



OCTOBER 2022



*From the Executive Director*



### Musings and Meanderings...

This will be a slightly abbreviated edition of the Whispering Pines, as we have already missed our targeted mid-October email date. That's because the editor/writer/designer (me!) got distracted by quite a few "shiny objects" this month. We launched our 2023 summer camp enrollment process, devoted an entire week to creating master site plans and began work on our 2023 operating budget - while at the same time attending to the daily tasks and projects that require time and attention in the fall. It's a busy (and exciting!) time.

On a more somber note, I recently attended the funeral service for Bruce Cook, who passed away at the age of 93. Bruce was a Hayo-Went-Ha alumnus, emeritus board member and longtime supporter of our camps. His generosity was extraordinary, but his degree of caring and commitment to Hayo-Went-Ha was even more so. While I did not get to know Bruce well during my short tenure here, I so enjoyed the times that we spoke. Throughout my career, I have become aware that every YMCA camp has **giants** within its community – individuals who stand out because of their character, their commitment and their generosity of time, talent and treasure. Bruce Cook was a Hayo-Went-Ha Giant and he will be sorely missed.

Read on for some information about the goings-on at camp and our preparations for next summer. Oh yes – and don't miss the blurb about the HWH Camps tailgating event that will take place this Saturday in Ann Arbor. I will be there – most likely wearing both blue & maize and green & white. Or, perhaps, a more neutral and seasonally appropriate color palette of black and orange! ~Dave



## **The HWH Camps Annual Fund: Our Year-end Initiative**

*"It's easy to give to an entity that keeps giving back with good works, treasured memories and a welcoming presence."*

- HWH Camps donor

Our camps have traditionally benefitted from a caring and generous community of alumni, camp families and friends. Their support has allowed to acquire new equipment, build new facilities, start new programs and – most importantly – provide camp experiences to children and families that otherwise could not afford our fees. Almost \$170,000 was allocated in financial assistance this past summer, allowing ninety-nine children to attend our camps. Every campership dollar granted was given by a donor – and we have **fully covered** our 2022 financial assistance allocations!

***"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. HWH 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."***

- HWH Camps Donor

Soon we will launch our year-end campaign – with a goal of generating **at least \$50,000** in contributions from our supporters. These year-end gifts are so critical to our financial success: General, non-restricted donations allow us to cover the many costs associated with operating two high-quality resident camps **without** significantly increasing our tuition and fees.

***"Hayo-Went-Ha means a lot to my family so I continue to support strongly as the mission has proven so invaluable to the development of all four of my children. 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."***

- HWH Camps Donor

You will hear more about our year-end campaign in the weeks ahead. Of course, if the spirit moves you, [you may certainly choose to make a gift now.](#)



## **A Record Start to Summer 2023 Enrollment!**

On Sunday, October 2nd – precisely at 2:00pm – we launched the registration process for the 2023 summer camp season. We intentionally chose not to start the process over the summer, as we wanted a bit of time to reflect on the '22 season and to make necessary changes and improvements to our programs. While there was some concern that this would result in a loss of momentum, we felt that it was worth the risk.

Well, our worries were for naught! Online registrations came in steadily throughout Sunday afternoon and evening. By 8:30pm, we had received **279 registrations** – 140 for girls and 139 for boys. Some of our more popular programs filled to capacity in a few short hours.

The enrollment pace has continued to be brisk. As of this Monday, we had reached 476 total registrations (still relatively-evenly split with 240 boys and 236 girls). Last year at this time, we had 305 total enrollments!

We still have a ways to go, as we need approximately 850 total registrations to meet our enrollment goals. Many of these additional registrations will come from new families with first-time campers. We've got an ambitious series of rallies and in-home slideshows planned for the new year.

But – for now – we're excited about our enrollment progress and grateful to the families that have signed on for the 2023 summer.

## What the Heck is a *Charrette*?

In mid-October, a variety of HWH Camps staff members, board members and other key volunteers gathered for on-site discussions to begin the process of developing new master plans for our camp properties. Called charrettes, these planning sessions were intensive events that will help us chart our course for future facility development.

Our process was facilitated by [a team from OCBA](#). These planners, architects and landscape designers took in information from our group discussions and immediately began sketching new and renovated buildings, redesigned program areas and more welcoming/attractive landscape features. They then presented these drawings and, with the feedback they received, further refined and improved the vision. By the end of the week, we had draft site plans that will help to inform and guide our maintenance efforts and future philanthropic initiatives.

OCBA will deliver more polished drawings with additional information and detail work in the weeks ahead. Once reviewed and approved by our board, we will share these plans with our camp community.



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