

The Art of Summer

- Andrew Dearborn

I spent my first summer away from home seven summers ago, when I stayed two weeks at a camp in New Hampshire called William Lawrence. It was every boy's dream; there was riflery, sailing, camping, and rock climbing among other things. I returned to William Lawrence the next four summers. While I never went for more than four weeks, the days flew by. At the end of the four weeks, when I returned home, I always felt I had missed out on a lot, having been out of town for the past month.

And I think that's what kept me from going to camp for longer, the fear that I would be missing out on all the fun things that my friends would be doing. In reality, I wasn't missing much. Obviously I did miss some things, like the Fourth of July or boating trips, but otherwise I was probably having more fun at camp than I would have had at home. I remember every year being excited to be home and to be with my friends, but after a few weeks I would get bored and struggle to find something to do. I often wished I were back at camp. I always had the option to stay at camp longer; I could have stayed for seven weeks, but every year when the time came to decide, I stuck with four.

As summer approaches with alarming speed, I am reminded of those years that I spent at William Lawrence, and I'm glad I went; it saved me countless days of drowning in boredom. I was always afraid to schedule away my entire summer because I wanted free time, and I believe that's how a lot of kids feel as well. After a year of demanding academics, extracurriculars, and sports, the idea of sleeping late and doing nothing sounds very good to the average high school student. As a result of having a lot of free time though, kids crave activity, just like I did every summer, and just like kids have before me and kids will in the future. It's important to realize that there is a balance; summer should be part relaxing and part experience or adventure. The trouble is finding out what that adventure is for you. It's easy to become lost in the idea of doing nothing this summer because you want a break from the structure of school, but if you find something to do this summer you will be much more satisfied in September.