



Soup Strainer

2011
YMCA Camp Kitchikewana



Boathouse, circa 1950

Greetings YMCA Camp Kitchikewana Alumni,

It has certainly been a cold and long winter, but it is now time to head up to the island for another great camping season. I am happy to report that registration is full for this summer. This winter we moved to online registration and it was the fastest registration we have seen in the camp's 93 year history! Our spring and fall seasons are also filling up quite nicely with many school groups and weekend events. Last fall, we launched a brand new program featuring canoe trip and hiking programs for high school students. It was a great success; we had groups on site from Labour Day until Thanksgiving weekend. In 2010, we had a very successful summer season receiving an overall satisfaction score of 9.3 out of 10. A big thank you to the 2010 summer staff team for making it such a successful summer. The staff team for 2011 is now fully hired, and we have a very enthusiastic group of youth who are eager to lead the way this summer at Kitchi.

I am pleased to announce that Andrea Pepe is our new full-time Assistant Camp Director. Andrea comes from an extensive background in YMCA camping and outdoor education. Andrea

will manage our spring and fall seasons at camp and will support our summer camp.

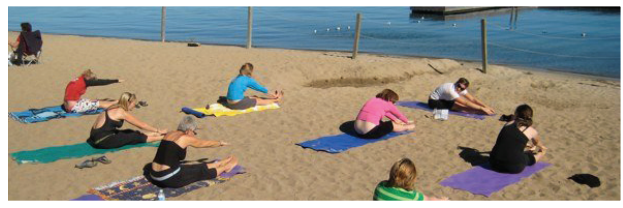
We have had a very successful year for raising funds towards the YMCA Camp Kitchikewana Strong Kids Campaign which helps support children who cannot afford the full price to attend camp. Thank you to fellow Alumni Jennie Meeker and Brenda French who were the Co-Chairs of our campaign this year. Our annual campaign wraps up at the end of June, so there is still time to donate and help change a child's life forever! Please contact the camp office if you are interested in donating or visit us online at www.strongkids.ca

You will notice in this edition of the Soup Strainer that there are a number of upcoming events this season at Kitchi. I hope to see you on Kitchi sands!

The above picture was taken from inside the old Boat House. This picture was found in the Georgian Bay Islands National Park Archives. Have a wonderful spring.

Cam Norman,
Director YMCA Camp Kitchikewana

2011 Upcoming Events



- Senior Women on the Move: Sept 6-9
- Women's Wellness Weekend: Sept 16-18
- Fall Alumni and Family Weekend: Sept 30-Oct 2

Please contact camp_kitchikewana@ymca.ca or 705.325.2253 to register.

Visit www.ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca for more information.

YMCA Camp Kitchikewana Capital Campaign Update

One year into our campaign we have raised 40% of our goal of \$350,000. These funds will go towards the rejuvenation of the Dining Hall and kitchen/maintenance facilities, as well as the purchase of sailboats. Thank you to Campaign Chair, Steve Nicholson and his campaign team for leading us towards our goal, as well as to all of you who have made donations towards the campaign.

As former YMCA Camp Kitchikewana campers and staff, we all know the importance of the "Kitchi" experience. More than learning to sail, swim and paddle, we learned the value of friendship, how to be independent, and most importantly, had fun. Together, we can ensure that YMCA Camp Kitchikewana is around for generations to come. To make a gift, please contact brian_shelley@ymca.ca or go to www.ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca and click on "GIVE: find out how you can help make a difference".

YMCA Camp Kitchikewana Strong Kids Campaign 2011

This year our goal is to raise \$25,000 to help send kids to camp. Last year the campaign helped send over 55 kids to camp, and this year we are hoping to send 65 kids. The following are some fantastic YMCA Strong Kids Stories:



In this photo: Margo (Hamilton) Kushner; Lissa (Daniel) Dwyer; Jennie (Hughes) Meeker; Bidy (Sheila) Barclay; Tina (Rankin) Middlebrook; Sue (Auld) Diefenbaker

Brenda's Story:

The camp boat pulls up to the dock on Beausoleil Island, and right away you get that anxious feeling as you return. Whether it is to stay or just visit, those of us who have had the privilege know the feeling. Then you walk up the ramp to the dining hall, and you once again experience that feeling of promise and energy at the same time. It is like the thoughts and memories of camp fill your "gas tank" once again.

My name is Brenda French, (Frenchie), and I had the good fortune to spend 11 summers at Camp Kitchikewana. My roles varied from camper, to counsellor, to senior staff. I am currently involved with the alumni (Friends of Kitchi), and have two sons that will be on staff this summer. For me, Camp Kitchikewana is a very special place where all people are equal. It does not matter where you live, what type of car your family had, or where you attended school. We all had our speedo bathing suit, Kitchi t-shirt, and cut off blue jean shorts, and that was all that really mattered.

