



**Adaptive
Adventures**

Experience

Summer 2009

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Rocks the Boat

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in Chicago

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10th Anniversary Issue



KJ van der Klooster catches big air
at the 2008 Extremity Games



Editor & Design: Joel Berman, Matt Feeney
 Photos: Joel Berman, Amos Callenberger
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MISSION STATEMENT
 The mission of Adaptive Adventures is to identify, promote, and provide progressive sports and recreation opportunities to improve quality of life for children, adults, and veterans with physical disabilities.

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- Joel Berman - Executive Director
- Matt Feeney - Program Director
- Mau Thompson - Associate Program Director
- Rebecca Archibald - Administration Director
- Amy Seamans - Technology Coordinator
- Ed Salau - Southeast Director
- Mark Drake - Program Consultant
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Founder's Corner:

After 10 years of communicating with the community through bi-annual newsletters and taking turns with the director's letter, we felt it was time to make this letter from both of us. If you had asked us 10 years ago if we thought this would become our livelihood for the next decade, it is doubtful we would have taken that bet. We both feel truly blessed to be where we are today, providing opportunities for those who face similar challenges and paving the way for quality outdoor experiences around the country.

First and foremost, we need to thank the hundreds of volunteers who have donated time and money over the years. Like all small nonprofits, Adaptive Adventures relies heavily on the time, energy, and heart of a dedicated group of people. It starts with a committed Board of Directors. We are proud to say we actually have two original board members still with us. A special thank you to George Mannion, our Chairman, and Ronald W. Servis, our Secretary. These two gentleman exemplify the attitude and commitment that has allowed us to flourish over time.

An interesting phenomenon relates to the many ways we have found Adaptive Adventures to be rewarding. We always knew that working hands-on with participants and their families would have a visible and profound impact on their lives. What we did not realize initially was the way the Adaptive Adventures philosophy and vision would impact other individuals and organizations across the country. Many alternative ideas we focused on from the beginning are now being incorporated in other programs. From our mobile All Mountain Ski Camps and clinics to our trailer full of handcycles, our model has proven that an organization does not have to be "site-based" to succeed. It is also gratifying to see more organizations coming together as one to provide better experiences to the people we serve as we always hoped it could be.

Growth has not just come based on our model or approach to adaptive sports and recreation, but in specific sports as well. Adaptive Adventures' original premise was to create and expand opportunities in newer or alternative sports that were either not offered or hard to find. By developing programs in such activities as cycling, paddling, and wakeboarding, we have helped create and expand participation in sports for the population that benefits from it the most. It is this continued growth that not only changes perceptions but also gets us excited for the next 10 years.

Thank you to everyone...we look forward to another decade of service.

Joel and Matt

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Adaptive Sports for Kids (ASK) Program



After a successful winter that featured four Stars of Tomorrow Youth Ski and Ride camps, we feel the best way to share the story is through the eyes of one of our parents.

Joel, Mau, and Matt,

I wanted to write a thank you letter regarding the Stars of Tomorrow Camp in Steamboat this year. It was a first rate camp as usual. Our year wouldn't be complete without attending one or two of your events.

First of all, thank you so much for the scholarship. I'm not sure if we could have made the trip without the financial help. I was happy to volunteer where I could to help earn my keep. I must say all the volunteers were first rate people, knowledgeable and motivated to help. I don't know where you find them all, but keep up the good recruiting on the volunteer front. They really "make" the experience for the participants.

Pierce has the most fun on your trips. We went on a mountain trip last summer with another group and while it was fun, it just wasn't quite the same. Adaptive Adventures lets the kids set their own pace and push themselves farther. That's so important for Pierce. He hates to be treated like he's made of glass or worse to have assumptions made about what he can't do just because he's in a wheelchair. I think a big part of your success with this has to do with limiting the participation to physical disabilities. Physical and cognitive disabilities have different needs and I think it diminishes the experience for both groups if you try to be one size fits all.

