

“Choose to be Optimistic. It feels better” -Dalai Lama

Optimism - that positive outlook that sees the glass half full, whose first answer wants to be “Yes!”, views the risk as worth the reward and greets each day as a fresh beginning, full of possibility and promise.

Each and every one of us has optimism within us. Optimism is what gave us the courage to first crawl, and then stand and ultimately take our first big steps in our infancy. Optimism is what fires up that internal engine that makes us want to push forward, to climb higher, to be stronger and better and further ahead than the day before.

But life’s journey is long and full of unexpected twists and turns that can de-rail our progress as well as our hopes and dreams. The shine and brilliance of optimism can get tarnished by the dust and cobwebs of pessimism. When pessimism creeps in, we grow more cautious, more determined to protect what we think is “ours”, more skeptical of risk and less willing to seek positive change. Therefore, keeping our internal optimism polished and ready to shine forth is essential to our well being and personal growth.

The Lake Geneva Fresh Air Association and Holiday Home Camp were built from optimism. Chicago families, whose homes had been destroyed in The Great Fire, found relief and respite on the beautiful shores of Lake Geneva. As they worked to optimistically rebuild their city, they wanted to share the fresh and brilliant beauty of this lake and its surroundings with less fortunate children who could benefit from the basic elements of nature.

Fresh Air, Clear Water, Cool Earth and Warm Sun are the best polishing agents ever invented by Mother Nature. They clear away the cobwebs and smog of pessimism and allow the brilliance of optimism to shine once more. These elements have been at the core of what we do - brightening the lives of disadvantaged children through summer camp experiences so that they can see the glass half full once again, see the possibility and promise of each new day and take those next confident steps toward a better future.

We are in a period of unprecedented success where optimism has produced incredible results: 104% growth in the number of children we have served over the past five years, double digit growth in our number of donors, the launch of our \$2M Capital Campaign that already has \$800K in pledges and in 2019, the kick-off of a day camp program that will fulfill one of our strategic goals of serving more children from the Walworth County area. And we aren’t stopping there! Our bright and bold optimism has us charging ahead!

Where do you fit into the equation you might ask? Well, quite perfectly, because your support and generosity towards the LGFAA and the children we serve is your own internal optimism saying “Yes! I believe in these children and the potential they possess. And Yes, I believe in the work that the LGFAA is doing to fulfill its enduring mission of improving these deserving lives through fresh air camp experiences.”

So as the Dalai Lama says “Choose to be optimistic. It feels better!” The children we serve at Holiday Home Camp appreciate your incredible optimism and your generosity to help make their own bright spirits shine.

Tradition, sustainability and longevity exist because of optimism: specifically, YOUR optimism, for which we are forever thankful.

Holiday Home Camp’s 132 year history is a testament to that optimistic spirit that refuses to give up, that always has hope for the future and that sees each new day as an opportunity to surge...Onward and Upward!

Enjoy the promise and arrival of Spring!

Molly Keller
President, Board of Directors
March



Amazing People-Amazing Gifts!

Each year the LGFAA recognizes someone who goes above and beyond to serve HHC, our campers and our mission. This year we have chosen to honor two very special people who have given their passion, heart, dedication, talent and time. We’d like to introduce you to this year Amazing People Amazing Gifts Award - Christie and Hector!.



Christie and Hector both started working at camp in 2014 as Cabin Counselors. After their third summer, Christie returned to her home in Scotland, to start her career and Hector ventured out to Los Angeles to start his.

In 2017 Christie and Hector both contacted camp and decided they simply could not bare a summer away! Between the two of them they traveled over 6,000 miles, crossed the entire United States and “the pond” JUST to volunteer at camp. The two of them spent two weeks each at camp, volunteering with the kids, leading activities and basically were unpaid staff members for two weeks! They didn’t do this once - the dynamic duo did this AGAIN in 2018! Christie and Hector are prime examples that camp will change ANYONES life! We asked the two of them to elaborate on their entire camp experience- from being a staff member, coming back to volunteer and the effects camp had on their lives. We’re excited to share their responses.

We asked, What does HHC mean to you? Christie said “Holiday Home Camp means the world to me. Working with the children at HHC was a magical experience and one that I will never forget. From the moment I arrived at camp in 2014 I knew it was going to be a place that I would love forever.” Hector responded “HHC for me is family. It’s the warm feeling you get from the first campfire of the summer. It’s the happiness you get from having your first s’more at camp. It’s the best camp in creation”



When asked why he kept returning to camp to volunteer, Hector replied “Volunteering is another opportunity to make a difference in a young camper’s life. It’s another chance to offer our campers the summer of a lifetime – free from the real world and give them a chance to experience the outdoors and the chance to relax under the starlit sky. More importantly, volunteering at HHC is the very least I could do for a camp who provides so many resources to such an amazing group of children. Having the community support our mission further solidifies how much we all care for our campers and how far we’d all go to provide them with nothing but the best. With the help of volunteers, community groups, and everyone that works tirelessly at camp, our campers are able to experience a love and support like no other.”

