



# OCAsional News

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## Managing Homesickness

Three summers ago I had the pleasure of looking after an eight-year-old girl named Queralt. Despite being far away from home and surrounded by unfamiliar people who did not speak her language, Queralt flourished at camp. She quickly mastered camp routines, the underwater summer-sault and basic English. She was a joy to be around during the day. At night, however, Queralt suffered from severe homesickness.

The subject of homesickness generally comes up in pre-camp training: counsellors will have amusing stories to tell about kids with a history of homesickness. Yet despite the potential homesickness has to ruin a child's summer at camp, to try the patience of even the most seasoned counsellors, and to disrupt the activities of whole cabins, it sometimes does not receive the attention it deserves.

A coherent strategy for preventing and dealing with homesickness can go a long way to limit its detrimental effects at camp.

From a staff member's perspective, homesickness among your campers can become extraordinarily frustrating. It breaks your heart and wears down your patience at the same time. Homesickness can also be very enigmatic: what to make of the child who cries every night at camp because she misses her parents, but then cries when they come to get her because she doesn't want to leave? How can we deal with the child who seems absolutely fine and enjoys the camp experience to the fullest, but when the parents are around he or she becomes hysterical? What can be done with the child who voluntarily returns to camp summer after summer despite serious homesickness, and never seems to improve?

The transition to camp life is not easy for many children and homesickness is a natural reaction. For some, getting used to sharing, communal living and unfamiliar routines is very stressful. There are also increasing numbers of campers who have to deal with being in a new country, and learning a new language and a new way of life when they come to camp in Ontario.

Children express homesickness in a variety of different ways, though we tend to become more concerned with and attentive to the children who cry or discuss it openly. However, the child that bullies other children or makes fun of their homesickness may be equally as homesick, but expresses it in different ways. Another indicator of homesickness may be frequent visits to the camp nurse or doctor. Counsellors need to learn to recognize homesickness in all its forms and find ways to address it before it becomes a serious problem.

As counsellors we tend to spend too much time dealing with the symptoms of homesickness and not enough time trying to prevent it. We need to ensure that every camper has the opportunity to bond with a counsellor, instructor or another grown-up at camp. Having a close relationship with an adult can be a positive experience. Kids will feel more secure if they understand that there is someone who will be there for them, and staff benefit because the child will feel accountable to someone. Instructors can play an important role by taking kids under their wing. This can be especially important in camps which are activity—as opposed to group—focused and in programs of the summer school type.

We need to provide an atmosphere wherein counsellors, and in particular younger or newer staff, feel comfortable

talking about homesickness and getting help when dealing with homesick children. Counsellors often take homesickness personally, and feel that if a child misses his or her family this is a reflection on the quality of their work. This can mean that counsellors are reluctant to share their problems with senior staff and directors who might be able to help. While senior staff and directors have been around long enough to know that homesickness is natural, many new and younger staff may feel it would be a strike against them to seek outside help from those with more experience.

Finally, hugging is important. It is our job to care for the campers, and that includes their emotional as well as physical needs; campers may require a hug from time to time. Counsellors should not be afraid to hug children that need it.

If you are faced with a child suffering from severe homesickness, there are many things that you can do to try to reduce its impact.

See *Limit Parent Contact*, page 10

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**"For every action there is an equal and opposite government program." — Bob Wells**



# From Barb's Laptop

## Learning From a Guitar

Amid the educational jargon of "deliverable outcomes" and "paradigm shifts", the article titled, *Would you play a one-string guitar?*, came like a breath of fresh air. As I struggled to understand learning, both my own learning and facilitating the learning of others, I seized upon the article as something I might be able to understand.

The ideas expressed in the article are simple but have far-reaching implications. The essence of the author's concept is that we have six learning capabilities. Each capability enables us to learn, but using all of them leads to powerful learning experiences and to greater understanding.

The capabilities are:

- Rational - intellectual powers, linear thinking
- Metaphorical - intuitive and right brain thinking, subconscious thoughts
- Relational - relationships, learning from and with others
- Emotional - using emotions to generate learning
- Physical - body energy, doing activities
- Spiritual - tapping the inner spirit, natural environment

The use of the guitar metaphor brought visions of campfires and singsongs and also a new understanding of why camp is such a powerful experience. While the school system emphasizes rational learning, at camp we value all these areas of learning. Every day and in every activity, we encourage and support campers and staff in learning in so many different ways.

The guitar image drifted into my mind as I listened to the Conference Committee discuss various aspects of the conference program. We bring the essence of "camp" to the Sheraton Parkway each year by providing a variety of ways of learning. Each of us has a way of learning that we prefer but, as the metaphor suggests, when we use all of our capabilities, we can make beautiful music.

