



Spring 2010

*Serving the Youth of
Southwest Michigan
since 1950*

VBYC Board of Directors

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**Van Buren Youth Camp
12370 45th Street
Bloomington, MI
49026**

Friends of Camp Newsletter

Spending my summers with nature I am constantly reminded of its positive symbiotic relationships. These relationships are most evident within the human interactions at camp; they keep camp's vision alive. We are celebrating our 60th year not only because of a commitment from six decades of staff, dedicated board members and volunteers, but also because of the strong ongoing relationship and support of alumni, campers and our Friends of Camp.

VBYC's friends are truly special individuals. Your support eases camp's everyday financial burdens making it possible for us to continue offering a quality summer program. The donation list is numerous, so numerous I am confident I cannot recount them all, but let me list a snapshot of your kindness.

1. Boats and cars
2. Sports equipment (nets, bullets, basketballs, arrows, backstops...)
3. Program supplies (craft supplies, speakers, books, costumes...)
4. Building supplies
5. Kitchen equipment
5. Reduced or free service fees
6. Monetary donations
7. Sweat, equity and time

Every alumnus donation embodies "to lead is to serve". Our mission, "The Van Buren Youth Camp is a spirit of working together for a better world by providing the opportunity for our young people to grow socially and develop their leadership potential" remains strong because of our alumni and friends. I am overwhelmed and humbled by your support. Your commitment to our program has helped youth ignite their leadership potential for six decades.

Thank you for keeping the spirit of camp alive for 60 years.

In the spirit of camp,
Becky Pasman
Executive Director



Time To Get Camp Ready

On April 3 the Board will be working every Saturday starting at 9 a.m. and go until we are tired. Lunch is potluck so bring a dish to pass. Any volunteers are definitely welcome and encouraged to show up. Come rain or shine, there are always tasks to be done. No expertise is necessary.

GREAT BEAR MUSIC FEST

Van Buren Youth Camp is hosting the Great Bear Music Fest on Saturday, June 12th, with Mainstage performances by Joel Mabus, Detour, The Corn Fed Girls, Red Tail Ring, Mark Sahlgren and Lorraine Caron, The Red Sea Pedestrians, and Sarah Holtschlag and the Crosscuts. Workshops for kids of all ages will be offered throughout the day including rhythm guitar, introduction to upright bass, violin for youngsters, instrument making for kids, instrument petting zoo, wetland adventures, orienteering, singing with Lake Effect, folk dancing, Bubbles the Clown and many other festivities. Meals will be available in the Lodge provided by our Leadership campers. Gates open at 10:00. Tickets can be purchased online at GreatBearMusicFest.org and locally at Marshall Music and Broughton Music, in Kalamazoo, and Hills Pills and That Coffee Place, in Paw Paw. Ticket prices: \$15 individual in advance or \$20 at the gate, \$35 car pool in advance or \$40 at the gate. Bring your lawn chairs and instruments for a day full of fun.



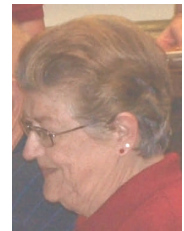
Revival of Van Buren Folk Dancers

VBVC TO CELEBRATE 60 YEARS

Plans are being made to celebrate camp's 60th Anniversary, the dates are August 19th through the 22nd. There will be opportunity to stay in cabins or at our primitive campground. Meals will be served for a nominal fee with a chance to do kitchen duty. There will be fun and activities for all. More information in

Goodbye Dear Friend

I would like to take a minute to pay tribute to a special staff member, our camp bookkeeper, Maggie Koning. She passed away on December 24, 2009 after bravely fighting a battle with numerous cancers. Maggie lived camp pride. Every spring she would proudly wear her camp staff shirt, tuck extra camper applications in her purse, and go about her everyday errands, I am sure, with the intent of bringing another child to camp. We will miss her frequent kind acts – the special desserts each spring, her gifts of special day costumes and party decorations, and her willingness to help every staffer young and old. Her weekly departing question, “Can I get you anything?” will be missed.



Submitted by Becky Pasman

Van Buren Youth Camp 2010 Staff

Becky Pasman	Executive Director	Erica Johnson	Lifeguard/Canoe Instructor
Jay Groth	Program Director	Cody Preston	Lifeguard/Canoe Instructor
Betsy Antisdale	Head Cook	Katherine McKelvey	Sports Instructor/Lifeguard
Seth Field	Part Time Cook	Marian Pintar	Low Ropes/Initiative Instructor/ Lifeguard
Kyle McKelvey	Kitchen	Katherine Rector	Nature Instructor
Nathan Knapp	Kitchen	Melissa Paloucek	Arts & Crafts Instructor
Dillon Preston	Kitchen	Brooke Murphy-Wade	Song, Dance & Drama Instructor
Brian Groth	Kitchen	Nick Beam	Riflery Instructor
Neil Curiel	Volunteer Coordinator	Not yet filled	Archery Instructor
Alex Moyer	Waterfront Director	Bill Swaney & Scott Averill	Maintenance
Frannie Lorenzi	Lifeguard/Swim Instructor	Denise Kuipers	Bookkeeper
Tim Pituch	Lifeguard/Swim Instructor	Margaret Foster	Office Manager

VBYC FUND FOR TOMORROW

Van Buren Youth Camp focuses its programs and offerings on helping youth by developing leadership skills, supporting families, and instilling an appreciation for the environment. Since its founding in 1950, thousands of young people have benefited from a camping experience at VBYC. 2010 marks the 60th Anniversary of VBYC's founding, and the Board is proud to announce the creation of the *VBYC Fund for Tomorrow*. The purpose of this Fund will be to build a permanent endowment to support future VBYC needs.

