



**ONTARIO CAMPING
ASSOCIATION**

OCAsional News

Published by the Ontario Camping Association

November 1998

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Life Outside of Camp

It's very easy to sometimes think of camp as a separate little world running on a clearly delineated schedule. There are clearly defined roles for everyone; there are rules for living and interacting with each other; there are expectations to fulfill and there are constant evaluations to ensure that these are being met. Staff are hired; supplies are ordered; meals are cooked; skills are learned; friendships are made. At the end of the season, we speak of "wrapping things up" and "tying up loose ends." Those camp people with full-time employment in the industry traditionally go on vacation in October and November, and eagerly anticipate a new fresh season ahead. Dates and budgets are set, promotional materials are organized, and life goes on.

But, Virginia, there is life outside of camp. The outside world is impinging on our little worlds. Recent events and legislation seem to be impacting more and more on aspects of organized camping. Throughout its long-lived history, the Ontario Camping Association and its members have faced certain crises where immediate action was required and acted in accordance. As a volunteer-driven organization, OCA has accomplished amazing tasks. This would not have been possible without the drive and dedication of many individuals who energetically work on committees and task forces. Volunteering is a difficult proposition for many people, who in addition to their paid work also have families to take care of and other responsibilities. Yet there are many ways in which we can serve and share with our camping community some of the knowledge and skills we have acquired. Ask any member of the OCA's Human Resources Committee for more information on these ways!

**1998 OCA Annual General Meeting
Thursday, December 10, 1998
North Toronto at the Pickle Barrel Banquet Hall**

The OCA is pleased to announce Yuen-Ching Chow as the speaker for the 1998 AGM. Highlights of her career include:

- producer of many cross-cultural events assisting the assimilation of Chinese immigrants in Greater Toronto
- has taught York Regional Police courses on identification of Chinese cultural barriers
- advisor to China-Canada business ventures on long-term educational and commercial projects
- accomplished performer and artist in dance, theatre and opera

Yuen-Ching Chow will share with us her vast knowledge of creative marketing and promotion techniques.

Watch for your invitation in the mail!

Monitoring legislation is perhaps one of the most daunting tasks for a volunteer-based organization. There seems to be an almost labyrinthian aspect to it. One has to be "in the know" in order to even make a start. However, it is important that we make our voices heard, or outside forces will not even know we exist.

Reaching out to all members of the population is also essential. Speaking to families about the Ontario Camping Association and not just about our own camp is a great first step.

See *Sharing Knowledge*, page 3

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**"Cherish your yesterdays, dream your tomorrows;
but live your todays." — Anonymous**

From Barb's Laptop

Changing Seasons

Signs of autumn are everywhere. The trees here are in various stages of change as they move toward the next season. The very efficient leaves have already turned beautiful shades of yellow and red and dropped to the ground. Others are clinging to their summer green. The vast majority are in the middle of the process. Fall flowers enjoy their time to shine. Monarch butterfly migration is complete and the next wave of songbird migrants prepare for their journey south. The house is strangely quiet but late evening phone calls are frequent. The smell of apples permeates everything.

As the seasons change, we too, find changing rhythms in our lives. The busy times of summer change to a different kind of busy as we head into autumn and winter.

Work at OCA also shifts as the seasons change. Standards Visits, preparation of membership information, the name label program and the distribution of *Camping Guides* have been completed. Results of Standards Visits and membership renewals are now being processed. OCA Committees are gearing up for activities, educational events and the special projects that comprise our fall, winter and spring season. Conference 1999 education program, Nominations Committee and plans for the AGM are under way. During this year we will study changes to our Membership/Standards process and Board structure.

The seasons change but camping people are always busy with some aspect of the camping profession. We welcome your involvement in any of these activities.

Things to Do

- Thank Bob Smith for taking responsibility for the Crisis Response pager this summer
- Thank the Standards Committee for all their work
- Complete front verandah and make pickled beets
- Prepare for a busy OCA year

Barb Gilbert
President

Thank You

The OCA thanks all those who helped make our 1998 Standards Visits Program a success.

