

SONSHINE 2007 RECAP

Another Sonshine has come and gone but what a fabulous year we had! What an amazing crew we had and what friendships we made! I get such an awesome feeling when I arrive in Willmar and come over the hill to see the hundreds of tents already set up. From that moment I actually come to grips that Sonshine has finally arrived. All the planning and preparing is about to pay off. This year was memorable for many reasons. It was the year that Facebook united crew members that had never met and forged bonds that will last a long time. The rookie class this year was probably the best we've ever seen! While the days were warm, we escaped the 100 degree heat of last year. The nights however were teeth chattering, hand numbingly cold. It pays to prepare for all types of weather as I advise all crew. Many were scrambling to buy sweatshirts and gloves for the overnights. Outside of a few rough spots thrown our way, the security was smooth and simple. Enough with the prelims, on to the stories!

Sonshine always seems to start off with a ***BANG***. This year was no exception, except this time it included me, **Jeff Quiggle**. Starting Wed evening off right, I lost my car keys (they were in my raincoat pocket), and lost the Communications trailer lock (which **Janna Langer** saw was attached to the key hanging from my lanyard). Tired and cold I went back to the hotel and dropped off **Sam Jerome** at Room 211. I then proceeded to my Room – 216. The door was ajar so I didn't even need to use my hotel card key. I entered the room and saw both beds full. I had allowed 2 girls from my church youth group to stay in the hotel room that night because of the rain. Having grabbed a couple spare towels from the front desk, and seeing them sleeping, I thought it would be funny to towel snap the closest girl (Kelsey) lying in bed. The girl slowly raised her head, just barely, and asked me, "Who are you" and "Why are you in my room"? My eyes having adjusted to the darkness I then realized the other "girl" next to her was a guy covered in tattoos and I was in the wrong room! My room was 206 and there I am standing over this poor girl holding a towel and dressed in my all-black hooded sweatshirt at 3am! At breakfast the next morning I heard a group of people talking about the "strange man" in their room last night so I awkwardly approached them, raised my hand, and admitted the intruder was me! They could not stop talking all weekend (they were backstage with Risen Drums) about how that was the most awesome thing that had ever happened to them and "thank you" for the cool experience. It will certainly be a Sonshine experience none of us will ever forget.

Always amusing is the cruel practice of teasing the kids in the front of the crowd at Main Stage. **Joel Hamm**, a 2nd year Canadian SRT member, convinced three girls and a guy in the crowd that he clubbed baby seals for a living. He told them that baby seals are overpopulated in Winnipeg and he was an official government agent specifically assigned to maintain the population of baby seals. Silly stupid Americans! I think it was payback for all the bad Canadian jokes he heard.

Saturday night ended early at Main Stage and many of the preps cautiously made their way to HM to check out the hardcore music. **Eric Vogel**, always hospitable, promptly greeted them with, "The Abercrombie section is over there" and pointed out the door. **Sheila Quiggle**, sensing many of them misunderstood the hardcore scene, kindly told them that as soon as the band began playing the crowd would push back to where they were standing and they would surely get hurt. The Abercrombies made a hasty exit.

Saturday overnight fellow firefighters **Terry Post** and **Ben Uden** were on patrol together. It was Ben's first time doing an overnight, and they ended up staking out a campsite suspected of having fireworks. Taking cover in the NW dirt parking lot by the Hill, they settled in between a minivan and a large pickup. Suddenly Ben sees movement in the pickup Terry was leaning against, warns Terry and they noticed the truck starts rocking. The windows fogged up and they **knew** what was going on in the cab....It was so funny but they didn't want to jeopardize their position. Personally, banging on the pickup windows and interrupting them would have been much more entertaining than any fireworks bust!

Lisa-lynn Kern and **Kelly Lowe** both learned not to sniff water bottles with amber liquid in them. We no longer care if it might be Captain Morgan; we aren't taking the chance, especially if **Andy Sopher** says to sniff it. FYI...it was pee. Lisa-lynn is now the designated "sniffer" on overnights. On a side note, make sure Lisa-lynn's hands don't smell like pee before you shake them.

