

2011 Year in Review



WIDJIWAGAN
YMCA WILDERNESS ADVENTURES



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From the Board Chair

All that we behold is full of blessings. ~W. WORDSWORTH



As I prepare for the end of my term as your board chair I am struck by the impact Widji has had in my life. As such, I am moved to create a gratitude list; but where to begin...?

For starters, I am grateful for those who had vision, some 82 years ago, as they came upon the land which became Camp Widjiwagan—a vision honored in Widji’s mission of promoting in our youth respect for self, each other, and the environment. Our founders clearly had a sense the site held a special quality that warranted preserving which continues to serve Widji’s programming so well today.

Secondly, I deeply appreciate Widji’s mission. I’m hard-pressed to imagine another objective I can more strongly commit to. “Respect” is delivered in so many ways: from presenting challenges to campers and students, providing growth for seasonal staff, and giving multiple opportunities to volunteers in stretching our wings (we’re still young, right?). Widji shepherds so many of us through our development. I have been fortunate to live out Widji’s mission and I view it as a canoe—we sometimes carry it but more often it carries us as we endeavor in our adventures.

Thirdly—our staff. I have had varying contact with many of our staff in 30 years and had the pleasure of meeting past directors. To a person, Widji has attracted highly-talented, passionate, and humble folks— people I have been and would be proud to work alongside. Widji is so vital and successful due to your collective works.

Next is my appreciation for our youth—our trail-mates and counselors/instructors. You are the paddles striking clear water and the soles on the trail.

Widji taught me the pleasure of going out into the wild but even more so, the joy of sharing wilderness with others. As it is said “...to go far, go together.” Thank you to all of you who have made my times at Widji larger and more rewarding.

I would be remiss not to mention my family. To my parents for their wisdom in sending me to Widji and to my wife and kids for rearranging your schedules, allowing me to serve—gracias.

My list is incomplete if I do not express my awe of our volunteers and donors. I find humility in your dedication as you help Widji continue to reach greatness. Thanks to our board members—past and present. You were there when I was a camper ensuring our programs were vibrant; you are there now, doing the same; and you will be there as the next group of kids arrive and leaders emerge. Thank you for your devotion and camaraderie.

In mind of this, I extend an additional special thanks to our board chairs. I hope I have been able to serve half as well as any of our past leaders. I stand on your shoulders and am proud to be in your company. Mindful of that, I am also glad I won’t be called to fill the shoes of incoming chair Tom Hiendlmayr. He is an incredible soul, possessing great vision and passion for Widji.

Second to last are the traditions—cabin row, closing campfires, wood-canvas canoes, songs sung in harmony or rounds, saunas, board retreats... just some of why Widji is worth the price of admission.

I will conclude by revisiting perhaps the greatest gift Widji has given many of us—a love of wild places and the grace therein. Widji has been instrumental in my spiritual development, nurtured as I was nestled in the awesome power, glorious beauty, and peaceful silence of the mountains and north woods. I am grateful that even when I leave the wilderness, it remains a part of me.

As we used to sing when our groups departed camp, “May the long-time sun shine on you, all love surround you, and the pure light within you guide your way on!” May you find much to be thankful for in your adventures in the coming years. —Mark Scott

From the Director

Last summer I decided that I needed to get out and enjoy one of the perks that living on the edge of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness has to offer—a day on the water!

At every banquet we sing “Madeline.” If you know this storied Widji anthem, you know that Madeline’s paddling adventures take her to Curtain Falls. Singing the song has served as a reminder that I had never seen Curtain Falls. After sharing this with Joe Smith he felt that it was high time we change that fact and suggested we take a one day journey to Crooked Lake.

So on a rare day off in late July, Joe, Kurt Simer, Brian Geisler and I started out at Stuart River and headed to Curtain Falls. Our goal was to have lunch there and then head back, all in one day. We packed light but were also mindful of the possibility that weather could change at any time and brought plenty to keep us warm and dry. We began portag-

ing at 7 a.m. and were blessed with beautiful weather. We were efficient on portages and enjoyed the scenery of that part of the BWCA. About half-way up Iron Lake we could hear the roar of Curtain Falls. We made our way across the portage and sat in the sunshine and ate our lunch. What an amazing site!

Shortly after we arrived, we noticed a group on the other side of the falls. The group of boys were walking along the falls and came to sit contentedly on an outcropping of rocks. With excitement we realized that this was a group of Widji campers! We waved and tried to say hello across the falls and received skeptical greetings (we were told later that they couldn’t figure out why Joe, Liz, Kurt and Brian would be on trail in the middle of summer!). After a while they disappeared and we watched them load their canoes and paddle safely to our side of the falls to portage. It was impressive to see this group of Explorers who only had a few days left on trail, work as a flawless unit to carry two wood canvas canoes and a bunch of Duluth packs across the portage. They appeared to be having a great trip and hardly seemed ready to return to camp. We took pictures, gave them the few sweets we had with us, and then they were on their way.

A short time later we retraced our route and on the way back even stopped to fish (Joe caught dinner). A pair of playful otters greeted us once we reached Stuart River. We were home before dark—exhausted but content.

I am so glad to have had a chance to see Curtain Falls and will listen to banquet day renditions of “Madeline” with new appreciation this coming



summer. Being on the water for a long day of paddling with great travelling companions also made the day enjoyable, but definitely the best part of the day was seeing Widji campers on trail. —Liz Flinn



Joe Smith, Brian Geisler, Kurt Simer, and Liz at Curtain Falls.

