

Friends of Camp Newsletter

A Day at Camp

by Becky Pasman, Executive Director

As I start my second season, I look forward to:

- * Excited returning and new staff members meeting for a weekend to renew friendships and plan for the upcoming season.
- * A group of excited campers talking with staff about conquered challenges.
- * All the camp nurses who have returned year after year to “mom” the homesick campers.
- * Cabin row where I can always find a welcoming camper.
- * Sunday evening folk dancing!
- * Singing, campfires and silly kid skits.
- * Meal rituals, the lodge and Cleo.
- * Our leadership campers who return as counselors week after week to give the campers love and lasting memories.
- * My morning walk around camp.
- * Michelle Galliez, the assistant director and my right hand and creative twin.
- * The camp bookkeeper and office manager who diligently track registration and daily camp business.
- * Loyal alumni who continue to give to camp so other children may build positive summer memories.
- * A board of directors whose labor of love keeps camp safe and looking fresh.

VBYC is positively an endearing spot for all who make the summer pilgrimage. Its unique charm keeps campers, alumni, and staff smiling with every memory. Every person involved with its existence helps keep the Spirit of Camp alive!

I'm looking forward to the summer of 2005 – and thank all for allowing me to serve as the Executive Director (or head Mom) of VBYC. The experience has already given me more than I ever imagined.



Spring 2005

*Serving the Youth of
Southwest Michigan
since 1950*

VBYC Board of Directors

Horace Adams
Terri Auensen
Bob Badra
Sharon Bailey
Blain Bechtold
Bob Gregory
Alisa Haynor
Kathy & Rick Kinan
Mike Northuis
Ralph Patterson
Louise Thar Poland
Mike Prestidge
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Jane Vaught
Bob Walker
Tim & Georgie Washburn

Van Buren Youth Camp
12370 45th St
Bloomingdale, MI 49026



Summer Camp Schedule

Register Today!!



Planning for the summer is well under way. A majority of last year's Staff will be returning for a second, third, fourth and yes, even fifth summer at VBYC. Due to the major success of Little Bear, it is returning. Every spring and summer brings new life to camp. The Staff hopes you can camp with us this summer. Bring a friend and join in the Spirit of VBYC. Go online to sign up for any of the sessions listed below:

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Name of Week</u>	<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Cost</u>
June 19 - 25	Leadership Workshop	grades 9 - 12*	\$240
June 26 - July 2	White Pine Middle Youth	ages 11 - 14	\$240
July 6 - 8	Little Bear Pre-Early Youth	ages 6 - 8	\$90
July 10 - 16	Great Bear Early Youth	ages 8 - 11	\$240
July 17 - 23	Rec Lab	ages 13 - 15	\$240
July 24 - 30	Wolverine Middle Youth	ages 11 - 14	\$240
Aug 7 - 13	Arrowhead Early Youth	ages 8 - 11	\$240
Aug 14 - 20	Discovery Early Youth	ages 9 - 12	\$240

* 14 year-olds who are in 9th grade may apply with two letters of reference and a personal essay stating why they would like to attend the Leadership workshop.

*Our new schedule is on our web page at www.vbyc.org
Sign up now while space is still available.*

PayPal coming soon!!

Camper Price Increase

Campers and parents will notice an increase in camper fees this summer. Seven days and six nights at VBYC will now cost \$240. Campers will receive a quality program and this price is still far below other camps. Our competitors' fees range from \$365 to \$555 and often do not include a six-night stay or all programs because many camps charge additional fees for special programs such as teambuilding and overnight adventure. Our caring Staff's exuberant energy assures a week of personal growth, fun



You can be a VBYC Sponsor!

Starting in the late 1950's, sponsorship at VBYC became a popular way for individuals, businesses, and service clubs to support the camp. At that time, there were 13 camper cabins, all of which were sponsored. Sponsorship meant you could maintain or replace the cabin yourself or simply give the camp funds to hire someone to do it for you. In return for a sponsorship, a sign was put on the cabin showing the sponsor's name. This was a real sense of pride. Spring weekends would find all kinds of workerbees as sponsors spruced up their cabin.

