



the powder keg

copper cannon newsletter

Winter 2017

It may only last one week
but the memories and
friendships last a lifetime!

Our Mission:

To enrich the lives of
the underserved youth
of New Hampshire by
providing a quality
tuition-free camp
experience.

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Annual Auction Fast Approaching

Mark Saturday, March 4th, on your calendar for the event of the year! Copper Cannon's 45th annual auction is just around the corner. This is Copper Cannon's largest fundraiser and we have made it bigger and better than ever. This year our goal is to raise almost \$55,000 through the event, allowing 90 youth a wonderful summer opportunity.

Similar to auctions in the past, there will be something for everybody. Three different auctions will be taking place simultaneously: a live auction, a silent auction, and a penny auction. These events promise to fill the evening with fun and laughter.

A dedicated group of volunteers has been busily collecting wonderful items for the auction including ski passes, gift certificates for lodging and dining, recreational opportunities throughout the region, collectables and more. The list of auction items is available for preview on Copper Cannon's website at www.coppercannon.org and will be updated throughout the month. Even if you have a scheduling conflict, you can still bid by proxy!

Doors will open at 4:00 p.m. at the Littleton Elks Lodge on Route 302 allowing participants to browse all the great items, start the bidding on silent items, enjoy complimentary wine-tasting and mingle. A delicious buffet dinner will be served at 5:15 p.m. and the live auction will begin shortly after dinner ends. There will be a cash bar throughout the evening. Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased at www.coppercannon.org. Last year's event sold out the week before!

Bring your wallet, credit cards and your smile for a wonderful evening of fun and help continue Ham Ford's vision of providing under-served youth with a quality, tuition-free camp experience.

If you would like to volunteer for the event or bid by proxy, have an item you would like to donate, or need additional information, contact Copper Cannon at 603-823-8107.



COPPER CANNON CAMP

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It's Never Too Early to Start Thinking About Camp!

Even though there is snow on the ground with more on its way, Copper Cannon Camp is already gearing up for what is sure to be the best summer of camp yet.

Because we couldn't wait any longer, we've already made the 2017 applications available online for campers and staff. And we already have camper and staff applications coming in, so the time is now if you know a child who needs camp!



Applications are available online at www.coppercannon.org. For camper applications, simply scroll down on the home page to the giant box that says "Forms and Apps."

As usual, there are plenty of options for youth this summer:

- **Traditional Camp** – The classic Copper Cannon experience for campers ages 9-12.
- **Ranger Week** – Traditional camp for ages 13-15 but with some twists for the older age group.
- **Ranger High Adventure** – Hiking/backpacking in the White Mountains for teens 13-15.
- **Mountain Biking Adventure** – Head out to the White Mountains on two wheels for 13-15 year olds.
- **Last Chance Camp** – In its second summer, this is for 15-16 year olds who still just want to be campers. It will include a day of hiking, a day of biking and a day on Moore Reservoir.
- **Counselor In Training** – For 16 year olds looking to bridge the gap from camper to counselor.

Those looking to apply as a full-time summer staff member should go to the "Staff" section on the main menu, then click on the "How to Apply" drop-down menu item. It is the hardest, but most rewarding job you will ever have.



It is not what a Camper learns at Copper Cannon, but what they do with that knowledge.

Since 1963, we have been changing the lives of youth. When Copper Cannon began, John F. Kennedy was president, the space shuttle was science fiction, and youth rocked out to records. Even as times have changed, the need for camp has remained. With a conservative estimate of 21,000 youth from throughout the Granite State, Copper Cannon Camp has changed lives over the years, and Ham Ford's vision continues to shape youth today.

Through the years, youth have changed and the need for Copper Cannon is greater than ever. Today's youth are growing up faster and are quickly losing the skills

necessary to interact with each other, communicate and disagree with one another, or even use their imaginations and creativity.

According to a recent issue of Camping, the American Camping Association magazine, youth today could be labeled "Gen Me," bringing a feeling they are bound for greatness and their generation is specially destined to achieve unimaginable things. Yet they watch twenty-somethings make gazillions of dollars through Facebook or Google, and unfortunately, youth aren't being taught to share, to succeed and to fail.

When children come to camp, they are immersed in a wonderful, positive environment where they learn to succeed, learn to fail, grow through disagreeing with others and through learning how to compromise in a safe nurturing environment. They are read to every night by an adult and gain a greater understanding of the world around them and their environment.

Pete's Perspective

Since my arrival, our teen program has continued to expand. For the summer of 2016, one quarter of our camper population was between the ages of 13 and 16 with many being returning campers. The camp experience has a tremendous positive impact on adolescence. We have seen that if we can maintain that connection throughout the teen years, there is an avoidance of risk factors and greater academic success. In fact, this year we are able to present three \$500 college scholarships to former campers.

