

# Camp Shakespeare '08

## PROLOGUE

Camp Shakespeare, a component of The University of Texas Shakespeare at Winedale Program, is a two-week residential camp for young people, ages 10-16, held in the small town of rural Round Top, Fayette County, Texas, with daily activity at the University of Texas Winedale Historical Center, located five miles away.

Camp Shakespeare is dedicated to exploring a Shakespearean play through performance. This is an experience in daily performance, in exploring language and character, in doing, playing at play. It is not an “acting” or “theater” camp. Here, we celebrate the creative process. We do not rehearse “shows.”

This observation by a former (1980) Shakespeare at Winedale student whose daughter (age 12) attended Camp Shakespeare says quite a bit about what happens at Camp Shakespeare:

Their accomplishment [at Camp] is the more remarkable when we consider that none of these students are theater or drama students but only kids interested in working together to explore a play through performance, the original purpose of Shakespeare at Winedale. In the process, their play becomes a vehicle for their exploration of language, of social encounter and problem-solving, for developing self-confidence and self-esteem, verbal and written expression, and, through Shakespeare, for gaining insight into the human condition.

Camp Shakespeare accepts applications from candidates anywhere, in public, private, or home schools. Experience with theater or with Shakespeare is not necessary. Commitment to working long hours daily at play with others is.

## CAMP DATES

Camp Shakespeare will offer two sessions for Summer 2008:

Session #1: Sunday, June 8 - Saturday, June 21

Session #2: Sunday, June 29 – Saturday, July 12

## **CAMP FEE**

The cost of Camp Shakespeare '08 is \$900.00. Some scholarships are available.

## **CAMP SITE**

The site of Camp Shakespeare is the Round Top Inn B&B Retreat/ Conference center, in Round Top, Texas. The Inn provides a comfortable country and historical setting for the experience: students enjoy the privilege of using and the responsibility of caring for these beautifully-restored 19<sup>th</sup> century Texas buildings which serve as dormitories, dining, and gathering spaces. Please see [www.andersonroundtopinn.com](http://www.andersonroundtopinn.com) for a view of the Inn. Hosts of the Inn are Charles and Jackie Anderson.

## **PLAYS UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR '08**

Hamlet, The Comedy of Errors, Twelfth Night, The Merchant of Venice, and The Tempest.

## **DAILY SCHEDULE AND ACTIVITY**

Campers begin their day quite early, at 6:30 with cabin-cleaning and other assigned duties before meeting in groups or one-on-one with the staff to work on lines, characterization, or a scene at 7:00. A brief period of physical and vocal exercise follows. Then breakfast. Morning and afternoon work/play sessions (from 8:15-4:00) take place in the Theater Barn at Winedale, in La Grange at the Texas Czech Heritage and Cultural Center Amphitheater, and other places we find. Every lunch is a picnic, prepared and set out by campers. Late afternoon sessions (4:00-6:00) are busy with Journal writing, relaxation exercises, quiet time, painting, mask-making, lines, and preparing for the evening. Improvised "problem-solving" exercises, singing, dancing, and free improvisational play follow supper. The day concludes with film sequences of Shakespeare's plays and Cabin Time, wherein campers "unwind" and exchange responses to accomplishments of the day. Lights out : 9:00 p.m.

## **PUBLIC PERFORMANCE**

Public performances of the plays will be held for Session 1 on Friday, June 20, at the La Grange Amphitheater and on Saturday, June 21, at Winedale;

and for Session 2, on Friday, July 11, at the La Grange Amphitheater, and on Saturday, July 12, at Winedale.

## **STAFF**

Camp Shakespeare is directed by Professor Jim (Doc) Ayres, Founding Director of Shakespeare at Winedale, Distinguished Teaching Professor Emeritus of The University of Texas, and currently Visiting Professor at Texas A & M University.

Working once again with Doc Ayres as Senior Camp Counselor/Associate Director is Kendle Wade. A Camp Shakespeare counselor since 2005, Kendle is a Plan II Honors '06 graduate of The University of Texas, majoring in Government and French. In '06, she taught English and Geography in Senegal. During Spring, '08, she will be directing an ensemble of students in A Midsummer Night's Dream in Bombay, India. Kendle has assisted in the Outreach Program in Austin and has training in CPR and water rescue.

