



**HAPPY HOLIDAYS
FROM
CAMP BELKNAP
2007**

Dear Belknep Family,

For the past 20 years as Directors we have had the privilege of writing a holiday message to our "Belknep family". Much has changed over the past two decades that Caryn and I have been caretakers of this most special and sacred place, but some things remain the same. These include the quality and caring of our wonderful staff, the view of Winniper from our beautiful shoreline, the sunsets, the traditions of vespers and woodcraft and Belknep cheers, and the sparkle that shines in the eyes of all the campers and staff who enjoy the opportunity to come here each summer. We do not use the word family lightly for indeed we are an extended family sharing a spirit and language and culture that only other Belknappers can know and understand. It is a most special feeling and a precious gift. So, to you, our "Belknep family" we say Happy Holidays and ask that you always remember your days at your summer home~ Belknep~ and always "Seek The Joy of Being Alive". Timi-hi and God Bless, Gene, Caryn, Sean & Sam

On behalf of your Board of Directors, I want to extend to everyone our heartfelt thanks and highest compliments for another outstanding year at Belknep. Although we are blessed by the wonderful place that is Camp Belknep, our greatest asset, and most treasured resource, is in the minds and hearts of those who serve there, and the campers who go there. As Gene always says: You are the best! We are grateful to you for your stewardship of the Camp, and for your support of its values, its mission, and each other. As the board turns its attention to the challenges and opportunities of the years ahead, we send our best wishes for the happiest of holidays, and for another wonderful summer of pleasure and service in that magical place we call Camp Belknep. Timi HI! ~ Peter Powell, Board Chair and President, YMCA Camp Belknep

We hope each and every Belknapper has a wonderful holiday season. We can't believe we have been retired as directors of Camp Belknep for twenty years! Wow!! ~ A special "Timi-Hi-Timi-Ho"...Peg & Gene Clark

Dear Belknappers, It hardly seems possible that we're entering the holiday season already. Fall here in southern New England has been so warm that many trees still have green leaves on them in the week before Thanksgiving. As the weather turns cooler and we move into winter, though, our thoughts often return to summer days at Belknep. Of course, it helps having two campers at our dinner table every night! We wish all staff, leaders, and campers only the best this holiday season~ best of family, best of friends, best of health and the best Christmas and Hanukkah ever! Timi hi to all, Tom, Elaine, Ryan, and Tyler Giggi

Barb & I would like to extend our warmest wishes to all Belknappers far & wide, wherever they may be this Holiday Season. See you all again under the pines. ~ Chip & Barb Bierweiler

Dear Belknappers Near and Far, What a pleasure it was to spend the summer with you all on the shores of Winniper! The seasons may change, but the Belknep Spirit only seems to get stronger. Here in Exeter, that spirit is alive and well...and the Thurber family is staying quite busy. Simonida, Dacha, Sava and I traveled to Belgrade, Serbia when regular camp ended. We enjoyed seeing Simo's family and friends, shopping in the open air markets, and eating lots of ice cream during Serbia's record heat wave. Many thanks to Matt Brown, Dave Latchaw, and the rest of the Specialty Camp staff who ran a great sailing camp and put the waterfront to bed for the winter. I returned to the states on Labor Day to begin my ninth year as school psychologist here at Phillips Exeter Academy; Simo and boys stayed another three weeks. When they returned in late September, Dacha started kindergarten and Sava preschool. Dacha has continued playing violin and is learning to read. Sava has continued not being potty trained and is learning his Latin and Cyrillic letters. Both boys have memorized all of the characters from all six Star Wars movies and are

fascinated by moral questions, such as "How come Anakin became Darth Vader and then become good at the end?" Believe it or not, Belknap factors into many of my explanations, as I opine on the camp motto, the virtue of forgiveness, and the Woodcraft laws. Young or old, camp touches our hearts in unexpected ways. (Though neither Dacha or Sava has been able to make vegetables on their plates disappear simply by using the Force.) We hope this holiday letter finds you all in good health and among friends and family. See you next summer! Peace and love to you all, Chris, Simo, Gordana, Dacha and Sava Thurber

Even though Camp Belknap is a place of work for myself and my fellow maintenance staff, it is also a place of friendship, adventure and new experiences. It's wonderful to see the campers grow each year and become more and more dedicated to the spirit and feelings of Belknap. I love helping the foreign kitchen crew to adapt to a new country and listen to them admire and get a great positive feeling from the staff and campers at our little piece of heaven, Camp Belknap. Happy Winter....Pete "Ski" Sluski

Happy Holidays to all staff and campers. May you all have a happy holiday season and remember "to do one act of unbargaining service each day" in the new year. Always remember the Lamp of Love. Best to you all, Paul "Hippo" and Karen Moore

