

Connecting Friends, Making Memories

By Luke Overmire, Camp Director, Camp Tippecanoe

"It seems they had always been and would always be, friends. Time could change much, but not that." - Winnie the Pooh

Have you ever met someone and just knew you'd be instant friends? Each year at Camp Tippecanoe, we witness friendships being built that remain for years to come. This season, we got to witness it again, this time with two girls who met on their first day of camp.

Mandy and Kathryn were instantly inseparable. For the entire week, everywhere Kathryn went, Mandy was right by her side and vice versa. They participated in activities together, joked around with camp counselors and enjoyed spending every waking hour together.

They both accepted the challenge of the blue rag, which is the first stage in a program available to campers ages 12 and over. It's a seven-stage progression of spiritual and personal growth that involves peer counseling and symbolic bandanas or "rags." Each person who participates develops his or her own goals for growth, and each "rag" challenges the individual to a deeper awareness and personal growth. The blue rag challenge focuses on God, country and becoming your best self. During that week of camp, all campers who feel they are ready to accept the challenge meet to be inducted into the Ragers Society. Both Mandy and Kathryn attended and wore their blue rags proudly!

At the end of that week I asked them, "How long have you known each other?" I was amazed to find out they had only met at the beginning of the week!

Amidst the fun of camp games, songs, swimming, canoeing and talent shows, Kathryn and Mandy, together, came up with goals to develop their own personal growth which will instill lifelong confidence and independence: And started a friendship to last a lifetime!