

**Camp Kawartha &
The Camp Kawartha Outdoor Education Centre**
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Executive Director's Annual Report 2010-2011

There is much to take stock of and reflect on, as we enter our 91st year of camping and our 26th year of providing outdoor education programming. Despite the effects of a pervasive and deep economic downturn, Camp Kawartha continues to thrive and innovate. From spearheading Ontario's only Eco-Mentorship Program for student teachers to providing workshops on sustainable living - from creating hands-on outdoor programming for children to hosting environmental conferences and retreats, Camp Kawartha is without question, delivering its mission of "creative positive stewards" for today and for tomorrow.

I'd like to take a moment and celebrate the accomplishments that have occurred over at Camp Kawartha over the past year. We are very fortunate to have talented, creative and dedicated staff who always give more to the camp than they are ever compensated. To them, we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude and thanks.

1. Summer Camp Highlights:

- a. More than 751 children participated in creative residential summer camp programming
 - b. 84 senior campers participated in our unique 3 phase leadership sessions including – Counselor Skill Development, Wilderness Skills Development, Leaders in Training and Pre Leadership Skills
 - c. Our best ever showing for day camp with over 185 campers registered
 - d. New, creative Theme Days developed including: "Joe Smo" a program all about jobs; Harry Potter and Hogwarts – a program about magic, wizards and witchery
 - e. A continued focus on stewardship – fresh produce used from our organic garden, environmental theme days, a focus on water stewardship – frequent visits to the environment centre
2. From donations from individuals, foundations and businesses, we were able to provide over **\$74,094** in sponsorship and subsidy dollars directly to children in need. To date, this is the most in funding Camp Kawartha has ever provided in a single year to our sponsorship fund. All of these funds directly enable children, who otherwise would not have had the financial means, to attend our award winning outdoor education programs and summer camp. Special thanks to the Toronto Star Fresh Air Fund, the Douglas Utting Foundation and the Williams Wilson Sherport Foundation for their generous contribution to our sponsorship program.

3. A total of **5,541 students** participated in outdoor and environmental programming delivered by Camp Kawartha's talented team of educators (most are teacher-trained) during the school year. Feedback given by teachers, parents and students has been overwhelmingly positive. They appreciate our efforts to teach their students about stewardship, environmental awareness and personal responsibility. More than **10,463 people** came into contact with Camp Kawartha (a total of campers, students, workshop participants and facility rentals)

Here are just a few testimonials Camp Kawartha received this past year:

- *"To the sponsors, you need to know that your contribution has gone a long way to enrich our lives and has brought lasting memories to my daughter who deserves to have the very best in life, even if I can't afford to give it to her."*
- *A poem written by a camper who was subsidized:
"Singing and laughing by the fire,
Our voices rising higher and higher
Learning new facts and making new friends,
Trying new things until the day camp ends.
We'll remember the moments, the fires, the races.
All the Goodbye's and the sad embraces.
And yet there were so many awesome things to do,
The best thing about camp was that you could be you!"*
- *"After a tough year socially at school, having experienced some exclusion from cliques, our daughter came back from a week at Camp Kawartha happy and full of self-confidence. The atmosphere is inclusive, and most of all-FUN. She loved every minute of it. Thanks Camp Kawartha for encouraging kids to be their best selves, in a healthy, beautiful and supportive environment!"*
- *"Camp Kawartha is a place where kids find themselves and lifelong friends. An experience they will have for a lifetime."*
- *"We had a blast again! The staff were knowledgeable, organized and helpful at all times."*
- *"Excellent place, great instructors, great games, food is amazing, shows an understanding of clientele."*
- *"Watching our students learn and play in a natural environment was an eye-opening experience. It is such an important part – and often a forgotten part – of their education."*
- *"Camp Kawartha ran fun, engaging programs for my students. The hands-on, practical learning was valuable and memorable. The staff were easy to work with and very accommodating. My students loved the food and asked if they could come back next year. Thanks for the amazing experience!"*
- *"Camp Kawartha's programs have been a wonderful learning experience for our students. Linked to the Ontario curriculum, the programs are engaging and rich in team-building opportunities. The staff is very knowledgeable at what they do and are always available to assist the kids at any time. Their ability to motivate the students*

and adopt different teaching styles promoted an enthusiastic learning opportunity and guaranteed success.”