Wishing you and your families a Holiday Season filled with special moments. May peace and joy come to you all. Merry Christmas and a Very Happy New Year. Believe in the magic of Christmas. ~ Debbi Santulli

"Wishing all Belknappers everywhere the very best of Christmas Holidays and a Great New Year" ~ Ann & Bob Champagne

As the snow falls outside my window today, it reminds me that the winter season is quickly upon us. Before we realize it, winter will have come and passed and our thoughts will be of returning to Belknap. Until we are reunited under the pines, I hope everyone has a safe and happy holiday season! ~ Robin Bierweiler

To Belknappers everywhere: May you all spend some time this holiday season with family and friends. If it is not possible to do so in person then do so with memories of times past. Either way they bring smiles and the realization of how lucky we all truly are. God bless you all this Christmas. May you have health and well being in 2008. ~ Nurse Doris Nerderman

"May your holidays be as joyful as your days at Belknap". Skip Walton

"Happy Holidays Belknappers! I wish all of you a holiday season filled with fun and laughter, peace and joy. May memories of the summer keep you warm this winter." God Bless, Suzanne Murphy, Nurse

Hello to all staff & campers (Belknappers). Hope you all have the greatest of holidays. Time is going by so fast it's hard to get everything done that I want to do. Quite a bit of traveling in the near future for me. Wish everyone the best winter ever. ~ Maxine Smirles

To All Belknappers: I hope everyone has a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. Hope to see you all in 2008. Have a good & warm winter. Norma Hughes

Greeting Belknappers, Happy Holidays! If only it was as hot as Messer Field in July right now! Warm yourselves with thoughts of bizouball, campfires, friends and leaders. Seek the Joy. ~ Sam "Milkman" Goessling

Season Greetings Belknappers! I've been enjoying my second year of teaching 7th and 8th grade at the Fenn School, in Concord, MA. I'm now living in Watertown, and see a good number of Boston-Area Belknappers (past and present) on a regular basis. What strikes me about these timeless friendships, is how the lessons and values learned at camp resonate deeply within all of us, even for those who's last summer under the pines was over a decade ago. I hope you all take the time to reconnect with friends and family during this holiday season, and keep Belknap memories close to your hearts to warm you throughout these long winter months. I look forward to seeing you all back under the pines in six short months. Timi-Hi, Dave Irwin

Hey Belknap family! Thanks for yet another great summer under the pines. Thanks to those who hiked with me too-you're Belknap's burly future. Camp misses all of you as much as you miss it. If you're freezing and feeling blue, remember what Regina Spector says: "It's gonna get bettuh." ~Fortitude, Truth, Beauty, Love, Pete "Jackaroo" Hammond

Happy Winter, Belknap Nation! Firefighter Will here, writing you from Middlebury, VT, where I am currently teaching 9th and 10th grade World History at Middlebury Union High School. It was great fun to teach the freshman about early hominids and the emergence of fire as a necessary tool for human survival. Obviously, I am forever indebted to those prehistoric men who corralled the power of flame. In any case, I hope the memories of the summer past keep you warm this winter, and that you remain forever prepared to fight wildfire, in forest or in town. May you all be happy, healthy, well-together, safe and surrounded by love. With a special holler to the Storm Band, Will McDonough

Hello Belknappers near and far. It's amazing to think that it is already time to say the Christmas Timi-hi, but I guess it just goes to show how fast the year can pass. I hope these past few months have been as enjoyable as the summer months and you have been able to bring Belknap into the lives of those around you everyday. The Belknap spirit is alive and well out in the Rocky Mountains. I've been busy with school and lacrosse but I've been lucky enough to spend time with Belknap brethren at random points this fall. As the snow begins to pile this winter, I hope you all find time to be with your friends and family and spread the lessons you've learned under the pines. As I've seen time and time again, the snow will melt and Belknap will be upon us sooner than we can imagine. Let it never be forgot that once there was a spot, fellas. Keep seekin that joy. ~Brendan Gangl

Dear Friends, By the time you read this, I should be in my last semester of Graduate School at UNH where I am studying Elementary Education. It will be nice to be under the pines again this summer but until then, Happy Holidays! Timi Hi, David "Chaw" Latchaw

Greetings Gentlemen, It really is impressive how the seasons spin round and round. Yet here in Southern California that hardly applies. Yes indeed, I have gone from pines to palms and, while I miss the autumn, I can hardly complain about 300 days of sunshine a year. Yet, I have learned, despite the constant sunshine, that there is no substitute for the shimmering waves of a summertime Winnepesaukee. I hope this letter finds you all in good spirits and will serve as a key to the storehouse of Belknap memories we all keep locked away. I just want to thank you all for making summer so awesome. And if I know anything about time, which I fancy I do, we'll be back there: shooting goals, stacking plates, hearing taps, playing totem, Oh-chiefting, making tags, water-serving, laying out, eating paddies, and attempting to play volleyball before we even know it. Until then, Greg Berman

