

Whispering Pines



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



NOVEMBER 2025

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State of the Flame – 2025

Please join us for our annual camp
update on

World Kindness Day!

When – TOMORROW, Thursday, November 13th

Time - 7:00pm (EST)

How - [Click here](#)

YMCA Hayo-Went-Ha Camps

STATE of the FLAME

JOIN US ONLINE,
THURS, NOV 13th
7PM EST on ZOOM

Musings and Meanderings...

By John (JC) Carlson, CEO

Why Camp Still Matters: Join Us Today in Shaping Unforgettable Summers for 2026 and Beyond

For more than a century, YMCA Hayo-Went-Ha Camps have offered something increasingly rare: a place where young people grow through real challenge, face-to-face connection, and time spent immersed in the natural world.



From the shores of Torch Lake and Arbutus Lake to remote wilderness routes across Michigan, into Canada, and even the Alaskan backcountry, our campers build confidence, develop skills, and form friendships that shape who they become — for life.

As we look ahead to 2026, our mission is more urgent than ever. The world our children are growing up in is rapidly changing. Today's youth spend an average of 7 to 9 hours each day on screens, often alone, indoors, and disconnected. What was once time spent exploring, creating, and playing outside has been replaced by scrolling, gaming, and curated content. Anxiety is rising. Resilience is declining. Many kids don't know what it feels like to struggle and succeed in the real world.

YMCA Hayo-Went-Ha Camps exist in direct response to this crisis. We offer more than outdoor activities, we offer a return to what's real. Campers unplug from technology and plug into something deeper. They paddle across lakes, sleep under stars, cook over fires, and live in community with others. They experience challenges, learn to adapt, and grow in confidence with every step on the path.



This journey is at the heart of our Pathways to Growth program design. At camp, resilience is not taught in theory, it's earned through experience. Campers become leaders through moments of courage and kindness. Environmental stewardship isn't a lesson, it's a way of life shaped by nights under the stars and sunrises over clear northern waters. Joy is not manufactured, it's found in the pride of finishing a hike, the energy of a cabin skit, or the deep connection formed around a fire.

To protect and expand this experience, we continue in 2025 with our annual appeal, **Keepers of the Flame**. Launched by longtime camp leader Pat Rode in the early 1990s, this tradition honors our heritage and invites each of us to carry the camp's light forward. When you give, you make this mission possible. Your support funds exceptional staff, safe and lasting facilities, and scholarships so every family can say yes to camp regardless of income.

As we look to 2026 and beyond, your gift fuels more than a summer. It fuels a movement. One that raises stronger, more compassionate, more resilient young people who are ready to lead, ready to care, and ready to light the way forward.

Join us today as a Keeper of the Flame. Make your gift, and help ensure that camp continues to matter—now and for generations to come.

Thank you for being part of this community. Thank you for carrying the flame.

[DONATE TODAY!](#)

Mission Momentum

By Amanda Macaluso, Director of Development & Alumni Experience

A HUGE thank you from all our campers to all our donors. We LOVE our NEW BATHHOUSES!

That's right — bathroom upgrades at both camps! Thanks to support from donors like you, each camp now has a brand-new **bathroom** that will be fully operational for Summer 2026.

At **Camp Arbutus Hayo-Went-Ha**, the new bathroom is located in the Nejee area, near where the porta-potty once stood. This addition will ease congestion at the main camp facilities when all campers are on site and offer older campers a shorter walk to showers—reducing wait times and keeping the daily rhythm of camp flowing more smoothly.

At **Camp Torch Hayo-Went-Ha**, a new bathroom in Lower Camp sits just back from the campfire ring, near the former site of Bruno's Cabin. This location will take pressure off the Intersection and provide more convenient access to bathrooms and showers for campers in nearby program areas and the Old Dining Hall.

Both bathrooms were designed with comfort and function in mind. Sinks are available inside and outside, allowing for quick tooth brushing outdoors while keeping things moving efficiently inside. The open-air showers feature clear roofs that let in natural light and maintain that fresh, outdoor-camp feeling—while still ensuring privacy.

Campers who used the new bathrooms at the end of this past summer loved the rustic-modern design and the improved flow and space. These updates will make a big difference in our campers' daily experiences.

Thank you for helping make everyday camp life better. These thoughtful upgrades will save time, reduce lines, and keep campers smiling for years to come.



