

Whispering Pines



HAYO-WENT-HA CAMPS
Arbutus Lake for Girls • Torch Lake for Boys
State YMCA of Michigan



OCTOBER 2024

In This Issue:

- **Musings and Meanderings**
- **Torch Talk: The Power of a Four-Week Camp Experience**
- **Arbutus Angle: Introducing the Arbutus Room**
- **Fall Fix Up: Small But Mighty**
- **Maintenance Update**
- **Mark Mullins Retirement**
- **Introducing Our Newest Team Member**
- **Future Newsletter Sections**
- **Upcoming Events**

Musings and Meanderings...

By John (JC) Carlson, CEO

Excitement is in the Air: 2025 Summer Registration Opens Soon!

We are excited to announce that registration for the 2025 summer season at YMCA Hayo-Went-Ha Camps opens on **October 20 at 2 p.m.** (Eastern Standard Time)—a perfect coincidence with National Youth Confidence Day! This special day celebrates the confidence that camp instills in young people, making it the ideal moment to secure your camper's spot for a summer filled with adventure, growth, and lifelong friendships. Some of our programs fill up quickly, so be sure to register early!



What's New in 2025:

Introducing Rovers — A Land and Water-based Expedition

Get ready for an unforgettable adventure with our brand-new program, **Rovers!** This exciting two-week experience is designed specifically for ninth graders and offers the ultimate mix of land and water-based adventures. It's perfect for campers eager to reconnect with the magic of Hayo-Went-Ha Camps while exploring the breathtaking beauty of the North Country Trail and paddling along the stunning Manistee River.

We recognized the need for a two-week program for ninth graders that fits seamlessly into summer schedules, making it easier for families to include in their plans. If your ninth grader has been away from Hayo-Went-Ha Camps for a while, Rovers is a great opportunity for them to return and embark on new adventures!

Adventure Awaits!

During their time in Rovers, campers will experience:

- **Backpacking:** Campers will enjoy the thrill of hiking along the North Country Trail, immersing themselves in the beauty of nature and daily hiking challenges.
- **Canoeing:** Rovers will love navigating the tranquil waters of the Manistee River, honing their paddling skills and enjoying the camaraderie of fellow Rovers.

The cost of the Rovers program is consistent with our other two-week offerings, ensuring an exceptional value for a program designed with exploration and growth in mind.

Introducing Tiered Pricing

We are unveiling our **new tiered pricing model** for 2025. As we strive to attract top-notch staff and maintain high-quality programs amidst rising camp costs, we've reassessed our fee structure while remaining committed to affordability for families. Here's how it works:

- **Tier A:** Reflects the true cost of camp, based on a recent cost analysis. Paying this tier keeps us competitive in staff salaries and offering top-quality programs and trips.
- **Tier B:** Offers a more affordable option, subsidized by donations to our annual fund.

Families can choose either tier at registration, with the assurance that **the camper experience remains the same.** This model enables us to uphold Hayo-Went-Ha Camps at a world-class level while keeping our programs accessible. It also invites those who can contribute more to support our commitment to exceptional staffing—our goal for 2025 is to increase summer staff salaries by 10%—as well as maintain the highest quality of food, cutting-edge equipment, and excellence in programming for all campers.

Camperships for All

To further our commitment to accessibility and our mantra of 'Each for All, All for Each,' we are proud to offer camperships for families in need. Thanks to our generous donors from the

2024 Summer Dreams Campership & Equipment Drive, 137 children received financial assistance this past summer, totaling \$245,000 in subsidies, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to experience the magic of Hayo-Went-Ha Camps. In 2025, we encourage families seeking financial support to apply early for camperships during the registration process.

Get Ready for the Best Summer Ever!

We believe that 2025 is going to be our best summer yet! Our programs and pricing details are available on our website: hayowentha.org. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out. We can't wait to welcome you back to Hayo-Went-Ha Camps and let's make this summer unforgettable!



