



**YMCA of
Simcoe/Muskoka**
Camp Kitchikewana



2021 SOUP STRAINER

YMCA CAMP KITCHIKEWANA

DIRECTOR UPDATE

Hilary Neeb - Acting Director, Camp Kitchikewana

I have been at Camp Kitchikewana working since the beginning of June and wow, I have fallen in love so quickly. The Staff this summer, although it is not the summer we all dreamt about at night, are fully invested in the continued shared love of Camp. I have been pleasantly blown away by the level of programs we have been able to run since opening up as a community. The site looks great, although being closed down for two months had its challenges! It is incredible how fast nature takes over once we are removed, which is another reason why I am in love with this Island. I am proud to be the Acting Director this summer and I am thankful for the staff, alumni, and campers who have all helped Camp Kitchikewana this summer. The campers laughing, singing, and dancing is what keeps Kitchikewana alive and thriving.



WHAT'S GOING ON?



By Rachael Bowman

This summer, the staff team at camp looks a little bit different. While the cabin rental team is hard at work providing a fun-filled summer for families, a second group of amazing folks have been honing their skills to be the best staff members possible next year. The Staff Development Program (or SDP) of 2021 has been running since July 12th and includes 16 awesome staff members. During our six-week work term, we have been functioning around five key pillars: Skill Development, Leadership Development, Stewardship, Community Engagement, and Work Experience.

In terms of skill development, we have completed courses including Canoeing Instructors, Lifesaving Instructors, and Wilderness Advanced First Aid. Our participation in these courses has prepared the team to be capable instructors next year.

Similarly, we have been training to be engaged, caring, and confident members of other staff teams. This includes the kitchen team, sites team, and cabin rentals team. We have also had sessions learning about topics such as integration, programming, and counselling.

The stewardship and community engagement projects we have been working on will both be explained further on, but they are both super exciting undertakings that will hopefully make next summer crazy awesome.

Everyone on the team had a blast this summer and we are more than excited for next summer when everyone can hopefully be up at camp!



MEET THE SDP

Thanks to the very generous support of the 100th Anniversary Endowment Fund and an anonymous donor, we are already preparing for next summer through this one of a kind Staff Development Program. The 16 staff, many of whom were originally hired as counsellors, completed the 6-week program at camp and were able to earn certifications, take part in training sessions, and prepare for summer 2022.



MADDIE BERMAN

Years at Camp: 12

Favourite Camp Activity: Trip



RACHAEL BOWMAN

Years at Camp: 10

Favourite Camp Activity: H & E



PATRICK NIGHTINGALE

Years at Camp: 12

Favourite Camp Activity: Bump



WILL SANDLOS

Years at Camp: 11

Favourite Camp Activity: Sailing



ANDREW MARTIN

Years at Camp: 12

Favourite Camp Activity: Tower Jumping



CHARLIE MOSSER

Years at Camp: 8

Favourite Camp Activity:
Driving the Gator



JAMES NIGHTINGALE

Years at Camp: 12

Favourite Camp Activity:
Being a lumberman during L & V



SULLY PEARSON

Years at Camp: 11

Favourite Camp Activity: Sailing

MEET THE SDP



SARAH MACDONALD

Years at Camp: 12

Favourite Camp Activity: L & V



SOPHIE SHARPE

Years at Camp: 11

Favourite Camp Activity: Trip



ANNA SOPHIA DEATON

Years at Camp: 1

Favourite Camp Activity: Triangle Swim



JACK SERRE

Years at Camp: 13

Favourite Camp Activity: L & V



TATUM MCLEAN

Years at Camp: 8

Favourite Camp Activity:
Stargazing on the rock



JOHN DICKSON

Years at Camp: 11

Favourite Camp Activity: All Camps



MCKENNA MUNRO

Years at Camp: 12

Favourite Camp Activity: Trip



GABBY SAMIS

Years at Camp: 9

Favourite Camp Activity: Canoeing



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

By James Nightingale

This summer, one of the big focuses of the Staff Development Program is the community engagement project. We really wanted to engage campers and try to bring a little bit of Kitchikewana culture to them. After some brainstorming, we realized that nothing is more iconic to camp than the Kitchikewana t-shirts campers receive at the end of a session. We sent out a form of interest, and each camper who filled it out is going to be mailed a shirt and a handwritten letter from one of us! Honey Harbour pickup is also available, so campers get to see some familiar camp faces and hopeful counsellors for the 2022 summer. The Kitchikewana staff team hopes campers can feel a little bit of camp spirit and excitement for next summer! The staff team wants campers to know we miss their enthusiasm and energy as we continue to prepare for an exciting revival of the traditional Kitchikewana summer we know and love!



OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES

By James Nightingale

The Kitchikewana staff team this summer has been getting involved and exploring the beautiful Beausoleil island more than ever! From canoe trips to Chimney Bay, bike rides to Christian Beach and hikes to the cemetery, the staff team have run many trips like this during time off to explore the island and have some fun. The SDP program was also involved with the parks team working at Cedar Springs. The group helped clean up the park from an invasive species of phragmites. Phragmites out-compete native species to the park and spread very quickly along the shore of beaches and shorelines. From August 4th to the 5th, the 16 SDP participants worked in the mornings around the park. We were able to clear up the waterfront all over the park. Getting involved with parks and giving back to the amazing national park we love was something we wanted to share with all of you!



STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

By Patrick Nightingale

This summer, the SDP team has been working hard on programming for next year. Our main focus has been revamping the sports equipment, to create the opportunity for loads of new activities next summer. We have decided to invest in new volleyball, badminton, spikeball, and soccer equipment. We have made sure all age groups will have a blast as we have planned many new cabin-choices and all-camp activities to put this equipment to use. As well, a wider variety of sports at camp will make Awesome Time that much more awesome! All the SDP staff can't wait to see the Kitchikewana smiles that are brought to campers faces from the new sports equipment.



ALL-CAMP

By Will Sandlos

This summer, one of the SDP projects is creating a new All-Camp weekend theme, and we decided on Astronauts versus Aliens! In the game, a team of astronauts and a team of aliens crash-land on a foreign planet. As natural enemies, the teams will spend all day competing for a safe exit off the planet. The evening program game for the day is called Space Tongs. In the crash, both teams' spaceships were completely destroyed, and the campers will compete to find hidden parts to repair the ships. However, there is also an army of martians that lives on the planet and wants to keep the parts for themselves. Campers must collect more spaceship parts than the other team without being tagged by the martians. The game ends with an awesome waterfront skit to find out the winner. The SDP team decided to play Space Tongs with the first session of Leadership. The game was a huge success and we can't wait to play Space Tongs and Astronauts versus Aliens with all of you next year!



STAFF DEBATE: BANANA POPSICLES VS ICE CREAM SANDWICHES

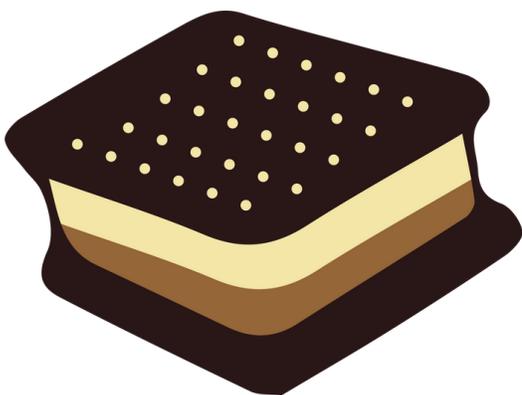


By Anna Sophia Deaton

As soon as the first food order of the year came through in June, the eons-old debate over the best Kitchikewana dessert was reignited. Kitchikewana staff are at odds. On one side, there are banana popsicles; joy in a cool classic yellow lolly, perfect for a hot July afternoon. On the other, an epic rival; the ice cream sandwiches, creamy cold goodness sandwiched between two chewy chocolate cookies, the perfect union of richness and freshness. The debate is a hot topic for many post-dinner conversations between staff.

For team banana pops, nothing beats the fresh sweet taste of artificial banana. According to Rachael Bowman, to whom banana popsicles are life, “Banana popsicles are superior to all other desserts. No further comment.” On the same side, Andrew Martin (resident vegan) argued that banana pops “Take into account people with dietary restrictions.” This is true, as anyone who doesn’t eat dairy or gluten has to pass on ice cream sandwiches.

