



Cherish...with a side of Relish

I have this simple little block of wood on my dresser. I love it and even though it has been sitting there atop my jewelry box for a few years, I still notice it. It reminds me to cherish what is in store for the day. At night as I fall asleep it reminds of the people, memories, events or things that I cherish. And sometimes, it is a reminder that I really could have been more tender and loving with those I cherish.

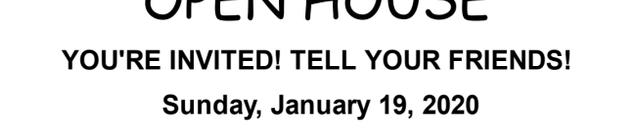
I often work on Christmas. Call me weird but I like the aftermath of Christmas more. Seems things are slower, calmer and there is more time to enjoy the people, things and activities I cherish. I guess it is because there seems to be more time to truly relish what I cherish.

Since childhood I have loved those days of exploring my gifts, the paint-by-number sets, jigsaw puzzles and books just perfect for curling up on the couch to read. For many years now in the mountains, it is during these cool crisp days that Kitchens and I have time to explore new little mountain towns or to take big hikes to new vistas.

It is the time I take moments to remember my beloveds who have left my world. Their cherished memories loom large in my heart and though I miss them, I cherish my memories and relish knowing I was loved and loved them well. As I get older I know I will be losing more of my dear ones. It is inevitable and it makes me cherish each moment I had with them this year even more.

As we enter a new decade, I wonder, if you might take a moment and reflect on what you have cherished most over the past decade.

And then maybe take a little more time to imagine with me ways you might take more time to relish those people, activities, dreams and yes, even the things you cherish. Together I think this would make for an amazing new decade for many of us to truly take time to relish what we cherish.



OPEN HOUSE

YOU'RE INVITED! TELL YOUR FRIENDS!

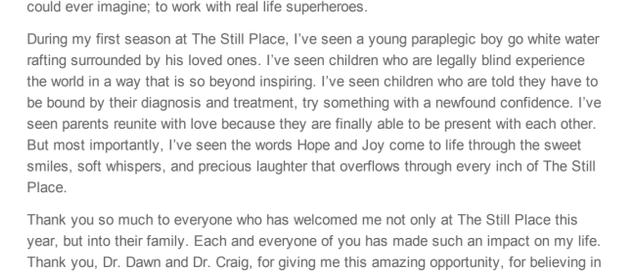
Sunday, January 19, 2020

Stop by The Still Place house between 2:00 and 6:30 pm. We are inviting the community to come and see our amazing creek side home. You will learn about our single family retreats and about the families we are fortunate enough to invite to The Still Place. Refreshments will be provided. There will be door prizes, a raffle and more! Don't miss it!



NAME THE STILL PLACE GNOME

Visit our website at <https://www.thestillplace.org/name-the-gnome.html> to cast your vote now for your favorite name. Each vote is \$5.00. You can vote as many times as you'd like. The name with the most votes will win. We will announce the name on New Years Day 2020.



Thank you...from Kayla

Growing up, I had so many dreams. Like many kids, I had a dream of becoming a marine biologist; thank you to Seaworld and Shamu for the inspiration. At one point I wanted to start my own Chick-Fil-A franchise. Not your typical childhood dream, I know, but it sounded like a great business opportunity to me. Of course, there was the dream that I would one day become famous. But let's just say, thank goodness none of these worked out! But what did work out for me, is a dream to work with the most incredible families I could ever imagine; to work with real life superheroes.

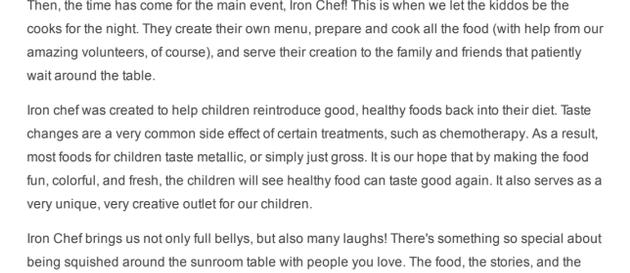
During my first season at The Still Place, I've seen a young paraplegic blind go white water rafting surrounded by his loved ones. I've seen children who are legally blind experience the world in a way that is so beyond inspiring. I've seen children who are told they have to be bound by their diagnosis and treatment, try something with a newfound confidence. I've seen parents reunite with love because they are finally able to be present with each other. But most importantly, I've seen the words Hope and Joy come to life through the sweet smiles, soft whispers, and precious laughter that overflows through every inch of The Still Place.

Thank you so much to everyone who has welcomed me not only at The Still Place this year, but into their family. Each and everyone of you has made such an impact on my life. Thank you, Dr. Dawn and Dr. Craig, for giving me this amazing opportunity, for believing in me, and teaching me. Being able to work at The Still Place has truly been one of the best things that has ever happened to me. As one of our sweet kiddos says, it's better than Disneyworld, and I completely agree!

I will forever cherish the memories I have already created with you all, my Still Place family, and I absolutely can't wait for all the amazing memories that are still to come next year.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!

by Kayla Tucker, Program Director



Series: Day 4 of The Still Place Retreat

Day 4 of the retreat is packed full of Appalachian adventures, laughter, and good food! This day of the retreat holds one of our favorite Still Place traditions: Iron Chef, or as some of us call it, Chop This Chef!

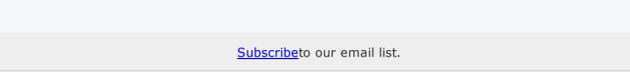
Typically we begin the day with a mini Appalachian excursion. One of the favorites of the summer were the trips to the High Mountain Meadows Farm and Creamery to visit Ms. Donna, the goat whisperer. Her beautiful farm is packed full of goats, dogs, a donkey, and a turkey that you can pet. That's right, a pettable turkey! Ms. Donna gives our families the best tours; from seeing all the animals to showing us how she makes the most amazing goat cheese ever. Of course we can't leave the farm without taking some cheese home for ourselves!

To prepare for the Iron Chef dinner feast, we also like to go to a local produce farm called 7M Family Farms in Blairsville, Georgia. We hand our kids a basket, and they excitedly take off searching for the best fruits and vegetables. By the time they're done, we have baskets upon baskets full of fresh goodies: bell peppers, broccoli, tomatoes, asparagus, potatoes, strawberries, peaches, watermelon, and tons more!

Then, the time has come for the main event, Iron Chef! This is when we let the kiddos be the cooks for the night. They create their own menu, prepare and cook all the food (with help from our amazing volunteers, of course), and serve their creation to the family and friends that patiently wait around the table.

Iron chef was created to help children reintroduce good, healthy foods back into their diet. Taste changes are a very common side effect of certain treatments, such as chemotherapy. As a result, most foods for children taste metallic, or simply just gross. It is our hope that by making the food fun, colorful, and fresh, the children will see healthy food can taste good again. It also serves as a very unique, very creative outlet for our children.

Iron Chef brings us not only full bellies, but also many laughs! There's something so special about being quizzed around the sunroom table with people you love. The food, the stories, and the good times never disappoint!



WE LOVE OUR VOLUNTEER TEAM!

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