

Christian Camping

Summer - Autumn Feature



Unforgettable weekend

Camp for disabled a blessing to everyone involved

For the past 29 years, Totara Springs Christian Centre and Christian Ministries with Disabled Trust (CMWDT) have partnered together over Labour weekend to see those with disabilities enjoy a weekend never to be forgotten.

Look through the photos of their weekends together and you will see bravery, courage and strength written in the faces of attendees, helpers, camp staff and CMWDT volunteers who numbered near 400.

Lee Love from Totara Springs, Matamata, explained that for them it is a non-negotiable weekend. Each year the Trust gets a priority booking. Along with organising beds, wheelchair ramps, hoists in rooms, and dietary needs, the weekend is a huge blessing to the camp.

Lee's highlight was, "Thinking that we are the ones blessing others who may not be as able as us, but being blessed by them ourselves. Having people remember you from previous years, and having hugs from people you don't even know."

For those attending a camp for the first time, like Julian (18), it was the first time in his life that he had not stood out in the crowd, and for once nobody was staring at him.

"I am just another pebble on the beach. I feel overcome with happiness, and could almost cry tears of joy." Together disabled and able-bodied people stand praising God. Those attending can feel God working in their lives and in everyone



THUMBS UP: Campers at this year's Christian Ministries with Disabled Trust camp at Totara Springs show their appreciation.



PRAISE: Worship is an integral part of camp.

at camp.

One helper at a recent camp commented, "Everyone was smiling no matter how tired we were. Camp was jam-packed.

Every minute of every hour had activities to do, from worship to speakers to games to swimming and more." The weekend was a combination of fun



BUSY BEES: Getting stuck in.

with sports, time to worship together, breakout groups and teaching from Christian leaders like Pastor Geoff Wiklund. For those with disabilities it was an oppor-

tunity to try new things in an environment where those cheering you on really understood the struggles and triumphs.

"I just want all you camp-

ers to know that no one has a disability but everyone big or small, tall or short in the world has the ability to achieve amazing things in the power of God," encouraged helper Monique.

Another helper, Rachel, felt that she had learnt a lot about serving, "I have found that in my measly attempt to give I have been given so much in return by simply attending camp.

"The kindness demonstrated in this camp is something surpassing age, culture, gender, and disability. It is unique to anything I have ever experienced, and I feel so blessed to have been a part of it, and to have received in my small giving something infallible and irreplaceable."

Camp director and main organiser Jeanette Howden is described as 'super efficient' and is supported by the fabulous committee team.

"The team that runs this camp is so thankful for anything and everything we do — it makes our job so easy," says Lee. Hosting CMWT over the years has allowed Totara Springs to offer three camps for disabled clients each year.

"The things that we learn from this camp, like dealing with those that are disabled, we can use for other camps. We now have about three camps for our disabled clients each year. For us at Totara Springs we are about making all things accessible for all people, whether it's a small school, deaf people or any others that may be considered 'not camp clients'. ■



Totara Springs Christian Centre, Matamata - Family Camp B 'Kiwi As' kiwiana theme - 2 January to 7 January 2011.

This is the best all-inclusive package deal on the market. The fees include all meals, all activities, great family time, and most important - no dishes or meal planning for mum!

This year we will have activities such as; daily family hour/kids programs/op shop dress up/it's in the bag/family concert night/theatre sports/ladies' pamper night/miniature waka race/top town plus all the Totara Springs traditional favourites like hydro slide/train/flying fox/hot pool/kayaks and loads more.

Please refer to our website for more information and prices - www.totarasprings.org.nz or email - bookings@totarasprings.org.nz or phone us on 07-8884700.

Also check out our website for OSCAR approved children's holiday camps in January.

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