



The Royal Page

February 2007

Royal Family Kids' Camps, Inc.

Vol. I

You are encouraged to attend ...

Extreme Royal Family Makeover

Our 17th Annual Celebration Banquet

With honored guest speaker Dr. Wess Stafford

When:

Thursday, March 1, 2007
at 6:30 p.m.

Where:

The Irvine Marriott Hotel
Irvine, California

*For additional information,
call our office at 714.438.2494
Advance ticket purchase required*

This year we are thrilled to welcome Dr. Wess Stafford as our guest speaker at the banquet! Author of *Too Small to Ignore: Why Children Are the Next Big Thing* and President of Compassion International ... the love and compassion Wess has for impoverished children has made him an internationally renowned advocate. He was the son of missionaries to the Ivory Coast; and as a child, Wess was among the village children watched over by a wise and loving African "extended family." But all too often his heart would break when African friends

died from the devastating effects of poverty.

As an adult Wess feels privileged to carry on his parents' deep commitment to the poor ... to minister to those who have always been so close to his heart. Wess echoes the sentiments of Royal Family Kids' Camps and feels that the most strategic way to break the cycle of poverty is by investing in the physical, spiritual and socioeconomic needs of the children to give them hope for a brighter future.



Dr. Wess Stafford, renowned author and President of Compassion International, will be our guest speaker



Starting the Year with a Grateful Heart!

by Wayne and Diane Tesch,
Co-Founders of Royal Family Kids' Camps, Inc.



We know Thanksgiving has past — but frankly we are extraordinarily grateful for friends like you who volunteer ... who give of themselves ... who pray for the children who need us so desperately ... and who support us.

What a joy it has been to join with you and reach out to abused, abandoned and neglected children. Because you give, we have been able to serve faithfully for 22 years. Over the last year, Royal Family has helped

impact and change the lives of over 5,500 campers and 6,000 volunteers that have been involved with Royal Family Kids' Camps.

Sometimes we just stand in amazement at the privileges we have. As we said before, we are incredibly thankful for all that you do. So as we enter into this year, let us say as loud as we can ... THANK YOU for being a crucial part of what God is doing through Royal Family Kids' Camps!

The Healing Power of "Therapy Dogs" at Royal Family Kids' Camps

Imagine if all you had to do each day was give unconditional love ... and receive it from hundreds of adoring children. That is the sole job of a Therapy Dog, and they are bringing the precious children at Royal Family Kids' Camps tons of love!



These very special dogs are (in some cases) trained by nationally recognized, professional dog handlers who also happen to volunteer hours of their time at many of our RF camps. Some bring their dog for the entire week of camp and others only for one day — no matter how long the dogs stay, the results with the children are always the same ... simply astonishing!

The primary duty of a "Therapy Dog" is to "visit" with the kids, let them hug him, get their picture taken with him, and allow the children to feel emotionally "safe." It gives the children a chance to hug something that appreciates their touch and doesn't reject them.

Sometimes the kids will talk to the dog, or just sit next to it, petting it for a while. Regardless of how they visit, the dog is happy to receive attention. And when the children see the pleasure they are bringing to the pet, it makes them feel appreciated!

Just like the time when a little boy at one of our camps formed a strong bond with a therapy dog named Rex. Rex seemed extremely apprehensive whenever his owner, Clara, left the

room. As soon as Clara would leave, Rex would become anxious and whimper. No one could comfort Rex until Clara came back.

A camper noticed this and asked a staff member what was the matter. Knowing the camper's story, the volunteer explained that Rex did not like to



let Clara out of his sight because he had just lost his owner and didn't want to lose anyone else. The boy hugged Rex tightly, and buried his small face in the dog's fur. He told Rex it was going to be alright and the dog calmed immediately.

This special camper had lost his father to prison. Now he lived with his biological mother and had difficulty leaving her because he worried he would lose her as well. The rest of the time this little boy was at camp, he ran to Rex and hugged him whenever he saw him. Both he

and Rex found someone who could understand their loss, and share a bond that was beyond words.

Thank you for helping to bring the loving touch of therapy dogs to the children of Royal Family Kids' Camps!

