



OCAsional News

The Newsletter of the Ontario Camping Association

February 2001

250 Merton St.
Suite 403
Toronto, ON M4S 1B1
416-485-0425
F: 416-485-0422
oca@ontcamp.on.ca

Life-threatening food allergies

by Wendy Macdonald

Most of us, through the media reports of food allergy fatalities and potential life threats, are well-informed about how trace amounts of foods are transferred to create a situation that can cause death in a matter of minutes for a highly allergic individual. Thankfully, there has been a tremendous response on the part of schools, day cares, churches, airlines, restaurants, community programs and vacation resorts to restrict and remove peanuts, nuts, and other life-threatening foods. Many camps have also been exceptional in their response for which I, as a mother of a peanut-allergic child, am extremely grateful.

However, in the face of all the literature that is available and the move to minimize risk, some camps continue to serve peanut butter and nuts, and to sell foods in the tuck shop which are potentially life-threatening to many children. This situation essentially prevents these children from attending camp. Why is this? It is my first responsibility to educate my allergic child in the wise management of his allergy. There will never be a safe, controlled, or allergen-free environment in the

world. Most parents are not seeking impossible guarantees. However, camps do have control over what food is served and made available, and therefore intentionally make a choice to either minimize risk or ignore it. To remove peanut butter greatly reduces the life risk for a peanut-allergic child. Most children today are very familiar with food allergies and requests to restrict nuts, and they willingly give up peanut butter and other foods in situations of communal living and mutual co-operation.

I urge all camp administrations, in this day of accessibility and special needs, to consider an environment that lets children experience the life-changing experience of the camp environment by eliminating the potential threat of food allergies. I also fear for those situations where tragedies occur through ignorance, as some people are not aware of their own life-threatening allergies. Camps can only make "best efforts," not guarantees.

Wendy Macdonald, MA, MBA, is the mother of two children, and was involved in camping as a camper, counsellor, section head, waterfront director, and program director for over 15 years.

For more on food allergies at camp, see pages 4 & 5

Board development: how to make it happen

by Jason Brown

Working with a board of directors can be difficult work. Recruiting the right people for your board is a team effort and requires thought, planning, and discipline. Cynthia Armour at Canadian Fundraiser has put together a Ten-Step Checklist for Board Recruitment:

- Your mission is your lighthouse - a beacon in the fog.
- Anticipate board turnover - before the AGM.
- Articulate the agency's culture.
- Know your priorities.
- Identify gaps in your board composition.
- Go beyond the 'pulse' - good boards have more than just a heartbeat!
- Define tasks.
- Know where to find suitable candidates.
- Be selective.
- Learn from experience.

from Canadian Fundraiser, March 15, 2000

Jason Brown is a Vice-president on the OCA Board, and is the Manager of Camping and Outdoor Education for the YMCA-YWCA of Ottawa-Carleton.

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The official newsletter of the Ontario Camping Association, the *OCA*sional News is published monthly from October to June of each year. The newsletter helps to keep the OCA membership informed about developments both in and out of the Association pertaining to children's, youth, and special needs camping.

Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Ontario Camping Association.

Queries regarding submissions and letters to the editor are welcome. Please direct correspondence to:

*OCA*sional News
416-485-0425
oca@ontcamp.on.ca

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The Ontario Camping Association
250 Merton St., Suite 403
Toronto, ON M4S 1B1
416-485-0425
F: 416-485-0422
oca@ontcamp.on.ca
www.ontcamp.on.ca

OCA Office Staff:

Bev Jahnke
Office Administrator

Kim Mitchell
Membership Secretary

John Zachariah
Production Secretary

The view from here

Each time a person stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, a tiny ripple of hope is sent out, and crossing each other from a million different centres of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance. - Robert F. Kennedy

Some see things as they are and say "Why?" We dream things as they might be and say "Why not?" - George Bernard Shaw

As your new Board prepares for a new century in camping, we need to acknowledge as an Association our debt to the Board that has just completed its term. Under the able leadership of President ELLEN NASH and Vice President JILL DUNDAS, the past Board, in addition to its usual duties, was responsible for these special projects:

1) Completing the RESTRUCTURING OF THE OCA so there is better representation of particular groups and better continuity as a Board. (Special thanks to Ted Cole's Task Force for this!)

