

Old Kia Kima News



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To All Kia Kima Men BY Steve Horne

I attended the reunion of September 2000. It was a truly great experience. I will never forget it!

When I first heard of the effort to bring back the old camp, I was reluctant to get involved for emotional reasons of my own. I was not ready to let the memories of the old kamp that I had placed in my heart come out. I thought that these memories were of a time in my life that was gone forever, and they should remain where I had put them. I was wrong! I regret now that I did not get involved sooner. I have always known that the years spent there from 1952 to 1962 were the best times of my life, and I never forgot them. In my quite times, I would often think about the great experiences I had there, and just the simple beauty of the river, the old kamp and all my brothers who I shared

so much with. Finally, because of the persistence of my brothers; I had to yield. When I did I was freed. My memories could now be shared in fellowship with the GREATEST FELLOWS I have ever known!

The effort that has been expended to bring back the Spirit of Old Kia Kima is both phenomenal and unique. Our story should be told to the world. Have you ever heard of a group of ageing old men who loved a place and time in their young manhood so much that they didn't want it to die and fade into oblivion? They have now given new life to the place that gave them lasting worthwhile values that made them true men. It has been a great effort!

Our work is on-going. I encourage all of you to become dues paying members. We need your support,

your ideas and your fellowship. Our mission is to give to the young people of today, the spirit of Old Kia Kima that we all share. We can make an impact on their lives if we will only get involved and put forth the effort.

I want to tell you that the brothers who have given the most money to the "Old Kia Kima Preservation Association" did not do it for personal recognition. What recognition? They did it because of the love for that place that we all shared so many years ago.

You are not expected to give anything. We want your fellowship, and, if Old Kia Kima ever touched your heart, and your spirit is strong; your memories dear as a Boy Scout at the old camp, then come join us now! Just \$25.00 a year can ensure that our newsletter gets out to as many people as possi-

ble. You are wanted, we need your support. Yours in Brotherhood, and the spirit of Old Kia Kima.

Steven L. Horne,
Big Indian-Road Runner,
685 Peterson Lake Cove,
Collierville, TN 38017
901 853 8982

(Just make your check payable to Old Kia Kima Preservation Association 'OKKPA' and send it to Brooks Gooch, 4709 Aloha Ave, Mphs, TN 38118 See the insert page for tax deductibility info. jh)

It's A Long Way To Kia Kima

By Steve Demster

The human mind is an amazing thing. As I ease toward the end of my 6th decade of life, it fascinates me that so many details from forty years ago are still so sharp. When Anita and I decided to go to the Old Kia Kima reunion this year, we wondered if we'd be able to remember, much less recognize all those long lost friends from our youth.

You know what, they hadn't changed at all, and (maybe) neither had we. I will admit to some difficulty seeing these wonderful people, but not to any difficulty recognizing them. John Hurt asked me to write an article for the OKKPA paper about where I've been the last 35 years, so here it is.

Neal Talley, Bill Harrison, David Logan and I tried to figure out the dates I attended Kia Kima by matching up with their known dates. My first appearance as a Scout at Kia Kima was for a two week stint at Slick Rock with Ken Humphries and Troop 43. That first summer must have been 1955. I remember that 2 weeks felt like an eternity at age eleven.

My last summer was 1966. I had completed my Masters Degree in Mechanical Engineering and had signed on with Boeing as a systems engineer on the Saturn V /Apollo moon landing program. Vietnam was boiling, and I had a draft deferment through my Boeing job. I was trying to make it through my last Kia Kima summer when the Boeing personnel people called and said, "You'd better show up for work right now, or you're going to get drafted." So I left a week or so before camp closed that year.

In January of 1967 Anita Myrick, my old Miramichiee sweetheart, and I were married. We set up residence in Huntsville, Alabama, at NASA's Marshall Space flight Center. My first job was in Boeing's "Engine to Stage" group. Each of the three stages of the Saturn V was designed and built by a different contractor. The main engines for each of the stages were built by Rocketdyne in Canoga Park, California. This meant four prime contractors in four widespread locations doing design and fabrication work. I was assigned as a systems engineer to ensure that mechanically, electrically and hydraulically all the pieces fit together and worked when they got to the launch pad.