YEAR-ROUND STAFF 2011

PROGRAM STAFF

Liz Flinn – Executive Director
Brian Geisler – Summer Program Director
Missy Huppert – Marketing Coordinator
Peter Johnson – Kitchen Manager, Canoe Master
Karen Pick – Outdoor Learning Program Director
Linda Ramacier – Financial Development Director
Jim Schwartz – Canoe Master, Fall/Winter/Spring Cook
Kurt Simer – Wilderness Program Director
Joe Smith – Property Manager
Connie Starns – Capital Campaign Coordinator

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Jen Fogel – Administrative Coordinator
Tracy Ryman – Administrative Coordinator
Jennifer Weinzirl – Administrative Coordinator

Partners with Widji: A highlight of Camp St. Croix LDP program

BY BRIAN GEISLER

2011 marked the 6th summer the YMCA Camp St. Croix LDPs' have gone on trail with Camp Widjiwagan to experience life in the Boundary Waters and to learn about the "Widji Way." The Camp St. Croix Leadership Development Program is a progressive leadership and outdoor training program, designed to provide an educational and fun environment where participants can develop their camping and leadership skills. The Leadership Development Program provides opportunities for campers to increase their leadership abilities through trainings like service learning projects, program development, philosophy of camping, equipment use and care, and "Leave No Trace" camping ethics.

There are 3 different "years" for this program starting with 10th graders. 2nd year LDPs are going into 11th grade, and the oldest LDPs are 3rd years, going into 12th grade. The 3rd year LDP's participate in a 16 day trail experience where 12 of those days are with a Widjiwagan Trail Counselor for an 12 day trail experience in the Boundary Waters and the other 4 days are spent rock climbing on the North Shore with their own climbing staff.



Widji is proud to be a part of this training and experience by providing the staff and equipment to help in the 3rd year LDP's summer trip. There were 6 campers, 2 Croix Counselors, and 1 Widji Trail Counselor in last summer's trip starting on the Stuart River. Prior to the Croix LDPs leaving for their Widji trail experience, at camp, they went through the preparation that all campers go through from PBL's, tent demos, food and meal selection, to setting up their goals and expectations, and team building. They also took part in the campfires and traditions that Widji holds so dear. This partnership brings together the missions of both camps and provides a unique experience for these future leaders.

THOUGHTS FROM PARTICIPANTS—

"Today our LDP group got up to watch the sunrise. It started out with a purplish/pinkish hue in the sky. Minutes later the horizon turned golden. It was absolutely breathtaking. Our entire Boundary Waters experience has been amazing. Each day we have had a leader of the day and I was first. I had to lead my LDP group all day on our canoe trail...Being an LDP is definitely preparing me for being a counselor. Today is day 5 of our canoe trail in the Boundary Waters and my patience has been tested many times. Even though my patience has been tested, I have been learning a lot and growing a lot. I have grown so much individually, but the six of us have grown so much as a group."

—2011 Camp St. Croix LDP Camper

"Today was the end of day 17 of our LDP experience. I'm overjoyed with the group that I'm in. We're each so caring, genuine, and easy to be around. Our group operates like a family now, essentially. Like all families, we've had moments of stress and tension, but the major skill that's important in all team players is forgiveness. On trail, I've challenged myself both physically and mentally. The physical demands ranged from dealing with illness for the first few days to portaging Widji's prized woody canoe 340 rods earlier today."

—2011 Camp St. Croix LDP Camper

"The Widji-St. Croix relationship is great. The leaders at Widji get to work with kids who are wholly focused on developing leadership skills and the St. Croix campers get the opportunity to throw themselves even further outside of their comfort zones."

—John, Widji Trail Counselor

Having Fun, Learning & Growing at Widjiwagan in February

BY KAREN PICK

For the past 10 years, Widjiwagan has had the pleasure of working with 8th grade students from the Bloomington Public Schools. Over time, this has added up to more than 1200 students participating in our Outdoor Learning Program. While bringing a group of students to Widji requires hard work on the part of a teacher to present the Widji program, collect and organize permission slips and health forms, the faculty say that it is definitely worth the effort.

Greg Gilbert of Olson Middle School writes, "Widji offers a unique environment for students to learn about, experience and evolve their ideas of self and their interactions with the environment. Over the years I have witnessed many students from different social groups come to Widji and break out of their usual groups. They interact and get closer with other peers whom they do not normally associate with. It is the small group environment with a focus on being prepared and respectful of others that creates a safe environment for students to get to know each other as individuals. It goes beyond stating the obvious, that Widji has excellent access and uses the natural environment to foster learning and appreciation and respect for others."

Thomas Thomas, a former teacher for Bloomington Public Schools and perennial chaperone, says, "Students take a risk to come to Widji and they always learn that the risk to grow was worth it. Outside the tight boundaries of school, kids can be different and thrive differently. We see a different student when they are at Widji; one that has bigger boundaries. The people working at Widji are the difference —smiles, knowledge of the outdoors and their ability to engage us in the outdoors."

A student from Olson summed up her experience by writing, "I really enjoyed having all the judgement of my classmates left at home and how caring some of the people became. It was so warming to hear them happy and genuine. Nature can really change people and I hope that they act like that at home."

A Valley View student explained that, "My favorite activity was stargazing! I loved just laying out in the snow looking at the stars. It was amazing — peaceful, calm and super interesting to find the constellations. We even saw the northern lights. I don't get to do that in the cities."

We look forward to continuing to work with middle schoolers from Bloomington for years to come!



