



DICK CHAMBERLAIN'S RESPONSE IN RECEIVING THE AMERICAN CAMP ASSOCIATION'S DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD AT THE 2011 ACA NATIONAL CONFERENCE (HIGHLIGHTING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF CAMPING), AT THE HILTON BAYFRONT HOTEL, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, FEBRUARY 10, 2011

I am enormously grateful to share this Distinguished Service Award. And I highlight the powerful word SHARE. And while I am the only one standing at this podium, there are a great many people represented by my standing here.

In accepting this award, I am proud to focus on the importance of MENTORSHIP; those who have guided us with distinction, and in turn have empowered us to be leaders for others.

The Conference Committee told me that I could reserve a table for 10 and I asked if I could squeeze in 11. And we are squeezed . . . ever realize that in the middle of a meal you are eating off someone else's plate? These 10 friends have been and are some of my primary mentors and I wish to introduce them . . . without asking them to stand:

- First of all is my wife Ann of over fifty years who has been a 200 percent participant in our lengthy camping career. Ann and I have two sons . . . Ian in New Hampshire and Brett in California. Ann and I are very pleased that Brett, living nearby, is able to join us in this celebration.
- Next are Terry Phinney and Bette Bussell. For many years Terry was the executive director of my New England Section of ACA and Bette has followed Terry in that same position.
- Jean McMullen, past president of the New England Section of ACA and past president of ACA, active in about anything that has ACA attached to it, owner/director of Alford Lake Camp in Maine, and long time friend.
- Liliana and Valery Kostin . . . is there a single person here who does not know of them? If so, you will know them before this conference concludes.
- Linda and Richard Pulliam. My wife Ann, Linda, Richard and I have traveled the world together on behalf of the International Camping Fellowship.

You realize the direction I'm heading in this five minute acceptance talk . . . the invaluable importance of mentors and guides.

Each of us in this room is a mentor and a guide . . . providing our best judgments, sharing our numerous life experiences, and especially building a legacy of leadership.

In the coming days, please think about who your mentors have been and how they have shaped your lives. Also think about the persons whom you have had the pleasure of guiding in leadership roles.

I want to highlight one exceptional mentoring experience: It spontaneously happened at a section

president-elect training event at our ACA national office in Bradford Woods, Indiana. Among those present were Ernie Schmidt, former executive director of the BSA, Eleanor Eells who has written the definitive history of camping, and Dr. Rey Carlson, Mr. Conservation. Someone suggested that the three of them sit in front of the fireplace one evening and talk about the “history of camping” from their varied perspectives. And Ernie, who had trained two-thirds of the Scout executives at work at that moment throughout the US talked about the origins of camping in Scouting. And Eleanor talked about the origins of camping through Hull House in Chicago and through the social agency network throughout our country. And Rey Carlson, past president of ACA, professor emeritus at Indiana University, talked about the origins of camping through the conservation movement. Those of us present sat spellbound for two hours . . . unfortunately none of this valuable discussion was recorded . . . except that it was recorded within ourselves. We were truly being mentored.

In order to mentor well, we must be willing to freely accept the leadership of others . . . we are not islands unto ourselves. It is our responsibility, really our gift to others, to offer forward what we have learned from listening to seasoned judgments and shared experiences from those we respect.

For over 150 years, those of us who call ourselves campers have been mentoring a variety of people, young and old. I think our SERVICE has been DISTINGUISHED.

I thank you all so much for this honor and even more for the opportunity to share it with all of us skilled in camping education. All of us, as a collective body of mentors, are contributing to a legacy for the American Camp Association.

And I thank you so much for encouraging me to pursue this lifelong passion.

DICK CHAMBERLAIN’S RESPONSE IN RECEIVING THE ABBOTT FENN DRUZHBA AWARD AT THE 2011 ACA NATIONAL CONFERENCE (HIGHLIGHTING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF CAMPING), AT THE HILTON BAYFRONT HOTEL, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, FEBRUARY 10, 2011

Thank you, for this honor of receiving the Abbott Fenn Druzhba Award.

The word “Druzhba” is Russian for “friendship.”

Abbott, who is a vital eighty-nine years young, lives in Brattleboro, Vermont. And Abbott was one of the founders/directors of The Keewaydin Camps . . . once a string of thirteen private camps that extended from Canada to Florida. Abbott has been an active member of the New England Section of ACA — once its president, and active nationally in ACA.

I talked with Abbott last week, told him that I would be receiving the Druzhba Award, and asked what prompted him to create the award back in the late 1980s.

And Abbott said that he believes what is UNIQUE in camps is the REAL understanding kids develop of each other through the INTENSITY OF THE EXPERIENCE. Camp, at its best, can create a community . . . of living, playing and learning to trust each other . . . and that camp community can be a miniature of a world community at its best.

In the late 1980s, the Soviets and the Americans were at each other’s throats . . . and then there was this wonderful breakthrough between Samantha Smith, Soviet campers, and the campers of Jean McMullen’s Alford Lake Camp in Maine. Campers were actually exchanged between Alford Lake Camp and Soviet camps.

And Abbott thought . . . “what camp has done the most in the past five years in developing better understanding between the Soviets and the USA” . . . promoting and demonstrating peace internationally and hands down . . . the first Druzhba Award went to Alford Lake Camp. (Jean would you stand, please?)

While I have this opportunity I want to mention a third person who has been enormously instrumental in the creation of international camping . . . and that is Armand Ball. Many of us refer to Armand as “The Father of International Camping.” In 1987, when Armand was executive director of ACA, he turned to Janet Adamson as president of the Canadian Camping Association and to myself as then president of ACA and suggested that we jointly seek out country camping leaders throughout the world, invite them to the 1987 Washington, DC, ACA National Conference, and help them discuss ways to share camping internationally. And that was the beginning of the International Camping Fellowship. Linda Grier Pulliam, Valery Kostin, Sako Tanaka, and others present, and available materials in the ICF room, can tell you how ICF has grown.

I conclude by quoting a song that Jeff Bradshaw, president of the Canadian Camping Association shared a week ago in his visit to Lord Sommers Camp in Australia:

Jeff said:

“This song celebrates a uniquely Canadian experience: the building of the railway in western Canada over 100 years ago. But more importantly, it’s a song about friendship and community. Men would come together for weeks and months at a time to work on the railway. They would experience hardship but equally the satisfaction of giving their best toward a common goal. At some point, they would return home. That journey home would be with the hope that one day they would see each other again. Very much like camp.”

And the song:

I must be on my way. Must be moving along

And as I go , I’ll sing this song

No roof for me, no roof have I

But I own the stars and the open sky

One thing that I know and I know it’s true

I’m better now for the knowing of you

When day is done and the coyotes wail

We’ll be moving down, down the lonesome trail

One thing that I know and I know it’s true

I’m better now for the knowing of you

We’ll meet again as the years go by

And we’ll sing this song, ’neath the open sky

One thing that I know and I know that it’s true

I’m better now for the knowing of you.