

# Alumni Notes

December 2006

Holiday greetings to you all from Camp! As we write, there is a bit of rain throughout the camp and of course most of the trees are without leaves. A different look than mid summer. This coming weekend, we will have our summer camp reunion, expecting to see many staff and campers return for a great weekend of festivities!

We've had another great year at camp with many excited campers and groups attending. We had our biggest enrollment year in the last 25 years. We're not sure what Camp Director Frank Wilcox's largest attendance years were, but we're guessing he still holds the record! New programs have been added and old program were modified. If you want to see the complete brochure, please visit [www.ymcacampwillson.org](http://www.ymcacampwillson.org).

We are in the final stages of our 2007 brochure and hope to have it online before the end of the year. If you know of any youth between the ages of 7 -17 who would like to attend camp, give us a call. We are also looking for anyone 19 and older who would make great staff.

Our school and conference camping groups have been keeping us busy during the school year. Kori Keck heads up our OE program. She and her staff of 10 do a great job with the kids. They have spent the last several years revising curriculum to better reflect Ohio standards and just beefing up the overall program. Through Outdoor Education, over 5,000 students attend Camp Willson each school year! Doug Wetsch keeps up with our weekend retreats groups. If you are part of a school or group that might be interested in coming out, please give us a call!

## Staff news of interest:

- Congratulations to Sara (Roberts) Brinkman (1999-2000) on the birth of her second daughter.
- Kim (Konopka) Holter (early 90's) on the birth of her second daughter
- Chris "Fos"(96-00) & Michelle Gates Fosnaugh(99-00) on the birth of their second daughter
- Kairat Sadvakassov from Kazakhstan stopped in Labor Day weekend for a visit
- Cindy Hietter, Kim Knopka Holter and Stacey Simonyi all attend the fall Women's Weekend.
- Travis Arnold, after a tour in Iraq is now stationed in Arizona, patrolling the border.
- Rob Day (Equestrian & Fishing Volunteer) is in the Air Force and stationed in Arkansas
- Celeste & Mark Battig are working with YMCA Camp Crosley in Indiana.
- Craig Barr is now working with the Ohio Dept of Natural Resources as a wildlife officer.
- Mike Costlow will be joining us in January as our new Associate Program Director to assist both our summer camp and Conference/Retreats Depts. This past summer, Mike worked with former summer camper & staffer Erik Beach-Rehner in California.
- Caroline Beachy returned to camp this past summer as a trip leader for our Rides & Thrills (Amusement Park Trip Camp).
- Summer Staffer & Malaysian Amran Ariff Ahmad was given the Outstanding Service to Youth Award at the end of summer camp. Massimino "Max" Caponeri from Rome Italy was our Tracy Rhea Giving Tree Award Winner.
- Miranda Carpenter (1997 & '98) returned to Willson this summer as a Ranch Counselor.
- Zac Early '93-99 was married in 2005 and is living/teaching in Missouri
- Equestrian Director, Beth Powers, was awarded the Camp Horsemanship Association National Volunteer of the Year Award at their annual conference in Colorado in October.
- Jeff Paquin joined us for Men's Camp in August.
- Bob Hightshoe (1938-42 camper, bugler and staff member stopped in and toured camp, sharing many of his wonderful memories of camp.
- Mark Henton is working at High Adventure in England

- Former Summer Camp Director Steve Easley is now working for Core Integrated Technologies, Inc in Columbus.
- Special Thanks to Mallory Wengatz, camper & staff '05 & '06 for raising funds for camper scholarships as her Upper Arlington High School Sr. Project.
- Todd McSwan ('93 -'94) is living in Australia with his wife and 2 kids (ages 2 & 4). He is the owner/President of a Financial Planning/Strategic Consulting business.
- Archie the pig ('91-06), finally passed away this year after many years of camp service.
- Former staff with kids at Camp this past summer:
  - Karri & Craig Barr-son Jarrett
  - Marty Beck-son Jarrett
  - Jeff & Maggie Harriman-daughter Liz
  - Diane Wagner Hooper (early 1980's)-daughter Kylee
  - Jamie Wagner Armstrong (late 70's/early 80's)-daughter Riley
  - Sarah Ward, daughter of Office Manager Teresa Ward Bond (1980's)-son Austin
  - Tracey Danner-Odenwelder-daughter Charli
  - Therese Snively (1999-2004)-daughter Rachel
  - Steve Davis (1980's)-daughters Samantha & Jessica
  - Alicia Rhea (1970's)-son Rashad
  - Michelle Rhea-daughter Mackenzie
  - Pam Rhea Browning-daughter Talore
- (We know there were more...but this was a quick brainstorm...)
- Former Staff with kids on staff:
  - Diane Wagner Hooper (early 1980's)-son Ryan
- Summer 2006 staff who were campers at Willson: Amanda Thomas, Leah Miller, Cindy Hietter, Danika Alexander, Adam Fitzsimmons, Dezaray Reed, Becky Schleich, Rob Coalter, Scott Martin, Tricia Lines, Katie Pace, Andrea Agin, Parker Quincell, Ryan Hooper, Erin Delgrosso, Mallory Wengatz, Aaron Leadingham
- Current Outdoor Education Staff: Jay King, Heather Wood, Rob Coalter, Andy Hauman, Matt Herrmann, Annie Roeth, Lynda Haessler, Laura LeFebvre, Corey Wallace, Kimm Fisher, Robin Zitter