Between your contributions and camper fees we are able to keep the doors open, keep the basic physical plant functioning, and provide the unique VBYC experience to hundreds of young people each year. By being good managers of our limited financial resources means camp has been able to pay off our mortgage so that VBYC is debt-free. We are grateful for your continued support.

As we look toward the future, we see several challenges that simply cannot be met from current funds, such as:

- Ensuring the long-term financial future of VBYC in the face of steadily declining opportunities for inexpensive, traditional youth camps nationwide. During the past decade more than a third of all camps have closed.
- Building sufficient reserve capital to handle more than routine maintenance and an occasional construction project. This will allow for facility replacement and make future growth a possibility.
- Provide camperships for children who would otherwise be unable to afford to participate.

VBYC emphasizes traditional values and leadership in a simple, even rustic setting. While the content of the various age-group programs may have evolved over the past 50 years, the basic approach and program schedule remains a constant – a tie to what has worked successfully over five decades. VBYC is designed and operated to be as inexpensive as possible in order to include families from diverse socio-economic backgrounds.

The Van Buren Youth Camp Fund for Tomorrow will be invested and the annual earnings used for future camp needs. As our 60th Anniversary year progresses, you will learn more about how *you* can invest in VBYC's future. In the meantime, please direct questions, ideas, or suggestions to any Board member or the camp website.

Paul Knudstrup
Board Member

LEADERSHIP 2010

A group of leadership campers have worked together to help create an epic event for their peers. They began by selecting a theme, "Welcome Destruction"; it's a message with a slight twist; the intent is to help our leaders handle today's fast paced constant changing world. A few of the speakers include the following: Bob Badra, a philosophy and humanitarian instructor from Kalamazoo Valley Community College and Siena Heights University; Cleve Henry, a community leader from Lansing, Michigan; Nathan Hiemstra, a web design contractor and former staff member; Mike Northuis, a track, cross country coach and Boston Marathon competitor; and Phil Poole, a community service officer. All clinics and general sessions concentrate on discovering personal leadership strengths and styles, dealing with conflicts, communicating with peers and adults, accepting the unacceptable, appropriate internet use, and stewardship.

Leadership campers will be focusing on two stewardship projects during the week of leadership. One project will be environmental stewardship. We are one of nine camps selected by the American Camp Association to receive the Camp2Grow program grant. The environmental leadership program, LifeKnowledge®, created by the National FFA organization will provide our leaders project frameworks to be used within our environment and in their communities. They will spend time during leadership workshop nurturing the environment around camp. A second stewardship project is global. Mike Northuis will talk with our campers about the more than 50,000 orphaned children of Rakai, Uganda. These children struggle each day with survival and desperately need shoes. Last year Mike collected and mailed shoes to help this region. Our leaders will be asked to bring unused, well loved shoes to Leadership workshop. You can HELP too!!! Look through your closets, garage, and basement for shoes that are not being used anymore, but could be a treasure for a child or adult. Drop them at camp from June 6-22, or send a small donation to help reduce the cost of shipping.

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

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Check out our camp website at:
www.vbyc.org

Serving Youth Since 1950

2010 Camp Schedule

June 17	Little Bear	ages 6 – 8	Pre-Early Youth
June 20	Leadership Workshop	ages 14* – 18	High School
June 27	Great Bear	ages 8 - 11	Early Youth
July 4	Rec Arts (formerly Rec Lab)	ages 9 – 12	Early Youth
July 11	Wolverine	ages 11 - 14	Middle Youth
July 18	Arrowhead	ages 8 - 11	Early Youth
July 25	White Pine	ages 11 – 14	Early Leadership
August 1	Discovery	ages 9 – 12	Early Youth



*14 year-olds entering ninth grade may apply to Leadership with:

- Two letters of reference
- A personal essay about why they would like to attend leadership.

2010 Summer Nurse Staff

A camp nurse is our weekly dose of mom. They address both emotional and physical needs of our campers. VBYC is blessed to have a veteran staff of dedicated nurses again this summer. Many of the nurses on this list have dedicated four or more summers to camp. I appreciate their continual support and nurturing. They are another example of the ever dedicated individuals who help keep camp's spirit alive. Nurses for this year are: Rosie Glynn – Little Bear; Karen Sipe – Leadership Workshop; Shannon Scheff – Wolverine; Dawn Sutton – White Pine; Kirsten Haroldson – Discovery; Kathy Kinas – Paw Paw Band Camp. If you are interested in becoming a camp nurse, please contact camp (269) 521-3855 or e-mail beckypasman@vbyc.org.

A nurse is still needed for Great Bear, Rec Arts, and Arrowhead.