

Hi

My Name is Michelle Okes. I've been a part of this Rainbow Trail Family for most of my life—as a youth and family camper in the 70s, on staff in the 80s, as a family from the 90s and as a staff parent of our 3 children. My grandchildren now call Rainbow Trail home too. Our lives have been forever changed by this place.

For many years, I've served on the Board of Directors and most recently as the Board Chair.

It's been an honor and a privilege to serve Rainbow Trail in this capacity and to work so closely with Dave Jarvis through many of camp's seasons.

When Dave let the Board know that together with Nellie he had set a timeline for retirement, it was a big moment. Although we'd known it would be coming, the December 2025 date was now set.

We've been working together as a Board with Dave and Fulltime staff since the end of summer to put the pieces in place for a healthy transition. But really, it's gone on long before that. A good leader always 'works themselves out of a job' so to speak. And Dave has been that kind of leader for Rainbow Trail.

He came to an organization that was full of love and history and the work of the Spirit, but that also had a long way to grow. He brought us the Village System, he grew programming outside of our little site in Hillside into our Synod and into the world. He somehow even made doing KP and cleaning the shower house into a party! His financial background has always kept the organization sound, healthy and free of debt, and he's our leading fundraiser. But

perhaps his greatest gift has been in hiring, training and supporting his staff. 37 years of them. We've experienced that in our own family.

Rainbow Trail as an organization is in an awesome position.

For the last 10 years, the Board of Directors and staff have worked with a professional consultant to develop our Strategic Plan with our mission and Vision, we've developed a Master Plan that looks well into the future, and are currently in development of a Site Plan for the land that will soon belong to RTALC. Thanks to many years of work, the Land Exchange process is almost complete, ensuring we will own our land and Rainbow Trail forever.

We have generations of people who have experienced God's love here and taken it down the mountain. All of YOU are the heart and soul of this camp and will continue to be its strength for generations to come.

Ministry is alive and well here, and even as we share this news with you, our Summer Bible Study is being written, summer staff is being recruited and hired, retreats are ongoing through the year and before we know it, summer will be in full swing again. Just as it's always been. And to ensure that, the Board has adopted The Village System as a permanent part of our programming, and we've asked Dave to work alongside the Board, to take part in the transition process with a new Executive Director.

As a Board of Directors, we are eternally grateful for the ministry and service of our Executive Director, Dave Jarvis. We plan to celebrate retirement and hopefully the completed Land Exchange in the fall. We will keep you updated on plans for that. And at the same time, we're excited for what God has planned for the next season at

Rainbow Trail. And we look forward in faith to the next generation of leadership here. We hope you'll be holding this process and our next Executive Director in prayer. This is God's place—holy ground—and we're his hands and feet--here to help usher it into its next glorious season.

The Board has posted a list of FAQs that will hopefully answer many of your questions about Dave's retirement and RTLCS next steps. You can also email Board@Rainbowtrail.org to ask questions or share your thoughts. We will continue to add those to our FAQs.

We've also set up memories@rainbowtrail.org as a place for you to share fun stories and memories of your time at camp.

And in honor of Dave and Nellie's years of ministry here, The Board has set up a special fund in the Jarvis family name. If you'd like to donate in honor of their ministry, you can do so and mark it, "Jarvis family fund'.

I'd like to offer a prayer of thanksgiving to Dave and to Nellie for all you've done here. This is *always* your home. And we're excited for what your future holds.

And now in the words from Isaiah, spoken in blessing over this place year after year by Rainbow Trails' beloved founder, The Reverend Don Simonton,

YOU WILL GO OUT IN JOY
AND BE LED FORTH IN PEACE;
THE MOUNTAINS AND HILLS
WILL BURST INTO SONG BEFORE YOU,
AND ALL THE TREES OF THE FIELD
WILL CLAP THEIR HANDS.....