In case you missed it in person, some random sightings and hearings:

Diana Larson couldn't make a sharp left on her bike and ended up planted in the ditch!
Rachel Hubbell was so eager for Dippin' Dots she also did a "dirt angel" from her bike.
Kelly Lowe and **Joel Hamm** chasing four guys at night wearing nothing but their boxers!
The SRT Guys and **Ben Uden** installed a "safety device" on my golf cart – a PINK HORN!
"That's what she said!" was the comeback that just wouldn't die on Crowd Patrol!
"Are you REALLY working security? What exactly are you securing?"
Jeremy Camp played the Kazoo on Main Stage during Hawk Nelson's show.
Poking In Person (PIP) was all the rage! Evidently, rules were broken however...
Suzanne Lueck lost her voice and could hardly speak at the Green Mill Sunday!
Rebecca Ness talked some guys into picking up some french fries for her while at Access 2.
Can someone *please* explain to me, "Who was Charlie the Unicorn?"
"Tell your crotch to stop talking to me!" said to Suzanne when she had her radio between her legs
Don't wear nipple rings in the mosh pit. It hurts when they get torn out!

Aaron Ash, a 2nd year SRT, and **Rebecca Ness** ran into a campsite with five guys stripped down to their boxers one night and made them put some clothes back on. I can't believe anyone thought it was warm enough to not wear clothes at night this year!

If you are going to try and steal a security golf cart at least make sure the key is in it otherwise you look like a putz. And if you do decide to try to steal a security golf cart and then get mad about it, you shouldn't throw a cup at security later cuz you didn't get your way.

Saturday evening around 9:30pm **Michelle Hopkins**, Artist Protection Sup, wandered back to the area of the signing table (all signing had been completed prior to 8pm that evening), when she noticed a line of approx 30-40 people standing outside the door between the signing table and Stage 2. Asked who they were standing in line for, they proudly indicated they were there for Relient K autographs. Unfortunately, she had to sadly inform them they were standing in line for nothing as Relient K would not be signing, nor was anyone else. Some of them had been there since the Relient K concert had completed!

Weren't the NEON yellow shirts all the rage! Were we EVER visible! We glowed in the dark like fireflies! That color will definitely be coming back for 2008 despite some wanting HOT pink....

The access points are always hilarious; **Kelly Lowe** had about four different cars with older couples from Willmar trying to get in to gawk at the kids. We've never had "tourists" try to get in before. I guess Sonshine is now like a Theme Park. They were quite disappointed.

File this under, "Be careful What You Say" from **Laura Holum**, back on crew after becoming a mommy in 2006 – "I was watching the side gate at Main Stage, and the lead singer from Day of Fire tried to get in with no wristband. Not knowing what he looked like or if he was telling the truth, I asked if I could walk him back to get his wristband. He was willing to take the escort (it always feels like I'm degrading people when I don't trust them). He shook my hand and we talked while we walked back to the artist tent. I informed him that he would be setting a good example for all his fans - that if they had to wear the bands, then so did he. He mumbled something about punk kids, and I scolded him (like a new mommy) with a tactless "those punk kids are your fans and what makes your money." He laughed at me and said that he was talking about his other band members he had just spotted. What a dork I am! But they laughed and joked with me for a few minutes before I went back to my post."

Kelly Lowe told of the time when **Sandi Stark** shrieked into the radio that she needed help because she thinks this guy is going to run, and when it turns into he is running, she calls **Terry Post** for help. Terry asks where she is, (and after carefully consulting her laminated map) she hurriedly yells, “the Boulevard!!, the Boulevard!!” Where the heck is Boulevard? Turns out it was the road by the biffs running up to HM. They gave her grief all of Sonshine for that!

At Stage 3 on Saturday, Dizmas was playing and Zach, the lead singer, kept jumping and walking onto, yes, I said ONTO, the crowd! **Leigh Lundy's** facial expressions were priceless! She looked like a worried mother, with her gasps and both hands covering her mouth. The best, though, was when he climbed up the two big speakers on the side of the stage and then jumped into the crowd!! I hear the crowd did at least catch him!

Sam Jerome should consider a career in forgery after the fake backstage wristband she actually melted together and used to test rookie **Liz Gorham** and **Nerissa Wilker** at side gate. The fake was so good NONE of us would have spotted it but Liz was so paranoid she then went into “pit bull” mode. She checked every wristband relentlessly, scrutinizing each like a jeweler inspecting a diamond ring. She even stopped Jerome from Switchfoot, obviously not recognizing him. He did not tell her who he was until her next shift at the signing table. After seeing him signing autographs she was more than a little embarrassed and apologized. He graciously joked with Liz and told her she was REALLY good at security.

