



THE
OCONTO

ECHO

Spring 2017

The View from the Bung

Summer 2017 is officially underway! Work camp staff arrived a couple weeks ago and have been very busy. They have been raking, cutting grass, opening zebos, cleaning, and painting. Their hard work is paying off and camp is starting to look great! Our first school group of the season arrives next Wednesday and campers arrive for our first camp session of the summer on June 30th!

Life in the city moves fast and kids feel the constant need to keep up. Keep up with school, keep up with sports and extra-curriculars, and feel the pressure to constantly keep up with social media. Camp allows them to slow down and have a chance to just be kids. Camp is a haven to relax, unplug, and connect face to face with friends. Friendships grow fast at Oconto and new friends feel like old ones in a matter of days. The concentrated time of playing and living together, away from the pressures of the outside world, foster very strong relationships that can last a lifetime!

In the early years of all teenagers having cell phones, campers were very reluctant and unhappy to turn them over when they arrived at camp. It was often a struggle in Senior section to get all of the hidden cell phones. In recent years there has been a shift. Many campers are now happy for the excuse to disconnect for a little while and have a break from any school or city drama. We are so happy to be able to give kids a chance to just be kids while they are here!

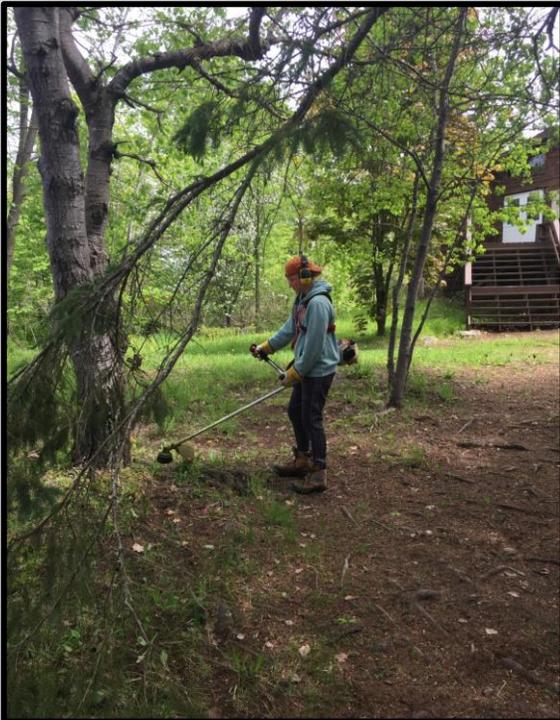
Friendships that started at Oconto seem to be among the strongest in many of our alumnae's lives. It is so heartwarming to see and hear about the countless examples of friendships that began years ago at Oconto and are still thriving today. Oconto girls are there for each other to celebrate life's great milestones, to have each other's backs when times are tough, and just to share a laugh on all the days in between.

The warmth and kindness that we show for each other at Oconto seems to spread into the outside world. Passed from one generation of staff to the next, campers have great young role models to look up to. Campers idolize staff while they are here and our staff set a great example of how to treat everyone with kindness and respect. It is never 'cool' to be a mean girl at Oconto. Campers want to emulate the staff, so they go back to their schools and say, "I wouldn't treat someone poorly at camp, so I won't do it here either". We often here from parents about the positive growth and change they see in their daughters after returning from Oconto.

We are so excited for summer 2017 at Oconto and we hope that you have a great one too! Please accept my challenge to reconnect with a camp friend you have lost touch with. Use all the helpful technology to find each other (or let us know if you're looking for someone's email address), but then get together in person and catch up face to face. Keep the Oconto spirit going strong!



First Day of Work Camp!



Hard at work

Alumnae Updates

Meredith Jackson Donohue (1967-1989) became Granny "M" on October 21st, 2016 to Oscar Alexander Donohue, born in Krakow Poland.



Alison (Cook) Singh and her husband welcomed daughter Emily Jada Singh, born July 27th, 2016!



Alison (Beaton) Conron got together with some Oconto girls on the weekend for a play date with their babies! From left to right are Jeffrey (Heather Wright), Brooke (Alison (Beaton) Conron), Norah (Katie Symes) and Nora (Kristen (Shames) Heredia). They have reconnected since having kids and finding out they all live in the same part of Toronto.



Genn Giroday and Geoff Warren were thrilled to welcome Georgia Brooke Warren into their family on January 5, 2017. (Born July 24, 2016). Genn and Geoff are hoping for a fourth generation Oconto girl, circa the 2020 Oconto Chikadee program!

Allison, Heather and Erin Cook won a provincial curling championship on March 19th, 2017 in Meaford, Ontario. This was exciting for their family because it was the first time all 3 sisters have won a provincial championship together and they're excited to have their names on the banner together.



Steph King and her husband Matt welcomed a son on February 23rd, 2017. His name is Miller, and their first born, William, is very happy to be a big brother!

Steph King and Kate McLeod have been best friends since they met on the steps up to Chips, in the mid-90s.



Sarah Keenleyside has been running her own Interior Design Firm "Qanuk Interiors Inc." in Toronto for the past 7 years and last summer filmed her own renovation show for HGTV called Backyard Builds. Sarah and her co-host contractor Brian McCourt transform boring backyards into one of a kind spaces. She credits her comfort in front of the camera to many a Sunday Evening Concert performance! ;) She can also be seen this May on the Season 2 of HGTV's Home To Win with 30 of the top designers and contractors from across the country. To add to the exciting year, an engagement to boyfriend, singer songwriter Justin Rutledge topped it all off. They plan to marry in Prince Edward County in the Summer 2018.