One way to maintain that positive connection for the youth is through our series of Teen Leadership Retreats. We piloted the program last year and received a wonderful response. Fifty-six youth attended one of the three weekends with each one focusing on a different aspect of leadership: self, others and the environment.

The staff develops a unique and strong relationship with our teens and we can help them navigate



adolescence a little easier. As a teen camper wrote this past summer, "The first time I came to camp I didn't want to be here. I was forced to come for some anger problems. I do not have those same problems

anymore and I really think that Copper Cannon was a big help for controlling my anger. And, every time the week comes to a close, I don't fancy leaving so much even if the camp is a bit tiring." Maintaining the connection throughout the year will continue to build those relationships.



Because of the teens attending the weekends, our program has improved. Feedback from the youth led to modifying our summer program by adding a new "Last Chance Camp" for 15 and 16 year olds. Eight teens and their parents helped at the Copper Cannon auction last March. Partnering with Elks lodges from throughout the state, these teens helped get Copper Cannon ready for the summer through projects in May of 2016. These are just a few of the tangible outcomes from the weekends.

In December, Copper Cannon received a \$2,500 grant from the Saul Sidore Foundation to help subsidize these teen leadership retreats. The foundation saw the importance of the retreats and wanted to be a part of it. This helps validate the important work we do with our programs.

But the rewards can be best summed up by Ryan, an adopted child whose mother takes in individuals with disabilities as a foster parent. Ryan attended all three retreats and learned how to make bread, taking six loaves home to his family. On his exit survey he stated, "I hope you will continue these so that I may attend next year as a CIT. It is like a third home for me."

Copper Cannon's Stewardship Role

Taking care of the environment is an important role we need to assume. At Copper Cannon, we don't focus on teaching children what to think, but how to think. The first step in creating stewards of the environment is creating an awareness of and appreciation for the natural world around them. We then want to take youth from awareness to action.

Copper Cannon believes in leading by example and the success of this approach has been fantastic. In its second year, the garden exceeded expectations. Over the course of the summer children had the opportunity to roam through the raised beds snacking on chives, spearmint and peppermint leaves, tomatoes, etc. Healthy salads were prepared exclusively with produce grown in and picked from our garden. To top it off, Copper Cannon saved well over \$1,000 in produce costs. The children went home with a painted pot, soil and a bean to create their own mini-garden.

It has been almost a year since Copper Cannon Camp added solar to Ham's Hall. It is still too early to know how effective the panels will be, but in their first ten months of operating, over 14,000 kilowatt hours of electricity were generated. This green electricity flowed back on the grid and helped lessen Copper Cannon's carbon footprint. Campers had a chance to see the panels in action and watch the LED display on our inverter.

We have taken the initial steps in implementing a forest management plan for the 128 acres Copper Cannon Camp owns. Through a NRCS grant, a management plan was written by Hudson Forestry and presented to the Board. The land had been logged in the 1940s and we now need parts of the property thinned. This will create habitat for a variety of animals and allow the growth of the on-site Sugar Maples. Through selective cutting, a healthier and more diverse forest will be available for future generations of Copper Cannon campers.

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Masonic Temple Donation

As the year drew to a close, Copper Cannon received a Sponsor-a-Kid donation from the Mason's lodge: Golden Dawn Lodge #66. The funds will be earmarked for Littleton area youth. A shout-out to another service organization supporting Copper Cannon Camp!

Sponsor-a-Kid (SAK) Appeal

What would a newsletter from a small non-profit be without a shameless plug for money? This is ours. Copper Cannon Camp has three fundraising events (Auction, Sponsor-a-Kid and Membership). Each helps us transition from one season to the next. The summer of 2017 is fast approaching (it will be here before we know it!) so now is the time for our Sponsor-a-Kid (SAK) appeal. Campers arrive on a Sunday and by the following Saturday, they will have memories for a lifetime. Your SAK donation is an important part in making that kind of difference in the lives of our campers. Thank you!



Copper Cannon Wish List

In every issue of the Powder Keg, we include a “wish list” of items (new or used) that would be welcome donations. As our needs continue to grow, we have included an updated list. Remember, all donations are tax deductible.

- Arts and crafts supplies (leather scraps, glue, gimp, etc.)
- Books (Harry Potter, Ramona Quimby, Hardy Boys, etc.)
- Kayaks
- Building materials
- Gravel
- Grass seed and fertilizer
- Starter plants for garden
- Donating printing services
- Volunteer at camp
- Volunteer on a committee
- Cash (of course)

