Summer 2012 Gives a Whole New Meaning to the “700 Club”

Thanks to the generous support from the PenFed Foundation, Sierra Club and the USO, over 700 kids got a camping experience to last a lifetime. Through Operation Outdoors, they will long remember the activities in which they participated, the new friends they made and the life lessons learned at camp.

Parents, too, appreciated the opportunities afforded their children. Here are a few examples of that gratitude:

“Thank you for another memorable camp. As you know this is Lizzie’s second year and this camp was her first away from home -- ever. With her being the fourth baby, I really had a hard time letting her go for a whole week. But with the location so close to post, the trained volunteers and the organization of the camp, I felt comfortable enough to let go. When she got back the first time, she was so excited and talked about “next year, next year” and then when she was able to go this year, she passed on a trip to Colorado with grandparents to be at this camp. Her favorite part of this year’s camp was the military day. She said she never knew what soldiers “did”. I was surprised, because her daddy has been a solider well before she was born, so I just thought she knew.”

“Please let me know what we need to do to insure the funding is there for this camp. This is so important to the building of a child. As for being a military brat, nothing is ever the same from year to year and this would be nice if we could count on it as well as have the kids count on it too. All kids are special, however, there is something extra special about a military kid.”

“Please tell you staff and volunteers how thankful we are to have them . . . and these types of opportunities.”

“Our son attended the Camp and loved it! The amount of care that was provided to him with his allergy condition was above and beyond what we could have ever expected. Not to mention the activities that they took part in. He has been talking about it since he returned home from there. I was so surprised to find out all the activities that they did with no cost to the family. The sponsors are awesome and my family and I will be forever grateful! We are looking forward to next year as we will have two sons attending!”

And, from one young camper . . .

“Hi this is Ynessa from camp. I just wanted to let you know how much fun it was, and I wish I could go back next year :-) I really enjoyed learning what my parents do in the Army during our military day event and I also met a lot of new friends who I keep in touch with. I hope my brother can go next year since he’s old enough now, and I also want to say thank you. Last year, I just moved to the area and I had a lot of fun, but it was even more fun this year. I hope camp goes on so other kids can enjoy it too. I want to thank everyone who volunteers and those whose donation keeps this camp going for us military kids.”

This year was my last year at camp. I had so much fun, and I met new friends who I keep in touch with now. It was way better than staying at home, and doing nothing. It was cool to learn about what my parents did. The food is good too. I wish I could do it again, but I’m too old now - haha. But I want to make my brother go to camp next year, because I had a lot of fun.”

Notes like this have been coming in from Camp Pendleton, Fort Bragg, Camp Lejeune, Fort Bliss, Fort Leonard Wood, Fort Riley and Twentynine Palms.

See pp 8-9 for a snapshot of a week at camp