2) Initiating a complete STANDARDS REVIEW and upgrade by HOWARD ORETSKY and CRAIG HARTLEY and their committee, the results of which will be available in Fall 2001.

3) Completing arrangements with the CCA (which has made a very generous financial contribution) for a Canada-wide camping survey. (Special thanks to ELLEN, CCA President JOHN JORGENSEN, and all the other provincial Presidents who made this possible at their meeting in Moncton.) The OCA is better for your efforts.

It seems to me that it is always worthwhile remembering that much of who we are is the result of who we

were. "Who were we" began about 63 years ago, when a small group of camp directors led by TAYLOR STATTON, ETHEL STATTON, MARY EDGAR, and a few others had the vision to create the Ontario Camping Association. Since that time, we have grown to an organization of nearly THREE HUNDRED camps of remarkable diversity. Every year, about a QUARTER OF A MILLION young people attend our camps. Every year, we try to help them to learn to live comfortably with themselves and with others in an environment we create, and work continually make even better. Every year, we do our best to ensure that no one is left out or feels left out. For all these years, thanks to the leadership of those early pioneers in camping, and the many who picked up the torches after them, literally millions of young people have become stronger citizens and made our world a better place in which to live.

The new Board is committed to making our Association (as David Crombie said) "ACCOUNTABLE, EQUITABLE, EFFICIENT and EFFECTIVE." We will do our best to "set a good stage" so that this summer in your camp you can "put on a good play" and provide the leadership to YOUR STAFF; and then for a 64th summer, THEY will be the young women and men who once again produce "a million miracles."



Remember Our Conference

It's a time for renewal: new information, seeing new products, visiting old friends, and showing your support for your Association as we rekindle once again "the fires of friendship." We look forward to seeing you there.

by Brian Blackstock
OCA President

2001 Conference update

by Jocelyn Palm,
2001 Conference
Chair

event with learning opportunities for everyone.

There are lots of copies of the program and registration form. Camps should request whatever number of copies is required for circulation to your staff who might wish to attend - there is no need to photocopy the material. Please request copies NOW and take advantage of the early bird reduced prices.

The OCA Showcase event on Saturday, March 3 has been cancelled for this year. This cancellation is the result of the less-than-minimum number of camp exhibitors required to make this marketing event a success. A great effort was out into the planning for the first OCA Showcase. We thank the following people for their work: Jill Vandal, Erin Shields, Kate Horton, Rick Howard, Bruce Nashman, Rob Carmichael, Bev Jahnke, John Zachariah, Barb Weeden, Jill Dundas, Boomer Stacey, Julie & Craig Hartley, Jane McCutcheon, Duncan Robertson, Dave Graham, Michael Moore, David Latimer, Freeman Decorating, Fiora Hawryluk, Camp Muskoka, *Our Kids Go To Camp* magazine, and others.

The deletion of the Saturday OCA Showcase leaves a space in the Conference program from noon until 2:00 pm. A dynamite addition will be made to the program in this time slot. Have no doubts that all days at the OCA Conference will be well worthwhile!

Call or email the OCA Office for Programs and Registration forms to send to staff. There are a number of partner organizations for the Conference and we will welcome all on March 1-3, 2001.

The Conference Program and Registration Form have been circulated to all camp, commercial, individual and affiliate members. It will be a superb

OCA Board of Directors

President:

Brian Blackstock, The Mazinaw Company
33 Davisville Ave., PH 15
Toronto, ON M4S 2Y9
416-486-1526 F: 416-485-0422

Vice President:

Dave Graham, Camp Kandalore
14 Bruce Park Ave., #201
Toronto, ON M4P 2S3
416-322-9735 F: 416-322-5899
dave@kandalore.com

Vice President:

Jason Brown
National Capital Region YMCA-YWCA
R.R. #1, 1620 Sixth Line Rd.
Dunrobin, ON K0A 1T0
613-832-1234 F: 613-832-4324
ottawa_y-camps@ymca.ca

Past President:

Ellen Nash, Camp Northland - B'nai Brith
3995 Bathurst St., #200
Toronto, ON M3H 5V3
416-630-1180 F: 416-630-8561

Secretary/Treasurer:

Eoin Wood
11405 1st Line, Massagaweya, R.R. #1
Moffat, ON L0P 1J0
905-854-3820 F: 905-854-3821
eoin.wood@sympatico.ca

Director, Agency Camps Sub-class:

Alf Grigg, R.D.M.R.
394 Woodsworth Rd. #48
Willowdale, ON M2L 2T9
416-392-1926 F: 416-392-0023
agrigg@city.toronto.on.ca

Director, Private Camps Sub-class:

Craig Hartley, Centauri Summer Arts Camp
19 Harshaw Ave.
Toronto, ON M6S 1X9
416-766-7124 F: 416-766-7655
directors@centauri.on.ca

OCA Regional Representatives

Eastern Ontario (Ottawa):

Jeff Brown, Camp Otterdale
Box 127, Lakefield, ON K0L 2H0
705-652-6277 F: 705-652-0057
jbrown@cyccor.ca

Northeastern Ontario (Sudbury):

Dave Ward, YMCA John Island Camp
185 Lloyd St., Sudbury, ON P3B 1N1
1-800-465-9622 F: 705-674-3236
david_ward@ymca.ca

Director, Special Needs Camps Sub-class:

Sari Grossinger, Camp Robin Hood
158 Limestone Cres., Downsview, ON M3J 2S4
416-736-4443 F: 416-736-9971
sarig@camprrh.com

Director, Religiously Affiliated Camps Sub-class:

Bill Stevens, Camp Big Canoe
322 Bigelow St., Port Perry, ON L9L 1N2
905-985-9848 F: 905-985-2326
SWESTevens@aol.com

Director, Day Camps Sub-class:

Barb Weeden, Seneca College - King Day Camp
13390 Dufferin St. N., King City, ON L7B 1B3
905-833-3333 ex. 5029 F: 905-833-0421
barb.weeden@senecac.on.ca

Membership Committee Chair:

TBA

Standards Committee Chair:

Catherine Ross
8 Catherwood Ct., Toronto, ON M1W 1S1
416-497-5389 F: 416-497-4883
ross@miakonda.com

Human Resources Committee Chair:

TBA

Public Awareness Committee Chair:

TBA

Regional Representative

Jeff Brown, Camp Otterdale
Box 127, Lakefield, ON K0L 2H0
705-652-6277 F: 705-652-0057
jbrown@cyccor.ca

Northwestern Ontario (Thunder Bay):

Charlie Wilson, Dorion Bible Camp
408 South Marks St., Thunder Bay, ON P7E 1M5
807-857-2331 F: 807-857-1141
dbccc@northroute.net

Southwestern Ontario (London):

David Woollven
YMCA-YWCA Camp Queen Elizabeth
1795 Clarke Rd., London, ON N5X 3Z6
519-667-3300 F: 519-455-2519
david_woollven@ymca.ca

Planning to hire non-Canadian camp staff this year?

The Government of Canada requires that foreign staff working in Canadian camps hold a valid Camp Counsellor Visa. Applications for this Visa, and easy-to-follow directions on how to proceed, may be requested from the OCA office. Call 416-485-0425, or email oca@ontcamp.on.ca.

City of Vaughan allergy guideline: an introduction

Howie Dayton,
Program Supervisor, City of Vaughan
Department of Recreation and Culture

The City of Vaughan, Department of Recreation and Culture has developed a new allergy guideline for use in our programs and summer day camps. The need for this guideline became apparent as new allergies became evident in our summer camps and parent requests for special consideration became difficult to manage. Additionally, as many of you I am sure have grappled with, how do you ensure an environment "free" of a particular food product?