### **New Summer Cabins, Ranch Improvements & Staff Housing**

Thanks to grants from the Honda Foundation, Columbus Foundation, the Sutphen Family, Harry C Moores Foundation and the Columbus Foundation, we have completed Phase 1: Replacing all 13 Summer Cabins. These cabins are insulated, with ceiling fans (and about 10 degrees cooler) and Cabins 10-13 are equipped with heat (great classrooms for Outdoor Education). They are also more spacious and have places (cubby holes) for the kid's belongings. In keeping with the tradition of the original 12 or 13 cabins (depending on when you were at Willson), the cabins are in the same location and look very similar to the former design, but now with porches.

Phase 2 & 3 will include the construction of a new barn at the Ranch and staff housing. If interested in contributing to this campaign, please give us a call!

### **Camp Improvements**

It's been another busy year at Willson. Projects included the final stage of the remodeling of the winter shower house. This new shower house has tile floors, new stall partitions, tankless water heater for unlimited hot water and a fantastic concrete pad outside the shower house to give more sitting space! The only thing that hasn't changed is the 5 minute showers.

The last 6 summer cabins were completed in March. The grass even grew in before summer camp began. Steve Davis generously donated and installed new signs for each of the cabins, as well as for the front of the dining hall.

A new hearth was added to the dining hall fireplace, making it easier for indoor cookouts and campfires.

Through the work of the Hilltop Y's Men (a Columbus YMCA Service Club), the interior of the Birdhouse (formerly called the Arts & Crafts Building) has been remodeled. We have combined the 4 closets into 2 closets, cleaning up the building.

With the addition of a new Web Designer at our Columbus YMCA office, the website was redesigned and unveiled in February. Another part of this redesign was the addition of online registration for camp. Special thanks to volunteer Stuart Weinberg who managed our website since it's inception. His leadership was instrumental in getting the Willson word out to the public!

If you haven't noticed, we have officially changed our name back to Camp Willson from Willson Outdoor Center. This has been a gradual phase in. One of the last parts of the conversion has been changing our web address to [www.ymcacampwillson.org](http://www.ymcacampwillson.org) If you have our website bookmarked, please make the change. Staff e-mail addresses will be changed shortly as well to match.

In October, we replaced the entrance sign to camp, using the new logo shown at the top of the page. (funny how it looks very similar to the design from the 70's/early 80's!)

We're currently working to add an office behind the current maintenance/equestrian office in the dining hall. The Outdoor Education office will move to the current maintenance/equestrian office. The maintenance/Equestrian office will move to the new office behind the OE office.

### **Keeping you updated**

We had our last alumni gathering for the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Willson. Shortly after that, we had a major "snafu" with our alumni database (We still don't want to talk about it) and needed to start over. If you are connected with any former staff, please share their name, address, phone and email addresses with us. Please do not assume we have their information! We are starting over!

2008 marks our 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary. If you are interested in being on the planning committee for this celebration, please give Anne a call!

As we prepare for the birth of Christ and the salvation He brings each of us, we wish you a blessed and healthy season to carry you throughout the year.

### **The Camp Willson Staff**

Anne Brienza, Executive Director, [director@ymcawillson.org](mailto:director@ymcawillson.org)  
Maggie Haverfield, Summer Camp Director, [summercamp@ymcawillson.org](mailto:summercamp@ymcawillson.org)  
Doug Wetsch, Groups & Conference Director, [conference@ymcawillson.org](mailto:conference@ymcawillson.org)  
Kori Keck, Outdoor Education Director, [outdooreducation@ymcawillson.org](mailto:outdooreducation@ymcawillson.org)  
Beth Powers, Equestrian Director, [equestrian@ymcawillson.org](mailto:equestrian@ymcawillson.org)  
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