Wilderness Adventure Centers in 2026?

For more than a century, every camper at HWH Camps takes a wilderness trip.

For more than a century, every camper at HWH Camps takes a wilderness trip. Ten-year-olds tackle the dunes at Sleeping Bear and older campers backpack Isle Royale and climb mountains in Alaska. These shared adventures are a core part of who we are and how kids grow at camp.

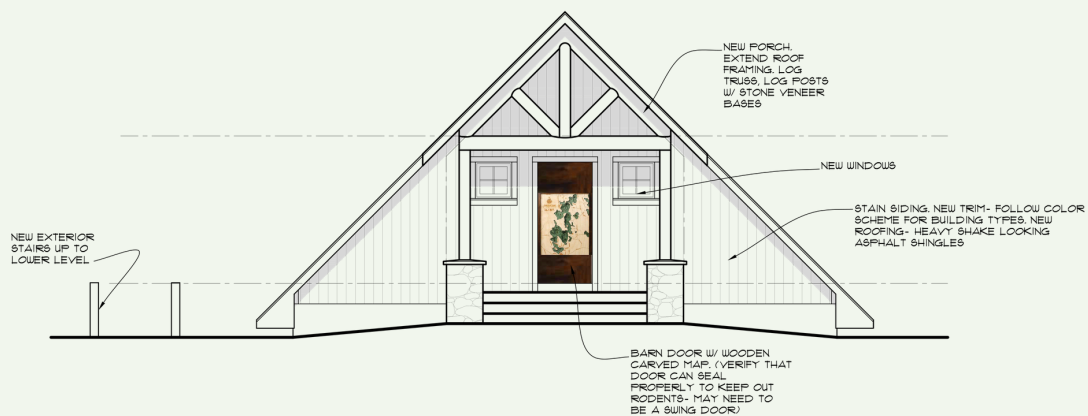
We are creating Wilderness Adventure Centers at each camp to prepare each and every

camper and trip leader better than ever. These are not just buildings for the equipment! They will be hands-on spaces where staff train, campers learn routes and practice skills, and families can see how trips progress from a first overnight to pinnacle experiences. Clear maps, past trip photos, and organized gear help campers feel ready, confident, and safe before they leave camp. By creating sound systems, we also protect and extend our equipment, so dollars go further.

What this means for campers? Campers will try on packs and rain gear, set up tents and stoves, and walk through Leave No Trace and safety routines and procedures in a highly functioning building. This reduces anxiety, boosts confidence, and supports equitable outfitting so every child has high-quality gear that fits.



TORCH LAKE WILDERNESS ADVENTURE CENTER



ARBUTUS LAKE WILDERNESS ADVENTURE CENTER

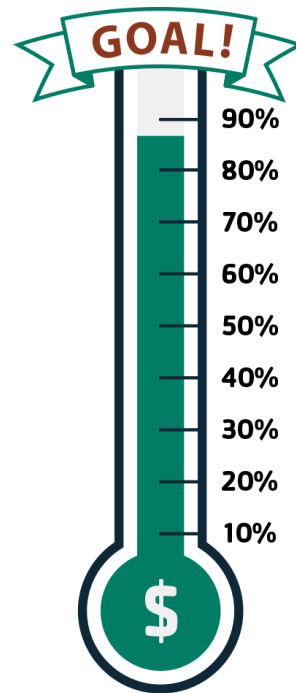
Pictured above: This will be the addition to the new Arbutus Wilderness Adventure Center.

What this means for campers? Campers will try on packs and rain gear, set up tents and stoves, and walk through Leave No Trace and safety routines and procedures in a highly functioning building. This reduces anxiety, boosts confidence, and supports equitable outfitting so every child has high-quality gear that fits.

In regard to safety, the Wilderness Adventure Centers support our Praesidium Guardian safety practices in visible, well supervised spaces. They anchor our staff in the **W.I.L.D.E.R. Certification Program** (*Wilderness Initiative for Leadership Development and Expedition Readiness*), adding practical lessons such as weather awareness and navigation. Having well-trained staff is the best proactive measure for trip success.

We have designed each Wilderness Adventure Center to be the most optimal space at each camp, collaborating with experts in the field to achieve the most efficient layout. We are excited to share that we have already raised 88% of our needed financial goal, and we need your support to cross the finishing line. Your donation will help close the final gap, allowing us to open these centers and elevate every trip that leaves our camps as soon as next summer.

