A DOUBLE ANNIVERSARY!

In September, we hosted the New York State Outdoor Education Association (NYSOEA) for their 50th Anniversary Conference. NYSOEA has long been New York’s leading membership organization for outdoor and environmental learning, standards, and stewardship. We were honored to host such a milestone celebration! The conference was filled with workshops facilitated by true heroes and grass-roots of the outdoor education industry and, as one can imagine, our own Greenkill Naturalist staff were in their element! There were many joyous reunions and highlights—among them a gathering of some Greenkill Outdoor Education Directors—spanning 4 decades of leadership (Dottie Shuman, Nancy Reichert, Heather Chadwick, Hillary Southard).

The conference opened with a keynote by Dr. William Hammond. Bill has been an educator in the field for more than 60 years with accolades such as Founder and President of the board of Trustees at the Calusa Nature Center, President of Natural Context (a consulting firm), and Associate Professor at Florida Gulf Coast University, among others. Judy Braus was the following day’s keynote. Judy is the Executive Director of the North American Association for Environmental Education. With more than 30 years of experience in the field, Judy has also worked closely with the National Audubon Society, World Wildlife Fund and the National Wildlife Federation— to name a few. Both keynotes addressed where we have come from and where we are going within the outdoor education field.

The theme of the conference was “Learn It! Live It! Pay it Forward!” and this motto resounded throughout the weekend. It was quite a common sight to witness cross-generational conversations happening throughout camp. In keeping with the “Pay it forward” theme, NYSOA presented a scholarship to Greenkill for registration to next year’s conference at the closing ceremony.

FALL WOMEN’S WELLNESS

Without a doubt, Women’s Wellness is one of our very favorite weekends of the year, and this fall’s event was no exception. Women of all ages and all walks of life—some brand new to the program and some returning for more than 20 years—came together for a weekend of fellowship, renewal, and relaxation. The weather was chilly, but even the occasional snow shower did little to dampen the spirits of our participants, who enjoyed sessions on meditation, self-care, wellness, and yoga, as well as classes in topics as diverse...
Over a beautiful fall weekend in mid-October, more than 70 camp and OE alumni and their families gathered to celebrate the NY YMCA’s 100th anniversary. The Alumni Committee, led by Emily Van Ingen, Cortney Williams-Lloyd and Nancy Reichert, created a fun-filled weekend for alums and their families, including a range of beloved camp activities and traditions. Among the crowd favorites were tie-dying camp t-shirts, a hike to Blueberry Hill, lanyard making, camp crafts, and canoeing. Special shout outs to Lisa Garcia for leading “Extreme S’mores” (yes, the buffet of add-ins included bacon), Simone Backstedt for her sweet-smelling session on Aromatherapy, Rusty Russell for leading “Johnny Appleseed” and other camp favorites at mealtime, and Scott Johnson and Lois Heitler for creating and running a very cool, and very high-tech trivia contest.

Perhaps the most moving moment of the weekend came during our Centennial Reception on Saturday evening. After perusing 100 years’ worth of camp memorabilia—photos, brochures, logs, schedules, slides, and videos, alums gathered to listen to the reflections of former and beloved camp directors, Kent Sampson, and via Skype from Texas, John Snowden. Projected onto a big screen, John shared many wonderful memories and soon had the audience laughing out loud (and more than a few shedding tears of joy). Even from a distance of more than 1500 miles, John brought a warmth to the room that was wonderful to behold.

“For those alumni and friends of camp who were not able to attend this special weekend, don’t worry! The party is coming to NYC! Please join us on Thursday, January 31st, at 7:00 PM at the West Side YMCA as we continue celebrating the 100th birthday of the New York YMCA Camp. Come reminisce, reconnect with old friends, make new ones, enjoy photos and other memorabilia, and share your stories. For more information or to RSVP, please call the camp office at 845-856-2211.”
NEW PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

New in Summer 2019: WORLD TEEN CAMP

A truly international experience, our World Teen Camp offers a one-of-a-kind language and cultural exchange opportunity for campers ages 12-16. In a traditional summer camp setting this language immersion program brings together campers from five different countries—the US, France, Germany, Colombia, and China—to leave, learn, have fun, and make lasting friendships. This program, designed and overseen by certified, bilingual teachers, utilizes tandem learning, in which peers guide and encourage each other’s learning (e.g., an American child learning German is paired with a German child learning English) through a combination of academic and recreational activities. American campers can specify in which language village they would like to live and study. If you would like more information about this exciting new program, please call our office at 845-858-2200.

UPCOMING EVENTS

REGISTRATION FOR WINTER SLEEPAWAY CAMP NOW OPEN!

Click here for registration form.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: WINTER FAMILY CAMP!
February 15-18, 2019

TELL-A-BRATION!
100 YEARS OF CAMP STORIES!
January 31st, 2019
7pm at the West Side YMCA

REGISTRATION FOR SUMMER CAMP 2019
Opens on December 3rd, 2018.

Visit our new website: nyycamp.org | camps@ymcanyc.org