



# HAYO-WENT-HA CAMPS

## WHISPERING PINES

INFORMATION FOR FRIENDS OF HAYO-WENT-HA CAMPS

### DECEMBER 2023



### Musings and Meanderings...

*From the Executive Director*

While our December issue of Whispering Pines is traditionally focused on our year-end philanthropic goals and needs, this also marks my final newsletter as CEO (and editor). It's been a busy and eventful three years in this role, and I'll do my best to sum it up in just a few paragraphs.

**These are amazing camps!** It has been a privilege to be a part of this organization and to serve alongside an incredible group of staff (both year-round and seasonal) and volunteers (board members, work weekend participants and more). It has been equally enjoyable to get to know the camp families, alumni and other friends that make up our worldwide Hayo-Went-Ha Camps community.

I am proud of what we have accomplished in these last three years. We have created a strategic plan for the camps (our roadmap!) and followed it up with an ambitious master site plan for each camp property. Summer camp enrollment has increased at both HWH and AWHH. We have added dedicated and talented members to the board of trustees.

To be sure, there's more work to be done. Both camps need to reach (and maintain) full enrollment. We have significant facility improvements to make. We must bolster the ranks of our full-time staff. We must increase revenue through more extensive philanthropy/fundraising.

**Here's the good news:** There is a talented and experienced new CEO joining the team! **John (JC) Carlson** is the perfect leader for these camps. I am eager to see how JC builds upon the foundation that has been built and takes these camps to new heights.

And as for me – I look forward to becoming an active HWH Camps alumnus! My wife and I will remain in northern Michigan. I am excited for the opportunity to enjoy this wonderful area in the summer.. without the 24/7 demands of camp work/life.

I am so grateful to the Hayo-Went-Ha Camps community for the way that I was welcomed into the family and for the support that I have received during my time here. These are special camps with storied histories and extraordinarily bright futures.

Onward and upward!

**Dave**

[Dave DeLuca/CEO – YMCA Hayo-Went-Ha Camps](#)



## Glimpses Into Giving

*Camp played an integral part of my life from my days as a Pathfinder through my time on Staff and into my service on the various Boards. It was especially important to me at a time after my father had passed away. It brought me back to a place I had spent great times and gave me an opportunity to meet and spend time with people many of which have become lifelong friends. I give of my time and monetarily because I want to preserve for others the opportunity to have the same experiences I had. To make an impact on others and to have others make an impact on them. In the words of a friend of mine who I knew through Camp, I want to provide others with the chance to make memories.*

*HWH Camps Trustee*

*We gave because we saw how much Hayo-Went-Ha Camps helped our kids learn how to be more independent and made them more rounded adults. We wanted to give other kids that same camp experience.*

*HWH Camps Parent*

*So why do I give? Every summer when my children returned, they came back better than when we sent them. They grew as people every summer. Better emotionally, physically, mentally. Happy. They made lifelong friends and learned a lot about themselves. The camp radically improved their lives and helped make them who they are today. I have no doubts as to the positive experience the camp was to them. Especially in the girls when they were 13 to 15. Behavioral and emotional issues were fixed and forgotten. Just being away from their parents and friends in a safe environment was amazing for them.*

*I give so that other kids can experience summer camp at its best; it a beautiful camp on a gorgeous lake, with great counselors and offers trips for every skill level to some of Michigan's best outdoor places. Kids need to be in nature. They benefit in many ways by learning how to swim, camp, cook outdoors, hike, sail, build a bonfire and get along with other campers. HWH gave my son a sense of independence and confidence from the very first summer, he was eager to return every year and went on to work as a camp counselor during his college summers. HWS provided him with many great experiences that helped shape him into the fine man he is today. Giving to HWH is a no brainer for me and something I feel good about as I know kids will benefit in so many ways.*

Past HWH Camps Parent



## Ways to Give

There are several ways in which you can make a gift to Hayo-Went-Ha Camps!

- [Visit our website.](#) Here you can make a secure online gift.
- Go "old school" and send a check to the camp office (address below)
- Make a gift of appreciated securities. [Email Dave DeLuca](#) or call the camp office for transfer details.