Thanks to the Bob and Jeanne Coughlin Foundation and the Lippert Family for their incredibly generous lead gifts to start the projects.



Team Leads - 2025 KEEPERS OF THE FLAME ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

Introducing our team leads for the 2025 end of year campaign.

Introducing our team leads for the 2025 end of year campaign. These dedicated supporters have volunteered to create a team for our peer to peer end of year campaign. You can check out the teams and donate towards the campaign by selecting someone you know or someone who resonates to you and loves camp as much as you do. Each Team has a goal and will work hard to achieve that goal. All goals add up to the \$300,000 we will need to support the operations, maintenance and preservation needs and the support we will need for the Wilderness Adventure Centers at both camps.



Andy (AJ) McKnight - Sailors Dreaming

"I first came to HWH as a Pathfinder in 1973. I am a legacy with HWH, as my father attended HWH in the 1950s. My HWH claim to fame is that I was a camper in the original Helmsmen sailing program. I have so many, many fond memories of all my adventures at HWH. From opening day, rekindling friendships all the way to Leaders Follies and the final banquet. However, my greatest memory and honor was spending a summer with Cliff "Cap" Drury in Japan at Camp Chimikepp. A summer I will never forget. **HWH is where I "grew up". Where I learned the value of "Each for All and All for Each"; where I learned the value of giving."**

GOAL: \$2,500

[DONATION PAGE](#)



Betsy Foley – You CAN ride in my Little Red wagon

1995 (Bows Lake) Isle Royale Camper
1996 (Arbutus and Hayo-Went-Ha merge) Extended Trip on the Bruce Peninsula
1997 Leadership Corps
1998 Counselor - Boundary Waters Explorer trip and Trailblazers
1999 Counselor - Killarney Explorer trip and Pathfinders
2000 Camp Chimikepp in Hokkaido, JAPAN

Fun memory: As counselors, Amy Goetz and I led an instructional session on kites. Amy (the tall one) stood on the swim raft and held the kite as high as possible while a couple of my Explorer campers and I paddled in a canoe as hard as we could to see if we could get a kite flying behind us in Lake Arbutus. I don't recall how successful we were at flying the kite, but I know we all did a lot of laughing.

So many fun memories from Camp! The best part of being at Camp was being able to let loose, be extra goofy, creative, and focus on FUN!!

It was great to do this as a camper, but even more rewarding to see Camp transform my campers. The backcountry trips were empowering. By the end of our trips, we all were stronger, tougher and more confident. . . . **The Camp Arbutus Hayo-Went-Ha experience offers an awesome way for girls to develop. Hooray for Camp!**

GOAL: \$2,500

[DONATION PAGE](#)



Ben Montague - Torch Lake legends

I can say without any hesitation that going to Hayo-Went-Ha was the one of the most important things I did as a kid, if not the most important. It was a second home where I grew up, learned to be independent, and came to cherish the values HWH instills--"Each for all" above all else. But the best part of camp--as anyone who's ever been to camp knows--is the community. I formed great relationships with some of the best people I've ever met. I hope this campaign can be a way for some of us to reconnect in the name of supporting camp and ensuring that the next generation has the same incredible experience we did when we were younger.

GOAL: \$2,500

[DONATION PAGE](#)



Caitlin Owens – Team Firstmatelin

My name is Caitlin Owens. I spent ten years at camp as a camper, counselor, and year round staff between 1998 and 2010. As a staff member I was a cabin counselor, program director, and even spent two weeks as the arts and crafts director. It's hard to capture how formative and important my time at camp was, it's such a part of who I am and definitely the source of so many of my happiest memories. I now have a young son and daughter who love to hear stories and see pictures of my time from camp, and I hope will want to attend when they are a little older! I have loved being part of the camp alumni committee over the past year as a way to reengage and pay forward the amazingness of camp to a new generation. **I am especially passionate about camperships and getting kids who might not otherwise have the means the opportunity to go to camp.**

GOAL: \$2,500

[DONATION PAGE](#)