I always describe Adaptive Adventures the same way to people. I tell people your organization was created to serve the spinal cord injury and amputee population and that you guys are basically a bunch of "adrenaline junkies with chairs and prosthetics." Other groups that focus on kids with birth defects seem to coddle the kids too much and the organizations are more for the parents than the kids. I'll tell people that Pierce fits in with your crowd much better and their child might benefit from doing a trip with Adaptive Adventures. I want you all to know how important I think it's been for Pierce to be around Adaptive Adventures. He's living life and not watching it, in large part from his exposure to Adaptive Adventures' activities.

I guess I'm getting off subject a little. Pierce especially enjoyed the group (Chris and Stephanie) he skied with. I think he's still texting them both. I know he'll remember this trip for a long time and he's really looking forward to the next one. Thanks again for everything you did on this trip and for future ones to come.

Bruce Grandchamp (Pierce's Dad)



Pierce skiing at a Stars camp in 2009



Pierce climbing in Evergreen in 2005



Pierce riding at the Inaugural Stars of Tomorrow camp in 2003



Stars of Tomorrow Camp Rocks the Boat

After 10 years of creating and developing ski camps, the first Stars of Tomorrow Youth Ski and Ride camp in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, was held from March 21-23, 2009. This newest camp in the Stars series was a resounding success and years in the making. After working with Access Anything for three years on both a winter All Mountain camp and summer Behind the Boat event, it was time for the kids to take over the mountain! It was also time to partner with Steamboat Adaptive Recreational Sports (or STARS), an emerging non-



Kyle Taulman of Steamboat skied independently for the first time in his life at the 2009 STARS camp in the Boat.

profit based out of Steamboat that will be taking on the responsibility of Steamboat Ski Area's adaptive program as well as offering additional sports opportunities for visitors with disabilities.

Known as one of the top Kid-Friendly destinations in the country, Steamboat Ski Area proudly welcomed its first adaptive youth ski camp and thanks to the dependable local support, this first installment of an annual camp was a huge success! The camp group included over 50 participants, siblings, parents, volunteers, and staff, but the focus was on eighteen children and young adults with different abilities. The kids spent three days enjoying some sun, snow, and the beauty of the mountains while perfecting their skills on the hill. In addition to individual and group instruction, all the participants had the opportunity to explore a wide range of ski conditions as well as

make some runs on the race course. Participants came from across the country, but a key element to the camp was the inclusion of a group of local Steamboat kids as well. "I got all the way down the hill without falling, it was awesome!" stated local skier Kyle Taulman who has been bi skiing since he was four and is already looking at moving to a mono ski next year at the age of seven.

"This group was a lot different than the adult camp for sure," commented Craig Kennedy, President of Access Anything. "The energy of the kids was great; they were excited and ramped up to explore a new mountain. The group became one big happy family by the end of the weekend!" Local restaurants donated food for lunches, and parents and coaches teamed up to make two meals in the condo at night. A few locals also donated crock pots for a final banquet, a new staple to the Steamboat camps that began at this year's adult camp and became an instant hit. "We always eat well at camps in Steamboat," noted Mau Thompson from Adaptive Adventures.

Many skiers made great strides in their skills over the weekend. Kathryn Gray of St. Louis, Missouri had her first time skiing in Steamboat and "had the time of her life skiing... and feels great about herself and what she can do," as her mother told the group after the camp. Several other participants were from "Team Mau" with their sites on the 2014 Paralympics.

We want to thank our three primary partners for making this event such a success. This was STARS' first collaborative event, and their involvement included bringing experienced coaches and volunteers to support the large group. Access Anything, based out of Steamboat as well, once again did a fantastic job of reaching out to the local community for support in fundraising, sponsorships, and additional recruitment of volunteers for this and all Steamboat events. Last but not least, Steamboat Ski Company for going above and beyond in their support of this camp, the new STARS program, and the disabled community.

We are already looking forward to another great season in the Boat in 2010!



Abby Farrell receives a race medal from head coach Mau Thompson.

Adaptive Adventures Heads Southeast



Adaptive Adventures is expanding to North Carolina! For the past decade, Adaptive Adventures has impacted the lives of people with disabilities through promoting and providing progressive sports and recreation opportunities in many locations. Despite a national focus, for the most part we have provided opportunities regionally around our offices in Colorado and Illinois. Our long term goal is to have five or six hubs across the country to develop awareness and new programs.

