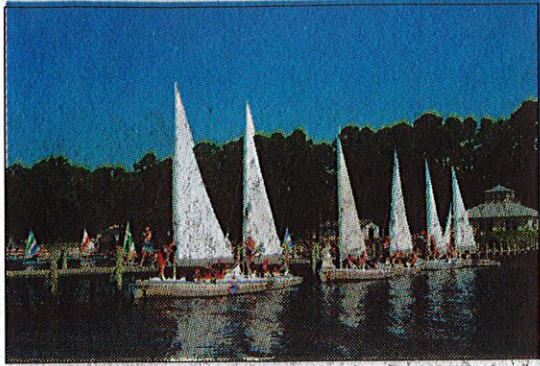


Don Lee Camp & Retreat Center



For the past 70 years Don Lee Camp & Retreat Center has been a shining beacon on the eastern North Carolina coast, attracting thousands of children of all ages, parents, adults, teachers, families and more to the many camps, retreats and environmental education opportunities offered throughout the year. "Camp Don Lee" is an icon in the coastal camping universe, not just in North Carolina but across the United States, providing amazing experiences that are often life changing.

Former campers most certainly recall their days at the swimming pool, thinking that high dive looks a lot higher when you're standing on the diving board. They can still taste the famous fried chicken cooked almost daily at the Don Lee Dining Hall. Or thoughts of gliding across the Neuse River on Sunfish, Flying Scots and Hobie Cat sailboats bring back memories of how all our campers learn the extraordinary power of wind and

water, friendship and faith. And what camper or staff member will ever forget the Don Lee song?!

"There's a place that I love best,
Ho la he, ho la ho,
It's a spot that God has blessed,
Ho la he la ho..."

However, the most vivid memories of Don Lee attendees, new and old, are most certainly the relationships made while being at camp, retreat or educational program. Lifelong friendships are formed every week. And many former campers return to serve as counselors, lifeguards and sailing instructors. Others make the drive to Arapahoe and lend their talents as a weekly doctor or nurse. Some bring their carpentry and landscaping skills to support and enhance the camp's facilities and beauty. What this really embodies in our camp alumni is Don Lee never leaves them. The experiences shared become part of who they are and have become. The opportunity to give back is almost a rite of passage to many former campers and staff, ensuring the Don Lee spirit always lives on.

That spirit was born in early 1948, thanks to a generous donation of land from the Don Lee family. Over the years, little by little, Camp Don Lee began to take shape. Every year saw a new building rise, from the Fellowship Hall to the Caretaker's Quarters, cabin after cabin to the Dining Hall to the Staff House. Each structure added to the identity of Camp Don Lee and that legacy continues with new structures built in the last few years through generous donations, such as the Environmental Education Center where students and teachers discover nature through hands-on, interactive programs, more modern cabins with heat and air conditioning, a new bath house, outposts away from the camp grounds, and coming soon, a new Medical Center. But these structures are more than just buildings, these are building blocks, testaments to the commitment from alumni, friends and the local community to the future campers, families, counselors and educators, to the future of Don Lee Camp & Retreat Center.

Just as the iconic cross at the end of the pier has stood proud during storms, hurricanes, snow and blistering heat, Camp Don Lee remains steadfast throughout the camping community in eastern North Carolina and beyond, impacting thousands of lives over the course of seven decades. Whether the experiences came from traditional camp, Tweekers, Mariners, Coast Runners, Marine Science camp, Leader-In-Training or from the middle school girls, confirmation or yoga retreats, or from Family Camp, Father-Child Weekend and the Challenge Course, or from the thousands of school children attending Coastal Communities and Common Ground programs each year, the common bond throughout has always been Faith, Fun and Friendship. From ages 7 years old to 18, these children, the staff, the educators, the retreat visitors and the local community have attended 'this place we love best', a place God has blessed, and we all are blessed by this place, this camp which has been such a special part of our lives. Then. Now. Forever.

www.donleecenter.org

