

WILDERNESS WORKS

644 Memorial Drive, SE • Atlanta, GA 30312 • 404-441-1087 • wildernessworks.org

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TAKE A SWING

"I was so surprised about how much fun tennis really is!" said Chermaine Galimore one of a group of Wilderness Works kids that participated in Wilderness Works' first ever Take A Swing tennis session at the International Tennis Center in Doraville March 29th. Wilderness Works children went through a series of training exercises to familiarize them with the basic movements in tennis. Games and contests around the use of a tennis racket kept the kids quite captivated.



In no time kids were enjoying regular volleys and getting balls well over the net.

Wilderness Works is one of a few agencies serving needy kids selected by Take A Swing to receive a series of tennis workshops with dedicated volunteers. The children are already anticipating the next trip to the tennis court after a great first experience.

Take A Swing is a non-profit organization that offers kids living in economically disadvantaged communities a change to play tennis. The Take A Swing team of volunteers and coaches are all dedicated high school students. The Take A Swing goal is to offer an opportunity for kids to play tennis as well as learning other valuable skills including cooperation, positive attitude, perseverance, and dedication.

Take A Swing was launched by two dynamic high school students, Melody Yin and Ari Axler.

For further information please e-mail at tas.tennis@gmail.com

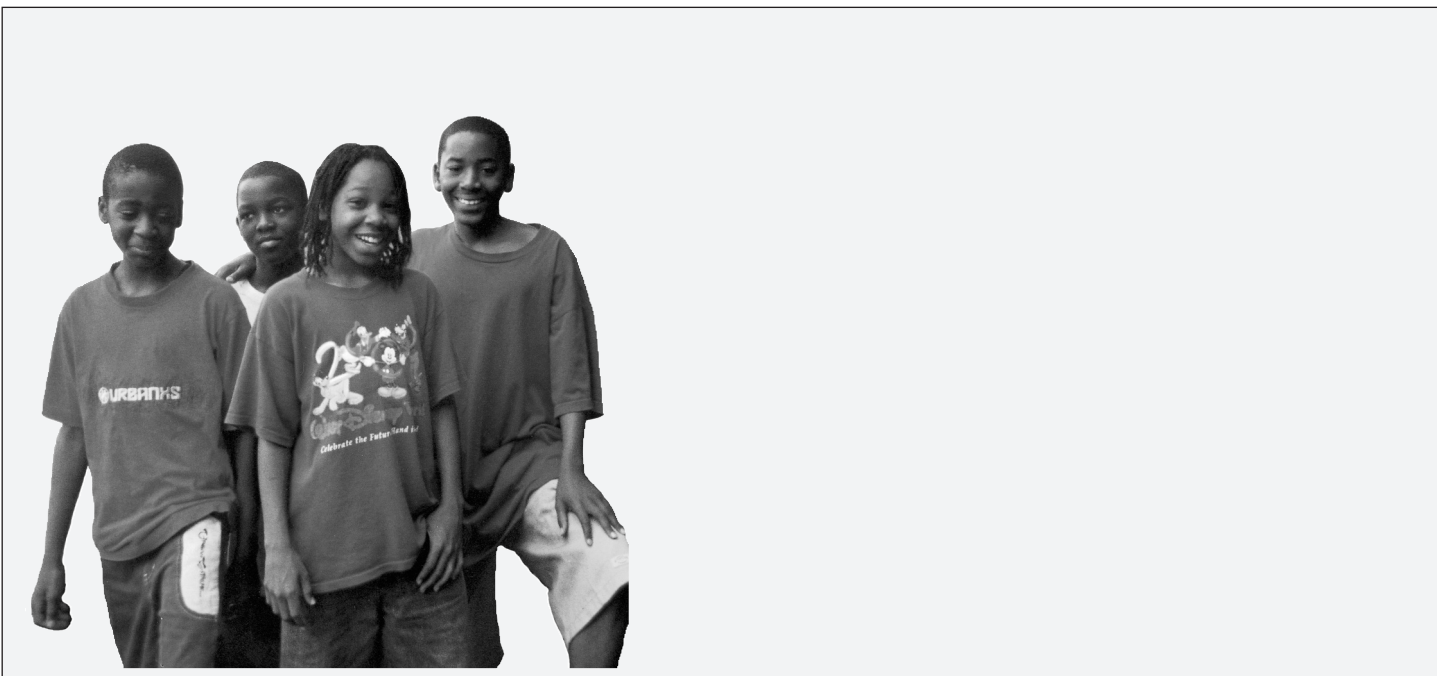
Wilderness Works Mission Statement:

Empowering and enriching disadvantaged and at-risk children living in urban Atlanta with year- round experiential education, recreation and outdoor adventure.