Thus, a meeting held at the City of Vaughan this past fall, brought together private camp operators, public health and board of education representation to review the issues around allergies and programs. Following consultation with senior management and the municipal insurer, the guideline reprinted here in the OCA News was approved and included in our 2001 day camp literature.

We are now undertaking the development of a comprehensive staff protocol to ensure the appropriate safety procedures are in place to accommodate our campers with life threatening allergies. I would be happy to speak to any OCA member requiring more information. I can be reached at 905-832-8500 x8246 or daytonh@city.vaughan.on.ca.

Wondering about waterworks legislation?

Consult www.ontcamp.on.ca for information about:

- 1) What category of waterworks your camp falls under.
- 2) What regulations your camp will have to follow.

Guidelines for parents on lunch, snacks and food allergies

City of Vaughan Department of Recreation and Culture

The Department of Recreation and Culture requires parents to send campers with their own daily lunch, snacks (morning & afternoon) and drinks (at least two water bottles are encouraged).

Energizing camp fare includes fruits, vegetables, breads and drinks. Limiting "sugary" foods is highly recommended, as are foods requiring no refrigeration.

In response to the number of campers with food-related allergies, the department has adopted the following guidelines:

- Due to the number of life-threatening allergies children in camp have to peanuts/nuts, the summer camps have become a "nut aware" environment. We therefore request that all parents avoid sending peanut/nut products to camp.
- It is recognized that to safeguard campers with severe and potentially fatal reactions to peanuts/nuts, the camp locations need to be as peanut/nut free as possible. Even a tiny amount of peanut/nut particle or residue can cause a child with an allergy to have a strong allergic reaction. Without medical treatment, the child can die.
- To avoid such products, all parents share in a responsibility to read labels before packing lunches, not send products with warnings stating "may contain traces of nuts," not send products which do not carry a complete list of ingredients (e.g, bulk food, on-site bakeries).

- Staff will receive training on the prevention of allergic reactions and medical treatment should one occur.
 - Parents with children who have a life-threatening allergy are asked on the Camper Information Form to identify that allergy and send the form in early to ensure the camp site is well prepared for the campers' needs.
 - Children carrying EpiPens®, over the age of 5 will be asked to send a minimum of two to camp and the camper will be required to carry one on their person all the time.
 - While it is difficult to screen every campers lunch, staff will be taught proper hand washing techniques for campers before/after meals and where there is a life-threatening allergy to nuts/peanuts (confirmed by a family physician), special lunch screening will be conducted to the best of the staff person's ability.
 - Where there is a life-threatening allergy, parents in that camper's group will be notified by letter, that food item will be identified, and a request will be made not to send the item again.
 - Parents who send either peanuts/nuts or another food item which is known to cause a life-threatening reaction will have their camper moved to a private area to eat that item.
- The Department of Recreation and Culture extends its thanks to all of our parents for their co-operation and understanding.

Sexual Abuse Insurance

www.jdsmithinsurance.com
JDS Shield Insurance Plan
1-800-917-SAVE

Managing life-threatening allergies on outtrips

by Joanne Kates, Camp Arowhon

1) What Is Anaphylaxis?

A rapid, severe allergic response. It happens when a person is exposed to an allergy-causing substance. Death can occur within minutes.

2) Who Will Get Anaphylaxis?

Anyone can, although people with a history of allergies are more vulnerable. Each anaphylactic episode may be more serious than the last.

3) What Can Cause Anaphylaxis?

- stings of bees, wasps, hornets, yellow jackets and fire ants
- foods: peanuts & other nuts, milk, eggs, shellfish, whitefish, some food additives
- medications: some antibiotics (especially penicillin), seizure medications, muscle relaxants, even aspirin and anti-inflammatory drugs

4) Prevention:

Every staff member carries an EpiPen®, and the anaphylactic person is never allowed to be more than 50 metres from a staff member - *just in case* of allergic reaction.

Avoid substances that can cause it. On trips, check *every single food* and *all labels* to make sure none of the following ever go on a trip:

- peanuts or peanut butter
- bagels or bread with sesame or other seeds
- chocolate
- snacks of any kind
- cereals that contain peanut or other nut oils

Read the labels before packing the food!