- *“Absolutely the BEST facility for outdoor education that I have experienced.”*

4. Despite an economic downturn, Camp Kawartha has had a strong fiscal year. And although there was a modest decline in total revenue from 2010, we were able to generate an operating surplus of more than **\$44,700** (\$42,000 above the approved budget). This has meant an accumulated operating surplus of over **\$293,000 over the past seven years**. These dollars are badly needed to invest in an aging infrastructure.
6. Generating sufficient funds through grants, events and sponsorship programs continues to be an important part of our operations. Here is a summary of the funds we received for 2010 - 2011:
 - YMCA Environmental Internship Grant - \$11,025 for an environmental educator
 - Community Futures Grant to purchase environmental education resources - \$3,600
 - Earth Day Canada Grant - \$15,000 to deliver water stewardship programming
 - RBC - \$21,000 to deliver sustainable living workshops
 - Gainey Foundation for the creation of an environmental arts program - \$30,000 over three years
 - Peterborough Horticultural Society \$1,000 – for the creation of a pond
 - Summer jobs program for youth at risk: \$8,600
 - Peterborough Employment Counseling and other employment programs: Fundraising Assistant, Outdoor Education Assistant, 2 Maintenance workers, Ontario Works. Total value: \$12,000
7. Camp Kawartha was fortunate enough to receive **2 awards** this year for our work in promoting environmental awareness and stewardship. This makes **9 awards** for our work in promoting stewardship and camping over the past 5 years.
 - **2011-** Camp Kawartha is recognized for **environmental achievement** from the Ontario Ministry of Environment: Minister John Wilkinson says:
“Commitments to environmental excellence benefit all of us today and for future generations. This award showcases the commitment and innovation that make Ontario an environmental leader internationally. I commend your ongoing commitment to the environment and your participation in this new initiative. Your achievement will serve as an impressive example of excellence for others to follow. Congratulations again, on receiving this special recognition.”
 - **2011- [Peterborough Business Excellence Awards](#)**
Camp Kawartha is the recipient of the **Environmental Practices Award**.
8. Over the past year, Camp Kawartha has focused on **expanding our brand** to a wider audience. We have accomplished this by:
 - Creating our first ever TV Ad focusing on stewardship
 - Developing full colour brochures for our 1) outdoor education program (this brochure was mailed out to over 2,000 schools within a 2 hour catchment area of the camp), 2) our new “Be a Water Steward program and 3) Environmental Arts programming.

- We have developed a new brochure (in house) to promote our corporate team building initiative. We placed these brochures at all major resorts and hotels in the area. Our program consists of a series of creative team building activities focusing on trust, positive communication, problem solving and the roles various team members play within a group. We've provided teambuilding for the Peterborough YMCA, Sun Life Financial, the MNR and Siemens Milltronics. We've conducted workshops for senior managers from the Ontario Ministry of Social Services (in Toronto). We are looking to expand this segment of our programming.
- Here is a testimonial from a corporate group:

The team building day you ran for our project team was truly fantastic!!! The feedback from all participants has been excellent. Very special thanks to the instructors, kitchen team and certainly to yourself for organizing this event!

With all of us coming from the various functions of our organization it was great to experience how we grew from a group of individuals to a team with every activity throughout the day. From simple tasks highlighting ways of effective communication to trust activities on the ropes - you had it all and tailored it perfectly to our needs.

Getting to know each other outside every day corporate life, sharing adventures, and challenging ourselves in the many different ways available at Camp Kawartha and the Kawartha Outdoor Education Centre has provided us with a better understanding of the individuals we are working with and will surely help us throughout our project.

Thank you for this wonderful experience!

Christoph Flatten
Senior Project Manager
Siemens Milltronics Process Instruments Inc.