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UPCOMING EVENTS:

Novare Group Service Project
Wilderness Works Building Upgrade
May 9

Stone Mountain Day Trip
May 10

Dunwoody Baptist Church
Atlanta Zoo Visit
May 17

Take A Swing Tennis
May 24

Camp Trinity
June 7 - 13

Ocracoke Island
June 13 - 19

Camp Evergreen
June 23 - 27

Camp Evergreen
June 29 - Jul 3

Camp Bob
July 7 - 11

Metro Atlanta Project
July 11 - 17

ASU Students Join Wilderness Works For March 14th Tornado - by Alexis Rice

There were 39 of us that Friday night, March 14th. We had enjoyed being with a great group of students spending a week with Wilderness Works from Appalachian State University on their Alternative Spring Break. We had spent all of Sunday with this group of old friends and summer camp counselors up at Camp Evergreen cleaning up camp for Summer 08. The TODAY Show was up there filming our work. Tonight we had a big spaghetti dinner prepared by the ASU group. Now we were seated in the auditorium at Wilderness Works playing a group game. There were about 20 adults with us.



Wilderness Works kids enjoying volunteers

Suddenly the electricity went out and the auditorium became very dark. We all thought it was part of the game! We just screamed and laughed and acted crazy. We could hear a strong wind outside. The sound outside got louder and louder. Then it got VERY loud. The whole auditorium, the ceiling, the walls, the floor, the windows, everything was shaking. Air was pushing into cracks in the windows and walls. Now we were screaming and scared for real! Then a very loud crash came from out on Memorial Drive. By now the ASU students were yelling for us all to get on the ground. My hands were shaking. My friend (I will not give out his name) was crying. After about five minutes Mr. Bill came in with flashlights. Some people had been down in the basement. Mr. Bill started talking loudly and had everyone calm down. He explained that a TORNADO had just passed over our building and through the neighborhood (Cabbagetown).

Next we had a birthday party scheduled and the ASU team went ahead and got the ice cream into bowls and candles on two birthday cakes and Brandon had his eighth birthday. With no electricity, with only the birthday cakes for light, we sang "Happy Birthday". We somehow were calm now. In about 25 minutes Mr. Bill and Toby Grady (Camp Evergreen director) had us all move next door to the main Wilderness Works building for another tornado. This time we had some warning! Fortunately, the tornado did not come. We learned about tornado safety and the experience brought us all closer together.

The next morning we discovered that a giant billboard from about two blocks away had crashed into the side of the auditorium and was wrapped around a telephone pole in our front yard. Now we knew what had been so loud. There were giant things all out in the streets. Trees were down on top of cars. We also realized we were very fortunate. Some of the houses nearby were completely destroyed.



Our Staff:

Tony Jones – Volunteer Coordinator
 Leonard Evans – Program Director
 Tony Hayes – Program Director
 Oliver Porter – Equipment Coordinator
 Bill Mickler – Director

Chaperones:

Lakeria Allen
 Courtney Brewer
 Curtis Bright
 Joseph Jones

FROM THE CAMPFIRE...

by Tony Jones

The children in Wilderness Works are enjoying a wonderful spring. January started out well with a special woodcraft project sponsored by **Lowe's**. Wilderness Works children enjoyed hammering together bird houses and small scale basketball hoops with nets.

New children continue to join Wilderness Works from nearby **Cook Elementary School**.

The Wilderness Works **board of directors** is starting to get more fully involved in strategies for building a strong local support base. We are excited, as we know monthly operations depend on this kind of support.

In early February we were contacted by Dee Dee Thomas, producer for the NBC television **TODAY Show**. Dee Dee was very hush-hush about the contact and shared that Wilderness Works was under consideration for the **Al Roker Lend A Hand Award**. Exciting news!

With the help of **Hands On Atlanta**, representatives from **Novare Group**, a key Atlanta real estate development concern, opted to do a large company wide volunteering renovation project for cosmetic upgrading at the Wilderness Works Memorial Drive site in May. We are really excited about these terrific people sharing their energies with us!

The **Reverend Claiborne Jones**, Vicar of **Emmaus House**, a ministry of the **Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta** and a leading service center serving the needs of Atlanta impoverished families for 40 years, graced Wilderness Works with a tour of our facility and a vow to find ways for the two efforts to join hands in service to Atlanta children.

ProBono Partnership Atlanta accepted Wilderness Works for its legal services. ProBono provides excellent legal services for charities that might otherwise be unable to afford such services.

Wilderness Works children joined Camp Evergreen Director **Toby Grady** and camp staff for a campwide clean up at **Camp Evergreen** at Lake Burton. A television crew from NBC came along and managed to interview and shoot footage without being a distraction. Wilderness Works is excited to have a second

week at Camp Evergreen for 2008. This week will primarily be for children that are facing homelessness.

Read Alexis Rice's article about the **tornado** that hit Wilderness Works on Friday, March 14th! Astounding!

Board Chair **Bill Calton** is busy making arrangements to purchase a beautiful new bus for Wilderness Works. Bill Calton and director **Bill Mickler** drove a demonstrator bus from Carpenter Bus Sales in Nashville and came away very pleased. This critical transportation tool comes by way of the generosity of **One Hundred Shares**, a Christian women's leadership group that gave Wilderness Works a grant of \$50,000.00 in November.

