

ONE TIME...AT SUMMER CAMP

Memorable days and nights at summer camp



Lost at “Lost Colony”

When I was 12, my brothers and sister got together money they earned working in tobacco to send me to 4-H Camp in Manteo, N.C. I will never forget the ferry ride over even though I was raised on the White Oak River. I had never seen so much water.

First night there we went to see the “Lost Colony” pageant, and I was so tired I fell asleep during most of it. I spilled an orange drink on the boy sitting next to me. Over 40 years later I finally got to go back to see the pageant in full. It was on my list of things to do after I turned 50.

*Eugenia Rudd | Newport
Carteret-Craven EC*

Thanks for sending us stories of times at summer camp. See more on our Web site. Next month we'll publish your stories of buying and selling farm products in the old days. (Deadline was May 15.) For themes and rules of our “Nothing Could Be Finer” series, go to page 24.



A week with Aunt Polly & a rattler

My sister, Peg, and I both went to Girl Scout camp near our home for a week's stay with moms from our neighborhood. This was Peg's first year to stay away from home in the woods, and she was a little shaky.

Going to see “Aunt Polly” was one of the worst parts for all of us. “Aunt Polly” was the outhouse—full of wasps, snakes and quite a stinker. Peg was forced to visit “Aunt Polly” late one night, and while getting her PJs back on she bumped her special, brand-new Girl Scout flashlight, and it rolled into the hole. You could hear her for miles! She wasn't scared to come back in the dark. She was mad! The next morning, she was most insistent that one of the moms should get her flashlight back from “Aunt Polly.” That didn't happen, of course. It was the same day I was demonstrating how to hold a baby timber rattler right behind the head when it turned its head and bit my finger. That was the end of the week for both of us, and I'm sure some of the moms were glad.

*Julia Book | Candler
Haywood EMC*

A church camp prank

As a youngster the highlight of my summers was going to Camp Grier in the North Carolina mountains at Old Fort. Why some of us did a foolish prank one summer I'll never know, but I will not forget it.

The cabins at our Presbyterian Church camp had boys bunks on one end of the building, girls bunks on the other end, and a huge meeting room in the center. Two adult staff members supervised each side of the building.

One night two boys from my church, a girlfriend and I planned to switch our counselors' clothes during the night. After everyone was asleep, we were to get together in the meeting room. However, the guys overslept. My girlfriend and I bravely tiptoed into their area and woke up one of the males. I was scared to death.

We did swap the supervisors' clothes. When our counselor went to get dressed the next morning, all she could find was a man's clothes. She was not a happy camper. Fortunately, no one solved the mystery of the misplaced clothes.

*Cathy Holsey | Chapel Hill
Piedmont EMC*

Warming up Aunt Cynthia

One summer my family decided to send all of the girls to GA camp (Girls in Action). I was one of the girls. My Aunt Cindy was a chaperone.



My Aunt Cynthia was 36 and I was 7. She says our trick on her did not work.

We had the best time playing tricks on each other. Certain things we had to do each day: wake up at 7 a.m. and have prayer with devotion, lunch at noon, house-group competitive activities at 3, and after dinner we played tag and tried to scare everybody.

The trick I loved the most was putting Aunt Cindy's hand in a bowl of warm water while she was sleeping. We were sure she would wet the bed, but she did not. (At least that's what she says.)

*Casi Joy Harper | Lillington
South River EMC*

When Walter was here

I attended camp one year as a counselor. I think I was around 14 at the time, so I was still a kid myself. One night, the other counselor and I told the girls a made-up story about a man named Walter who roamed the woods at night. After the girls left, I stayed behind and wrote in shaving cream, "Walter was here" on the wall.

The look on those girls' faces when they saw the writing on the wall was priceless! One girl got so scared she wanted to call home to have her parents pick her up. We had to tell them that the story was made up.

The story was so convincing that I even had trouble sleeping that night, and I was the one who made it up. I guess that was my payback for playing a joke on those poor little girls.

