



Camp Kawartha Annual Report 2013

Message from the Executive Director:



A bend in the road is not the end of the road... unless you fail to make the turn.

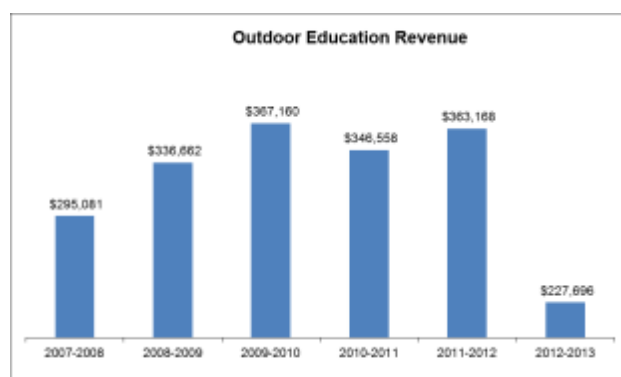
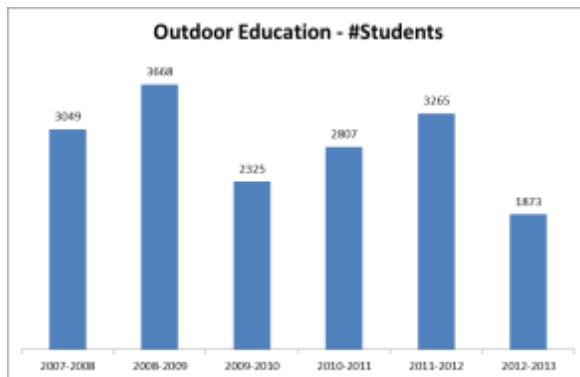
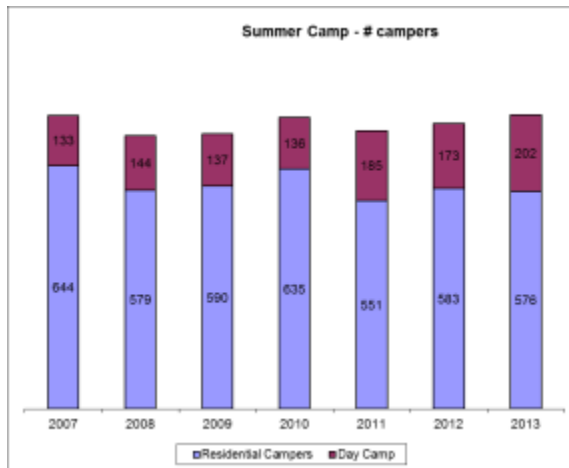
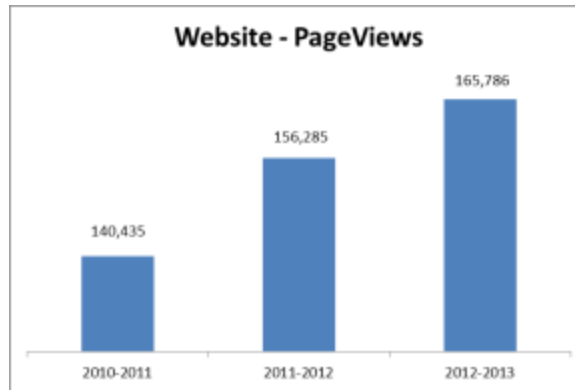
As many of you may know, last fiscal year was a challenging one for Camp Kawartha. We faced a significant drop in revenue as a result of Ontario Public School teacher's work action. That meant the cancellation of many field trips. Outdoor centres, museums and camps across Ontario struggled with bookings during this past school year. However, we can take heart in knowing that the mark of a good organization lies in its ability to respond to adversity. As the architectural firm of du Toit, Allsopp and Hillier (DTAH), authors of our 2012 Site and Facilities Master Plan state: *"Camp Kawartha staff have been nimble in responding to camp industry market trends (interest in shorter programs, programs for those with special needs and curriculum-based programs). Further, staff are entrepreneurial in their approach – successful in securing additional program funding through grants, creating fee-for-service programs (corporate teambuilding) and establishing partnerships."*

Our hope is that we can continue to find creative and relevant ways to foster a culture of stewardship in the Peterborough Region and beyond. For example, during this past year we piloted a new outreach program that we could take directly to schools; we focused on a comprehensive marketing plan showcasing our programming to more new school boards, private schools, churches, youth groups and organizations than ever before. We expanded our summer camp offerings and developed several environmental camps in partnership with two Cottagers Associations. We created a unique environmental education framework and we continue to build on our Eco Mentor program, encouraging young educators to promote environmental awareness in their future classrooms.