Cat Baxter – BAXter BAXter

Hi! I'm Cat Baxter. I was a camper and then staff member at AHWH for a combined 15 years (!) from 2000-2014. I came to camp at 8 years old - fresh off my parents getting divorced and diving into the middle school years. Camp was a true refuge every summer - I learned about independence from figuring out how to do laundry in between sessions, I learned grit by making it up The Pig even though I was completely spent. I learned teamwork on the trips, and at lows, and by being gopher. And I made the most incredible friends that are still some of my closest relationship today. Today, 25 years after rounding the bend on E. Arbutus Lake Road for the first time, I couldn't be more proud to support the Keepers of the Flame campaign this holiday season. As a kid, I was a beneficiary of the generosity of donors/camp supporters when my family needed a bit of support getting my sister and I up to camp, and **I hope that we can collectively help more kids get to camp to grow, to get off their phones, to challenge themselves, and to come back home a better person.**

GOAL: \$2,500

[DONATION PAGE](#)



Chris Holter – Lakeside Legends

Hello - Thanks for stopping by Lakeside Legends - I am on a mission to get more kids to summer camp as camp helped shape my life and helped me be my best. I am looking for other people that feel the same way to join me in this effort and be a part of the Keeper of the Flame Year End Fundraising mission.

Joy is created by acts of kindness and a creating a positive impact in the world. Let's spread kindness like confetti.

GOAL: \$5,000

[DONATION PAGE](#)



Christa Shier – The Shier

I can't think of any other thing in my life that has had as much impact as camp has had. It truly guided my journey from a loner adolescent into an outgoing adult. I not only attended camp as a camper (6 years), then became a counselor (6 years), I spent 3 seasons guiding the AHWH Alaska trips and training the other SAGA guides. Although I still can't get Amanda to give me a 15-year moon! :) Camp sent me to Japan, where I was able to meet amazing people across the world. I spent time doing the Spring and Summer shoulder seasons of outdoor Ed programming after that and made lifelong friends from both the Boys' and Girls' camp. The career I have today and the values I hold have either been shaped by my camp experiences or reinforced by them. There are so many things in the world today that bring me sadness and anxiety. Most of those things I cannot control. But one thing I can do is promote camp —it's tangible and an experience I know will have a positive impact on others. I can't think of any other cause I could donate to that I know for certain would help others in such real ways. Providing experiences to others within a supportive and fun loving community is about the best gift I can think of!

GOAL: \$750

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Debbie Stephens – Team Olds(mobile)

Hayo-Went-Ha Camps has been a constant in my life: I started as a camper, returned as staff, and later watched both of my sons thrive here. One even held his wedding at Torch Hayo-Went-Ha. I currently serve on the Board to help ensure that same experience for future families.

GOAL: \$10,000

[DONATION PAGE](#)



Doug and Ellie Vahey – Hayo-Went-Ha Hokey Pokey

Doug - I was a camper between '78-80 then a counselor between '80-83, then a parent between '11-'17 and now a Board member enthusiast. Ellie was at camp as a camper and staff member between 2011 - 2017.

Ellie - I was a camper between 2011 and 2018 as an LC then a year on staff in 2019.

Doug's favorite memory was co-leading 13 campers hiking through Jasper National Park (after taking the cross-Canada train, through Saskatchewan), and stumbling upon a giant patch of blueberries at high altitude just below the snow. Blues and sledding.

Ellie's favorite memory was swimming in Lake Desor with my cabin mates just before sunset.

GOAL: \$5,000

DONATION PAGE



Elise Rolisin (Miller) – S'more Camp Fun for ALL!

I started coming to AHHW as a Bushwhacker in the original Cedar cabin in 1999. I met friends that year that I'm still friends with today! In 2004, I was an LC and started on staff in 2005. I was a cabin counselor for most trips and age ranges through my last summer in '09 when I was an AK counselor and waterfront director.

I have 2 sons, Owen (7) and Warren (3) that I am loving introducing to camp with my Dad, Dave Miller, who was a camper at HWH.

I'm fundraising to make sure as many kids have access to the invaluable life experience of camp. Kids need the magic of camp more than ever!

GOAL: \$2,500

DONATION PAGE



Eliza Upton – Arbutus Takes the Big Apple

I spent every summer at Arbutus from 2007 to 2019! Whether it was being part of a cabin group, hanging out in the trip shack, planning Super Saturday as Program Director, kicking it in my favorite spot at camp—the Thicket—as DL, or visiting as an Alumni, I've loved every summer season camp has brought. Camp became my favorite place in the world during my Trailblazer year and remains so to this day. Some of my most treasured memories include muddy gaga, Trailside dance parties, bonfires at Donut Beach, banana boats, and trip returns. Most importantly, the friendships I've made through camp are among the most meaningful in my life. **Camp has given me so much, and I hope to help this community continue to thrive for generations to come!**

GOAL: \$2,500

DONATION PAGE



Emma Macaluso – Emma Mac When are you Coming Back?

