

Here is some general information about our camp and ministry and this may help you generate some questions when I contact you. Let me know if you need anything else.

Fair Warning: This email is going to be long!

Who: Lone Tree Ranch started in 1980 with the purpose to provide a summer camp for kids to come and grow in their relationship with Christ. It was started by Tim and Charlene Worrell who are still active in the camp today as the CEO of Lone Tree Camps. The camp was started with very humble beginnings. Tim and Char lived in a tent for 3 months with a 6 month old and a 2 year old. For the first two years there was no running water or electricity. Since that time, God has blessed us beyond our imaginations. The one small camp has grown into three camp programs (Lone Tree Ranch, Fort Lone Tree, Lone Tree Mexico Missions) with four different facilities (We have a lakefront camp at Elephant Butte Lake that serves as the tail end of our Mexico Missions Program. To find out more about the camps and the age group each serves you can check out our website www.lonetreecamps.org. You can also download an application by clicking on the help wanted button on the homepage on the bottom right.

We are a non-denominational camp that believes Jesus was who he said he was! We agree on the majors of Christianity (The Trinity, the Bible is God's infallible word, our sins our forgiven through Christ dying on the cross). For more specifics you can reread our Statement of Faith from our application. We choose to agree to disagree on the minors of Christianity (stuff like sprinkle or dunk for baptism). We serve many different denominations throughout the summer (Baptist, Presbyterian, Calvary Chapel, non-denominational churches, occasionally Assembly of God, and Methodist). Working here will give you exposure to a lot of different denominations, styles of worship and teaching. Working with so many different denominations over the years has really challenged me on what really is important in my faith and also matured me in ways that I was not expecting.

The groups we serve are 80% church ed kids. We are a summer camp set up for Jr. and Sr. High aged kids. We serve any where from 100 to 140 people per week. As a former "church ed kid" (grew up in church, heard it all, faked my way through a lot of spiritual conversations), I am totally convinced this is the hardest group to get to connect with God, His Word, and a personal relationship with Christ. I am passionate about teaching God's Word in a way that challenges kids to go deeper in their discovery about God's Word in a way that they will connect with. Just so you know, I am not a hype kind of guy. I do not believe in emotionally manipulating people into a decision about their faith (although sometimes it is tempting for a speaker's ego!) I believe in explaining God's word as best as I know how, letting the Holy Spirit move kids hearts towards Him, and facilitating things from there. Kids will have the opportunity to make decisions about their relationships this summer in a Spiritually healthy way. Paul challenges us that our work will be tested on what lasts. We need to be careful how we build into people Spiritually. I want to build into kids in a way that lasts. I am tired of seeing so many kids make decisions in a hype emotionally driven manner and see the same kids a few months later with no changes in their life.

What: I am looking for 20-25 college aged summer staff to work here for the summer. We are a relational ministry! That means we have to create relationships with the kids and church leaders who come here. To do this we have to spend a lot of time with the groups. This is not the kind of camp where you come and do you job for 8 hours and then call it a day. We start at 7am and usually work until about 11pm at night. Since we are such a small staff we all have many different roles for camp. We work as a team to take care of all of the day to day operations of our facility. Everyone will have their main job that they are hired for (usually hospitality staff or program staff. Outside of the 4-6 hours a day that you are in that role you will be working as part of a team to help clean camp each day (I will get to our ministry philosophy later in the email), lead wild and crazy team games (we call it MXC), lead small group bible studies (don't freak out, I will give you the material), camp wide evening games, minor maintenance jobs on Mondays before the groups arrive for the week, and we are all part of the housekeeping crew to clean camp after the groups leave on Saturday morning. To be honest, I have never seen a camp of our size of program and capacity run on this few of staff. That is one of the reasons why our camp has been successful! We work as a team and see our position here not limited to a particular thing but as a role for whatever it takes and is best for the campers.