Torch Talk

The Power of a Four-Week Camp Experience

At YMCA Hayo-Went-Ha Camps, we hold that a four-week camp experience embodies the pinnacle of personal growth and success for our campers. This immersive journey offers unparalleled opportunities for self-discovery, meaningful connections, and transformative adventure. We are deeply passionate about this extended stay, as it not only enables campers to embark on longer wilderness expeditions but also cultivates lasting impacts that resonate throughout their lives.

1. Deepening Connections

Relationships made in the midst of a four-week camp experience, filled with shared wilderness expeditions, are ones that endure. HWY Camps were designed with purposeful and challenging outdoor adventures to help young people develop teamwork, cultivate leadership skills, and build lifelong resilience. The thoughtfully crafted challenges encountered during our trips also foster authentic connections, allowing campers to truly know each other and form lasting friendships.

2. Personal Growth and Development

Four-week camps create an extended opportunity for kids to explore who they are becoming. This valuable time to experiment is critical to the healthy development of their sense of self, particularly in how that self relates to their peers. As much as we parents try (and as much as society tells us we have to), we can't be everything to our children. Camp is an ideal time for them to learn what they are capable of. At camp and on the trail, they can face adversity in a safe environment and know for themselves that they can overcome it.

3. Skill Mastery

Our progressive programs within a month-long timespan, allow campers to delve deeper into their interests and learn skills for wilderness living. Wilderness experiences enhance this by offering outdoor skill-building in navigation, kayaking, canoeing, and teamwork. Over four weeks, campers achieve meaningful progress and mastery, resulting in a greater sense of accomplishment and increased confidence.

4. Lasting Memories

The rich tapestry of experiences creates unforgettable memories. From campfire songs to thrilling moments on the trail, each adventure contributes to a unique summer narrative that campers carry with them long after they leave.

We wholeheartedly believe that the pathways we offer campers at Hayo-Went-Ha Camps reach their fullest potential during a four-week camp experience. This immersive journey is nothing short of transformative. Campers have the opportunity to cultivate lasting friendships, achieve personal growth, master new skills, and create cherished memories—all while surrounded by the breathtaking beauty and power of the wilderness. This experience leaves a lasting impact on their character and abilities.

Arbutus *Angle*

Introducing the Arbutus Room: A Space for Reflection, Connection, and Calm in Trailside Lodge

In the heart of YMCA Camp Arbutus Hayo-Went-Ha, amidst the excitement and outdoor adventure, we are thrilled to officially announce the addition of the Arbutus Room, our new library and gathering space. This special place is designed to provide a peaceful retreat for cabin groups—an area where they can relax, read, listen to music, or simply enjoy a quiet moment away from the busyness of camp life.

The Arbutus Room will quickly become a beloved spot for campers to meet, chat, and unwind. With so many exciting and physically demanding activities happening all over camp, it's important to have a place where campers can slow down and embrace a different pace. Whether they're looking for a good book, a comfortable spot to play a board game, or just a place to sit and listen to records on the room's turntable, the Arbutus Room offers a calm and welcoming atmosphere. This unique space is more than just a library; it's a hub for fostering meaningful conversations and friendships. We encourage campers to use it as a place to be "chill" and find calm amidst the excitement of camp.

As we continue to grow and develop our facilities, we're excited to see how the Arbutus Room becomes a cherished part of camp life, offering campers a space to reflect, connect, and relax. It's the perfect complement to our action-packed days, and we look forward to seeing it become a favorite spot for all.



Fall Fix Up: Small But Mighty

The first weekend in October, several stalwart workers gathered for the first annual **Fall Fix Up at Hayo-Went-Ha on Torch Lake!** We had beautiful weather and accomplished some projects that many hands made light work of.

While this weekend was a couple of weeks too early to do much work with leaves, we still accomplished a lot!

We put away the last of the waterfront, including moving canoes, kayaks, and paddle boards to the Old Dining Hall. The group also took down not one but two wedding tents that served us well over the summer.



The small but mighty Fall Fix Up crew.

