

THE BELL



Issue 51, March 1, 2023



March
Toward camp!

CONSIDER A PARTNER PROGRAM!

What is a Sertoma Partner Program? Originating from the Clemson Sertoma Club, a Partner Program is simply a way to fully fund \$500 camper registration fees without conducting traditional fundraising programs. A Partner is a non-Sertoma community citizen with a big heart for supporting good causes, particularly as related to children. In many cases, these are busy and successful people who do not have time to join Sertoma but are willing to financially support Sertoma. Everyone in your club knows one or more of these civic minded people. You simply need to ask.

For 2023, our club intends to send 30 children to Camp Sertoma. Each child will be fully funded by a Partner from the greater Clemson area.

That's \$15,000 in outside funding. Contact us for more detailed information about how this program is structured. You don't need to reinvent the wheel.



Charlie R White
Clemson Sertoma Club
cwhite@g.clemson.edu



IF I HAD KNOWN..

IF I HAD KNOWN THE DEPTH OF IMPACT I COULD HAVE ON THESE CHILDREN,
I WOULD HAVE SAILED A LITTLE HAPPIER
SANG A LITTLE LOUDER
WALKED A LITTLE SLOWER
I WOULD HAVE LISTENED MORE INTENTLY.

IF I HAD KNOWN THE TEARS THAT FALL WHEN THESE CHILDREN SAY GOODBYE
TO THE BEST FRIENDS THEY'VE EVER HAD,
I WOULD HAVE CHEERED A LITTLE LOUDER
HUGGED A LITTLE MORE
FISHED WITH MORE ENTHUSIASM
I WOULD HAVE SMILED CONSTANTLY.

IF I HAD KNOWN THE JOY I WOULD FEEL WHEN A CHILD I'VE KNOWN
FOR A WEEK INTRODUCES ME TO HIS PARENTS AS HIS BEST FRIEND,
I WOULD HAVE CAMPED A LITTLE HAPPIER
ENCOURAGED A LITTLE MORE
PLAYED MORE WHEN IT RAINED
I WOULD HAVE SHOWN A MORE UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

AND IF I HAD KNOWN A TIME WOULD COME WHEN THE SUMMER JOB
THAT BECAME A PART OF ME WOULD ONLY BE A MEMORY,
I'D TREASURE EVERY MOMENT, HOPING EACH ONE WOULD
FILL A PART OF THE EMPTINESS I WOULD TOO SOON FEEL.
I'D CRACK A SMILE. I'D SHED A TEAR.
I'D THANK EACH CHILD FOR BEING A PART OF MY LIFE
AND I'D DO MY BEST TO BECOME A PART OF THEIRS.

FORMER CAMP SERTOMA COUNSELOR

ANOTHER WEEK

SUNDAY.

BUSES, BAGS, STRANGERS, CARS.
NERVOUS KIDS WHO DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE
NAME TAGS, HEAD CHECKS, 100 DEGREES,
A BOY IN THE WOODS BENDING SMALL TREES.

MONDAY.

RAISING A FLAG WITH FIDGETY BOYS.
RAISING OUR HANDS TO QUIET THE NOISE
RAISING OUR EYES TO LOOK AT THE SKY.
RAISING THE STANDARD. TEACHING THEM WHY.

TUESDAY.

HELPING THEM FIGURE OUT WHO GETS WHAT SEAT.
HELPING THE GIRL TOO NERVOUS TO EAT.
HELPING THE BOY WHO CAN'T TIE HIS SHOE
HELPING THE ONE WHO DOESN'T LIKE YOU.

WEDNESDAY

HURRY TO BREAKFAST. HURRY TO EAT. HURRY TO MAKE TABLES CLEAN.
HURRY TO SAILING. HURRY TO CHANGE. HURRY TO RUB IN SUNSCREEN.
HURRY TO LUNCH. HURRY TO PLAY. HURRY TO REST FOR AN HOUR.
HURRY TO CRAFTS. HURRY TO MAKE HURRIED PINE CONE FLOWERS.



THURSDAY

ONE MORE SAIL, ONE MORE GAME, ONE MORE CANOE
ONE MORE GIRL WONDERS IF SHE MATTERS TO YOU.
ONE MORE SKIT, ONE MORE AWARD, ONE MORE SONG,
ONE MORE BEDTIME THAT'S TAKING TOO LONG.

ONE MORE CAMPER WHO NEEDS FROM ME
SOMETHING I DON'T POSSESS,
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS THAT SHOULDN'T NEED ASKED,
CURES FOR WOUNDS THAT SHOULDN'T NEED DRESSED.

