

Spring

OCONTO

2010

Director's Note

It's that time of year again! Work camp has already started. There are currently fourteen staff at camp cleaning, raking, staining, painting, and much more. School groups start in early June, and our regular camp season begins July 1st.

We have eight school groups from the Kingston area coming to Oconto this June for outdoor education programs. Some of the schools coming are: H.H. Langford Public School, Frontenac Public School, Cataraqui Woods Public School, and Sharbot Lake Public School. This September is also busy with groups. Turnbull Learning Centre is coming from Ottawa and Lorne Park Secondary School is coming from the Toronto area. As well, we have three groups coming from Queen's University; the Phys. Ed. first year students and their leaders, a group of Kinesiology students, and the medical residents from the department of Family Medicine.

While the summer has not yet officially started for the rest of our campers and staff, we are already looking ahead to the fall and are thrilled to announce the three exciting camp weekends we will be offering throughout September. We hope you will attend one or all of our events, which include a Labour Day Weekend, Women's Weekend and Family Camp Weekend. Dates and details are included in this newsletter and are available on the website as well. We hope to see you there!

You might also be interested to know that this March my daughter Bronwyn and I spent two amazing weeks volunteering as vochelis (camp counselors) at Camp Sizanani in South Africa. Upon arriving we were thrilled to learn that many of the principals and values that we hold so dear at Oconto are universally applicable to all camping experiences, giving these 140 extremely well-deserving children have fun as kids, something that is unfortunately so rare in their young lives. We worked with three other vochelis teaching swimming, something many of them had never before had the chance to do. It gave them a feeling of empowerment, and it was wonderful to see how excited they were when they finally achieved their goals and swam without lifejackets. Bronwyn and I won't soon forget our time in South Africa, and I encourage you to read more about our trip on our website. You can also visit www.worldcamps.org if you would like to learn more about Camp Sizanani itself.

We are very excited for all that Summer 2010 will bring and hope to see or be in touch with you all soon!

All the best, Lisa Wilson.



Lisa and Bronwyn in South Africa



Bronwyn modelling our new Oconto clothing



Our new Oconto Coat of Arms!

UPCOMING EVENTS AND EXCITING NEWS!

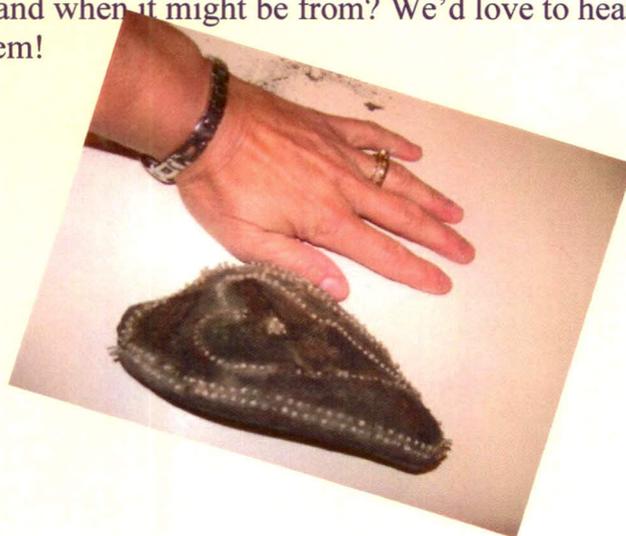
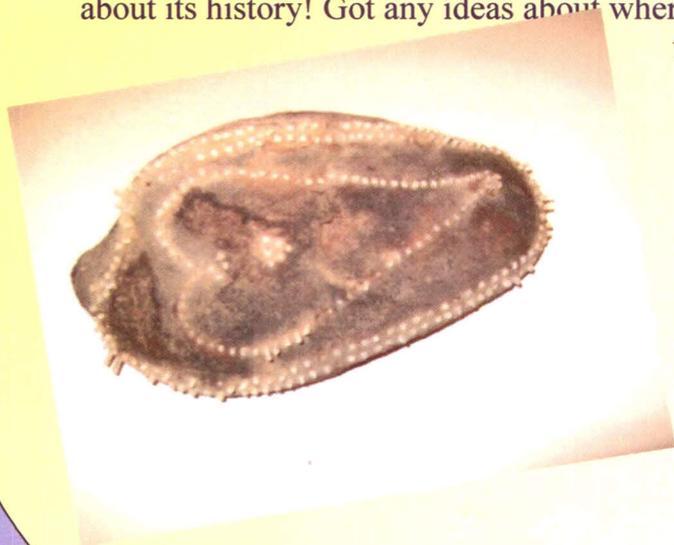
Upcoming Alumnae Weekends

We have three exciting weekends planned in September and we hope you will be able to join us for at least one of them! Sign-up forms are available both through this newsletter and the Oconto website; they will be a lot of fun!