### Things to Do

- Send in my conference registration form
- Reserve a room at the Sheraton Parkway
- Plan January Transition Board Meeting for new Board
- Thank retiring Board members - John Jorgenson, Bob Smith, Dave Ward

Barb Gilbert  
President

Reference: Griffin, V.R. *Holistic learning/teaching in adult education: would you play a one-string guitar?* in Draper, James A. and Stein, Thelma Barer-Stein, (eds.) *The Craft of Teaching Adults*, Toronto: Culture Concepts, Inc., 1988

## Come Out and Join us

Guess what? It's that time again. We need enthusiastic people to assist us in putting together another powerful Counsellor Conference. Each spring, the Counsellor Conference Committee hosts a training event designed especially for counsellors and support staff at our many OCA Day and Residential summer camps.

If you believe you have the ambition to assist in arranging a dynamic Counsellor Conference, please contact the OCA at 416-781-0525 or John Bergman at 905-884-9756.

John Bergman  
OCA Counsellor Conference Committee Member

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# Editor's Note

## Thank you, Yuen-Ching Chow

The faces of Canadians, especially in urban areas, are changing. New waves of immigrants, from a number of countries, are arriving in Canada. Their knowledge of what constitutes suitable recreational and educational activities for their children comes from a vastly different perspective; their preconceptions of typical Canadian summer activities may be incorrect. They may also have little or no knowledge of canoeing, sailing, archery or certain land-sports.

We were therefore fortunate to welcome Yuen-Ching Chow as the speaker at the OCA's Annual General Meeting on December 10th. Artist, businesswoman, advisor, interpreter, committed family advocate and teacher, Yuen-Ching has combined all her talents into a successful consulting business. She is extremely active in assisting newcomers from the Asia-Pacific area to integrate into the Canadian mode of life. Yuen-Ching spoke on creative and financially sound ways to market the concept of camps to the Asian community. In many cases, her advice will work for any ethnic community. Yuen-Ching recommends:

- Know who you are; you must grab people's attention by introducing yourself and what you have to offer within a three-minute speech. Emphasize safety, structure and the disciplined environment of camping.
- Discuss with a well-resourced Chinese-Canadian the level of general awareness the Chinese communities in your area have about yourself or camping.
- Know why different ages of Chinese-Canadians and the newer immigrants

behave differently depending on where they originated and on where in Ontario they now reside. Know also their educational level. Yuen-Ching discussed the traits of the various Chinese communities in southern Ontario and gave insights on the ones that are most likely to consider a camp experience.

- Allow active participation; this permits your clients to experience what you are trying to sell. Reliance on only basic advertising will not work.

- Don't hesitate to use interpreters and translators, but any advertising must be well-designed, visual and tailored to persuade a change in the psychological attitude of your clients. This must be done in a trusted Chinese environment. For instance, sponsoring a Chinese event gets the message across that you value Chinese culture and presents your logo in a positive light.

- Typically, most of the Chinese population is passive with regards to activities that are not related to school or work; they come from too busy and competitive an environment to care about other means of leisure. They must be convinced as to the benefits of the camping experience.

- A Chinese "Camp Awareness Day" does wonders. Yuen-Ching proposes collective ventures, either under the umbrella of the Ontario Camping Association or through a group of camps that share similar features (e.g., site location).

Copies of handouts given by Yuen-Ching Chow are still available through the OCA office. Examples of Chinese advertisements are also on display.

Thank you, Yuen-Ching, for a delightfully informative evening!

Fiora Hawryluk

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Thunder Bay, ON P7E 1M5  
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YMCA-YWCA Camping, c/o George White Outdoor  
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B: 519-667-3300 Fax: 519-455-2519  
e-mail: ymca.jjanzen@odyssey.on.ca

Get ready and get set to go to the  
Association of Camp Nurses  
International Camp Health Conference!

**Let's Talk Camp Health  
October 14-17, 1999  
Concordia Language Villages  
Bemidji, Minnesota**

Questions? Call ACN's national office at  
218-586-2633 or Pearl Bell at 416-491-9651.



# Competition at Camp? Perhaps Not

Oh my heavens, this is a really difficult situation. I have been in children's camping for over 10 years. As an advocate of non-competitive camping, I am left hanging as I look towards my campers.

Here's the problem. Over the years, children have grown up with the fast-paced culture of ESPN, Hockey Night in Canada or any other rivalry sport you care to refer to. It is the "in your face" syndrome which had my campers run up to me this summer after a camp-wide sporting event and begged me to reveal the score.

To keep the campers happy and to make this sporting event appear legitimate, I stood outside the dining hall appearing to keep score of the game the campers were playing.

In some ways, I found myself putting on a grand production: me as a scorekeeper welcoming campers from each cabin group to bring me a wild animal. What did I give them? A point to encourage them to hunt for more wild animals.

I remember that a lot of these campers had to make certain without a doubt that I marked a point down under their cabin group just to get that point.

In all honesty, sometimes I really did keep score, and other times I took the score sheet and properly placed it in the garbage. There were times I lost track of who received what score and I really did not care because at my camp, affiliated with the YMCA, we try to discourage competition and play the game for the sport of it.