Wax Paper Protocol:

Because so many canoe trippers use peanut butter on campsites, contamination of surfaces from other trips is *very possible*: If the canoe trip that occu-

ried your site yesterday was making peanut butter sandwiches on a nice flat stump, and you get there tonight and use that stump to cut onions for dinner, and then feed those onions to a kid who's allergic to peanut butter, that kid will have an anaphylactic reaction and could die!

Therefore: Every trip with a highly allergic child must bring along 12 or more sheets of wax paper (one per meal) and put the wax paper down on any surface used to prepare food - to avoid contamination by previous use of the surface.

5) Symptoms (What To Look For):

Symptoms can appear two seconds or two hours after exposure. Look for these signs:

- flushed or itchy skin
- agitation and terror, the chest feels tight
- a rash or hives or swelling, especially swelling of the face
- wheezing, shortness of breath, coughing, hoarseness
- headache, nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, loss of consciousness

6) Treatment:

a) If a person is flushed and agitated, and you suspect an allergic reaction, immediately give them two tablets of Benadryl. That may stop the reaction. Try to calm them.

b) Watch closely - and listen - for wheezing. If the person starts to wheeze, that means their airway is closing. Do not delay. They need an EpiPen® or Ana-Kit® injection FAST.

While the tripper is getting the injection ready, assign a responsible person to start timing immediately. (Time information is crucial.)

See *Allergies on outtrips*, page 6

Allergy awareness tips

by Brian Emmerton, RD
Complete Purchasing Services

As camp operators providing services to one of the largest demographics in Canada, we need to be more proactive towards responding to customer inquiries and questions about potential allergens (the substance that causes the reaction). This is accomplished by educating and training our staff, increasing the awareness of the issues, and putting in controls and systems to reduce the potential risk to our business in the future.

Key training components of a successful allergy awareness program encompass five areas:

1. Allergies in general: staff need to be educated on what food allergies are, understand the signs and symptoms, and appreciate the importance of people dealing with severe allergies.

2. Cross contamination: cross contamination is the leading cause of food induced anaphylaxis in camps across the country. Techniques and systems to minimize cross contamination in all areas of our establishments must be stressed.

3. Emergency medical procedures: all camp staff (everyone, not just the camp nurse) need to know how to react if a camper has an allergic reaction.

4. Ingredient information: kitchen and serving staff need to know how to respond to customer requests, inquiries, and questions, how to read labels, and where to get information.

5. Purchasing and food handling systems: staff working at the back of the house need to understand the importance of proper purchasing and procurement systems, consistent use of brand products, and the importance of following standardized recipe and methodology systems.

Take the time now to plan for the future and reduce your risk by implementing training systems and programs to educate your staff on this crucial but responsible aspect of your business.

Seven good reasons to volunteer as a Standards Visitor in 2001

by Catherine Ross,
Chair Standards Committee

1. You would be seizing a great opportunity for professional development.
2. You will get to visit a new place and make some new camping friends.
3. You will definitely gain some fresh ideas or a different perspective and enjoy the benefits of sharing with a camping colleague.
4. You would have a valid reason for taking a short break from your own camp responsibilities or summer commitments.
5. You would be demonstrating confidence in your own staff that your camp can run very well without you for a short time.
6. You would be serving the OCA in a most significant way.
7. You would make the Standards Committee very happy because we can't do the job without you!

Please respond to the enclosed mailing requesting your participation as a Standards Visitor with an enthusiastic YES!! It is a worthwhile and enjoyable experience. An informative workshop for visitors and camps to be visited will be held on Wednesday April 11, 7 - 9 p.m. at the Girl Guides of Canada offices at 50 Merton Street, Toronto.

If you would like to participate in a Standards Visit with an experienced visitor to show you the ropes, we can happily arrange that.

Ontario Camp Leadership Workshop



Thursday, May 31st to Sunday, June 3rd, 2001
YMCA Camp PineCrest in the Muskokas
For more info please contact
1 877 418 - OCLW (6259)
www.oclw.ca

Allergies on outings,
continued from page 6

Details on giving EpiPen® injection:

Inject into the arm or thigh, NOT through clothes. Count 10 seconds while you leave the EpiPen® needle in. Then take it out, and massage the area to speed absorption. Make sure your timer person is timing.

