

TRIBUTES TO DIRECTOR DANNY KERR
Final Banquet
Thursday, August 12, 2021

By Director Kenny Moore:

The banquet started tonight with Danny thanking everyone in this room for the wonderful summer. But he left one key person out. It is only appropriate for us to end the banquet tonight by thanking Danny for all that he has given to Pemigewasset for the past twelve summers.

Before I turn it over to Tom Reed for some additional words, let me remind us all of the question that is posed in the Campfire Song. "And I wonder if anyone's better for anything I've done or said?"

Without a doubt, we are all better for what Danny has done and said. I have benefitted from working alongside him for more than a decade and know that he has helped me along my own journey. I encourage you all to think about a moment where Danny has made a positive impact on you. Let me leave it with two challenges for you:

1 - Extend the Danny Kerr joy when you're at home or back at school. Ask yourself, "What would Danny do?" and I bet you'll be happy with the result.

2 - Find a moment before you leave on Saturday to thank Danny personally

By Consulting Director and President of the Board of Trustees, Tom Reed, Jr.:

As most of you know, Danny is retiring at the end of the summer after 12 years at Pemi and over 50 years in camping. He leaves us with our next great director in Kenny, two wonderful assistant directors in Charlie and Pat, a capable and committed Board of Directors, and a very satisfying victory over Camp Tecumseh. He also leaves us with the Pemi Spirit in never-better condition and camp solidly back on its feet after its first-ever closure for a summer, in 2020. Our debts to him are many and great, and we'll miss him for his wisdom, balance, steadiness, and sense of fairness.

I recently read an article about people in leadership positions who insist on occupying the center of the stage, who take credit for everything good that happens while they're in power (whether they deserve to or not), who take no responsibility for anything bad that happens (even if they should), and who talk trash about their employees and associates behind their backs. Danny can occupy the center of the stage, but look how often, at the campfire circle, he simply accompanies others as they deliver their vocals. Similarly, his philosophy of building a staff is to hire good people and let them do their jobs. For all the

wonderful things that have happened at Pemi over his twelve years, Danny has constantly stood back and celebrated the creativity and commitment of everyone else around him. The unfortunate things that have happened during his tenure have fortunately been very few, but Danny has always been the first to admit it when he's disappointed himself—and he's helped others, me included, to have the courage and resilience to own our shortcomings and move on as wiser and stronger people. Finally, he knows how to praise the people who work for him, and often commends them when they're not around. But his criticism is always presented to them directly, face-to-face, and confirmed by the input of other people in the know. It is also always delivered with kindness, understanding, and personal humility.

And so, in Danny, we've had a director who has not only kept the Pemi ship on course through challenging waters but who has also given every one of us an example of humble but effective leadership. There used to be a joke around Boston: "What would Johnny Damon do?" (That was before he cut his hair and became a Yankee.) I often find myself thinking, when there's a tough, interpersonal decision to be made, "What would Danny do?" I don't think I'm alone in that. Thank you, Danny, for the years and gifts you've bestowed on Pemi. May you now enjoy decades of mountain jamming and mountain skiing, great seasons rooting for the Giants and the Mets, exciting and safe travels with your family, and quiet and happy evenings with Julia. Know that there will always be a place for you at the Pemi campfire.