

August 2017 Client Corner: Giving Back

Long-time clients Andy and Heidi Nickerson have two children, Kyle, a Junior at Troy High School and Megan, a Freshman at Orange Lutheran. Andy and Heidi lead very active lifestyles with Andy as the President of HdL Companies and Heidi's involvement in multiple community organizations along with the management of the Nickerson household. Andy's work requires an incredible amount of travel, yet both manage to find time each summer to provide a water experience for local high schoolers.



Andy and Heidi have been involved in a summer activity with their local church for 5 years. Their church sponsors a week long waterski camp in July. Andy and Heidi volunteer as boat drivers for the week and help students learn how to wakeboard, waterski, wake skate and wake surf.

Typically, there are 60 to 70 high school students that attend camp each year. There are generally four additional boat drivers working together to get as many kids as possible out on the water. The typical day starts with student runs on the water from 6:00 am to 8:00 am. From 9:30 am to 11:00 am, the assistants that run the camp have their runs on the water. That is immediately followed by student runs from 11:30 am to 5:00 pm. It's not uncommon to put in 40-50 hours of boat time at the camp for the week. Due to the Southern California drought, the camp has been

going to Lake Camanche near Lodi, California with an 8 hour drive each way from Orange County. This is anything but a relaxing week on a lake.



This summer marked Andy and Heidi's 5th year volunteering as boat drivers for the camp. Rob and his wife, Diane, originally talked them into volunteering for camp. Andy and Heidi started out very skeptical about going because they did not think spending a week with 70 high school students sounded like fun. However, after their first year, they were hooked and now

they look forward to camp each year.

Before their own children were old enough to go to the camp, a family member would stay home with them while Andy and Heidi were away. They usually tried to arrange for their children to be at day camp during the week of the waterski camp to make it easier for the family member taking care of them. After their youngest graduates from high school, Andy and Heidi think they will continue going to camp. It is something they look forward to each year and they get to serve alongside so many incredible people. It is hard for them to imagine not going.

They love getting to know the students and watching them enjoy their time out on the water with their friends. The kids are so encouraging and supportive to each other. It has been fun for them to watch the incoming freshman mature over their four years at camp and even see some of them come back to work on the servant's team.

Every year there are several students who are unable to get up on a wakeboard. They try over and over, get instruction from the various boat drivers, but they just can't do it. Andy and Heidi's best memories from camp are when they can get one of those kids up, see the big smiles, and

hear their fellow students cheer for their accomplishment.



Andy and Heidi started a tradition in their first year by having students sign their wakeboards. Many students have signed them and quite a few students have signed multiple times. The kids seem to enjoy signing the wakeboards, and it provides Andy and Heidi with a lasting reminder of their time with the students.

They look forward most to seeing the kids develop closer bonds with each other and their leaders, worship together, and grow in their relationship with God. It takes a tremendous amount of work to pull off camp every year, but the results make it all worthwhile. When they return home from camp, Andy and Heidi are completely exhausted and it usually takes them three or four days to recover.

Thank you Andy and Heidi for your hard work and dedication to your church and community!