

Whispering Pines



HAYO-WENT-HA CAMPS
Two Camps. One Purpose.



JANUARY 2026

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Musings and Meanderings...

By John (JC) Carlson, CEO

HAPPY NEW YEAR: A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION WE'VE KEPT FOR OVER A CENTURY

As we enter 2026, it feels natural to reflect on resolutions, the promises we make to ourselves and our community at the start of a new year. At Hayo Went Ha Camps, our resolution has been much bigger and has been lived out for more than a century. Since 1904, our community has committed itself to growth, shared responsibility, and care for others, shaping lives in ways that last far beyond the summer.

Past camp leaders such as Cap Drury, Grace MacDonald, Pat Rode, Amanda Macaluso, and Dave Martin helped establish the trail markers that continue to guide our camps today. Their vision and dedication shaped what we now call our Pathways to Growth, a model that challenges campers, builds confidence, and develops leadership grounded in shared responsibility and strength of character.

That legacy continues to shape our community today. Amanda reports that the 2025 Keepers of the Flame Annual Campaign was a tremendous success, a reminder that the strength of Hayo-Went-Ha Camps has never rested on any one person. Every donation, every act of care, and every hour of volunteer service reflects a shared commitment to showing up for one another and carrying the weight together.

As I enter my third year as CEO, I am continually inspired by our community and the stories that shape the living narrative of Hayo-Went-Ha Camps. These moments are more than memories. They are proof that our values take root in meaningful and lasting ways.

One such moment occurred last summer when I received an email from a man hiking Isle Royale with his mother, who was struggling under the weight of her backpack. By chance, they came upon our Arbutus site Isle Royale campers. Without hesitation, the girls stepped

in and redistributed some of her gear, carrying it nearly two miles so she could finish the hike with her son.

In his message, the man shared his gratitude and described the campers as a bright spot on a difficult, rainy day. He wrote that the girls responded cheerfully and without hesitation, and that they wanted to ensure their kindness and leadership were recognized. Moments like this reflect exactly what Hayo-Went-Ha Camps strives to teach every camper.



Beyond these individual stories, Hayo-Went-Ha Camps fosters a culture in which leadership, responsibility, and care for others are woven into daily camp life. The lessons learned here stay with campers and staff, making a lasting impact on their lives and communities.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are building on these foundations with intention. This year, we will begin phase one of renovations at our Wilderness Adventure Centers, with a strong focus on making camp more accessible, investing in updated equipment, and continuing to recruit and train an outstanding staff of caring, experienced leaders. Together, these priorities will ensure our programs remain safe, challenging, inclusive, and transformative.

Many camps do meaningful work, but what sets Hayo-Went-Ha Camps apart is a model refined over generations. We teach young people not only how to lead, but also how to take responsibility, support one another through challenges, and contribute to something larger than themselves.

As we begin a new year, I am deeply grateful to our community, including our board, staff, donors, alumni, campers, and families. Together, we build on the shoulders of those who came before us. This is a resolution worth keeping, one that will carry Hayo-Went-Ha Camps forward for generations to come.

Each for All. All for Each. Always.

Torch Talk - NEW DIRECTOR ANNOUNCED

BREAKING NEWS: WELCOMING JACK LAGOY AS OUR CAMP TORCH HWH DIRECTOR

We are pleased to announce the hiring of Jack LaGoy as the new Director of YMCA Camp Torch Hayo Went Ha.

Jack brings broad and well-rounded experience in YMCA camping and outdoor education, with a proven record of leadership in staff development, program excellence, and day-to-day camp

operations. His previous roles at YMCA Camp Hayo-Went-Ha, YMCA Camp Ralph S Mason, and, most recently, as Summer Camp Director at Pali Institute and Pali Adventures reflect a deep commitment to youth development and to the mission and values of the YMCA.

As a former camper from 2010 to 2014, Jack experienced firsthand the transformational power of camp. He saw his confidence grow as counselors encouraged him to try new things, challenged him on wilderness trips, and helped him build strong bonds with his cabin mates. Returning as a counselor in 2019, Jack was reintroduced to a community where he formed lifelong friendships and once again witnessed the profound impact camp has on children of all ages. He looks forward to strengthening these experiences for all who come to camp.

Please join us in welcoming Jack to our YMCA camping community. Jack enthusiastically began his role on January 7th and can be reached at jlago@hayowentha.org.

"As a camper from 2010 - 2014, I saw my confidence grow as my counselors encouraged me to try new things and as I challenged myself on wilderness trips that put me out of my comfort zone and helped me build stronger bonds with my cabinmates. My first summer as a counselor in 2019, I was reintroduced into a community like no other, where I made lifelong friends and was again able to see the immense impact camp has on children of all ages. I look forward to strengthening these experiences for everyone who comes to YMCA Hayo-Went-Ha Camps, and ensuring that these are the best experiences possible."