In my little real world which consists of my desk and computer, I create camp-wide games for the summer. In most of the games, it is a fact that there will be different teams. If you get right to the heart of the matter, I suppose each team may be labelled as competing against each other.

I find it inevitable that in most camp-wide games, particularly those of a sports nature, you are going to have to divide your camp into teams.

Now, here is the persisting question: are they placed into teams to compete against other teams, or are they in teams to merely work together within their team?

The answer with which I agree is that campers are not placed in teams to compete against each other. They are placed in teams to stress working together.

*John Bergman  
OCA Individual Member*

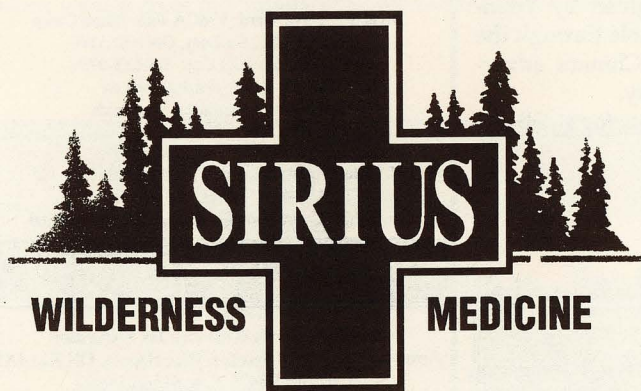
## Building Bridges

We are pleased to welcome Dr. Linda Hill to the OCA Directors and Senior Staff Conference in February. Dr. Hill is a trained and experienced child care worker, educator, psychologist and author of *Discovering Connections*, a new book about inclusion.

Over the past 25 years, Dr. Hill has become well-known on Vancouver Island for her approach to building bridges across differences. She combines research and best practice in cross-cultural communications, social learning and participatory education for social change.

Please join Dr. Hill's pre-conference workshop on Wednesday, February 24 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. to discover how to become a more inclusive group leader by learning how to adapt and improvise cooperative games that build social skills. Check out the Conference program for more information.

*Sari Grossinger  
Co-Chair, OCA Special Needs Resource Committee*



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# Women's Health Matters Forum & Expo

Now in its third year, the Women's Health Matters Forum and Expo provides up-to-the-minute information on many health issues. The Ontario Camping Association will be present as a non-profit exhibitor during the event, in recognition of the fact that the thousands of people in attendance at the Forum are aware and interested in matters that affect all of us: ourselves, our children, our environment and our society's infrastructure.

Of particular interest to the camping community will be two presentations at the Forum given by Dr. Mary Pipher. Dr. Pipher is the internationally known best-selling author of Reviving Ophelia, Hunger Pains and The Shelter of Each Other: Rebuilding Our Families. Reviving Ophelia was at the top of the New York Times list for 23 weeks. Therapist, writer, and speaker, Dr. Pipher is a clinical psychologist in private practice in

Nebraska. Her special area of interest is how North American culture affects the mental health of people. Her articulate and energetic delivery creates enthusiasm for her ideas in a way that unites her audiences. At the Women's Health Matters Forum and Expo, Dr. Pipher will speak on the challenges faced by girls and young women in the 1990s. She will also discuss how the loss of community in today's society has hurt our oldest institution: the family. Both presentations provide excellent information for any person working with children.

In addition, the following lively and interactive sessions will be of particular interest to camp professionals:

- Harm Reduction: Talking Sense to Teens About Drugs
- Depression: The Disease of the 21st Century
- Understanding Allergies

- Healthy Weight for Children: The Possible Dream
- How to Avoid Sports-Related Injuries
- Healthy Eating on the Run: Is It Possible?
- Vitamins and Minerals: Can You Get Enough of a Good Thing?

The Women's Health Matters Forum and Expo will take place January 22-23, 1999 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre.

For more information, call 416-323-6000.

Jocelyn Palm  
Glen Bernard Camp

## Camping Makes the World Go Round

One of the most rewarding aspects of involvement with the International Camping Fellowship has been the opportunity to meet and become friends with camping colleagues from many countries around the world. The exchange of information and perspectives is always refreshing and provides great impetus for reviewing one's own operation and practices.

Recently, I had the opportunity to travel to Australia and meet with several ICF friends. It was a marvelous experience to spend five days with Bill and Jenny Bowker and their son Matthew at their camp. The Bowkers are the owners/directors of a large and thriving outdoor education centre and host farm called Kangaroobie. Located on the south coast of Australia (a three-hour drive along the Great Ocean Road), Kangaroobie is situated on 2,000 acres of stunning property that overlooks the Twelve Apostles—a well-known Australian attraction—and the historic shipwreck coast.

With Australia's seasons reversed from ours (I must admit it took some getting used to speak of spring turning to summer in late November and early December!), the nature of the camping programs offered throughout the country differ dramatically from our own. Summer break occurs in Australia from December to early February and the classic North American summer camp experience simply does not exist. What I observed in terms of programming was much more in line with what many of us would refer to as outdoor education centres operating year-round or during shoulder seasons.