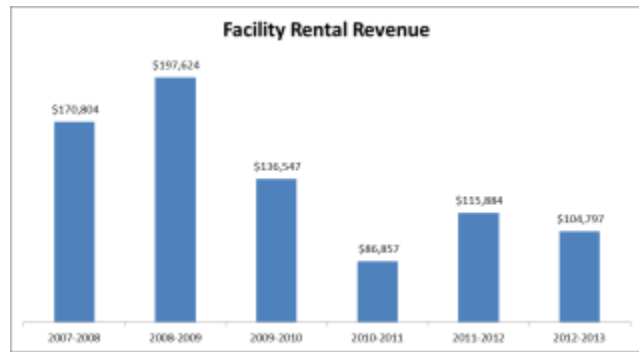
The good news is that schools are coming back. They are coming from Quebec, from Windsor and from the Ottawa region. They are finding out about our focus on sustainability and environmental awareness and they are selecting us over other centres. And gratifyingly, they are coming more frequently and in larger numbers. It is our hope that 2013-2014 will be a watershed year. A year in which we can demonstrate categorically that Camp Kawartha is, as our vision statement suggests ... *"a leader in the delivery of high quality and inspirational outdoor and environmental programming, practicing, teaching and promoting sustainable living practices to children and adults of all ages and abilities."*

By: Jacob Rodenburg

Facts and Figures:



Please note: The Teacher's Work Action took place from September, 2012 to mid-May, 2013



Accomplishments:

Below please find an overview of accomplishments over the past year:

- Camp Renewal:** Thanks to the hard work of our maintenance team, this past year has seen some remarkable improvements to our facilities! Our kitchen has been completely renovated, and we can proudly say that we have a “*state of the art*” camp kitchen. A beautiful amphitheater now overlooks Clear Lake and several of our larger cabins have had a complete makeover. Our dining hall has also been significantly improved. My thanks to Willi, Gary, Larry and Aran for all their hard work!



2. **Promotions and Marketing:** Thanks to our office team and in particular our marketing and promotions intern, Michelle Beattie, we were able to promote our programs in the following way:

- Since July 2013 Camp Kawartha has reached out to various facility and program user groups. To date, 18 school boards have approved the distribution of our materials to some or all of their respective schools; the total number of schools with access to our materials is 1,339, with potential exposure to approximately 629,500 students. Over 140 private schools have also been reached. Distribution to an additional 6 school boards is currently pending approval. Direct marketing to Quebec school boards will start in early 2014.
- Promotion of the Environment Centre's "Be a Water Steward" programs effectively increased bookings in Fall 2013 and in early Spring 2014. Outreach for these programs went to 130 regional schools and to their 48,053 students.
- Facility rental advertising has been distributed to almost 400 organizations in the GTA and Peterborough area.



3. **Summer Camp:** Under the exemplary leadership of Adam Strasberg, summer camp 2013 was one of the smoothest summer camps ever! We developed several new programs in order to attract new cohorts of campers. For example:

- A Kindercamp geared for ages 3 ½ to 5.
- Mini Kawartha Day - A program for both parents and children to enjoy the magic of camp.
- Open house – for tentative newer campers to experience what summer camp is all about.

4. **Survey's say it all!** A recent compilation of data from 120 teachers over the past 7 years have revealed that our outdoor education programming is proving to be effective indeed! (*please note that "very satisfied" is the highest rating on our scale*).

- 89% of respondents were very satisfied with the quality of OE programming, close to 91% were very satisfied with their overall learning experience, almost 93% were very satisfied with the knowledge and experience of the OE instructors.

And parents and campers from summer 2013 seemed equally pleased. From over 100 surveys completed:

- 86% of respondents for Summer Camp were very satisfied with their experience. Among the reasons cited - 60% selected Camp Kawartha because of its reputation. 80% were very satisfied with the quality of camp staff and 83% thought that our staff were very positive role models.

5. **Environmental Framework:** In a very exciting development, Camp Kawartha is working with the PVNC Catholic School Board to create an environmental framework. The idea is that every student, throughout their development will be exposed to age appropriate environmental

education delivered by Camp Kawartha and our partner – the Ganaraska Forest Centre. By the time students graduate from High School, they will receive a Stewardship and Sustainability Certificate. The framework is being piloted during the 2013-2014 school year. This innovative approach to environmental education is being considered by other school boards.

