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JULY / AUGUST 2009

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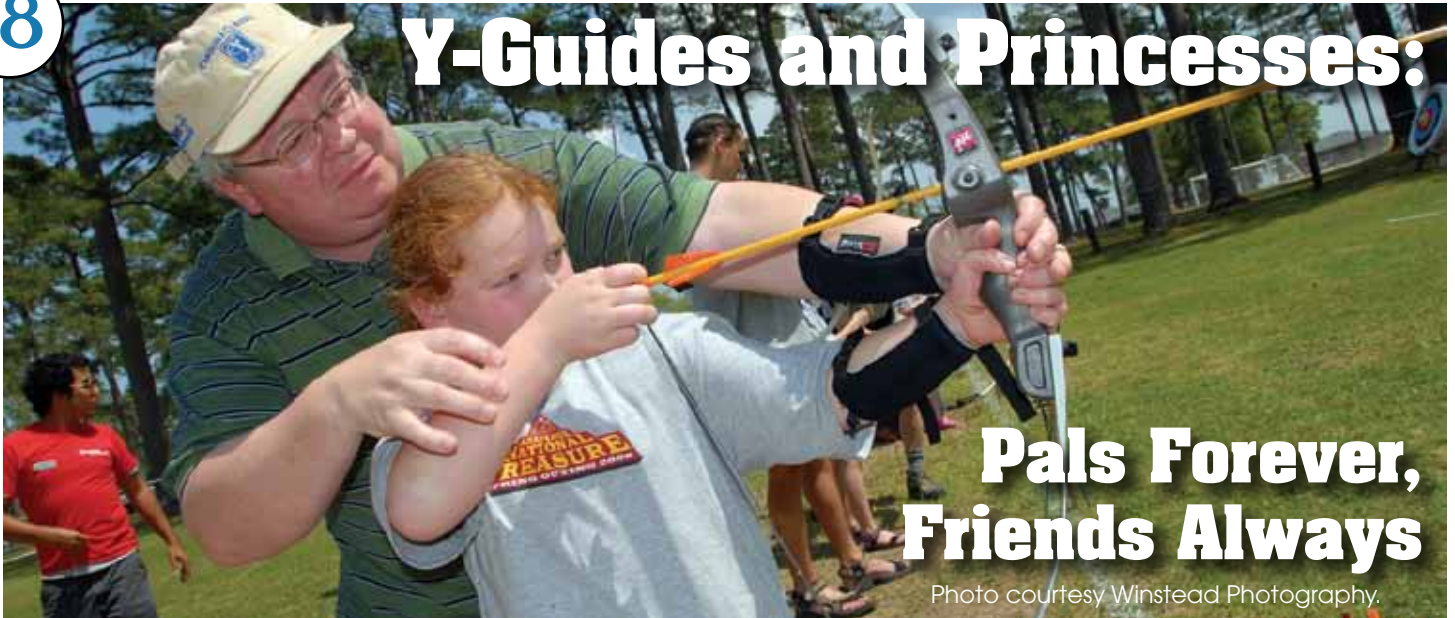
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Local Success Stories



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Y-Guides and Princesses:



Pals Forever, Friends Always

Photo courtesy Winstead Photography.

The Y-Guides and Princesses (YGP) program of the YMCA of the Triangle's Arapahoe Nation is an enormously popular program serving over 12,000 dads and children throughout Wake, Durham, Johnston, and Lee counties, and is the largest father-child program in the nation! The purpose of the program is to strengthen the father-child relationship through activities that allow fathers to spend quality one-on-one time with their children.

YGP is a pre-packaged, action-oriented program built around a tribe. Each tribe typically consists of seven to nine fathers and their sons or daughters. Tribes meet two times a month at a member's home for a formal meeting after which they participate in fun activities like games, crafts, stories, songs and tricks. Other activities, like camping and hiking excursions, bowling, shows, games and service projects, can also be organized – the extent and frequency of activities is determined by each tribe. The one requirement for participating in these activities is that both

the father and the child must be present. The fathers plan and participate in the fun along with their children - parents do not just drop their children off and pick them up at the end of the evening. As Nation Elder and former Nation Chief Brendan Bailey notes, "These activities create shared experiences between a father and his child that will last a lifetime."

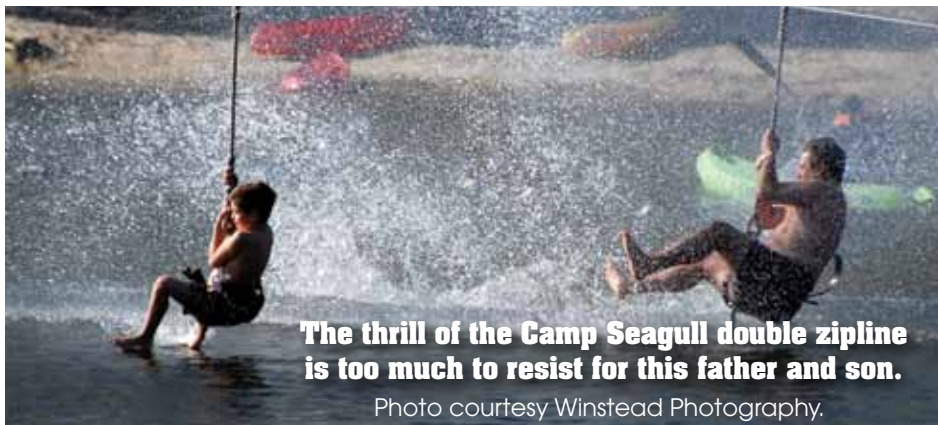
YGP begins in the first grade and the first year of the program is probably one of the more exciting. It's when they learn the YGP greeting ("How-How!"), they each choose a name (like Running Wolf or Yellow Petal), they get to know their tribe, and each other's YGP names, and learn and understand the basic aims of the program. The children can earn "wampum," or money, at home by doing chores or other special tasks, which is then announced to the tribe, contributed to the tribe's fund and used for special projects or to donate to a worthy cause.

