

The CampLIFE! Line

* October 2007 *

A Message from John

CampLIFE! celebrated 2007 with three large accomplishments:

1. Our sixth successful year of serving children by hosting HUGSS (Helping Unite Gold Star Survivors). We had a fantastic camp benefiting a group of kids who have lost a parent in the Iraq or Afghanistan war, and we added programs for the surviving spouses this summer also!
2. We received our first grant from the Dallas Foundation, which will enable us to host 3 camps a year instead of one. We have partnered with Scott & White hospital in Temple, Texas to offer grief counseling for our campers. Our first November camp will start November 10th, and will offer a more holistic, year-round program for the campers.
3. The first meeting of CampLIFE!'s new Board of Directors was held at Ski' N Scats before the August camp. We are excited to have a fantastic board of dedicated team members in place to help build and develop great plans for this organization. A huge thanks to the board for volunteering your time, creativity, energy and enthusiasm to CampLIFE!

CampLIFE! 2007 Board of Directors:

- Chrisma Jackson: VP- Grants
- Don Kersting: VP- Marketing
- Jack Fennell: Treasurer
- Jim Royer: VP- Donations
- John Gillis: President
- Jon Williams: VP- Operations
- Pete Dawson: VP- Communications

In the News...

A story on August's Camp LIFE made the Ft. Hood Sentinel, featuring personal stories from the special weekend. [Click here to read the article.](#)

Thankful for CampLIFE! in November

CampLIFE! will hold its first November session November 10 – 11! Camp starts Saturday morning and will wrap up late Sunday afternoon. Counselor orientation will be held at 8:30 Saturday morning. All counselors are encouraged to arrive Friday evening for fellowship, fun and preparation for the weekend.

Water-skiing in November!? Only for the brave...all water-based activities will be replaced with ropes course activities, archery, sport court games, teambuilding, etc. We will enjoy a Scavenger Hunt Saturday evening before sharing a Thanksgiving dinner together!

If you're interested in being a counselor, please contact John at CampLIFE4Kids@yahoo.com.

Making a Difference

Frank Busch, husband of HUGSS Founder/Director Debbie Busch, is currently serving in Afghanistan. He is collecting things small enough to put into his pocket to give out to local children. Donations (pens, small writing tablets, bounce balls, small toy cars, etc.) can be sent to Frank at the address below:

CSM Frank C. Busch
36th Engineer Brigade
C/O HHC 240th Engineer Group
FOB Sharana
APO AE 09354

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CampLIFE! on the Web

The official CampLIFE! website is up and running! Check out <http://www.Camp-LIFE.org> to view updates, contact information, pictures, and relevant details about future camps! Any questions can be directed via e-mail to Marketing@Camp-Life.org.

Inspiration of the Season: "The Importance of Time"

(Submitted by Chrisma Jackson)

A young man learns what's most important in LIFE from the guy next door.

It had been some time since Jack had seen the old man. College, girls, career, and LIFE itself got in the way. In fact, Jack moved clear across the country in pursuit of his dreams. There, in the rush of his busy LIFE, Jack had little time to think about the past and often no time to spend with his wife and son. He was working on his future, and nothing could stop him.

Over the phone, his mother told him, "Mr. Belser died last night. The funeral is Wednesday." Memories flashed through his mind like an old newsreel as he sat quietly remembering his childhood days. "Jack, did you hear me?" "Oh sorry, Mom. Yes, I heard you. It's been so long since I thought of him. I'm sorry, but I honestly thought he died years ago," Jack said. "Well, he didn't forget you. Every time I saw him he'd ask how you were doing. He'd reminisce about the many days you spent over 'his side of the fence' as he put it," Mom told him.

"I loved that old house he lived in," Jack said. "You know, Jack, after your father died, Mr. Belser stepped in to make sure you had a man's influence in your LIFE," she said. "He's the one who taught me carpentry," he said. "I wouldn't be in this business if it weren't for him. He spent a lot of time teaching me things he thought were important...Mom, I'll be there for the funeral," Jack said.

As busy as he was, he kept his word. Jack caught the next flight to his hometown. Mr. Belser's funeral was small and uneventful. He had no children of his own, and most of his relatives had passed away. The night before he had to return home, Jack and his Mom stopped by to see the old house next door one more time. Standing in the doorway, Jack paused for a moment. It was like crossing over into another dimension, a leap through space and time.

The house was exactly as he remembered. Every step held memories. Every picture, every piece of furniture....Jack stopped suddenly. "What's wrong, Jack?" his Mom asked. "The box is gone," he said. "What box?" Mom asked. "There was a small gold box that he kept locked on top of his desk. I must have asked him a thousand times what was inside. All he'd ever tell me was 'the thing I value most,'" Jack said.

It was gone. Everything about the house was exactly how Jack remembered it, except for the box. He figured someone from the Belser family had taken it. "Now I'll never know what was so valuable to him," Jack said. "I better get some sleep. I have an early flight home, Mom."

It had been about two weeks since Mr. Belser died. Returning home from work one day Jack discovered a note in his mailbox. "Signature required on a package. No one at home. Please stop by the main post office within the next three days," the note read.

Early the next day Jack retrieved the package. The small box was old and looked like it had been mailed a hundred years ago. The handwriting was difficult to read, but the return address caught his attention. "Mr. Harold Belser" it read.

Jack took the box out to his car and ripped open the package. There inside was the gold box and an envelope. Jack's hands shook as he read the note inside. "Upon my death, please forward this box and its contents to Jack Bennett. It's the thing I valued most in my LIFE." A small key was taped to the letter. His heart racing, as tears filling his eyes, Jack carefully unlocked the box. There inside he found a beautiful gold pocket watch.

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Running his fingers slowly over the finely etched casing, he unlatched the cover. Inside he found

these words engraved: "Jack, Thanks for your time! - Harold Belser."

"The thing he valued most...was...my time." Jack held the watch for a few minutes, then called his office and cleared his appointments for the next two days. "Why?" Janet, his assistant asked. "I need some time to spend with my son," he said. "Oh, by the way, Janet...thanks for your time!"

"LIFE is not measured by the number of breaths we take but by the moments that take our breath away."

Best wishes from CampLIFE! for a happy Thanksgiving!



CampLIFE!