Despite the cooler temps and calmer crowds, we had our share of injuries and trips to EMS. The list looks like a football injury report. I tried to remember them all. If I forgot, it's because you never told me. **Tim Mundfrom** (hip, smoke inhalation), **Suzanne Lueck** (knee), **Ben Reutter** (Mono – he went home Friday morning in great pain), **Stephanie Schroeder** (stomach), **Todd Paulson** (heat), **John Rasmussen** (back), **Rebecca Ness** (wrist), **Jon Ness** (stomach), **Jason Doehling** (heat), **Diana Larson** (knee). We were running short of able bodies by Saturday!

The show of the weekend was put on by **Flatfoot 56**, an Irish punk, something band that played Thursday evening. Their set included bagpipes and lots of wild action. The most unforgettable moment came when they called for the “Wall of Death”. They asked the crowd to split down the middle like the Red Sea (ha-ha Biblical Reference) and move back as far as they could. After revving up the crowd for a minute they called for the charging of the two walls! Standing on the edge it looked like a scene from Braveheart!! Security had been told it was coming, and that our job would be to simply scrape up the bodies that didn't get up on their own after it cleared! Best and biggest pits of the weekend as well by far! What a great time!

During **Flatfoot 56** they also had a circle pit going AROUND the sound board (those guys were a bit freaked out), and had a meat grinder going (that's three circle pits together, two clockwise-one counter clockwise). Flatfoot said that Sonshine NOW ranks up with Cornerstone for them because of the HM security crew! The crew did three things for them: We kept people safe, we got things going, AND we participated, the last of which made a huge impression on them!

The other side of the spectrum would have to be the show put on by He is Legend to close HM Friday night. It ended with some questionable moral behavior on stage involving a drunken girl that caused **Amberlie Haak**, HM Supervisor, to leap on stage and put an immediate end to the show. The band had been drinking and **Nerissa Wilker** had noticed some strange smelling diet coke cans (different than the bottles Lisa-lynn was sniffing). Even their merch was packed up ASAP! By the way, both Amberlie and Lizzy did a SUPERB job this year as rookie Sups!! They were in control of everything going on at HM and I never worried about them once!

After the rain, **Jon Ness** put a \$20 bounty out for the overnight SRT to find any Security shirts out “drying”. They could not find a one!! (Good job rest of crew!)

Why did **Ben Uden** go through partners like Paris Hilton goes through BOYTOYS?

What would Sonshine be without some Potty humor? We seem to always have funny stories when it comes to urinating, and this year was no different. First, at 3am Sunday morning **Diana Larson** tells **Aaron Ash** and **Tim Mundfrom** she has to pee. (Thanks for sharing) Aaron wants to show her the guys' bathroom that was a big trailer with a long trough. That was all the suggestion Diana needed. She asked the guys to watch the doors, went inside, and peed standing up with one leg on the floor and the other firmly planted on the wall. She now claims to have a greater appreciation for guys being able to pee standing up. Is there no end to the life skills they teach at St Cloud State?

Kinsey Anderson, on the other hand, experienced a problem quite the opposite. After leaving Green Mill on Sunday with **Suzanne Lueck**, they stopped at her Grandmother's place. Kinsey excused himself and went to the bathroom. When done, he fell on the floor, half dead and mumbled, "I had to pee sitting down. I didn't trust myself to stay awake standing up."

Not to be outdone, **Suzanne Lueck** badly had to use the restroom (we don't say pee do we Suzanne!) while at Green Mill. She used the bathroom by the pool, washed her hands and walked out ONLY to return a few seconds later after realizing she had NOT flushed the toilet. Amazing that a few days of using those glorious porta-pottys can make you forget to flush!

I did some necessary training Thursday and Friday with **Elise Austad**, **Christine Staloch**, and **Rachel Hubbell**, all Crowd Patrol rookies. I showed them how to chat up a campsite and look carefully for stuff they shouldn't have (alcohol, fireworks), but the most important lesson was how to talk your way into a free meal or snack. While hesitant at first, they got better at it as time went on. By the end of the weekend it brought tears to my eyes to hear they were turning down burgers and brats because they had chicken or steak waiting for them elsewhere. It was like watching Animal Planet and seeing baby lion cubs learn to hunt on their own. I was so proud!

Tim McConnell was working HM on Friday when some dude took his fist and punched him square in the eye. He was in disbelief because it didn't seem to be an accident (which would be common) as he looked at Tim first before punching. Tim totally kept his temper in check! WOW! He grabbed him by the shirt, said nothing (the music was too loud to hear anyway) and instead wagged a finger at him indicating his displeasure. He then sent him sailing into the mosh pit. He looked over to **Lizzy Alexandr** nearby and loudly explained what happened. Shockingly, he grabbed Tim's head and gave his punched eye a big puppy lick. I really doubt that is standard medical procedure for swollen, bruised eyes!

