

# GETTING INVOLVED

## CALLING ALL ALUMNI!!

The Holiday Home Camp Alumni Association Inc. was created during the Holiday Home Camp 100th celebration in 1987 by campers and staff that had attended camp in previous years. The purpose was to bring all of the campers, staff and board members together at HHC to share once again that special comradery that is ever abundant when being at camp. The second objective was to assist HHC with it's special mission of working with children by lending a helping hand during weekends of sprucing up camp or assisting with mailing such as this news letter and other projects that aid our mission. We have also raised funding for projects or for materials for repairs to date totaling over a \$100,000. We have many exciting things on the horizon and are always looking to connect with new Alumni members!

Contact us to reconnect and once again be part of the Holiday Home Camp family. Visit the alumni website at Holiday Home Camp Alumni Association and like us on Facebook.

Email for additional information [info@HHCAlumni.org](mailto:info@HHCAlumni.org)



Lake Geneva Fresh Air Association  
PO Box 10, Williams Bay, WI 53191

### Board of Directors

Molly Keller...*President*  
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Interested in serving on the LGFAA Board or helping on a special projects committee? Contact us!

[Brad@holidayhomecamp.org](mailto:Brad@holidayhomecamp.org)

Please visit our online wish list at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)

Search wish list section for "Holiday Home Camp"

It's as easy as shop, click, donate!

Choose your donated item from our list of preselected needs.

All purchases will be shipped directly to HHC with a letter from you. programs, with a donation letter from you.



## -- CHICAGO ADVISORY COUNCIL --

Serving Children is a tough job. Serving children that need us the most is a tougher job. For 126 years LGFAA has been serving children in the Chicagoland area, but we didn't do it alone. It is with the support of our volunteers, donors, and partners that allow us to strengthen our ability to serve our mission and children.

The Lake Geneva Fresh Air Association is expanding its Board of Directors Committees to include a regional Advisory Council for Chicago. This council would advise on local programs, act as liaisons to local agencies, and aid in expanding our relationships in the Chicago Area.

To get involved contact Brad at 262-245-5161

December - 6

### Winter Events



#### LAKE HOUSE TOUR

Join us for a tour of some of the most elegant homes in the area, brilliantly decorated for the holidays. Enjoy refreshments at Holiday Home Camp!

December - 7



#### FOUNDERS DINNER

Enjoy an exclusive diner at Holiday Home Camps original 126 year old Founders Hall building! This event celebrates our mission and recognizes the generosity of our loyal supporters.

Visit our website [www.HolidayHomeCamp.org](http://www.HolidayHomeCamp.org) or call 262-245-5161 for event tickets and details



# The Waterfront

FALL 2014

## A Letter From The President

"Breathing is important. If you aren't breathing, you're not going to be doing anything else either."  
- Anonymous

And right now I am panting, trying to catch my breath after summer sprinted past faster than I can ever remember! While I can't believe that our 2014 camp season has come to a close, I am more inspired than ever by the 572 children (a 15% + increase over 2013!) who took advantage of each moment their outdoor fresh air experience offered them, by the talented staff who provided the safe, nurturing and fun environment that allowed those children to break out of the confines of their home lives, and by you, our generous supporters, who continue to improve hundreds of lives by making these experiences a reality each year!

The incredible generosity from several donors, volunteers and the strong leadership of our Executive Director, Brad Cripe, and our Associate Directors, Jessica Brenner and "Big Dog" (Gary Cwidak) has allowed for many new exciting activities at camp. One Eagle Scout project completed by Kendall Elfstrom, provided a new Super Slide down our wooded hillside, while a high quality used ski boat acquired with the valued assistance of Gage Marine and a new RAVE raft graciously donated by The Stearns Family to replace our damaged one, allowed for hours of tubing and lake fun for our campers. Our forest restoration project being continued by Ron Martin and his team at Midwest Prairies through the ongoing support of the Lake Geneva Garden Club grant, is opening up access to areas of our property that have been overgrown with buckthorn and other invasive plants and shrubs. These "new" open spaces are not only healthier for our mature trees and native plants, but even healthier for the children we serve who are getting to hike on new nature trails with their cabin mates and counselors and challenge themselves on new low-ropes course elements that have

been implemented by the OWLS team. Collectively, our "important breathing" has kept us doing a lot!

Breathing is so basic and automatic that we forget about it – and we forget that breathing FRESH AIR, rich in oxygen, is vital to maintaining a strong, healthy mind and body. We take this known fact for granted – air is free and accessible right? And all air has oxygen right? So why would anyone think to give others the gift of fresh air?

Food Banks, medical research and fresh water projects are efforts that many people give their time and resources to support – wanting to ensure that those who are less fortunate are fed and have access to healthcare and good drinking water. Yet we often overlook one of the most important necessities of life – fresh air!