"My name is Emma Mac, and I am a team lead for the Keepers of the Flame year-end campaign! Last year was my 13th year at camp and my 5th year on staff. I went to Alaska with a fantastic group of campers and staff! My years working on staff have given me the most rewarding experiences of my life. Guiding and mentoring campers every summer on wilderness trips and sharing my love of camp with them is truly the best job ever! I am excited to continue my fundraising work that I have contributed to through the staff auction and hiking trips through this year's end-of-year fundraising campaign."

GOAL: \$5,000

DONATION PAGE



Hadley Robinson – My Camp Family

Camp is a magical place that changes lives by building community, grit and resilience and fostering a sense of belonging that can last for life! I'm committed to keeping that magic going so that camp can continue to benefit my daughter and all future generations of campers!

GOAL: \$12,500

DONATION PAGE



Jacob Leski – Lesk Is More!

I was a counselor at HWH from 2010-2014. I was the Program Director in 2015 and 2016. I came back several years later as the Assistant Director in 2021 & 2022.

My favorite memory from camp isn't a singular one, but more of a feeling than anything. **Camp HWH blessed me with relationships that helped shape me into the man I am today.** Anytime I step foot on camp, I immediately feel a sense of calmness and grace. Safe to say, it feels like I am home whenever I return.

Each for All

GOAL: \$2,500

DONATION PAGE



Jim Asselin – Each for All, All for Each

I first came to camp in 1965 as a Bush Ranger canoeist. I liked it so much. They returned the next year for the same trip. In 1968, I became an LC, which led to many lasting friendships and the start of a 57 year love affair with the surroundings- the woods, the long shoreline, Torch Lake and the bonds of loyalty. In 1970 and 1971, I was a leader on the Explorer Trip, an extended three weeks of canoeing and portaging in Canada. I finished my stay in 1972 as the camp waterfront director. Since then I've returned over and over again with no two experiences being the same- winter, spring, summer or fall. How lucky I am!

GOAL: \$2,500

DONATION PAGE



Jim Austin and Jerry Fine – Ghosts of Camp Past, Present and Future

We consider ourselves Ghosts of Camp Past, as we were both campers and staff in the 1960's and 70's and Present, as Jerry continues his long run on the State Y/Camp Board and Jim hangs around Torch and Arbutus trying to be helpful. We both want to keep it up and be Ghosts of Camp Yet to Come, through ourselves, our kids and our grandkids. Camp brought us together and we have been good friends for decades, as Camp friends are the best friends. Camp has instilled in both of us lessons and values that last a lifetime and which we strongly believe, have made us not only into the people we are, but have made us better people. We give back to Camp because it gave so much to us and our families, and we want it to continue helping our camps do so for generations to come.

GOAL: \$20,000

[DONATION PAGE](#)



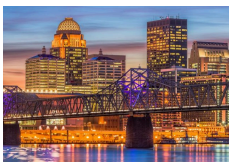
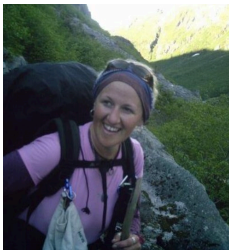
Jodi Hamilton – Give It Up For Mama Jojo!

Hadley Robinson said a very long time ago "I think we have a lifer". My life is full to the brim because of the time and wonderful lifelong friendships made at camp. Each and every time I get to catch up with a camp friend, it is like no time has passed since we last sat and chat. That is a beautiful thing. Forever grateful for your friendship, I hold it dear and treasure it deeply. Join me in keeping that flame burning. Much love

Jodi aka Hammo, Mama Jojo, Judy, Mama J
2001, 2002, 2007-08, 2016, 2017-18
visited for the 100th in 2014, 2015 and most recently in 2025

GOAL: \$2,500

[DONATION PAGE](#)



John Birnsteel – Louisville Sluggers!

Representing Louisville, John is an alumni himself who also has his three children all attending a camp session in 2026.

