



"People Experiencing People in God's Nature"

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St. John Bosco Camp Association, Fall 2012



The Bosco Wilderness

The Newsletter of the St. John Bosco Camp Association

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

What an exciting journey it has been! As usual, experiencing Bosco has been an amazing opportunity for me. Of course I have all of you, your beautiful smiles, and your laughter to thank for that. Bosco has a way of leading us to discover new things about ourselves, as we are often pushed outside our comfort zone. Someone once told me you're supposed to run towards what scares you (unless it's a bear - don't ever run towards a bear!); I find myself doing this at Bosco time and time again - facing my fears and stepping outside of my comfort zone.

I remember my first time ever being a camper, and we were planning our hike as a group. I thought to myself "there is no way I can do this hike, I know my limit, and this is way beyond it. I can't do it". To my surprise, I finished the hike. Although I did not hike the fastest, and I definitely did not carry the most supplies, I completed the hike. It didn't matter how tired and sore I was, nothing could have wiped the smile from my face once I had completed that journey.

Our minds have a funny way of tricking us into thinking that we aren't capable of doing certain things or overcoming challenges. In reality, if we set our minds to it, we can do anything. That was my favorite part of this year: watching campers, staff and volunteers discover this about themselves.

Ever wonder how Bosco came to exist? It was a group of regular people like you and I who had a dream. They could have let their doubts get the best of them, but they persevered and started up this amazing place we all love. A place that, after all of these years, people are still so insanely passionate about.

I congratulate all of you on yet another successful season. I do not know everything that the future holds for Bosco, but I am excited for all of the good things to come. I hope you will find the time to enjoy those moments with us.

See you around,

Gillian Wourms
2012 Camp Director

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday, November 17, 2012 at 1:00 PM

Lower Level, St. Joseph's Parish Hall
(Corner of 8th Street & Broadway Ave, Saskatoon)

Please contact the camp office if you wish to be placed on the agenda.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Here we are at the end of the 54th successful summer at St. John Bosco Wilderness Camp. While the many things we love thankfully stay the same at camp, such as the sound of a crackling campfire or the feeling of accomplishment after a long day's hike, some things have changed for Bosco. Our office processes have made a move into a new technological era! Even though we still receive camper registration via traditional "snail mail" we are proud and excited to say that our first year of accepting online registrations and payment via PayPal was a success!

In our programming we have modified the costly badge program to a comprehensive "passport" book that our Junior and Intermediate campers took home. Our traditional badge designs were creatively incorporated into this book to reflect our ongoing commitment to provide a worthwhile camping experience that all have come to expect from Bosco. The work on this project started in the summer of 2011. We are proud of the result and as promised were able to offer this new format to our campers this summer. In fact, it was so successful that there were several requests for an equivalent version for the Senior programs, which we are currently exploring.

The weather is turning colder but we are hard at work planning and preparing for the summer of 2013. We have much to do before we unlock the gates to campers in the spring, not the least of which is the start of a new shower building. As you can imagine, this is a massive undertaking, but desperately required as the existing shower building has reached the end of its lifespan. If you can help in any way, whether by a financial donation, attending a fundraiser, or offering some time when construction starts, it would be greatly appreciated.

Without the ongoing support, projects like these, the projects before it, and the numerous projects to come would not be possible without the army of staff and volunteers to make it happen. To all of those people I want to say thank you. Your dedication and commitment has kept Bosco alive and well for all these years.

God bless and see you next year.

Cheryl Kirzinger
President, SJBWC Board of Directors

VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Bosco has so many great traditions that we are able to revisit every summer: our campfires on swim beach, singing at liturgy in the chapel, sprinting to finish the Bosco Relay. More than that, there are so many little rituals that, for me anyway, are all tied up in my thoughts of camp. Rituals like staring up at the stars and the northern lights from the deck of the Naturelore building, cooking up burgers on a wood flame after closing ceremonies, jumping out of a canoe to go for a swim in Zeden's fresh clear water, and I am sure that you can think of many more. This year we have started what we hope to be a couple of new traditions: handing out passports to younger campers at closing ceremonies, and our Fall Fling.

The passports are our new way of recognizing achievement and experiences from the year at camp. In the spirit of recognition, I would like to extend a special thank to those who put in the hours to make it a reality this year, especially the 2011 camp administration and this year's Board of Directors. I think that the passports turned out really well, but I would love to hear your feedback. It is always nice to hear from people who care about camp.

Many of those people who care about camp were out at this year's first annual Bosco Fall Fling on October 20th. We had it all: We had an open microphone with some young (Neil Young) players and some more experienced guitar gurus. We had door prizes, 50/50s, and a silent auction. We had a professional photographer taking pictures to commemorate the evening, which you will soon see on our Facebook page. We had a fashion show exhibiting some of our nice new clothing line, and soon you will be able to buy your very own Bosco wardrobe right from the camp website. We had a great night with great food and great company, and raised over \$2000! The one thing that we could have done to improve the evening was to have given people more notice. So here it is for next year:

You are formally invited to Bosco's Second Annual Fall Fling.

I'll see you there!

Martin Plemel
Vice-President, SJBWC Board of Directors

2012 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

After the 2011 teacher's strike, we were excited to welcome back familiar friends and new faces as we opened our gates for the 2012 school programs in June. 285 students had the opportunity to experience the Bosco wilderness during our spring programming. We are already booking groups for 2013 and look forward to seeing everyone again and to welcoming new organizations to join the fun!

The summer saw 200 campers join us for our July and August sessions (66 first camp, 66 second camp, 68 third camp). We welcomed 20 Junior campers, 92 Intermediate campers, 82 Senior campers (43 Wilderness Skills, 20 WOTS, 19 COTS) and 8 ALE campers.

