



# Chikopi Chant

February 2011

## Beef-O-Bob

### **What Do I Really Do All Year...**

For me, July and August are hectic, exciting, fun-filled and challenging months.

So what do I do the rest of the year? The question should be: What *don't* I do? Camp directors work as hard in the "off-season" as they do during actual camp sessions. Some of it is visible to campers, parents and staff members – but much of it no one ever sees.

The old days – when camp directing was a summer job for teachers – are long gone. Camps today run 24/7/365. I know I speak for my fellow camp directors when I say: We wouldn't have it any other way.

Here are just a few tasks that demand our attention, beginning the moment the last vehicle pulls out of Chikopi.

**Closing down camp.** Equipment must be put away, docks pulled in, cabins and kitchens cleaned. Winterization begins in September.

**Construction begins on new projects.** There are buildings to be built, courts to be maintained, roofs to be re-shingled...the list is endless. This is exciting stuff: planning, building and getting new facilities, cabins and program areas ready for the following summer! Returning campers and staff love "being in the know," and hearing what's new and improved for the coming season.

**Camper recruiting and retention.** Working with families is a fun process. We arrange meetings, talk by phone and email, get together with new and returning families – and we do it more than once. Camp/family relationships are very important, and ongoing. You may be surprised to learn that this spring, we're already talking with families about their 2012 plans.

**Leadership meetings.** We review the past season, prepare for the next, and constantly take stock of who we are, where we've been and where we're going.

**Program planning.** We spend 10 months getting ready for a 2-month special event. From scheduling trips to making sure the daily routine does not become a rut, we plan every detail. Longer-term planning includes building projects.

**Meals.** The food service calendar is incredibly complex. From the first dinner in mid June for 25 people through early September when 100 campers and counselors suddenly need three meals a day, snacks, cookouts and more... the food service staff is crucial. Training the staff, planning menus and getting meal counts right takes a ton of off-season "prep work."

**Everything else.** Here are a few of the thousands of items: Writing and sending out newsletters. Reserving buses. Distributing DVDs. Recruiting. Advertising. Clothing suppliers. Award makers. Revising our staff handbooks and training sessions. Renewing all necessary certifications. Updating technology. Tracking medical mailings and other forms.

Our goal as camp directors is to control as much as we can when campers and staff are at home so that when they're at camp we can devote as much time, energy and care to them as we can.

Now, if you'll excuse me, I've got a phone call to return. An email to respond to. And a potentially great new counselor waiting to be interviewed.

This newsletter is comprised of articles written by alumni who are still very much involved in Chikopi.

## **Chikopi through the years... By Paul Anderson - Canada**

My first Chikopi experience occurred in 1975. The Brantford Aquatic Club held a one-week session at the close of the summer. Back then, a new counselor named Bob Duenkel held court in the back corner of the Main House during meal hours. This particular counselor was renowned for learning every camper's name within two meals – I still don't know how he did that.

Arriving at Chikopi was always exhilarating. Most kids would arrive on the bus, but I always coaxed my parents into driving me northbound over 3 hours, and picking me up after the shortest, busiest, happiest week of the year. Of course, exhaustion would set in on the drive home, only mitigated by a meal stop at Weber's on Hwy 11, for the best charcoal broiled burger and a fine chocolate milkshake. But, I'm getting ahead of myself – I've been asked to describe how Chikopi has changed over the last 35 years. So, back to arriving at the camp...

As we turned down the Chikopi road, the pavement would turn to dusty gravel and the anticipation would build as we rounded every corner, climbed up every hill on our way to the end of the road. We eventually made the under the Camp Chikopi sign strung over the road, and we'd be welcomed by the sight of the blue waters of Ahmic Lake shimmering beyond the tennis courts and fields of camp. We'd slowly pass the overgrown trail up to the HoneyMoon cottage and the dense brush that hid the HOP behind Cabin 4 and the PlayHouse. As we'd drive up to the flagpole row, I'd look up and see how many nationalities were represented this year at the camp. My parents would quickly recognize I wanted to get on with things, and they'd quickly drop off my gear. I'd wander over to the front of the MainHouse for cabin assignments. Sitting on the little steps leading up to the MainHouse front entrance, Bob, always in Chikopi green shorts and a yellow Chikopi swimming T-shirt, would already be mobbed by other kids, Charlie the dog sitting quietly at his side.

We'd receive our cabin assignments – we younglings would always hope to make it into Cabins 1, 3 or 4, all over near the tennis court, not because we wanted to play on the clay courts, but because we'd be closer to the trampoline. The tramp was the first and favorite pastime of most of us – we'd had little opportunity to bounce like that anywhere else. While we'd wait for our turn, we'd bounce on the springboard nearby and leap into the tumbling pit.