9. Over the past year, as we become more recognized for our work in promoting stewardship, we have been asked to present on the work we do in environmental education. Jacob Rodenburg, Executive Director, was invited to speak on behalf of Camp Kawartha at the following conferences/organizations:
 - a. *The Canadian Roundtable for Pollution Prevention on June 4th, 2010. Topic: "Stepping Towards Green – Creating a Culture of Sustainability."*
 - b. *Key Note Speaker on Connecting Children to Nature at "Kick Start Sustainability. Reducing Environmental Footprint in Durham Region," December, 2010*
 - c. *American National Summit on Sustainability as an exemplar of a Canadian organization demonstrating "Sustainability in Action", Detroit Michigan.*
10. Camp Kawartha has also acted as a **mentor for two new outdoor centres**: Shaw Woods near Renfrew and Echo Echo – near Wakefield, Quebec. Jacob has visited both sites and offered suggestions on how to start an environmental learning centre. Over the past year, the camp has

also distributed over 30 CD Roms to organizations across Canada, requesting information on how to start an environment centre.

11. Camp Kawartha spearheaded the 4th annual **Environment Day** at Beavermead Park in partnership with the PVNC Separate School Board. Over 220 students participated in hands on environmental programming including: Here's the Dirt: (a program about soils, composting and vermi-composting), Nature Sculpting & Nature Tracking and Trailing, Shedding Light on Your Watershed, Endangered Species, Walking on Sunshine. Sun Energy Systems, Water Conservation Pentathlon. We also provided native tree species that go to each school. That makes for close to 1,000 students who have directly participated in inspiring environmental programming. Some of the remarks provided by parents, teachers and students:

"This was awesome"

"We should do this everyday."

"The staff were organized, entertaining, and fun."

12. In March 2011, Camp Kawartha completed an in-depth **strategic plan** outlining specific goals and benchmarks for program delivery over the next 5 years. This plan has been posted on our website and is available for all campers, parents and stakeholders to review.
13. Paul Patterson, our Property Manager, has been working hard to create a unique interdependent food system called "**barrelponics.**" Plants are grown in our strawbale green house. Nutrients are provided by fish waste (which live in a barrel), converted by algae into plant food. The fish feed off organic scraps as well as duck weed (which grows in the water). The fish "poo" provides nutrients to the plant. Barrelponics is a lovely demonstration of a closed system in action. This is an excellent educational tool for students and campers. The greenhouse provides fresh herbs for our kitchen and the catfish will eventually be harvested for food.
14. Camp Kawartha has developed a new, comprehensive **food philosophy**, consistent with our mission statement of fostering stewardship.
 - We use local foods whenever possible and practical. Our Kitchen Manager has been sourcing more of our food from local farmers and suppliers and reducing our dependency on large food distribution companies. The names of local farmers selected to help produce the food provided to campers/students for each meal are posted in the dining hall.
 - We use natural and wholesome ingredients in our meals. For example, using whole wheat bread and whole grain pasta.
 - We focus on seasonal foods, as much as we can (when reasonable and possible). For example root vegetables in the winter, fresh local fruit in the summer.
 - Increase the use of our own garden and solar green house for herbs and for vegetables. Part of our summer camp and outdoor education programming involves teaching kids about local foods and making mention of the local producers that helped to grow food for each meal. We are exploring the potential use of a root cellar for storing fresh fruits and vegetables in season and utilizing solar dehydrators to help preserve food.

- Meals are made, as much as possible from scratch. For example, homemade soups, homemade baked goods. If we need to purchase supplies (i.e. bread), we ensure that the ingredients are wholesome, without preservatives and flavour enhancers.
- We create innovative and appealing menus that inspire health and a connection to our local environment.
- Our ultimate goal is to prepare delicious, nutritious and appealing food to visitors of all ages.