***However you may choose to give, we're grateful for your support!***

## ***Reach the Summit First-time Donor Challenge!***

We are more than a third of the way to achieving our year-end fundraising challenge for new donors. Our Reach the Summit initiative will match donations made by new donors – up to a total of \$25,000. These funds have been pledged by a group of trustees and staff members – folks who believe completely in the value of our camps.

This initiative will result in each first-time donation being doubled! This is a fantastic opportunity. Please consider making your **first-time gift** to our camps before the end of the year.

[Make a gift here.](#)



## John Carlson to be Next CEO!

***In the event you missed the recent email, here is the communication from board president Mimi Mosher Dyer announcing the hiring of our new CEO:***

To the Hayo-Went-Ha Camps Community:

I am pleased to announce the selection of our new YMCA Hayo-Went-Ha Camps CEO. **John (JC) Carlson** has been working with the YMCA in various capacities for over 25 years. Specifically, he was the Executive Director of Camp Copneconic in Flint, Michigan for 12 years. Currently, he is the Vice President of Youth Development for the Ann Arbor YMCA. He is a proven visionary and change agent toward providing high-quality camping programs for all children. He has a very strong financial development background and the ability to cultivate long-term donor relationships. He also has extensive day and overnight camp programming, management, and operational planning under his belt. The CEO search committee spent an entire day with JC and found him to be personable, thoughtful, energetic, and very excited to be considered for this position. He is well respected in the industry and has been called a courageous and brave leader. Everyone from staff to the board are very excited to have him lead our camps.

John has a Bachelor of Arts in Parks and Recreation from Central Michigan University. He also has a Master's Degree in Education/Instructional Technology from Wayne State University. He is certified as a YMCA Organizational Leader.

In JC's words:

*"I am honored to serve as the next CEO at the State YMCA of Michigan Hayo-Went-Ha Camps. The history, traditions, and memories of both Camp Arbutus Hayo-Went-Ha for girls, and Camp Hayo-Went-Ha for boys, have me feeling so blessed to be joining this amazing organization. These two storied camps are hallowed grounds and I look so forward to meeting the campers, families and alumni. Together we will build upon over 100 years of inspiring and positively impacting youth."*

JC will be starting on January 2, 2024 and we have planned a solid onboarding process, along with time with Dave DeLuca and reaching out to our community.

JC's email is [jcarlson@hayowentha.org](mailto:jcarlson@hayowentha.org). Please feel free to drop him a line with some words of welcome.

## Two Weeks - \$70,000 to Go!

As previously announced, our year-end campaign has set a goal of \$200,000 in total contributions. With fourteen days remaining, we must generate **an additional \$70,000** to achieve that goal. We can do it!

These gifts are critical to our success. We allocated more than \$220,000 in financial assistance this past summer,



giving a camp experience to 125 kids who otherwise would not have been able to participate. Other, unrestricted, gifts allow us to care for our facilities, invest in new equipment and cover the multitude of expenses required to operate our camps.

**Your year-end gift helps to keep the fires burning.**

[You can make a secure, online gift here.](#) If you prefer, you can send a check to the camp office (address below).

Thanks so much for considering a gift to Hayo-Went-Ha Camps. It's a great investment!



**Brown Bridge Quiet Area to Expand!**

The Brown Bridge Quiet Area – a gorgeous nature preserve located a stone's throw from Camp Arbutus Hayo-Went-Ha – is expanding by an additional 528 acres. This will increase the total BBQA acreage to over 1800.

Our AHWH campers already take advantage of the Brown Bridge Quiet Area for day hikes and trip shakedown. The newly added property, which borders our camp to the southeast, will provide easy access to trails and recreational opportunities. Just as importantly, this means that the property adjoining ours will remain forever undeveloped.

Funding for this purchase was provided by the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and will be supplemented by monies in the Brown Bridge Trust Fund (established using proceeds from oil discovered on the property).

Our friends at the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy played a key role in advocating for this property acquisition. In addition to expanded recreational opportunities, the property is habitat for such wildlife as red-shouldered hawks, osprey, bald eagles, trumpeter swans and common loons.

*Please considering forwarding this issue of Whispering Pines to friends, family members and others in your network that might consider making an investment in our camps!*

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