Mealtimes were always fun – we'd sing grace ("Heavenly Father, kind and good..."), and sit at the meal tables, devouring our food like the little sharks we were growing into, and when the seconds, or thirds, or fourths left the kitchen empty, Bob would huddle us around to chant for another table's chow. It seemed that Bob's vegetarian ways would always empty the salad bowl first. I think his favorite was "Chikopi Chikopi, rah, rah, rah; Lettuce, Lettuce, eat your Lettuce; no, let us eat your lettuce!" While we'd wait for announcements, I'd always look at the walls, covered with Chikopi alumni, famous athletes, Olympic posters, and the ubiquitous sayings of our founder, Matt Mann – "The only way to swim fast, is to swim fast."

After dinner, we'd break into teams for a game of Murderball, Earthball, Capture the Flag or some other whole camp activity. The senior war canoe would head out for an hour practice as the lake quieted down and became a mirror to the red/blue sky. After the evening's activities, unless there was a campfire on the Point, all the cabins would head off to bed, except for one designated cabin. That special cabin would be selected based on their inspection score, and

they'd be allowed to spend an hour at the MainHouse, playing cards, or a board game, or just shooting the breeze under electric lights, while the rest of the camp settled in for the night.

Morning routine always started with the wake up bell – the kitchen staff would ring it 100 times, the echoes ringing off the far shore of the lake and reminding the entire lake, from Crawford House to Rocky Reef and down to Knoepfli that it was time to wake up. For the Chikopi boys, it meant “Time to either lace up your sneakers for a run to the end of the Chikopi road” (the trail hadn't been cut yet), or “Get your swimsuit on and 3 Dock-to-Rocks, MINIMUM.” Of course, back then, the Main Dock was just another pile of rocks – it was destroyed by ice sometime before 1975. Where the new Boathouse sits, with the old Cabins 1 & 2 behind it, there was just this overgrown pier leading out to an old, disused diving tower leaning off to one side. So our “Dock” was the end of the 50-yard pool, and we'd swim around the six Sunfish sailboats and over to Guest House rock. As an aside, because the Main Dock didn't exist, our open water swims would start from the Point and go out to Gull Rock.

After Early Bird, Breakfast would fuel everyone up for the busy day ahead. Inspection, three morning activities before lunch, Lunch, Rest Period, then Team Comp and Free Time. Dinner Bell. Repeat. Camp routine was always the basic structure of the day, but with 27 sports to teach every day was different, and the Rambo Hunt, the Magnetawan swim (and ice cream at June's), Knoepfli rapids, Cellar rapids, competition days against Ak-O-Mak, and of course, canoe trips – every special event in the afternoon made each week different from the rest, and the summers would pass in the blink of an eye.

Over the years, there have been many, many improvements to the camp - Colette being the finest, acting as camp Mom and nurse; the 5 & Dime; the infirmary; the cabin line moving deeper into the woods; the new pools; the new boathouse; the new four car garage, the new docks. Bob is always working on another project. When an alumni shows up at camp, he is shown many new things, yet, at heart, he recognizes Chikopi. He can see through the new, and sense the history and the routine. Whatever the physical shape Chikopi takes on, he knows he is back home.



Paul Anderson and his son, Patrick, who currently attends Chikopi.

## Thoughts from my Summers at Chikopi During the Years of 1969-1973. By Tony Cordero - Mexico

### My Expectations:

- Have a new experience away from home.
- Meet new people, make friends.
- Swimming workouts, improve strokes and performance.
- Most importantly, come back home at the end of August ready for Mexico National Swimming Meets, first week of September.