We were all encouraged to try new things. When we stepped out of our comfort zone in singing, sailing, drama, or swimming, the staff and fellow campers cheered you on. At the close of each

summer, I returned home a different person. I was more confident in who I was, and what I could offer.

As my camp role grew into being a counsellor and staff member, I could see these changes in my campers. It was not about being the "best", it was about being the "best that you could be", and they too were different as they left the island on the last day of camp. As we all know, there are many charities we can choose from these days. YMCA Strong Kids is special to me as I believe that they are our future. Can you imagine being on the YMCA Strong Kids team and offering a child an experience of a lifetime?

I have donated to the campaign, and am the Co-chair of YMCA Camp Kitchikewana Strong Kids Campaign with my good friend Jenn Meeker. Our goal is \$25,000, and we hope to sponsor 65 children this summer. Any of you who have experienced camp life will know how meaningful it is, and I thank you in advance for being a part of YMCA Strong Kids. Let us be the best that we can be.

Brenda French (Kitchi '65 to '75)

Jennie's Story:

From my Kitchi life, I would be known as Jennie Hughes, although more recently, I would be known as Jenn Meeker. One could say that I am one and the same person, but in fact, that is really not the case.

In 1968, I went to Camp Kitchikewana for the first time. I was excited to be going. It was going to be an adventure – of that I was certain. But I never could have predicted the impact Kitchi would have on my life – beyond age 8. Over the next 10 years, I lived and breathed camp as a camper, counsellor and member of senior staff for the month of August, and yearned for it the other 11. The physical site of Kitchi is beautiful but it is the spirit of the camp that has enriched me. At Kitchi I learned how to swim, how to canoe and how to sail. But I also learned valuable life skills - team work, acceptance of others and differences of opinion, kindness, patience and tolerance. I also made many, truly, truly wonderful friends – the kind of friends you can rely upon unconditionally for support. Friends, who can rely on me for that same support. And wonderful friends to celebrate with

in times of joy. However, I also learned that I was very fortunate to be given the opportunity to go to camp.

And it is this opportunity that I would like you to consider helping me provide for others. As Co-chair with Brenda French of the YMCA Camp Kitchikewana Strong Kids Campaign, and with the help of alumni, friends of Kitchi, and families of current Kitchi campers, we are aiming, this summer, to provide assistance for 65 campers who otherwise would not have this opportunity for the growth and friendships Kitchi has to offer. Our goal is to raise \$25,000 toward these efforts, and any assistance in helping us reach these goals is truly, greatly appreciated. Please join me in supporting these efforts.

In the 'spirit of Kitchi',
Many thanks,

Jennie Hughes-Meeker (Kitchi '68-78)

A Camper Parent's Story:

"We are simply delighted with the young man who has come home to us after two weeks at Kitchi with you and your outstanding staff. He has begun to share a few tales with us today, and I know there is a lot more to come. He has grown tremendously - he is calm and confident, he feels VERY proud of overcoming his vertigo to jump that crazy tower, he was delighted to find a friend in James, he is immensely proud of having jogged out to the Lighthouse, and he intends to return next year! He is healthy and confident and deeply calm, and I can tell that he has been challenged to grow, and has embraced that opportunity and made the most of it.

We would not have been able to send John to Kitchi without your awesome support - both financially and emotionally. As you know, this kid is developing slightly differently than some of his peers - but he is not going to let THAT hold him back. We are incredibly proud of him, and equally thankful to all of you, for the life-changing experience he has had at Kitchi this summer. He couldn't have had this chance without the Strong Kids Campaign!"

How to donate to the YMCA Strong Kids Campaign:

Online: Please visit www.strongkids.ca click on "find a storyteller" select "Midland" then enter Cam Norman

Phone: Please call 705 726 6421 x 445 to make a donation over the phone

Mail: Cheques can be mailed to YMCA Camp Kitchikewana, 22 Grove St West, Barrie ON, L4N 1M7

Second Annual YMCA Camp Kitchikewana Alumni Pub Night

On April 1, 2011, we had our Second Annual Alumni Pub Night held once again at the Watermark Irish Pub in Toronto. It was a great turnout with over 50 alumni in attendance. Here are some pictures from the event:

