



## WHISPERING PINES

INFORMATION FOR FRIENDS OF HAYO-WENT-HA CAMPS

### JANUARY 2023



### Musings and Meanderings...

*From the Executive Director*

*Every week I write a Monday Morning Email to our board and staff. Last week's email seemed to resonate with folks and I was encouraged to share it more widely in the Whispering Pines.*

So, I'm a "New Year's Resolution-er." I like the process of setting some annual goals and aspirations... and I am *usually* pretty good at sticking with them. One of my 2023 goals is to get outside for at least a 2-mile walk *every day of the year*. As of yesterday, my streak is intact.

To be sure, working at camp provides an incredible advantage when it comes to a goal such as this one. Still, there have been days (especially during the winter season) when I've driven to work in darkness, spent more than 8 hours at my desk and on my computer, and then driven home in darkness. I would like to avoid days like this in 2023.

Some of my encouragement/motivation for this goal has come from a couple of interesting sources: LL Bean and Nature Valley Granola. Or, more accurately, from their marketing teams.

LL Bean has resurrected their campaign from 2017: **Be an outsider**. I love the play on words! [Here's a short TV commercial that they ran over the holidays](#). I really like the way they used music from the Grinch in the ad.

Bean has recently gone further with the concept with their "*Be an outsider at work*" initiative. [Here's the section of their website that is dedicated to the topic](#). And here's advance warning: we may need to figure out how to move our summer board meeting into the out-of-doors!

Then there's Nature Valley Granola. I've enjoyed their television commercials with the theme "Take in the outdoors." [Here's one](#). [Their website devotes considerable space](#) to extolling the virtues of being outside. There's some really good material here!

And finally, I sometimes think back to a YMCA camping conference I attended in 2010. I was the CEO at Camp Mason and

traveled out to the YMCA of the Rockies (where I eventually ended up working) for the event. One of the keynote speakers was Sally Jewell, who at the time was the CEO of REI (Recreational Equipment Incorporated – a large nationwide vendor of outdoor gear). She subsequently became the Secretary of the Interior under President Obama. She spoke about the need to get kids outside and the challenges/obstacles that stood in the way. She shared the following statistics:

- *Children were spending 7.5 hours a day (50+ hours a week!) in front of screens – computers, televisions, video games, etc.*
- *Children were spending less than 30 minutes a week engaged in unstructured outdoor play*

I can only imagine that these numbers have *not* moved in the right direction since 2010!

Summer camp – both the day and overnight varieties – has so many values and benefits: social opportunities, skill development – I'm preaching to the choir here! But maybe its greatest value of all is getting kids outside and encouraging a lifelong love of the outdoors. Just as it is for LL Bean and Nature Valley, this may be ***our most compelling and effective call to arms*** as we share the story of Hayo-Went-Ha Camps with prospective camp families, prospective donors and prospective volunteers.

I think that it's time for a walk...

*Each for All – All for Each.*

***Dave***

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



## **On the Road Again...**

Even though our camps are more than **75% filled** for the 2023 summer, our directors are hitting the road to share our HWH Camps story with new families. Along the way, they look forward to connecting with both current camp families and HWH Camps alumni.

The entire series of [events may be found here](#), but we also want to highlight some of the first gatherings:

**Denver, Colorado/Monday, February 13/Homlar Family Home**

**Cincinnati, Ohio/Tuesday, February 28/Hyde Park Methodist Church**

**Louisville, Kentucky/Wednesday, March 1/Harcourt Family Home**

Our in-home events are a bit more intimate and geared to new families, while the rallies (gatherings held in larger spaces) are intended to serve as both reunions AND informational sessions. As you can see from the link above, other events will be held throughout Michigan and beyond over the next few months.

**AND** – if we don't happen to be coming to YOUR area for an in-person event, please read on to learn more about our virtual gatherings!



## Join us for a Virtual Open House!

Bill and Amanda will offer a series of online, **Virtual Open House** events for new families to learn more about our camps. The short, informational slideshows will be followed by opportunities for prospective campers and their parents to ask questions of the directors. Attendees will also have the chance to connect with other first-time families.

Our first virtual open house is scheduled for Thursday, January 19th at 6:30pm (EST). You can learn more about this and [other virtual events here](#). If you know of families that might like to learn more about Hayo-Went-Ha Camps, please share this information with them.

## Sneezers Needed!

Are you a *sneezer*? We're looking for the good kind of sneezer – people who will help us share our camps with new families. **More than 90%** of our new camp families learn about us through a personal connection that already knows us – a friend, family member, co-worker, neighbor or other relationship. These connections are so critical to our ability to fill our camps.

If you – or someone in your family – has had a positive experience at Hayo-Went-Ha Camps – please consider how you might help us to spread the word and reach new prospective camp families. Tell them about our in-person promotional events and our virtual open houses. Encourage them to check out our website or give our camp directors a call.



A full camp is a happy camp! Even though we're already more than 75% full for the 2023 summer, we're still looking for more than **250 first-time campers** to join us this summer. And that's going to require a whole lot of sneezing!



## Staff Positions Available

At this time of year our camp directors are busy filling their seasonal staff positions – more than 70 at each camp! While we're grateful for our high return rate of past staff, we always have a need to find new applicants to fill our summer positions. [You can learn about all these opportunities here.](#)

Maybe most critically, both camps are looking for **Seasonal Food Service Directors**. Each of our camps provides more than 6000 meals to our community during the summer season – and that doesn't include all the meals eaten while our campers are out on their wilderness trips! Managing our kitchens are big jobs and we're looking for the right people to give leadership to our food service operations.

We could certainly use the assistance of our community in helping to fill these positions. If you know of suitable applicants – or have ideas as to where we might promote these opportunities – please reach out to [Bill](#) and [Amanda](#).

## Seeking Maintenance Director!

In addition to our seasonal job opportunities, we're looking to add a **year-round, full-time Maintenance Director** to our team! The HWH Camps Maintenance Director will oversee the facilities and property at both camps and work closely with our current maintenance team.

It's an exciting time at our camps – especially regarding buildings and grounds. We've developed a new site master plan to guide overall facility development. We have identified several key projects to be undertaken that focus on the preservation of some of our most treasured and historical buildings. And, we've begun to put aside the funds required to address the significant amount of deferred maintenance that exists at both camps. To be sure, there's lots to be done and we need an experienced, talented maintenance director to guide the process.

For more information about this opportunity, please contact [Dave DeLuca](#).

## Movin' On & Movin' Up!

It's a sad day when our camp directors learn that a valued, experienced summer staff member has decided not to return for another summer at our camps. Eventually, this happens with just about every staff person.

But, periodically, these transitions can also be cause for celebration. And that's the case with two of our finest seasonal staff.

**Mackenzie Morison (MackMo)** has been hired into a fulltime position at [YMCA Camp Hi-Rock](#) in the Berkshires of western Massachusetts. Her position (Wilderness Camp Director) will focus on the YMCA's BOLD & GOLD Program that works to get young people out into nature through a variety of wilderness trips and other outdoor experiences. Destinations include the Connecticut River and the Appalachian Trail.

**Jack LaGoy** has joined the team at YMCA Camp Mason in northwestern New Jersey, where he will serve as the Assistant Camp Director. His off-season work will include camper promotion and staff recruitment, and he will spend his summers in a lead role with camp operations and a focus on programming.

MackMo and Jack have been important members of our staff in recent summers and, while we're sad to see them move on, we're so proud of them for joining the ranks of camp professionals on a year-round basis. We're also proud that their Hayo-Went-Ha Camps experiences were seen as valuable to their new camps.



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