Typically, schools and community groups travel to Kangaroobie for extended periods of time (the group I observed was a school from Melbourne that would rotate students through the site over a 10-day period). More often than not, the staff at Kangaroobie provide program support where necessary with the teachers/leaders from the visiting group taking principal responsibility for instruction.

The fact that Kangaroobie is a working farm provides some wonderful benefits for all visitors. They get a feel for "life on the farm" and in fact, many choose farm activities as part of the program. While I was visiting, 150 cows were due for their annual pregnancy test (it's not necessary to go into details, but the 150th cow, with the help of the local veterinarian, had a close encounter with a Canadian!).

The other activities offered range from the familiar (canoeing, archery, orienteering, ropes and initiatives) to the unusual (coastal erosion study, bush art and craft, maritime history). I came to realize that the Bowkers have been creative and resourceful as they have evolved and introduced programming over many years. Their example has prompted me to begin looking beyond the traditional camp programs that we offer at our site and start to consider alternatives that celebrate the space we have and the region that surrounds us.

After five memorable days at Kangaroobie, I spent a day in Melbourne with Don McDowell and David Strickland of the Camping Association of Victoria. I was most intrigued by the direct association between school curriculum and the programs offered in camps across Australia. The Camping Association of Victoria has worked tirelessly to develop a working relationship with the Ministry of Education and have in turn developed very specific documents that aid both camps and schools in providing board-recognized and endorsed programs. I look forward to sharing an overview of the membership services of another camping association in the next *OCA'sional News*.

Until next time,

Jeff Bradshaw  
Canadian Representative  
International Camping Fellowship

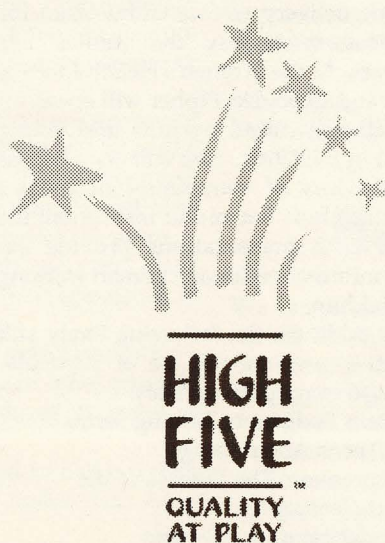


## High Five Program Coming to Your Region

Recreation and sports activities make an important contribution to how children develop physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually. HIGH FIVE, a new provincial quality assurance program, was developed to ensure that this progress is positive and encourages children to achieve their full potential.

HIGH FIVE is already underway with training sessions planned for front-line staff and supervisors in Halton Hills, London, Ottawa and Toronto. Employees and volunteers in municipal Parks and Recreation Departments, YMCAs and local colleges will be the first to undergo the training. After the initial demonstration phase is over, HIGH FIVE training will be available in more regions and organizations.

If you are on the HIGH FIVE mailing list, watch for the next edition of *Quality at Play*, the HIGH FIVE newsletter, and our detailed *User Guide* which are coming out in the next few months. If you would like more information, or would like to join the HIGH FIVE mailing list, contact us



through Parks and Recreation Ontario,  
1185 Eglinton Ave. E., Suite 406, North  
York, ON M3C 3C6 or drop in at our  
website: [www.prontario.org](http://www.prontario.org).

*David Heeney*  
*Parks and Recreation Ontario,*  
*High Five Program*

## Election Results

At the OCA Annual General Meeting, held on December 10th, the new Board of Directors was presented. The Executive will consist of:

- Ellen Nash, Incoming President (Camp Northland)
- Jill Dundas, Vice President (Girl Guides of Canada)
- Eoin Wood, Treasurer (Wanapitei)
- Barb Gilbert, Past President (Individual Member)

The Directors are:

- Brian Blackstock (Individual Member)
- Elaine Cole (Camp Walden)
- Pauline Hodgetts (Camp Hurontario)
- David Latimer (Kilcoo Camp)
- Jen Palacios (Individual Member)
- Maija Zeibots (Camp Oochigeas)

At the AGM, Barb Gilbert thanked John Jorgenson (Camp Tawingo) who is coming to the end of his term as Past President. John will remain active, however, in his new role as incoming president of the Canadian Camping Association.

We thank all those members who allowed their names to stand for election, and to all the Individual, Student and Camp members who voted. It is vital that all members become as involved as possible in the workings of our Association.

If you were unable to attend the Annual General Meeting and would like a copy of the 1998 Annual Report, please call the OCA office at 416-781-0525.

*Fiora Hawryluk*  
*OCA Human Resources Committee Member*



## Accessible Camping Visions

Have we got something for all camp directors and senior staff members who will be involved with campers with disabilities! We call it, "Accessible Camping Visions."

