



PHOTOS BY MIKE LYNCH

Campers play after a swim in Augur Lake. Camp Lincoln is among many that employ 60,000 people statewide.

# More than s'mores

■ Summer camps have far-reaching impacts on campers and the Adirondack Park's communities.

By Janet Reynolds

**T**rying to measure the economic impact of summer camps on the Adirondack economy is a little like snipe hunting. Like the mythical beast in this summer camp ritual, the exact figures are always just another bush away.

That summer camps are big business in New York State is indisputable. The Northeast Region of the American Camp Association places the direct economic impact at \$1.3 billion annually. "It's vital to many of these small towns throughout New York where summer camps bring in a ton of business to local store owners and to local people to give them jobs," says Susan Lippert, executive director of the Northeast Region of the American Camp Association. "Camps have an enormous impact on the local economy."

Statewide, New York camps employ 60,000 seasonal workers and 3,500 full-time workers, who receive more than \$411 million in wages, according to an ACA Northeast Region Economic Impact Study. Besides payroll, New York camps spend more than \$1.2 billion on goods and services including food, supplies, fuel, marketing,



Campers like this one at North Country Camps have fun (and chores).

banking, maintenance and repair. These camps also attract 129,000 out-of-state visitors who spend \$42 million annually.

Pinning down how many of those dollars can

be attributed to the 37 ACA-accredited camps in the Adirondack Park is more elusive, because no specific studies have been conducted in the zone. What is clear in talking to camp directors,