Things weren't standing still on the home front either. Over the next several years we had two kids, Debbie and Miles. Anita was busy as only the mother of small children can be. My career at Boeing was very exciting, and I went on to a number of interesting projects including the Skylab Space Station and the Lunar Rover.

I became deeply interested in aviation and got my Private, Commercial, Instrument and Flight Instructor Certificates during those early years.

As Apollo continued to fly with great success, NASA's budget wound down. Boeing relocated Anita, the two kids and me to Philadelphia to the Vertol Division. This is where the big twin rotor Chinook helicopter was designed and built. This turned out to be an action packed part of my Boeing adventure.

It took a while to become thoroughly versed in the intricacies of the Chinook. We referred to this huge, loud, tornado blowing behemoth as the "Shuddering S_ _ _ house." Boeing asked me to spend 7 months in Chu Lai, S. Vietnam, to help solve some persistent problems with the aircraft. It was designed originally for a nice, sanitary European war, not the heat, sand and grime of Vietnam. Anita's Father (an Army Colonel) and Brother (an Army Infantry Lieutenant) were both in Vietnam already, so I went too. Anita stayed in Huntsville raising the little guys.

After Vietnam we left Boeing and changed our career to automotive engine part manufacturing. During this time we lived in St. Louis. Anita and I also made one of the best decisions of our marriage. We adopted two Korean children, Becky and David to bring our brood up to four. By the early eighties we had relocated to Philadelphia again, where I was President of a German/American manufacturer of automotive valves, pistons, and oil pumps.

Returning one evening from a business trip to Germany, my lovely wife informed me that we were going to have a fifth one in our brood. That's Steven, Jr., born in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, in 1986. He has recharged our batteries, and we heartily recommend this strategy for any of you older folks needing a little more action around the house.

Today we're still in manufacturing. We live in the Detroit area where I am President and COO of a pneumatic control system manufacturer. As with our other two sons, Anita and I are up to our elbows in Boy Scouts and loving it. Steven is about to reach Star. Anita and I both spent summer camp this year with our troop. The four early ones are all grown and scattered, but we are in constant contact. They all know all of their Mother and Father's favorite Hardy stories. It's been a great ride.

Tales from Below the Low Water Bridge

By Anita Myrick Demster

Kia Kima is part of my history too.

Each June during the 50's and 60's I would board the train at Memphis' main station for the ride up through Arkansas to the Hardy station. This was a special train that ran every two weeks to deliver staff and campers headed for the YWCA's Camp Miramichee and the Girl Scout's Camp Kiwani. Miramichee was a very special place for me, just like Old Kia Kima was a special place to you.

It was an exciting time for all of us girls. The train ride up was an expression in liberation celebrating the end of the annual grind of school. It was a reunion with those whom we'd known from previous years, but the ride was too short to possibly catch up on all the juicy details of the months we'd been apart. We were always glad and sad at the same time when the train pulled into Hardy and we saw the Sharp County school buses lined up to take us to camp.

Julia Hall ran a tight ship, just like Ralph Young did. After the hugs of reunion, Julia would line us all up and set the rules, for example, "No one above the low water bridge without a good reason." (There were wild animals up there.)

Never the less there was the inevitable mingling among the two camp staffs and many wonderful anecdotes reside in my memory today. I remember trips to the Sitting Bull Restaurant with a handsome Boy Scout in his snazzy staff T-shirt, where you could actually order what you really wanted to eat. I remember the July 4th celebration at the Kia Kima campfire with Steve Horne and the OA Indian dancers. All of us at Miramichee had been told by someone that the snakes the dancers used were rattlesnakes (they weren't), and I didn't know until years later that they actually sewed the snake's mouths closed.

It was a revelation at the reunion listening to Ralph Young tell his stories of the girls at Miramichee. He told the story about finding two Miramichee girls hiding under a parked car long after one of the July 4th campfires. He hauled them out by their ankles and drove them in disgrace back to Miramichee all the time assuring them that he was going to march them straight into Miss Julia's presence when they arrived. When he got them to the gate, he simply let them out and drove away. The two escapees confessed to Miss Julia anyway. We never heard about these stories because they never got past the front office on the hill. These things were not discussed in those days.

I remember the many trips into town to do laundry. Laundry nights out were cleverly arranged to coincide with those of your date from Kia Kima. (It was at that point in my young life that I realized men could do laundry, too, a fact I have held dear since.) Today, as I drive the stretch of highway from Hardy to camp, it looks an awfully long way compared to the days of my youth. The miles must have been shortened by camp songs and talk among friends.