Christie agreed and said Christie had similar feelings, stating “I volunteer at camp so I can try to change the lives of the campers. I also love getting the opportunity to make many happy memories for the children and for myself. Having volunteers and community involvement supports and develops the HHC program. Volunteers provide the children with a wide range of experiences. Cooking with Connie was a personal favorite of mine. The campers and their counsellors would work as a team to learn how to cook a delicious meal from scratch. This awesome experience brought the cabin together and gave the campers a chance to learn new skills.”

It’s undeniable, endless skills are learned and lifelong memories are made while at camp. This is true for everyone involved at camp! Christie was asked how camp impacted her life and she replied “HHC has made a huge impact on my personal and professional life. I made a lot of strong friendships at camp that have helped me to grow my confidence and become a more independent individual. By being at HHC I was able to develop and grow as a teacher and implement a range of ideas into my classroom. I find myself thinking of camp most days and it always puts a smile on my face.”



Coincidentally, Hector had a similar response to this question, stating “Camp has become so ingrained in my life that there isn’t a day that goes by where I don’t look back at all the memories I’ve made and think about going back. Camp has allowed me to experience how amazing it is to make such a difference in someone’s life. The moment a camper sees a deer in the woods for the first time is an experience like no other. You can practically see their eyes completely light up at such a magical sight. Having the opportunity to experience such magic cannot be translated into words. I feel very fortunate to be a part of Holiday Home Camp! That being said, I hope to continue volunteering at HHC for as long as I am able to.”



We are so thankful and grateful to have such dedicated and caring staff members that have continued to pour their heart and passion into camp. Christie and Hector have gone above and beyond to show their love and appreciation to camp and we are thrilled to honor them with the 2019 Amazing People, Amazing Gifts award.



CAPITAL CAMPAIGN PROGRESS

Dear Camp and Capital Campaign supporters,

As many readers and camp supporters may already know, we officially launched our capital campaign in late 2018. The purpose of the campaign is to help ensure the growth potential and sustainability of Holiday Home Camp, OWLS, and the Lake Geneva Fresh Air Association thru investment into our programs and facility. With an exciting 104% growth in the last 6 years we have carefully planned key focuses that keep evolving to meet the needs of our kids!

We are happy to announce that people have been so excited to get involved that we are almost half way to our goal as we move into the active phase of our campaign! During our initial phase supporters have generously donated close to \$800,000, setting us on the path to successfully accomplishing our goals!

With a target of \$2 Million there are still plenty of ways to get involved and show your support. Many donation opportunities can be recognized with your family or companies name proudly displayed on a natural looking plaque or stone near the project. Some of our feature projects include building a new activity pavilion, renovating our beloved Founders Hall, updating the Crane Max staff building, winterizing girls village and much more!

If your interested in helping with a project please reach out us at 262-245-5161. A range of lead sponsorship opportunities still exist and Brad would be happy to discuss all of the possibilities. Lead gifts can even be pledged over 5 years! No amount is too big or too small, as we appreciate them all!



Bradley Cripe,
Executive Director



Our proud annual Corporate Sponsors
continue to help make the HHC

magic possible!



Future World and Local Leaders at Work and Play



Winter season here at OWLS was fantastic! We provided 100 Illini Elite Volley Ball Club players with premier team development programs over four weekends in the month of January. Out in one of the coldest Wisconsin winters in several years, we completed 698 participant hours of ground initiatives and low ropes activities. Add on a whopping 415.5 participant hours on a variety of our high elements. These include pretty much any object you could possibly scamper up on our property; High ropes, zipline, Dangle Duo, Portable pamper poles, climbing crate stacks, rock climbing tower, and our 12' wall. The LGFAA and OWLS team deserves a huge pat on the back for enduring the harsh elements and coming to work prepared to battle the frigid temps.

Upcoming at OWLS is a season full of great programs all throughout spring, summer and fall. We will be welcoming our new intern Hope this month at our annual staff training. A Central Michigan University Outdoor Recreation student, Hope will be joining us full time for May-December!



Lake Geneva Fresh Air Association
PO Box 10, Williams Bay, WI 53191
262-245-5161

Board of Directors

Molly Keller...*President*
Willis Herron...*Vice President*
Andy Sterkowitz...*Treasurer*

Liz Ring...*Secretary*

Bette-Jane Austin
Tim Black
Kelly Clow
Ann Brunk-Peterson
Brigid Cashman
Donna Egly
John Engerman
Nancie Freeborn

Andrew Fritz
Sue Griffith
Rita O'Brien
Lucy Otzen
Mary Beth Schirmang
Jim Wilkin

Staff

Brad Cripe...Executive Director
Kayla Wilkin... Assoc. Director
Mark Feldman...Assoc. Director
George Pascoulis... Intern
Cierra Caver...Program Coord
Linda Garant... HHC Registrar

Additionally, OWLS Community Climbs are back! This year we are running two community climb events. The first will be taking place on July 13th from 12-4pm. Follow our Facebook page find out more details as they come out. Our second event will be held on October 5th, "Climbing in the Colors." Experience the awe inspiring birds eye view of the Holiday Home Camp property while you explore the canopy. Experience fall's true beauty from up in the trees! This unique tree climbing opportunity will be offered to all of our supporters, friends and community members.