GROUPS PARTICIPATING IN 2011 OUTDOOR LEARNING PROGRAM

Avalon	Montessori School of Duluth
Blake School	Northrop
Boy Scouts	Oak Hill Montessori
Carondelet Catholic School	Olson Middle School
Central High School Ski Team	Project Venture
Centre Pointe School	Seward Montessori
Dugsi Academy	Shakopee Area Catholic School
Ely Girl Scouts	Simley High School
Expo Elementary	Sisu Design
Fall Women's Weekend	Skeewaksurs
Free At Last	Southern Adventist University
Friends & Family of Anne Murphy	St. Francis-St. James United School
Frisbee Women	St. Paul Academy and Summit School
Groveland Park Elementary	St. Paul Lutheran School
Harding High School	St. Therese School
Highland Park-AVID	University of Minnesota ICD Group
King of Kings	Valley View Middle School
Lake Country Montessori	Widjiwagan Board
L'Etoile du Nord French Immersion	Winter Women's Weekend
LSS Youth Services-Oh No 18!	Yinghua Academy
Marshall School	Youth MEA Retreat
Matoska International	



Planning for success on trail, every day in camp

BY KURT SIMER

Once a day during the summer, I get out of the office and head to the Trail Building Circle to see trail groups in action. It is enriching to see an Isle Royale group learning to set up their tent or a Quetico group heading out for a paddle. Groups build the foundation for a successful trip during this time by going through all of the demos, checking their gear, and packing out their food. When I head into the TB, I am immersed in enthusiasm (and noise), and it is instantly clear that the Trail Building is the heart of the Widji summer program.

When the TB was opened, in 1969, it served approximately one-fourth as many campers and staff as it does today. The number of camper days has grown at an even greater rate. With 13,828 camper days, the summer of 2011 was our busiest summer yet. This was most in evidence when visiting the TB on a typical day. Trail Building Coordinator Ben Ratzlaff, gear guru Peter Murray, food master Jake Cahill, and task-master/repair specialist Keely Young-Dixon worked extremely hard to keep all of the gear organized and the food flowing.

There were some very impressive TB stats from 2011, as over the summer we packed out:

425 pounds of chocolate chips

800 pounds of oats

120 pounds of parmesan

1,000 pounds of baby shells

1,392 pounds of raisins

11,000 6"x12" plastic bags

Most importantly, the TB staff and the various trail counselors (and administrators) who lent a hand made sure that each group received a stellar pack out. It cannot be emphasized strongly enough the importance of talking with campers and counselors during pack out about individual and group goals, their route, and the aspects of their trip that make them feel excited, or nervous. A well-run pack out is a shining example of the strength of the Widji summer program: numerous staff and volunteers working together to provide an amazing learning experience for kids. The TB truly is where it's at!



A counselor's perspective

BY CHARLOTTE MUZZI

This summer was my first back at Widji after graduating from college. It's easy to mock the plight of the recent graduate, but it's another thing entirely to experience it yourself, to see your conception of who you are and were—the scholar, the athlete, the musician—neatly framed and ready for filing. But if graduating from college felt like leaving my identity behind, returning to camp felt like coming home. In my years as a counselor and a camper, I had come to rely on Widji for many things: familiar places and faces, a sense of belonging, of common interests and of common purpose, and as a college graduate, I was even more grateful for this community.

As the summer progressed, I began to notice a shift in my perspective. During my year off, I had worked at a grocery store, a newspaper, and as a substitute teacher, and a year on the broader job market had impressed on me the uniqueness of our jobs as counselors: Widji gives its staff an amount of responsibility



that is unique across all strata of the job market and unparalleled among the opportunities available to young adults.

Counselors take on a lot. We are given responsibility for the well-being of teenagers in the wilderness, the authority to think creatively and make decisions, and control over a curriculum covering everything from the basics of cooking to conflict resolution. Trail makes polymaths of us all: carpenters, tutors, spiritual advisors, athletic coaches, sherpas, physicians, chefs, confidants, cheerleaders—the list goes on. Nobody embodies all these things naturally, but as counselors fill each of these roles every day because we have to.

I'm going to do this because I have to: this is the main dictum of trail, beautiful in its simplicity. In this way Widji challenges us, and we grow to meet that challenge. I used to think of the source of this challenge as mainly external, but while swampy portages definitely have their place in helping us to discover new reserves of strength, ending my trip this summer helped me to realize the role of campers in molding us into our best selves. Getting off of trail this summer was difficult for me. Straight from the safety of the mountains and the triumph of leading a successful trip, I was facing my fourth move in a year, and glimmerings of doubt were starting to appear.

Surprisingly, I wanted to talk to campers. At first this seemed odd. My campers this summer were fantastic—thoughtful, wacky, adventurous—but they were seven years my junior; I was their guide, their mentor, their more-or-less-infallible sage. What surprised me most was the way that even

thinking about my campers changed my entire outlook. I began to consider my fears in the terms in which I speak to campers about challenge—not necessarily as the person I am,

but as a person I would want them to look up to. And just like that, everything changed: "I'm not ready" morphed into "I'm about to do something that will force me to grow;" "I'm scared" became "You will be fine." Just by looking up to us, campers make us into people worthy of their admiration; we are challenged to grow into their images of us. Leading trips makes you not just your best self, but a version of yourself you might never otherwise access.

You have to be challenged to grow. This concept, foundational to Widji's approach to youth development, is just as true of its staff. Growth shouldn't stop ever. Not for campers at the end of a trip, for students at the end of an academic career, or for counselors at the end of a Voyageur trip. We need challenge and opportunity in all phases of our lives in order to become whole, functioning individuals; mindful contributors to our communities and advocates for ourselves and for our values. Widji demands of campers and of staff: be better than you are, for yourself, for your peers, and for your world.



Preserving Traditions ~ Building Legacies ~ Transforming Lives

A capital and endowment campaign with a goal of \$3.5 million is underway. Its purpose is to enhance the quality of the wilderness experience for campers and students, and to keep the Widji Way sustainable.

- Through renovations and improvements to structures and grounds that support wilderness tripping and environmental education programs. Goal: \$2.5 million
- By investing in the growth of the endowment funds, supporting quality programs and financial accessibility. Goal: \$1 million

We invite you to be a part of something big! Join our generous donors and dedicated volunteers to support this campaign.

