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"Home"
Tree Talk - 07/09/12
Camp Paquaney

Last year my college professor prompted us to write about our home. This was a very difficult subject for me considering I've moved over ten times and lived in 6 different states. My English professor probably expected the classic Iowa story that I was born on a farm and lived there my whole life.

That was not my story at all. So, I began to think about what was home for me. I believe home is where you make it. Was it the place where I was born, the place I learned to walk, the place I received my first kiss, or was it where I graduated from high school?

So I thought of what I wanted my home to be. I knew I wanted it to be a place where I felt safe, a place where I can be entertained and entertain others. I knew I wanted to live in a place where I had a lot of friends. I also wanted to live in a place where I am able to see the growth of my kids from adolescence to adulthood.

When I compiled all these ideas together I knew my home was Pasquaney. When I came to Pasquaney I was a timid 13-year-old boy. I had no friends and had really no idea of how to make friends because of my constant moves. I had insecurities about making friends because I usually just lost touch with them as the years went by. These insecurities revealed themselves, in my acting out at camp, but no matter how hard I tried to fight the Pasquaney spirit; I ended up making some of my best friends at Pasquaney.

My problem as a first year camper was decorum. I used foul language frequently. I did this to try and seem cool. In actuality I was just making a fool of myself. I feel my swearing was making it harder for me to make friends. I started thinking about my foul language after a reading of Siwash from Mr. Vinnie. In Siwash Master Boss never used foul language because it was the ignorant mans way of expressing himself. I did not want for people to think of me as ignorant so I stopped swearing. After I made this adjustment I was more approachable therefore I make more friends.

I came back the next summer in order to hang out with my friends and do activities. By the end of my second year I had an idea there was more to camp than just activities. I noticed in the activities there were specific instructions and procedures we followed, in order to make things go smoothly and safely. In sailing we like to catch a little problem before it gets big. Benjamin Franklin said, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure". Things like this I was able to translate into my daily life. My 16 year old summer I knew I wanted to be a better person and camp was the perfect place to try and be that person. I wanted to be nicer and more hospitable, than I was in the past. I became that person by doing the things we learned in camp like sowing an Act reaping a habit. Sowing a habit reaping a character, and sowing a character and reaping a destiny.

At Pasquaney I have a completely diverse group of friends. I have friends from almost every walk of life, friends from different countries, different economic backgrounds and ages ranging from 11 to 92. I find this absolutely mind blowing considering my age that I have a friend that is a 12 years old. In my home I want to be able to have friends like this.

In my home I want the stress of the world to be non-existent. At Pasquaney we lessen the stress of the world by not conforming to a world of technology and popular culture. Instead we celebrate the small things. Like winning an obstacle race, going sailing, listening to counsellors play music or just watching and listening to the sounds of nature. In the city one really never notices how entertaining it is to just sit down and listen to the wind in the trees, and to talk about how one's day was. Things are just so simple down here. I've won multiple national championships in wrestling, but one of my greatest athletic moments was winning my senior crew race in 2006. This victory made a profound impact in my life because we celebrate athletic merit differently at Pasquaney. Weather we win or loose we celebrate one another in the way of railroads or epic Mem hall announcements.

At Pasquaney we build a close-knit community. In this community it is so great to see the growth of campers from their first year at camp as timid 12 year olds, making mistakes and learning from them, to 16 year old campers who are leading camp and setting the tone for the summer. Seeing this growth in campers is one of the greatest benefits I get as a counsellor. I want to see this type of growth in my home whether tangible or intangible.

Pasquaney has been a constant good experience for me no matter where my travels take me. I have always been able to come here, slow down the pace of life, start enjoying the simple things and watch myself grow into the man I want to become.