GOAL: \$10,000

[DONATION PAGE](#)



John Kelley – Happy Campers

At Hayo-Went-Ha Camps ...

- I made friends for a lifetime
- I learned to be more independent
- I developed a deep appreciation for nature and our environment
- I did something harder than I thought I could – and grew in self confidence
- I met people from across the country and around the globe

The Keepers of the Flame annual campaign helps to ensure the values, traditions, and life-changing experiences campers enjoy every summer will carry on for generations to come.

GOAL: \$10,000

[DONATION PAGE](#)



John Zore – The Ladd Drive Lads

I attended YMCA Camp Hayo-Went-Ha from 1976 through 1986, from Woodsmen to Hikers, then on staff as a counselor. My three sons attended HWH from the early 2000s to today, from Sparks Day Camp to Pioneer to Extended Trips and staff.

I have fond memories from the many trips I experienced; from Sleeping Bear Sand Dunes to Jasper National Park, from the Manistee River to Ranger Lake – just to name a few. Many of the best stories can only be told...IYKYK. Beyond the stories, my greatest memories are of the people I've met along the way: leaders including the Rodes, Laws, Martins, Austins, Ulrichs et. al. and the many cabin mates, co-counselors, and campers with whom I've either simply crossed paths or become life-long friends.

GOAL: \$5,000

[DONATION PAGE](#)



Katie Sulau – Cove and Miche Forever

For all of the AHWH campers and staff who have lived in and loved Miche and Cove. After years of high water and wear and tear, it's time to rebuild the best little waterfront cabins on camp. Help us bring back the magic of a Nejee summer by chipping in to rebuild new versions of Miche and Cove...the new version of the same perfect spots to stay up too late after campfire and watch the sunset over Arbutus.

GOAL: \$20,000

[DONATION PAGE](#)



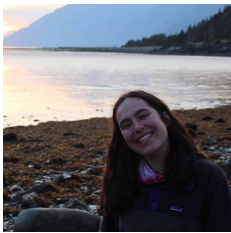
Lawrence LeBlond – Order of the Black Kettle

The 15 years I spent at camp has helped me become who I am today, as I am sure it has helped mold many individuals. I started camp the summer my grandfather passed away and the loss that brings. Camp introduced me to a much larger world. Now I have friends around the world and have been fortunate enough to visit many of them. Not only has camp helped me grow into who I am today but has nurtured many in my family from my brother to cousins both near and distant. I believe in giving back and hope you do as well.

With two future campers currently excited about A/HWH and HWH, I can't wait for them to create their own memories and friends at camp.

GOAL: \$10,000

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Liz Roy – LIZ in the Thicket

I attended camp from 2006-2021. During my time at Arbutus, I was a counselor, the LC director, and the Thicket Division Leader. One of my favorite memories at camp is when my co and I planned an island themed Super Saturday for our campers on Isle Royale. That trip is so incredible and beautiful, but it can be mentally and physically draining at times so we wanted to do something special to help our campers soak up the amazing opportunity we were sharing. It ended up being a fun way to keep spirits up at the midway point of a challenging but rewarding experience!

GOAL: \$2,500

[DONATION PAGE](#)



MackMo and the Impact Team

Hello! After 10 years at camp — as a camper, staffer, and now my first year as Arbutus Director—I'm excited to join the campaign that helps bring kids to camp. I've served as support staff, cabin counselor on many Arbutus trips, photographer, ropes director, division leader, and seasonal site lead. My favorite moments are campfires— opening stories about why we're here and closing songs that celebrate our time together. Knowing generations before and after will share the same songs gives me good goosebumps. I also love that the Full Time Year round Impact team are helping to support this team!

As an alumna and current Camp Director at Arbutus Hayo-Went-Ha I have both felt the impact and seen how camp helps shape campers into their best selves - help me give the gift of camp to kids again this year!

GOAL: \$5,000

[DONATION PAGE](#)



Marnie Brewster – Team Brewster

Team Brewster began in the early 1980s when we were first invited to Family Camp by Tom Erickson and his family. Since then, my parents' siblings, their families, and now multiple generations of cousins (and friends!) have all joined in. Over the years we've been campers at Boys Camp and Girls Camp, LCs, counselors, and staff. We've grown up here, worked here, and now are kids are creating their own camp memories under the same trees and along the same shores. We want to help keep the flame burning so that the magic of camp can continue to be shared with as many kids and families as possible. We know how impactful camp can be, no matter your age, background, or outdoor experience.