After that, there was painting, putting cabins to bed, processing lost and found, and a lot of badly needed cleaning work in Kresge. We had a good time and some great food, thanks to Scott Swanson, our Director of Building, Grounds, and Hospitality!

Board Members John Kelley and Debbie Stephens joined the fun. John is now the official "Work Weekend Recruitment Czar" with a goal of recruiting even more volunteers for our important Spring Work Weekend and now all future annual Fall Fix Up weekends.



Board Members John Kelley and Debbie Stephens



Alumni Peter Hoffman, Andras Hernadi, Chapin Cook, and Jim Austin lending a helping hand. (absent from the photo is Louise Austin.)

Chapin Cook is an alumni from 1960-1966 and he says, "Helping at these clean up weekends always brings back great memories and I am happy to be back here at HWH and support."

Andras Hernadi is an alumni who was originally a staff member from Hungary and now resides in Michigan. He says, "It's always fun to give back and I enjoy helping and being outdoors. It is great that this weekend had such perfect weather for our tasks."

Camper Mum and volunteer Hahna says, "I love to come and help and have done so for close to 16 years. I love it, I love the people, I love the atmosphere, and I love to give back."

Alex Martinez is a returning camper and joined us "to help the camp get projects done."

Chadwick Noellert has been a staff member on and off since 1998 and he volunteered for some history in the making. "I came up to start hanging the cabin plaques from '23 and '24. I'm passionate about the plaques for how they showcase campers' incredible creativity and how they help preserve institutional memory at HWH."



Staff member Chadwick Noellert



Hahna Martinez, Alex Martinez, Alex Plambeck, and Kelley Plambeck

Maintenance Update

By Scott Swanson, Director of Buildings, Grounds, and Hospitality

Times are changing here at camp, with early mornings now greeted by a refreshing chill that calls for a long sleeve—though the warm fall days have been a delightful surprise! While I'm accustomed to October snow, this year we're dreaming of October swims instead. The dry weather has provided us with ample workdays, allowing Jake and I to tackle essential projects like road repairs, especially after a fox family tunneled under our bridge.

We've also revitalized Bonbright by removing overgrown bushes and laying down crushed stone to showcase the beautiful stonework that has been hidden for years.

The last rafts have been pulled from the Arbutus waterfront, and I'm now planning our winter projects, focusing on centralizing the Building and Grounds workshop. Our goal is to streamline storage and organization, reducing the back-and-forth between camps.

We're in the final stages of preparing for the construction of two new bathhouses, one at Arbutus and the other at Torch. Our goal is to have shovels break ground by this Fall. Although progress at Torch Lake has been slightly delayed due to Health Department approvals, this week's promising onsite meeting suggests we're moving forward. Fingers crossed that our next update will feature photos of the groundbreaking!

In the meantime, let's savor this beautiful fall light, admire the changing trees, and remember how fortunate we are to be surrounded by this incredible place.

Mark Mullins Retirement

We want to extend our heartfelt thanks to Mark Mullins for his incredible commitment, dedication, and keen eye for detail over the past three years. His efforts have truly helped get the Maintenance Department back on its feet, and his work has made a lasting impact on the beauty of AHWH. Mark's connection with the campers and staff has been inspiring, and his passion for making our campgrounds shine has not gone unnoticed. As he retires, we are deeply grateful for the way he has transformed our spaces and strengthened our camp community. Thank you, Mark, for everything you've done to make AHWH a place we're all so proud of! Happy retirement from us all at AHWH and the camp community as a whole.



Introducing Our Newest Team Member



We're excited to welcome Beth Putz as the newest member of the YMCA Camp Hayo-Went-Ha team! In her role as Office Manager and Bookkeeper, Beth will enhance our business practices in the main office and ensure that families enjoy a smooth and positive registration experience.

Beth resides in Bellaire with her two sons, Casey and Ryan, and she brings a wealth of experience from her previous position as Office Manager at the Antrim County Sheriff's Office. With her strong background in office management and her passion for supporting youth programs, we're eager to see the positive impact she will make at camp.