I started at Miramichee at 10 and left at 23. Those years at Hardy were the years during which I changed from a girl to a young woman. My husband and I were at the 2000 reunion. It felt so natural to be there. I guess in spirit I never left.

BURNOUT ???

Hi.

I typed in old kia kima into the internet and your page came up! I worked at the new Kia Kima from 1990-99 and am now in graduate school at Indiana University, Bloomington in Recreation and Park Administration. I am doing a presentation on burnout and want to talk about the OK-KPA since it appears to be an association of men who have never burned out of Kia Kima!

How have you managed to keep from burning out still to this day which has led to the formation of OKKPA and the resurrection of old Kia Kima?

Alan Wright
Staff Kia Kima Scout Reservation
1990—1999

How did the staff members from Old Kia Kima avoid burnout and retain a high return rate of staff members each summer?

ANSWER TO ALAN'S BURNOUT QUESTION

By Fred Deen

Alan,

I am Frederick E. Deen, Jr. a camper at Kia Kima in 57, 58, a staff member 59,60,61,62,63. I find your inquiry about burn out to be very interesting.

My first year on the Kia Kima Staff I was 14 years old. As a very young person I was able to conduct training sessions to other scouts and adults on camping and cooking. I, a young person, was pressed into a role of leadership. A boy who leads other boys and men - what a great experience.

I lived in South Memphis (a tough part of town), came from a low income family, and didn't have a great expectation of accomplishment. Kia Kima and Boy Scouting was the sentinel influence in my life. Many of the people in my neighborhood ended up in jail or in disappointing lives. I was fortunate to be in a troop of Boy Scouts lead by Robert L. Irwin (Buddy Irwin) who gave many a young, troubled youth a chance to be a part of something that was honorable. Their was never an issue of burnout. Kia Kima was the highlight of my life. At Kia Kima I was exposed to other life styles. I met and worked with fellow staff members who came from middle and upper income families. The Kia Kima experience was part of my maturing process. I was able to develop self confidence at Kia Kima. My family had no aspiration of higher education for me, but many of my fellow staff members were focused on college and professional careers. Kia Kima became a part of my extended family. Many of early decisions were influenced by association with my Kia Kima staff members.

I have often thought that Boy Scouting and Kia Kima was my center touch stone. As I was growing up, as a teenager, and as a youth from a tough part of town, I ventured out and tried all the things that teenagers of that era tried - I'll let your imagination fill in the blanks. Yet no matter how far I strayed I always had Scouting and my ex-

perience at Kia Kima as a core to return to. Scouting and Kia Kima was always about doing the right thing, being honorable, being loyal, basically the twelve points of the Scout Law. If I had not had this core to return to I may have ended up in jail or worse. Some of my friends weren't so lucky. Most of my friends who were in Scouting also had this core of honor and turned out to be successful and honorable people.

I moved around the United States and had little association with Scouting for more than 35 years (I was a scoutmaster in Ireland for a year and a half, while in the U.S. Navy). One day, while living in Minneapolis, Minnesota I received a call from Umpy Osborn, a long lost fellow Boy Scouter from Ole 97, Buddy Irwin's troop. He informed me of a group of Old Kia Kima staff members who were interested in restoring some part of the old Kia Kima Kamp. After 35 years you might think that this would have little appeal to me. Yet, I had many times, over the years, revealed to my wife what a significant influence that Kia Kima had over my life. The more I thought about re-uniting with old Kia Kima staff members, the more excited I became I have experienced nothing but satisfaction and joy since my involvement with OKKPA. What the Old Kia Kima Preservation Association is attempting is glorious. To be able to pass along some of the joy and experience that I had at Kia Kima will be one of the highlights of my life.

Burn out - That's not even a consideration. What can I do to pay back for all the great experiences that I had? I'll keep trying to answer that question.

I hope I have answered your question.