Mission Momentum

By Amanda Macaluso, Director of Development & Alumni Experience

SUCCESS, SUCCESS, SUCCESS: WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED TOGETHER IN 2025

As we reflect on the past year, I want to express my sincere appreciation to all our camp supporters. As a nonprofit that relies on the generosity of friends and donors, 2025 was an incredible year, and it is all because of you.

We did it! We reached and exceeded our \$300,000 goal for the Keepers of the Flame end-of-year campaign, and the momentum continues. Nearly forty teams fundraised, many meeting or surpassing their goals. This level of engagement speaks volumes about the care and commitment people have for our community.

Every gift helped provide a safe, unplugged, and welcoming space where campers are truly seen, supported, and celebrated. From facility improvements to endowment gifts, and from trusted donors to campership support that opens the door for more kids to experience the magic of Hayo Went Ha Camps, every contribution mattered.

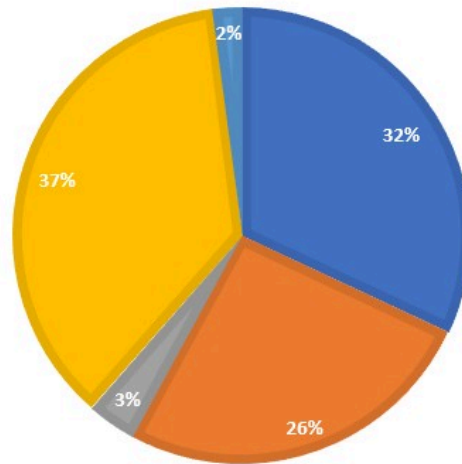
Nearly every day, we hear stories that remind us why camp matters, from alumni spanning generations to first-time campers. Our programs give young people life skills, confidence, and connection in an unplugged environment, fostering time in nature and away from social media. Our community has stepped up because we all know kids need this now more than ever.

As I close out my first year in this role and look ahead to 2026, I am grateful for all I have learned and excited to continue refining our processes and planning for another impactful year.

Because of our community, we can continue this critical mission. Below is a brief snapshot of our Keepers of the Flame end-of-year support, showing the percentage breakdown by category of giving

BREAKDOWN OF ALL DONATIONS IN 2025

■ Trip centers ■ where needed most ■ endowment ■ cship ■ facilities and preservation



Arbutus Angle

By Mackenzie "MackMo" Morison, Arbutus Hayo-Went-Ha Director

THE HEART OF CAMP IS COMMUNITY

When I think of camp, one of the first things I think about is community. Building a strong camp community starts with the campers and trickles up to the staff, our alumni, and the broader global community.

This is something we've been talking about a lot in the past year, and that I've been thinking about recently, in regard to goals for the upcoming year. Community is something that can build itself around whatever we deem most important - we see this at Arbutus with how our cabin groups create such connections that kids jump to 4-week programs and stay in their tracks, choosing camp over sports and other extracurriculars because of what it and the people mean to them.

But what does that mean for this next year? With my first year under my belt and getting to know campers, staff, and alumni better over the past 12 months, I have learned which values people are building community around at camp today. That means incorporating community into our rallies, starting before campers arrive. Working to create it online with staff before they arrive, so we can build on those blocks during staff training.

With our growing team, we've also been talking about the community across all three branches of our camp. As a place families can send all their kids, it's important that we're connected! When staff and campers feel connected ahead of the summer season, it makes it easier to build a shared community and act with greater intention toward our shared goals.

All of this reinforces that intentional community building is my primary focus as camp director this year. Last summer was about learning, listening, and sustaining what already makes this place special. This year is about building on that foundation, bringing people together with purpose, and strengthening the team and community that make Hayo-Went-Ha Camps feel like home.



JANUARY MOMENTS: WHAT THEY ARE - AND WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

I'm reaching out to request January Moments from our alumni, campers, and staff this month to feature on our social media accounts! You may be asking, what IS a January Moment? Started by former CEO Dave DeLuca, January Moments occur at a time of year when it can be cold outside and you feel as far removed from summer as possible. During this time of year, we like to warm up with fond memories and look forward to the bright moments of summer with memories we call January Moments!

If you have a favorite memory and a related photo from your summers here that you can share with us, please send it to MackMo at mmorison@hayowentha.org!

We look forward to seeing ALL of your memories. We'll accept submissions throughout January and look forward to sharing these with the whole camp community.

See you this summer!



2026 CAMP EVENTS

BRINGING CAMPERS, ALUMNI, AND FRIENDS TOGETHER THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Our staff have put together some great ways to reconnect in the year ahead, from camper recruitment gatherings to alumni meetups and casual get-togethers where we can simply catch up and share how HWH Camps has shaped our lives.

We'd love to see you at any event that works for your schedule and your area.

Hope to see you soon.

2026 Camp Events



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Our Contact Information

{{Organization Name}} • *{{Organization Address}}*
{{Organization Phone}} • *{{Organization Website}}*

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