(Marnie is the third from the left at Family Camp)

GOAL: \$2,500

[DONATION PAGE](#)



Mary Tobin – Mary at the Sleeping Bear Dunes

My name is Mary! I was a camper from 2009 to 2014 and was on staff from 2015 to 2017, 2019, and 2021. On staff, I led trips as a cabin counselor, played tetherball as a Happy Hollow Division Leader, and taught camp songs as a Chimikepp leader in Japan. My favorite camp memories revolve around the trips program. As a camper, hiking the Sleeping Bear Dunes, biking across the UP, and canoeing through Killarney gave me the confidence to overcome anything during the school year. As a staff member, I cherished conquering hard hikes and long portages as a cabin group, together, watching the group get stronger each day. At the end of a trip, the energy as the big blue bus rolled around the corner back to Arbutus was *electric*, and I treasured celebrating and reuniting with the camp community!

GOAL: \$2,500

[DONATION PAGE](#)



Matt and Andy Carlson – Food Grubbers Anonymous

My name is Mary! I was a camper from 2009 to 2014 and was on staff from 2015 to 2017, 2019, and 2021. On staff, I led trips as a cabin counselor, played tetherball as a Happy Hollow Division Leader, and taught camp songs as a Chimikepp leader in Japan. My favorite camp memories revolve around the trips program. As a camper, hiking the Sleeping Bear Dunes, biking across the UP, and canoeing through Killarney gave me the confidence to overcome anything during the school year. As a staff member, I cherished conquering hard hikes and long portages as a cabin group, together, watching the group get stronger each day. At the end of a trip, the energy as the big blue bus rolled around the corner back to Arbutus was *electric*, and I treasured celebrating and reuniting with the camp community!

GOAL: \$10,000

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Megan Peters and Stephanie Donalds – Babes in the Woods (Keeping the FLAME Alive)

From the shores of Bows Lake to drop off day at Lake Arbutus....from being the OG HWH Girls Campers to being Legacy Mamas of Arbutus HWH Campers.....from Platform Tents to Neejee.....from Pura Vida in the BVI's to building the Chapel at Girls Camp, we are Babes in the Woods, and we keep the FLAME alive. We are a fortunate and unique group—the first group of girls to experience Hayo-Went-Ha as campers, and to embark on life changing wilderness adventures, trailblazing the way for so many girls and young women—including our daughters—to follow in our footsteps. We aren't only the first generation of campers, we are a generation that calls for equity, opportunity, and inclusion at camp and in the wilderness, something that the generations that proceed us will hold in even higher regard. This is our legacy. We are raising funds so that every child has the opportunity to find a home—belonging, joy, and the best version of themselves—in the Piney Wood Hills we hold so dear. Please join us!!

GOAL: \$5,000

[DONATION PAGE](#)



Meghann Donahue

A parent, spouse of an alumnus, and a Board Member. Meghann is excited to represent the New York area.

GOAL: \$5,000

[DONATION PAGE](#)



Mimi Dyer – Cincinnati Campers

I love camp. Recently, I got to do a camping trip with Hayo-Went-Ha staff, and quickly remembered what I love about camp - spending hours and hours with friends. Even through the rain, playing games while hiking and hanging out was the MOST fun!

GOAL: \$5,000

[DONATION PAGE](#)



Nathan and Amelia Rode – Keep the Fire!

Camp Years: 1994-2001 (Camper); 2001-2004 (Staff)
Camper: Woodsmen, Pathfinder, Voyager, Viking Outpost, Isle Royale, Bush Ranger, BVI Extended Trip
Staff: Sherpa, LC, Pathfinders, Voyagers, SCUBA, Mountain Bikers

After 11 summers on Torch Lake, it's difficult to narrow my memories--so many games of four square and ultimate frisbee, campfires at The Point, sunsets on the pier, Super Saturdays and challenging trips. Just an endless catalog of stories. I also made so many friends from around



the world. Ones that I could connect with years later, as if a day hadn't passed. But one summer and trip I talk about the most is Isle Royale. It's the flagship expedition. My dad always told stories about his time hiking the island. It was a rite of passage. So many things went wrong during my experience. Our van got hit by a deer just a couple hours into our drive to Copper Harbor. We were delayed two days, which meant we wouldn't have a layover day. We had to hike 110 miles in 11 days. It rained for seven of them, once for 26 hours straight. A fellow camper left our tent stakes behind at the first site, forcing us to MacGyver our rain fly at every campsite the rest of the way. It was grueling. And yet, it remains one of my favorite experiences. I was 14 years old. It would've been easy to swear off hiking and camping for the rest of my life. But I had good leaders and friends with me the whole way. Finding adventure is part of my identity now. Without camp, I don't take the trips I have since, nor do I have friends around the globe. My family afforded me a priceless opportunity and I will be forever thankful for that.