We use high adventure activities to create relationships with kids. I am looking for people to work as rappelling instructors, wranglers, belaying our high ropes course, lead the rifle range, digger instructors, waterslide staff and run our zip line. It is a blast! Just remember that you are leading the activity not necessarily participating in it! God has blessed us with some incredible equipment that we want to be good stewards of. This takes people who are disciplined to inspect our gear daily, take care of it, so we have a safe operation.

I am not looking for the greatest athletes!!!!!! I used to go out and find hard core cowboys, climbers, mt. bikers etc... What I ended up with was a staff who wanted to climb, rodeo, and ride and not hang out with kids. I can teach you how to do anything we have at camp! I love to give people new experiences. What I cannot put into you is a heart to come and serve. If you come with the attitude that you are here to serve and give God your best you will be successful here!

Typically we run our activities 4 hours a day. The rest of the day will be helping with the other programming of camp.

Out of the 11 weeks of camp. 4 weeks will be the group bringing their own program. Meaning they will bring their own worship band, speaker, and schedule. We will come alongside them to provide activities, food, recreation, and help wherever needed. The other 6 weeks will be Lone Tree's program. We provide all the teaching, worship, programming, activities, small groups, etc... It is a turn key program. This provides youth pastors who come, time to hang out with their kids. This provides small youth groups with limited resources to have a great week of camp with little effort on their part.

A typical week looks close to the following.

Monday: We start camp as a staff with lunch at Noon. This gives you Monday morning to take care of things during business hours (registering for College Classes, contacting your bank, or the one true morning you have to sleep in). Have a staff Bible Study. We pray for each other and the incoming groups. Wrap up any maintenance stuff that needs to happen. Our groups arrive on Monday's between 3-5pm, Tuesday through Friday - 7am until 11pm. We work hard to make it all happen, hang out with kids, activities, games, worships, etc... We are on! When kids see us, they want to hang out with us. Why! because we want to hang out with them! Saturday the groups leave after breakfast (after throwing some us in the horse trough). We draw cleaning assignments. Clean like no other, and are usually done by 1pm. Lisa makes us sack lunches. After the cleaning gets checked out we are off (By 3pm at the very latest) until Monday at Noon.

Our staff usually goes to Ruidoso to do laundry and catch a pizza. (If you are wise, you can hook up with a family at a local church and do your laundry at their house to save money). Sunday you need to go to a church! It is important to get Spiritual food outside of Lone Tree. Lisa is also very good about leaving the leftovers from camp in the refrigerator in the dining hall. If you are wise you would not have to buy food on the weekend to save additional money. We pay \$200.00 per week and your check will be direct deposited every two weeks. It ends up being between \$175 and \$185 per week after taxes.

We do not have the traditional counselor role here at camp. You may be asked to stay in cabins with kids once or twice during the summer. Most groups bring their own leaders to stay in the cabins with kids. Our staff live in designated staff housing with other summer staff. We offer a bunk bed, mattress, and private restrooms. You are welcome to stay here on the weekends. We do not ask you to leave the property when no one is at camp.

Where: Our camp is located in SE New Mexico. We are 8 miles from Capitan (claim to fame Smokey Bear). Capitan is a small 1 gas station town of 1500 people. Our camp sits at just under 7000 feet in elevation at the base of the Capitan Mountains (Capitan Peak is 10,137 feet). We are located about 45 minutes from Sierra Blanca (12,003 feet). We are in the high desert. In June it will be extremely dry here (sunscreen and lip balm for sure) somewhat dusty. The highs very rarely get over 90 degrees. The nights cool down to the 50's. July is our monsoon season. It tends to rain in 1 inch down pours every afternoon. The rain can come in and leave within an hour. Massive temperature fluctuations. In the mornings in July and early August some of us will be wearing sweatshirts. It is beautiful country. The closest Wal-Mart is in Ruidoso, NM (45 minutes away). Ruidoso is a ski town in the winter and has a horse racing track in the summer. Huge tourist spot for West Texans. It has been referred to as a poor man's Aspen, Colorado.

