



The Year Without Elephants and Sharks

Summer camp at Kia Kima in the late 50's and early 60's can be thought of during an era of innocence. At that time, hazing and harassment had not become common words along with child protection, so it was very likely that the staff remembers what were thought of as fun and jokes are now classified totally different. Those were the times where a Scout was roaming over camp looking for the bunk stretchers, the shore line, keys to the row locks, and the smoke shifter that some staff member has asked them to retrieve. Likewise it was with the daily dining hall stories and the villain who would sneak out in the dark of night and place their mark (with magic marker) on some unsuspecting camper. It was this time that the year “without elephants and sharks” occurred.

With every Scout having a knife and with the abundance of twigs in camp, those magic talismans and amulets were conceived. For warding off those elephants on land, a necklace with a red and black color was worn by the staff. For keeping the sharks at bay, the waterfront staff wore an amulet on their ankle that served that purpose. For those campers who doubted the effectiveness of these powerful objects, it was always reaffirmed with no elephant or shark sightings that summer.