"Accessible Camping Visions" is a workshop that will be held on Sunday, February 28, as part of the OCA's Annual Conference for Directors and Senior Staff. This workshop will be centered around visions of camping choices for individuals with various disabilities and camping interests. Whether you come from a camp considered to be mainstream, or one serving special needs populations, you are invited to come and share your experiences and your visions. Interaction will be key as you become the centre of this workshop. Come with an open mind and be prepared to share your views, voice your concerns and celebrate your successes and even your challenges.

The Special Needs Resource Committee's mission is to support all of our member camps and, wherever possible, assist them in dealing with issues that pertain to campers with special needs. We are committed to this ideal and we feel that the "Accessible Camping Visions" workshop will go a long way to provide everyone who attends invaluable information and great opportunities to network.

*John Bergman*  
*OCA Special Needs Resource*  
*Committee Member*

## Label Program in Full Swing

The OCA would like to remind camps that clothing label order forms are available from the OCA office.

Whether your camp needs 75, 100, or 1,500 labels, give us a call to ensure your camp is "lost-and-found" friendly.

Also, if any camps have label order forms from previous years, **please discard them and call the OCA for our new and improved forms.** The price is now \$11.00 per 100 labels.





**Ontario Camping Association  
Conference for Directors and Senior Staff**

Recognized by the Canadian Camping Association/  
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**Conference Highlights Include:**

- ❖ **Keynote Speakers:**
  - Steve Paikin
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# Life, Liberty and Peanut Butter

There is a new battle raging in many Canadian schools, from British Columbia to Nova Scotia. It's not about pedagogical principles, class size or even racial tensions in the classroom. This is a battle about peanut butter. My daughter, 5, an otherwise picture of health, suffers from a life-threatening peanut allergy. Tiny amounts of peanut products in her mouth, eyes or nose will send her body into shock, virtually instantaneously. Her face, mouth and throat swell, breathing becomes very difficult, she becomes disoriented and, if not treated immediately with an injection of adrenalin, she could die within minutes. She carries injectable medication, her "epipen", in a fanny pack around her waist everywhere she goes. Even this treatment will buy her perhaps only 15 minutes to get to the emergency room. It is estimated that at least one percent of all children suffer from some form of anaphylaxis and experts agree that it is on the rise in children.

Because of its deadly nature, parents of peanut-allergic children often try to persuade their schools to provide peanut-free lunchrooms or to prohibit peanuts altogether in the school. Most families are supportive of such initiatives. But there is a small and vocal minority that assert that their rights are being violated. This argument is usually focused around peanut butter, an inexpensive source of protein for children's lunches. But for the anaphylactic child, peanut butter is poison. Thus the conflict is crystallized: the safety of the anaphylactic child to the "right to peanut butter."

Peanut butter is particularly deadly to anaphylactic children because it sticks to surfaces, to cutlery and to hands and faces. One Canadian child died because the jam sandwich she had eaten had been made with a knife used to make a peanut butter sandwich. Another died because her cheese sandwich was packed in a bag next to a peanut butter sandwich.

As a law professor with an interest in human rights, I am confident that the allergic child has the law on her side. Provincial human rights legislation prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability for services customarily available to the public. It is clear that a life-threatening medical condition that greatly restricts the activities of daily living is a disability.

Further, it is clear that schools have a legal duty to accommodate children with physical disabilities. The only limit on that duty is the principle of undue hardship. The Supreme Court of Canada in 1992 made clear that the mere fact of inconvenience to others would not limit the duty to accommodate. There would have to be a significant interference with the rights of others. And the "rights of others" does not include a right to eat peanut butter under the law in any Canadian jurisdiction. Similarly, the equality guarantees in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which clearly applies to school boards, prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. The point, in short, is that the law requires people to be inconvenienced and the state to spend some money, to protect the rights of disadvantaged members of our community. All Canadian children have a right to safe education in the public school system. Children with anaphylaxis deserve no less.

As a parent, however, I believe that this should not have to be fought out in the courts or before human-rights tribunals. This is an issue about community and social responsibility. Schools are public institutions to which we entrust our children on the assumption that they will be educated and safe. Schools are also, outside of the family, often the first community to which our children belong. When one member of a community is in danger, one hopes that other members will rally behind that individual, even if support is not always the most convenient option. The

extent to which we demonstrate this to our children will shape their vision of community and responsibility.

Children with anaphylaxis are greatly limited in their ability to participate in social life. Most only eat food made at home. Birthday parties, restaurant outings, school picnics and barbecues, Christmas and Halloween are severely limited for these children. My daughter experiences exclusion on almost a daily basis. Children having a picnic on the schoolyard warn her to stay away because someone is eating peanut butter. Some parents are so nervous about having her in the house that she is not invited to birthday parties.

My daughter has been lucky to develop a group of friends, and their families, who have gone out of their way to include her in social events safely. Many parents have told us that the nut restrictions, while inconvenient, were a positive experience for their children. It helped them learn about differences, disability and accommodation in a way that was meaningful to them.