For more specific information about the campaign please visit:

widji.org

[facebook.com \ widjiwagan](https://www.facebook.com/widjiwagan)

<https://mplsfd.ymcatwincities.org/widjicapital>

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* Capital Campaign Steering Committee members

Scenes from Summer 2011



Distinguished Leaders

Claire Burgeson – Outstanding Youth Leader



Claire Burgeson is a junior at Central High School in St. Paul. She has been attending Widjiwagan for five years and went on an Advanced Explorer canoe trip in 2011. This was her second year as a member of Widji Leaders.

As part of Widji Leaders, Claire attended all of the planning meetings and always had lots of ideas for more community service projects. Claire planned the entire volunteer event at Feed My Starving Children which was well attended by her fellow leaders.

Widji Leaders coordinator Ginna Curry said of Claire, "She is always willing to step up when a task needs to be done. She is a confident and enthusiastic young woman, which is contagious to those around her. She is extremely dedicated to the community of Widjiwagan and she gives it her all."

Outside of being involved in the Leaders Club, Claire is involved with theater (on stage and as a crew member) and Concert Choir at school. She also dances for Lar-kin Dance Studio. She is a member of National Honor Society and volunteers at Living at Home Block Nurse Party.

Babs and John Reidel – Distinguished Leaders



Since 2000, John and Babs have been faithful volunteers at the Garage Sale that benefits Camp Widjiwagan and Camp duNord. John and Babs worked 21 sales! They came to be part of the sale through their grandchildren who were campers at Widji. They saw the positive impact attending camp had on both Nick and Victoria and wanted to devote time to making this experience possible for many campers, so they joined the team of loyal volunteers at the garage sale. At the sale they saw a need to organize the clothing department, which was no small task. John and Babs organized the clothing, shoes and accessories. They made racks for better display and washed clothing to

ensure it would be presentable.

Two years ago John and Babs met the Widji bus throughout the entire summer to disseminate information about volunteering at the sale and the importance of donating to the sale. Last year John and Babs took on a leadership role and helped to organize all aspects of the sale. The sale has raised thousands of dollars for both camps over the past 30 years. Without Babs and John, the last ten would have not been nearly as organized!

GIFTS IN KIND

Garage Sale Volunteers:

Numerous and dedicated volunteers drove the garage sale to success. Sale proceeds benefit both Widji and du Nord camp programs.

Gifts in Kind:

Tim Anderson-Chain saw and chains
Mike Braun-Seliga Canoe
Dr. Mark Bixby-Staff training and consulting physician
Rob Donisch and Jessi Rick-Widji Leaders coordinators
Doug Habermann-Summer camp volunteer
Rob Hlavacek-Summer camp volunteer
Jerry Lusk-Old Town Canoe
Frederica Musgrave-Backpacks, sleeping mats and water bottles
Tom O'Rourke-Staff training
Dave Ponthan-Historic paddle
Kevin Redmon-Writing
Bob Rick-Framed drawing of "Mad Trappers Cabin"
Dr. Amery Robinson-Staff training
Marty Ruddy-Construction consultation
Steve Sawyer-Dewalt sanders and sanding discs
John Shepard-Apple computer, screen, keyboard, hard drive
Terra Firma-Construction of two biffies
Wellington Management-Steve Wellington-storage space
Arlene West-Graphic design
Skip Wilke-Television

Health Professionals:

Anne Marks
Louise Krueger
Roland Brusseau
Karen Loewenson
Erin Omann
Sharon Sivertsen-Modrijan

Non-Board Committee Members:

Buildings and Properties Committee-John Saxhaug
Campership Committee-Jean Currie and Dave Mayer
Financial Development Committee-Elizabeth Flinsch
Risk Management Committee-Mark Bixby, Mike Grace, Laura Wellington

In Memoriam

JACK AND SUE CORNWELL

In February, 2011, the Widji community lost two of its long term friends. Jack Cornwell died of a heart attack at his home in Eagan, and three days later, Sue, his wife of nearly 52 years, died from the stroke she suffered at the moment she realized her life partner was gone.

They would not choose to have this kind of honorary article about them, a fact that alone demonstrates the gentle quality of their Widji Way.

Sue Cornwell never attended Widji, but with her marriage to Jack, a staff member in the 1950's, she became a canoeist and a life-long supporter of Camp, its philosophy and mission. Sue was a member of the Widji Board in the late 1970s. Their daughters Krys, Laurie, and Sally all attended Widji, as did grandchildren Dylan and Heidi. Jack and Sue were model parents, and many of us thought that if we could be half as good at parenting, we would have wonderful families ourselves.

In her 20s, Sue developed rheumatoid arthritis. Over time it affected her feet and toes, hands, knuckles and jaw. She was in continuous pain, but almost never mentioned it. Through it all, She became a community leader in her and Jack's home town, Winona. She was a college English instructor; she founded and helped build the Winona Community Foundation; she was on the boards of the Winona Hospital and of the National Arthritis Foundation, among other activities.

Sue continued to go on Ontario canoe trips with Jack, her family and good friends and their children even after she was no longer able to hold a paddle. She would duff as



the third, non-paddling, member in her canoe. Seated in that uncomfortable spot, she always provided a lively, energizing conversation. She had a natural ability to elicit information, ambitions and aspirations from

otherwise reticent teens—and adults. She of course had to sleep in a tent, on the ground. If she awoke stiff and in pain, her traveling companions never knew.

Her spirit and sense of fun would have been remarkable even without her physical challenges. She was a warm hearted companion, with a unique capacity to never complain, and yet never act as a martyr.

Jack was a native of Winona. He was the successful owner of a Winona lumber business and an industrial door company. Widji led him to a lifetime of wilderness canoe tripping and support for Camp. Jack was a man of great decency and quiet competence. He was not given to loose or undocumented conversation. When he spoke, people listened because what he said was thoughtful and accurate. He was among the founding members of the Widji Y's Men's Club in the 1960s, before moving back to Winona.