North Carolina, or the Crystal Coast, also called "Down East" or the "Tarheel State," offers everything we seek to serve our clients. "The Graveyard of the Atlantic" is world renowned for wreck diving. You can SCUBA among civil war shipwrecks, centuries old sunken cargo ships, and explore the wildlife within them. North Carolina offers ocean kayaking on its Outer Banks, canoeing on the rivers, and wake boarding on its many lakes.

Adaptive Adventures Southeast will be led by Ed Salau, who is volunteering his time. Ed has been participating in Adaptive Adventures' events for four years, skiing some of his first turns with us after losing his leg in Iraq in 2004. Ed is a PSIA certified level-1 adaptive ski instructor, recreational handcyclist, kayaker, and all around good guy. Ed currently works full-time as a program coordinator with the Marine Corps' Wounded Warrior Battalion, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. He has lived in North Carolina for 14 years, and he is excited about sharing all he loves about the Tarheel State. For more information about upcoming events in North Carolina, continue to check www.AdaptiveAdventures.org, or email Ed directly at ed.salau@hotmail.com.

Welcome aboard ED!

Adaptive Cycling Experience Expands

NEW Adaptive Cycling Partnership in Chicago

After six years of working with Great Lakes Adaptive Sports (GLASA) headquartered in Lake Forest, Illinois, we are excited to announce a formal partnership in the cycling arena in 2009. We have always collaborated on some group rides, clinics, and the cycling component of the highly successful Stars of Tomorrow Camp Trek, but both organizations realized the benefits to the community for a more coordinated effort. Adaptive Adventures and GLASA are combining all elements of the programs including staff, volunteers, equipment, and funding.

"We look forward to expanding the Adaptive Cycling Experience program in the Chicago area and across the Midwest through partnering with an agency like GLASA," noted AA Chairman George Mannion. "With Chicago 2016 and World Sport Chicago making cycling one of their primary focus areas in Chicago, our joint effort with GLASA will put us in the best position to grow the sport in the area."

One of the first additions to the program will be the formation of a new group – Great Lakes Adaptive Cycling Club. The club will be run by AA and GLASA and will be set up in much the same way as any able-bodied cycling club. The key difference will be the focus on athletes of all abilities and ages and integrating cyclists based on ability levels, not equipment or physical limitations. Keep your eyes on our web sites for new rides, clinics, and riding opportunities in the Chicago area and beyond.



While skiing down some of the most difficult terrain of my life last week, the thrill was not only in the challenge of the terrain, but (keeping up with) the people in my group. Unlike every other group I had skied with in over 30 ski camps in the last decade, this group was not “disabled” or “adaptive.” It was just a group. But this wasn’t just any mountain. It was Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

In early March 2009, I traveled to Jackson Hole to participate in the famous “Steep and Deep” camp. These camps have been offered for the last 15 years to skiers and riders from around the world and are recognized for their excellence. This year, there was a slight change. Behind the energy and efforts of Kurt Smith, the Executive Director of Teton Adaptive Sports, a group of seven adaptive skiers were in-



vited to the camp for the first time, including myself and two Adaptive Adventures alumni and Wounded Warriors.

The first day the weather was anything but Spring-like. Bullet-proof snow and howling winds made conditions very challenging, as if the mountain was not challenging enough. The skiers were divided into ten groups based on ability. My group was led by Anthony, who had been a coach at the camp for 15 years. None of the other participants in our group had ever skied with a differently-abled skier before. They lived in the two legs, two arms world on the hill, as do millions of people every season. By the second day, the snow was falling and we were into the ‘deep’ part of the camp. We skied some of the steepest trees I have ever skied in my life. We learned more about tactics than technical skiing. We were challenged and exhilarated by the terrain, the conditions and the great camaraderie of the group. There was plenty of respect to go around as the group continued to bond throughout the camp.