6. **No Child Left Inside:** Camp Kawartha is working with the Kinark Outdoor Centre and Peterborough Green-Up to provide hands-on outdoor experiences at local schools implementing a unique program called “*No Child Left Inside.*” Using nearby green spaces and school yards, Camp Kawartha staff are encouraging teachers to take their students outside. We hope to reach 500 students over the school year.
7. **A Way Forward: Camp Kawartha’s Site and Facilities Master Plan:** The architectural firm of du Toit, Allsopp and Hillier (DTAH) developed a comprehensive Site and Facilities Master Plan to envision the site priorities of Camp Kawartha. This firm is renowned for its innovative work in creating the “*Brickworks*” in Toronto, one of Canada’s pre-eminent environment centres. To review the plan, please visit: www.campkawartha.ca/about-us/mission-and-vision. Camp Kawartha also retained the services of Cambium Environmental to develop a business plan. The plan provides a rationale for investing in the facility upgrades suggested by DTAH.
8. **Grants received:** Many thanks to our donors and partners who helped us in the delivery of our programming:
 - \$2,500 from Kawartha Credit Union to support our Environmental Education Programs
 - \$5,000 from Cottager’s life to hold a two week Environmental Camp in partnership with Wollaston Lake Home & Cottagers Association.
 - \$25,000 from the Great Lakes Guardian Fund for our “*Be a Water Steward Program*” in partnership with the Otonabee Region Conservation Authority (ORCA).
 - \$25,000 from Terminal Management to help us upgrade equipment.
 - \$3,500 from Canada Summer Jobs to fund an Environmental Coordinator for Summer Camp.
 - \$14,000 from Community Futures for a Marketing and Promotions Intern
 - \$6,500 from the Toronto Star Foundation for Summer Camp Sponsorship
 - Funding for a Youth Intern Program to hire a Fundraising Assistant, two Maintenance Workers and an Outdoor Education Assistant for a total of \$26,600
 - \$10,000 from the estate of Don White
 - \$10,000 from the Williams Wilson Sherport Foundation for Summer Camp Sponsorship.
 - \$6,000 from the Toronto Star Fresh Air Fund for Summer Camp Sponsorship.
 - \$8,960 from The Douglas Utting Foundation for Outdoor Education Sponsorship.
 - \$2,000 from St. Peter’s on the Rock for Summer Camp sponsorships.



- In total, thanks to **donations** from foundations, businesses and individuals, we were able to provide **\$77,723** in sponsorship dollars to children from economically challenged backgrounds. This is the most sponsorship funding raised in the history of Camp Kawartha.

9. Lending a Helping Hand:

- No Empty Beds: This is the second year we've been able to offer our "No Empty Beds Initiative." In partnership with the YMCA, Big Brother's & Sisters, Prince of Wales and St. Teresa's Catholic School, we were able to provide summer camp experiences to 37 children (in addition to our sponsorship program). This



initiative identified "last minute" beds which were not likely to be filled and provided these to local service organizations for children in need. This represents an in kind value of **\$49,602** in additional sponsorship opportunities for kids in need. In total Camp Kawartha and its partners contributed **\$127,325** in sponsorship and subsidy assistance over the past year! That represents an impressive 15% of summer camp enrollment.

10. Partnerships:

- Wollaston Cottagers Association: Thanks to a grant from the Cottager's Life Magazine, we organized two weeks of environmental learning for campers in Coe Hill, Ontario this past summer. Kids planted trees, naturalized shorelines, assessed water quality, visited a local fish hatchery and participated in hands-on environmental games. The camps were so successful, we've been asked to continue the partnership next summer.



Wollaston Cottagers Environmental Camp



Stoney Lake Environmental Camp

- b. Stoney Lake Outreach Camp: At the same time, we provided a week of environmental learning on Juniper Island in partnership with the Stoney Lake Cottager's Association. Using the Wollaston model, kids participated in daily themed environmental activities.

Next summer, we are working with the Stoney Lake Cottage's Association to offer 3 weeks of environmental camps.

- c. Eco Mentorship Program: This is the third year of our partnership with Trent's School of Professional Learning. Together, we have created an environmental education training program for student teachers. After participating in a series of workshops put on by Camp and Faculty staff and after successfully completing a practicum component, student teachers receive an Eco-mentor



certificate attesting to their skills and interest in environmental education. In June 2014, over 135 student teachers will have graduated from this program. This approach to environmental education has been adopted and modified by other Universities in Ontario among them: Nipissing University, York University and the University of Toronto. They credit Trent University and Camp Kawartha for inspiring them.