Karol Vellines, current director of **The Andrew P. Stewart Center** in nearby Reynoldstown toured the Wilderness Works site and joined Bill Mickler for conversations on how the neighboring Stewart Center can work with Wilderness Works. These two organizations have partnered off and on over the years.

Wilderness Works children are thrilled about a new partnership with **Take-A-Swing** tennis program. A large group of Wilderness Works kids attended a tennis clinic at the International Tennis Center in Doraville (along with the NBC television crew!). Our kids learned technique and familiarity with tennis-related movement. The experience went very well and showed that tennis will be a popular outlet for Wilderness Works.

A large group of Wilderness Works children were treated to arena football as they attended a **Georgia Force** football game at Gwinnett Arena. We were not surprised at how much they enjoyed this! Thanks goes out to **Colt Berry** of Georgia Force and the **Atlanta Falcons**.

Never a dull moment! We owe a lot of thanks to caring friends who make these experiences possible. Please take a peek at our new website: www.wildernessworks.org!

Thanks so much for caring



TODAY SHOW A WONDERFUL SURPRISE FOR WILDERNESS WORKS

by Kimberly Guyton

Mr. Bill shared with us about being at lunch with Father Mike in February and getting a phone call from Dee Dee Thomas, producer of the TODAY Show. Bill thought it was a friend joking!

Then Mr. Bill realized that the TODAY Show had discovered Wilderness Works!

Soon the NBC television crew was following us everywhere we went. The biggest day might have been when we joined the Camp Evergreen staff up at camp for a spring cleaning. We young people were all raking leaves and repairing cabin steps and carting away dead trees while the producer interviewed Ezell Jones and Chermaine Galimore.

Later the crew came to our overnight and filmed our games and even managed to be there in the middle of a tornado! What a crazy night. The crew came to see us one more time when we were taking tennis lessons at Take A Swing. Edward Morris stole the show as the crew thought he really spoke well. What a ham!

Eventually, the big day came when the show came to Wilderness Works for a live show. They called it a remote. NBC's Al Roker himself came and so did Dominique Wilkins of the Atlanta Hawks. Both of these men were so nice and just ordinary. The parking lot was full of all kinds of people from so many companies and just citizens coming to give donations for Wilderness Works. Mr. Bill was on tv with Al Roker. We knew he was very tired because we kept him up the night before!

A lot of people that are now grown up or older teenagers were there

WILDERNESS WORKS WEBSITE UP AND RUNNING!

Thanks to the tremendous talent and hard work of **Karen and Ed Daniel** at **Red Tusk Studios** Wilderness Works has a wonderful web site for learning about all the activities and programs Wilderness Works provides: www.wildernessworks.org

One of our newer programs is **The Kids Closet** which allows caring donors to share their gently used blouses, skirts, shoes, slacks, blazers, ties and other items that our children need for events and outings requiring more formal or dressy attire.



Mr. Bill and Al Roker

Friday. It was like a reunion. Two of the board members of Wilderness Works grew up in the program and they were there along with the whole Wilderness Works board.

So many great gifts were given. We got bicycles that we needed. We got futon couches, mattresses, air conditioners, a washer and dryer, computers, furniture, office stuff, arts and crafts supplies, cabinets and even a Segway! Then, as if that was not enough, we received a 2008 Quest van donated by the Nissan Corporation. The Nissan people spent a lot of time talking with us. It was amazing!

The Wilderness Works web site helped the TODAY Show make a decision about Wilderness Works. Please take a look when you get a chance! Thanks!



Bill Mickler and Wilderness Works kids with Tripper Mansfield and Marvin Cosgray of Buckhead Community Bank

THE BUCKHEAD COMMUNITY BANK HELPS WILDERNESS WORKS

Wilderness Works is grateful to the kindness and care shown by team members at the Buckhead Community Bank. CEO Marvin Cosgray makes a board room available for meetings for the Wilderness Works board of directors. Buckhead Community Bank provides funding that helps the Wilderness Works bicycle program. Wilderness Works kids already knew Marvin and his lovely wife Jennifer as this warm hearted couple helped escort a bunch of WW kids to the Georgia Aquarium with Peachtree Road United Methodist Church last year. We are trying to talk Marvin into going fishing with us sometime in the future (keep your fingers crossed!).

- I'd like to volunteer.
- I'd like to make a donation: \$ _____
- I have _____ to donate.
- I know a child in need of your services.
- Please remove me from your mailing list.

You can use the back of this form for additional details.

Wilderness Works is incorporated as a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization. All donations are tax-deductible.

For more info, or to volunteer or donate, fill out this form and send it to us.

FEEDBACK FORM

Name

Address

City, State & Zip

Phone Number

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Send all correspondence to:
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