We organized visits for a record number of camps:
106 compared to 69 last summer!

Once again, the OCA has showed that its strength truly lies with its volunteers.

Camps on the internet...

more traffic

For over three years web surfers from all over the world have been using **CAMPSEARCH** to locate summer camps in Ontario.

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Sharing Knowledge

continued from page 1

Then there is the reality that many parents still are not aware of the advantages a camp experience can offer their children. Newcomers to Canada and first- and even second-generation Canadians may harbour preconceptions of camp that are not exact. At the upcoming Annual General Meeting on December

10th, we are fortunate to have a speaker who is an expert on introducing recent immigrants to the Canadian way of life (see box on page 1). Attending the AGM is a wonderful way to liaise with other camping people and share our collective knowledge.

Fiora Hawryluk
Editor

Money Matters

Your OCA Board continues to develop and implement financial policies for the benefit of the Association. Our office staff is diligent in seeking quotes on printing and office supplies. The tender policy has been followed for the purchase of our new computer equipment and will be implemented for other major projects such as the Name Label Program and Postings.

Barb Gilbert
President

Reminder:

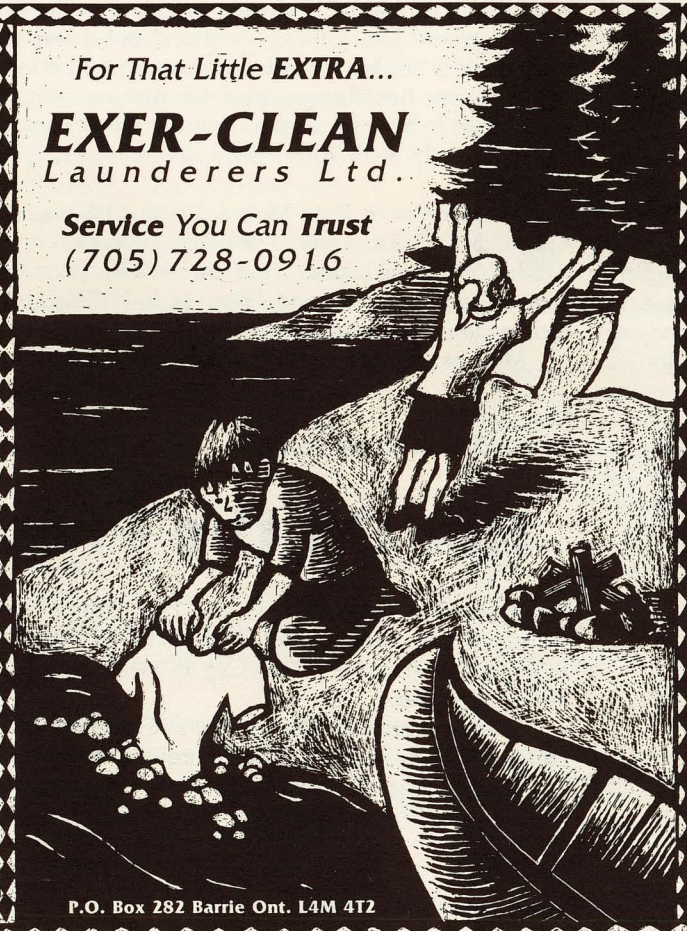
*OCA Board of Directors'
Nominations deadline is
November 6, 1998.*

*If you have yet to receive
your 1998 OCA Membership and
Nominations Package call the
OCA office, 416-781-0525.*

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Camping Makes the World Go Round

As we all settle into our winter routine, I hope that your summer season was healthy, happy and everything that you hoped it would be!

Part of the excitement that is generated at this time of the year is from the opportunity that we have to recommit ourselves to the work and advocacy that is needed on behalf of camping in Ottawa, in Canada and around the world. I hope that everyone in the OCA will look for ways to strengthen and enhance the camping movement.

