



A Report on the April 2005 OKKPA Board Meeting and Spring Work Weekend

Our spring work weekend turned out to be a smashing success. The number of attendees looked more like a mini-Fall reunion than a chance to strain and sweat on behalf of the grand old thunderbird. The total count was nearly fifty versus a goal the Executive Committee had set of reaching 45 participants. The weather was excellent; the food was even better and a great time was had by all.

The spring Board meeting accomplished much, which has already been reported on in the recent Old Kia Kima News.

The most exciting thing, of course, was the approval to upscale the Ralph and Martha Jane Young Chapel, to enable it to seat the entire current 64 person cabin capacity of the camp. The contract with Bobby Williams' construction company was signed during the weekend and our 'Sluggo' and his merry band began building almost immediately thereafter. The Chapel is now very near to completion. The dedication of the Chapel has been scheduled for Sunday, July 31st at 1:00PM at OKK. We hope you'll be there.



The Board also authorized two studies to be accomplished in order to select the next major renovation effort for OKK. One study will cover alternative recommendations for use of the old hospital structure.

The second study will present a proposal for a toilet facility to be installed adjacent to the camp office area at the top of the quadrangle. This will enable OKKPAers to have restroom facilities without climbing the quadrangle hill.

Numerous other issues were covered as well.

The major work projects completed were:

1) clearing of the hillside below the Thunderbird Lodge to enable an unrestricted view of the river. You need to see this!



2) the cabins were cleaned and repaired for campers.

3) A bulletin board was built on heavy wooden poles and with a roof covering.

4) The quad was remulched and there were major cleanups of the bathhouse, the office, the kitchen, and other key areas.

Thank you all so very much.

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REFLECTIONS FROM THE APRIL CAMPFIRE

BY : Jim Moore

“An Old Kia Kima campfire is something special, oftentimes remembered long after the other memories of camp are fading, a magical coming together at the end of the day. It is an opportunity to enjoy each other’s company, to make music, sing, and laugh together, to share a common bond, and to sit huddled up around the leaping flames which cast a warm glow over the circle of faces as they lift little sparks toward the stars. It is also an opportunity to teach young people about ones Responsibilities to self and others, to emphasize the value of Integrity, and how this links with the Achievement of important personal goals, and how all these tie in with the Courage to always do the right thing”.

As we walk down memory lane reflecting on our experiences at camp, we inevitably find that many of those memories, when retold, are punctuated with an exclamation mark by the Sunday Night Campfire upon arrival at camp, and by the Friday Night Campfire upon departure. As a successive parade of Scout Troops took their place with other Troops seated before the fire in wide eyed anticipation, everyone sensed the greater presence of the Spirit of Old Kia Kima hanging like electricity in the air. Then, as the songs and activities started, they began to feel the reassuring tug of an invisible common bond that inevitably links all participants to all Old Kia Kima Campfires, past, present, and future.

So it was then, and so it is even today. This was the unique experience for over 40 OKK and KKS

alumni participants in the April work weekend that ended on Saturday night with a traditional OKK style campfire. We “modeled the way it used to be,” sang the old songs, participated in and laughed at the skits, and our minds flooded with memories of days of old when Scouts were bold and Kia Kima was where it was happening! Now, like beads strung on an eternal strip of knotted rawhide, at each new OKK campfire, we link the past with the present as we take up positions on the logs to join others in experiencing anew the Spirit of Old Kia Kima, It is this enduring “Spirit” that stretches along a continuum of time, irrevocably linking our past with our future, and propelling participants along a timeline that began in 1916 and now reaches toward the 100 year mark, and on into perpetuity.

Walking the “hallowed” grounds this April, and joining others on the many work projects needed to ready the camp for another camping season, we

shared the same common bond of a love and respect for the role that the Old Kia Kima experience played in our life. During the weekend, we all reflected with amazement on the re-birth of Old Kia Kima, and in doing so, we couldn’t help but be struck by the following. It’s truly a remarkable story! “As the years roll by”, the Traditions, Core Values, and Spirit of Old Kia Kima have been preserved and passed on to new generations by word, deed, and example. Now, because of the completion of a near total restoration, we are offering the camp for young people to enjoy

and again experience its magic - just like we did!