- d. Environment Day: In partnership with Ecology Park, Camp Kawartha delivered the 5th annual environmental education learning day at Beavermead Park for more than 220 students from the PVNC Catholic School Board.
- b. Nature Playscapes: We are working with a local carpenter and the John Howard Society to implement a number of design elements for our nature playscape, designed by two Trent University Students. Youth will not only learn some carpentry skills but we will have some hands on nature play elements suitable for younger, elementary students.



Nature Playscapes in Action

11. **Web design**: Thanks to the hard work of Karen Copson, our Administrative Coordinator, Camp Kawartha has launched a brand new website. The website uses WordPress, a much more manageable platform for organizing and updating information. Please visit www.campkawartha.ca to see for yourself.
12. **Getting the Word Out**: Camp Kawartha continues to share its accomplishments in camping and Outdoor and Environmental education to organizations across Ontario. For example:

- Our Executive Director, Jacob Rodenburg was a keynote speaker for the Community Care AGM. Jacob also presented workshops on environmental education at the Ontario Camps Association, the Ontario Society of Environmental Education and the Council of Ontario Educators.

13. Camp Kawartha Environment Centre: The Centre continues to inspire and educate our community about stewardship. Here are some highlights:

- 2,091 elementary and high school students participated in environmental programming (70 classes) in the fourth year of the Environment's Centre operations.
- Since opening, the Camp Kawartha Environment Centre has directly taught 9,400 High School and Elementary students about sustainable living, energy conservation and ecology. More than 1,200 student teachers have participated in environmental education workshops and at least 19,000 people have visited the Environment Centre (a total of tours, students, student teachers and rental groups).



- A total of 485 student teachers participated in environmental education workshops at the Camp Kawartha Environment Centre.
- During 2012, we introduced our "Oaks and Acorns" program. Specifically geared for parents and their toddlers, we provided a weekly opportunity for young families to explore the natural world at the Camp Kawartha Environment Centre. This past year we logged 450 visits! Parents tell us they and their little ones love the building and the incredible green space around the Centre.
- This is also the second year for *Forest Fridays* - a program designed for homeschooling families. 18 sessions took place, logging 270 visits. This program provides a venue for homeschooled children to participate in in-depth nature and environmental programming. Kids discovered wetlands, made forts and explored the many trails around the Centre.



- We were able to offer a March Break Environmental Camp and three one week sessions to children from the ages of 5 to 12 during the 2012-2013 school year and summer. These sessions had a waiting list. Activities included Nature Art, Exploration, First Nation Awareness, Sustainable Living, Story Telling and Music. Over 80 campers participated in these camps.
- We continue to deliver our "Be A Water Steward" Program to elementary and secondary students in partnership with the Otonabee Region Conservation Authority. 537



students learned about water conservation, sustainable living and participated in direct environmental action by rehabilitating wetlands and shorelines. As one parent put it:

- *"We had a wonderful time! Both Amanda and Meredith were excellent with the kids and able to engage a wide range of ages which was perfect for such a diverse group. The hands on nature of both programs was both fun and really educational. Many of the other parents approached me afterwards and shared praise for the program. Many parents also mentioned that they look forward to attending similar programs in the future."*

14. **Our Volunteers:** A not-for-profit organization like Camp Kawartha is only as good as the volunteers it attracts. We'd like to pay tribute to a remarkable group of people who believe in the Camp, its' mission and what it has yet to accomplish. To them we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude.

1. Special thanks to our Board of Directors and in particular Bob Burgis, our President, who has helped to guide our organization as it creates a vision for the future with its Site and Facilities Master Plan
2. A big thank you to our Board of Directors who have faithfully served Camp Kawartha over the past number of years. They have worked hard to ensure that Camp Kawartha remains relevant and viable long into the future. We'd like to acknowledge: John Etches, Mike Evans, John Lewis, D'Arcy McKittrick and Gord Regts for their many contributions to the Camp.
3. Thanks to Warren Craft, who this year began a new fundraiser called "*Warren in Motion.*" He has now raised an astonishing \$108,000 to assist in our sponsorship and subsidy program. This year Warren collected over \$6,000! Thanks for all you do Warren!