### My personal experiences at camp were:

- Very professional Junior and Senior Counselors with campers.
- Praying every meal and singing, playing freeze or lots of other different games at the MainHouse.
- The swimming coaches were great. Better than ever for me, in Mexico we did not have such good coaches.
- Trying new sports like lacrosse and canoeing.
- Excellent experiences in canoe trips. 7 day canoe trips in Algonquin Park were excellent. I did 4 canoe trips, 3 day, 4 day, 5 and the longest 100 mile in 7 days.
- Cleaning cabins and having all your trunks ready for inspection every morning.
- Everyone had to have his uniform, perfect blue shorts and Chikopi shirt.
- Excellent experience on new games like capture the flag and scavenger hunt.
- One dance with sister camp, Ak-O-Mak was great, but only one hahaha!
- Representing Chikopi swimming team at London, Ontario was awesome.
- Matt Mann II and his wife were great people, Director Pat Hayhurst was a very important part of all things running well at Chikopi.
- The meals were good. I loved Chikopi Sand with brown sugar and butter. We never complained about them.
- Loved sailing, competing against ourselves and Ak-O-Mak.
- Laundry every 3 days.
- Bunks, top or lower we had to have lots of shelves to put all our stuff.
- Signing your name and year onto the cabin wall. It was very impressive to read all the other names.
- The water fountain before bed. Cold fresh water, great!!!
- Having Wally Weber showing us skills for football. Foxy showing us fencing, meeting a boy that held the world record for abdominal.
- Receiving the certificate with stars on it.
- Receiving mail was very, very important to me, unfortunately Mexico's postal service was terrible.
- Swimming 3 times a day in a lake where you cannot see at first was weird but you got used to it, it was a great experience to swim in a fresh water lake when you were only able to swim in Chlorinated pools in Mexico.
- I remember the flagpoles having 9 countries, Canada, USA, Mexico, Venezuela, France, England, Virgin Islands, Argentina and Australia.
- Something that was really great is that when I returned for my second, third and fourth summers I felt like I was family. This was very important because I met campers that had being going to Chikopi for 8 or 9 or more summers.
- I consider myself very lucky to have met Anne Lipman on a flight from San Francisco to Mexico, we introduced our parents. Bill Lipman was a member of the AAU, Bill told my parents, "if Tony and Mimi, (my sister), like swimming call Buck Dawson and Matt Mann to they can go to Chikopi and Ak-O-Mak to improve their swimming."
- After so many years I really feel how many things in my life were helped by Chikopi. I have more confidence, I am more outgoing, and I make friends easily. All this has helped me learn to work in a team and be a more competitive person in my life.

## The Summer of '78 - By Andy Davis – USA

The summer of 1978 and going to Chikopi was a brand new experience for me. As a 15 year old competitive swimmer, it was referred to me by Andrea Kalish, my club swim coach....an Ak-O-Mak alum who thought it would be a great place for me to grow. I had no idea, at the time, that my seven weeks at Chikopi would last...so vividly...a lifetime.

When I think of Chikopi I think of people, places and events: Bob Duenkel, Colette, Liz Fry, Randy Redpath, Kip Petry, Pro Boim, Knoepfli, Magnetawan, Orillia, “around the lake in '78, tiring days and great nights of sleep under the Northern Lights. So many memories and still so familiar.

When I think of Chikopi if think of maturing, growing, testing limits, thinking anything is possible. At 15 I thought swimming 9 miles to Magnetawan was a great accomplishment...then I watched my 10 yr old son do it the summer of 2005.

While I've lost touch with my two best friends of that summer ...Randy and Kip...I have more recently become friends with Liz Fry, an Ak-O-Mak alumni whom I met in 2003. Liz talked me into swimming 16 miles from Port Jefferson, NY (Long Island) to Bridgeport CT. Liz is the event director for the, “Swim Across the Sound,” that raises hundreds of thousands of dollars each year for patients and families fighting cancer. Liz has crossed the English Channel multiple times and holds the record for swimming the “wrong way” around Manhattan Island...one she beat by 7 hrs. Her inspirations for greatness began at Ak-O-Mak.



Bob Duenkel taught me many lessons during the summer of 1978. I remember constantly telling myself “I can’t do this...I can’t do that”. Bob showed me how and inspired me to perform and succeed. I watched Bob and Colette teach those same things to my 10 & 12 year old sons during their summer at Chikopi in 2005.

## **Birch Trees Die – Chikopi Never! – By Kai Makela - Finland**

My first encounter with Camp Chikopi was in 1970, the 50th year of Chikopi swimming. Matt Mann III was the “King” of the camp. There were plenty of birch trees with Chikopi green foliage on the water front. Now most of the trees have become grey-haired old seniors suffering from leaf loss, thinning bark and rotten roots, and many of the birches are not there any more.

But Camp Chikopi goes strong. The outline of the daily camp program is exactly the same now as it was 40 years ago. New flavours have been added to the menu like bocce ball, mountain biking and triathlon. Wally Weber would coach American football now replaced mainly by soccer. I can still hear Wally shouting, “don’t fumble! don’t fumble!”

Pro Boim coached baseball. How excited he was about coaching the Chikopi team. Pro coached the boys for the game against the Ak-O-Mak girls with the same enthusiasm as if Chikopi were getting ready for varsity championships.

In 1970, my knowledge of the North American summer camp world was next to nothing. However, Matt Mann hired me as a Counselor for the oldest boys’ cabin, called “bunk house” at that time. Matt also used another military expression “you are dismissed” after every meal in the main house.

Chikopi is a healthy place: far from the today’s fast paced world, clean air, pure lake, beautiful forest, three meals a day to give energy for the various activities all day long.