Happy Holidays! So quickly I have traded in my shorts and a t-shirt for a winter coat and hat. Winter's arrival also means though that we are that much closer to another Belknap summer. School has kept me bogged down with work, but I am having a good time and I hope all of you (especially those from Junior Cabin A) are having a great offseason. The chlorine pool I am swimming in cannot compare to the lake, and the school Frisbee team has been a little different than the 15 and under squad, but both have been fun nonetheless. As these cold months continue keep thinking of camp, and put a little bit of Belknap into everything you do. Until we meet again, Timi-hi. Marcel Moran

Hey to all Belknappers, It's already getting cold up here in Colchester, VT. It was a short fall and going to be a long winter. School has been good, I've been playing a lot of baseball, and keeping in touch with my boys. I hope everyone is doing well and I cannot wait for next summer. Have a great holiday season and remember to always "be a boy". Timi-Hi, Christian D'Amour

Hopefully, this finds all Belknappers happy and healthy this holiday season. It is turning to winter up here in Wolfeboro and we got our first snow yesterday! Though, it won't last long. Most of it has melted already. Bummer. Work is boring and I would much rather be under the pines, enjoying a nice game of BOLF (Baseball-Golf). Now is the time when I start thinking of Summer, Belknap, and Orioles Baseball. I hope everyone has a great Holiday. Until we meet again. Hey Middlers, HOW BOUT THEM COOKIES!~ Kyle Richard John

Hello Belknap Nation, The first snow just fell today, and I don't know about you but the snow and cold and frozen breath are what start to really trigger the warmer memories of Belknap for me. I just got to spend a couple of days with Ben Starr out at UMass, we've got a new game that will be sweeping the nation next summer. All I'll say is Kan Jam: Coming to a Messer field near you. I hope this letter finds you all fine and dandy, I'll be seeing you all in June 2008 (it's much closer than you know). Rock on Middler 1... Seek that Joy, Tom "Ratt Dog" Wraight

Well four months have already gone by since any of us were seeking the joy under the pines together. And here we are its holiday time, one of the few times a year where the outside world hopefully shows some of the characteristics of giving and "God first, the other fellow second, myself last," that we do so well at camp. Enjoy the holidays Belknap and remember everything camp has taught us. Timi-Hi, Mike Bylund

Greetings from Boulder, Colorado everyone! The snow is in the mountains but I still have shorts on down on campus. The mountains are so beautiful out here, but its missing one thing: the lake. Like everyone else camp is always on my mind, giving me flashbacks of fun and laughter. I can't wait to return and see all the familiar faces in Camelot. Peace to all Belknappers, see you soon. Bogie Foden

Greetings Fellow Belknappers. My days since camp have consisted of playing music, doing schoolwork, and dreaming of next summer. I think about Belknap whenever I have a lot of homework and have often tried to seek the joy of Spanish class but that does not seem to be working out very well. Overall though, life is good here in Wellesley. I miss all of you a lot and I hope everyone has a wonderful holiday. ~Matthew Geisinger

Greetings from beautifully snow covered Auburn, ME! Hope to find everyone safe, happy and healthy as winter approaches quickly. I think of all of you and the wonderful summer we all had under the pines. I hope to see many of you out on the slopes this winter~ hopefully it will be a good one! Have a very Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays! Hope to see everyone very soon. Love, Ben Horton

Timi-Hi, I can't believe the summer ended so long ago, it seems like it was just the other day I was running around up on Clark 1 and 2 for some ultimate frisbee. I've been hanging out at home cranking out some college applications but there certainly hasn't been a day when I haven't thought back to life under the pines. I can't wait to get back. Hope everyone's off season is going well. Keep seeking the joy. Sincerely, Mark Loh

Happy Holidays to those great Middler and Senior cabins, and to all Belknappers alike! I want to give some credit to my '07 LIT's. You guys were awesome every step of the way this past summer, and I hope you're all doing just as well in school now that the cold months have set in. Keep the Belknap spirit alive and well through the off season and never forget to seek the joy everyday! Timi-Ho, Kyle Raab

Hey Brothers! Hope everything is good and your off season is treating you well. I'm at the University of New Haven right now doing my best to spread the Belknap spirit. Hopefully you're all doing the same and keeping in touch with your summer family. Keep it real and seek the joy fellas! ~Matt Sirois

I would like to say thank you for inviting me to work this summer. I had a wonderful time at your camp and I met a lot of nice and kind people. Working and living at camp was a very interesting experience. I hope I wasn't a bad worker, I tried to do my best. I hope to return to the USA next year. Yours faithfully, Karol Posielezny, Kitchen Crew