In every ending are the seeds for a new beginning, although I confess that I couldn’t see through the tears of that poignant last OKK Staff campfire in 1963 to believe that this was so. The truth is that Old Kia Kima’s Spirit rose like a Phoenix from the ashes of that “last” campfire to transcend a time



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and a place, and in doing so, it turned into a Legacy and a Heritage that took on a life of its own. The enduring bridge into preserving this rich heritage was formed at that last OKK closing Campfire in 1963 when the Old camp ended and the new camp, KKSR, began in 1964 under the leadership of the former OKK staff members who attended the last OKK campfire. Their intuitive goal then, although not formally written as such, was much the same as OKKPA's Mission statement today; "Preserve the (memory of the) place, honor the vision of all who have shared in the spirit of the South Fork waters, and provide an environment where elders may pass on knowledge and experience, enriching and shaping the lives of young people today". Thus, the traditions and Spirit were preserved and nurtured to live on at KKSR, just as they live on in our hearts today.

The April work weekend was fun working shoulder to shoulder and sharing a common bond with new and old friends alike. Then, as it is today, the "Spirit" of Old Kia Kima is distilled from the essence of Teamwork and embodies cheerful and unselfish personal contributions to the greater good of the team. It is based on a strong commitment to always do your very best in service to others, with a balance of duty to God and Country. It is observed in a respect for others derived from strength of character and respect for self, and is built upon integrity and demonstrated moral, ethical and spiritual values in the conduct of one's daily life.

The Heritage and traditions of Old Kia Kima are deeply rooted in the rich character building traditions of the Boy Scouts. Programs of outdoor challenge were built around skill development, teaching of leadership principles, and emphasis on the personal growth and development achieved through acquiring the values of Integrity, Achievement, Responsibility, and Courage. Today, our aspirations are driven by the desire for future generations to experience the Spirit of Old Kia Kima, to learn these 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.

To illustrate the importance of these values, at the April campfire, four former Staff Members shared the Talk Stick topic of Old Kia Kima Core Values

learned long ago – how they impacted my life. David Logan spoke eloquently on the core value of Integrity. Dan McGuire spoke on how the core value of Achievement impacted his life. Rick Phillips spoke of the impact and importance of Responsibility, then passing the talk stick to Boyd Billingsley who spoke from the heart on the core value of Courage. We hung on every word, for their story was our story, and we knew the time would also come for us to be called on to speak to the importance of these core values learned long ago - this will be our shared responsibility and Legacy to pass on to the Youth of Tomorrow.

These Youth Leadership Core Values are unique in that they are "outwardly demonstrated leadership character traits" which cannot be bestowed upon someone, for example, as is the case with title, rank or authority. These values of Integrity, Achievement, Responsibility, & Courage are distinguished by the fact that no one can give them to you. Nor can they be earned in the traditional sense of a certificate or diploma. Yes, they can be taught, learned and acquired, but one must first seek them out as a commitment to make them guiding principles to light the paths and guide decisions as one travels through life. In doing so, we should teach that you will not only find the way for yourself, but also set an outstanding example for others to follow.

The Board of Directors of the Old Kia Kima Preservation Association, Inc. selected these four values to best represent the essence of the "Spirit of Old Kia Kima" which we seek to preserve, and that will guide the future development of our Youth Leadership Training Initiatives. They will help us to convey the "Spirit" by letting others know that this small set of general guiding principles are OKKPA's essential and enduring tenets for Youth Leadership – a key part of the rich Legacy we want to share and utilize the Camp to pass along to the Youth of Tomorrow.

We hope you will join us in this endeavor and encourage others to attend the next event at Old Kia Kima. Come and participate in a wonderful walk down memory lane by attending the always present campfire at the end of the formal gathering of old and new friends alike. You will be glad you did – see you there, and please be sure to bring a friend!

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Cleaning Up The Cabins

By Brooks Gooch

George Clarke, Ron Tate and I, Brooks Gooch, had the chore of checking the cabins. This entailed moving the bunks out of the center of the cabins, checking for wasp nests, sweeping if needed, and accounting for the mattresses. In addition we checked all the screens and then on the next round of the 16



cabins repaired the screens. The repairs were to screens which had been torn away from the studs. The wooden trim strips had to be removed, the screen stretched back into place, stapled and the trim replaced. We also repaired the screen door stops and springs. All 16 cabins were in good shape and ready for campers. There is one problem which we did not have the proper material to repair. There are a few small holes in some of the screens. I will try to find some fine wire with which to sew up the holes.

I think that the work days went very smoothly and that everyone enjoyed the weekend of fellowship and **WORK!**

R' hood .

Waterfront Cleanup

By Pat Moody

A hail and hardy crew attacked the bank vegetation and water foreign objects with hands and tools. Weeds were hand pulled from the bank and "weedeaten" from the surrounding area by John McGuire, John Fletcher, and several others..