In 1981, Jack helped form a group calling itself the "Widji Guides Emeritus". Our objective was to explore the rivers of the Northwest Territories that the Widji kids were paddling. Other members were Blake Davis, Gary Clements, Windy Linder, Dean Tracy, Joe Prouse and Tom Patterson. Over the years, we paddled several Arctic rivers. On these, and on family trips, Jack was the most observant. He seemed to be the first to spot an eagle,

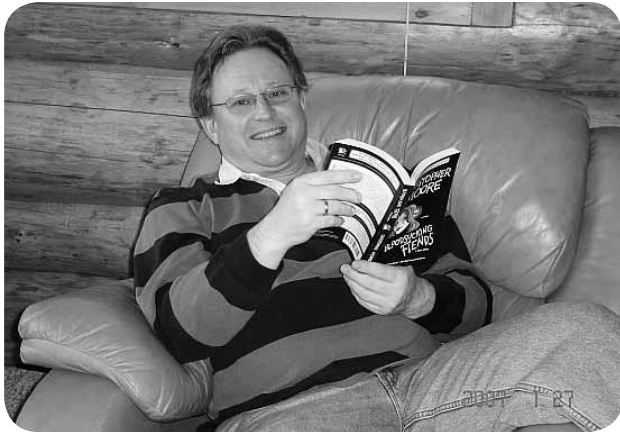
heron, moose, fox, musk ox, caribou or grizzly. His calm analysis of difficult situations was invaluable on the WGE Arctic trips. He was a formidable canoe companion, and his hiking ability was legendary. He often wore out his younger friends on explorations over the tundra hills. His portaging technique was to flip his canoe onto his shoulders, stick one hand in a front pocket and take off at a rate others had difficulty maintaining. Jack was our champion fisherman, which in an amicable way may have rankled some of us, particularly when we watched him gently return a 9 pound lake trout to the river, while we licked our hungry lips.

Jack's devotion to Sue was extraordinary. Without hovering, he was always aware of her needs. If she were struggling with something, he would quietly appear at the right moment, and say "Can I get that, Susie?" And she would say, "Thanks, Cornie" —her term of affection for him.

Jack and Sue owned a beautiful piece of property on Burntside Lake. From there, they exhibited their remarkable hospitality, and kept in contact with Widji, its facilities and staff. In many ways, they represent the best of Widji - good people involved as young adults, maintaining their interests in Camp and in canoeing for their entire lives, involving their families, and maintaining their Widji relationships.

Their legacy lives on at Camp Widjiwagan through "The Cornwell Family Endowment Fund," as a result of estate and memorial gifts. The fund will be a living memorial to Jack and Sue, as it works in the lives of Widji teens for generations to come.

Members of the Widji Guides Emeritus, with great respect for Sue and Jack, contributed to this article.



A TRIBUTE TO TIM GRAVELLE

BY LINDA RAMACIER

Camp Widjiwagan lost a good friend and dedicated staff member on September 13, 2011 after an 18-month journey, living life fully while battling pancreatic cancer.

Tim Gravelle was Widji's Registrar for nearly 25 years. Over his career, Tim registered more than 15,000 summer campers and more than 400 environmental education groups. He answered thousands of phone calls, kept track of campers' paperwork, kept statistics and much more. Tim calmed the nerves of countless parents as they were making important decisions for their teens. Tim was the cheerful, helpful and confident voice that parents had grown accustomed to and dependent on for answering all the important camp questions. Tim did all of this in a very quiet and unassuming way, just as Widji campers leave no trace behind as they travel the lakes, rivers, streams and mountains.

When Tim started working at Camp Widjiwagan, he had never been camping, let alone wilderness camping, but he was open to go out on a Widjiwagan staff break-in trip. Little did he know that he would fall in love with camping and especially the BWCA wilderness area. He was so enthused that he introduced

his family and friends to the wilderness.

Tim truly made a big impact on the lives of so many teens, young adults and families. How lucky was the Widjiwagan community to have Tim in such a critical role for so many years.

REMEMBERING UNCLE TIM

BY ANDREA GRAVELLE WINTER

My Uncle Tim definitely opened the door for my family to experience the North Woods. It began in 1990 when he first helped to coordinate my fundraising, work weekends, and application for scholarship to make a Widji canoe experience possible. Certainly those 10 days were life altering for me, and when I first developed my love and appreciation for the serenity, beauty, and spirituality that only the North Woods can bring. He did the same for my sister Theresa two years later— who would agree that those were some of the most amazing and pivotal experiences of her life. Not long after that, he helped my cousin (with whom he has no relation actually) to achieve her dream of a Widji experience. She was in the midst of some very difficult and challenging family struggles. She gets teary eyed to this day talking about what a milestone those experiences were for her. She has since guided other cousins on BWCA canoe trips, and loves to spend time in the region with her husband. For the three of us, the Widji experience was monumental and has helped to develop who we are. It would not have been possible without my Uncle Tim's encouragement and efforts.

Tim also planned and led a memorable family summer canoe trip in 1995 that opened his brother and nephew (my dad and brother) up to the wonders of the BWCA. He instilled in all of us a great appreciation and

respect for the north woods.

Uncle Tim initiated an annual family vacation for us to Camp duNord every winter beginning in the 1990s. He did this shortly after our parents separated and it created a much needed new tradition that brought us all closer. Year after year we looked forward to those wonderful long weekends of the winter beauty, cross-country skiing, sledding, sauna and family time together in the cabin that included meals, games, puzzles, crafts and enjoying a fire in the fireplace. Many meaningful moments were spent together on those vacations. One of my favorite traditions was walking out to the lake late at night, laying down in the snow and just enjoying the view above. The crispness of the air, the quiet of winter, and the brilliance of the stars created a special time spent with Uncle Tim. The lasting memory of those nights is something I love to revisit during meditation; it's my happy place.