The 1998 International Camping Fellowship (ICF) Annual General Meeting and Steering Committee took place in Caracas, Venezuela in early May. During this wonderful week, we heard from the ICF regional representatives. Here are some highlights of reports made by regional representatives, Sako Tanaka and Bill Bowker:

Japan/East Asia

- there are on-going negotiations to have the camp leader certification program recognized by the Ministry of Education
- the current trend in Japan is towards an increase in private and independent camping
- the National Camping Association of Japan has established programs to network with other outdoor education organizations in order to develop training opportunities for senior staff and directors

Australia/Oceania/Africa

- the accreditation program of the Camping Association of Victoria (Australia) is now recognized by the Ministry of Education as a pre-requisite for use by schools
- the Australian Camping Association has adopted the Victoria standards/accreditation program nation-wide
- economic difficulties in Malaysia and South Asia have stalled outreach and international activity

I will be travelling to Calgary, Alberta in mid-October to participate as an invited guest at the Canadian Camping Association's President's Council meetings. I look forward to discussing several opportunities with the provincial Presidents that will increase the commitment to ICF in every region of Canada. A full report from these meetings will be featured in the next *OCA'sional News*.

I would like to use this space several times over the next year to write a series of articles that highlight international camper and staff experiences in Canadian camps. Please feel free to contact me if you have a story that you can share!

Until next time,

Jeff Bradshaw
Canadian Representative
International Camping Fellowship

Hands Across Borders

This is my first summer (whoops, this "was" my first summer – it's hard to remember that summer is over when the temperature outside is constantly in the thirties!) without camp in 13 years. I had prepared myself mentally for missing the campfires, friends, bedwetting campers, porcupine-eaten platforms, camp songs and all. A summer at camp has now come and gone without me. I can now with relief say definitively that, yes, there is life after camp. Or perhaps, more accurately, I should say there is life and at its best, it resembles camp! Co-operation, "win-win" problem solving, shared experiences, fun and sunshine: this is what I've found in my current home of Costa Rica with Youth Challenge International (YCI).

Some aspects of YCI are like camp. We have staff orientations, participants, closing ceremonies and occasional cases of constipation. I have also had the good fortune of meeting some folks who have helped me along. Susana Waldron and Stafford Johnson of Las Candelillas hosted a portion of our staff orientation at their gorgeous farm. It has mango groves, a cashew apple orchard (did you know cashews grow on the bottom of a fruit that juices all over you and then leaves your mouth dry?), a swimming pool, sugar cane fields and more. They sometimes rent out the site to day user groups and would like to install a fitness course of the type with stations where participants run from station to station. At each station participants do whatever the sign says; for example: supporting one's body with one's arms and "walking" along two sloped parallel bars, or doing 50 step-ups or... There is no Costa Rica Camping Association to turn to and we don't know of any such fitness trails already in existence here. Susana and Stafford would like a fitness trail and not a low or high ropes course as it is needed for individual, unsupervised use.

If anyone has fitness course descriptions with DESIGNS, we would love to hear from you. You can either communicate with me or directly with them (they are bilingual in Spanish and English).

My address is: Kate Moore, Youth Challenge International, Apdo 528-4005, San Antonio de Belen, Heredia, Costa Rica, e-mail: youthcha@sol.racsa.co.cr. Their address is: Susana Waldron and Stafford Johnson, Las Candelillas, Apdo 174-4021, Orotina, Costa Rica, e-mail candel@sol.racsa.co.cr

Muchas gracias for your help!

Kate Moore
OCA Individual Member

Hot Off the Presses

The Education Committee of the 1999 Annual Conference for Directors and Senior Staff is pleased to announce Karenne Bloomgarden from New York City as one of this year's Conference keynote speakers.

Karenne runs a camp consultant business and works with children who have special needs throughout the year.

Come hear Karenne address the Conference on Friday February 26, 1999 and catch her enthusiasm.

Larry Bell
Chair, Education Committee

Yours for the Asking

Yours for the Asking is a regular feature of the *OCA's* *Asional News*. Readers are invited to send in their questions to the OCA office, attn: **Yours for the Asking**. Our panel will be delighted to respond in an upcoming issue! We are fortunate to have on the team Catherine Ross of Camp Mi-A-Kon-Da and Tracy Shand of Camp Naorca. Catherine brings a residential camp perspective, while Tracy offers the day camp view!