ONE MORE TALK BENEATH PINES TALL,
ONE MORE RACE THAT WE DIDN'T WIN
WE BRUSH OURSELVES OFF AND RISE WHEN WE FALL,
TAKE A DEEP BREATH AND TRY IT AGAIN.

FRIDAY

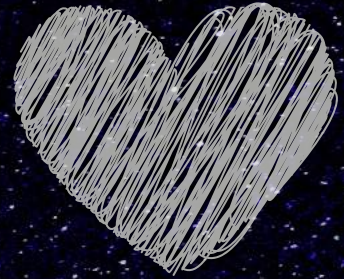
INSECURE GIRLS, FIDGETY BOYS,
HAVE TURNED INTO SISTERS AND BROTHERS,
THIS PLACE HAS OFFERED A NEW KIND OF WORLD,
WHERE IT'S SAFE TO LOVE AND TRUST OTHERS.
AND WHILE HE'S A GIGGLE THROUGHOUT OUR DAY,
HE DOESN'T NOTICE MY SORROW,
WE SING AND HUG AND RUN AND PLAY
BUT I KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN TOMORROW.

SATURDAY

BUSES, BAGS, BEST FRIENDS, CARS,
TEARY KIDS WHO KNOW WHO THEY ARE,
I'M OVERCOME, I DON'T CARE WHO SEES,
A BOY IN THE WOODS, I FALL TO MY KNEES.

I CAN'T STOP WAVING, I WON'T LOOK AWAY,
HE WAVES BACK WITH EYES THAT ARE BLURRY,
WE'RE WISHING WE HAD JUST ONE MORE DAY,
TO RAISE UP AND TO HELP AND TO HURRY.

SILENCE COMES, I WISH FOR NOISE
FOR SHOES TO TIE AND FIDGETY BOYS,
I STAND UP, BRUSH MY KNEES, WIPE MY TEARS AND THEN
I TAKE A DEEP BREATH, TOMORROW'S SUNDAY, LET'S WE DO IT AGAIN.



I saw great things today
in the eyes of a child.

I saw life and hope and peace and joy
all swirled together.

I saw a heart that should have been hardened
from what it had endured already
in it's young life.

But instead of closing up and refusing to love
he offered his heart freely to any
taker

I looked with sadness into eyes that had
already seen things most of us
only read about:

But what I saw was utter contentment
living every moment
as if it were his last.

I saw great wisdom today
in the eyes of this child.

Wisdom far greater than anything
most can fathom
or take time to understand.

He has a love that is unconditional
and a happiness that finds it's
roots in soil much richer than riches.

I saw that he has found a love
that few ever find.

And somewhere along the way
he helped me find it too.

But I wonder if he'll ever understand
just how much he has given me.

I saw lots of neat things today
all around camp.

I saw birds and trees and flowers
swimming in the sunshine.

People say that I'm a troubled child,
an at-risk youth, and that
my home is broken.

I got an award for being
the best helper in camp.

A lot of great stuff happens here
we swim and sail, but the
best part is the people.

Everyone at camp is nice, they really
care about you and help you
when you need it.

I think this is the way it is supposed
to be everywhere.

I learned to swim the other day and
my counselor hugged me and
said he knew I could do it.

He believed in me and I guess that
helped me to believe in
myself.

Now I want to help other people
the way he has helped me.

He tells me I'm special and
somehow makes me believe
that I really am.

But I wonder if he'll ever understand
Just how much he has given me.



Camp Time

It's camp time. A time when the worries of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth are cleared from my mind and I can see what is truly important.

A time when a camper knows (and believe me he knows) that the smile he's receiving is out of pleasure and not pity. A time when the child who wouldn't lift her head to look you in the eyes now wants to lead the whole camp in "The Little Green Frog." Fear has been crowded out by love.

A time when I can pause and catch a glimpse of the way the world is supposed to be. It's camp time. A time when a camper is made to feel important enough to take his turn, to tell what his favorite activity is, to say, "Wait for me, don't leave me behind." A time when the conversation she overhears is not about where she can be dropped off today, but how she can be lifted up. A time when food is plentiful.

It's a time when he can cheer with all his heart and not be told to be quiet. There is not only enough time for her to tell her story, but you can stop, sit, look her in the eyes, and listen with eyes filled with wonder. A time when he succeeds because he tries...and he tries because he knows he is safe.

It's camp time. A time when a stranger becomes a new friend and a new friend becomes a best friend all in one afternoon. A time when his imagination is not squelched but ignited. Her enthusiasm is caught, not condemned. It's camp time. It's his birthday and Christmas and the Fourth of July everyday. It's my Thanksgiving. It's a time to revel. A time to cherish. A time to hold onto with all your might.