Spending time as a family in Ely, and in the North Woods, has meant so much to us. The trips have evolved from my Dad and Tim in the front seat, and we three kids huddled in the back of one over-packed vehicle. Over the years, we needed two or even three vehicles, and it was exciting for my sister and me to introduce our husbands to this place we have loved. Our next trip is planned for May 2012, a trip to honor my Uncle Tim and plant a tree in his memory. His two great nephews and a great niece will be added to the vehicle on this trip, and it's exciting for us to share the North Woods with them. Though Uncle Tim will be missing, something that will be very difficult, somehow we know he will be close with us. As a growing family, we will honor Tim in the beautiful woods he opened to us over 20 years ago. His gift of the outdoors has shaped who we are today. For that, we thank him and remember him.

2011 Endowment Gifts

Boening Family Endowment Fund
benefiting Camps du Nord and
Widjiwagan
Marjorie Boening

Gordon Brown Endowment Fund
in memory of Gordon Brown
Linda and Norman Harris

Warner S. Brown Memorial Fund
in memory of Warner S. Brown
Anonymous

Kevin Burke Memorial Fund
in memory of Kevin Burke
Anonymous
Molly Burke

Bussey Family Endowment Fund
benefiting Camps du Nord, St. Croix,
and Widjiwagan
Mike and Marcia Bussey

Charles and Michael Cheney
Memorial Endowment Fund
in memory of Debra DeClue
Arta, Ted, Addy, Paul, Jessie
and Jed Cheney

in memory of James W. Dyson
Arta Cheney

in memory of Karen Johnson
Arta Cheney

Cornwell Family Endowment Fund
benefiting Camp Widjiwagan
in memory of Jack and Sue Cornwell
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Matthew Andersen
Paul Andersen
Anonymous
Associated Bank - Green Bay
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Jean Church
Gary and Jane Clements
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Adams Doerr Memorial
Endowment
in memory of David and Chuck Doerr
Mairi Doerr

Steve and Jayne Quehl Dumas
Memorial Fund
in memory of Steve and
Jayne Quehl Dumas
Denis and Phyllis Bakke
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Liz Flinn

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James and Joan Gardner
AESL Garvey Endowment Fund
Dana and Edward Garvey

Otis Godfrey Endowment Fund
Charles Flinn
Louise Jones

Greenberg Family Endowment
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Sue and Bob Greenberg

Ju-Ka-Lin Gustafson Endowment
Fund
Karen and Alan Crossley

Hlavacek Family Endowment Fund
Christine and Doug Hlavacek

David E. and Judy Jerde
Endowment Fund
Dave and Judy Jerde

Herbert O. Johnson Memorial Fund
in honor of Kirsten Johnson and
Alissa Johnson
Judith Miller

Waid Johnson Endowment Fund
in memory of Waid Johnson
Lyle and Claryce Johnson

Bruce Koci Memorial Wood Canvas
Canoe Fund
in memory of Bruce Koci
Robert and Margaret Baker
Ann Guhman
Susan and David Peterson

Armin & Virginia Luehrs
Campership Endowment
Whitey and Ginny Luehrs

Dorothy Lundahl Endowment Fund
benefiting Camp Widjiwagan's Chapel
Point
Dorothy Lundahl Charitable Trust

Christopher T. Lyford Memorial
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in memory of Chris Lyford
Kay Lyford

William and Katherine Mackenzie
Grandchildren Endowment
William and Katherine Mackenzie
Family Fund of the Saint Paul
Foundation

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Fund
Dave and Sherla Mayer

Anne and David Murphy Family
Fund
John Murphy, Jr.

Frank and Laura Nelson Memorial
Fund
benefiting Camps St. Croix and
Widjiwagan
Maxine Corder

in honor of Melinda and Jason Hight,
Laura and Frank Sullivan, and Steve
and Lisa Mattson
Sandra and Merle Mattson

in honor of Sandra and Merle Mattson
Steve and Lisa Mattson

Harold C. Nicholls Memorial Fund
Nedra Nicholls

Bill Noyes Endowment Fund
in memory of Bill Noyes
Thomas Noyes
Joe and Lindsay Smith

Robert Olander Ecology Fund
of Orange County Community
Foundation
in memory of Robert Olander
Olander Family Fund

2011 Endowment Gifts, continued

Ormasa Hiendlmayr Family Endowment Fund

*benefiting Camp Widjiwagan
Advanced Trips*

**Jan Ormasa and
Thomas Hiendlmayr**

Ostergren Family Fund

**Joan Ostergren and
Jim Alexander
Phyl and Doug Ostergren**

Racciatti Family Endowment Fund

Tom Racciatti

Linda and Dominic Ramacier Endowment Fund

Linda and Dominic Ramacier

Rick Family Endowment Fund

**Bob Rick
Jeffrey and Roxanne Rick**

in memory of Jerold Neseth

Bob Rick

Winthrop and Barbara Rockwell Endowment Fund

Win and Barbara Rockwell

Rob Runyon Endowment Fund

in memory of Rob Runyon

**Donald and Sharon Fleming
Mary Fleming
Donna Runyon**

Saxhaug Family Endowment Fund

John Saxhaug

Kenneth W. Scully Advanced Trips Endowment Fund

in memory of Kenneth Scully

**Kenneth W. Scully Endowment
Fund of the Catholic Community
Foundation**

Kenneth W. Scully Wood Canoe Endowment Fund

in memory of Kenneth Scully

**Kenneth W. Scully Endowment
Fund of the Catholic Community
Foundation**

Nora and Joe Seliga Wood Canoe Fund

in memory of Joe and Nora Seliga

**John Bell, Lauren Bern, and
Allison, Ben, Emma and
Jesse Bell Bern
Gary and Jane Clements
Peter and Leigh Currie**

Martin and Esther Kellogg Fund of the Saint Paul Foundation

**Deb Sussex
Joe and Lindsay Smith**

Skeewaksur Member Endowment Fund

*benefiting Camp Widjiwagan Outdoor
Learning Program*

in honor of Skip Wilke

**Curtis and Jo Ann Bernd
Danforth and Rosemary Bodien
Stuart and Harriet Cameron
Dick and Brenda Dansingberg
Thomas and Vicki Engel
Todd and Mary Jo Fetsch
Nancy and Steve Hokonson
Nancy and Dodd Knutsen
Ron and Lynette Lindmark
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Kathryn and Joseph Nasvik
Donald and Darcey Pederson
George and Alta Pederson
Helen and Richard Pederson
Paul Stegmeir and
Anne Roach-Stegmeir
Sandy Zeiss
Susan and Philip Zietlow**