For years, Adaptive Adventures has been creating ski camps and opportunities for individuals with physical disabilities. The goal at our camps is to improve quality of life through increasing confidence, motivation, and independence. We have always tried to create an atmosphere of inclusion and integration at all of our events. Whether the activity is skiing, paddling or cycling, people with disabilities are now more than ever participating in sports with friends and family. The camp in Jackson Hole was unique in that it was an existing successful event that enhanced the experience for all by including skiers with disabilities. By integrating adaptive skiers into such an environment, it emphasizes everyone’s ability level, not their level of disability. It is only about the skier-type, not the body type.

The benefits of integrated activities can impact all people in the community – participants of all abilities, volunteers, coaches, and professionals. In our world of buzz words like change, inclusion, outreach, and awareness, it is refreshing to see that something as simple as an integrated Ski camp can make these words a reality.

www.tetonadaptivesports.org



*Photos Courtesy of Amos Callenberger/ Teton Adaptive Sports

Athlete Spotlight: Dean Schwartz - Wounded Warrior

Dean Schwartz is a wounded warrior currently living in Johnson City, TN. While serving in Mosul, Iraq, as a Combat Engineer, in 2004, Dean's truck was hit by a rocket propelled grenade (RPG). The blast from that explosion severed his leg above the knee. Since that time, with the help of groups like Disabled Sports USA and the Wounded Warrior Project, he has participated in many events in an effort to find new and exciting sports and activities. "My goal is to always try new sports and keep working to become better at the sports I already know," Dean noted in an early conversation with Adaptive Adventures.

After learning about Adaptive Adventures through the Wounded Warrior Project, Dean and his good friend and fellow soldier Andy Corbett joined Adaptive Adventures for the annual All Mountain Ski camp in Vail, Colorado in January, 2009. Vail Mountain proved to be a tough challenge for Dean. The bitter cold and depth of the snow is just not something that is seen very often in the mountains in the East; but then again, neither is a one-legged skier. Even though he had plenty of falls, Dean always got back up and continued to work down the mountain and improve his skills. Dean said that the Vail All Mountain Camp was a good way to improve his skills and challenge himself to become a better skier.

It was clear from the beginning that despite having all his limbs in tact, Andy was going to need more help on the hill than Dean. During the camp Dean commented, "I never would've imagined skiing in Colorado before my injury. Adaptive Adventures not only gave me the opportunity to ski in Vail but to be able to do it on one leg. I enjoyed the chance to ski with instructors who also skied on one ski and had over 50 years of skiing experience between them...there was no way that I could not achieve my goal of becoming a much better skier." Since learning how to ski as an amputee Dean said that he has become a much better skier now than he ever was with two legs." Matt Feeney put it best, "Dean is Adaptive Adventures material!" We look forward to working with Dean again and again...



Dean on a blue ski day at the Vail All Mountain camp



Dean and Andy at Gold Peak in Vail



Six above-knee amputees and Andy at the top of Vail

Program Spotlight: Steamboat Adaptive Recreational Sports (STARS)

STARS (Steamboat Adaptive Recreational Sports) was formed in 2006 by a group of ski instructors, Steamboat Ski and Resort Corporation management, and interested community members. The group saw a need to help improve opportunities for people with disabilities that live in or travel to Steamboat. After receiving 501 (c) (3) status on July 11, 2007, the organization negotiated with Steamboat Ski Corporation to take over the adaptive ski program. In the last two years through grants and donations, STARS has been able to buy two new sit skis and update a lot of the equipment needed for the increased demand for adaptive lessons. To supplement this inventory, Adaptive Adventures has loaned several pieces of equipment as well.

STARS provides scholarships, equipment, recreational opportunities, and hosts events and ski camps for people with disabilities. Currently the program is only offering skiing, although future goals are to offer summer activity camps and other recreational programs throughout the year. This March, STARS partnered with Adaptive Adventures and Access Anything to offer our first ever youth ski camp, as part of the Stars of Tomorrow Youth camp series offered by Adaptive Adventures. STARS is looking forward to working with Adaptive Adventures again this summer on the Behind the Boat water-ski camp.