Frederick E. Deen, Jr
 Camper 57, 58
 Staff 59,60,61,62,63

2000 OPENING CAMPFIRE PRESENTATION

By Steve Horne

Kia Kima 1952-1962

Thirty-eight summers have passed since I last came before you and opened our campfire in the "Old Kia Kima Way". From the forest, I come before you once again:

It is a great honor. As the years passed each of us scattered with the four winds, never to return as campers and staff members. On our long journey we discovered that we had left a part of our spirit on the South Fork at Old Kia Kima. We longed to return to find this spirit, the part of us that we had left there. In small councils, some of you met to decide if our memories of Old Kia Kima would die when the last of the old ones passed to the Great Beyond, or could we bring new life to the spirit of Old Kia Kima. It was decided that there would be

life. Many great warriors among us deserve many coups for the work they have done. If we can pass on to the young ones of today, the spirit of Old Kia Kima that we knew, then our work is good. If one boy becomes a man, and then a great warrior because of the spirit of Old Kia Kima that we have passed to

him, then our mission is complete. The spirit of Old Kia Kima challenges us.



Let us not forget those who have passed into the Great Beyond before us. They left a part of themselves here also. Be silent—watch the flickering of the flames in the council fire. Watch the smoke as it rises and disappears. We do not know where it goes. Hear the rustle of the wind through

the leaves — See the hawk as it soars high above our camp. In each of these signs dwells the spirit of those departed warriors who cannot be with us, but who are still here in spirit. We will not forget them.

When the full moon is seen eleven times, we will gather here once again. I will appear before you from the forest in the old way. For even though we gather our tepees and lodge poles and depart, each going our separate way, a part of our spirit will remain here at Old Kia Kima.

FAREWELL MY BROTHERS - UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN !!!

I wrote this early Saturday morning, September 9, 2000 on the road just across from the trail to the Old Church in the Wildwood.

LEADERSHIP GIVING A MAJOR DONOR PROGRAM OF OKKPA

Recognizing that OKKPA supporters may wish to contribute at a leadership level, the Board of Directors has established the following categories:

Osage	\$ 5,000.00
Cherokee	\$10,000.00
Chickasaw	\$25,000.00

Major donor commitments may be fulfilled over a forty-eight (48) month period with gifts of cash or appreciated stock. Upon completion of the pledge, an appropriately engraved plaque will be presented to the donor.

Major donor gifts may be designated for a specific project (i.e. cabin, T-Bird nest, waterfront) and any specific contributions made to date will be credited to your pledge. So, if you have already donated \$500.00 to a specific use, you're 10% paid up on an Osage commitment.

Currently, sixteen (16) OKKPA supporters pledged to become Osage level donors and three (3) have moved up to Cherokee level. As of this writing, eight (8) are fully paid and the remaining Donors have each contributed \$1,250.00 or more.

Please join us in this major donor effort! For additional information, contact :
Rick Phillips (901) 526 7631

Cairn Dedication Ceremony

Saturday, September the 9th 2000 was a really neat day. The gamut of emotions and feeling ran from happiness to tears with many stops in-between. Somewhere just under 200 people were there and enjoyed a great afternoon. Many stayed for the dinner and campfire that followed. Each and every dedication had a special significance for some of those there. Unfortunately for all of us our beloved "Uncle Dudley," George Billingsley to whom the Cairn and Flagstaff are dedicated, had to fly out early due to an approaching weather front.

The Cairn and Flagstaff occupy the center and most prominent place at Old Kia Kima. They oversee the Cabin Quadrangle, Thunderbird Lodge and indeed the whole camp. This is fitting for without the wonderful donation of George and Boyce where would we be today? It was a great ceremony! The monument of stones, the Cairn, holds the Flagstaff, Time Capsule, and a handsome Bronze Plaque with the inscription (located on the next page). We missed you George! May God bless you for your wonderful generosity! jh

Old Kia Kima Flagstaff

Dedicated to
George “Uncle Dudley” Billingsley, Eagle Scout,
 for his boundless spirit of generosity and commitment.

As waterfront director from 1948 to 1951, he set the high standards that have guided others for more than 50 years.

This campsite was abandoned in 1963 and left to the elements of weather and deterioration. In 1998, George (Mr. Kia Kima) and his wife, Boyce, acquired the entire 43 acre site and presented the deed to the Old Kia Kima Preservation Association.

His dedication to restoring and preserving this cherished campsite ~ the land, the cabins, the Thunderbird Nest and the waterfront ~ serves as a beacon of welcoming light for all who pass this flagstaff portal, from the historic quadrangle of Old Kia Kima to “Uncle Dudley’s” waterfront.

Welcome, friend. You stand on sacred ground.