Starns Family Advanced Trip Endowment

Connie and Byron Starns

in honor of Connie Starns

**Linda and Dominic Ramacier
Ellen and Martin Sampson
Kathleen Tschida
Mary Vetscher**

YMCA Camp Widjiwagan Advanced Trip Fund

**Patrick Campion and
Elizabeth Fabel
Gary and Jane Clements
Thomas and Judith Gehrz
Mary and Mark Stoick**

YMCA Camp Widjiwagan Fall/ Winter/Spring Environmental Education Endowment Fund

**Herb and Anne Pick
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**Michael Blandford
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Lynne Meyer and Mary Walser
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Ned and Susan Patterson
Herb and Anne Pick
Melissa Raphan and
Thomas Rock
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John Shepard and
Suzanne Brust
Ward and Shotsy Johnson
Lee and Margaret Skold
Tom and Laura Swain
Diane Wartnick
William and Barbara Welke
Lisa and Peter West**

in memory of Molly Brown

Molly Brown Trust (estate)

in honor of Margaret Di Giorno
**the Anderson Family— Sarah,
Logan, Jeri, & Charles**

in memory of Tim Gravelle

Jeri and Charles Glick-Anderson

in memory of John Roe

**John & Sandra Roe Foundation, a
Signature Fund of the
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HOW YOU CAN HELP SUSTAIN WIDJI

YMCA Camp Widjiwagan endowment funds provide essential support for camperships, programs, operations and more. Your donations will help.

- ▼ **Gifts to the YMCA Camp Widjiwagan General Endowment Fund provide support to Widjiwagan where needed most.**
- ▼ **Tribute gifts to any fund may be made in honor, memory or appreciation of friends or loved ones.**
- ▼ **Include Camp Widjiwagan in your will or estate plan and be recognized as a Heritage Club member.**
- ▼ **For information on establishing a named fund, please contact Linda Ramacier at 612-465-0454 or linda.ramacier@ymcatwincities.org.**
- ▼ **Send donations to "YMCA Camp Widjiwagan Endowment" and write the name of the fund you are contributing to in the memo line:**

**YMCA Camp Widjiwagan
 Attn: Linda Ramacier, Development Director
 2125 E. Hennepin Ave., Suite 150, Minneapolis, MN 55413**

A Widji Parent's Peace Of Mind

Not long ago, the Garvey family, Edward, Dana, Katherine and Arabella, became members of the Heritage Club by creating the AESL Garvey Family Endowment Fund to benefit Camp Widjiwagan.

When asked about his generosity, since Edward was not a Widji camper himself, he responded with the following statement:

We first heard about Camp Widjiwagan 12 years or so ago when some family friends were talking about their Widji experiences. We then started to run into all sorts of people who had Widji connections with awesome Widji stories. It was weird. They all talked as if Widji was some outdoors cult. An enticing one, since we sent our two daughters on the Widji intro trips when they were old enough. They loved the experiences.

Our older daughter, Katherine, was a Mountaineer last year and now spends time with her Widji friends in college. Arabella will be an Explorer this summer, eager to embark on her fourth Widji trip. So, now we are the ones telling the awesome stories to prospective parents urging them to join the Widji cult!

The high school-into-college years are incredibly transformative, and they can be very difficult and unsettled years. Yet, there are only so many things a parent can do help their children. By allowing self discovery and personal assessment, Widji helps the kids in so many ways. It helps them determine what's important in life, and it helps them mature, gain confidence and take on more responsibility. Widji provides bumpers in that alley of life, and that is so important.

But the Widji experience was good for our whole family. For example, when we think about who our kids hang out with, we always feel better when it is with Widji kids because we know they are anchored by the Widji experiences.

So we are delighted to support Widji

through an endowment. It helps make sure the Widji experience lives for a long, long time and can continue to serve as a foundational anchor for many more generations of kids. Plus, we like the idea of setting up something that I can put money into with some regularity, and my girls can put money into, too.

Edward has served on the Widjiwagan Board of Directors since 2010, learning the inner workings of the camp, while experiencing the trail through his daughters vicariously. At a recent Board meeting he gave the following opening statement:

*A world's pain, turmoil and uncertainty,
Gives a parent pause, a need to reflect,
More now as their children grow and fly the nest.*

*Though wary of the turbulence,
I see mine maturing to fine, wonderful ladies
Prepared and futures bright.*

*Widji is sublimely responsible.
Summer after summer,
From Intro to Mountaineer (or Voyageur).
Widji embeds a compass of what's truly important.
For decades, for generations,
for my daughters, for me.*

*Traditions and Tales of Trail: stories that grow
over their lifetime
The sanctity, sanity, and silence of nature
Friends, companions, and fellow travelers:
Life-long assets*

*Conquering challenges, overcoming hardships
Fortified by their journeys through physical and
emotional peaks and valleys*

*Maturity developed, confidence gained, and inner-
strength grows*



Kat, Dana, Arabella and Ed Garvey visiting the Grand Canyon.