When: We will run 11 weeks this summer. 1 week of staff training and 10 weeks of camp. Our staff training starts Monday Memorial Day and camp ends on Saturday August 11th. I have spoken with a few of you that may have a conflict with those dates and I will do my best to work around those.

Why: As I said before, I was a church kid. I was the kid who had the books of the Bible memorized by 3rd grade. I was the kid who had all my memory verses done for Sunday School. I was the kid whose parents dragged them to church 3 times per week. I was the kid who kept going to church in middle school after my parents got a divorce and no one in my family went to church anymore. I was the kid who knew the right answer to the spiritual questions. I was the kid who did not have any real relationship with Jesus. I was the kid whose 10th grade year was a blur from alcohol and drugs. I was also the kid who got invited to go to a summer camp with Young Life (a Christian outreach ministry to high school students). I went rappelling for the first time in my life. I met two college aged guys on staff that shared their faith with me. It was the first time in my life I had met someone under the age of 60 (I had some pretty old Sunday School teachers) that seemed cool to me that was a believer. I must admit I did not ask Christ in my heart until a year and a half later. Those two college aged staff have no idea how God used them to impact my life. They have no idea how the summer they gave to the Lord would change my life eternally, but also it lead me into Christian camping full time. (long story, maybe I will tell it to you sometime).

I am confident you will be challenged in many ways this summer. Spiritually, financially, physically, emotionally. Camp is hard work! I am also very confident God is going to show up this summer! He has yet to fail me! I am anxious to talk to you about working here this summer.

About me: I first came to Lone Tree Ranch in 1988 as a senior in high school on a weekend retreat with my church. Tim was looking for summer staff. I had a passion for rock climbing and rappelling that started in me from my time at camp 3 years before. God was at work and I didn't even know it. I came on summer staff the day after I graduated high school. I was 17. It was the first time in my life I felt like God was using me. I had always wanted God to use me but never had an outlet for God to work. I came back a second summer and met my beautiful wife Lisa here in 1989 (we will talk about inter-staff dating later). We came back as an engaged couple in 1990 to work one last summer before real life. We ended up coming here full time in 1991. Camp has changed a lot since then. We have two daughters that are very important to us. Emily is 20 and Sophie is 19. There will be times when Lisa and I will choose not to attend some camp functions so we can hang out with our kids. Lisa is in charge of our food service. She rocks at the food. Most of you will gain weight this summer! She has a really funny sense of humor, says exactly what she is thinking. She comes to work at 4:30am every morning during the summer and goes home around 7:30pm. She will not be at the evening worship stuff. I come over to camp at 6:30am and if I am teaching that week get home around 11pm. We keep this pace up for the summer and actually pick up the pace for the months of April, May, September, and October. Our calendar at camp is crazy and we operate all year round.

We have seen the results of our ministry. That is why we work the hours we do. We believe in what we are doing and are looking for people who are committed to giving God their best.

If I wasn't in Christian Camping I would totally want to be in a punk band! We laugh a lot. We work hard and we play hard. I am not a Director that runs camp from behind a desk. I hate cell phones and I am notoriously difficult to get a hold of (please refer back to the note that I do not run camp from behind the desk).

Things you need to pray about working here?

Is our style of ministry a good fit for your personality?

Finances (I have watched God provide for 20 summers to students with the same needs you have) We ask our staff to send out a minimum of 25 support letters to attempt to raise their pay for the summer to help keep the cost down for the campers. Our full time staff raise 50% of our salary every year. I will send you all the materials to help raise that money. I believe God is in charge of our finances. If you raise \$1.00 awesome. If you raise the full amount, awesome. You are still guaranteed the \$175.00 per week.

I look forward to talking to you. I can also give you some emails of former summer staff that will give you a more unbiased opinion of what it is really like to work here. I hope this gives you some things to think about and helps generate questions you may want to ask.

In Christ,

Steve Dirks
Lone Tree Ranch Director
575-354-2523 office
575-808-1336 cell
nmranch@lonetree.org