Question: It's that time of year again: selecting who gets to be a CIT. Every fall, we go through the same exruciating process and it seems we can never please anyone. The reality is, we have more campers wanting to become CITs than we have room. Could you please share with us your procedures for selection? Do you involve the parents? How do you justify your selection, when the inevitable anguished calls come?

Catherine Ross responds: Selecting CITs is one my least favourite tasks as a camp director. The job becomes harder each summer as our campers become more qualified and capable. My solution is to rely almost wholly on an objective point system. When our girls become Senior Campers (usually at age 13), we begin education the parents about the process for CIT selection. I consider this allows plenty of time for advance planning; however, I still have parents of 11- and 12-year-olds anxiously inquiring about the procedure! Campers and parents are aware that each summer the 16 CITs are selected from a group usually twice that number.

A letter, included in the pre-camp mailing, explains: campers who are 16 years of age on July 1 are eligible. Parents of children with summer birthdays may start objecting here, but we have always held firm to this minimum age requirement, and choices are made based on an objective point system. Points are accumulated for the number of summers at camp (regardless of length of stay, i.e., two, four or six weeks) and the skill levels achieved in camp activities. Points are assigned for participation in the drama, arts and crafts and canoe tripping programs.

Some of the staff insisted that we were eliminating some potential excellent future staff because our system was too objective. I held firm to the concept that we needed specific guidelines that were explainable to the campers and parents. However, we did introduce a Leadership Program for 15-year-olds. The evaluations from this are

considered if candidates are equally qualified. During the summer, a meeting is held with all final year campers to fully explain the process for selecting CITs. During these meetings, we have refined the process and made improvements based on campers' input.

In the fall, when all CIT spaces have been filled, I write to the campers who did not receive an invitation and offer them alternatives. If they were close to being offered a place in the CIT program, they may decide to return for one more year as a senior camper. They may choose to return to camp as a babysitter or to work in the kitchen. We also offer to write references to assist them in exploring other options. We aim to keep all those affected by the process well informed. We listen to and act upon their suggestions for improvements. We hope that we are fair and consistent in our choices.

Question: We had to fire a counsellor in the summer. Actually, we had to fire several, and regrettably two of them were from the same cabin group. Later, I found out that the parents of these campers felt that I should have taken the children aside and explained to them in greater detail the

reason for the firings. How much information do you consider necessary to give young campers? What about protecting the counsellors' reputation, however justified the firing?

Tracy Shand responds: Regardless of whether or not the parents of this camper group felt that they and their children should have been given information regarding the dismissal of a staff member or not, we should not be releasing any information. It is our responsibility to uphold the privacy of the staff member involved. Their contract and dismissal is between the employee and employer. Only if there was a serious incident between that staff member directly involving a camper and/or parent should we inform them. Similarly, if a camper is dismissed from camp, or involved in an incident, other campers, staff, etc., should not be informed unless directly involved or required to assist. It would be even more appropriate to state that this employee "is no longer with us." Again, depending on the situation, if at all possible, the employee should be given a written warning and an opportunity to correct the inappropriate behaviour before dismissal.

ONTARIO MARCH OF DIMES, dedicated to enhancing the lives of adults living with disability, encourages independence by providing vital programs and services to 1.4 million men and women. To maintain the high quality of services for which we have become renowned, we currently require a...

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To be considered for this rewarding opportunity, please apply in writing by October 30, 1998, to:



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e-mail: bmatthaes@dime.on.ca

While we thank all applicants in advance for their interest, only those to be interviewed will be contacted. We are an equal opportunity employer.

First-Aid Fast

While visiting Camp Kitchikewana for the first time this summer (my father was one of the earliest staff in the 1920's), I noticed that all staff carried first-aid kits with them, either around their waist or over their shoulder.

This allows for IMMEDIATE RESPONSE should a camper hurt themselves. This reassures campers and staff as they know they can respond quickly without necessarily returning to camp.