There are still two of the original sponsored cabins bearing those sponsors' names. The other cabins were replaced in the 80's with new, low maintenance cabins. The old cabins had been built in the 1930's originally as tent cabins. The new cabins were pre-fabed at the Van Buren Co-Tech Center in Lawrence and assembled and completed by the Camp Board and volunteers. The new cabins also have sponsors, but they differ in that they funded the construction, not continued maintenance of the structures.

Now we are looking for a new type of sponsorship – namely, program areas. We currently have three program areas sponsored, and those are riflery, archery, and sports. We are in need of sponsors for swimming, canoeing, nature, crafts, initiatives, leadership training, and song and dance. Sponsoring a program area encompasses funding equipment and supplies for the program. In addition, sponsors could elect to fund the salary of the staff member teaching that program if they wish. Sponsors' name is placed on a sign in a place of prominence.

The more sponsors we have, the more funds we can save in operational costs and thus the lower our breakeven fees. All capital improvement and major maintenance costs come from donations allowing us to keep camper fees at a minimum.

If you are interested in becoming a sponsor at VBYC, please contact Becky Pasman, Camp Director at 269-521-3855.



African-American Scholarships Available

The Dortha Ampey Memorial Scholarship is available. With the passing of Mrs. Ampey of Paw Paw/Lawton, VBYC was bequeathed \$50,000 with \$10,000 to be used for construction of a structure at camp and \$40,000 designated for camperships to VBYC for African-American young people of the area. We anticipate making five camperships available per year from the interest generated from this wonderful gift. The only criteria is that each camper must have 50% African-American heritage and need assistance.

If you qualify for the Dortha Ampey Memorial Scholarship, please contact Becky Pasman at 269-521-3855 and request an application.

Cleo Notes

PayPal - Good news!! We are in the process of implementing PayPal so that you can pay for camp when you register on line. Watch the website for details!

Interested in working at Camp? Starting April 2 and ending October 15, you may join us every Saturday at 9:00 a.m. to work on projects. Bring a dish to pass for a potluck at 1:00 p.m.

We have rentals on and off the lake. If you are looking for that beautiful summer retreat this year, contact camp at 269-521-3855 for more information.

Send us your "Remember When" stories to be published in this newsletter. Call Becky Beckett at 269-686-2269 or send an email at beckyb1111@chartermi.net.

www.vbyc.org

Van Buren Youth Camp
12370 45th St
Bloomingtondale, MI 49026

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ORGANIZATION
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Kalamazoo, MI
PERMIT NO. 310

Check out our *new* website at:
www.vbyc.org

Serving the Youth of Southwest Michigan Since 1950

ACA Accreditation

Van Buren Youth Camp has again achieved certification from the American Camping Association. What does this mean? This means the camp staff, facilities, and program met the rigid standards set by a national board. The mission of ACA is to create a community of camp professionals who are dedicated to enriching the lives of children and adults through the camp experience. The standards serve as a guideline to achieve this mission.

Last summer we received two visits from ACA inspectors. The first visit was a preliminary inspection. At this time, an inspector previewed camp documents and spent the day learning about our program and facilities. We received a second more in-depth visit in July when camp was in full swing. During this visit, two inspectors reviewed our written documents. Each ACA camp is required to maintain written documentation in the following areas: Site and Food Service, Transportation, Health and Wellness, Operational Management, Human Resources, and Program. A typical visit not only requires proof of compliance to guidelines, it also consists of an inspection of buildings and grounds, and interviews with staff and campers.

Van Buren Youth Camp received superior ratings in all areas. The ACA visiting committee was impressed with our facilities, program areas, and staff. Our program areas are safe, orderly and camper oriented. During the visit, they toured camp, interviewing staff, inspecting equipment, and observing Staff-camper interaction. Our visitors were delighted by camp's atmosphere; they complimented the staff for their safe programs and camper interaction. They were equally complimentary of our camp's grounds and buildings noting it is obvious a great deal of love and care is given to VBYC. It was apparent to the ACA team that VBYC is a camp dedicated to enriching the lives of children and adults through the camp experience.