Stale, recycled indoor-air and polluted, congested urban air contain fewer oxygen molecules than outside air that is circulated by growing trees and plants (the very organisms that produce oxygen!). Lower air quality requires the body to work harder to obtain the oxygen it needs for proper cell function which means decreased mental capacity, poorer circulation, poorer digestion and overall dampened mood.

For many disadvantaged children in stressed, urban environments, good fresh air is neither free nor accessible. The high violent crime rate in the Chicago neighborhoods of the many children we serve has more and more of them staying indoors, breathing the stale air of cramped apartments and overcrowded schools. That poor air quality directly impacts their health, their spirit and their motivation to be productive students and citizens in their communities.

The Founders of the Lake Geneva Fresh Air Association weren't Rocket Scientists (there weren't any rockets back then!), they

simply recognized that providing THE most basic element of fresh air (which was in high demand in the polluted cities of the Industrial Revolution) would benefit the bodies and spirits of the disadvantaged urban youth. By providing higher quality air to children who need it, in a place that is safe, nurturing and empowering, Holiday Home Camp improves lives. It's that simple.

In our 127<sup>th</sup> year, we have a renewed, re-invigorated purpose to provide the essential gift of pure fresh air to those disadvantaged children whose lives can be changed by it. We don't just believe that breathing the fresh air of Geneva Lake during an inspiring outdoor camp experience improves their lives, we KNOW it does.

If you have given the gift of fresh air already this year to a Holiday Home Camp child – we send our immense thanks! Your commitment to our mission and the example you demonstrate by donating your time, talent and generous dollars toward fresh air experiences is so greatly appreciated! And if you haven't yet given this year or are new to the Lake Geneva Fresh Air community, will you please consider making a gift of an inspiring, fresh air camp experience? Together we can continue to improve the lives of the disadvantaged youth in our extended community. And if we all continue to inhale the inspiration that Holiday Home Camp provides, just think of what we can do and accomplish!

Onward and Upward! Keep Breathing!



Molly Keller  
September, 2014

LAKE GENEVA FRESH AIR ASSOCIATION  
HOLIDAY HOME CAMP • OWLS LEADERSHIP

# FIRE & ICE GALA

Guests of this year's Fire & Ice Gala were again treated to a spectacular setting on the shores of Geneva Lake under a beautiful Sperry Tent at Lake Geneva Yacht Club. In addition, the evening of the Gala on Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup> marked the Summer Solstice as cocktails and hors d'oeuvres were served lakeside and guests enjoyed the warm summer breezes. A delicious sit down dinner presented by Courtyard Caterers was then enjoyed as everyone was able to take in the views from inside the gorgeous tent.



Fire Dancers brought everyone to the edge of their seats as a prelude to our Adopt-A-Camper appeal in which we presented a short documentary featuring our very own

ELITE, Devon. In the documentary Devon opened the door for all of us in order to get just a glimpse of the street he lives on and the school he attends; as he talked about and shared what life was like for him away from camp, and the obstacles that he faces in his home environment on a daily basis. Devon is an inspiration to us all, and needless to say, our Adopt-A-Camper appeal raised over \$80,000 that evening!!

After dinner and our Live program, the mood was quite festive as the band, Platinum, kicked off and as the lakeside 'ice bar' took on a very swanky vibe that was enjoyed by all! Additionally, guests were given the opportunity to release Wish Lanterns into the beautiful starlit sky!

Of course all of this would not be possible without the extreme generosity of this year's Corporate Sponsors: MacLean Fogg, Engerman Contract-

ing, Dalco Metals, Inc., Miniature Precision Components (MPC), China West Jewelers, Majic Enterprises, and Ideal Impressions.

We wish to thank all of you who attended and/or contributed to our Fire & Ice Gala to make it the success that it was! We look forward to celebrating with everyone again in 2015! Work has already begun to make it another great event!

-Liz Ring



## Holiday Home Summer Camp



As the summer comes to a close, one cannot help but reflect on all the successes Holiday Home Camp had over summer. HHC and its 35 seasonal staff members continued to help children discover their inner confidence by challenging them to try new things. We had many campers celebrate their first bull's eye at archery, swimming on their own for the first time, hooking their first worm in fishing, sleeping under the stars for the first time and countless other exciting new experiences. With camper numbers continuing to rise, we were able to provide these 'first time' successes to over 500 campers. We served more campers in 2014 than we have in the past 5 years.



Summer 2014 continued with a schedule where campers were able to select which activities they participated in. This allowed for a personalized camp experience. Thanks to Gage

Marine, we were able to purchase a new boat which gave hundreds of unforgettable boat rides and tubing experiences. HHC also welcomed a total of 5 international staff from Ireland, Scotland and England, adding to the camper experience. Continuing with tradition, we used timeless camp activities such as: swimming, archery, crafts, team-building, games, songs, campfires, and more as learning and self-confidence building opportunities for every camper.

