

Camping brings
families together



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

I would like to focus on the camping experience and how that particular recreation and leisure allows us to break away from work, tasks, household chores, and most modern conveniences, to encounter a very different kind of activity and play. One that is far removed from television, computers, MP3's, and texting on cell phones; this would be the simple process of camping. I propose to convince my audience that camping is a recreation that brings families together in a unique and special way.

Of all the memories I have of childhood, my fondest are those of our family camping trip. Although there were not as many distractions back then as there are today, we could not wait to get to the campgrounds and get set-up for a week long adventure with nature. Fishing, boating, campfires, lots of food, fellowship, games, and family fun awaited. ' We do not remember days; we remember moments" (Cesare Pavese), which authenticates that it's these wonderful moments that leave a lasting impression as we grow older and become adults.

My sincere desire has been to create these same moments and memories for my children and for my grandchildren. Camping in today's economy suggests it's one of the most affordable recreations possible. You can camp without spending a fortune (Dales, Tim). The fun of close communication, teamwork, and cooperation between family members form a great recipe for bringing families closer. Johnson mentions the pure and simplistic fun of camping, which is often overlooked by adults and craved by children.

Catching fireflies, gazing at stars, telling stories around the fire, making s'mores or simply collecting firewood" [can stimulate a collective attitude of

togetherness] (Creating Summer Memories 20). It characterizes the meaning of family. For this reason, I am a huge advocate of family camping and spend a great deal of time encouraging others to take part and share in this experience. If you are interested in camping, there are about 8, 000 to 9, 500 private U. S. RV parks and campgrounds across the United States (Woodall's 6).

David Gorin, the former head of The National Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds, who currently heads up the ' Best Parks in America' marketing network, arrived at this estimate by adding 20% to the number of parks listed in the Woodall's and Trailer Life Directories. Woodall's Campground Management and Trailer Life Magazine, both offer insightful information about camping, and are great resources when choosing a place to go. You can enjoy the travel to a park across country, or you can simply choose a local park close by, like the ones I manage at Lake Lanier Islands or Shoal Creek Campgrounds.

Both offer family fun and convenience in a peaceful setting In the August issue of RV View, put out by CampingWorld. com, the article on " Weird Wanderings" boasted of offbeat destinations offering quirky family fun with photographs of unusual, larger than life props that make wacky photos for your family album or slide show. From " Big Mo" (a replica of a dinosaur head in front of Big Mike's Rock Shop just outside of the entrance to Mammoth Cave National Park), to the Shoe House in York, Pennsylvania (built to promote a chain of shoe stores), family fun can be found.

Planning a vacation like this one, or planning a simple camping trip will be forever embedded in the hearts and minds of your family. Camping is all about connecting. Vanderford points out that despite the 40 years difference between he and his dad, they became pals on those magical forays into the great outdoors, who worked as one, and shared the mysteries of the universe in their own little private plot in the woods (Legacy on Lanier 51).

I remember all too well . as we all scampered around looking for twigs to add to the fire, we collected a variety of bugs in jars to take home and identify in our home encyclopedia, (I infer my age), and I loved watching the look on my dad's face when he got a bite, or caught a fish. Now that he is gone, these memories are precious to me and ones that I will not soon forget. Never in past memories have I ever felt such a strong connection to my dad as in those times, and I was forever a daddy's girl.

You too can enjoy your own memories. Camping with the family can open a whole new universe of ideas, suggestions, and more importantly, connections that cannot be broken or forgotten. In conclusion, I would like to invite you to participate in the joys of camping. Experience the fun and excitement that camping can bring and test my hypothesis for yourself. I am confident that you will agree, camping is truly a recreation that can bring families together for a lifetime.