No school and no parent can guarantee the safety of these children. Parents are merely asking that members of their child's community help them minimize the risk at school. We are asking for hand-washing and table-washing policies, for adequate supervision at lunch and recess so that life-saving treatment could be delivered quickly. Most importantly, we are asking that other children refrain from eating peanut butter for one meal a day. Surely this inconvenience is warranted when a child's life is at stake.

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The advertisement is framed by a decorative border. It features a black and white illustration of a woman in a long dress and apron, kneeling and washing clothes in a large tub outdoors. A basket of laundry sits on the ground nearby. The text is positioned in the upper half of the frame, with the company name and phone number prominently displayed.



A common objection to nut restrictions is that they create a "false sense of security." This argument is only made by people who do not live with anaphylaxis daily. We parents will certainly not assume she is safe, knowing how easily accidents and mistakes can happen. Our daughter, who at 5 years old understands the threat to her life, will not let down her guard. One simply is not lulled into a false sense of security when one's life is at stake.

I worry every day about my daughter's safety. I also worry about striking a balance between protecting her and not isolating her, between developing in her a healthy fear of peanuts and not making her constantly afraid of dying. I worry that governments and school boards won't act until another child dies in the classroom or on a school field trip.

But our battles have raised a new kind of worry for me about the nature of communities and institutions in our society. Those parents who are fighting the nut-restricted policies send a critical message to their children—that it is more important that they eat just what they want, exactly when they want it, than that they help protect the life of their classmate. That message will affect the way that these children see their responsibility to people different from them in much more profound ways than my daughter.

*Isabel Grant  
Faculty of Law  
University of British Columbia*

*Editor's Note: This article, initially published in The Globe and Mail, was reprinted with Dr. Grant's permission. It was brought to our attention by Bryan Gerber, whose company is a long-time OCA Commercial Member. Although Dr. Grant's article is specifically geared to public schools, it raises some interesting points regarding community responsibility. Camp owners, directors and staff, as well as parents who have experienced similar situations, are invited to comment. We welcome debate on this controversial issue! Your letters may be faxed, written or e-mailed to the OCA office, attention: The Editor. If you prefer to correspond directly with Dr. Grant, her e-mail address is [igrant@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:igrant@interchange.ubc.ca).*

## Wanted: Kitchen Artists' Contributions

The Human Resources Committee is pleased to announce the production of an OCA Cookbook. This venture will be fun, creative and totally inclusive: all members will gain from the final result!

What we need from every member (whether Camp, Individual, Student, Honorary Life, Commercial or Affiliate) is one recipe that is suitable for entertaining at a staff function or OCA social function in the off-season. We all have wonderful summer chefs that serve superb cuisine, but during fall, winter and spring the burden falls upon us to do the cooking. Many of us have attended a committee or other meeting where a scrumptious meal or unique snacks were served: take a moment to share a recipe with all of us.

Every contributor will be acknowledged. All proceeds from the sale of the cookbook will be directed back to the OCA. Recipes should be in one of the following categories: For Under 50 people or For Over 50 people.

Please use the following format for submission:

- a) Brief statement describing the selection
- b) Specify: Appetizers or Entrees or Desserts
- c) Ingredients, measurements, directions
- d) Oven time and temperature (if necessary)
- e) Number of servings
- f) Useful cooking tips for the recipe

Submissions should be sent by February 1, 1999 to the OCA office, via: Fax: 416-781-7875; Mail: 1810 Avenue Rd., Suite 302, Toronto, ON M5M 3Z2; e-mail: [oca@ontcamp.on.ca](mailto:oca@ontcamp.on.ca). Please mark submissions, "Human Resources Cookbook Project."

*Patti Thom  
Chair, OCA Human Resources Committee*

## OCA Needs You

The Membership/Standards Review Task Force has recently been established and endorsed by the OCA Board of Directors to make our Association even stronger.

The Task Force has two major goals:

- to create a resource manual that will include documents that support all aspects of Standards (including the interpretation of all Standards and supporting resources each camp can use); the manual will then be made available to all Accredited and Provisional OCA camps.
- to work with two new Provisional Member camps in the Fall of 1999 towards full accreditation using the new Mentorship approach; to offer the approach to all new members beginning in the Fall of 2000.

An initial meeting of the Task Force is scheduled for Friday, February 26, 1999 at the OCA Directors and Senior Staff Conference. All people who have expressed an interest in working on the Task Force or would like more information before committing or would like further information about the review process are welcome to attend!

The Task Force needs members that will aid in the compilation of documents for the resource manual and assist with the creation of the guidelines and structure necessary for successful implementation of the Mentorship approach.

For more information, please contact me at 905-631-2849.

*Jeff Bradshaw  
Chair, OCA Membership/Standards Review Task Force*

**The February issue of the *OCA'sional News* will have information on the first meeting of the Human Resources Interest Clubs.**

**HR will host a Gourmet Day so participants can prepare and taste some of the Cookbook submissions.**



## Limit parent contact

*continued from page 1*

We pair a child with a staff buddy who can demonstrate a special interest in the child and devote one-on-one time to hanging out, playing or talking with the child.

