



# HAYO-WENT-HA CAMPS

## WHISPERING PINES

INFORMATION FOR FRIENDS OF HAYO-WENT-HA CAMPS

April 2021

### CEO CORNER

This is the first issue of Whispering Pines that I've put together. Astute readers will note that it's long on calls to action and perhaps a bit lacking in human interest content. That's by design. There's a lot going on and much to accomplish before we'll be ready for the 2021 camping season. And THAT'S probably the best news of all – there will be a 2021 camping season! Once again there will be happy children enjoying the very best that our camps have to offer.



But right now, we need the assistance of our worldwide community to ensure that we're ready for our campers to return. As you read through this e-newsletter you'll find several invitations to lend a hand. I humbly ask that you consider these and step forward where you can.

These are amazing camps. I have so enjoyed learning of their history and traditions. Even more so, I've loved getting to know the camp properties by walking them regularly. I can envision just how special they are when filled with excited campers and dynamic staff members.

I'm so grateful for the warm welcome that I've received here in northern Michigan. I've been devoting a good amount of my time to speaking with camp families, alumni, donors, and other stakeholders. To a person, folks have spoken passionately about the impact of our camps and their desire to provide assistance as we emerge from the challenges of the last year.

You've asked, "How can I help?" Below, please find the answers to that question!

### 2021 Camp Enrollment

As of this writing, both camps are closing in on their enrollment goals for the 2021 summer. To be candid, we set the bar a bit low, not knowing how the nation would be emerging from this long-lasting pandemic. What we're discovering is that parents desperately want their kids to have a return to normalcy – and the social, outdoor experience of sleepaway camp is a big part of this.

We're continuing to promote our camps – mostly through a series of virtual Information Nights. During these events, the camp directors provide an overview of the Hayo-Went-Ha Camps experience and answer questions from prospective camp families.

Our next Virtual Open House is scheduled for Tuesday, April 6th (7:00pm). For more information and/or to register, please visit [here](#). We plan to schedule additional events for the weeks ahead.

As always, we find that most new families learn about us through word-of-mouth promotion by folks that know us well. Please consider all your networks and families that you know who may be interested in learning about our two

camps. Read on to learn just how this worked for one series of families...

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## "Sneezers" Wanted!

*Yes, we acknowledge that the terminology may be a bit out of step in the age of COVID...*

In *The Tipping Point*, author Malcolm Gladwell described those folks who enthusiastically share ideas and are more naturally inclined to pass these on to their friends as Sneezers. In the camping industry, these people are our very best recruiters. You know them and you may be one yourself. You and your camper talk about camp to each and every friend, coworker, neighbor, or stranger you meet. The new family is excited to hear more, feels comfortable because of your recommendations and support for our amazing camps and they follow up by registering their own camper. Amanda Macaluso recently shared this story of a sneezer extraordinaire:

Lauren will be back on the shores of Arbutus Lake this year for her 7th year. Her Dad, David recommended our camps to his college roommate Jeff and after some great conversations and research he signed up his three children. His friend Olivia called and asked some good questions and has registered her two campers. Jeff has also encouraged his sister to send her children. So, from one "sneezers" we are now welcoming 7 new campers from 3 different states for the 2021 summer! Thank you, David!

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## We're looking for Professional Role Models!

While camper recruitment efforts are moving along well, we're finding it challenging to recruit and hire the talented, high-quality seasonal staff that we need to provide a safe and rewarding camp experience. It seems that our "lost summer" of 2020 has wreaked havoc with the natural progression of young adults joining our staff team and progressing up through the ranks. Additionally, the pandemic has severely impacted the likelihood of attracting international staff to camp.

We're working all our networks and promoting our staff opportunities widely, but we could certainly use your help. If you know of young adults (and perhaps some not-so-young) with the character and interest to be part of our 2021 staff team, please [complete this form](#). If you know of other ways that we might better promote and recruit, please share these as well.

Visit our website [here](#) to learn more about staff opportunities!

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## Amazon Smile

Are you using Amazon for on-line purchases? Have you heard of Amazon Smile? If you register with Amazon Smile, a percentage of your purchases can be designated to go to Hayo-Went-Ha Camps – and over time this can really add up! To date, HWH Camps have been awarded over \$1,370 with another \$181 coming in this quarter! It all adds up!

Visit [Amazon Smile](#) to get started.  
Every purchase  
– and every dollar – helps!



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## Camp in the time of COVID

While there is great enthusiasm and excitement for the prospect of operating camp this summer, there's also some understandable concern from parents about just how we'll keep our community

healthy and safe. Our staff team is working hard to develop the specific protocols and practices that we'll use during the summer season. There's a wealth of resources to draw from, and we've also benefited from speaking with some of the few camps that chose to operate last summer.

To learn more about our plans and preparations, please visit the [COVID page](#) of our website. This will be regularly updated as our plans become more specific and as new information becomes available.

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## Help Needed: Preserve Your Past – Protect Our Future Campaign

Our June 1, 2021 deadline is rapidly approaching! We've got to generate *just over \$100,000 in new donations* to qualify for the \$500,000 match. Our generous donor has pledged half a million dollars to our COVID relief efforts – funds that will help us navigate these challenging financial waters. The dollars we raise for the match will go toward several critical capital needs at our camps. These projects include historical preservation (Bonbright and Trailside Lodges) and critical work along the waterfronts of both camps. To make a tax-deductible gift to the campaign, please visit [here](#).

For more information about the campaign – as well as other charitable giving opportunities – please contact CEO [Dave DeLuca](#).



## Volunteer Workdays – Come Lend a Hand!

Every summer, the preparation of our camp properties for the summer season can be an arduous and daunting task. There are major and minor repairs, woodcutting/trail-clearing, significant cleaning, and LOTS of set-up work to be done. Now – imagine taking on these tasks after a full year of the camps sitting vacant and unused. Then – add in the additional considerations of operating with several COVID-related changes and enhancements. Simply put, we've got our hands full!

**We've scheduled two Volunteer Workdays in May:**  
Saturday, May 1st – Torch Lake  
Saturday, May 15th – Arbutus Lake

Yes, you've read that right – workdays. We will not yet be prepared to offer full meal service and lodging to our volunteers, but we'd love to have folks join us for a day of service. We'll focus on outdoor projects at each camp – critical tasks that we must complete in order to open and will also allow for good social distancing. We'll serve a simple lunch to our volunteers and there will be plenty of hot coffee and cold water available as well.

While we understand that the lack of meals and housing may make your participation more challenging, we ask that you consider joining us for one or both workdays. You'll get a great dose of that Hayo-Went-Ha Camps spirit and know that you're helping to get us ready for another successful summer season.

Visit our [website](#) to sign up for these events. Please call the camp office for more information.

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## Board & Committees: Looking for Volunteers!

The Board of Trustees of the State YMCA of Michigan is the entity responsible for the governance and fiduciary oversight of the Hayo-Went-Ha Camps. Various committees – including Finance, Buildings & Grounds and Program – help to provide professional expertise, counsel, and boots-on-the-ground assistance to our staff team. Our organization has benefitted from the invaluable involvement of selfless and committed volunteers... involvement that is critical to our success.

The Nominating & Governance Committee, under the capable leadership of Casey Robinson, is looking to identify and recommend two additional members to the State YMCA Board by this summer. On the committee level, we are reconstituting the Building & Grounds Committee as a single entity that will address needs at both camps.

For more information regarding these opportunities, please contact [Dave DeLuca](#) at the camp office.

### Our Contact Information

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