*Tammy Jones | Iron Station
Rutherford EMC*

Seeing double

I attended camp at Laurel Ridge in the late 70s for five summers in a row. During one of these week-long adventures I was in my cabin getting ready to go to lunch when some of my buddies saw me. They all had looks of astonishment on their faces.

"How are you *here*, Paula? We just saw you at the mess hall!"

I thought they were picking on me, but they were so insistent. We all hurried up the hill, and when I came around the corner I practically ran into a girl who was the spitting image of me. It was like looking into a mirror. It was so surreal and scary that we both burst into tears and ran in the opposite direction.



I am in the white tank top next to the female counselor, without my twin.

You hear that "everyone has a twin in the world," but I have actually seen mine.

We did not see each other again, even though our pals tried to get us in the same place at the same time throughout the rest of the week.

*Paula Griffin Stone | Pilot Mountain
Surry-Yadkin EMC*

The well-dressed 4-H camper

When I was a child, I always wanted to go to summer camp. With a family of seven, however, it was never possible.

When my son was 11, I found out about the 4-H camps around North Carolina, where we had just moved. We were both excited to learn that we could actually manage to send him to a one-week "technology camp."

I packed his shorts, t-shirts, socks, etc. per the recommendations in the material provided to campers. He had a clean outfit for each of the seven days that he would be there,

When I returned seven days later, I

was shocked to see that he had on the same clothes that I had dropped him off in. It was obvious that he had worn them the entire time. We rode all the way home with the car windows open.

He swore that he had changed clothes while at camp. He said, "I wore my bathing suit every time we went swimming!"

*Jeannette Haynes | Maiden
Rutherford EMC*

Golden Valley girls in peace paint

For almost 20 years I have been a Girl Scout leader, so I have many fun memories tucked away. But one particular summer I remember my assistant leader and I took our troop to Camp Golden Valley near Rutherfordton. Before we left we planned a special theme for our camping adventure, Native American Indians. We made plans to cook Indian dishes, to make Indian crafts, to play games that the Indian children would play and even to take on Indian names. So during our weekend we all answered to our assigned Indian names. There was Swift Doe, Soaring Eagle, Tiny Swan, and of course, Raging Hormones (the name suggested for me by my boss).

During the weekend we cooked lima bean and corn succotash in an iron skillet over the campfire. Many of the girls cried "yuck" until they tasted it, loved it and then wanted more until it was all gone. We also painted our faces with "peace paint" instead of war paint. Looking at the pictures brings back special memories of that camping trip, that summer and those girls.

*Gail Costner | Dallas
Rutherford EMC*



Here we are wearing our face masterpieces.

Learning to eat everything, almost

Every summer I used to go to Girl Scout camp in Tennessee. I loved hiking and canoeing and inner tubing—but I didn't love the dinner table policy: Campers had to eat at least three bites of everything served, even if you didn't like it. I was a picky eater, and that summer what I really didn't like was coleslaw. I hated everything about it—the taste, the texture, the smell. I would gag just thinking about it.

I begged my Scout leader not to force me to eat my three bites of coleslaw, but she wouldn't be swayed. I even told her, "I swear, if I eat it I'm going to be sick," but she just handed me a fork. I held my nose and put a lump of the slaw in my mouth, but sure enough, I got sick all over the dinner table, the floor and two of my poor tent mates. It was horrible, but at least nobody tried to make me eat coleslaw again.

Rachel Pollock | Carboro
Piedmont EMC

Send us your best Earn \$50

Here are the themes in our "Nothing Could Be Finer" series. Send us your stories and pictures about these themes. If yours is chosen for publication, we'll send you \$50. You don't have to be the best writer. Just tell it from your heart.

August 2007 The Class Prank

What's the best one you ever heard?