Instructors who work with the child in activities they particularly like can be especially helpful. Similarly, we can pair a child with an older or more experienced camper who may be able to make them feel more included.

We can also try to limit contact with parents, especially at bedtime. At the camp where I grew up parents only phoned on birthdays and visited on visitors' days, if at all. Recently I have been working at a camp where the parents may phone as often as they like (and wow, they phone a lot!) and visit frequently, even taking their children away from camp for overnights. In my experience some contact with family is good in that it makes the child feel loved and secure in facing the new challenges that camp poses. However, kids can get too much of a good thing. If parents have the opportunity to communicate with their child too often, the child may have a hard time separating her or himself from the parents and participating fully in camp. This becomes a vicious circle as they will become less integrated into peer group activities, and as a result find less and less to like about camp. Too much contact with parents can also be rough on the other children in the cabin. Encourage parents to write letters to their children instead.

Modern technology is changing the way that people keep in touch and this is impacting camps already. Many parents would expect their child to be able to receive faxes, but at large camps the volume can become overwhelming very quickly. Similarly, if you haven't yet had a child turn up with a cell phone so they can call mom whenever they want, you will!

In some cases homesickness becomes so overwhelming that children may want to leave camp early. Discourage parents from setting up any kind of arrangement wherein the child is allowed to go home after a week or two if they don't like it. Much of the time this sort of a deal between parents and their child prevents the camper from becoming involved in camp life. After all, why bother working on a swim badge, because they're leaving anyway? Why bother making friends with children they'll never see again? As a result, the child is more likely to take their parents up on the offer to go home because he will have established few connections at camp.

As the experts in the field, we also have to remember to support parents who have difficulty dealing with separation from their kids. Parents who seem overbearing or difficult are likely experiencing their own separation anxiety and have legitimate concerns about their child. This may be especially true for parents who never had the opportunity to go to summer camp themselves. Parents who call too often or visit every second day are not trying to be difficult; they miss their children desperately and are concerned about their welfare.

In the end, almost anything is better than having a child leave camp early. Down the road their inability to persevere at camp can hurt their self-confidence. Furthermore, in removing the child the parents are denying them all the rewards that camp might have to offer that summer and for years to come. Any other attempts at going to camp will be more likely to fail because the child will be unsure of success and very aware that the parents are willing to withdraw him.

At the same time, we must be careful to avoid adopting a "the customer is always right" perspective with regards to homesickness, because in some cases the counsellors and staff may really know better than the parent what is going on with the child at camp. While camps are businesses that must cater to some extent to the desires of parents, we must help parents to understand that camps have strategies for providing great experiences for kids, and policies dealing with visiting, phoning, or other matters. Involving the counsellors in communicating camp policies with their campers and their families from the start is paramount.

This summer, Queralta came back to camp for the third year. She is now 11 and is basically running the show. She also takes an active interest in helping other children experiencing homesickness.

*Kate Manson-Smith*

*Editor's Note: Kate has been on staff at Camp Hollyburn (Ontario) for five summers and has been a counsellor at the John F. Kennedy School Camp in Switzerland for three summers. Kate has her Masters in Policy Administration and is currently working for the Ontario Ministry of Health in Kingston.*

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# Calendar of Events

## January

Special Needs Resource  
Committee Meeting  
OCA Board Room  
Wednesday, January 6  
1:00 p.m.

Board Meeting  
OCA Board Room  
Tuesday, January 12  
4:00 p.m.

Health Care  
Committee Meeting  
OCA Board Room  
Monday, January 18  
7:00 p.m.

## February

Board Meeting  
OCA Board Room  
Tuesday, February 9

Health Care  
Committee Meeting  
OCA Board Room  
Tuesday, February 9  
7:00 p.m.

Director and Senior Staff  
Conference 1999  
Sheraton Parkway North Hotel  
Richmond Hill, Ontario  
Thursday, February 25 to  
Sunday, February 28

## March

Health Care  
Committee Meeting  
OCA Board Room  
Monday, March 22  
7:00 p.m.

## April

Health Care  
Committee Meeting  
OCA Board Room  
Tuesday, April 20  
7:00 p.m.

## May

Health Care  
Committee Meeting  
OCA Board Room  
Monday, May 17  
7:00 p.m.

Counsellor Conference  
Saturday, May 29

Health Care Workshop  
Saturday, May 29

## The Society of Camp Directors 1998 Photo Contest

Every season of the year, camp time is photo time in Canada! Capture the best of life at camp, with creativity, originality and skillful technique.

**Now is the time to enter those great photos you took  
last winter, spring, summer or fall!!!**

1) Pick your best photo (single or group), enlarge them to at least 8 x 10 inches and matt or frame them. Digital camera? Print these photos to fill letter-size paper and matt them.

2) Tape a label on the back with the following information: Name, Camp, Phone. If you are a camper, add the word, "Camper."