15. **Award:** Camp Kawartha was fortunate enough to receive an **Environmental Excellence Award** from the **Otonabee Region Conservation Authority (ORCA)** for: *"continuing to find creative ways to deliver its mission of creating positive stewards of our natural and human communities."* ORCA goes on to say: *"From establishing a unique eco-mentor program for student teachers in partnership with Trent University, to designing and implementing a water stewardship program for elementary and secondary students and embarking on an ambitious facility master plan, Camp Kawartha truly innovates and inspires."*

Testimonials:

It is important for our organization to recognize that we do make a significant difference in the lives of others. Here are just a few of the testimonials we've received from parents, campers, students and teachers telling us that we help to promote stewardship, caring and environmental awareness in children of all ages, for today and for tomorrow:

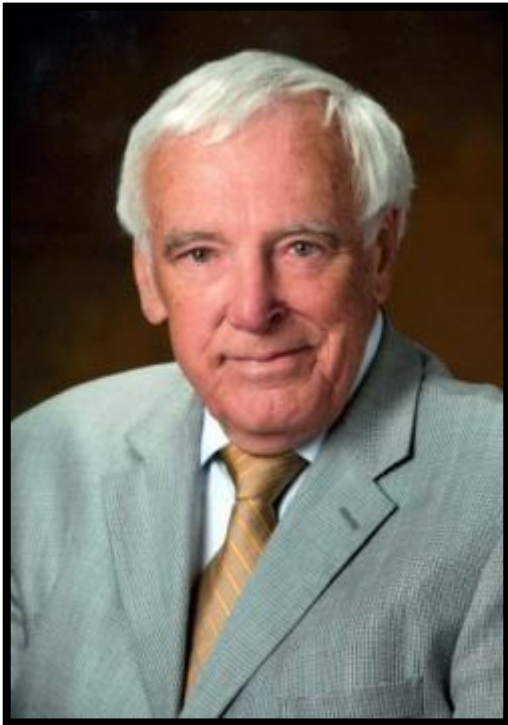
- o *Our son was initially very unsure about going to camp. By the end of day one, however, he was hooked and couldn't wait to go back the next day. He came home each night full of stories and loved*

- all of his counsellors! A most excellent week. Perhaps the biggest praise came a week or so after he had finished camp. While on a walk in the woods, he asked if his little sister would be old enough to go next year because "I think she'd really love it, Mum" Amazing. Thank you to the entire Camp K staff!*
- *Our 2 sons were so happy to have attended Camp Kawartha. Even though they barely spoke English, they came back starting to speak English more freely. We appreciated the extra care that the counselors took towards our children. We are definitely sending them back next year and recommending our friends to send their kids as well.*
 - *Both my children love camp, and they will keep going back again and again.*
 - *My daughter went to Camp Kawartha not knowing anyone there. This was a huge step for her as she really enjoys just being at home. She was a very shy girl with low self-esteem and very little confidence in herself. What two weeks did for us!! She has so much self-confidence and her self-esteem is incredible. She learned a new sport (Archery) that she continues to do! She tried new foods, which she continues to eat! She met new friends which she continues to talk to! She has changed so much! And for the better! What an amazing kid! What an amazing camp! Thank-You Camp Kawartha!*
 - *My 3 children have been attending camp now since 2003. Camp Kawartha has enhanced their overall skills and development in a way that I don't think I could provide as a parent. My eldest son went from a camper to becoming a counsellor. My youngest child has ADD and has had some issues of her own while away at camp. All the staff have been incredibly supportive in helping her while away at camp*
 - *My boys had a great time at the daycamp. I thought it would be a great way to introduce the camp before they did a sleep over camp. At the end of the first day, they asked to go to sleepover camp!! The staff were energetic, organized and fun! My kids had lots of new experiences and came home everyday, tired, dirty and happy!! A perfect way for young kids to spend a few weeks. We will be back next summer, for sure.*
 - *Camp Kawartha has been a big part of my boys` summers for seven years. We return each year due to the exceptional staff and programming. My boys are turning into wonderful young men, in part because of the mentoring they have received at Camp Kawartha, and the new experiences they have each year. My eldest was on staff this year, and I like to think he is providing the same mentorship to new campers that he was so lucky to receive. I would recommend Camp Kawartha without hesitation.*
 - *This was my niece's first experience with overnight camp, and she felt immediately comfortable as soon as she met her camp counsellors. She loved all of the activities, had no trouble making friends, and said that she wants to return for longer next year. The setting is absolutely beautiful.*
 - *I was really surprised that my son did not complain about anything. He liked it a lot and would like to repeat this experience. I noticed some positive influence of the camp to my son for appreciation and ecological approach with nature. He was so proud of himself and his muscles after canoe trip.*