Beth loves spending time with family and friends, and she's always up for outdoor activities that let her take in the beauty of Northern Michigan. She's looking forward to meeting everyone in the Hayo-Went-Ha community and learning more about the unique experiences our camp provides for kids. Welcome to the team, Beth!

Future Newsletter Sections

We want to hear from you! Whether you recently got married, welcomed a future camper into the world, or traveled somewhere amazing while proudly sporting your camp gear, we'd love to share your news with our alumni community. Complete this form to share your updates and photos and we'll be thrilled to share your milestones with camp friends across the U.S. and around the globe!

[Click here](#) for all past editions of the Whispering Pines and some news from alumni. Weddings, Babies, and reunions...

Go Blue, Go Green, Go Hayo-Went-Ha Camps



We're excited to announce the annual Hayo-Went-Ha Camps Tailgate, set for October 26, 2024 in Ann Arbor! A huge thank you to Kent and Vicki DesJardins for graciously hosting us once again in the Champions Blue Lot, space #97. The tailgate will kick off two hours before game time, and we'd love for you to join us—whether you bring a dish to share or just stop by for a chat. Plus, the first 48 visitors will enjoy our signature HWH Camps cookies! Come out, connect with camp friends, and enjoy a great time celebrating both HWH and game day traditions!

Thanksgiving Dinner

We're back! Join us for the Annual Thanksgiving Dinner, a cherished community tradition, on Sunday, November 24 at 1pm. This event brings together local friends and neighbors for a full Thanksgiving feast with all the trimmings. It's a wonderful opportunity to enjoy a delicious meal, catch up with familiar faces, and make new connections. We're excited to share this special day with our community and look forward to celebrating together! If you are local and would like to help the camp staff and volunteer to work the event please reach out to Amanda at amacaluso@hayowentha.org

HAPPY
Thanks
Giving

Ann Arbor Area End-of-Year Fundraising Events

TRIVIA NIGHT!

Get ready for the first-ever Camp Trivia fundraiser in Ann Arbor on Saturday, December 14! It's going to be a night of fun at an amazing location, and your support will be celebrated. We'll be testing your knowledge on camp trivia, general knowledge, and current affairs—so whether you're a trivia master or just looking for a good time, bring your friends and join the fun!

We're forming teams of 4–6, but don't worry if you come solo—we'll help you find a team. Join us at [Hear Say Brewing & Theater](#) (2350 W. Liberty) for a great evening! Show your camp spirit and don't forget your checkbooks—this is a fundraising event, and your generosity helps keep the camp magic alive.

Come for the trivia, stay for the memories, and let's end the year on a high note. We can't wait to see you there!

Heya-Want-A Cup of Coffee

Introducing Coffee Time with Alumni

As a pun on Hayo-Went-Ha Camps, we have created a coffee name of Heya-Want-A Cup of Coffee! We're excited to be hosting a casual Boston Alumni get-together on Sunday, October 27, at 10am. The event will be held at the Smith Center, 1350 Massachusetts Ave, Cambridge, MA 02138, at the Pavement Coffeehouse. Come and join us and let's catch up!



Christmas Shirt Design

It's nearly that time and we need your help! We're asking our talented camp community to

submit design ideas that capture the festive holiday spirit with a touch of camp magic. Whether it's inspired by campfires, snow-covered cabins, or the great outdoors, we want to see your creativity shine. Your design could be the one that brings holiday cheer to campers and alumni everywhere! Submit your ideas and let's create something special together for this holiday season! The winning design will be revealed in the next newsletter along with an order form. Please submit your design to amacaluso@hayowentha.org by November 10th, 2024 and your design should work for both camps.

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



HAYO-WENT-HA CAMPS
Arbutus Lake for Girls • Torch Lake for Boys
State YMCA of Michigan



Our Contact Information

State YMCA Hayo-Went-Ha Camps • 919 Northeast Torch Lake Drive
Central Lake, MI 49622
2315445915 • <http://www.hayowentha.org>

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Manage email preferences](#)