As summer turns to fall, Holiday Home will continue to work with the ELITE Teens throughout the school year. After welcoming 20 new teens, there are currently 36 teens who make up the ELITE program. We look forward to community service opportunities, college visits, self-growth

and learning experiences throughout the year. The ELITE Teens enjoyed a week of camp over the summer, but are looking forward to working on their leadership skills and setting themselves apart from the traditional campers as leaders on camp.

It is amazing welcoming campers to a place where they know they do not have to be anyone except themselves. Campers also know when they come to camp they have a week where they are safe and able to be a kid, not matter what age they are. As 2014 concludes, we look onward to another great summer in 2015!

-Jessica Brenner



# Outdoor Wisconsin Leadership School



Newsletter updates from OWLS; what's newsworthy? What's so important we need to share it with all our constituents?

Everything! Is the simple answer. We'd like to shout about the increase in number of groups, all the great groups we work with, all the wonderful participants we engage with, all the successful programs we implement, and all the lives we affect positively! There isn't enough space in the newsletter for all our success stories, so we'll focus on three points that are most important to OWLS: professionalism, great relationships, and work that touches our heart.

In addition to working with the camp kids, there are four programs that provide us as rewarding an experience as we design for them. There are more, but these are the most recent warm fuzzies.

**Camp care-** is a bereavement group who run a summer camp at HHC for children affected by loss. We enjoy working with their dedicated staff as much as the campers to provide a place of security and caring.

**UCAN-** is a group home for Illinois children without foster placement. The summer camp and adventure education OWLS provides is the highlight of their summer, and we all laugh, giggle, share, learn, and work hard at creating a better community. The picture of Gus (my black lab) giving a high 5 just before he boarded the bus says it all- thank you UCAN.

**MCFL-** a summer camp for developmentally different young - adults. No matter how hard physically it is for us to gear them up, lift them up the ropes, rescue them, rig special climbing systems, it's worth it to hear Brian proclaiming "I'm doing it" as he rises out of his wheelchair and climbs the Ewok walk.

**Cook County Probation department-** Now, one might think working with adjudicated adolescents, in a court ordered probation program would be scary. But these young gentleman prove us wrong every year. They work hard in their program to earn the right to come to HHC and OWLS. And they work hard at the challenges we throw at them to help them learn to persevere. It's a highlight of their program for them, and an

honor for OWLS to be an impact in their lives. And it's not always sunshine and rose water for OWLS (maybe the truth is newsworthy?). This is where the professionalism and great relationships create growth.

Last season, after working hard on the summer season, we moved directly into our hectic season. We had less than rewarding feedback from a long-term client group. It was actually one of the hardest letters I've had to read in my career. We accepted the challenge again for 2014. The summer camp staff cleaned camp for 3 days- the best the grounds have ever looked. The OWLS adjunct staff stepped in to implement a great program so OWLS full-timers could focus on the tech work at high ropes and exceed our high professional standards. This years' outcome: "Wow! Thank you..... I'm blown away. You run a first-class operation, sir. I am honored to be able to work with you."

It doesn't take a breaking news bulletin to understand that OWLS, HHC, and LGFAA work from the heart- with professionalism and caring to create great relationships. Just participate - you'll know!

*What might be newsworthy* is the fact that OWLS may not be able to continue the quality programming we strive for. **Our ropes course and climbing activities have to be moved.** Our lease agreement with George Williams College has not been renewed and we have to relocate all OWLS adventure activities to camp property. We need help. We are writing grants, booking additional groups to increase income, and are recruiting donations. But we have a long way to go to meet the expense. Our ropes course, climbing tower, and low ropes are crucial to successful programming. Please visit our crowd funding site and help us continue to positively affect our communities.

-Big Dog (Gary)

Find out more at:

[www.GoFundMe.com/saveowls](http://www.GoFundMe.com/saveowls)



## Notes From: Brad Cripe -Executive Director

I would like to start by saying THANK YOU. Thank you to our supporters, partners, donors, board members, and staff! During the first 9 months of my time with the Lake Geneva Fresh Air Association, I have witnessed some truly amazing work being accomplished that made such a difference in the lives of the kids we serve, that it would melt your heart.

The LGFAA, through the Holiday Home Camp and OWLS programs gives fresh air opportunities to disadvantaged youth, along with leadership and team building skills to youth and adults of all ages. This is not only our mission, but the heart and soul of why we create the opportunities for our participants that we do.

With a clear vision, strong leadership, and hard work, 2014 has already proven to be a year of growth and positive change. Please join us in making 2015 even better! Get involved with one of our committees, be a host family, attend one of our camp work days, or help us in making our upcoming capital campaign successful. It is with our ever growing network of supporters and volunteers that we can continue bringing the Fresh Air to so many kids. THANK YOU!