This year was our first year piloting a formalized camper sponsorship program, which was a great success. In April, we approached all Saskatoon public and Catholic schools and asked teachers to nominate campers from low-income and new Canadian families that would benefit from attending Bosco. Campers were chosen based on need, availability of funding and program space. We were blessed to receive a lot of generous financial support this year, which allowed us to sponsor 21 economically disadvantaged and new Canadian campers. The Dakota Dunes Community Development Corporation graciously sponsored nine campers. An additional twelve campers were funded through the City of Saskatoon and private donations of cash and Bosco Bucks. To all of our sponsors and funding agencies: words cannot express our gratitude towards your generosity.

We also received funding from the Saskatchewan Outdoor and Environmental Education Association (SOEEA) and Sask Lotteries to assist with our Naturelore programming. This funding assisted us in continuing to enhance our Naturelore programming, enabling us to offer a more consistent, valuable, and enjoyable nature experience for our 2012 campers. The overarching goal of the Naturelore program is to instruct and encourage campers to care for and nurture the environment. Campers learn about the local vegetation and wildlife, responsible camping, how to reduce/reuse/recycle/rethink, and many more valuable lessons. Our Naturelore program is now more revitalized than ever and we plan to continue to see it develop for many years to come.

Planning is now underway for the 2012 camping season! Stay tuned to www.johnboscocamp.com, our Facebook group (search "St. John Bosco Wilderness Camp"), and Twitter (@johnboscocamp) for 2012 camping dates, program updates, and other news!

BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

Camp looks better all the time, and we have you all to thank. Between our funding partners, generous private donations, and the hard work of our volunteers, we continue the challenge of maintaining and updating our facilities, and we are seeing great progress.

Some of the highlights of this year's progress include the demolition of the Flying Fortress, installation of new stoves (with great thanks for the financial support Lorne and Evelyn Johnson Foundation), reinsulation and residing of the kitchen freezer and fridge, the construction of a new recycling bin, pressure washing and linseeding of Mike's Cabin, pressure washing and repainting of the dining hall floor, and the painting of various buildings including the canteen and chapel.

We wish to extend a special thank-you to the St. Joseph's and St. Michael's Knights of Columbus, who came up in early June to finish the water heater and laundry area of the dining hall.

We've got some big plans in the works for 2013. First and foremost, the new shower facilities will be built. We will do some repairs to Mike's Cabin, including work on the chinking. The dining hall roof will be extended, and some windows in the chapel will be replaced with venting windows. The floor in admin needs painting, as well as a variety of other tasks - the list is never short! As always, we open our doors on May long weekend for our traditional "work weekend", so mark it on your calendar. If you have some time and elbow grease to spare, we'd love to see you, and show you all the great things we've been up to!

55TH REUNION

The Alumni Committee has met, and it's official: plans are in the works for a 55th Reunion on the 2013 July long weekend! We will keep you posted on the details as they arise. If you are interested in joining us or in getting involved, please contact the camp office.

FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITIES

We are looking for volunteers to assist us with our winter fundraising endeavors. We have some bingos lined up for November 10th, December 15th, January 12th and February 2nd. We will also be selling ATV tickets again this winter, and are planning a steak night towards spring.

The money earned at these fundraisers goes towards keeping your camper fees low, but to do this, we need your help! If you can come out to any of our fundraisers and lend a hand for a few hours, there are some Bosco Bucks in it for you! Please contact lynn@johnboscocamp.com for more information.

THANK YOU TO OUR STAFF!

The Board would like to extend a huge **thank you** to the staff of 2012. This year we welcomed many new staff to our energetic crew, as we bid farewell and good luck to senior staff moving on to their next phase in life. These newcomers showed true Bosco spirit like they had spent years there. Thank you also to the staff that were unable to spend the entire camping season with us, but were able to give us a little of their summer. It is greatly appreciated. It is this type of energy that is the life blood of camp and keeps our campers coming back.

Thank you, everyone, for helping us to make a difference in the lives of the youth that come through the gates of St. John Bosco Camp!



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MEMBERSHIP HAS ITS PRIVILEGES

So you forked out \$10 for a membership to the St. John Bosco Camp Association when you registered your children. Now what? Well, membership gets you more than just a charitable donation tax receipt. You also receive:

- Voting privileges at the Annual General Meeting, held every November
- A say in the growth of camp
- Semi-annual subscription to our newsletter "The Bosco Wilderness"
- An invitation to register campers early and receive special Alumni Registration discounts
- Notification of fundraising events, work bees, and other events
- A chance to join the Board of Directors
- The opportunity to promote Christian Wilderness camping in Northern Saskatchewan

Anyone can become a member. We have three types of memberships: Catholic Organizations (voting privileges equal to three votes) are \$100, Organization or Commercial memberships (associate member – no vote) are \$25, and Individual/Family memberships (one vote) are \$10.

THANK YOU

We are blessed with a long list of generous people and organizations to thank. So many, in fact, that we've had to move the list to our website! Visit us at www.johnboscocamp.com and click on the "Thank You!" button.

We are a non-profit corporation and a registered charity. Camper fees do not come close to covering the cost of operating camp. Therefore we rely on volunteer labour, grants and donations to help us offer our unique wilderness experience at a reasonable cost. St. John Bosco Camp would not be the camp that it is without the grants and sponsorships that we receive from our sponsors, or the time and effort of our tireless volunteers. If you are interested in making a monetary donation or volunteering in any way to help at camp or with other activities throughout the year please contact us.