ALSO: If you have given one EpiPen® or ANA® injection, you must EVACUATE the victim. Immediately after giving one injection, the tripper stays with the victim and does the timing. A counsellor prepares for evacuation so that victim can be evacuated very quickly after the injection is given.

Make sure to bring along all the EpiPens®/Ana-Kits® except one EpiPen® on the evacuation, because you may need them for more doses. Also bring Benadryl. (Leave behind one EpiPen® and half the Benadryl just in case the trip needs it.) The person must be evacuated as fast as possible to the nearest telephone, access point or camp, whichever is closest.

Dose 2: Wait two to five minutes before considering a second dose. After five minutes, if victim's wheezing is worse, lips blue, fingernails not pink, in short if the person is not moving air, give a second EpiPen® or ANA® injection (Dose 2). Do not give Dose 2 in same limb as Dose 1.

Dose 3: Same exact five minute waiting period and procedure (with timer) as Dose 2.

If the victim's symptoms worsen again after Dose 3 (difficulty breathing, etc.), you may continue to give injections, when necessary to save the person's life. There is no maximum number of doses. Start CPR if necessary. After EpiPen® or ANA® injection, give one to two Benadryl tablets every two hours.

Important: on a trip with an anaphylactic person, bring:

- 2 watches
- 12 or more sheets of wax paper
- 2 EpiPen®
- 2 Ana-Kits®

(Every tripper must carry two Ana-Kits®. The counsellor must carry an EpiPen® - in day or fanny pack. The allergic camper must also have an EpiPen® in a fanny or day pack.)

Peace Of Mind Camp Insurance

www.campinsurancecanada.com

JDS Shield Insurance Plan

1-800-917-SAVE

Health Care Committee Q & A

Q. How do I find a camp nurse?

A. The shortage of nurses will make finding a camp nurse a challenge. Here are some suggestions.

- Place an advertisement in a national or local newspaper.
- Advertise through the RNAO (Registered Nurses Association of Ontario) 416-599-1925 or 1-800-268-7199 x227 or the ACN (Association of Camp Nurses) www.campnurse.org.
- Place a job posting with Human Resources Development Canada (it's free!).
- Contact former camp nurses to see if they are interested in returning, or do they know someone else who would be interested in working at a camp.
- Offer a locator fee to any staff who can recruit a nurse.
- Contact staff and camper parents.
- Advertise at universities that offer a post-RN degree programs in nursing; these programs attract experienced nurses.
- Ask if you could place an flyer at your local hospital, nurses working 12-hour shifts find it fairly easy to get two weeks off.
- Place an advertisement in your local church bulletin.

Prior to making your job offer you should obtain a copy of the applicant's Certificate of Competence and contact the College of Nurses of Ontario at 416-928-0900 or 1-800-387-5526 to verify that they are currently in good standing with the College.

Breakfast Meeting

Tuesday, March 6th
8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
Camp Robin Hood office
158 Limestone Cres
Downsview, ON
(Steeles & Keele)

RSVP to Sari Grossinger
416-736-4443
sarig@camprh.com

Light breakfast will be served

OCA Health Care and Special Needs Resource committee members will also be in attendance.

Our camp is not "nut-free" but a camper with a life-threatening allergy wants to still attend. How can we work to protect the camp and the camper?

Our camp doctor says a potential camper is too medically fragile to have his needs met at our camp - can we ensure a safe camp setting for this camper?

We all have policies in place to ensure that campers have a safe, successful camp experience. We take pride in our individual philosophies regarding the type of program we run and the camper base we cater to. This information-sharing session is open anyone interested in participating in an exciting discussion about **policies, waivers and Human Rights Legislation**. Please bring along any questions, policies, waivers or literature to share so that we can all brainstorm!!!

