**The Power of Community**

One scorching afternoon, I decided to introduce our campers to a cherished activity from my own childhood. As a former camper and Girl Scout, making homemade ice cream by rolling coffee cans with rock salt inside was a fond memory. I thought it would be the perfect way to combine fun and a sweet treat on such a hot day. The plan was simple: we’d start the project early in the afternoon and enjoy our homemade vanilla ice cream for dessert after dinner.

The campers were thrilled, eagerly rolling the coffee cans back and forth, their faces lit with anticipation. The process brought back a flood of memories for me, and I was excited to share this piece of my past with them. As the sun began to set and dinner time approached, I went to check on the kids' amazing ice cream creation.

To my dismay, the ice cream didn’t turn out the way it was supposed to. Instead of the smooth, creamy delight I remembered, we had a soupy, frozen mess. The campers had put so much hard work into making that delicious homemade vanilla ice cream, and I couldn’t bear to disappoint them.

Determined to save the day, I did what any good camp director would do: I quickly ran to the nearest grocery store. I grabbed two giant gallon tubs of vanilla ice cream and rushed to the checkout line. The cashier noticed my hurried demeanor and the large quantity of ice cream and quipped, "You must really want to get home to your party and eat this ice cream—and lots of it!"

With a sigh, I explained the situation. As I pulled out my wallet to pay, the cashier smiled warmly and said, "You’re not paying for this ice cream. Go back and let those kids enjoy this wonderful treat."

Her kindness took me by surprise and filled me with gratitude. I hurried back to camp with ice cream in tow, just in time for dessert. When I served the store-bought ice cream, the kids’ faces lit up with joy. To them, it was the best ice cream they had ever made, and they were none the wiser.

That day, I saw firsthand how the camp community extends beyond our boundaries, touching lives in unexpected ways. The generosity of the cashier, the joy of the campers, and the shared experience all reflected the spirit of Camp Norwesca. It was a reminder that sometimes, it’s not the ice cream itself but the effort, the fun, and the memories made along the way that matter most.

And so, the campers believed they had made the best ice cream ever, and in a way, they did—because it was made with love, laughter, and a little bit of community magic.