



NOVEMBER 2022



Musings and Meanderings...

From the Executive Director

As I shared in this space last month, I was a little behind in getting the October Whispering Pines out. Now that I'm back on schedule, it's only been a few weeks since that October edition. Fortunately, there's lots to share with our community.

Most importantly, we're gearing up for our year-end fundraising campaign. We have set an ambitious goal of \$50,000 for this initiative. I hope that you'll consider a gift to help get us there.

While we often raise funds for such appealing items as camperships, new equipment and capital projects, our **greatest need right now** is unrestricted donations that we can use in several ways. For example, these gifts help us to address our substantial deferred maintenance needs at both camps. The costs of these projects far exceed the funds we have available through our operating budget. We absolutely must take better care of our facilities.

Your unrestricted gifts also help us to address the needs of our summer staff. We must significantly increase the salaries of our seasonal staff. We are currently challenged to compete for the best and brightest young adults. As you know, the quality of our staff is the most critical ingredient to providing an impactful and successful camp experience. Furthermore, we must invest more dollars in their training and support.

These - and other needs - are so vital to our continued operation and our ability to serve our campers.

Currently, almost \$9 out of every \$10 of our total revenues come from tuition paid by our camp families. The very best YMCA camps generate a minimum of 20% of their total revenue from donations, grants and endowment earnings. We've got our work cut out for us as we try to reach this benchmark.

You will certainly hear more about our year-end fundraising efforts over the next few weeks. I have been so impressed with the generosity of our camp community. I am confident that we will once again rise to the challenge and meet our year-end goal.

Each for All – All for Each.

Dave

Dave DeLuca/CEO – YMCA Hayo-Went-Ha Camps



Tailgating in Ann Arbor!

On Saturday, October 29, the Hayo-Went-Ha Camps faithful gathered for a brief reunion right outside the Big House. Hosted by Kent and Victoria DesJardins at their perfectly-located parking spot in the Champions East lot, more than 30 campers, staff members and alumni stopped by for some camp fellowship and a specially-made HWH cookie!

Camp directors Amanda Macaluso and Bill Hinton made the rounds and greeted all our guests. They could even be heard “wheeling and dealing” and encouraging 2022 camp staff to return for another summer season. True to his promise, Dave DeLuca wore non-partisan colors to his first Michigan-Michigan State tailgate event.

Thanks to all who turned out – and a special thanks to Kent and Vicki for their incredible hospitality!



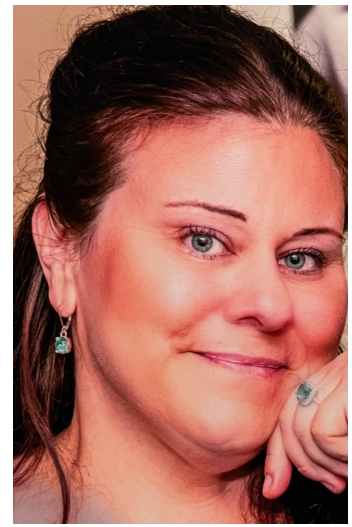
Welcome Renee!

In September, we welcomed **Renee Surdu** as our new camp registrar. She replaced Cathy Kulhawik, who retired in early June.

Renee lives in Alden and hails from the metro Detroit area. Since her childhood, she has spent her summers on the shores of Torch Lake. She enjoys all sorts of aquatic activities including boating, jet-skiing, swimming and snorkeling.

Renee is a proud graduate of Central Michigan University (Go Chips!) and has had a variety of professional work experiences. Through them all she has demonstrated strong abilities in customer service excellence and management. Some of her past experiences include serving as director of youth ministries, middle school counselor, and mission trip leader.

Renee is excited to be a part of the Hayo-Went-Ha Camps family and is looking forward to her first HWH summer. It is typically Renee's voice you hear when you call the camp office, so please be sure to say hello and welcome her warmly to the Hayo-Went-Ha team!



Strengthening our Alumni Network

Our Hayo-Went-Ha Camps alumni are a widespread and powerful network. They support our camps through financial contributions and volunteer service and help us recruit new campers and staff members by telling our story within their communities. They have done this so successfully *without* a formal alumni association structure. It begs the question: *What could they accomplish if we devoted some time to harnessing and coordinating their energy, passion and dedication?*

Our board (and new strategic plan) has asked this question, and so we are embarking on a process to build a more cohesive and connected alumni network. Many camps have formal alumni associations that take on specific projects and initiatives that benefit their organizations. Led by volunteers, these alumni groups can be powerful forces for good.

Dave DeLuca and HWH Camps Trustee **Katie Sulau** will take on the challenge of determining just what a Hayo-Went-Ha Camps alumni network might look like. One of the first steps will be to reach out to our community via a series of Zoom sessions to share initial thoughts and to seek feedback from our alumni.

Would you like to see an annual (or semi-annual) alumni reunion at our camps? How about regional events that help to reconnect former campers and staff with each other? Or maybe a professional mentoring initiative that connects alumni with current staff members with similar career interests and goals? The sky's the limit!