Mark Feldman
Assoc. Director OWLS

Again, don't forget to follow us on Facebook for information on Community Climb pricing as well OWLS program updates!

Thank You for supporting OWLS programming!

July 13th - Open Community Climb! Join us for an afternoon climbing adventure! 12-4pm. See the website or facebook page for updates.

October 5th - Climb in the Colors! Join our premier tree climbing team as we harness up and lead you into the canopy for a view of the fall colors. 12-4pm

Are you a Holiday Home Camp Alumni?



Keep the camp spirit going by joining
us at "Holiday Home Camp Alumni"

Facebook page!



Make **change** happen, volunteer!

Holiday Home Camp adores our volunteers! In 2018 there was certainly a lot of appreciation to spread around as we saw over 175 volunteers come to camp and donate their time and talents! We enjoyed having individuals, families, companies, scout groups, youth groups, churches, and even other non profits that came to lend a helping hand. There were over 525 hours of volunteering logged in 2018 by community members that wanted to invest in our mission! All we can say to numbers like these are "THANK YOU!" - to all of our volunteers and partners. Your generosity has helped us *make change happen*. This change positively effects the lives of our campers, and our community.

There are always opportunities to get involved every month! We enjoy customizing your volunteer experience to reflect what you or your group interests are. If you'd like to help, then we'd love to have you. We are always looking for summer programming volunteers and boat captains! Call us at 262-245-5161 for a summer schedule.

Calendar of Events

June 8th - Annual Gala- A Fresh Air Summer Soiree! Join us at the premier party of the summer. Party the night away, win prizes, and raise money for camp scholarships!

Everyone is invited, advanced reservation required. Call or visit our website for details.

August 9th - Ladies Luncheon and purse Auction! A great afternoon of food, fun, and fundraising! Everyone is invited, advanced reservations require. Call or visit our website for details. Can't attend but still want to be part of the action? This event offers online bidding so everyone can be involved!

CHECK OUT THE DATES FOR OWLS OPEN COMMUNITY CLIMB EVENTS!

MORE WAYS TO GIVE BACK...

For supporters that want to give the perfect gift directly to campers programs, please visit our wish list on
amazon.com

Shopping! When you shop on Smile.Amazon.com and select the Lake Geneva Fresh Air Association as your charity, a percentage of your normal shopping will be donated to us by Amazon!

amazon smile

Some items naturally fall outside our annual budget range, for these items we look to our community for leads and assistance. We could use your help finding the items below.

- 12-15 Passenger Van
- Commercial Kitchen ovens
- Paving work for eroded paths
- Tree Trimming
- Construction or landscaping help
- Certified Electrician time



The Waterfront

Spring 2019



HOLIDAY HOME SUMMER CAMP

Summer is right around the corner - can you believe it?! It's hard to imagine a warm summer day after the polar vortex winter we just had! At Holiday Home Camp we've been daydreaming and planning for sunshine and a warm, calm lake all winter. The entire team has been hard at work registering campers, recruiting staff and planning yet another fabulous summer full of fun!

We are thrilled to introduce new and exciting program plans for our 2019 campers. We plan on hosting a special day each session. What is a special day, you may ask?! WELL! A special day is a THEME day - we tend to take these things pretty seriously around here. All of the staff and campers are encouraged to dress up for these days and every little thing we do at camp that day is based around the said theme! For Summer 2019 we have the following special days planned: Pirate Day, Superhero Day, Camp Hollywood Day, Wacky Sports Day, Survivor Day, Color Wars and of course Harry Potter Day. Stop by camp on one of these days and you're sure to see every Marvel character lurking around camp, the entire Gryffindor class making wands or you may even be swarmed by the "camperazzi!"

On another note, we are extremely thrilled to share that 67% of our staff from 2018 are returning for 2019!! Providing our campers with dedicated and loving staff is just one of the many things we are proud of here at HHC. We have an extremely diverse staff this year and we are eager for the opportunity to teach our campers about various cultures from all around the world. We currently have staff coming from the following countries: England, Poland, Ireland, Turkey, Nigeria, South Africa and Hungary! In addition, we have nine staff extra eager to work at camp because they were former Holiday Home Camp Campers!

Speaking of campers, we have over 200 campers registered for the upcoming season. Linda has been hard at work contacting parents and creating partnerships with other amazing non-profits throughout the Midwest! For the second year in a row, it looks like camp will be completely full as we're expecting over 700 campers once again!

With your support, we are able to continue providing these unforgettable and life-changing experiences for the most deserving children. Thank you for your generosity and for making all of this possible! Here's to our 132nd summer of magic!

Summer Camp 2019 begins in 85 days and we can hardly wait!



Kayla Wilkin
HH Camp Director