It seemed **Larry Buhler**, a rookie from Canada, and **Duane Bobick** (ex-professional heavyweight boxer) had been best friends for life when they really just met and did Crowd Patrol together on bicycle. They were so good at chatting with campers! I saw them at many campsites doing the job the way it was meant to be. Great job! FYI, Duane fought in the 1972 Munich Olympics. I tell you because he HATES it when I tell people! I still told lots of people at Sonshine....

From **Kelly Lowe**, "The boys were getting ready for crowd control behind stage for Switchfoot. **Jason Lowe** and I lined them up and you could tell they were tired so someone in the line yelled "Kelly give us a pep talk", so I yelled a bunch of stuff that sounded good, then started at one end while making a great war yell sound proceeded to hand slap the whole line. By this time they were fired up and raring to go!!! Mind you this all took place 15-20 minutes before Switchfoot went on, I got to the end of the line and turned around to talk about crowd surfers and they had left!! They got so pumped up they had taken off for the crowd already!! We had a good laugh.

The Relient k Crowd Control Wall crew had gathered behind stage a bit earlier to get organized and I mistakenly thought the band was still doing a sound check. **Carl Skaro** asked if they should head out into the crowd but I told him and the others they could kick back and relax in the security tent until Relient k was about to start. It wasn't long before I realized the band was ALREADY playing, ran back to the guys in the tent, and yelled for them to get out in the crowd pronto! Oops!

Diana Larson has put another spin on getting free food while doing Crowd Patrol. Despite being a rookie, she would go boldly into campsites, ask how they were (as if they cared!), and immediately ask, "Sooo...looks like you have too much food. We can help you with that." All they had to do at that point was stand there and wait for the unsuspecting camper to offer them food!

Kinsey Anderson and rookie **Scott Fisk** confiscated a wonderfully crafted medieval mace made from cardboard and duct tape on Saturday night. Admiring the workmanship, Kinsey needed to give it a test. Swinging it around above his head, he smacked Scott at the base of the skull.

I really think **Amberlie Haak** and **Tim Mundfrom** outdid **Lizzy Alexandr's** great HM feast of 2006 with their own buffet table(s) this year. They borrowed my golf cart to "run an errand", and ended up going from campsite to campsite asking for ALL leftover food. It was indeed a banquet for royalty! Many of the HM band members even got in the bounty. **Andrew Crowser** said it was like Thanksgiving!

In the words of **Tim McConnell**, "I was patrolling with **Sandy Stark** on Friday when I noticed a fellow with no wristband. She was driving the cart and doubled back to look into the matter. He realized he was noticed and took off running through tent city. I jumped out of the cart and sprinted after him, eventually finding him sitting on a flattened tent pretending to talk to someone on his cell-phone. Grabbing him by the arm and back of his neck, we walked to the street and called for back-up. I explained that he was not likely in serious trouble and not to run again. Wasted advice! When we got to the street Sandy noticed alcohol on his breath and asked if he had been drinking. He said no. She asked if he would be willing to take a breathalyzer test. He said "No Sir", to which Sandy replied she was not a "Sir". Sensing he was headed for trouble, he took off running again, this time down the middle of the road. I grabbed him immediately and brought him down after a bit of a struggle. I rode on top of him as he skidded down the asphalt to a stop. I knew that one hurt (him not me). After we stopped, I reached around and applied a rear naked choke. This will render a person unconscious in about 3-5 seconds if applied well. I put it on for one full second and then loosened my hold enough for him to breathe. I told him if he had any more funny business left, I would pass him out. He was a good boy after that. Sandy and I saw him to the tent where he faked being in a seizure for several minutes before the cops administered a breathalyzer test. The testing machine failed to work so the kid was off to Detox for his mandatory 4 day stay. Not a fun way to end your Sonshine weekend!

Kelly Lowe had two teenage girls practically burst into tears when she cut the TFK signing line; they were determined and followed along anyways despite the line being cut. Having an extra minute or two she let them sneak in at the end (they were the only ones that hung around!!) and they promptly cried some more, thanked me, and I got hugs!!! What a hero!

A number of the ladies on crew had pink security shirts made and proudly displayed them for the Wednesday group picture. Awful Pink Mischievousness (APM) went too far though when it sucked in guys like **Eric Vogel**. Alas, Pink City never did live up to its own hype.