**South Fork River
 September 9, 2000**



IN MEMORY...

Mrs. Opal Woods of Blytheville, Arkansas, a long-time summer resident of Rio Vista, made her transition November 15, 2000 at the spry age of 94. She was known to some of us Old Kia Kima staff as “Mom Woods”. Her words of encouragement during our years on the staff and more recently with our restoration efforts shall never be forgotten. She will also be remembered for offering her cabin as a dressing room for OKK’s July 4th Indian dances at Rio Vista. For a glimpse into the inspiration Mom Woods gave to us see *OKKPA Newsletter*, July 1997, page 6, *Friendship and Mrs. Woods*.

We join with Bill and Nelia (her daughter) Nettles in celebrating Mom Woods’ long and fruitful life. Nelia and her family represent four generations of summer residency at Rio Vista. We are all richer for having known Mom Woods, a friend indeed.

Old Kia Kima Preservation Association, Inc.

President's Message

From : Jim Moore

We can all take immense pride in the restoration results we have achieved at Old Kia Kima. In the six short years since OKKPA, Inc. was founded in 1994, we have taken the dream of restoring the camp and preserving the Spirit of Old Kia Kima for The Youth Of Tomorrow, and brought it to the point where that dream is clearly within reach of coming true.

Yes, we have made great progress with our restoration goals since the acquisition of the 43 acres of Old Kia Kima. A bathhouse was built last year to service the needs of a restored camp, and restoration was completed for all 16 stone cabins this year, plus numerous road and sites improvements. The September 2000 Reunion Cabin and Lodge dedications were a dramatic punctuation to that progress, and clearly everyone present was in awe of the current level of restoration results achieved.

The volunteer work efforts of so many dedicated Officers, Board Members, Committee Members, and most importantly a broad base of expanding Membership financial support fueled all this momentum. This continues to be extremely important in order to reach our ultimate goals, and we are very grateful and appreciative of all the monetary support contributed by OKKPA Members, friends, and supporters. That continued support makes it possible for us to remain steadfastly committed to the purpose of establishing or supporting Leadership Training and Service Programs which will enrich the lives of young people. This is the ultimate reason for all our efforts, however the necessary first steps are restoration of the facilities.

The Board of Directors recently approved the following OKKPA Core Purpose Statement:

WHAT: Restore the Camp and Preserve the "Spirit" of Old Kia Kima for the Youth Of Tomorrow.

WHY: We want future generations to experience the Spirit of Old Kia Kima, to learn the values of *Integrity, Achievement, Responsibility, and Courage*, and to utilize the Camp to pass this along to future generations just like we did - This will be our legacy.

HOW: By continuing to support and maintain the high principles of Scouting as we knew them to be at Old Kia Kima; and by advancing those principles in service to others through organized programs of community involvement, Youth Leadership Training and camp activities that will span the new millennium and continue our legacy in perpetuity.

In order to get the camp ready for this intended purpose, we still have some necessary restoration projects ahead of us. The Thunderbird Lodge, Old Hospital, and Old Pump House are on our priority list because of the functional utility that they afford, and also because the unsupported standing stone walls are a safety concern until fully restored. Thunderbird Lodge restoration is fully funded and work will begin 4th quarter 2000, followed by restoration of the remaining structures. Projects beyond the Lodge are not fully funded and are dependant upon the availability of future contributions. Our ongoing restoration progress depends on your continued volunteer efforts and support, as well as that of our friends and major contributors.

"Onward and Upward..."

WHAT WONDERFUL MEMORIES

By Harry "Chigger" Danciger

You know the old saying about someone who asks what time it is and you tell him how to build a watch. Well, this is one of those stories. Way back in 1941 when I joined Troop 13, the minimum age for scouting was 12 (not 11 like it is today). My active scouting was over as a kid by the time I was 15. By then I had accumulated Life Rank with 29 merit badges; I still needed Camping (50 nights on the ground) merit badge as well as Bird Study (40 birds to identify).

The problem was that gas rationing was applied during all of World War II, and the extent of camping was mostly confined to Camp Currier. And those trips were limited to only occasional excursions. My dad, Henry Dinkelspiel, had been at KKK as a kid, became a member of the waterfront staff, was a Council Scout (forerunner of OA), and was an Eagle with 33 merit badges. So, my chance for the Eagle rank was looking bleak.