Over the past two years, STARS has accomplished everything through its volunteer Board of Directors, a partnership with Ski Corp, and its volunteers. They have established a volunteer program with over 60 dedicated volunteers that either assist certified instructors in lessons or they help independent skiers that may need additional assistance. There is also an inclusion program this year, which allows kids with disabilities to participate in local ski programs on the mountain or through Steamboat Springs Winter Sports Club. This new program enabled the first ever sit down skier to participate in the Steamboat Springs Winter Carnival Lighted Man Parade on Howelsen Hill. Additionally, STARS has provided over \$4000 in scholarships to kids and adults that normally would not have been able to afford the cost of adaptive lessons. STARS is the beneficiary of donated office space in the new One Steamboat Place, which is expected to open December 2009.



"When we first started doing camps in Steamboat in 2006, there was no organized adaptive sports program in the area," noted Joel Berman - Executive Director of Adaptive Adventures. "Our goal was to help develop the interest and awareness to start a new program in the Boat. STARS is that program. We will continue to work with their board and staff to offer organizational and technical assistance to help the exciting new organization to grow and be the best it can be."

Contact: www.Steamboatstars.com



JOIN US at the 5th Annual Stars of Tomorrow Camp Trek - June 22-26, 2009 - Libertyville IL



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Summer 2009 Featured Events Calendar*

May

May - October	Adaptive Adventures Kayak Chicago Paddling Program	Chicago & Midwest
April - October	Adaptive Cycling Experience Clinics, Demos, and Rides	Colorado & Midwest
9	Paralympic Cycling 101 Clinic	Chicago, IL
10	Colorado Spina Bifida 5K and Cycling Clinic	Denver, CO
13	Tournament of Champions	Denver, CO
24	Bike the Drive	Chicago, IL
29-31	Great Lakes Games (GLASA)	Libertyville, IL
29 - June 1	Gates of Lodore whitewater rafting trip	CO and UT

June

June - August	Adaptive Water-ski & Wakeboard program - camps, clinics, and training	Colorado & Midwest
June - October	Challenge Aspen Whitewater Rafting partnership	Aspen, CO
3	Water-ski and Wakeboard Training	Denver, CO
4-7	No Barriers Festival	Miami, FL
6	Rocky Mountain Regional Handcycle Race	Aurora, CO
6-13	Lake Powell Experience - Family Trip	Lake Powell, UT
8-12	Colorado Jr. Wheelchair Sports Camp	Aurora, CO
14-19	Ride the Rockies with Adaptive Sports Center	SW Colorado
20	Rock Climbing with Expand	Boulder, CO
22-26	STARS Camp Trek Youth Sports Camp	Libertyville, IL
24	Youth outing to Brewers Game	Milwaukee, WI
28	Chicago Kayak Family Paddle and BBQ	Montrose Beach, IL

July

2	ASK Cycling and Paddling Day	Evergreen CO
6 & 13	Adaptive Cycling Clinic with GLASA	Skokie Lagoons, IL
8	Caring for Kids Kayak Day	Montrose Beach, IL
8-11	Extremity Games IV	Waterford, MI
15-16	7th Annual Adaptive Water-ski & Wakeboard Festival	Longmont, CO
18-19	Adaptive Cycling Team - Fat Tire Classic	Winter Park, CO
TBD	Aquanuts Adaptive Water-ski Clinic	Twin Lakes, WI
22-24	Behind the Boat Water Sports Festival	Steamboat Springs, CO
25-27	Courage Classic Cycling Ride	Colorado
27	Lodo Restaurant Group Golf Outing - Ranch CC	Westminster, CO
30 - August 3	ASF Support our Troops Water-ski Clinic	Albany, NY

August

2	Family Sports Festival with MDWSSC and Kostas Z	Chicago, IL
3-7	GRWSA Jr. Wheelchair Sports Camp	Grand Rapids, MI
4-8	Chicago Park District Adaptive Sports Camp for Kids	Chicago, IL
6-7	STARS of Tomorrow Youth Sports Camp	Denver, CO
9-12	Adaptive Cycling Team joins the Peace Ride	Southern, CO
12	Wounded Military Yacht Cruise on the Free Spirit	Burnham Harbor, IL
13-16	Wounded Warriors Sports Camp and Chicago Air & Water Show	Chicago, IL
22-29	Lake Powell Experience	Lake Powell, UT
29 - Sept. 5	Lake Powell Experience Trip	Lake Powell, UT
TBD	Western Slope Water-ski Clinic	Grand Junction, CO