The second year focuses on "working

with Dad" on craft-type projects as well as developing both the physical and mental aspects of life. The emphasis of the third year is on community service. Many tribes replace one of the monthly meetings with service projects such as making and distributing lunches with the Brown Bag Ministries. After the third year, many fathers and their children continue into the Arapahoe Nation's Trailblazers/Trailmates program. This program is less structured than the YGP and offers more challenging and varied experiences, while teaching leadership and responsibility.

All along, through both the YGP and Trailblazers/Trailmates programs, kids earn award patches that they proudly display on their vests by completing activities such as learning and repeating all the names of the members of their tribe (for first year members only), developing a plan for the family in case an emergency occurs at home, or performing a service for a homebound person. All activities are to be completed by the kids with the guidance of their father.

The highlights of the year are the Fall and Spring Outings. The Fall Outing takes place at Camp Kanata and includes a variety of activities as well as a spectacular initiation ceremony for the first year tribes. The Spring Outing is a great place for a father to spend quality one-on-one time with his child – it takes place at Camp Seagull and Camp Seafarer near the mouth of the Neuse River and is filled with all sorts of exciting activities as well as more reflective times for fathers and their children to



The thrill of the Camp Seagull double zipline is too much to resist for this father and son.

Photo courtesy Winstead Photography.

talk and just enjoy being with each other. Between the YMCA's fantastic facilities, including their double zipline, and their staff, the outings are much-anticipated!

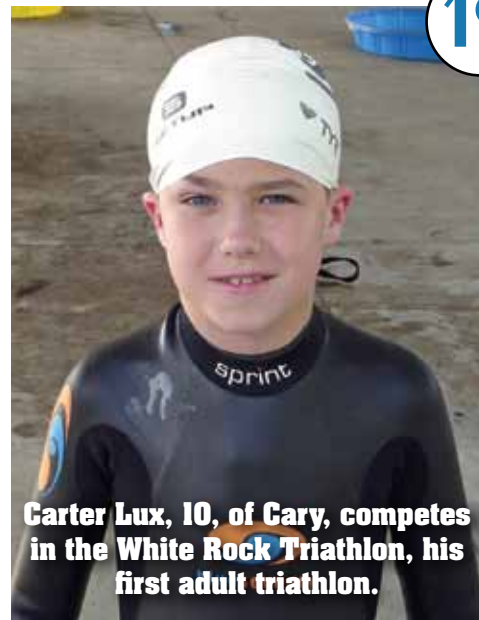
Getting started in the program is easy. Attend the "dads only" meeting (see box) for fathers who are interested in joining a first year tribe. While you may have already formed your own tribe or been invited to join one, it's perfectly fine to come without a tribe and find other dads at this meeting to start a tribe. Most tribes are formed based on geography, and children in 2nd and 3rd grade (and their fathers) are able to join an existing tribe by contacting the members of the tribe to make sure they have room for another pair. The 2009-2010 dues will be \$91 per pair for non-members of the YMCA, \$73 per pair for members of the YMCA. For each additional child in the program, the cost is \$27 for Y members and \$33 for non-Y members. There are also costs incurred for vests, some of the activities the tribe plans throughout the year and the Spring Outing which is approximately \$200 "and well worth it," according to Soaring Eagle, a member of the Fireshark tribe. There are no fundraising activities.

The number of fathers and children who are members of the Arapahoe Nation serves as testimony to the fact that the Y-Guides and Princesses program does a great job of building and strengthening relationships between fathers and their children. These bonds and memories formed during the years in the program will make it easier for fathers and sons to stay "pals forever" and for fathers and daughters to remain "friends always."

If you have any questions about the Y-Guides/Princesses program, please go to www.arapahoe-nation.com or call 582-2266.

INFO SESSION

The informational meeting for Wake County dads interested in joining the Y-Guides/Princesses will be held on Tuesday, **September 1 at 7:00pm**, at the Jane S. McKimmon Center on the NC State campus in West Raleigh. This is a Dads Only event - no children, please. Dads can attend with tribes already formed or can find a tribe to join once there.



Carter Lux, 10, of Cary, competes in the White Rock Triathlon, his first adult triathlon.



Participants at Hoops City U's Father's Day Weekend Parent-Child Overnight Basketball Camp listen to coaches before their next drill.



Kilo and Xander Krahn and Dominic D'Ercole (right) celebrate after completing a 5k race at Camp Seafarer.

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