Now let's fast forward to when I was 19. This was the minimum age for ARC Water Safety Instructor. At the time, it was given at the old Hotel Devoy in downtown Memphis. Not only did I get the rating, but I met a lifelong friend who was in

the same class by the name of George Billingsley. I went to Ole Miss and George went to the University of Arkansas. Between my junior and senior year Uncle Dudley called me. "You need two merit badges for Eagle and I need a waterfront man," he said. "We can pay you \$5.00 per week plus your meals." He continued, "Sleep in the camp demonstration area to get your nights on the ground for Camping, and take the birding hike course which starts at 5:30 a.m." It was an offer I couldn't refuse.

So, Charlie Marcus and David Peters, who taught birding and were about 15 or 16 at the time, were my teachers. I was 22, but in those days there was no time restriction on becoming Eagle Scout by 18--or we wouldn't have this story to write. We learned (and I still know) most of my birds through sound and not sight because of the thick Ozark foliage. I remember once calling a tufted titmouse (peter, peter, peter) in my early learning stage. Charlie said, "Well, it does sound like a tufted titmouse, but continue to listen to the other calls. That's a mocking bird imitating a titmouse in the midst of other calls." Amazing! Even today I marvel to listen to the realism of how a mocker can duplicate other species.

The summer was waning and my list of identified birds was 38 and holding. Our feathered friends had started migrating and were becoming scarce, as August was upon us. So, Charlie suggested that if I got a new bird I should tell David Peters or Jim McWhorter (waterfront, but a crack birder), and they could relay the information to him. Well, I finally got 39, but no fortieth was in sight. Then one morning I was sitting in a canoe in the middle of the river in the waterfront section.

All of a sudden, flying in formation only 20 feet above the river coming upstream were a pair of American Egrets. Jim McWhorter was down river in the slough in a canoe. I started screaming, "Hey Jim - McWhorter- American Egrets! American Egrets! American Egrets!" They had by divine messenger flown right over McWhorter as well. He yelled, "Yes! You got it!"

And thus ended my quest for the coveted Eagle. I also proudly passed Canoeing from George that summer and if my memory is correct he issued only four merit badges for this the entire camp period. If George gave you canoeing, you earned it.

What a summer...what wonderful memories!

**We honor these 16 Native American tribes
by choosing their names for
the restored cabins of Old Kia Kima**

East Side / Ouadrangle

Osage / Cabin #1--Dedicated To Old Kia Kima Staff & Campers 1916-1944

Hopi / Cabin #2--Dedicated To The Memory of Harlen F, Mackey

Lenni Lenape / Cabin #3--

Cheyenne / Cabin #4--Dedicated to The Memory of Bob Hurt

Sioux / Cabin #5--

Apache / Cabin #6--

North Side / Ouadrangle

Cherokee / Cabin #7--

Pikuni / Cabin #8--Dedicated To Ken Humphreys

Chickasaw / Cabin #9--Dedicated To Miller M. "Huck" Huckabee

Mohawk / Cabin #10--Dedicated To Ralph "Padre" Young & Martha Jane

Mohican / Cabin #11--Dedicated To Frank U. "Simon" Simonton

West Side / Ouadrangle

Choctaw / Cabin # 12--

Navajo / Cabin #13--Dedicated To The Memory of Orville W Swarner, I & II

Shawnee / Cabin #14--Dedicated To The Memory of Willard E. "Chief" Hayes

Comanche / Cabin #15--Dedicated To The Memory of Ford Turner

Iroquois / Cabin #16--Dedicated Io James A. "Gray Eagle" Moore

Flagstaff

Dedicated to George "Uncle Dudley" Billingsley

Time Capsule Presentation

"TO ALL HERE PRESENT..."

T-Bird Restoration Memorial

Dedicated To The Memory Of Robert L. "Buddy" Irwin

Thunderbird Lodge

Dedicated To The Youth Of Tomorrow

In Memory Of The Camp Directors

Of Old Kia Kima

1916-1963

An Open Letter

Dear OKKPA Brothers,

I was delighted with many of the reunion conversations, and my own idiosyncratic tour of the campground, and want to add something to an upcoming newsletter.

