



THE SOUTH MOUNTAIN YMCA CAMPS

THE ARROWHEAD



A PUBLICATION OF THE SOUTH MOUNTAIN YMCA CAMPS

FALL 2023

Meet Bill Hinton, Our New Chief Executive Officer!



Bill is a native of Austin, Texas. He attended Colby College in Waterville, Maine, where he played Division III basketball and earned a degree in Psychology. After graduation, Bill took a job as the Program Director at Camp La Junta for Boys, which he attended as a child, and has been a full-time Camp Director since 1999. He started his YMCA career as the Outdoor School Director at Camp Classen, the Overnight Camp at the YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City. He then spent ten years as the Executive Director of Camp Flaming Arrow at the YMCA of Greater San Antonio and was instrumental in reaching 92% occupancy and balancing the budget. In 2014, he became the Executive Director of Camp Manitou-Lin at the YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids. During quarantine, he served as the VP of Camping Services for the YMCA of Northern Colorado, bringing Camp Santa Maria back up to speed post-COVID. He later moved back to Michigan as the Camp Director of YMCA Camp Hayo-Went-Ha, where he learned the ins and outs of Independent YMCA Camping. He took the reins of the South Mountain YMCA Camps this April saying, "From day one I have felt welcome on Mountain." He has been impressed with Camp's staff and operations and looks forward to taking camp to the next level and Keeping the Fires Burning. Bill has a keen eye and a focus on strong financial stewardship as well as mission development and fundraising. He also has a passion for creating a culture of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Bill has 3 children— Andrew, Laine, and Luke — and has loved sharing the YMCA mission and Ragers' journey with them. He is especially proud that Luke is now a staff member at YMCA Camp Hayo-Went-Ha in Northern Michigan and Y on the Fly of Hastings, Michigan.

Bill looks forward to connecting with the South Mountain YMCA family as well as the local Berks County community. Things look bright for the South Mountain YMCA Camps with Bill at the helm! If you would like to meet with Bill, please reach out by sending an email to bhinton@smymca.org or calling 610-670-2267.



Bucket hats, Cow Plushies, and Pastel Blue ... Oh my!

Now under the management of our own Stuart Harsh, the Trading Post has added fabulous new items and new shades to fill any wish list! These items flew off the shelves this summer but are back in stock and waiting to stuff your stockings! Check them out online at www.smymcatradingpost.square.site/s/shop



THE SOUTH MOUNTAIN YMCA CAMPS: *Igniting the Fires of Friendship.*



2023 Bynden Wood Day Camp

At Bynden Wood Day Camp, we continue to pride ourselves on the rewarding task of providing our local families with more than just a place to go

during the summer months — we believe attending Bynden Wood Day Camp is an opportunity for our campers to make memories, grow in independence, and learn values such as caring, honesty, inclusion, respect, responsibility that contribute to a strong community at camp as well as back at home. Our wide range of activities, including climbing, swimming, crafts, sports, and nature exploration, is designed to ignite our campers' curiosity and foster a love of adventure. A bit of variety was added to our weekly routine by inviting community partners, such as Hawk Mountain Sanctuary and Berks County Search & Rescue. Our highly trained staff from around the world serve as passionate mentors to our campers, creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where they can learn, grow, and thrive. We heavily invest in their training and development to provide the best possible experience for our campers. We also continue to organize themed weeks to keep the experience fresh and exciting for campers. While Session Ten's "Color Wars" theme again reigned supreme by drawing in 169 campers, "Star Wars", "Stone Age", "Holidaze", and "Spy vs. Spy" were other popular themes. This year, Bynden Wood Day Camp finally returned to pre-pandemic numbers and operated at near-capacity, hosting 463 individual campers from 289 households for a total of 1,358 camper weeks. That's an average of 136 campers per week for the ten weeks of summer!

Antonio Skidmore
Youth & Family Director



"DAISY" our resident 1-year old cow loves company almost as much as apples! Stop by and say hi. She might not be Taylor Swift, but she's still kinda famous ... she even made an appearance on Facebook!



"ELF" the 14-year old miniature donkey did his best to channel Beppo for the campers, but just couldn't bring himself to bray as much. He loves to spend time with the ponies.



PA Senator Chris Gebhard presents CEO Bill Hinton with a proclamation marking this momentous event.



Lifetime Achievement honorees Dan Huyett, Samantha Duberstein, and Jim Boscov break ground on the new Dining Hall renovation project.



Surrounded by a hollow square, 4th generation camper Will Durdan, great grandson of our founder, Uncle Mel, lowers the flag at the end of the day.