Our new counselor/assistant director this year is Avi Syam, a member of the Shakespeare at Winedale class for two summers and a University of Texas graduate in English and Humanities. Avi has taught English in the Czech Republic, writes theater reviews for the Austin Chronicle, and teaches in the Austin Theater Action Project.

The campers' favorite people are the cooks, Veronica and Junell Skaggs, a mother and daughter team, school-certified dieticians in food preparation, respectively, for Round Top and Fayetteville ISDs.

## **CAMP POLICIES**

At Camp Shakespeare, we hope to create together a highly original, extraordinary learning experience. We have a country setting for that, much like Shakespeare's forest of Arden or the wood outside Athens. There is a different clock here. This world is filled with magic, wonder, song, and words and we do it without cell phones, computers, ipods, radios, or electronic games. The only TV game show here is Shakespeare. We do encourage campers to bring musical instruments of any kind. Upon acceptance into the program, campers are notified of what items to bring and not to bring. We also have a thing against flip-flops!

## **TELEPHONE CONTACT AND VISITATION**

Camp staff members notify parents of a camper's illness and/or problems with following the daily schedule or working with others, explaining how we are addressing those difficulties. Parents wishing to contact campers for any reason should call any of the three staff members at any time or the Inn (979-249-5294 between 8:00 and 9:00 p.m.)

Parents and friends are welcome to visit Camp Shakespeare during the afternoon of "middle" Sundays (June 15, July 6), from 3:00-8:00 p.m. and be treated to a special preview performance of the plays at the Round Top Library, at 7:00 p.m.

## **APPLICATION**

Each session will be composed of 14 students. Applications are available on the [shakespeare-winedale.org](http://shakespeare-winedale.org) website or by writing Doc Ayres at [jayres@cvtv.net](mailto:jayres@cvtv.net).

The application process requires prospective campers to send (1) the completed Application Form; (2) an essay by the applicant (a) introducing herself/himself and (b) explaining why he or she wishes to participate in Camp Shakespeare '08, exploring expectations/hopes/goals; and (3) two letters of recommendation from teachers.

## **APPLICATION DEADLINE**

The completed file should be sent to Professor Jim Ayres, P.O. Box 202, Round Top, Tx, 78954, before April 1.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

All applications are reviewed by a committee composed of the director, the counselors/associate directors and Clayton Stromberger, the Coordinator of the Shakespeare at Winedale Outreach to Schools Program. As we read applications, we give major consideration to the applicant's ability to live, work, and play cooperatively and generously with others; to a desire for shared and disciplined play experience; a willingness to try new things, risk, and explore; and to a firm commitment to the schedule of residential activities we propose. These qualities should be emphasized in both the

student application essay and the two letters of recommendation from teachers.

## **NOTIFICATION OF ACCEPTANCE**

Candidates will be notified of acceptance by April 10, '08 and are expected to acknowledge acceptance by e-mail. To secure registration, parents should send either partial (\$450.00) or full (\$900.00) fee payment to Professor Ayres, P.O. Box 202, Round Top, Tx, 78954.

## **PREPARATION FOR CAMP**

Upon acceptance, campers will be sent a text of the play chosen (with plenty of space for questions and annotation), role assignments, information about what to bring to Camp, a Release and Indemnification form and a Medical History report (to be returned by mail before arrival). Campers prepare for Camp by reading and re-reading the play and by working toward understanding language and characterization. Campers are expected to have memorized all of their assigned lines by the arrival date. Campers may at any time e-mail the director for assistance, advice, suggestions, or answers to questions arising during this period of preparation.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

Our web site, [shakespeare-winedale.org](http://shakespeare-winedale.org) carries up-to-date information about the summer camp. Parents and candidates are urged to check the site weekly for new information and possible changes. Questions of any kind about Camp Shakespeare '08 should be directed to Doc Ayres at [jayres@cvtv.net](mailto:jayres@cvtv.net). Students wishing to learn more about the process of Camp Shakespeare may wish to participate in the Spring activities of the Outreach to Schools Programs or "Saturday Shakespeare" workshops at The University of Texas directed by Clayton Stromberger, [cstromberger@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:cstromberger@mail.utexas.edu).

## **EPILOGUE**

Take pains, be perfect, adieu.

Nick Bottom, the weaver