HM Supervisor **Amberlie Haak** tried her best to communicate with the boys from Maylene & the Sons of Disaster but they could not understand her thick "Minnesootan" accent. **Andrew Crowser**, a rookie SRT, was actually asked to act as an interpreter.

Untested Backstage crew rookie **Dan Gerdin** took some kid down hard that had climbed up on stage during Maylene & the Sons of Disaster, winning the admiration and awe of the band as well as two thumbs up from **Lizzy Alexandr**.

Amberlie was thrilled and grateful for the hard work performed by the newly created Pit Crew. They always seemed to be available when she needed them. The crew basically worked EVERY time there was a pit or some sort of action at the HM stage. Thanks to **John Rasmussen, Kevin Pickar, Doug Nelson, Lucas Fillmore, Josiah Reutter, Michael Helweg, and Adam Jennum!**

If you need to hear the story behind the Roast Beef just ask me and I'll tell you.....It has to do with appropriate and inappropriate contact between the sexes. Or ask Suzanne to define appropriate.

SRT rookie **Ray Carlson** will forever remember when TFK's lead singer reached down and touched the arm of a kid in a wheelchair he was helping to shield from the crowd. Said Ray, "I know that God was there. With goose bumps on my arms and tears on my cheeks all I could do was praise and thank Him for putting me in that spot at that time".

Tim McConnell was in the wall doing crowd control when he noticed a UFF (Unidentified Flying Flip-flop) spinning his way. He waited...and waited...and with impeccable timing reached up and snared the flip-flop out of mid air. The crowd around him erupted in cheers!

Suzanne Lueck was riding behind **Kinsey Anderson** on the ATV one night and was headed for Main Stage as Kinsey was needed quickly to get some video of something. He had his waist pack laying in his lap with expensive equipment in it, took a sharp turn, and it started to fall from his lap. Having both hands on the ATV to turn he couldn't grab it himself, so without thinking he asked Suzanne, "Quick, grab the thing between my legs". He asked again and she replied, "Excuuuse me?" She looked over Kinsey's shoulder and started laughing as she grabbed the pack. He honestly didn't mean it to come out that way and they could not stop laughing about it.

Some campers in the blue section were threatened by a middle age woman with a cane. **Shawn Klein** and rookie **Lisa-Lynn Kern** never did find the mysterious assailant.

Lizzy Alexandr heard about a dumpster fire outside of HM, and being the pyro he is, had to go check it out. He was proud to see **Tim Mundfrom** jumping through the trash with an extinguisher putting out the fire, proving ONLY HM people play in the trash!

Nick Janssen had a white knuckling adventure riding in the golf cart with **Rebecca Ness** while patrolling one night. I guess Supervisors wives just shouldn't be allowed to drive, right Sheila?

If you've never been to the Green Mill on Sunday morning after Sonshine for their brunch and hung out with 25-35 of the crew, you've been missing out on one of my favorite traditions! We trade stories, laugh at each other, and eventually say our tearful goodbyes (sorry LLK). It's how we put an end to another tremendous year. Try to join us in 2008!

At the risk of leaving out some deserving names, the Supervisors or veterans specifically pointed to a number of the rookies and said how great a job they had done. A few mentioned were **Liz Gorham** (always ready to help and VERY hardworking), **Molly Miller** (always smiling and asking if she could help Michelle at the Signing Table), **Nick Janssen** (amazing job in the trench), **Justin Dowdy, Scott Fisk, and Chris Radecki. Ray Carlson**, thanks for the extra hours you put in. All the rookies did a stellar job this year! You proved that you could do well even if your interviews sucked. We hope you come back for years to come! For years I have given out a rookie of the year award, but this year too many of you did such outstanding jobs that picking one of you would be impossible. Consider all of yourselves "Rookies of the Year!"

Big thanks to **Gabe Hackmann** for providing the AC unit and the awesome Security Tent!

My sincere thanks to those that contributed stories for this recap. It was a pleasure writing this 6 page paper...(cough, cough) If you had (better) stories that you failed to tell me – shame on you!

To the rest of the Sonshine 2007 Security crew – **You ALL rocked!** Great job everyone – from the first day to the very end. I will miss you guys more than you know.... until we meet again next year for Sonshine 2008! And to all past crew members – we miss you greatly! Keep in touch or come back to work security! Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to start planning for Sonshine 2008!

Your Friend and Leader;