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FEARLESS

Heather Eggert, Executive Director



We've had the most marvelous summer at our sites! We welcomed over 5,500 kids into our summer programs, and it was amazing! Brilliant sunrises, lively & contemplative worships, eruptions of laughter, inspiring faith stories and conversations, singing at the top of our lungs, playing games with zeal, proudly portaging like a pro, soaking in magnificent sunsets. Friends were made, slushies were slushed, bracelets were woven, songs were sung, games were played, lakes were jumped into, and Jesus was proclaimed. Our theme of "Fearless" was a great backdrop for kids to lean into and push and prod along in their own faith lives – listening and being reminded of God's hope-filled promises for our lives.

We also came to know and love and appreciate the 200+ summer staff members of 2017. We are incredibly proud of these young adults and the ways they gave of their time and talents to the kids in our care. They are remarkable and resilient and patient and wise. Aubree Tsurusaki served as a Team Leader and the Art Shop Coordinator at Wapo. Take a moment to read her reflection on last summer.

"On Tuesday nights this summer, our oldest campers had the opportunity to put a name to their biggest fears, write

them down, and symbolically nail them to a wooden cross at campfire – they got to let those fears go, give them up to the Lord, and be reminded of the sacrificial love of Christ – taking our fears with Him to the cross.

On Wednesday mornings, I had the privilege of reading those hundreds of fears and praying over each one of them with a few other staff. In doing this, we learned of fears from spiders or heights, to fears of loneliness or rejection, of mental illness, of losing loved ones, of not being good/smart/loved enough, of uncertainty for the future, of returning to undesirable home lives, of a lack of community, of letting others (and God) down... the lists goes on and on. And while it broke my heart to read some of our campers' responses each week, I was humbled in realizing that *my* fears are not the only fears in this world – that there are 12 year olds playing field games alongside me who are also carrying heavy and burdensome fears every day; that this world is *full* of fears – big and small.

In the process of reading and praying over campers' fears week after week, and in



opportunities to speak Truth into campers' and counselors' lives this summer, I came to realize how much I needed those same words – words of boldness & fearlessness, and words of the Lord's promises when we choose to fully trust in His power, His indescribable peace, and His perfect love – that in Christ, we are no longer controlled by fear; and that in the midst of fears, anxieties, doubts, and darkness, *He sees us*, and *He is always with us, wherever we go...*" (Joshua 1:9)

Aubree's words are so beautiful and true. God meets us where we are and everyday provides us with what we need. Gifts, indeed.



ON THE BUS TO BETHLEHEM Christmas Dinner Theater 2017 Nov. 30 - Dec. 3 & Dec. 7 - 10

The perfect way to welcome the Advent season is to spend an evening together with friends and family. Come and enjoy a scrumptious four-course meal, wonderful music, and a moving drama. Plan on 3-3.5 hours of festivities.

CHRISTMAS DINNER THEATER RESERVATIONS 2017

Performance Times: Thursdays 6pm • Fridays 6pm • Saturdays 5pm • Sundays 4pm

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ email _____

Please reserve places on: (Number dates 1, 2, 3 etc. in order of date preference)

Thursday, Nov 30 _____ Friday, Dec 1 _____ Saturday, Dec 2 _____ Sunday, Dec 3 _____

Thursday, Dec 7 _____ Friday, Dec 8 _____ Saturday, Dec 9 _____ Sunday, Dec 10 _____

Number of Tickets: _____ Adults \$40 (Thursdays \$35) _____ Children (5-12) \$20 Total Enclosed: _____

Mail to: WAPO BIBLE CAMP • 738 HICKORY POINT LN • AMERY, WI 54001-5129
Reservations open October 23rd • Call With Questions: 715.268.8434 • campwapo@campwapo.org

Places of grace,
forming people of faith!



What an incredible summer at the Wapo & Ox Lake sites!

Luke Halverson, Site Director

We welcomed over 4,000 kids to Seeds, Wapo and Ox Youth, TIM Team and One Days. We can't say a large enough THANK YOU to all the congregations and parents who entrusted their kids to our care. We pray the impact and memories will last a lifetime! Also, a huge thank you is due to the 2017 summer staff team. They provided the relational foundation for kids to be safe, grow in their faith and have loads of fun! Here are a few counselor stories that reflect God working through the kids and staff community.

"One of the biggest reasons that I wanted to come back and counsel at Camp Wapo was to be able to give back the incredible experience that I got here as a camper. It is really cool how God works sometimes. This summer I had a first time camper who already had a very strong relationship with God. I saw a lot of my fourteen year old self in her. Later in the week after the foot washing devotion, she wanted to talk to me. She said she was really disappointed because she didn't feel the Holy Spirit like she normally does in that devotion, and she's been missing that feeling for quite a while. After we talked a long time I realized that I had similar faith stories from when I was her age. Since it was our last night at camp, I was a bit disappointed to hear she hadn't really connected in her faith like she had hoped she would. I gave her advice as to how I got through those times when I felt the same. And that was when God worked His wonders. A few more minutes of chatting went by and she interrupted me with a face of peace and excitement and said, "I feel it. I feel Him right

here. Right now." God's timing is perfect. She didn't feel His presence during the devotion just so that we could have a beautiful conversation about how there is someone else in the world that has such similar life experiences, even the ugly parts."