- 1. Family Camp** on Labour Day weekend. The weekend is run by alumnus Michele Nadeau and her husband. Lisa and/or Bruce Wilson will also be around. We would love to have you for a tour or visit. – Friday September 3rd – Monday September 6th.
- 2. Women's Weekend** – Friday September 10th until Sunday September 12th.
- 3. Cottage Weekend** – Friday September 17th – Sunday September 19th.

The Oconto Moccasin

As you may recall, the heavy rain from last summer caused much erosion around camp exposing many interesting objects from the past. The most intriguing object we found was this mysterious moccasin! A few of our staff members came across it one day and we have decided to put it on display in the dining hall until we take it to an expert to find out more about its history! Got any ideas about where and when it might be from? We'd love to hear them!



Oconto Reunion Weekend: Silent Auction for the Campership Fund!

Last September, Camp Oconto hosted a wonderful reunion weekend. There were many activities enjoyed, one of which was a silent auction during the dinner hour Saturday, to help raise money for the Campership Fund. It was great to see so much participation in both the generous donations of items for the silent auction and also in the excited bidding by the alumnae. We had an interesting variety of items donated. For example, a crock pot, water colour pictures of Camp Oconto, handmade needle point cushions and note cards with photos of nature scenes from around the camp. We also had a mini book sale. One of the highlights of the auction was the homemade strawberry jam, donated by June Labbett. Everyone was bidding on that! We even received individual donations from people who were not able to attend the reunion. Thanks to everyone who participated in this very worthwhile event.

Each year the Campership Fund financially assists two to four campers and makes it possible for them to continue their wonderful camp experience. We all know the magical experience that camp can offer a child. This year the fund is sponsoring two campers, who are very enthusiastic about their upcoming camp adventure. The Campership Fund was started ten years ago and is solely funded by the generous donations from Camp Oconto alumni and from fundraisers like the silent auction. Thanks to all who have financially participated in the past and to those who will donate in the future. The Campership Fund is an excellent way to carry on the Camp Oconto tradition and support a child's camp experience.



KEEPING IN TOUCH!

Bocking, Jen (80s & 90s) was very excited to inform us about the birth of her new son, Riley Bocking Bolden, born on February 27th, 2010. He was born in Victoria, BC where Jen lives with her husband Ben, their son Max, and new arrival Riley.

Zimcik, Heather (80s & 90s) and her husband Shannon Hunt were very proud to announce the birth of their daughter Anna on August 22, 2009. Anna is already a great swimmer and will be 'skipping around the dining hall' in no time! Heather is currently working in Toronto Rehab's spinal cord program and lives in Leaside with her family.

Loken, Tania (80s) and her husband Steve also had the recent joy of bringing a new son into the world on December 10th, 2009. Owen Jeffery Loken shares the same birthday as his mum! The Lokens currently live in North Vancouver, where Tania is on maternity leave from her job in Tourism HR. She manages an occupational and service training program for the British Columbia tourism industry.

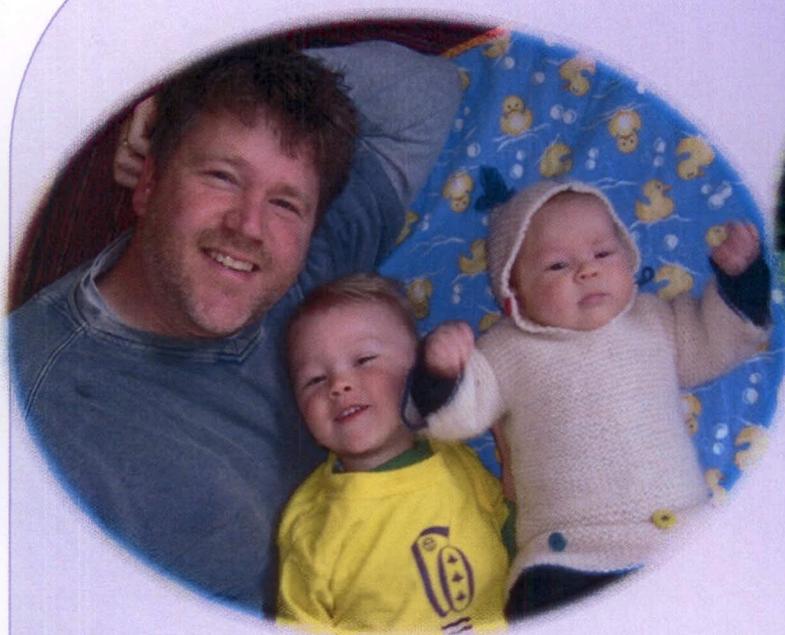
Labbett, June Kennedy (40s – Present) celebrated her 90th birthday on June 4th! She had a lovely dinner party at Lisa and Bruce's house and enjoyed catching up with many members of her extended family. June is very thankful for the many birthday cards she received from various Oconto alumnae and is looking forward to a brand new decade in life!