Camp is one of those magical spaces that is hard to understand without experiencing it. I spent 15 summers at Camp Arbutus Hayo-Went-Ha between 1998-2013 as camper, LC, counselor, and division leader. Every summer provided new and exciting opportunities and lessons. While there are countless positive aspects about the camp experience, my favorite part of being a camper was pushing through the hard parts of a trip and looking back thinking "I did that". A particularly favorite moment came while summiting the White Pass in Alaska. After several days of hiking in rain and fog, we watched the clouds part to reveal the stunning landscape of British Columbia. As a staff member, I cherished the times I watched a hesitant first year camper experience those moments for themselves and turn into a return camper for years to come. Camp is a special place because it enables young people to grow and develop parts of themselves that they may not have known existed. **I will be forever grateful for the summer adventures and look forward to helping other kids get their chance to experience the magic of camp.**

GOAL: \$5,000

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Rex Sessions – Chicago Fire

I spent many summers at my grandparent's cottage on Torch Lake, and first attended HWH as a Pathfinder in 1972. I ended up spending nine summers at HWH. My son spent nine summers at Torch, and my daughter spent five summers at Arbutus. I have maintained many close friendships from my days at camp, now more than 40 years removed from my last summer there.

GOAL: \$20,000

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Sal Cracchiolo – SCUBA Sal

Hello, I'm Sal! I was a 2wk Voyageur in 2011 and was on staff every year between 2021 and 2025. Probably my favorite memory of camp was playing turncoat as a camper. I didn't capture any paper plates, but had a blast being able to run all over camp.

GOAL: \$27,500

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Stephen Graham - Hayo-Went-Ha String Band Superfans

I was a camper at Hayo-Went-Ha from 2008 to 2013, and I came back as a counselor in 2015 and 2016. Leading diverse cabin groups from Woodsmen to Viking sailors sparked profound personal growth as I was able to pass on camp lessons I had learned to the next generation of campers. One of my favorite memories is playing violin around the campfire, especially getting to jam with Bobby Thurston and the Hayo-Went-Ha string band.

GOAL: \$2,500

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Tod Stenger - S.P.L.A.S.H. Paddle Heros

Is "because it's the right thing to do" a reasonable story? Camp has meant so much to me, as a camper, as a counsellor, and as an adult, that I have always felt I should give back to camp. Join me in giving back to a place that has meant so much and help it continue for many years to come.

GOAL: \$2,500

[DONATION PAGE](#)



Trevor Block – One more Summer Team

Is "because it's the right thing to do" a reasonable story? Camp has meant so much to me, as a camper, as a counsellor, and as an adult, that I have always felt I should give back to camp. Join me in giving back to a place that has meant so much and help it continue for many years to come.

GOAL: \$2,500

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Trevor Emig – Camp, Shorts, & Dockside Memories

Starting from my days as a wide-eyed Woodsman in 1996, HWH has been a cornerstone of my life. It has been the source of enormous personal growth and long lasting friendships. I met the love of life over a table in the Dockside and planned my first big interview from a booth in Shorts. Be a part of the impact that camp will have on thousands of people in the years to come. Donate or share now!

GOAL: \$20,000

[DONATION PAGE](#)



Captain Zach – Team Captain Zach

Always an excited visitor and someone who has a great reputation both on and off the water!

GOAL: \$2,500

[DONATION PAGE](#)



Young G Team

Part inspiration, part whodunnit. An anonymous alum lit the match and this team was created. Thank you to the team leader, whoever that may be, and please make flames and join the mystery.

GOAL: \$750

[DONATION PAGE](#)

Join us today as a Keeper of the Flame. Make your gift, and help ensure that camp continues to matter —now and for generations to come.

Thank you for being part of this community.

Thank you for carrying the flame.



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