Dinner ends and people filter out of Fanning Hall to the small amphitheater–shaped collection of rustic wooden benches facing a stage where campfire is held each evening. The audience is soon filled with animated campers, singing and dancing, with coordinating hand movements to a song about a tree in a bog. “Rattlin’ Bog” is a camp favorite, and is usually sung at one of the first campfires of the week. As the chorus begins, the excitement builds, the volume picks up, the dancing becomes increasingly enthusiastic as it reaches the catch phrase of the tune: “Bog down in the valley–o!” One voice rings louder than the rest, and that voice belongs to Michael George.

Anybody who has been at Mt. Hood Kiwanis Camp with Michael would easily recognize and remember him. Michael is a performer. Being on stage or in front of a group is something Michael is not only very comfortable with, but also something he loves.

Whether it is performing a skit with the campers in his group or leading a camp song, Michael shines in the spotlight.

When Michael has the chance to perform, he’s not just singing and dancing. Michael also enjoys playing musical instruments. He has taken music lessons in both harmonica and guitar, and has participated in choir. When Michael comes to camp, he brings his ukulele and sings on stage with the Kiwanians during BBQ dinner the last night of camp.

Michael has loved music all his life, and he particularly loves classic rock—All kinds of classic rock. Jimmy Buffett and Billy Joel are two of Michael’s favorite artists, but he especially loves The Beatles. He has many favorite Beatles songs, and really loves the song "Twist and Shout." On a recent trip to Las Vegas with his family, Michael got to see a Beatles tribute group perform. Even more exciting is during the performance “Paul McCartney” pulled Michael on stage to sing, dance, and play the tambourine.
Michael grew up in Southern California, and moved to Oregon with his parents when he was in 8th grade. Spending his childhood growing up near Disneyland, Michael spent a lot of time there as a young boy. He recently went back and got to go on his favorite rides: Indiana Jones and The Haunted Mansion. Michael is interested in and enjoys talking about characters from Disney movies. He especially likes *Alice in Wonderland*. At MHKC, every Wednesday there is an all-camp dance. Campers, counselors, and staff dress up in inventive, colorful, and sometimes silly costumes and dance to lively music and popular tunes in front of Fanning Hall. Both this year and last year Michael looked forward to the dance as a chance to dress up as his favorite *Alice in Wonderland* characters. Last summer, Michael dressed up as the Mad Hatter, and was looking forward to doing the same this summer, but at the last minute, decided to switch it up and dress as the White Rabbit.

Michael and his parents live in West Linn where Michael enjoys spending time with his family and friends, and has made lots of friends through the many activities he participates in. His parents describe him as very outgoing and not shy at all. Anyone who has met Michael would agree.

After Michael moved to Oregon, some kids he went to school with told him about MHKC. He has been coming to camp since he was 16, making this his fifth year. Each year is filled with opportunities to see old friends, meet new people, and try new things. And Michael is not afraid of trying new things. At camp, Michael is so excited to participate in all sorts of camp activities and gets the other campers excited, too.
Assisting the mascot led to Michael being more interested in mascots, which ultimately led to a job working with the Red Robin himself at the well-known burger restaurant.

As a graduating senior in 2010, each student chose a quote to accompany his or her picture in the yearbook. Michael, being the music enthusiast that he is, chose an insightful and appropriate quote by Bob Dylan: "You better start swimmin' or you'll sink like a stone, for the times they are a changin'."

While at camp, Michael is very independent. He knows his way around camp, and does a good job of taking care of himself and getting ready. If he starts getting overwhelmed, he knows to tell his counselor that he needs to take a break so that he can take a few deep breaths or have a drink of water before getting back to an activity. Sometimes he needs reminders about choosing the right clothes for the day’s activities or different daily routines, but Michael is very good at doing things on his own.

At camp, Michael shares a room in a cabin with the other young men in his group. Some he has been to camp with before, others he is meeting for the first time. But over the course of the week, they become friends. Michael loves talking to his fellow campers and friends about mutual interests, and sharing enthusiasm over the week’s activities.

Being involved and active is not new to Michael. As a student at Wilsonville High School, he was a member of leadership club, did the morning announcements, and was the attendant for the mascot during games, pep rallies, and other school functions.

“You better start swimmin’ or you’ll sink like a stone, for the times they are a changin’.”
—Bob Dylan
After graduating high school, Michael participated in a post-high school transition program for 18–21 year-olds with disabilities. He just finished this program this June 2013, but continues to keep in touch with his friends and classmates. This year, Michael joined PHAME Academy and started taking acting classes, in addition to continuing music lessons. His taste in music is also broadening to include singing opera and Italian songs.

This summer, the soccer team that Michael plays on represented Oregon at the “Rally in Seattle.” Michael’s team wore Timbers uniforms and played the team representing Washington wearing Sounders uniforms. The teams played at CenturyLink field before a Timbers vs. Sounders game. During the game, Michael scored a goal, which was replayed on the big screen during the Timbers vs. Sounders game. After the game, the team got to spend the weekend exploring the city. While in Seattle, Michael had fun visiting all of the fun attractions with his team.

Whether on the stage or on the field, Michael loves being in front of an audience. His eagerness to try new things is enlivening, and his zest for life is contagious. Back at camp, Michael’s counselors and fellow campers are lined up, watching and ready to pull a rope that will hoist Michael high into the air. The adventure course is Michael’s favorite camp activity, and the “Flying Squirrel” is his favorite part. Michael’s helmet is tightened and his harness is checked. As the carabiner clicks shut and everyone prepares to pull, Michael shouts his enthusiastic last words before soaring to the treetops: “Up, up, and away!”

Michael goes to work two to three days per week. He currently works at Burgerville, and follows a list of tasks and responsibilities compiled by his job coach. He loves interacting with the customers, and remembers to smile and say, “Have a nice day!” Michael’s job duties include serving food, cleaning tables, taking out the garbage, and keeping the restaurant clean.

When he’s not serving food or cleaning tables at his new job at Burgerville or immersing himself in a music class, you will probably find Michael doing something sports-related. Michael loves sports of all kind, both as an athlete and as a spectator. He has been a member of Special Olympics basketball, golf, bowling teams, but his favorite by far is soccer, and he plays on a Special Olympics Unified Sports soccer team.