Camp Conrad Weiser's 75th Anniversary Reunion

On September 8-10, alumni from as far away as the Czech Republic descended on the Mountain to rekindle old friendships and forge new ones. Citations and proclamations from all levels of state and local government marking this momentous occasion were presented. Programs were open, the hoppers performed their mealtime duties, and even the Polar Bears made an appearance! The Dining Hall was filled with memorabilia and lively conversation throughout the weekend as folks searched for their names on the Officer of the Day arrows. The highlight of the weekend was the presentation of the Harold Schappell Lifetime Achievement Award to three outstanding alumni — Jim Boscov, Dan Huyett, and Ken Duberstein — whose continued involvement in Camp at all levels helped us reach this lofty goal. They later helped us break ground for Phase 3 of the Dining Hall renovation project. Fresh off his first summer season on the Mountain, CEO Bill Hinton introduced himself and outlined his vision for the future at a meet-and-greet. Mother Nature almost cooperated, but a little rain didn't stop everyone from enjoying campfire songs, skits, and a Cedar Chip Ceremony, after which COO Cory Evans presented Legacy Awards to 3-, 5-, and 10-year campers and staff members. Topping the night off, it was our honor to welcome back Camp alum and Warner Records artist Mallory Merk! Fresh off her North American tour, Mallory brought the house down by performing some of her hits and a sentimental favorite for the sold-out crowd in the Boscov Program Center! The weekend was brought to a close following a traditional chapel ceremony, presided over by one of our longest-tenured alumni, Rev. Tom Reinsel.

A HUGE thank you goes out to everyone who made the trip!

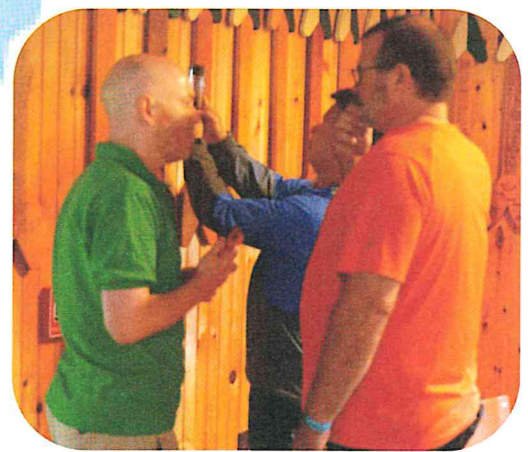
THIS is how we Keep the Fires Burning!



Rev. Tom Reinsel wowed everyone with his rendition of the campfire classic, "My Hat it has Three Corners"



Warner recording artist & Camp Alum Mallory Merk entertained everyone at Closing Campfire.



Alumni Colin Bordley, Peter Trang, and Myles Hamilton search for familiar names on the Officer of the Day arrows.

Penny Wars Has Arrived!

This summer, Bynden Wood campers competed in the First Annual Penny Wars. Penny Wars is a fundraiser that teaches our day campers the value of philanthropy. Each child was encouraged to bring loose change and deposit it in their group's jar. At the end of the week, the group with the most money in their jar won an ice cream party. A second party was awarded to the group with the highest point total, and that's where the strategy comes in ... play it straight or sabotage the other groups. Which would you choose?

The scoring was as follows:

1 penny = +1 point

1 nickel = -5 points

1 dime = -10 points

1 quarter = -25 points

1 dollar bill = +100 points

(no bills larger than \$1 were accepted)

All told, our day campers raised just over \$1,600 across ten weeks. Every penny went to Camp's "Reach Out for Youth" Campaign which provides financial assistance to deserving youths who want to attend Camp Conrad Weiser, Bynden Wood Day Camp, or any number of Outdoor Center programs.



PENNY WARS



2024 Summer Camp Enrollment Opens on October 2! Apply now to secure your spot for our most popular weeks and programs!

www.smymca.org



Do you dream of spending time on the Mountain? Peak Passes for the 2023-24 Season (valid from 9/1/23 to 5/31/24) are now available in the Main Office. You and your family — both the 2- and 4-legged variety — can hike, run, bike, cross country ski, and snowshoe.

NEW THIS SEASON: FISHING!

You can enjoy catch & release fishing at our pond located at the John R. Post Outdoor Program Center with a valid PA license.