Thanks to Camp Director Greg MacQuarrie for a fine visit and a good idea.

Brian Blackstock
OCA Director

Preserving OCA's Past

The Archives Committee of the Ontario Camping Association is hard at work, meeting regularly and planning activities, which serve to preserve the historic records of the camping movement.

Thanks to the support and involvement of the camping community, the "brown-bag" system, which assures that basic records are preserved in the Archives, is working splendidly. It has been so effective, in fact, that we at Trent University Archives have a backlog of approximately 30 cubic feet waiting to be processed, catalogued and shelved.

We are therefore delighted to announce that the Trent Archives has received a grant from the Canadian Council of Archives for \$5,040. We will be hiring an archival technician this fall to clean, weed, strip, arrange and describe this material thus making it available for researchers. The grant proposal specifically referred to the value of these camping records. I noted in my application that, "the records of the O.C.A. are amongst our most heavily used records." I referred to the various M.A. theses, in addition to such publications as *Using Wilderness*, which have made use of the camping papers.

The task and procedures of the archives technician who works on the latest camping acquisition will be varied and complex. The papers must first be inspected and all duplicate and extraneous material removed. Records will be cleaned and metal such as paper clips and staples will either be removed or replaced with non-corrosive products.

Intellectual control over the papers requires that they be arranged in series and sub-series (usually according to camp name or to function if the records pertain to the camping association itself). There are a number of photographs and sound tape recordings, which require special handling and description. The final finding aid will be word-processed and the details of the papers entered into our database which requires 53 fields of information to be recorded; we record such information as extent of the collection, outside dates, related material both at Trent and in other repositories, physical condition, historical overview of the association and multiple subject cross-references.

The papers will then be stored in acid-free file folders and shelved in acid-free record boxes. The finding aid will be available both on-site in our reading room and electronically via the Trent University website.

A daunting project, but one that we embrace in the knowledge that living effectively in the present requires memory

of the past. This memory is assured through such practices as the preservation of archives. Thanks to everyone in the camping world who have faithfully sent back their "brown bags" or who have donated historical records to our safekeeping!

Bernadine Dodge
OCA Archives Committee Member

Conference 2000 Countdown

As the excitement builds for the upcoming 1999 OCA Conference for Directors and Senior Staff, the planning is now well underway for the 2000 Conference!

The Steering Committee for Conference 2000 is now being formed and I would like to invite those interested in either joining the Steering Committee or a Conference Sub-Committee to contact me directly through the Camp Wenonah winter office, 905-319-0163, as soon as possible.

An initial focus group meeting with several past Conference Chairs and longtime Conference Committee members has been scheduled for early November. The first full 2000 Conference Steering Committee meeting will take place in mid-December with regular monthly meetings taking place January-April 1999.

We certainly welcome lots of suggestions that will enable us to host a memorable and significant event in February, 2000. Please don't hesitate to get in touch!

Jeff Bradshaw
Chair, Conference 2000 - OCA Directors and Senior Staff

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Calendar of Events

October

Board Meeting
OCA Board Room
Thursday, October 15
2:00 p.m.

Special Needs Resource
Committee Meeting
Sari Grossinger's House
Thursday, October 22
1:00 p.m.

Environmental Advocacy
Committee Meeting
OCA Board Room
Thursday, October 22
7:00 p.m.

November

Board Meeting
OCA Board Room
Tuesday, November 17
11:00 a.m.

Special Needs Resource
Committee Meeting
OCA Board Room
Friday, November 20
10:00 a.m.

December

Board Meeting
OCA Board Room
Thursday, December 10
11:00 a.m.

Annual General Meeting
Pickle Barrel Banquet Hall
Toronto, Ontario
Thursday, December 10

Special Needs Resource
Committee Meeting
OCA Board Room
Thursday, December 17
1:00 p.m.

January

Board Meeting
OCA Board Room
Tuesday, January 12
4:00 p.m.