Peg Keyes Kelly, Sam Buzza Atkinson, Kirsty Griffiths, Sharon Fritz Roth, Vicki Taylor Bedford, Sally Young Theysmeyer, Bev Keith and Carol Keyes Deimling

As a Birthing From Within childbirth educator & birth story listener, a birth & bereavement doula, Jen Gillean is committed to supporting families online and in person to prepare for their upcoming births and to integrate their birth experiences. Jen also offers a variety of workshops, retreats and courses for prenatal and postnatal moms in Ottawa and online. Check out her website to see what this Oconto girl is up to...inthemomentwithjen.com



Grace Nesbitt Fulford is happily in complete remission from CLL after all these years of being misshapen. Huge spleen is gone! Hurrah!



Chrissi Forte at her wedding reception with Lisa Wilson, Alix Morse, Denym Dupont, Jane Pigott, Bronwyn Wilson Gorsline, Sarah MacDonald, and Nora Hammond.

Erika Siren and Geoffrey Law were married on May 22nd, 2016 in Vancouver, British Columbia!



Erika and Geoffrey's wedding reception with Bruce Wilson, Nora Hammond, Anne Piggott, Jane Tozer, Lisa Wilson, Celine Junke, Amelia Ingram, Laurene Tabet, Meghan Buckley, Calynn Irwin, and Cat Powell



Michele Nadeau and her daughters Dom, Liz, and Maddy Soubry over the Christmas holidays, sporting their matching Oconto toques!



Winter OCF board meeting with members Peg Walker, Steph Kirk DeWard, Linda Ford Sutherland, Sarah Hammond, Lisa Wilson, Di Lovell Kirk, Beth Kavanagh, and Bronwyn Wilson Gorsline.

Also in attendance was honorary board member Sebastian Gorsline!



Sebastian and Bronwyn visiting great-grandma June. Sebastian attending his first art show, The Art Project, with Vicki Carruthers. Sebastian enjoying a lovely spring walk with Lisa and Bronwyn, while getting excited for his second summer at Oconto!



Oconto Campership Fund

My heart is often warmed by Oconto alumnae!

I have to say that the last three years I have sent out a special plea, after our main request for funds, for more money to cover needs of campers to go to camp! Several alumnae have been very generous, and we have been able to meet the demand. So, thank you

I also want to say a special Thank you to alumnae who have not been able to afford to give money, but have offered to help in other ways (fundraisers). Truly heartwarming, and appreciated! Especially by the campers that get to go to camp due to your thoughtfulness!

Thank you,
Lisa

Fundraisers

Oconto Campership Fund



Address

52 Chemin Larrimac
Chelsea, Quebec

RSVP

Please call Jen Gillean
613-864-8696

Camp Awakening

A colorful poster for a 35th anniversary party. The text includes: "party like it's 1982", "BIG NIGHT OUT 35th anniversary edition", "THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST, 2017 7:00 - 11:00 pm", "Steam Whistle Brewing 255 Bremner Blvd. | Toronto", "Tickets \$100 per person. Includes drinks, food & entertainment. On sale April 20th.", "LIVE MUSIC FROM GO FREDDIE GO", "COSTUMES ENCOURAGED!", and a "CAMP AWAKENING" logo.

party like it's
1982

BIG NIGHT OUT
35th anniversary edition

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7:00 - 11:00 pm

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255 Bremner Blvd. | Toronto

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Includes drinks, food &
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GO FREDDIE GO

COSTUMES ENCOURAGED!

CAMP AWAKENING

In Memorandum

MARJORIE “SKIP” KIRKPATRICK HARDY – April 17th, 1960 – April 6th, 2017

This April, we lost a friend. No, not just a friend, but a beautiful piece of the Camp Oconto framework. After a courageous 7-month battle with Glioblastoma, Marjorie (Skip Kirkpatrick) Hardy passed away. Her friends and family will be celebrating her life in late July at her farm near Fenelon Falls. To read some of the wonderful tributes, please visit the Camp Oconto Facebook page.

When you think back to Oconto in the 80s, it is difficult not to have vivid memories of a woman who gave us such joy, humour, music, and life. She embodied what camp was about: life-long friendships, leadership development, self-awareness and discovery, positive spirit, appreciation, and kindness. The soundtrack of Oconto is filled with her voice – one we will carry with us, always.

Skip will be missed by the many who knew, loved and admired her. In her honour today, let's reach out and give a loved one a hug; call a sister; listen and share a beautiful song or email an old camp friend. She taught us that *Friends are Friends Forever* and for that, we are better women.

Thank you, Skip.

Marjorie Hardy passed away peacefully today (April 6, 2017) at the palliative care unit at Ross Memorial Hospital in Lindsay, ON after a hard fought battle against cancer.

Beloved wife of Steve Hardy of Cameron, and dearest daughter of Laurie (Sterling Frizzell) and Thomas (Marian Siminski). She will be greatly missed by her siblings Tom (Xuemei Li), Kathleen (Ben Lamarche) and Shona (Dino Del Grosso) and her sister-in-law, Nancy Kirkpatrick.

Also mourning her loss will be her nieces and nephews, Tom & Kevin Kirkpatrick, Mackenzie & Madison Lamarche, Toni, Michael, Donato & Chase Del Grosso and her many cousins the Eccelstones, Fergusons, Taylors, Olmsteads and Gallaghers. She will also be missed by Steve's mother Betty Hardy and his extended family.

Her family would like to express their thanks for the excellent care Marjorie received at Toronto Western, Princess Margaret and Ross Memorial hospitals during her battle with Glioblastoma. Also thanks to all the wonderful cousins, family and friends for their support which helped to make this journey more comfortable for Margie. She was dearly loved by all who knew her and will be sadly missed.

A celebration of Margie's life will take place at Hardy Country Farm later in July. Steve has requested donations be made to Princess Margaret Hospital, in lieu of flowers.

Rest in peace our beautiful, bright star!