2023 Camp Conrad Weiser Season in Review

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER, BUILDING SKILLS, AND REDISCOVERING LIFE WITHOUT TECHNOLOGY

This year has been a testament to our unwavering commitment to providing a transformative experience for our campers, filled with opportunities for personal growth, building social and life skills, character development, and the joys of life without technology. In

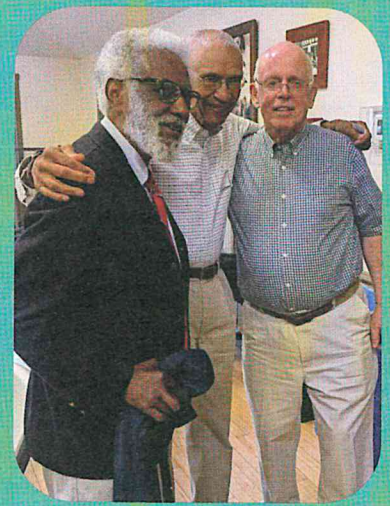
2023, Camp Conrad Weiser hosted a total of 681 campers who stayed with us for a total of 1,178 weeks, a significant increase over 2021. An impressive 71% of all eligible campers from 2022 returned to camp this year. Both statistics reflect the strong demand for our unique camp experience and the enduring appeal and value of Camp Conrad Weiser in the lives of our campers and their families. We also continued to strengthen our international ties by hosting delegates from the YMCAs of Germany and Spain. They participated in traditional camp weeks, leadership programs, homestays, and exciting sightseeing trips to nearby cities. Additionally, we sent a delegation of ICEP campers to Germany, accompanied by our dedicated Leader, Kevin Hernandez. Six campers from our community had the extraordinary opportunity to attend the first-ever Global Leaders Camp in Salduero, Spain, hosted by our partners at the YMCA of Spain, with Patrick Newill serving as the leader. We hosted three Counselor-In-Training Sessions throughout the summer, empowering future leaders and providing them with valuable skills. Two Equestrian Specialty Camps provided campers with unique horseback riding experiences, while our Literary-themed Camps — Camp Half-Blood and Penn's Woods — ignited imaginations and encouraged a love for reading and storytelling. The Summer ended with our teen travel program, "Adventure-Palooza" which took 16 teens around the state for spelunking, whitewater rafting, biking, ziplining, train rides, amusement park adventures, and more! We proudly welcomed 122 (not all international) staff members from 10 different countries, enriching the camp experience with diverse perspectives and cultural exchange.

In closing, we are immensely proud of the resilience and dedication displayed by our camp community throughout the challenges of the past few years. Camp Conrad Weiser remains a place where young people can come together, grow, and discover the beauty of life without constant technology. We look forward to another year of fostering personal growth, creating lifelong memories, and strengthening the bonds that make Camp Conrad Weiser so special.

As always, Keep the Fires Burning

Cory Evans

COO, Camp Conrad Weiser



The Godboldte Military Family Fund

Named for three outstanding and highly-decorated Camp alumni — Bobby, Corky, and Irv Godboldte — this fund provides much-needed financial assistance to allow the children of families that are serving or have served in the Armed Forces or the Reserves to attend Camp. Visit www.smymca.org to donate today!



Our Nearly-World-Famous Climbing Tower was rebuilt this spring ... Check out those new lines and grips!

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THE SOUTH MOUNTAIN YMCA CAMPS: *Keep the Fires Burning!*

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

2023

October 2
October 7
October 21
October 22
October 27-29
November 4
November 18
December 2
December 26-30

2024 Summer Camp Enrollment Opens
Kids at Camp, Parents Night Out
Guided Night Hike
FREE Fall Festival
Fall Harvest Family Camp
Kids at Camp, Parents Night Out
Guided Night Hike
Kids at Camp, Parents Night Out
Winter Day Camp

DONATE TODAY AT WWW.SMYMCA.ORG

Hey, Let Us Know!

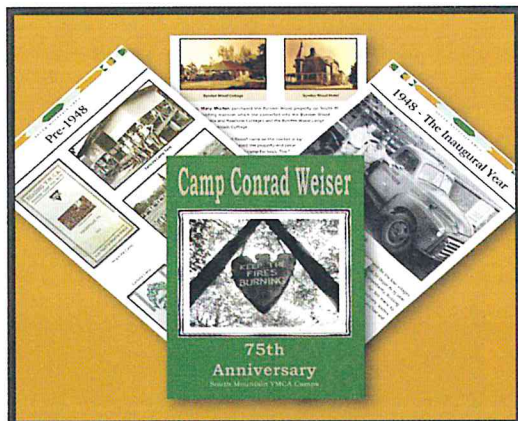
We'd love to hear what's going on in your lives! Keep us up to date on graduations, new jobs, promotions, weddings, birth announcements ... all of it!

mburger@smymca.org

Celebrate Camp Conrad Weiser's 75th Anniversary

Covering everything from when Uncle Mel Durdan arrived with only a pile of boards and a dream to today's modern renovations, this lovingly crafted hardcover book will transport you back to the mountain. It has been painstakingly assembled by a committee of dedicated alumni for the past year. Looking at our history decade by decade and celebrating the people that built our program, it tells the story of Camp Conrad Weiser through photos, reports, and memories submitted by alumni from around the world.

Order on-line at: smymca.org/trading-post-2/



Igniting the Fires of Friendship since 1948