Deadline: June 15

September 2007

My Favorite Fair Photo

From a North Carolina fair or festival. Tell us when and where. Deadline: July 15

October 2007

My Favorite Photo

North Carolina people and places. Digital photos must be high resolution. Deadline: August 15

The Rules

1. Approximately 200 words or less.
2. One entry per household per month.
3. Photos are welcome. Digital photos must be 300 dpi and actual size.
4. E-mailed or typed, if possible. Otherwise, make it legible.
5. Include your name, electric co-op, mailing address and phone number.
6. If you want your entry returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. (We will not return others.)
7. We pay \$50 for each submission published. We retain reprint rights.
8. We will post on our Web site more entries than we publish, but can't pay for those submissions. (Let us know if you don't agree to this.)
9. Send to: Nothing Finer, Carolina Country, 3400 Sumner Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27616
Or by e-mail: finer@carolinacountry.com
Or through the Web: www.carolinacountry.com

At Kay Yow's basketball camp

Last summer I was lucky enough to receive an all-expense paid scholarship to attend Kay Yow Women's Basketball Camp at N.C. State University. As a huge State fan and a basketball enthusiast, I was more than excited to go. Not to mention the fact that Kay Yow is one of my biggest role models. For four days I got to stay in University Towers at N.C. State and learn more about basketball than ever before.



My friend Heather (at left) and I went to the Free Expression Tunnel at N.C. State when we were at the camp.

I met plenty of new friends and the whole N.C. State women's basketball team. I even had my picture taken with Kay Yow! I loved every second of the camp. I was so sad to leave, and I cried when it was time to go home. This was definitely the best camp I have ever attended and it's all thanks to EnergyUnited and Touchstone Energy. Thank you Touchstone Energy for the scholarship and the camp experience of a lifetime.

Olivia Myers, 14 | Lexington
EnergyUnited

The Blue Racer's lunch

When I was 12, I attended a summer camp in Michigan. It actually gets hot there in the summer so our uniform included shorts and knee-length socks.

One particularly hot day, my group went on a hike. As we were walking along, I heard a rustling in the leaves on the ground. Passing right in front of me was a three- to four-foot Blue Racer snake.

Blue Racers, native to Michigan and adjoining states, are appropriately named because of their color. Plus, they are among the fastest snakes around. I was going to catch him. He was slithering in a serpentine fashion. But he was no match for a persistent

12-year-old, and I won! Blue Racers can bite, but they are not poisonous, so I held him tightly behind his head between my thumb and forefinger. Now what?

When I held him up, I noticed he had a large lump about a foot from his tail. I didn't have a sack to carry him, so I got creative and removed one of my socks and put the lumpy snake in.

I couldn't wait to get back to camp to show off my catch. In front of a large crowd, I proceeded to shake my sock. Lo and behold out came the snake without the lump. I shook the sock some more and out plopped the lump—a large, green headless frog. YUCK!

Roger King | Highlands
Haywood EMC

You can't fool a mom

Mountaintop Youth Camp, situated high above Pinnacle, N.C., holds fond memories for me. Camp was jam-packed with activities, and counselors often had their hands full particularly during Teen Week.

One such week after evening devotions, my friend Sherry and several fellow campers put their heads together, snuck into the cabin's bathroom and stole the showering counselor's clothes and towel. Sherry proceeded to hand out Pop Rocks to throw at the dripping wet counselor as she exited the bathroom.

Soon we heard wails of, "Okay, where are my clothes?" Minutes passed before Counselor Nancy appeared, wrapped in a shower curtain. She was greeted by exploding Pop Rocks, enough to scare the socks or any remaining clothing off her. After an extended interrogation of the cabin, Nancy had no clue as to the perpetrators. "Lights Out" arrived, and smug campers were soon sleeping soundly as Nancy hatched a plot of her own. (Nancy was a mom to two teens herself.)

The following morning Nancy awoke to a chorus of screams coming from the bathroom. The campers had met their match. Vaseline-coated toilet seats had got 'em! 📍

Mary Kay Cox | Four Oaks
South River EMC