*Personal discovery, Self-identity, and wisdom
experienced*

*Widji prepares my daughters for the exacting
unknowns;
But the vicarious harvest is mine;
This is Widji's gift to me; I am grateful.
It gives me a Widji Parent's Peace of Mind.*

One final thing worth noting about the Garvey's endowment, its name: the "AESL/Garvey Family Endowment." AESL is an acronym that Edward Garvey pronounces as "A-SILL" and stands for Attitude, Effort, Skill and Luck. These, Edward says, are the attributes of success—having a good attitude, putting in good effort, growing one's skills and making your own luck. These are also part of the Widji experience. So, as Edward told us, Widji provides good AESL!



2011 Y PARTNERS CAMPAIGN SUCCESS

The 2011 Y Partners campaign reached a total of close to \$222,000 in donations with a goal to achieve \$260,000. Camp Widjiwagan is fortunate to have a great group of volunteers who donate time every year to contact our alumni, campers, staff, family members and friends to raise money for this important campaign. The funds support camperships, which helped 109 summer campers fund their trips. In addition, 152 participants received assistance to the Outdoor Learning program during the fall, winter or spring. The annual Y Partners campaign also supports staff development and repairing and replacing trail equipment, wood canoe maintenance and other important projects.

The campaign to raise funds for 2011 took place in the fall of 2010 and was chaired by **Mark Scott and Lynne Meyer**. Many thanks to **Mark and Lynne, all the volunteers and the following chairs of the individual teams:**

Y PARTNERS TEAM

General Calling: Keelin Kane, Erin Walsh

Board Division: Jon Ridge

Major Gifts: Jeri Glick-Anderson,
Tom Hiendlmayr

Team Leaders: Matt Bailey,
Jeri Glick-Anderson,
Tom Hiendlmayr,
Bill Kellogg,
John Patterson,
John Saxhaug
Court Storey

Administrative Support:

Elizabeth Miller
Shelley Carpenter

A special thanks to the 91 general call night volunteers and to the 37 major gift campaigners who dedicated time and energy to support experiences for Youth at Widji.

YPartners

HUDSON BAY \$5,000-\$9,999

Ruth & John Huss
Joyful Women Fund
Keo Rubbright Lukefahr &
Robert Lukefahr
Philip and Katherine Nason
Fund of the Saint Paul
Foundation

ADVANCED EXPLORER \$2,500-\$4,999

Matthew Bailey & Kris Gendron
Annelie & Shawn Bergerson
Clifton Brittain & Peggy Ladner
Brown Family Foundation
Jim & Joan Gardner
Susan & Bob Greenberg
R.C. Lilly Foundation
Alida & Bill Messinger
Tom & Sally Patterson
Terhuly Foundation, Inc
Robert "Skip" Wilke

EXPLORER \$1,500-\$2,499

Mark Bixby & Keelin Kane
Charles E. and Edna T.
Brundage Charitable
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WIND RIVER \$1,000-\$1,499

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Jerry & Sonja Wenger

Philip & Christina White
John & Jan Wilke
Earl Windahl & Guri Kirkeng

QUETICO \$500-\$999

Anastasi & Associates PA
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Marjorie Boening
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Eric Buetow & Kathleen Madden
Philip Bush & Kathy Bishop
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Gary Carlson & Jane Howard
Kyle & Shelley Carpenter
Doug & Kathy Clock
Peter & Leigh Currie
Thomas Cusack &
Carrie Ohly-Cusack
Richard & Nancy Dana
Blake Davis &
Sandra Weiden Davis
Judith & Culver Davis
David & Patricia Drew
Thomas & Barbara Elliott
Steve Euler & Nancy Roehr
Charles Flinn &
Elizabeth Hayden
David & Leslie Gardner



ENROLLMENT HISTORY

CAMPERS	2011	2010	2009	2008
Summer Session Campers	642	647	646	670
Organizational Group Campers	22	24	11	39
Fall/Winter/Spring Campers	1,460	1,491	1,643	1,345
Year Round Total	2,124	2,162	2,300	2,054
CAMPER DAYS	2011	2010	2009	2008
Summer Session Campers	13,828	13,176	13,085	13,758
Organizational Group Campers	233	174	125	449
Fall/Winter/Spring Campers	5,779	4,584	6,383	4,141
Year Round Total	19,840	17,934	19,593	18,348

Linda & Wesley Gibson
 Google Matching Gifts Program
 William Gray
 Pat Hart
 Steve & Betsy Hill
 HP Company Foundation
 Ward & Shotsy Johnson
 Jim Kastenholz &
 Jennifer Steans
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“It cannot be emphasized strongly enough the importance of talking with campers and counselors during pack out about individual and group goals, their route, and the aspects of their trip that make them feel excited, or nervous. A well-run pack out is a shining example of the strength of the Widji summer program: numerous staff and volunteers working together to provide an amazing learning experience for kids.”

—Kurt Simer

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Jack Weise - Hanbury-Thelon Rivers
Dan Sinykin - Elk-Thelon Rivers
Andy Cochrane - Dubawnt-Thelon Rivers
Ginny Howick - Hanbury-Thelon Rivers
Juliet Dana - Dubawnt-Kazan Rivers
Kathleen Floberg - Elk-Thelon Rivers
Romy Eberle - Hart, Peel, Rat, Bell, Porcupine Rivers

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Will Brunquell - Arctic National Wildlife Refuge
Carl Johnson - Wrangell-St. Elias National Park
Kate Lauth - Wrangell-St. Elias National Park

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“We need challenge and opportunity in all phases of our lives in order to become whole, functioning individuals; mindful contributors to our communities and advocates for ourselves and for our values. Widji demands of campers and of staff: be better than you are, for yourself, for your peers, and for your world.”
—Charlotte Muzzi

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“Students take a risk to come to Widji and they always learn that the risk to grow was worth it. Outside the tight boundaries of school, kids can be different and thrive differently. We see a different student when they are at Widji; one that has bigger boundaries. The people working at Widji are the difference —smiles, knowledge of the outdoors and their ability to engage us in the outdoors.”

—Bloomington Public Schools chaperone

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