



Orca Sounds

November – December 2005

Dates to Remember

November

- 11 Veteran's Day
- 24 Thanksgiving

December

- 10 Trip to Leavenworth
- 25 Christmas Day
- 31 New Year's Eve

January

- 1 New Year's Day

February

- 14 Valentine's Day



The Changing Face of Thanksgiving

When you think of the first Thanksgiving, do you picture happy Pilgrims celebrating a great harvest? Actually, that was not the case in 1621, the year of the first Thanksgiving. The harvest—except for the corn—was a very poor one. But, thanks to help from a man named Squanto, a member of the Wampanoag tribe, the Pilgrims raised enough corn to double their weekly food rations. These survivors were thankful to be alive. Forty-seven people—almost half their group—had died the previous winter.

In the years that followed, communities did celebrate good harvests and proclaim their thanks for other welcome events. In 1779, more than 150 years after the first Thanksgiving, George Washington declared the first national Thanksgiving to celebrate the formation of the new country. Another 84 years later, President Lincoln issued a Thanksgiving proclamation that set aside the last Thursday of each November for gratitude.

Regardless of the origins of this holiday, it is clear that human beings have always found reasons to be thankful and to celebrate. It is what people have felt thankful for that changes over the years. The Pilgrims were happy to be alive, the Founding Fathers were happy to have established a government, and Lincoln's Thanksgiving proclamation expressed thanks that the Civil War had not destroyed the country.

It is the changing face of Thanksgiving that keeps the holiday as relevant today as it was in 1621. What will you be thankful for this Thanksgiving?



For nearly a century:
integrity,
responsibility,
tolerance.



New Leader Welcome!

Camp Fire USA Orca Council welcomes new leadership to our club program. New people bring new ideas and a renewed sense of why we choose to give service to children.

We hope that returning leaders will seek out these individuals at meetings and events, and welcome them to Camp Fire USA. Great co-leaders support each of these people. All have chosen to invest their spare time for the enrichment of youth.

Our new leaders, registered, or soon to be, are:

Laura Keesee, Rochester

Dawn Twiggs, Puyallup

Shandra Gilbertson, Yelm

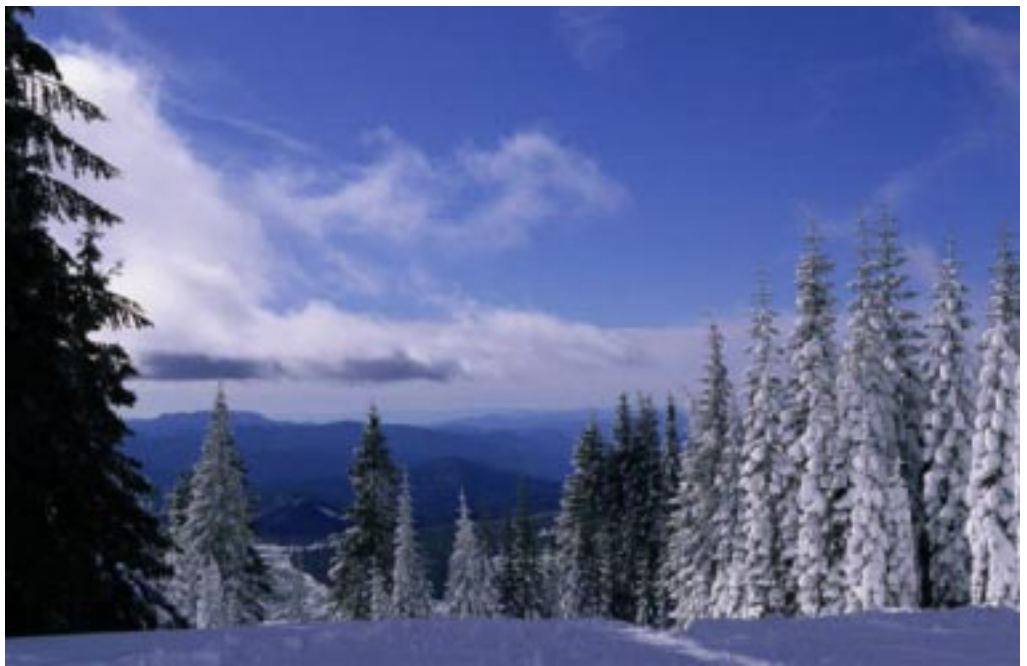
Teresa Knoll, Puyallup

Wohelo on the Web

Have you visited our new online Wohelo pages?

This new addition to the website provides a place to learn more about the Wohelo Award itself, as well as about Orca Council's award recipients past and present.

The website is currently featuring speak outs from Marcy Alstrom and Kimberlee Douglas. Kimberlee's SpeakOut is also featured in this issue of the *Orca Sounds*.



Trip to Leavenworth Makes for a Very Special Day

Horizon, Teens in Action, and Discovery club members should mark their calendars for the annual trip to Leavenworth on Saturday, December 10th. This Bavarian-style town offers dozens of specialty shops filled with ideas for gift-giving, and a true holiday atmosphere that is always enhanced by the very high probability that there will be some snow.

Travel to Leavenworth is via a chartered bus that leaves the Tacoma/Puyallup area first thing on Saturday, and arrives at its destination in the late morning. Shoppers have a little bit of time to look things over before choosing where and what to eat for lunch. After a satisfying meal, the serious shopping begins as everyone scurries to find that unique gift for someone on their list.