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Positions Available

Camp directors required: two seasonal camp directors required for a non-profit organization operating unique, well-established, residential summer camps for children and youth with physical disabilities. Responsible for staff recruiting/training, programme development and the overall administration of the camp programme. Candidates must be highly motivated with strong leadership, team building and communication skills. College or university degree and 3-5 years camping experience in a leadership position required. Salary \$450-\$650/week up to a maximum of 16 weeks. Please send letter/résumé to Barb Gray, The Easter Seal Society, Camping & Respite, 1185 Eglinton Ave E., Suite 706, Toronto, ON M3C 3C6 or fax to: 416-696-1035. Reply by December 15, 1998.

Assistant camp directors/leadership directors/camp administrators required. Seasonal positions available at five residential camps for children and youth with physical disabilities. Strong leadership, team building, communication, programming and administration skills required. Previous camping experience required. Please send letter/résumé to: Barb Gray, The Easter Seal Society, Camping & Respite, 1185 Eglinton Ave. E., Suite 706, Toronto, ON M3C 3C6 or fax to: 416-696-1035. Reply by December 15, 1998.

Business and fundraising manager, Camp Oochigeas. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Camp Oochigeas Business and Fundraising Manager is responsible for managing all business and fundraising related activities of the camp including donor and volunteer recognition, newsletters and annual report preparation, database administration, bookkeeping and

banking and administrative support for the Board of Directors. The successful candidate will have not-for-profit and fundraising experience, database administration experience, relevant software skills with experience in a Mac environment, excellent writing skills and the desire to be part of a very hard-working team. This position requires weekend and evening work. Salary commensurate with experience. Please forward applications to the camp office by Friday, November 13, 1998. Forward applications to: Camp Oochigeas, 60 St. Clair Ave. East, #404, Toronto, ON M4T 1N5, attn: Business and Fundraising Manager Search. Camp Oochigeas is a residential summer camp for children who have cancer. The camp is located on Lake Rosseau in Muskoka. The administrative office is located in Toronto.

Sparrow Lake, a United Church Camp, is seeking a new director. Applicants should fax letter and résumé to Esther Ewing, Sparrow Lake Camp at 416-360-6135.

Announcements

What Moves You? Information Fair hosted by the Ontario March of Dimes takes place on November 26, 3-8 p.m. Join the Ontario Linkage Initiative at this free event to celebrate active living opportunities for people with disabilities. Exhibitors, resource materials and recreation experts will be available to answer your questions and help you explore the many possibilities for a more active and full life. The guest speaker will be Jeff Adams, gold, silver and bronze medal winner at the 1996 Paralympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia, as well as a recent inductee into the Terry Fox Hall of Fame. For more information contact Cathy Smart at the Ontario March of Dimes, 416-425-3463, ext. 288.

Miscellaneous

Looking for a better way to evaluate your senior camp staff? Want a survey which uses camping staff competencies? For more information, call Esther Ewing at The Change Alliance, 416-350-5857.

Looking for a way to evaluate and identify risks in your operations? Want to make sure that you have everything covered? For more information, call Esther Ewing at The Change Alliance, 416-350-5857.

*OCA*asional News offers you a variety of ways to promote products and services within organized camping. The Ontario Camping Association welcomes articles and photo submissions. The next deadline is October 15th for the November publication.

☉ Display ads are sold on a single or multiple insertion rate, with a \$50.00 non-members fee. Please contact the OCA office for rates. Camera-ready art is required.

☉ We also offer professional and business directory ads of business card size. OCA member fee: \$50 per insert (up to three issues) or \$35 per issue (minimum four to maximum nine issues).

☉ Classified ads are sold with a maximum size of 25 words for a fee of \$15 for members and \$30 for non-members. Additional space sold in 25 word increments.

☉ Paid advertising content will not exceed editorial space.

☉ The *OCA*asional News is published nine times a year by the Ontario Camping Association, a voluntary, non-profit association committed to excellence in Camping. We want to hear from you. Please send your thoughts and inquires to the Editorial Committee, care of the office.

☉ Fiora Hawryluk, Editor. 416-481-2788.
e-mail: hawryluk@stn.net

The views expressed by the authors in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Ontario Camping Association.



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