



2009 Annual Report

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



4-H Camp Palmer Mission Statement

The mission of 4-H Camp Palmer, Inc. is to extend Ohio 4-H camping by engaging youth and adults as they build life skills in a community living environment.

Beliefs:

4-H Camp Palmer, an outreach of Ohio State University Extension, is a caring, cooperative and safe outdoor environment.

4-H Camp Palmer is a fun place to learn.

4-H Camp Palmer is a place where skills, knowledge, goals and aspirations of campers are developed through experiential education.



Camp is moving forward during a year of opportunities. Several new programs, facility upgrades, and improved camping services occurred.

- *New farm safety round-up program served about 200 school children. Next program May 20, 2010*
- *New hayride/farm tour program serving families from Harrison Lake State Park.*
- *Second annual Celebrate 4-H Camp Palmer day was held. Volunteers honored included Steve Arnold of Wood County, Jack Lawrence of Fulton County, Fayette Fire Department-Tom Franks, and Doug Gessner representing Fresh Start Program. Next Celebrate program Oct. 2, 2010*
- *Completed the new covered bridge entrance.*
- *Completed the landscaping in front of office/welcoming center.*
- *Dining hall stage was restored.*
- *Began phase one of mid camp electrical upgrade with installation of 6 new poles.*
- *Princess Camp was a huge success and will be repeated next year.*
- *A number of new retreat groups attended: Sea Cadets, KAM International, Sauder mgt. team, family reunion, scout groups ...*
- *The 4-H summer camps served over 2,000 youth with a great variety of creative programs.*
- *Continued participation by long-term school outdoor education programs: Napoleon, Evergreen, and Swanton middle schools.*
- *Continued development of shooting sports thanks to NRA grant support*
- *Received a donation of \$8,333 (fulfilling a 3 year pledge of \$25,000 toward the future environmental education center) from Farm Credit Services of Mid-America*

*Sincerely,
Bill Goodson*

LEAD, FOLLOW OR ...

This old adage tells the reader to go do something. It says get involved. That is exactly what Perrysburg and Eastwood Schools have done. They have developed programs that are changing their school communities. In 1988 educators at Perrysburg with the help of a \$60,000 three year grant, formed a team to promote leadership skills in their school. High Impact Peer Program or H.I.P.P. was born. Mike Godfrey and Eastwood began a similar journey in 1992 looking for the skills to give his students the ability to solve problems and work with students of diverse backgrounds. He runs Carpe Diem that started from a Drug and Alcohol Program Grant.



Deb Dom, retired school teacher still returns to help with the program she helped create, supervise, and run. She speaks with passion and care about the impact this program has had on the 30 new students that come every spring and fall. Deb said originally it was designed for high risk students but no body wanted to come to a "loser camp". To go was to be considered "one of those kids". So the focus changed to bring a variety of kids from all the different backgrounds at school. This inclusion of all the diverse leaders in the school community was a great step in the process of building a greater and more understanding future. It invited students to challenge and change their inner self confidence and their outward approach to others.



Ms. Dom says "The best part of leading a group of students is that they can leave with an accomplishment and feel good about themselves" "Some kids just do not find that in their lives" Another vivid memory Ms. Dom had was the testimony of one very popular girl saying how she bullied others and now realizes just how unfair and damaging that was. She now saw others outside her group as people that were just different and that they were o.k. too.



Mr. Godfrey says it is the "most important program in his school". We find the Camp Palmer facilities and staff to be exceptional assets for our Carpe Diem program, a program designed to enhance the leadership skills of our 8th - 10th graders who hopefully will aid us in breaking down cliques within our school." It is a wonderful partnership of school and camp in building strong "movers and shakers" of the future.

Mr. Godfrey and Deb Dom know that the power of this experience changes many to see beyond their own interests. It breaks down barriers both inside of students themselves and with those around them. Both agree, in this world

of potential conflicts and fear of being bullied or taken advantage of, these programs push back against the all too familiar norm. This invites all students to achieve their full potential with the help and support of others. These youth go back to their respective

groups at school and form bridges of understanding across the whole school body. Those friendships move on to high school and possibly beyond. So maybe the adage should be lead, follow and create understanding. The ability of understanding is powerful indeed.



THE IMPACT OF 4-H CAMP PALMER ON ONE YOUTH

Derek Bishop has attended 4-H Camp Palmer as a camper for eight years, counselor for two summers, and staff member for one summer. He represents one of 350+ youth that served as a summer camp counselor this year and loves camp.

Derek shares this memory as a camper. "I remember completing the high ropes course. I'm a person who strongly dislikes heights and for me to climb up and actually go through the course was a major accomplishment for me at the time."

His major highlights as a 4-H member has been to be a camp counselor and the 2009-2010 4-H King in Fulton County. "The highlight as a camp counselor is watching the kids get the feel of accomplishment when they have mastered a skill that they just learned. Secondly, seeing the friendships that have been made through the years."

