



Eagle View Newsletter

Volume XX

Success Oriented Achievement Realized

Spring 2007

The Joys (and Challenges) of Parenthood

By Jonathan Jones, Executive Director

The Joys (and Challenges) of Parenthood

This new year brings two milestones for Wandajean and I:

Milestone #1 - Our first child, whom you know as SOAR, turns 30

Milestone #2 - Our second child, Jonathan David, leaves the family nest for college

Now, for the rest of the story...

Success - When Preparation Meets Opportunity

SOAR began as a class project for a college graduate course some 30 years ago. The assignment was to design an outdoor education program for a special population. My own learning disabilities prompted me to choose the LD and AD/HD population as the focus of the model program. My supervising professor, Dr. Vincent Cyphers, liked the proposal and noted on the grading sheet - "Do you have what it takes to make this work?" Never one to back down from a healthy challenge, I began looking for an opportunity to develop SOAR. That opportunity came from the Spring ACLD, a support group for children and adults with LD and AD/HD, and their interest in developing a teen outreach program.



Jonathan and Jonathan David

Over the course of the next thirty years, SOAR moved from infancy to adulthood and experienced all of the growing pains along the way. The challenges were many, but the rewards far greater still in both scope and number. SOAR's success has always been linked to three guiding principles: 1) Give students ownership of the experience, 2) Create experiences that build on student interests and enthusiasms, and 3) Success is the most powerful of motivators. I am convinced SOAR's future success, as the success of youth with LD and AD/HD, will remain linked to these guidelines.

Creating a Balance

Eighteen years ago, Wandajean and I were blessed with the birth of a son, Jonathan David. Being trained professionals, we thought we were fully prepared to be parents of a child with his own mix of LD and AD/HD. How wrong we were! Fortunately, Jonathan David has been a patient teacher and we will finally receive our Parenting 101 diploma in this eighteenth year of instruction. For me, the most challenging part of parenting has been creating a balance between work and family. Interestingly, it is as great a challenge today as it was a decade ago - one of those gifts that keeps on giving.



Wandajean and Jonathan David

Jonathan David accompanied me on his first SOAR adventure at age four. For the next eight years he was a "little brother" to countless SOAR youth from Florida to Colorado to Belize. He was my scouting companion and navigator to Costa Rica and California as we laid the groundwork for future SOAR courses. He helped me open Eagle View Ranch in 2001 and joined the wrangling staff at the ripe old age of 13. To EVR students, he was known as JD, and was always ready to lend a helping hand. Little did I know, however, that the start of his wrangling career also meant the loss of "my little buddy" on SOAR expeditions. But as he explained to me, "He had responsibilities now" and I would have to lead the Canadian Rockies and Peru without his expert navigation skills.

Jonathan David graduates from high school in June and is poised to join the "long gray line" at the United States Military Academy at West Point on July 2nd. Even as Wandajean and I celebrate his achievement with that mix of joy and sorrow known only by parents, we look ahead to SOAR's 30th year with great expectation and gratefulness. Thank you for giving us this opportunity to impact the lives of

so many incredible youth!

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A WORD FROM BIG JOHN...

*Director of LD &
AD/HD Services*



Each of us has strengths that make us uniquely individual. Sometimes, people end up in careers that seem to match those gifts and abilities with opportunities. Some might call that luck, but we cannot rely on solely on the principle of luck to find success. I have heard a new definition for luck: when preparation meets opportunity. I find this a much more suitable outlook as I encourage each of you to help those whom you love prepare for opportunities. After all, I am a product of preparation meeting opportunity. Lightning struck when I met Jonathan Jones and he asked me to join the SOAR team. I had been diagnosed with AD/HD as a child, had been a camp director, and studied experiential education in a Masters program at the University of Colorado. I was ready to be lucky.

So how do we help promote “luck”? First and foremost it begins with developing a realistic assessment of strengths and abilities. While I believe remediating challenge areas can be useful, life success will be found by accentuating what a person can do well. Assessments can include learning styles inventories (The CITE Learning Styles Inventory), personality inventories (Myers-Briggs Personality Profile), and strength finding inventories (Strengthquest from Gallup). Each of these resources can be discovered online and provide you with the tools to discover healthy ways for your child to learn their strengths and use this information to approach life.

The next step would include finding ways to support the strengths you find. Match opportunities to the individual skills of your child. Insure the adult supervision your child will be exposed to will promote the positive attributes you are trying to sponsor. Team sports, individual sports, intellectual endeavors, hobbies, social groups, spiritual pursuits, and even academic interests are all opportunities to match strengths to activities. The trick is to match the strengths of your child with the right environment to continue promoting the skills and abilities that will allow your child to experience some “Luck”.