Then before you know it, it's time for one more cup of steaming hot chocolate as you join the crowd making its way toward the town square that is the center of the Christmas tree lighting ceremony. When the last building is aglow with lights, the tired but happy shoppers make their way back to the bus and the ride back home.

Get Ready!

The holidays are a good time to let friends and relatives that you will be selling Camp Fire Candy again this year and to find out how many boxes they will want.

Most people are happy to see Camp Fire boys and girls at their local neighborhood store selling candy. Buying a box—or two or three—of their favorite candy is a treat they look forward to



each year. For many buyers, it is a reminder of the happy days they spent in Camp Fire and they are pleased to be able to help out a younger person the way they too were helped when they sold candy.

What is the Value of Camp Fire USA Membership?

Parents, that depends entirely on you. The list could be endless or very short. As with most things in life, what you gain personally in any situation is usually in proportion to what you are willing to give.. A Camp Fire experience is no different.

Camp Fire members can:

- Make new friends
- Learn new skills
- Gain a better understanding of themselves and others
- Learn to work with others
- Develop new ideas and attitudes
- Have opportunities to travel and learn about their community and country
- Gain information about vocations, avocations and hobbies
- Develop the ability to express ideas
- Develop an appreciation of differences in people and thoughts
- Make a contribution to their community
- Develop a new outlook
- Have an opportunity to give meaningful service

The answer to the question, “*will your child?*” is up to you.

Members share with hundreds of thousands of members in a national organization that has a proud history, foresight, and vision. As members, they are a part of a local organization, Camp Fire USA Orca Council, which serves youth in their community and has their community’s interest and support. They are, at the same time, part of a group with adult leadership who cares about them.

What are the responsibilities of membership?

In our kind of society, all of us are dependent on people’s acceptance of responsibility for their actions. The privileges soon fade unless each individual is willing to take personal responsibility for keeping privileges alive. Camp Fire USA, too, depends on its members—both youth and adult—accepting this philosophy.

Effective Camp Fire members:

- Voice their opinions
- Take an active part in planning and evaluating
- Participate in the activities
- Wear the uniform with pride
- Understand the meaning of belonging
- Listen as well as speak
- Know that differences have value.



Hunger in Our Community *How can we help?*



Hunger is a huge issue in Pierce County. There are many reasons why this is; for one, Washington State has one of the highest unemployment rates in the nation. Other families have low-wage jobs and have trouble making ends meet. Retired seniors constantly have to choose between buying food or buying their medication. In many cases, families have to choose between food and heat.

Here are some facts about hunger in Pierce County:

- 143,300 residents visit food banks and hot meal sites each month
- 52% of those residents are children and seniors
- 43% are families with at least one adult working
- More than 50% of the public school children in Tacoma qualify for federal free or reduced lunch prices
- 2004 showed a 26% increase in demand for emergency food over 23%
- Tacoma food banks are already showing a 7% increase over last year

How can you help?

- Make a cash or food donation at your local FISH Food Bank or any shelter in the area
- Volunteer to help at any local food bank
- Support hunger fundraisers such as the Pierce County Hunger Walk
- Support a food drive in your school
- Have a club food drive for your local food bank



Camp Fire's Outdoor Education Philosophy

Orca Council Executive Director Kathy Unruh returned recently from Camp Fire USA's National Leadership Conference in Kansas City. At Camp Fire's 2003 national convention, a resolution was passed to explore the importance of outdoor programs in Camp Fire and a committee was formed to research the issue. The following is an excerpt from their report.

Creating community helps achieve outcomes.

It is not just the outdoor site that creates a special place. The place creates a sense of community. Like many communities, it provides the basic essentials of living, including safety, wellness, love, and often food and shelter. Some young people do not have adequate access to these essentials in their home environment, while others take them for granted. In a self-contained, neutral environment, Camp Fire USA camps and outdoor programs provide young people with a rich group living experience and a community for positive youth development. They have the opportunity to know and develop a concern for the community members and all creatures that share their natural environment. It becomes their home—a place where they can belong and feel secure.

Camp Fire USA believes the best youth development occurs in small groups. The individual's ability to relate and work within the group grows and develops. Individuals have the opportunity to build interpersonal and leadership skills. Knowing and working with others helps children know themselves better. Individuals become friends, and feelings and involvement create understanding and trust in other human beings.

In the outdoor program, groups include both young people and adults. Similar to society, the small group is a part of a larger unit or "neighborhood" group, and neighborhoods join to form the community. The experience provides one of the few opportunities to participate in an intense, informal, coeducational community.

When boys and girls plan and participate in activities together, they develop a mutual respect and trust that is deeper than roles based on one's gender. They learn that the capabilities of each will enhance and complement the other for the good of the group.

Even how the group is formed is intentional. In Camp Fire USA outdoor programs such as a resident and day camp where new groups are put together, the group is deliberately formed to reflect the demographic composition of the total group of camp participants. The camper has an opportunity to have a group living experience with young people from other socioeconomic, racial, cultural and religious groups and disabled populations. This diversity represents the continuum of human experience. This is a new experience for many young people. Some have always had to share a bed, while others have never had to share a bedroom.

When the outdoor program is designed for an existing group, such as a Camp Fire USA after-school group or an environmental education class from a neighborhood or school, it is a group enrichment experience. It provides a new environment for the existing group to learn to work together and may forever change how the group relates to each other when they return to their home or indoor environment.