It's a time when you realize all the other things you could have done with your summer...and you don't regret a thing. Camp time is completely unlike the time outside those gates...except for one thing. Both slip away too fast.



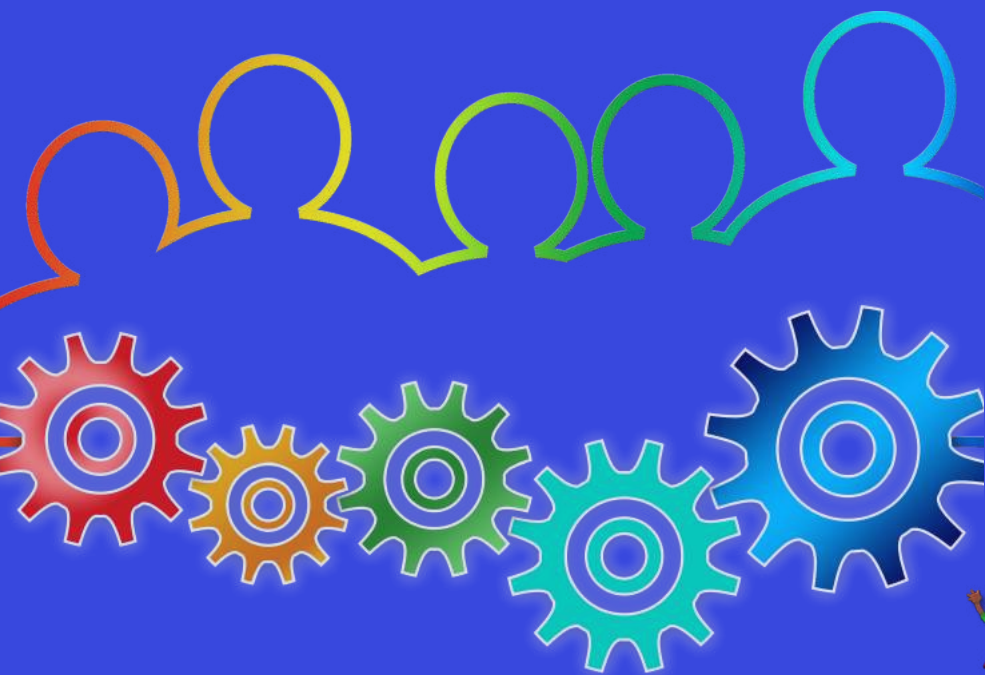
In the last issue of THE BELL, I gave an incorrect email address for the awesome Uptown Spartanburg Sertoma Club. Here is the correct address:

www.uptownsertomaclub.org



Roles board members and supporters of Camp Sertoma have taken on:

- Updated and reorganized our state-wide club officer contact list...and committed to keeping it up to date.
- Regular contribution in THE BELL looking at the people and stories that have made Camp Sertoma what it is today.
- Heading up a promotion of our Camp Sertoma license plate.
- Managing our website and facebook page
- Coordinating camper/parent/counselor presenters at our upcoming convention.
- Our Camp Sertoma work weekend.
- Gathering and organizing Camp Sertoma's history.
- Our Camp Sertoma golf tournament
- Keeping our coastal clubs involved with camp
- Collaboration with other clubs to recruit campers
- Managing our finances/investments
- Engaging all 29 clubs in our state, including the ones that do not currently send campers to camp



UPCOMING EVENTS

Atlantic Coast Regional Convention-

Camp Sertoma

April 14, 3-5 p.m.

Camp Sertoma of South Carolina

Board of Trustees meeting

April 29

Camp Sertoma Work Weekend

May 12-13

Start of Camp Sertoma!

June 18

CAMP SEEDED PLANTED

For many of you, the Clemson University Outdoor Lab, home of Camp Sertoma (CS), is your history. But the true history of CS started over 2 hours southeast of Clemson in Aiken County, at Camp Long. Camp Long was an old camp facility, owned by CU, for 4-H programs. "Old" is being kind. Old, well-worn, out-of-date, a WPA built facility built 50 years earlier.

But in 1970, with the lingering effects of integration still prevalent, 4-H camps were not held. The facilities and property were empty. This opened the door for the newly formed Department of Recreation and Park Administration at CU and the Electric City Sertoma Club of Anderson to test the waters of this new idea of serving children through residential camping. And thus, the CS seed was planted, not at the CUOL but downstate at Camp Long. The seed took root, the shoot spread its branches, and look what we have today! As I wrote last month, never overlook the potential of a single Sertoma club and a few members having an innovative idea. Camp Sertoma was birthed that way and the rest is history.

**Charlie R White
CUOL Director, Retired**

