

August 14, 2011

Hello Springhill staff,

Can I just tell you a little story about one of your counselors?

It was the summer of 1999 and John had finished first grade, my daughter Diana finished the third. I was newly divorced and we were still trying to get used to this new way of life. We belonged to an amazing church so I was confident that even though I may not be in the peace of mind to teach my kids about the love of Christ, healing or forgiveness, Kensington could. It was that summer my sister introduced us to this place called Springhill Camps. She had been there with her youth group and insisted I MUST send my kids. So, I did.



I will never forget driving up from Berkley and pulling up to be greeted at the entrance by these extremely enthusiastic kids on horseback and sitting on that huge bolder out front. Dropping my kids off on the fire truck and waving good-by. Then boarding my own tram for the grand tour. I wasn't worried about my independent daughter, she was fine. It was my son I wasn't sure about; he never wanted to go anywhere without her. Well, my sister and I pulled up to the Tee-Pee's to see him standing there with his counselors, face painted and ready for a week of Springhill experience! I looked into the faces of these 2 college aged 'boys' and thought "I'm dropping my child off in the woods with these two kids?" Their care and love for what they were doing was evident, however. I was in awe of their commitment. How could they know the wounds of my heart and soul or the nervousness I felt dropping my children off for a whole week at some strange place with perfect strangers for the first time in their lives!



The closing ceremony was so special, I cried. I missed my kids but I could sense something different when I picked them up. They seemed more grown up, they had both grown spiritually. I knew then this place was special. Not a year went by that I needed to ask if they wanted to go back. It was a given. The years I didn't think I could afford to send both of them, this amazing thing called the 'scholarship' landed in my lap. We were truly blessed. When I tell people about Springhill, I can't get through that sentence without getting choked up, every time.



The summer of 2010, my son served his 3rd year as TST. On August 5 of that summer, through events only he can tell you, he gave his life totally and completely to Christ. I will never forget the phone call from my crying sister in Virginia. You see, my son had to call his aunt who first introduced us to Springhill and share the good news with her. He then shared his testimony with me when he came home.

So here we are, the summer of 2011 and this young man, this little Tee-Pee boy, has returned as a Springhill counselor. I pray he has been a blessing to those kids, their parents and most especially Springhill, the way we have been blessed all these long years by the same. *Thank you and God Bless, Luana Cesarino*

