

Midlake 2014 Report

By

Don Boche

May 23, 2014 I was going to my first Midlake at Devil's Head Resort. I attended several of the planning meetings so I had some idea what to expect, but there was no way anyone could prepare me for the experience I was about to be involved in. The conference started with the Opening Ceremony at 7:00pm Friday and continued till Sunday at noon, note the word "continued". There were two rooms with one hour meetings in each room almost every hour and the hospitality room with crafting, food and drinks. There was no time for sleep, I didn't want to miss anything. First thing Friday I helped with organizing the drinks in the hospitality room. Later I had the watch at the fire pit from midnight till 3:30am Saturday. There were over a dozen teens playing a game at a table next to the fire pit and us sponsors were sitting at another table and watching the fire. One sponsor brought her ukulele and several were singing by the fire. A teen asked if she could try playing and she started playing and singing a Christian song that I recognized, it made me smile. After many logs on the fire and great conversation, my body was telling me it was time to retire. Then 3 hours of sleep and back at it. Saturday was full with meetings every hour till breakfast at 7:30, more meetings till lunch at noon, then one more meeting 1-2PM. The Rock Meeting started outside at 2:00pm and went almost to 4:00pm. Everyone would take a small stone with something written on it, and then when ready they would comment on their rock. The Alternate Delegate from Canada held the basket over by me, I tried to look in and she said "no looking" (this would be my control issues). When it was put in God's hands, what rock I picked, it was incredible. My rock said nothing! I felt myself start to get emotional because I know what this meant. My past was not there, I could choose to start with a new, fresh day. I shared this with the group. The banquet started at 5:00pm with mandatory attendance and most teens and sponsors dressed up. The dinner was great and the banquet had three Alateen speakers, an AA, and an Al-Anon speaker. The dance started at 9:00pm and went till sometime after 1:00am. Saturday night, or I should say early Sunday, I had almost 4 hours sleep and then I overseen two meetings Sunday at 5 & 6am. Most of the teens awake at this time were on the organized nature walk. Sunday morning was the first sleep most teens had. The hourly meetings ended at 7:00am for breakfast and then clean up. The Closing and open mic started at 10:00am and went past noon with most teens sharing their feelings and experiences. At this point there wasn't a dry eye in the place. Teens were sharing their deepest feelings and emotions. Teens that were afraid to talk to anyone in the beginning were

taking the mic and sharing their experience, strength and hope. Teens were sharing struggles that no adult should go through. Teens were sharing the bond between other teens that reached out to them. Teens were sharing the injustices and unfairness of decisions that adults made for them. We had to close because we were way past our time. We formed a circle and closed with the whole song "Lean on Me"

Lean on me when you're not strong and

I'll be your friend

I'll help you carry on

For it won't be long till I'm gonna need

Someone to lean on

Long story short, sure we can always do better. The people that organized this event did an incredible job, from the planning meetings, the huge amount of paperwork, the Alateen meetings, hospitality room, crafting, meals, DJ, outside activities, organizing sponsor duties, the entire event! I believe the total attending was 178 and from what I seen, this was a great group of Alateens! There were no complaints from the resort and I am proud to be part of this event. It was the most emotional and powerful event I have ever been to, and I will be back. I've made some friends from other states and countries (Canada) and hope to see them again. Some of these teens just tore my heart out with their stories. I just want to get in there and fix things, but I know I can't. The best I can do is make sure that the Midlake Conference is there for them in years to come. Please consider attending with your Alateens next year. Alateens are the future of Al-Anon and this conference has my full support.

Yours in Service,

Don Boche

AMIAS & Alternate Delegate