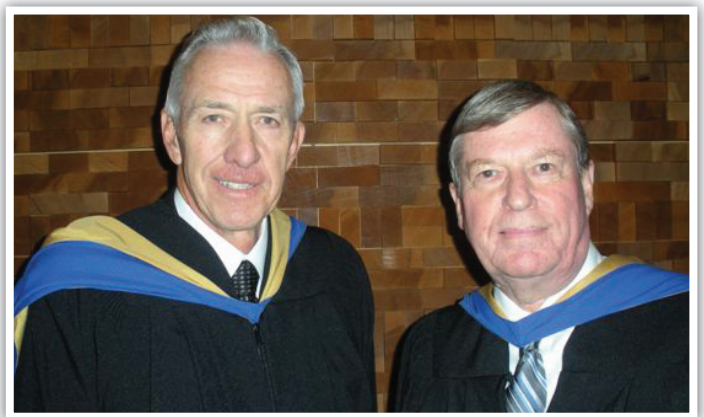


In this photo: Joe Vetro, Jennie Meeker, Tina Middlebrook, Anna MacQuarrie, Amy White, Anne Coleman, Joey Stasko, Perry Grasic, Greg MacQuarrie

Kitchi Connections: Former Kitchi Campers Meet After 53 Years

Bill Bryant ('49-'58) and Rick Nuttall ('50-'57) met in Vancouver in October, having last seen each other at camp in the summer of 1957. That summer Bill was Director of Sailing and Boating and Rick was Director of Canoe Trips, and they both lived in the old Boathouse. During their years at Kitchi, they were in the same cabin together for several years and became Counselors together.

Both Bill and Rick are semi-retired GP's, and were in Vancouver at the annual Forum of the College of Family Physicians of Canada, where they were invested as Life Members of the College. As the two were gowning up before the ceremony, they spotted each other and instantly picked up where they had left off 53 years previously. Bill lives in Waterloo, and Rick lives in Victoria.



In this photo: Bill Bryant and Rick Nuttall

Kitchi Alumni Advisory Committee

In the fall of 2010 a new YMCA Camp Kitchikewana Alumni Advisory Committee was formed. A special thank you to these alumni volunteers:

Committee Chair: Brad West
Gary Bard
Sue Diefenbaker
Jennie Meeker
Brenda French

Matt Ladner
Steve Nicholson
Dave Wismer
Brian Shelley (staff)
Cam Norman (staff)

New YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka CEO

The Board is pleased to announce the appointment of Rob Armstrong as the new CEO of the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka.

Rob brings 30+ years of YMCA experience to this position; 16 years as a CEO and more recently as the Senior Vice President of YMCA Ontario. Over the last 5 years, his strategic vision has helped create significant changes in the culture of the Ontario MRC resulting in increased association capacity and collaboration, as well as a greater emphasis on strategic initiatives that support all Ontario associations. The Board feels very confident that Rob's skills and experience can lead us to the completion of our current strategic plan, as well as help create a new vision for the future of the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka.

Rob and his family are excited about this opportunity and hope to be moving to the area over the summer. Please join us in welcoming Rob to the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka where he will begin this new chapter in his career May 27th, 2011.



Midland-Penetanguishene Builders' Association Volunteer Build

Once again the Midland-Pentanguishene Builders' Association, headed up by former Camp Director Austin Matthews, volunteered their time this past fall to help build our brand new out-tripping shed. Here are some pictures from the build.

Thank you for your support!





In this photo: Joe Vetro (center) and fellow alumni

2010 Fall Alumni and Family Weekend

This past fall we had a fantastic time at the Fall Alumni Weekend. Special thanks to Joe Vetro and his children, Harry and Katie who provided us with an incredible concert on the Saturday night. Many other alumni present had a chance to hop on stage and jam. Joe Vetro and his band are returning this fall to camp for the

Alumni Weekend September 30-October 2, 2011. To register, please contact the camp office at 705 325 2253 or camp_kitchikewana@ymca.ca or go to www.ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca for more information.

Austin Matthews Leadership Award

In honour of Austin Matthews and all that he has done for Camp Kitchi and the Midland Community, the Midland Penetanguishene Builders' Association started the Austin Matthews Leadership Award, which will annually support youth to attend the Camp Kitchikewana Leadership Program with a \$1000 scholarship.

Congratulations to Kevin Cook who was the first recipient of the award. Kevin is attending the Leadership 2 program at Kitchi this summer. Each year, leadership campers living in the Midland-Penetanguishene region can apply for the scholarship. Applicants must demonstrate leadership within their school, community and home environment and strive to live by the five YMCA Values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility and Inclusiveness.



In this photo: Kevin Cook, Austin Matthews and Cam Norman

YMCA Camp Kitchikewana Contact Information

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