15. This is the second year the **Camp Kawartha Environment Centre** has been in operation. We are pleased to report the following highlights:

- *2,718 elementary and high school students participated in environmental programming from 94 classes in year 2.*
- *6 programs on water stewardship were developed: Water Conservation Pentathlon, Every Drop Counts, Wetlands and Diversity, Wetland Wonders, Shedding Light on Your Watershed, Aquatic Web of Life*
- *87% of elementary students said they know why using less energy is important. 85% said they want to plant trees to help nature. 94% said they learned about sustainable living and wanted to share this knowledge with their families. Intermediate and Secondary students committed to saving a total of 567 tonnes of greenhouse gases by: walking to school, planting trees, replacing incandescent light bulbs, reusing paper and conserving electricity. 72% said they wanted to live in a house that has solar energy. 52% would commit to using a rain water harvesting system, 46% a green roof. A total of 500 respondents.*
- *6 student teachers participated in practicums.*
- *370 Student Teachers participated in environmental workshops in year 2*
- *3 workshops were held sharing best practices in environmental education. One workshop was on "Environmental Education in Winter." The second was "Environmental Learning an Indigenous Approach" - using the medicine wheel. The third workshop was on educators sharing tips and strategies on environmental education. A total of 53 attended.*
- *10 open houses in addition to many "drop in" visits were provided to 507 visitors.*
- *Thanks to a grant from RBC Canada, we were able to offer a series of workshops on sustainability to Peterborough Community. Workshops included: Does This Sustainability Stuff Really Work?; Solar Energy and the MicroFIT Program; Sustainability Begins in the Garden; Green Building Materials & Health Impacts; Stepping into Green.*
- *Thanks to a grant from Earth Day Canada, we were able to offer a "Be a Water Steward" program for students in partnership with ORCA (Otonabee Region Conservation Authority). The program taught water conservation to students of all ages. ORCA educators took these same students to a local wetland where they participated in wetland rehabilitation (planting).*
- *Thanks to a donation from the Peterborough Field Naturalists and the generosity of the Sadler Family, we now have a beautiful library consisting of natural history resources available for use by special request.*
- *Our Environmental Education Workshop: Creating a Culture of Nature Connection logged 89 attendees.*
- *10,270 visits to the Camp Kawartha Environment Centre website logged in year 2.*

16. We are delighted to report on the **completion of phase two** at the Camp Kawartha Environment Centre consisting of:
- A pond habitat. Special thanks to Peterborough Horticultural Society for providing funding for plant material and to the Trent Severn Waterway for providing guidance, labour and equipment
 - An arboretum featuring local native trees (35 trees were planted)
 - A timber frame outdoor classroom. Special thanks to Dave Saunders and the students from St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Lindsay who helped to design and build this beautiful structure
17. Camp Kawartha is pleased to have conceived, and in partnership with Trent University, developed a unique **Eco Mentor Program** for Trent's School of Education. Unique in Ontario, this certificate program provides student teachers with the skills and knowledge to become Eco Mentors in their future schools. Through a series of workshops delivered by Camp Kawartha staff, Trent professors and guest speakers, student teachers develop the skills, knowledge and awareness to teach environmental education at their future schools. Over 50 student teachers are enrolled in this certificate program.
18. We are pleased to announce that the **Gainey Foundation** has provided **\$30,000** over three years for the development of a new Environmental Arts Program. The funding will provide a bussing subsidy and funding for environmental educators.

Closing remarks:

Educating for a sustainable future is a proactive way to improve the health of future generations. Facing formidable environmental challenges such as climate change and declining air and water quality, our children need practical strategies to help them create a healthy future – strategies that go substantially beyond recycling. Camp Kawartha helps to create a culture of sustainability within our community by promoting alternative energy generation, energy and water conservation, protecting local habitats, naturalization of school grounds and backyards and encouraging green building techniques.

Camp Kawartha continually seeks creative ways to more effectively deliver its mandate of promoting positive stewardship in the greater Peterborough area. By not only being involved in teaching environmental programs and sustainability to children and adults but by being actively involved in educating future teachers in best practices in environmental education, Camp Kawartha is effecting real and lasting change. We strive to inspire our youth to make positive choices that strengthen and support healthy communities. In a world of ever increasing environmental challenges, part of the solution must involve providing our children with the strategies, tools and ideas to make their tomorrow and their children's tomorrow, a sustainable one.