Watch future issues of *Whispering Pines* for the announcements of these Zoom sessions. We look forward to speaking with you.

And - speaking of alumni events - watch for updates and more information about our Virtual Campfire to be held in December. A great opportunity to share some camp fellowship during this holiday season!



2023 Enrollment at Record Levels!

We recently eclipsed the 60% mark in our enrollment efforts for the 2023 summer. We have received more than 525 registrations for next summer and are tracking WAY ahead of where we were a year ago.

These results are encouraging, but there is still a long way to go to reaching our enrollment goals. Soon we will begin to shift our focus from enrolling *returning campers* to reaching out to new families that have

not been with us before. And this is where we need some assistance from our community!

Please consider ALL your networks – friends, family, neighbors, co-workers and more – and share your Hayo-Went-Ha story with them. Let them know what camp has meant to you – or your children – and why it can be such a meaningful and memorable experience for a boy or girl.

Soon, Amanda and Bill will announce their schedule of camp rallies – the combination reunion/promotional events that they will hold in such locations as Ann Arbor, Chicago and Cincinnati. They are also working on their series of home visits – the in-home presentations hosted by our current camp families and alumni. In addition to the usual locations in the tri-state area, they are considering such places as Denver and northern Virginia.

We are grateful for the families that have already offered to host such events and we continue to look for additional host families. Please reach out to Amanda and Bill if you are interested or would like more information about these home visits.

If you haven't yet filled out your [2023 camp registration form](#), please do so soon. A full camp is a happy camp!

Six Weeks - \$50,000!

As Dave DeLuca reported in his column at the start of this newsletter, we are launching our year-end campaign with a goal of generating \$50,000 in additional contributions. Your support of this initiative will allow us to finish our fiscal year in good standing and begin 2023 in strong financial shape.

Your gift will help to provide our team with the resources to accomplish great things...improve our facilities, acquire new equipment, recruit and hire the very best summer camp staff. Our vision of making Hayo-Went-Ha Camps the very best that they can be requires this support, as our program fees simply do not cover all the costs of operating such high-quality camps.

Please consider joining us and making a fully tax-deductible contribution. It just might be the very best investment that you could ever make!

You can make a secure, online donation [by visiting our website](#). Alternately, a check may be sent to:
YMCA Hayo-Went-Ha Camps
919 N East Torch Lake Drive
Central Lake, MI 49622

Thanks in advance for your generous support!

Five Fast Fundraising Facts! *Did you know...*

Via our website, you can opt to make a recurring gift to camp every month. Quite a few of our donors make regular gifts of \$5 or \$10 on a monthly basis.

We accept both Venmo and PayPal!

80% of our donors give between \$5 and \$50. No gift is too small and every gift helps!

We have already added more than **50 first-time donors** in 2022. We would love to add YOU to this list!

The #1 reason why a person DOES NOT make a gift is that they were not asked! Well, here's your ask:
Won't you please consider supporting HWH Camps with a year-end gift?





Help Wanted: Maintenance Director

In early 2023, we will begin the process of recruiting for a new (or newly recreated) year-round position: HWH Camps Maintenance Director. Filling this position with a highly qualified individual is essential to the improvement and expansion of the facilities at our camps.

While we are very pleased with the work being done by our “boots on the ground” maintenance team of Jake Smith (@ Torch) and Mark Mullins (@ Arbutus), we know that they need support and guidance to more comprehensively address the many facility needs at the camps.

The to-be-created maintenance director position will oversee facility/grounds work at both camps, coordinate the efforts of our staff team, serve as the primary liaison with outside contractors and manage the maintenance budgets. The timing is excellent, as our new master site plans are currently being finalized. These will serve as the road map for all facility work.

Our goal is to have our new maintenance director on the job by March 1.



Christmas Shirts!

At Hayo-Went-Ha Camps, we LOVE our t-shirts! Trip shirts, staff shirts, polar bear shirts – we’ve got them all. One of the most coveted of them all is the **limited quantity Christmas shirt**. Many camp families (including grandparents) use the HWH Camps Christmas shirt as a way of giving the gift of camp at the holidays. Could there be a better surprise to find under the tree on December 25th?

Time is running out on ordering this year’s HWH Camps Christmas shirt! [Follow this link](#) to place your order by December 1 and ensure that your shirt will arrive in plenty of time for the holidays!

Seeking Summer Camp Staff!

Without a doubt, the most critical component of a successful summer camp season is the quality of our staff. They make the camp experience come alive for our campers and ensure that it is both impactful and safe.

Our camp directors have begun the process of recruiting and hiring the 2023 Hayo-Went-Ha Staff team. While they are anticipating a good-sized group of returners, there is always a need to find additional high-character young adults (and maybe a few not-so-young adults) to fill out the ranks.

So – what are we looking for? Well, **everything!** Here is a partial list of the positions that we are hoping to fill:

- Cabin Leader
- Program Staff (sailing, ropes course, arts & crafts, target sports)
- Food Service Staff
- Housekeeping Staff
- Drivers
- Camp Store/Office

Our Contact Information

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<https://www.hayowentha.org>

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