

ONYAHSA TIMES

The YMCA Camp Onyahsa Newsletter
101 East Fourth St., Jamestown, NY 14701
office@onyahsa.org / director@onyahsa.org



Winter 2007-08
(716) 664-2802 ext. 238
www.onyahsa.org

2007 is History!



This was an historic year for Onyahsa; strong enrollment, a great staff, and expanded year-round programs made it great! Pre-summer programs included Environmental Education activities by three schools, two church retreats, monthly youth overnights, and other Camp or YMCA activities.

Summer Camp was wonderful, with amazing campers and staff. Several staff arrived in May to prepare the site and program. In mid-June they were joined by the rest of the summer staff for a full week of training. Eight weeks of resident camp began in late June. A new tent village was added to Onyahsa's wilderness site, and our Nature and Village Nights used this site weekly. Our Day Camp in the Woods program saw record enrollment, and the summer concluded with a very successful Mini-Camp and an Alumni Reunion.

Post-summer activities surpassed any previous year. The site was in-use *every* weekend until late November. In addition to a fun Fall Camp and capacity-enrolled monthly youth overnights, Onyahsa offered its first Hispanic Family Camp, with 75 participants, our annual Dinner Dance fundraiser, and the YMCA Battle of the Businesses. It also hosted a week-long hockey camp, an adult Diabetes program, two weddings, and several other group events.

The Camp staff is credited with the successful year. The American Camp Association recently attested to the quality of these offerings by giving Onyahsa high marks in its 2007 accreditation. We're on-track to celebrate a milestone anniversary next year, and we hope you will be part of it!

Promise a Great '08!

Your camp will celebrate its 110th anniversary next year! Established in 1898, Onyahsa is stronger than ever thanks to our founders, generations of supporters, and you. We'll celebrate the fact that we are one of the oldest YMCA camps by offering fantastic school-year and summer programs. Youth monthly camps have been scheduled for each month, and an Open House will be held in late May.

Youth Resident and Day Camps' theme will be *Supercentenarian Summer*, as we celebrate turning "eleventy." We'll have fun recreating some of the best Onyahsa programming from the last 110 years. Join us as we look to each decade of Camp's history over the last Supercentury.

Week A will go all the way back to 1898-1910, for real "old school" activities. At the end of the season, Week H will have fun with 1984-1996, so get some old clothes! We'll also honor historic Onyahsans like Roy Wagner, (director 1924-1946) and Spiro Bello, (director 1962-1984) during these sessions, and take group photos staged to look like each week's era.

The summer will also offer flexible scheduling due to the late departure of NYS schools. "Half-times," or optional half-week programs will be available during the weeks of June 22 and June 29th. New adventure and wilderness specialties are planned, as is an expanded sailing program. Mini Camp will return for kids ages 5-8 in mid-August, and we'll hold an Alumni Camp August 22-24.

Fall programming will offer youth monthly camps, group rental availability, and much more. The 2008 curriculum is under construction, so to check our website for updates!



The summer of 2008 promises to be great!

Tiered Pricing



These are crucial childhood experiences

Camp is a vital experience for youth development; and this is why staff, donors, and fundraising efforts heavily subsidize it. Going away to a quality residential camp helps young people to develop crucial life skills, self-discipline, tolerance, and autonomy. This growth is necessary for later success in college, career, and life; but they are best developed in youth.

As Onyahsa works to address the challenges of rising costs, we will ask families to help us to provide crucial, quality camping experiences by voluntarily choosing to pay the true cost of the program. Subsidized rates will be available to families who need reduced pricing. Unlike many camps that enroll hundreds of participants weekly, Onyahsa believes that a small, intimate camp community is most conducive to fostering healthy youth development. The financial challenges posed by Onyahsa's small size will be partially offset by this new pricing structure.



We're challenging the Cleveland area to enroll at Onyahsa this summer

Cleveland Calling

Rather, that should read, "Calling Cleveland-ites." The Cleveland area is no longer directly served by resident YMCA Camping, so Onyahsa hopes to fill this need by increasing our outreach. If you live in the area and can spread the news, host recruitment parties, or help us market Onyahsa, please let us know. Tuition discounts will be available to participants who help us to let the Cleveland area know about Onyahsa's great programs.

Master Plan

Onyahsa seeks to foster growth among its participants, but in order to fulfill this mission, it must also continually improve. The final touches are being put to the Camp's long-range development plan. This design will address the issues of new restrooms and year-round accommodations.

It will also seek to significantly enhance summer and year-round curricula, sustainability, and conservation. The plan was co-designed by Onyahsa's staff, board, and the Cleveland, Ohio architectural and camp planning firm, Schmidt, et. al. Onyahsa hopes to begin a major fund drive soon to implement the updated plan, and to thereby become a *premier* resident camp facility for the region.



The vision to be a premier resident camp for our future

Development News

Current Camp development includes several exciting projects. Thanks to a gift from Mary and Harry Lewis, renovations to the main Ungerman-Lewis room of Sheldon Hall are underway. This will include the paneling, expansion, and installation of a wood stove. Thanks to the Holmberg Foundation of Jamestown, new furnishings the added to this program center during the summer.

Thanks to a major grant from New York State, secured by NYS Senator Cathy Young, work will begin in January on the complete renovation of our Day Camp barn to become a Youth Wellness and Fitness Center. This building will be winterized and will include a recreation area, fitness room, and full restrooms and showers. Nautilus equipment donated by the Buffalo YMCA has already been received.