September

11-13	Beyond Boundaries Adventure Camp	Mississippi Palisades, IL
21	10th Annual Greg Reilly Memorial Golf Gathering - Ranch CC	Westminster, CO

*check AdaptiveAdventures.org for additional programs



**Wounded Warrior
Disabled Sports Project**



Adaptive Adventures / GLASA Partnership Water-ski / Wakeboard Events

July 10	GLASA Clinic	Libertyville, IL
July 20	Watersports Clinic	Twin Lakes, WI
August 3	Watersports Clinic	Twin Lakes, WI
August 13	Wounded Warrior Camp	Twin Lakes, WI



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info@AdaptiveAdventures.org

For information contact:

Chicago: 847.251.8445

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Save the Date!

10th Annual Greg Reilly Memorial Golf Gathering

Monday, September 21, 2009

11:00 a.m. Registration

1:00 p.m. Shotgun Start

The Ranch Country Club
Westminster, CO

\$170 per individual

\$640 per foursome

Banquet Dinner at
LoDo's Westminster
(104th & I-25)

Immediately following with
prizes, raffle, and silent auction

REGISTER TODAY!

call: 303.679.2770

Online at

www.AdaptiveAdventures.org



About the Greg Reilly Memorial Golf Gathering

This golf gathering is held in memory of Greg Reilly, a devoted friend and free spirit who passed away in an accident in 1997. We honor Greg and keep his memory alive through this gathering that raises money for Adaptive Adventures an organization that embodies his spirit and sense of adventure. Greg touched many lives and was loved by all who knew him.

In addition to honoring Greg through the golf gathering, Adaptive Adventures has established a scholarship fund dedicated to assisting disabled athletes meet their goals whether through attendance at an Adaptive Adventures' sponsored camp or clinic or by purchasing adaptive equipment for participants' use in any of the key program areas.

Sponsored by:



Additional sponsorships available starting at \$1,000 - Call Today!
Currently accepting silent auction donations

All proceeds benefit



501(c)(3) Organization

The mission of Adaptive Adventures is to identify, promote and provide progressive sports and recreation opportunities to improve the quality of life for children and adults with physical disabilities.

Take a look at our new home page at
www.topendwheelchair.com



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Before we had kids, my husband Joel and I skied almost every year. We always watched in amazement at the little kids barreling down the mountain and looked forward to the day that our children would do the same, no doubt becoming better skiers than us by the time they were four. When Gwen and her twin brother Nick were born 13 weeks early, each weighing under two pounds, all of our dreams for their future were put on hold. After they were diagnosed at 18 months with cerebral palsy we knew that many of our dreams for their future would have to change.

Now six years after their diagnosis, we have learned that when your child has a disability you have to push them and yourself to try everything, knowing that sometimes things work and sometimes they don't -- but you don't know until you try. This is what led us to the Adaptive Adventures Stars of Tomorrow Youth Ski Camp. When we signed Gwen up to go to Vail we expected that we'd strap her in some hardware and slide her down the hill. She would have a good time going fast and we'd call it skiing.

Never did we think that she would actually learn to ski. But she did, in her own way, and like all of us she will get better with practice. The superb instructors engaged her the whole time and worked with her at a level that made her successful, yet pushed her to achieve a little bit more on each run. It was unusual and very exciting to see Gwen try so hard to accomplish something new. The other great thing was that Gwen got to meet other successful people with disabilities. These are role models that she doesn't have at home. For once she was like everyone else -- wheels and all.

The Stars Of Tomorrow Youth Ski Camp was a life changing experience for Gwen. She talks about it all the time, and if you ask her to name her most prized personal possessions, she will tell you without a doubt- her ski goggles.

By: Saren Johnson – Gwen's Mom





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