Though the late winter snow is only just starting to melt, and the birds have barely begun to announce spring’s arrival, the Greenkill Retreat Center isn’t merely shaking itself out of hibernation—in fact, we’re shifting into high gear! After a wonderful winter marked by Family Camp, our first ever Community Pancake Breakfast and Maple Sugaring Celebration, and, yes, plenty of the white stuff, Greenkill is warmed up and ready for a spring season.

As the burgeoning of spring fosters a renewal in our surroundings, so too does Greenkill renew and refresh its offerings for our guests this season. Adventurous groups will try their hand at the four new high-ropes elements making up our brand new Quad – the Catwalk, Elevator, Space Loops, and Giant Swing! All four activities promise both thrills and feelings of collaborative accomplishment. Out on the lake, our brand new Raft-Building activity adds fun for the aquatically-inclined.

Throughout the spring and fall, the Retreat Center will be rekindling relationships with long-standing groups and welcoming many more for their first-ever Greenkill experience.

The year ahead will find Greenkill playing host to a very special wedding that will bring home some of our most beloved camp alumni. We will host retreats for youth & teen groups like Jack & Jill, and the NYS YMCA Youth & Government - both inspiring a new generation of leaders, spiritual retreats and groups representing an impressive range of different faiths, a women’s martial arts collective from Israel, and bevy of other gatherings both large and small.

Even with new activities, refreshed facilities, and another beautiful spring at the Retreat Center, we continue to stand most in awe of what every guest, staff member, and member of the community comes to appreciate about Greenkill. At its heart Greenkill offers a cordial welcome, a warm atmosphere, and a place to truly, simply retreat. If your group is looking for the perfect place to hold its next retreat, give us a call to learn more about availability, rates, and programs!

London, Edinburgh, Budapest... Port Jervis!

Once again, January finds our Camp Directors on the road... travelling far and wide to bring back the very best international camp staff out there. With help from Camp Leaders, our wonderful partner in international staff recruitment, literally hundreds of would-be camp counselors lined up for a chance to spend a life-changing summer at Camps McAlister, Talcott, or Huguenot. The popularity of our program means that earning a spot at camp is no easy task and all but the best are turned away. At each stop along the way (London, Manchester, Dublin, Edinburgh, Warsaw and Budapest), returning international staff joined our directors to help with resume reviewing, interviewing, and answering the questions of our very excited applicants. We couldn’t be more excited about the resulting crew and can’t wait to welcome them to camp in June!

REGISTRATION FOR ALL 2019 SUMMER CAMP PROGRAMS NOW OPEN!
WINTER HIGHLIGHTS

Winter Family Camp

The reviews are pouring in; Winter Family Camp was better than ever! Our biggest complaint is that there were too many cool activities to choose from. Among our favorite new offerings were Hungarian Egg Painting, Bottle Rockets, Dumpling Making, and Pet Photography (thanks Mark Liflander!). Families worked together to craft some awesome sleds for our very raucous, very hilarious Second Annual Sled Regatta. Awards were given for the fastest, most creative, and most durable sleds, but a great time was had by all. Our Family Fun Night asked “Are You Smarter Than Marit & Andy MAC?”, and guests got to belt out some tunes at Karaoke Night in the Thorne Room. Two very special shout outs—to Phil & Susan White, who celebrated 30 years of Winter Family Camp, and to Maya Berger, who celebrated a very sweet Sweet 16.

Winter Sleepaway Camp

We loved seeing campers old and new at our 2018 Winter Camp! It was a wonderful weekend full of traditional camp activities, with a cool weather twist...indoor archery, campfire cooking, winter ecology, and chilly winter hikes. The campers also got the chance to use our brand new ropes element “The Quad”! Our counselors got in on the fun while modeling camper-made cardboard creations in our annual Trash-ion Show. The magic of camp was in the air on our final day as we woke to a dusting of snow and finished out the evening with an Ice Cream Social and dance. Who could ask for anything more?
First Annual Pancake Breakfast and Maple Sugaring Celebration: Marina and Courtney prepare to ladle out our very own maple syrup to hungry guests out our First Annual Pancake Breakfast and Maple Sugaring Celebration.

Tellabration

Encapsulate 100 years of New York YMCA’s Camps in two hours...On your mark, get set, go! That’s a bit what it felt like on a Thursday evening in January when we held our “Tell-a-bration”, celebrating our centennial of “camping” on 1000 acres in Huguenot, NY. Over seventy folks gathered in a large room at the YMCA, temporarily transformed into a camp museum of photos, songbooks, t-shirts, and artifacts, covering every decade since 1918. The museum highlighted Camps McAlister, Talcott & Greenkill, all located on these aged acres, as well as Camp Brooklyn. Brooklyn closed in 1972 but its existence for New York’s Y represented the rich history of camping reaching back even past the turn of the last century.

“What are they doing in MY camp?” was the memory shared by Monica Bermiss, chairman of the event. On attending family camp later in life, she remembers being struck by the realization that the ownership she felt for ‘her’ camp was a feeling others embraced as well and that camp was home over these many years to generations of campers. Along with a ‘storybook’ of memories collected from alumni during the centennial year, random memories were shared by alumni throughout the evening prompting laughs, songs, gasps, and tears—that overwhelming feeling that this was ‘MY’ camp.

Yet, to the future, it was possibly Zoe Smith and her mom, Detra Gillians, who most touched each heart as they relayed the importance of Zoe’s participation in camp the last eight years. Zoe testified to how camp has helped her grow and comfortably reach out to others different than herself, and Detra noted the hardships of being a single mom yet still being able, through Y support, to provide camp for Zoe (something she was never able to experience herself.)

After sharing memories, good food, and countless photo ops, guests left intent on keeping the campfires burning for the next 100 years to ensure that ‘their camp’ becomes another child’s camp home as well.

Sincere thanks to McAlister alumnus, Bob Costas, for kicking off our celebration. His video can be seen here. There are many more stories untold so please continue to share them with us as we conclude our first century and camp onward into the 22nd century! Video stories can be viewed here.

Visit our website: nyycamp.org | camps@ymcanyc.org
2018 Annual Campaign a Success!

THE GOAL WAS SET, THE CALL WAS SENT, AND YOU ALL ANSWERED!

New York YMCA Camp, because of you, achieved its funding goal for 2018. 100 years celebrated by bringing children to camp for yet another year. Your generosity made it possible. Sincere thanks to each of you for joining our camper Scholarship Campaign. Those of you who have been part of supporting camp’s mission for years, your faithfulness is the foundation of camp. Those of you who joined in this year for the first time, your willingness is the encouragement for the future! On to the next century! Thank you for being part of the team, bringing each and every child to us, to the outdoors, to the lifetime impact of camp!

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