One of the many sporting challenges is the Chikopi - Ak-O-Mak 12 K run on hilly, dirt and paved roads. I challenge all you runners to beat my personal best 41.41. Go for it!

Chikopi left a lasting impression in my mind. At camp, I learned to swim properly and I got acquainted with canoeing which was a totally strange activity for me earlier. Ten years later, 1980, I brought my whole family, my wife Marja and the boys Panu and Sampo, to the camp. The boys were too young at that time to be real campers but when they reached the appropriate age they became campers and later CITs and Counselors.

We have five grandchildren now, four boys, one princess. When the little boys are the right camp size I hope it will be their turn to enjoy all the wonderful Chikopi experiences their father and grandfather remember.

My Chikopi summers: 1970, 1980, 1989,  
1992, 1995, 2002, 2005 and 2007.  
On my way to Chikopi Gold Watch!



## Dr. Jeff Manning – 1973 - Canada

Driving along Chikopi Road in 2003, the tree lined, winding road didn't look much different then it had in 1973. The spectacular view of camp, beautiful Ahmic Lake and the cabins had changed little. Sure the in-ground trampoline was gone, a new ball diamond, a sailing house, new sauna and most recently a new pool had been added. Camp has changed with many improvements in the physical structures but more importantly it hadn't changed in others.

I was taking my son, Chris, for the first of his 6 years of Chikopi remembering fondly my 5 years of Chikopi. The influence of camp in developing boys into Chikopi men under Bob's guidance was the reason for our return. The values of sportsmanship, perseverance, integrity and teamwork continue to be instilled by the camp staff under Bob's guidance. This philosophy, unchanged over the years, makes Camp Chikopi the special place it is to Chikopi men.

Thank you Chikopi.



Jeff and Chris Manning

## Henry Thoman – 1967-1976 - USA

I spent ten summers at Chikopi in the 60s and 70s, I earned my gold watch in 1976. My son, Nick Thoman, attended Chikopi for seven summers, 1996-2003. Nick won a gold medal at the FINA World Championships (short course) in Dubai in December 2010. Nick, who currently holds the **world record** in the 100 meter backstroke (short course), swam the backstroke leg for the victorious US 400 medley relay team. His split of 49.88 was nearly a second slower than his world record (48.94), but was the third fastest time in the world during the 2010-2011 short course season. The men's 400 medley relay set an American record and was the only relay won by the US at the World Championships.

Nick also placed fifth in the 50 backstroke and just missed the podium with a 4<sup>th</sup> place finish in the 100 backstroke in Dubai. Nick will compete as part of the US team in the long course World Championships this summer in Shanghai. At that meet he'll swim the 50 and 100 backstroke and will compete for a spot on the US 400 medley relay team. Keep rooting for Nick as he prepares for the Olympic Trials in 2012.

Henry's daughter, Victoria Thoman Sowers, attended Ak-O-Mak for five summers.



Nick Thoman, Garret Weber-Gale, Mike Alexandrov, and Ryan Lochte accepting their gold medals.

## News You Can Use!

**Zack Hurd:** Zack is back! Zack is now Head Swim Coach at the Barrie Trojans, kids have already started registering for two week, thanks Zack and welcome home!

**Chris Manning:** speeds to more wins at SEC Championships.

"We did it! 15th straight SEC Championships. I swam the 50 free, 100 free and 100 breast. I went 19.7 in the 50, 43.7 in the 100 and 54.9 in the 100 breast. I'm really happy with how I swam. I'm not fully rested so there's more to go at NCAA's for sure. I also swam on the 200 free relay. I split a 19.2 and we made the NCAA 'A' time so I'll be seeing you in Minnesota Bob! Here's a video of the relay, we are in lane 4, I went third. Anyways, now it is back to training and schoolwork! See you soon!" See Chris's swim on you tube.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Yo0UX6TmgE&feature=related>



### **Sweatshirts:**

We are looking for you to send us some feed back on a new idea for the 2011 sweatshirts.



Choice 1



Choice 2



Choice 3

The order has to be placed by April 1<sup>st</sup> to be at camp on time for summer. Email us your preference in design.

**Free Session:** Are you interested in a free session at Chikopi? In exchange for advertising Camp Chikopi on your team shirts, web page, notice board, etc. Chikopi will donate one, two week session to your team to use as a fundraiser. Tell your coaches, ask the office for more information.

**Chikopi Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/group.php?gid=120106461342159> log in and request to be a friend of Chikopi.



Teagan in her Fort Lauderdale, Camp Chikopi, soccer uniform.

Nessie turned 1 year old March 6<sup>th</sup>. Happy Birthday Nessie.