Recent site work includes the installation of chain link fencing along the Creek, from the bridge to the Point. This fencing is unobtrusive and will protect campers from entering the water accidentally. It will also serve to protect vegetation along the creek bank and provide a visual barrier between Camp and residences across the Creek.

This spring, Onyahsa plans to build a new village for the Mahicans, by replacing the old cabins with more comfortable accommodations. The teen girls have a great lakefront site, and their new village will make this one of the best areas in Camp.

Transformation



Running the Camp's a team effort too!

In order to meet rising challenges, the Camp Administration and Board will undergo transformation in early 2008. This will involve Jon O'Brian assuming responsibilities for camp development. Bev Lubi will be promoted to Administrative Director, and Rick DeCalzo will be promoted to Sr. Property Director. They will supervise part-time area staff.

The Camp Board will focus on policy creation and fundraising, and will meet alternatively as a full board and as the following sub-committees; Administration and Finance, Curriculum and Special Programs, Capital Development and Long-Range Planning, and Property and Implementation.

Given interest and participation, we would like to form teams for northern Chautauqua County issues, a Parents' Advisory Group, an on-line Alumni Team, and a hands-on Site Work Club. These groups will meet infrequently. Please contact the Camp Director if you are interested.



Say "good-bye" to the (green?) pole barn, it will soon transform too!

Equipment Needs

Monetary donations are not the only way to help Onyahsa. We are currently in need of equipment for site or program use. We also accept donations of vehicles, boats and household items, which we sell. Major items currently include a pickup truck, passenger van/mini-van or station wagon, a pool table, program items, and lawn tools.

Fundraising 101

Increasingly, successful fundraising is important to Camp operations and development. In 2007, Onyahsa raised over \$12,000 to subsidize the cost of camping through the Onyahsa Promise Raffle, Labor Day Yard Sale, and Annual Dinner Dance. The Pathways brick drive served to assist site development, and our alumni and friends supported operations, scholarships, and capital needs through their generous donations. Thank you for your support of these crucial efforts, and please consider helping us in 2008.



Please help us to meet our fundraising targets in 2008!

Alumni Chase

All alumni should report to the virtual flagpole! Several came to the real one on August 25th, 2007 to share old memories and create new ones. Our 2008 Alumni Family Camp is planned for August 22 – 24, with a reunion scheduled for the afternoon of August 23rd. We need help in planning this event, expanding the list of alumni addresses, and collecting scanned digital images from Camp's past (for posting on the alumni section of our web site). Please contact the Camp Director if you can help to build the Alumni Community and/or if you have photos.

Help Wanted

Camp Nurse (weekly for one or more sessions)
RN who loves kids. Very competitive salary, room and board in a separate cottage, free camp tuition for dependents. Role shared with other RNs over season.

Office Assistant (16 hours/week during school year with option of 30 hours/week over the summer). Competitive hourly wage. Based at the Jamestown YMCA.

Camp Staff (summer season)
Age 16+. Competitive salary, room and board, and "a million dollars worth of experience." Must meet stringent background checks and commit to at least six weeks of summer work. Experience working with children.

Sailing Director (summer season)
On-site director of expanded sailing program, maintain vessels, teach sailing daily. Residence on-site with evening duties preferred. Experience required.

YMCA
Camp Onyahsa
101 East Fourth St.
Jamestown, NY 14701

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**THIS SEASON, AS WE THINK OF THOSE
WHO ARE SPECIAL, AT ONYAHSA
WE'RE THINKING OF YOU!**



**HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND MERRY
CHRISTMAS TO OUR CAMPERS,
STAFF, FAMILIES, ALUMNI AND
FRIENDS! 'SEE YOU IN 2008!**



December 2007

Dear Friend,

YMCA Camp Onyahsa needs your help! The costs associated with quality camping continue to rise, as the need for this experience becomes ever more critical for the youth of our society. In many ways, the YMCA movement has always faced this challenge. From its inception, the Y has had a social contract that adheres to the adage, *"to whom much is given, much is expected."*

Can you help us to ensure quality resident, day, and school year camping programs for the kids who really need this experience? **We are asking our alumni and supporters to help us by:**

1. Joining the **Onyahsa Association** for \$25/year to re-connect with Camp and to build an endowment for its future. All current campers and staff have already joined.
2. Consider making a **tax-deductible gift** to one of our core funds: (Please use the form below).
 - a. **General Operations**. This helps to keep Camp affordable for our kids.
 - b. **Camp Scholarship Fund**. This fund provides camp financial assistance to deserving children from families facing financial challenges.
 - c. **Development Program**. This fund assists Onyahsa in major construction, site improvement, and property acquisition.

Thank you for your consideration at this special time of the year. Most importantly, we hope that each of you; camper, parent, staff member, volunteer, alumnus/alumna, or supporter will stay connected to Onyahsa. Our success now depends on you, the way our past achievements depended upon an earlier generation of supporters who understood the Camp's social contract, and met the challenge to provide for its fulfillment.

Best Wishes for the Holiday Season!

Jon O'Brian

Jon O'Brian, Camp Director

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Dear Jon and Camp Kids,

OK, I'll help out! Please accept my donation of \$_____ to be used towards the following fund(s).

Onyahsa Association Camp Operations Scholarship Fund Development

I have enclosed a check Bill my credit card Contact me at _____

Credit Card _____ Number _____ Exp. Date _____

Address: _____ Email _____

Please fax this form to (716) 487-1174, mail it to YMCA Camp Onyahsa, 101 East Fourth St., Jamestown, NY 14701, email your information to office@onyahsa.org, or call us at (716) 664-2802 ext. 238. Thank you!