The opposing side thinks that ice cream sandwiches are the best way to beat the heat. Emma Starratt, who iconically listed banana popsicles as an allergy before coming to camp, declared that, “Eating an ice cream sandwich is an adventure, eating a banana popsicle is like taking penicillin.” However, all parties were able to find common ground when they agreed that freezies are the best frozen treat served at Camp.



LEADERSHIP UPDATE



Nearly half of our original leadership campers registered for a modified 2-week leadership program in August. Campers limited exposures prior to coming to camp, completed a PCR test before arrival, and remained in cohorts with their cabin group in order to adhere to Ministry of Health COVID-19 guidelines for overnight camps.

By Mackenzie Frith

The leadership program has been a camp staple since its inception as the CIT program in the 1980s. The program is an essential component of a camper's transition from a camper to a community leader, and strives to prepare prospective camp counsellors to be the best role models they can be. It has successfully bonded past generations of leaders to one another and has inspired them to continue their time on Beausoleil, as we hope it will continue to do so in the years to come. Many campers look forward to their month-long participation in the leadership program as the highlight of their camp experience, which is why we were ecstatic to offer a condensed program this summer. Leadership 1.5, despite only being two weeks as opposed to the usual four, is jam packed with all of our Leadership essentials. Our leadership participants are thrown into crash courses in swimming, canoeing, and/or sailing, a three night out-trip, daily sessions, and lots of fun! Having campers back on site has reinvigorated the staff team and reminded us all why we choose to return to camp year after year. After seeing these two amazing groups of leaders, there is one thing all of us here at Kitchikewana know for sure: camp will be left in great hands in the years to come.



CABIN RENTALS UPDATE



Over nine weeks throughout the summer, we welcomed 146 families including 469 children, youth and adults to camp through our cabin rental program. Families had exclusive use of a cabin, ate meals under a tent outside the dining hall, explored Beausoleil Island, and spent time together at camp.

By Ailsa Haennel

With summer 2021 being the second summer in a row that COVID-19 has limited camp from running fully, it was important to get things up and running again in some capacity.

Though those of us on site missed regular camp programming this summer, we've been excited to welcome a whole new group of guests to the island! Throughout July and August, families have been visiting camp. Some are seasoned Kitchikewana campers, others are here for the first time, and some are returning after a long hiatus. During their stay on Kitchikewana sands, families have spent time swimming, tower jumping, boating, sailing, and exploring beautiful Beausoleil Island, to name just a few of the many camp activities. In addition, they have enjoyed yummy camp classics like chicken burgers and tacos and have connected with friends new and old. Overall, the cabin rentals experience has simulated camp as much as possible within the current public health guidelines, starting with the Kitchikewana Boat ride from Honey Harbour!

For many camp staff it has been invigorating to see the site come to life again with people running around, laughing, and enjoying camp the way it was meant to be. We've also enjoyed meeting alumni and new Kitchikewana friends to exchange stories from past summers while making new memories for the future!

While it will be a happy day when Kitchikewana is able to welcome traditional campers back to the Island, it has been amazing to meet this new group of families and show them what camp is all about!



THIS CHALLENGE IS ON... SURVIVOR: BEAUSOLEIL



By Matt “Jeff Probst” Martin

35 Days. 30 Kitchikewana Staff. 1 Survivor.

This summer, the whole staff team participated in a Survivor themed competition to test their ability to outwit, outplay, and outlast in a variety of evening challenges, engaging skills ranging from swimming to memory to stealth, all while searching for hidden advantages such as immunity idols, and building alliances to save themselves from being voted out.