A message from June Labbett.

Thank you for all the birthday cards! I had many surprises for days up to and including my birthday. It was really fun to read about what is going on in different peoples lives. I really appreciate you thinking of me.
All the best, June.



June Labbett blowing out her ninetieth birthday candles and 'skipping around the room' with her husband, Cliff.



Jen Bocking's husband Ben with their son Max (in an Oconto yellow!) and newborn, Riley.



Heather Zimcik and her daughter Anna



Jen Bocking's son Max holding his new brother Riley.



Tania Loken and her son Owen.

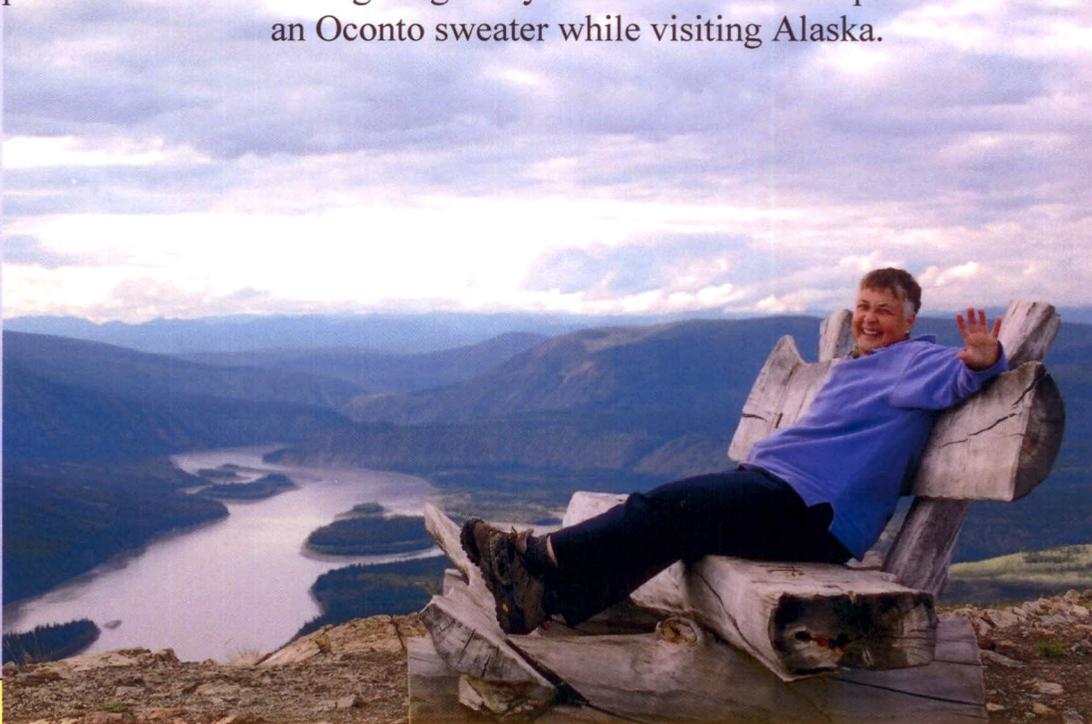


Tania Loken's son Owen in a cute snowsuit!

FINAL THOUGHTS

Alumnae Challenge

We are challenging you to send us neat photos of yourself wearing Oconto paraphernalia when traveling! Peg Kelly sent us this brilliant photo of herself wearing an Oconto sweater while visiting Alaska.



Here at Oconto we realize that times are changing, and changing with them are the number of new and exciting summer activities young people have to choose from. With the increasing number of school-credit trips, volunteer opportunities and specialized day camps, filling camp is proving a challenging task. We at Oconto maintain however that camp is an invaluable experience like no other, where young people gain confidence, leadership, independence and sense of self that they will carry with them throughout their lives. We hope that you as Oconto alumni share our values. You can help us by continuing to spread the word about Oconto to any friends or families you may know with young daughters of camper age. We are also currently working on a new camp DVD which will be available in the fall, which we would be happy to send you should you be inclined to inform new camper families about Oconto. Our website is the easiest means of learning about all that camp has to offer, so we always recommend that anyone interested visit us at www.campoconto.com. We are open to any suggestions you may have to help us promote Oconto and can be reached throughout the year at our respective Tichborne and Markham office numbers, should you be interested in getting involved. We'd love to hear your ideas! Have a safe and wonderful summer; we hope to see you soon!

All the Best, Lisa Wilson