Derek says "camp has a large variety of hands on activities that many youth may not have the chance to do elsewhere. With school pushing academically, there is less chance for youth to have those hands on activities. The coolest thing is seeing the campers grow and they decide to give back to camp by being counselors".

Derek also worked at camp this past summer. He was involved in landscaping, pool maintenance, and leading hayride tours. He said he enjoyed "seeing the many things that go on behind the scenes of camp and being part of a team that has to constantly work together".

Thanks Derek for your involvement in camp in some extremely important roles as a camper, counselor and staff member. Derek currently is in college at Northwest State Community College.

2009 4-H Camp Palmer Guests

• Zion Mennonite Church • Bowling Green Campus Crusade for Christ • Church of the Cross HS Youth • Church of the Good Shepherd Defiance Co 4-H/Princess Camp • University of Toledo Campus Crusade for Christ • Perrysburg HIPP • Super Camp • Eastwood Carpe Diem HIPP • Holland Free Methodist • Trotwood Girl Scouts • Conservation Camp • Auglaize Co 4-H • Wood Co 4-H • Fulton Co 4-H • Henry Co 4-H • 4-H Cloverbuds • Paulding Co 4-H • Putnam Co 4-H • First Church of Christ • Blue Family • BGSU PLA • Elida High School Band • Pi Sorority • Bowsher High School Band • Woodward High School Band • Archbold Show Choir • Figy Family Reunion • Sea Cadets • N. Lutheran School • Wood County MRDD • University of Toledo Campus Crusade for Christ • Wesley United Methodist Church • Memorial Woodworking • Myers Family • Perrysburg HIPP • Fulton Suites • Westgate Chapel Jr Hi • Bryan Lincoln Elementary • Bryan Area Four

OUTDOOR EDUCATION LIVES ON AT 4-H CAMP PALMER

Many youth from area schools have had their education enhanced through experiential learning at 4-H Camp Palmer. Two of the longest running programs are Napoleon and Swanton schools. For more than 35 years over 9,600 sixth graders have been served from these two schools alone. Spring or Fall for one day or up to 5 days, youth have benefited from the outdoor education experience.

Larry Wesche, Napoleon's Director/Leader has chosen to attend in the spring. Spring allows the study of plants, soils, trees, birds, animals and insects after a long, dormant winter. He and the other teachers use the entire year to build up to the camp experience. It also helps to motivate the students throughout the school year.

Betty Jo Sadowski, Swanton's Director/Leader has chosen to attend in the Fall. She and the other teachers follow up the experience the rest of the year by discussing the week's events. The opportunity to get to know her students is a great asset.

Outdoor education helps students develop a positive attitude towards the outdoors, changing attitudes and alleviating fears through first hand experience. Leadership skills are developed and students are more understanding of each other. They learn responsibility and how to work well with others. Students find out they are capable of doing much more than they thought they were able to do.

The outdoor education experience continues to be a positive effect in the students lives in the years after the sixth grade. It improves attitudes toward learning, they are more understanding of each other and when looking back realize how it made them a better individual.

A former student shares that "Camp Palmer is one of the best school events anyone could ever experience. Camp is a place where you can get away from your normal, everyday life and experience things you have never done before like: zipline, flying squirrel, ropes courses and canoeing. And the night time activities are incredible. Who would have ever thought we would see our teachers doing some of the things they do in skits to entertain us. The experience is something I will treasure forever!"

Both Larry Wesche and Betty Jo Sadowski extolled the benefits and rewards of using high school students as counselors. Counselors have shared that the week at camp has been an outstanding memory for them. For some, their experience has led them to choose careers in education.

There is not enough space here to share all the information given to us by Larry Wesche and Betty Jo Sadowski. Karol Westhoven of Evergreen has also shared her experiences. To read their entire responses please go to our website (www.camppalmer.org) and click on Outdoor Education.

Students learn the importance of teamwork and cooperation while canoeing on the lake. Students use math skills while making rope. Outdoor cooking gives students the reward of a roasted apple. Using design skills and creativity youth make a bottle rocket. Larry Wesche being surprised by current and former staff and students for 35 years at Camp Palmer.



herd • Geesey Family • Bryan Area Foundation/YELL • Scrapbooking Party • Super Camp counselors • 4-H Counselor Training • Carpe Diem • KAM International • First United Methodist Church • Evergreen Middle School • Napoleon Middle School • Perrysburg Henry Co 4-H • Organizational Leadership Program • Williams Co 4-H • Indiana 4-H • Allen Co 4-H • Van Wert Co 4-H • Defiance Co • Bryan Church of The Nazarene • Fulton Suites • Epworth Student Ministries • Eastwood High School Band • UT Alpha Omicron • Notre Dame Academy Crew • Swanton Middle School • Christ Community Church • Johnny Appleseed Gang 4-H Club • St John Memorial Lutheran Church • Glore Family • United Methodist Church • Four Co Career GRADS • Eastwood Carpe Diem • Sauder's Foundation/YELL • Fairview Middle School



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