Each spring the South Fork flow brings more clutter to the swimming area. An attempt to create a wade in area down river side of the dock was made by Dan McGuire and Pat Moody. Sticks, barbedwire, stones, and waterlilies were removed. Dan wrestled with one log bigger than himself. Removal help was provided by Bobby Harris, Rick Phillips and one large tractor and chain.

Much was accomplished but more needs to be done before the waterfront is satisfactory. The changing river presents a continuing opportunity for improvement.



Our New Camp Bullitin Board being Constructed

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OKKPA Membership Drive

For those of you who were at the Spring Work Weekend in April, President Steve Demster presented a letter to each attendee explaining some of the Membership Category and Dues Structure changes approved at the April 2005 Board Meeting.

Quoting Steve from that letter, "We have another major goal for 2005. First, we struggled through the **reclamation and preservation stage** where all of our energies flowed into bringing OKK back from oblivion to its original splendor. Next, we faced the **challenge of utilization**, i.e., letting youth groups know about this lovely place in the Ozarks and getting them to come and experience something, which had stood silent and forgotten for 40 years. We have succeeded at that challenge, too. This year, we will face **the challenge of providing for Old Kia Kima in perpetuity**. Your Board will be working hard to build the financial foundation on which Kia Kima can strongly stand for many decades to come, not an easy challenge especially after each of us is gone."

While we will aggressively continue to seek endowment funds for long-term financial security of Old Kia Kima, your board believes that Old Kia Kima is sufficiently unique and wonderful that we can keep a strong membership base going forward into the future even after the founders of OKKPA are gone. We will count on the generosity of that membership base to provide for the future well-being of OKK.

Accordingly, several actions were taken in the April 2005 Board meeting:

1. A goal was set to reach a **membership level of 250** by the end of April 2007. We are currently at 120. We ask each of you to be part of this effort to go out and tell the Old Kia Kima story and to bring in new members who want to contribute to the character building of our nation's youth.
2. The dues structure was changed to provide a series of dues levels where everyone would be able to belong to OKKPA and which the Board believed would also enable the organization to be self-sustaining at the higher membership level of April 2007.

3. The dues year was changed to correspond to our tax and financial fiscal year July 1 to June 30. That means our dues are due now, which is a three month 'pull ahead' from our past practice. This one time adjustment, which we needed to make for sound business reasons also will enable us to 'bank' a little more reserve for the future.

We have all put an enormous amount of work into bringing Old Kia Kima to this point. We must now 'tie the bow' by setting up a long-term, financially self-sufficient organization. Please go find those friends and associates who want to make a difference to the youth of America. Bring them with you to Hardy for one of our great weekends.

In addition, there will be a special recruiting breakfast in Memphis on Saturday morning, August 6th. If you know of someone who should be a member of OKKPA, invite them to the breakfast and send their name and address to membership@oldkiakima.org. OKKPA will send them a wonderful information packet on our organization and a formal breakfast invitation.



Finding Those Mirameechee and Kiwani Girls

We're trying to locate former Mirameechee and Kiwani campers and staff members. Did your sister go to one of those great girls camps? Perhaps, a girl friend? Can you tell us the married name of some of the gals from the good ole days of **BSA, YWCA and GS of the USA** fraternization? We want to be sure they get invited to our August 6th breakfast and become part of our OKKPA family. Send their names and addresses to anita.demster@oldkiakima.org. She'll contact them and invite them.

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OLD KIA KIMA PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION, INC.

6859 Deerhill Dr.
Clarkston, MI, 48346

Friday, June 03, 2005

To: All OKKPA Members and Friends

Subject: **Official Dedication of the Ralph & Martha Jane Young Chapel at Old Kia Kima**

You are cordially invited to attend the dedication ceremony for the **Ralph & Martha Jane Young Chapel at Old Kia Kima** on Sunday, July 31, 2005 at 1:00 PM. The ceremony will honor Ralph and honor the memory of Martha Jane, two people who over many years gave their spirit and energy to Old Kia Kima, our special place on the South Fork.

After the dedication, we will have a reception for Ralph Young at the Dining Pavilion.

Sincerely,

Steven W. Demster
President

P.S. Beginning at 1PM will be a non-denominal church service prior to the dedication.



Memphis Summer Reunion Breakfast

When : Saturday August 6, 2005

9:00 AM

Where :

Faith Christian Church

4965 Willow Road

Memphis, TN, 38117.

Please bring your spouse and pass the word to all your camp friends

ESPECIALLY Miramechee and Kiwani girls

and

Kia Kima Scout Reservation guys

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