First, I was awed by the miles traveled by most OKKPA brothers, and so many of the Ole 97 contingent, and wonder if some kind of "OKKPA Atlas" could be compiled, to encourage travelers (particularly those of us who are retired or semi-retired) to stay in touch. A neat little graphic and a geographic file of names, addresses, and phone numbers, would be useful if you are in the vicinity of someone you really want to reconnect with. Case in point, about 10 days before I talked with John Lang on the phone, he drove within a mile of my farmhouse, in Giles County, Tennessee, on his way to Memphis. He didn't know where I was and so we missed a great opportunity for a visit.

Second, my amble through the greenbrier brambles, at the reunion Saturday morning, was interesting. I didn't definitely locate the old Friday night campfire site, in picking my way east along the riverbank from the old Thunderbird Lodge, but I discovered several ideas worth consideration for OKKPA's planners: 1) cleaning the trail of greenbriers (several thorns gashed me up pretty well) should be pretty easy if some consideration was given to making the trail geezer friendly (not ADA-compliant) for anyone wanting to walk along the river; 2) several natural amphitheater type sites presented themselves as candidates for

a future campfire site or for merely meditative spots (even though this is not Northern California); and 3) the exuberant water-lilies and other aquatic beauties along the slough make a wonderful destination in themselves (Monet canvases on the South Fork) if a few bits of undergrowth were cleared out to enhance the water-view.

The last-mentioned possibility is dedicated to Plato Toulia-tos, who I was delighted to see again on the Friday canoe trip on the Current River, and who has been doing (of late) lots of water-garden landscaping projects for his Memphis clients. You understand, of course, that Plato might look at the botanical mayhem on the old KK waterfront and say, don't whack anything at all! But then again he might be the best of all possible guides, to enhancing what Nature has bestowed, by 35 years of benign neglect from the Lawn-mower & Chainsaw Mafia.

None of this will please everyone. Some of our earliest ideas of landscape gardening were the buzz-cut boot camp idea of scrape-and-rape the parade ground -- you need no vegetation on your head either, pick up all those butts and field-strip em, soldier, etc. --which may have made sense circa 1916, but may not anymore.

Third, I am delighted to learn that George Billingsley's partner has bought the far-shore of Kia Kima. My brother Pete, myself, and our father (Al Bowman who died Nov. 6, 1999) camped out in a time-share cabin there in 1997 and we realized immediately how wonderful it would be to reconnect both sides of the South

Fork. At the very least, we should hope (negotiate) for a scenic easement that would forever protect the viewshed (a buzzword I learned a year ago) across the river, both ways. At the best, perhaps, we could re-institute the watery entree to Kia Kima, by way of a dory, which I would like to endow as a great way to enter the old campground. George told me after the banquet Friday night that in 1948 the two dories were donated to the camp by Gerald Capers, who was (1) a Kia Kima counselor, (2) a Southwestern graduate, (3) a legendary Tulane history professor, and (4) author of the first real local history of Memphis "Biography of a River Town."

I would like to do likewise, if my brother Pete is in agreement, particularly since he went on to heavyweight rowing fame at Princeton, in the late 1950's; he undoubtedly got his start on Kia Kima's waterfront. The problem is that the price of one wooden dory is probably as costly as bankrolling one of the 16 cabins. The later aluminum dories -- even though my life owes much to what future historians will call The Age of Aluminum -- just weren't as wonderful to row. They lacked gravitas, that ineffable moral solidity we need, now more than ever.

This threatens to go on forever, so I will end it here, having made four main points (geography, historical archaeology, landscape architecture, and wooden boat technology) for us all. All the best.

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REUNION

**Sept. 6th - 8th
2001**

**Make your plans
to attend now !**

**BOARD MEETING
WORKDAY**

**April 26, 27, & 28
2001**

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**April Board Meeting,
and the September Annual Reunion
at Old Kia Kima :**

April 26, 27, & 28, 2001 Work-Party / Board Meeting At Old Kia Kima

Requested Attendance:

All Board Members, Officers and Committee Members

Invitational Attendance:

All OKKPA Members are encouraged to join in with the comradery and fellowship of the numerous restoration work projects and free time activities, as well as attend/observe the Business Meeting.

Reunion 2001

September 6, 7, & 8, 2001 OKKPA Annual Reunion (& Friday Board Meeting) All OKKPA Members, friends, special guests, and interested/invited potential members are encouraged to attend.

Newsletter notice / invitation will be sent July 2001.