For more information about Therapy Dogs please contact:
Delta Society
Phone: 425.679.5500
Or contact:
Therapy Dogs International
Website: www.tdi-dog.org



Gideon, Rex (pictured on page 2) and Nabby (above) are just a few of the many Therapy Dogs children are enjoying at Royal Family Kids' Camps.

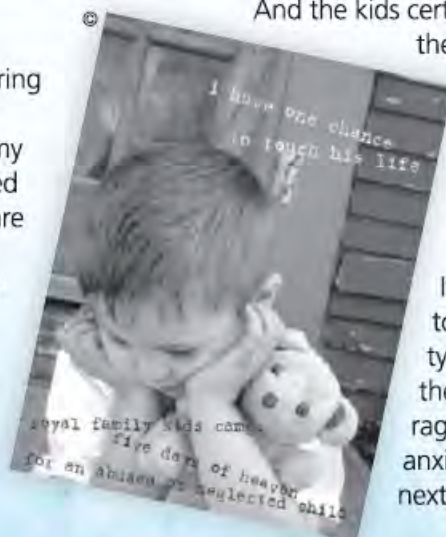
Former Volunteer Wins Art Award



Beth Trower is a remarkable 18-year-old young woman who recently participated in the Assemblies of God National Fine Arts Festival in Orlando, Florida ... and won!

In her essay, Beth shares her experiences at a Royal Family Kids' Camp, and was honored by walking away with third place at the closing ceremony. Her graphic design, a poster aimed at raising awareness and interest in Royal Family Kids' Camps, was awarded first place with the Award of Merit.

Beth says, "Volunteering at Royal Family Kids' Camp has changed my life; and I'm so blessed for the chance to share what the camp has done for me, by way of this essay and graphic design." She further added, "As pleased as I was that my essay and poster did so



well at Nationals, it means more to me that pieces about RFKC were so prominently honored and celebrated."

We are so grateful for Beth's God-given talents and her willingness to share them with Royal Family Kids' Camps.

Five Days, One Chance *an essay by Beth Trower*

Dust kicked up from behind the school bus wheels as we bumped our way along the winding roads leading to the remote camp lodge. I, dressed in my polo shirt and lanyard, was to be a staff member at a kids' camp. And the kids certainly were excited — the bus echoed with their lively chatter and laughter as they prepared for a week away from home.

It certainly appeared to be a busload of typical children, with their messy hair and ragged jeans, several anxiously awaiting the next bathroom break. I

looked around the bus, examining the kids more closely. The boy on my left had several scars on his arm, perhaps from jumping off a bunk bed or out of a tree. The tiny figure of a young girl sat two seats further ahead, with her face in a slight frown as she listened to her seatmate's stories of camp the year before.

Still, I knew these were no ordinary kids. The scars that would forever press their way into the boy's skin were from his mother, who, on numerous occasions, deliberately held a curling iron to his thin arm. The tiny girl, haunted by her memories, sat close-mouthed because she no longer had a reason to trust men, such as the bus driver five rows ahead. This week was so much more than a usual kids' camp. The camp is an escape from their fears, a glimpse of heaven in their eyes. The children's lives were ruled by the hate and torture of abuse and neglect; this was their chance to experience God's love and grace.

That's where I came in. Too young to be a counselor for Royal Family Kids' Camp, I was content to be a staff member, forever finding ways to keep

busy throughout the day. Each day I dressed as a sheep for the Bible story drama in the morning, spent three hours at the dock bringing in and sending out canoes and paddleboats, then hustled to the activity center to help with arts and crafts. I lived for the moments when a child caught a fish for the first time, or got a few laughs out of my “sheepish” lines and expressions during the drama. In the meantime, I did my part to keep the camp bursting with examples of God’s unconditional love. Each of the 24 kids in attendance had been abused

or neglected in some way, many in multiple ways, but here they could find peace and safety. As a part of the staff, I didn’t ask pressing questions, or scold the kids for the manners they had never learned. We simply listened and responded, hoping to touch their hearts with God’s love.

Their lives, so frail and broken, were in the camp’s hands, my hands, for five precious days. This was my chance to show the children that they could find freedom in Christ. Although their pain was deep, it could be released

into the Savior’s hands — and God would heal their broken hearts. Sometimes, long after camp is over, I worry about certain kids, such as the boy with the scars, and wonder how he is doing. As for the little girl, by the end of the week, she was smiling and laughing again as a child should, even repeating snatches of the Bible story drama. I may never ever see these children again, but I can delight in the fact that I had one chance to touch their lives forever.

