Daryl and Jacqueline Nolen for leaving their names off this list in the April issue of the VIEWS newsletter.

Creative Ways to Give to LRCC

Chances are you already share your good fortune with others—by volunteering your time and talents, and by making financial gifts. Helping others is important to you—it is part of who you are.

The main reason people make charitable gifts is to benefit the organization or individual who receives them—to further their work and support their mission.

There are additional benefits, such as the joy and peace of mind you experience when you make a gift that, with proper planning, can significantly help others. What's more, in some cases, your charitable gifts can provide valuable tax advantages. These tax advantages can help you retain more of your own personal assets, meaning more financial security for you—and for your loved ones.

There are many charitable giving options available to amplify your charitable gift.

You don't need to be wealthy to

help LRCC. In fact, you can make substantial, tax-favored gifts without taking a hefty bite out of your current income or assets. All it takes is a little planning. Each year, more people have discovered—and taken advantage of—the many financial benefits of planned charitable giving. Your team of professionals, including your Thrivent Financial representative, attorney and tax adviser, can help you make charitable gifts that may provide these benefits—and more.

Will or trust bequests. Include a charitable gift provision in your will or trust document for LRCC.

Investment gifts. You can transfer your ownership of an investment (i.e., land, a mutual fund, a stock, etc.) to LRCC. Generally you can receive a charitable income tax deduction for the gift you've made while you're living if you itemize deductions on your income tax return. You may be able to reduce or eliminate significant capital gains and estate taxation through

this type of gift as well.

Gift annuities. You can transfer money or property to LRCC in exchange for a fixed income for your and/or a survivor's lifetime. Generally, you can receive a charitable income tax deduction for the difference between the market value of the gift and the value of the retained annuity.

Traditional IRA gifts. With preplanning, funds in a traditional IRA can be given at your death to LRCC through your IRA beneficiary designation. The IRA funds pass to LRCC after death, escaping the income taxes due on the remaining funds. And your estate can generally receive a charitable estate tax deduction as well.

LRCC already has an account established for charitable gifts of stock. If you would prefer to have LRCC transfer the stock instead of your existing broker, we can initiate the paperwork as well.



How to Contact Us

www.LRCChome.com

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LRCC's BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lynn McCarter.....*President*.....Temecula
Pastor Stacy Payne.....*Vice-President*.....West Hills
Tom Pulte.....*Treasurer*.....Redondo Beach
Jeanette Parr.....*Secretary*.....Rowland Heights
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Stephen Smith.....Tustin
Lori Splinter.....Palmdale
Pastor Gary Stevenson.....Simi Valley
Suzanne Swigart.....Rancho Santa Fe
Pastor Denis Mims.....Carson



2007 Campers

...Yolijwa continued...

the end of May to be youth directors at a Lutheran congregation in South Dakota. This was a hard decision, but we will be closer to family as we welcome the birth of our first child in August. We have been blessed with meeting many amazing people. Thank you to all who have been a part of our lives in the past two years and to all who share in the ministry of LRCC.





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www.LRCChome.com

Camp is the leading incubator of those who feel a call to rostered ministry in the church.

Nearly 70 percent of ELCA seminarians – especially those going directly from college to seminary – list church camp as a major influence on their decision to go to seminary.



Left and Below:
 2007 Staff
 Trust Falls



Left and Below:
 2007 Campers