On Day 1, three teams of ten were formed around an impressive fire at the rock – Moto Moto, formerly ‘The Blue Team’), Geronimo, and the Smokey Bandits. The latter team took the victory and won immunity in a challenge featuring Beausoleil Island anagrams. See if you can solve the one below:

YONMNOYHO EBA

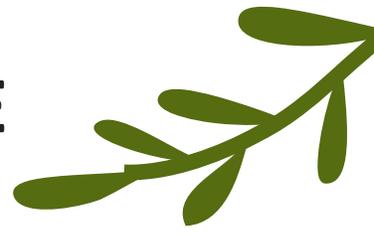
The two other teams were sent to a fire-making challenge where Geronimo failed to build a tall enough fire, and as a result, was forced to vote out one of their own teammates. Two other challenges took place (Bring me & Instant Insanity), three immunity idols were played, and ten players were eliminated before the three teams collapsed into two – Geronimo and Moto Moto.

While the new Moto Moto won the first immunity challenge, Geronimo stuck back during the Mission: Impossible challenge as they were able to accumulate the most points by moving items from around camp (such as mountain bikes, sailboats, inner tubes, and more!) to the main firepit in the dark of night while players who were previously voted out tried to catch them with flashlights. With both teams down to five, it was revealed that all players voted out had actually gone to the Edge of Extinction, where they could obtain advantages in two challenges to get back into the game. The first challenge – memorizing Oh Beausoleil located at the rock, and running back to the main docks to transcribe the song – was won by SDP members Tatum and Rachael, whom both lacked advantages and earned a spot off of the Edge. Buffs were then dropped, the two teams merged into the one Motonimo Team, and after two individual immunity challenges and team councils, seven players from the staff development program (Tatum, Rachael, Pat, Gabby, Will, Maddie, and Sarah) and zero from the senior staff team remained in the main game. With three days left of competition, one question remains - which of the remaining competitors or one of the 23 players from the Edge of Extinction will win the title of sole survivor?

CAMP DOGS



ENDOWMENT FUND UPDATE



By Brian Shelley

The YMCA Camp Kitchikewana 100th Anniversary Endowment Fund was founded to celebrate the Camp's 100th year of operation in 2019. The fund's purpose is to enhance the "camper experience", and all projects are approved by the camp's Alumni Advisory Committee to ensure that they are in the spirit of the fund.

Thank you!

Thank you to the hundreds of Friends of Camp Kitchikewana who have contributed to the 100th Anniversary Endowment Fund. To date, we have raised over \$1,200,000 in our efforts to build a strong and sustainable foundation to ensure that Camp Kitchikewana continues to serve children and youth for generations to come.

Thank you!

Thank you to our campaign volunteers under the leadership of Kitchikewana alumni, Matt Ladner and Sean Weaser. Without these volunteers making the calls, we would not have been able to connect with so many generous donors.

Thank you!

Thank you to our matching donor, Paul Lawrence, who has agreed to match all gifts dollar for dollar up until June 1, 2021. This kind of leadership is critical to the success of fundraising efforts of this size and scale.

Thank you!

If you are still considering making a donation to the 100th Anniversary Endowment Fund, you can do so directly at www.huroniacommunityfoundation.com or by reaching out to the YMCA at givingback@sm.ymca.ca. Gifts can be made in the form of cash, stock, or bequest, and every donation is a long-term investment into the camp we love and will long cherish.

Thank you for supporting the next 100 years of YMCA Camp Kitchikewana campers.

CAMP CLOSINGS

A poem written by Shreya Viswanathan

Not long ago, I first met all of you
New smiles, new faces, all was brand new
My heart skipped a beat for every new name
that I learnt,
yet my heart was filled with the experience
for which I had yearned.
I call that the opening of camp,
fresh beginnings, a clean slate, not a single
person who knows my names.
Often I like to sit and observe,
watch people go by, watch the boats turn
Slowly but surely, I learnt all names,
memorized all faces,
and fell in love with my leadership team
Look around, take in what you see,
friends of the past, friends that are new,
varying in shapes and sizes,
but all connected to you,
I don't know how it is that camp traditions
that carry with me for six years,
lift me up so and yet bring me to tears.
I am so fortunate, so proud, to live in a
country, live in a province, live in a city,
that brings me to this island,
and to all of you.
Though during the opening of camp, we may
all be apart,
at the closing of camp we are all of one
heart.
Thank you Beausoleil, thank you Kitchi,
I am happy where I am,
and my heart will forever be on Kitchi sands.