OCA Skills Weekend 2001

June 8-10, 2001

Site to be announced

A tremendous opportunity to gain hands-on training and certification.

Open to all in the Camping and Outdoor Recreation Fields.

A variety of streams are available to assist your staff in preparing for the upcoming summer season:

- **ORCA Canoeing**
- **Kayaking**
- **Leadership**
- **Crafts & Culture**
- **Outtripping**
- **Trust, Initiatives and Ropes**
- **Program Potpourri**
- **Eco and Environmental Pursuits**
- **Wilderness First Aid**
- **New for 2001: Theatre and Drama Stream**

Further information about Skills Weekend will be posted in future issues of the *OCA News*. If you have any questions, please contact the OCA office (416-485-0425) or Tim French (905-436-3376 or kennebeccamp@hotmail.com)

Standards Review reminder

The Standards Review Committee is still looking for documents and manuals from camps that would help in the process of creating a comprehensive standards (training) document. All materials used will be modified to appear generic. Bibliographic credit will be given for all contributions. Please send any materials to the OCA office, 250 Merton St, Suite 403, Toronto, by February 15th, 2001.

Panoramic photo of all your campers in one shot!

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CAMP LOGO AND DATE ON EACH PHOTO

Cabin and staff groups • Call for sample photographs

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Visit our booth at the OCA Exhibit Hall,
March 1st & 2nd!

Classifieds

Rewarding Summer Staff Positions Available: Summer Holiday Program. Ontario March of Dimes promotes 'independence' for adults with disabilities. The Provincial Recreation & Integration Services Department is seeking enthusiastic individuals for counsellor, driver/counsellor, nursing & waterfront positions. Duties include assistance with attendant care and involvement in recreation programs. Experience working with the physically disabled is an asset. Extensive 5 day pre-program staff training provided. This program operates from a location on the waterfront outside of Orillia, Ontario.

To apply for this 12 week contract position (June through August, 2001) please **fax** or **email** your resume to Nancy Hopkins, Provincial Recreation & Integration Services Department, Ontario March of Dimes, 10 Overlea Blvd., Toronto, ON M4H 1A4. Phone: 416 425-3463 x250. Fax 416 425-1920. email: nhopkins@dimes.on.ca. www.dimes.on.ca.

ATTENTION OCA DIRECTORS: Do you have summer staff looking for spring work? Camp Wahanowin is offering a **Spring-Only Work Term** for university camp staff looking for jobs in May and June. Please refer any interested staff to Tan at Camp Wahanowin: 416-482-2600 or tan@wahanowin.com.

Canadian and International Student Services is looking for Camp Directors for summer residential ESL programmes. Camping experience is necessary and experience in education an asset. Candidates should send resume to: CISS, Jonview Canada Inc. 1300 Yonge Street, 8th floor, Toronto, ON M4T 1X3. Phone: 416 323-9090. email: ciss@jonview.com.

Assistant Camp Directors, Head Counsellors, Camp Administrators: The Easter Seal Society operates five residential camps for children/youth with physical disabilities. Leadership experience and excellent communication skills required. For more information and an application package contact 1-800-668-6252 or 416-421-8377 x369 or summerjobs@easterseals.org. Other camp staff positions are available.

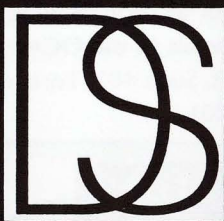
FOR SALE: Army-style steel bunk beds, \$80.00 each. Single cots also available, \$40.00 each. Call Adam or Joe, Camp White Pine, 416-322-6250.

www.skycraft.net: Boat show specials on the net! Great prices, written warranty on your new sail. Sale extends until the OCA conference. 705-538-2099

FOR SALE: Accredited children's camp with successful record; long time ownership by principals. Features: safe, sandy beach on south Mazinaw Lake, numerous buildings, considerable acreage joining 200,000 acres of Crown land with numerous rivers, trails, campsites. Central to Ottawa, Toronto. Contact Lauri Kangas, Campers Realty Limited. 416-259-1121, Toll Free: 1-888-259-1121; email: lkangas@trebnet.com.

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