3) Mail or deliver your entries to the Ontario Camping Association, 1810 Avenue Road, Suite 302, Toronto, ON M5M 3Z2, Attn: Prof. Peter Gilbert, by February 17, 1999. Entries can also be brought to the OCA Directors and Senior Staff Conference registration desk, Sheraton Parkway Toronto North Hotel on Friday, February 26, 1999 by 10 a.m.



## Classifieds

### For Sale/Rent

**Campsite: Private, exclusive, for 15 or more.** Wilderness trails (ski, hike or bike), beach, spectacular view, canoes, kayaks, volleyball. Available this fall or 1999. Call 705-657-8432.

**Secluded camp/retreat, fully equipped.** Available this fall and 1999. Spectacular shoreline, beach, wilderness trails (hike, bike, ski, or snowmobile), tripping, cabins with washrooms. Call 705-657-8432.

### Positions Available

**Camp Geshar is currently seeking** qualified lifeguards, swim instructors, waterski instructors and trippers for this summer. If interested, please call Yonatan at 416-633-2511.

**Day camp director. Seasonal contract** position—some part-time hours to prepare for this season. Must have one year's experience supervising camp counsellors, working knowledge of Word, Access and Excel. Send résumé and compensation expectation to: SportsWorld, 100 SportsWorld Drive, Kitchener, ON N2P 2J1. Fax: 519-653-0012 or e-mail admin@sportsworld.on.ca.

**Camp Ganadaoweh, a United Church** camp located outside of Ayr, is looking for a year-round, live-on-site director. The director is responsible for staff recruiting/training, program development and overall administration of the camp. For information, or to fax a résumé, contact Greg Case, 519-725-0898 or fax 519-747-8760.

**Summer assistant director, Camp Kirk:** Camp Kirk is a small residential camp for children ages 6 to 12 with learning disabilities, and ADD/ADHD, with a focus on experiential learning and adventure-based programming. Working directly with the camp director, the duties will include: preparing and facilitating a nine-day intensive staff training program; assisting with staff supervision; overseeing the camp's daily routine; acting as a direct support to the counselling staff and campers whenever necessary. A strong background and the ability to be an effective facilitator in cooperative and

initiative tasks is imperative. Preference will be given to candidates who have clinical experience in working with children with learning disabilities and ADD/ADHD. Ideal position for graduate students or beyond, in the field of Applied Psychology, Education or Recreation. Résumés will be accepted by fax at 416-782-3239 or in writing to 378 Fairlawn Ave., Toronto, ON M5M 1T8. Telephone: 416-782-3310.

**Camp Shalom, a Reformed Church** Christian Conference Centre and Summer Camp for Youth, is seeking a Managing Director to provide leadership in the direction and management of its expanding programs and business affairs. The right candidate must have an extensive working knowledge of the policies and processes relative to camping and outdoor education in Ontario; post-secondary education and training in recreation/outdoor education, or equivalent with a minimum of four years' experience in a senior administrative capacity in a similar environment. Also should possess: (1) an in-depth appreciation of commitment to children's camping, outdoor and environmental education; (2) a sound understanding of financial management; high level of organizational interpersonal and analytical skills; well above-average communication, publication and negotiation skills; good knowledge of the legislative environment within which camps operate; and (3) an appreciation of the dynamics of a non-profit, volunteer based Christian organization. Visit our website at [www.reformed-church.ca/shalom.htm](http://www.reformed-church.ca/shalom.htm). Forward your résumé to: Rev. John Kapteyn, Chair of Search Committee, 245 Faubert Drive, Chatham, ON N7M 2Y6; e-mail: [kapteyn@ciaccess.com](mailto:kapteyn@ciaccess.com).

### Positions Wanted

**A high school food service teacher seeking** summer employment with a residential summer camp. Extensive camp food service experience. Please contact Mr. Jim Fraser 705-725-9862 (residence) or 705-726-2552 (business) or e-mail: [fraserj@csolve.com](mailto:fraserj@csolve.com).

*OCA*asional News offers you a variety of ways to promote products and services within organized camping. The Ontario Camping Association welcomes articles and photo submissions. The next deadline is January 15th for the February publication.

• Display ads are sold on a single or multiple insertion rate, with a \$50.00 non-members fee. Please contact the OCA office for rates. Camera-ready art is required.

• We also offer professional and business directory ads of business card size. OCA member fee: \$50 per insert (up to three issues) or \$35 per issue (minimum four to maximum nine issues).

• Classified ads are sold with a maximum size of 25 words for a fee of \$15 for members and \$30 for non-members. Additional space sold in 25 word increments.

• Paid advertising content will not exceed editorial space.

• The *OCA*asional News is published nine times a year by the Ontario Camping Association, a voluntary, non-profit association committed to excellence in Camping. We want to hear from you. Please send your thoughts and inquiries to the Editorial Committee, care of the office.

• Flora Hawryluk, Editor. 416-481-2788. e-mail: [hawryluk@stn.net](mailto:hawryluk@stn.net)

**The views expressed by the authors in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Ontario Camping Association.**



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