WE TREASURE YOUR SUPPORT!

And for that reason we want to share with you the many ways you may benefit from giving to Royal Family Kids’ Camps!

- Memorials
- Charitable Trust
- Estate planning
- Donated vehicles
- A Gift of Life Insurance

Please contact Glenn M. Howard at: 714.438.2494 or GlennH@rfkc.org

We are happy to help you find an option that meets your giving needs!

On behalf of the children of Royal Family Kids’ Camps, we thank you for your generosity and compassion.

Going Above and Beyond to help RFKC



Tom built this elaborate mail station for all 7 Royal Family Kids’ Camps that are hosted at Green Oak Ranch in Vista, CA, during the summer.

“Uncle Tom” has been known in the past few years for his patient and helpful advice given to campers while they worked on their woodworking projects. He’s also known for all the fun hats he wears — sometimes he’ll even switch hats three times a day! But this year, Tom was only interested in wearing one special hat every day — a safety helmet — all because of his dedication to a special camper.

Tom suffers from severe spinal injuries he received after an Ultralite airplane accident in 1995. Doctors told him he would never walk again, but later that year he was back on his feet with the help of leg braces.

Since a little mobility issue wasn’t about to stop Tom, he rented a Segway® Personal Transporter

(a special two-wheeled battery-operated “scooter”) at his own expense, so he could easily make his way around the hilly areas of camp and keep up with the campers.

He wanted to be especially sure that he could do all of the things Counselor’s are expected to do (walk next to campers, keep up with them, do activities, etc.). This was the first time in a while he had left the woodworking station to be a Counselor, but it was for a special reason.

This summer would be the last camp year for a camper named Darrell*, and Tom wanted to make it extra-special. Tom and Darrell formed a friendship during Darrell’s first summer at camp when he was only

7 years old. Darrell knew Tom was a pilot; and since it was something he wanted to do someday, he would ask Tom questions about flying. Over the years Tom encouraged Darrell. They would talk about him possibly joining the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), to help his aviation career.

Tom was relieved to see Darrell step off the bus this year. And Darrell was thrilled to find out that he had "Uncle Tom" as his Camp Counselor. We are so grateful for the dedication of our volunteers, like "Uncle Tom," who often go above and beyond anything we ask them to do — to

make a difference in the lives of the children at RFKC.

*name has been changed to protect the child's identity

A Camp "Breakthrough"

Alicia* is a second-year camper. At a mere 8 years old, she has been in foster care for a long time. For a while Alicia was placed with another girl who is 11, and they moved together from home to home several times.

Then this past year, the 11-year-old girl was adopted — and Alicia was not. Two months ago Alicia was moved to yet another home. When she came to camp this year, the bright, happy girl we knew from last year was withdrawn and very insecure. Her Counselor took extra

pains to be sure Alicia felt special. Although Alicia seemed to perk up, we weren't sure how she felt when she left camp, until we received this note from her foster mom who expressed so eloquently the unique and special ways we give love to our RFKC campers:

Dear RFC Staff,
Thank you so much for providing Royal Family Kids' Camp. My foster daughter Alicia attended for the second time this year and just loved camp.
Alicia came to my home about two months ago. One of the first things she showed me was her photo memory book from last year's camp. She went on and on about the swimming, fishing and singing. When she came home this year, she spent a half hour or more on her bed comparing this year and last year's photos — tangible evidence of events in her life that mean so much to her.
She listens to her RFKC CD constantly. In fact, I had to quit allowing her to listen at night because she was crying herself to sleep each night. She missed camp so much!
Thank you for the intense effort and generosity that went in to providing this amazing group of memories for Alicia. No one ever goes into foster care for a good reason and she is no exception. In the midst of pain, confusion and insecurity, camp is an oasis of comfort.
And as the foster parent, I so appreciate the time of respite. Hurting children can be very demanding and I appreciate the time of rest and renewal so I can continue to work in my mission field.

This letter is proof of the wonderful things you are doing in the lives of abused, abandoned and neglected children all over our nation — when you give to Royal Family Kids' Camps. Thank you again for your generosity.

*name has been changed to protect the child's identity



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To protect camper confidentiality,
models are used in some photographs.