Sandra Coughlin – Counselor

"I remember one night we took our cabin of girls to the Gaga pit to do a devotional. That devotional turned into 3 hours of all of us pouring our hearts out and sharing our scariest fear, what we were each going through, and what challenges we were facing at home. After we each shared, we all prayed over each other. That night contained a lot of hugs, sniffles and crying but ended with knowing that God ultimately is in control and is walking with us. That night we were one, us counselors weren't any higher than our campers, rather we were all just trying to rest in Christ as best we could, while realizing that the road isn't always going to be smooth, but God loves us so, so deeply!"

Cara Deluce – Counselor



Lots of NEW at Ox Lake

Ox Lake campers got to experience a lot of cool new things in 2017. We introduced our newest camper cabin, White Pine and Red Pine. It's beautiful and has an amazing view!

We also built a new Gaga pit, played a ton of Knockerball, and we are just finishing a human foosball court for 2018. New day trips for 2017 included canoeing and waterfalls on the St Croix River and Wet and Wild days at Wild Mountain. 2018 will bring even more new programs pieces full of fun, faith and adventure for Ox Lake Campers.



Highlights from Wilderness Canoe Base

Nate Berkas, Site Director



Sacred and Holy was a mantra that was shared with the staff at the beginning of the summer. "Remember that you are walking on sacred and holy ground, that you are doing sacred and holy work, and that you are a part of a sacred and holy community." After my first summer as the Site Director at Wilderness Canoe Base, that mantra rings even more true than when I said it at the beginning of the summer.

"How were you fearless?" was a question that was asked of campers this summer, based off of the summer Bible study theme. Many responded that though they had fears while out on their canoe trip, they found unexpected strength within themselves and through their community, all the while being reminded that God is with them in the midst of each of their fears.

Wilderness welcomed over 900 campers and guests this summer, all of whom had the incredible opportunity to learn, grow and be challenged with the God's incredible BWCAW as

their backdrop.

Wilderness Canoe Base has a long history of being able to be incredibly flexible and nimble when it comes to programming, and this summer was no different. This year we welcomed traditional canoe trips, work service weeks, intergenerational family camp groups, our 2nd father/daughter week, and combinations of all of them! All the while, each of these groups learned more about themselves, about the community in which they came with, and about the promises and Good News that God has given us.



Women's Wilderness Adventure Retreat

Just a few weeks ago we welcomed a wonderful group of women to the Women's Wilderness Adventure Retreat. The first group of women initially came up to camp with PCYC as the auxiliary board. They were tasked with raising camperships for kids from North Minneapolis. They decided to take a trip up to camp to better understand the programming - that was 45 years ago, and it has been an annual tradition ever since!

To commemorate the 20th anniversary of the retreat, the WCB director at the time, Jim Wiinanan, came up with the idea of a women's Quetico trip (70 miles). They called it "Paddle the Dream". Over the years, three of these trips have happened and this year's retreat was special because many of the "Paddle the Dream" women were in attendance. The long standing traditions and rich history of not only Wilderness but the people who have been a part of it are

"Rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith and overflowing with thankfulness." Colossians 2:6

Sustaining Roots

Monthly Giving Program

Like the roots of a tree, the continuous support of many donors provides stability out of which ministry can flourish. Monthly donors are essential to the sustained health and vitality of the entire organization.

Double your gift! In 2017 all new or increased recurring gifts will be matched dollar for dollar by Thrivent Financial Foundation up to a total of \$30,000!

1. Visit campwapo.org/donate **2.** Click on "Click here donate online" **3.** Set up your monthly gift using your checking, savings, or credit/debit card.

Need help setting up your recurring gift? Call us at 715.268.8434 or email jenh@campwapo.org.



LWLBC Board Decision on Luther Dell

After months of thoughtful study, prayer, dialogue and research, and along with the diligence of the Strategic Planning Task Force, our Board of Directors announces our intentions to sell the Luther Dell camp property.

We are incredibly grateful for the 21 years of ministry we've provided at that site in Remer, MN. We give thanks for all of the campers, retreaters, volunteers, families and church staff that traveled down that 5 mile dirt road to Luther Dell. We also give thanks for all of the summer staff and fulltime staff who dedicated their energy and compassion to making the Luther Dell experience so special. We will cherish all of our Luther Dell memories. They have been an incredibly important part of this organization's history. God used people in mighty ways in this ministry.

After a careful and deliberate time, recognizing the downward trend of camping and retreat usage at Luther Dell, we have reached a decision that closes one door, but propels and encourages us to move forward in a new direction. We will be praying for wisdom as we develop plans to better accommodate youth and families at Ox Lake, Wilderness Canoe Base, and Wapo. We cast our eyes ahead with anticipation, content in the knowledge that God will continue to guide and bless these efforts. We are grateful and excited for opportunities to grow and serve people in new ways. Thank you for your continued support as we continue to build places of grace, forming people of faith.

You can read more about how the board came to this decision at campwapo.org/news.



PADDLE THE DREAM
 Maija Sedzielarz, Jan Swanson, Linda Thorson, Liz Blood, Louise Feske, Kathleen Gabrielsen, Becky Hamilton, Nancy Johnson, Karen Kleinstuber, Pam McGowan, and Pauline Miller.