SUMMER REVIEW

By Laura Pate, Director of NC Programs

It's that time of year again – time to look ahead to the beginning of the summer. I'm always amazed at how quickly the off-season flies by. Perhaps it's because just about everything I do is in anticipation of the fun-filled months of summer! Here's some of the exciting changes that are happening at SOAR:

- First and foremost, this year is SOAR's 30th anniversary of providing quality adventure programming for youth with LD and AD/HD.

- On February 5th, we launched our new, updated website! Not only have we made it even easier to find the information you need, but we have also initiated an on-line registration program. Now you have one-stop-shopping for completing paperwork, paying for courses, and finding out the status of your application.



Former SOAR Student, Dan Taylor on our High Ropes Course at Balsam Base

- We've added a continuous belay system to our high ropes course at Balsam Base.

This is the only belay system of its kind in the U.S. that has been utilized on a live-tree ropes course. How exciting for SOAR to be making history in the challenge course industry!

- We are in the process of building a beautiful, new cabin for SOAR's Balsam Base. This cabin will be larger and winterized in order to house our semester course students during the fall and spring. However, summer students will reap the benefits of the new “palace” as well.

- We've acquired two new jet skis for use in the Florida Keys! Now those students with the “need for speed” can rodeo and tube to their heart's content.

As usual, we eagerly anticipate your arrival! SOAR's definitely not the same without our lifeblood – the students of SOAR! See you in June.

CHRISTMAS KEYS REVIEW

While down in the Florida Keys, we heard tales of torrential downpour back in North Carolina, and cold temperatures throughout the country. For us, this was hard to believe as we swam in the ocean, and basked in the warm sun. The weather was absolutely beautiful, sunny and in the 70s during the day, and cool and breezy at night.



This adventure was a great time for all, as many students experienced new challenges and opportunities. While some students caught their first fish, others mastered the art of kayaking. We visited Historic Key West, and the Blue Hole Sanctuary where we even saw a crocodile! But who could forget the student's favorite, tubing behind the jet-ski and riding along with Jonathan David? On New Year's Eve we celebrated with an exciting cook-out and scavenger hunt! Overall, the trip was a huge success, serving 27 students on the Standard Course, and 9 SCUBA Students. Despite rough conditions, all eligible students received in their SCUBA certification! A very special thanks to all involved for continuing to make this such a wonderful program. We hope to see new and old faces alike in this year's Christmas Keys Adventure!

SPRING SEMESTER UPDATE

By John Willson and Jon Bressler

Appalachian Trail Semester:

It's official, SOAR has a new first. This spring we have expanded the Southeast Coastal Semester course to two groups and the opportunities abound. The teams are at base simultaneously and have a

chance to participate in some dynamic academic opportunities. In fact, a civil war reenactment using rolled up paper, artificial boundaries, and two teams representing the North and South, was facilitated in the early weeks of the program. The teams then traveled to the

Florida Keys to learn about marine biology and the unique eco-systems of the region. SCUBA certification followed and both groups had a chance to enjoy the underwater world of Looe Key.

The teams will bounce between base and adventures for the rest of the semester. Soon they will return from a trip to the coast of Alabama. Upcoming adventures will include an excursion to the Florida Everglades, an international trip to Costa Rica, and a visit to the Coast of North Carolina. The program will conclude with a family weekend as students have a chance to showcase some of the skills they have acquired during the semester.

Yellowstone Semester:

Sledding, ice fishing, The Grand Canyon, Big Bend National Park, Arches, mountain biking in Moab, service projects and a school to be successful at: No it's not for adults. Don't be jealous, but the Semester in the Southwest is having a ton of fun. The students are working toward their goals in group activities, school and the wilderness settings. Currently, students are finding methods to be successful at self-motivation in regard to their budget, homework, and journal. Others are finding mathematical ways of increasing their speed while sledding, but school is a part of everything. The log cabin project is coming along with the floor system being finished as I write. The weather is feeling



Southwest Semester Student Snowshoeing

like spring at times, with snow flurries coming and going. Some of the students were working in t-shirts as the weather reached a balmy 50 degrees. Overall our students are maturing, growing, and learning in ways that amaze all of us.

May your winter be white, and your friends many.

Jon Bressler



SEC Semester students enjoying a trip to Looe Key Marine Sanctuary.

IZZY'S CORNER

By Wandajeane Jones and Catey Terry



Recently, this strange item appeared outside on our deck. At first, I was a little hesitant about this glowing, wooden box, but as I passed by it I noticed it was glowing and I felt this heat coming from within. Very strange indeed...

It was a cold, windy night so I decided it was worth the effort to explore further. Using my little paw, I pried open the door, and climbed by way inside. To my excitement, I found.....

Food! And a Warm Bed!! What a treat!!!

After filling up on a delicious can of 9 Lives (Chicken Flavored- of course, my favorite), I laid down in the warm, cozy bed. I quickly drifted off to sleep and dreamt that I was laying in the most comfortable chair, on the most luxurious fleece jacket- similar to my usual spot during the Office Hours. I slept soundly the entire night, despite the chill in the air. So when I awoke, I was very surprised to find the ground filled with snow!

It was so warm and comfortable inside by new box, that I almost considered staying there all day long. But then Laura showed up, and myself always being hungry, I decided to follow her inside and let her know it was time for my breakfast.



Izzy enjoys a nap in her warm bed.

I must say, I am one very lucky cat!

STAFF MEMBER PROFILE

Up Close With....Jon Terry
Program Director, Project Pursuit

Where were you born?

In the great town of Concord, NC.

What is your job?

I am the Director of Project Pursuit, our Community Based Program. In the summer I will work as the Relief Coordinator.

What are your hobbies?

Backpacking, whitewater kayaking, wood carving, reading, live music, and spending time with my wife and dogs.

What person or people do you admire most and why?

My family, especially my father, and the man who runs the Tomato Shack, in Boone, NC. Plus anyone who gives back and fights social injustice.

What do you like about SOAR?

I enjoy having the opportunity to grow as a professional with people I respect, and being challenged. However the best benefit of SOAR is getting a chance to share those challenges with amazing kids.

People would be surprised to know...

That I can bend my index finger all the way back to my wrist.





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**SPRING ADVENTURE
 WEEKENDS 2007**
 Concentration, Communication, &
 Cooperation
 April 20 - April 22
 (Horseback Riding or High/Low Ropes)

Spring Family Weekend
 May 11 - May 13
 (Whitewater Rafting)

Social Skills & Team Building
 June 1 - June 3
 (Whitewater Rafting or Rock Climbing)

OPEN HOUSE
 May 5th, 2007
 10:00am - 3:00pm, Balsam, NC

SOAR will provide an Open House for families with children ages 8 - 18 diagnosed with LD and/or AD/HD. Come see our facilities and meet the staff. Drinks and Snacks will be provided. You will have a chance to see horses, llamas, and even challenge yourself on our climbing wall! Please notify SOAR if you plan to attend.



A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ALL CONTRIBUTORS

Adventurer Level- up to \$100

- William and Gail Dillon
- Lynn Kornhauser
- George and Carolyn Johnson
- Edwin and Sue Marosek
- Michael and Tina Oshinski
- Helene Brower
- Stephen and Eugenia Leonard
- Anne Lynn
- Robert and Elizabeth Thomas
- Clark and Anna Olsen
- Joanne and Jim AcAvoy
- Richard Arking, M.D.
- Sidney and Carol Anne Smith
- Stuart Liss
- Charles and Blanche Callais
- Lena and Toby Gerhart
- Robert and Eve Litwack
- Patricia Way
- Lynne and Larry Kramer
- Paul and Donna Nystrom
- Robeth and Donna Northway
- Joan and Kevin Frawley
- Edward and April Metcalf
- Mark Linzer
- Patricia Lindsey
- Melinda Roman and Douglas Clott
- John Hardison and Cynthia Schalk

Explorer Level - up to \$300

- Josh Willson
- Elaine Lebas
- Chales and Ann Kifer
- Theodore Burns
- Stacey Stern and Paul Von Berg
- Barbara and Doug Pierce
- Hunter Chevrolet
- Bruce Silver
- James and Jane Cohan
- Neil Siver
- Steven and Jennifer Rusk
- Lawrence and Danyse Weinberg
- Robert and Susan Klein
- Dana and Jennifer Blankenhorn
- Dr. Andrew and Dr. Vicki Light

Patron Level - up to \$500

- Thomas and Caroline Moore
- John Vitas
- Paul and Sarah Auvil
- John and Terry Norris
- Michael and Kim Kelly
- John and Debbie Rock
- Ann and Paul Friedman
- Linda Mundy

Benefactor Level- up to \$1000

- North Carolina Community Foundation
- Mr. and Mrs. Miles C. Collier
- Mark and Teresa Muir
- Dale Franklin
- Anna and Tom Robertson
- Richard and Karen Langhart
- Michael and Carol Clark
- Pamela Leiter and Philip Faraci

Summit Level - \$2500 and above

- Mark and Lois Wingerson
- Lena Dohlman-Gerhart
- Lisa and Porter Dawson
- David and Carolena Schuette
- James E. Constance L. Bell Foundation
- Don and Ann Kornblett
- Jeffrey and Donna Eskind

Visit our Updated Website at www.soarnc.org