Testimonials from the Environment Centre Camps:

- *I wanted to thank you for another amazing week of camp. Henry had so much fun. He was in a good mood and eager to talk about things he did when he came home. Your enthusiasm for teaching and all the preparations to get the plans and materials ready are much appreciated. I can tell that a lot of hard work goes into this! I love your program and can't wait for our younger son to be old enough to join.*
- *I wanted to let you know how much Max enjoyed the Environmental Camp. He absolutely raved about you and the camp every evening. Thank you so much.*
- *Cole and Emma had a wonderful time at camp this week. Thank you!!! Their days sounded full and exciting. Your energy is incredible!*
- *Thank you Craig. Sofia and Luca enjoyed your camp very much. Also thanks for the great photos.*
- *Exceeded, couldn't be any better!*
- *Engaging activities, counselor enthusiasm and flexibility, every day something new and unexpected, something to bring home.*
- *Exceeded, (the camp was) well organized and full of interesting activities.*
- *Exceeded, the girls love the camp. Amazing!*
- *Awesome! We like it very much.*
- *Exceeded! I Loved the way the counselors were so friendly and happy at the end of the day!*
- *It was so great!! I would recommend this camp to everyone! Thank You! Thank You!!*
- *(The camp) completely exceeded all expectations. Kids continuously raved about camp, told us how much they learned... J.*
- *Fantastic Camp... we will definitely come back. So much for the kids to learn while having fun....*
- *We have two girls that were very excited about going each day, because they felt the camp was interesting throughout the entire day.*
- *(The camp) definitely exceeded because we have a little girl that doesn't like much. She absolutely loved the camp.*
- *We loved the entire outdoor experience, the knowledge the girls gathered, how tired they were at the end of the day and adult instructors.*
- *Exceeded, sitting in circle singing at pick up time – wow. List of clothes in email the night/day before was a great reminder to send extra dry socks. Pictures good, reminders very good, easy going manner, very nice.*
- *EVERYTHING was fun! Love the warm and friendly staff!*
- *You have exceeded our expectations and Abby cannot wait until her sister is 6 so she can come to camp too!*
- *Absolutely awesome! Abby learned so much – lots of great conversations about solar power, being kind to nature etc.*
- *I love everything about CK. Great experience all around!*





In Memory of Don White

This we know: lawyers are busy people. And from what I've heard, Don White had a very busy practice. Most of us - at the end of a hard day of work, where the "to do list" is always longer than the "done" list - would like nothing better than to kick back and take some time for ourselves.

Not many of us would dare to think of fixing up an old camp. A camp with crumbling floors, collapsing bunks and rotting roofs - we would not imagine that as a fun way to fill our spare time! But that is exactly what Don White did some 30 years ago. He and a group of dedicated Rotarians bought Camp Kawartha from the YMCA, preventing a lovely piece of land on the shores of Clear Lake from falling in the hands of developers. Don and his fellow Rotarians had the vision and foresight to create a place where children would experience the magic of the outdoors in an atmosphere of both fellowship and fun - a place where every child felt welcomed, valued and cared for.

Here are a few numbers to ponder:

- *90,000 - That is about the number of children that have visited Camp Kawartha through its summer camp and outdoor education programming, since it was bought from the Y in 1985*
- *4,500 - That is about the number of children sponsored or subsidized during this time.*
- *38 - That is the number of buildings at Camp Kawartha that were either renovated or built since 1985.*

Don White had a hand in all this and more. As John Cockburn, a fellow Rotarian and a member of that original group of Camp rescuers says: "Taking on Camp Kawartha was a risky and stressful adventure, but Don White's influence was a major influence. When Don spoke, the Board of Directors listened."

Don served Camp Kawartha in many capacities: As its corporate secretary, as president and as a Board member for 28 years. He helped to improve governance practices and he was instrumental in the success of our annual fundraiser - the Surf and Turf Dinner.

We at Camp Kawartha owe Don a tremendous debt of gratitude for his spirit of volunteerism, his hard work and his indomitable belief in the magic and possibility of camp. May all of us take some measure of inspiration from Don. And may we find something to give ourselves to, with the same energy, heart and conviction as Don did. On behalf of the thousands of children whose lives are better today because of you, thank you Don White for your dedicated service. Your legacy will be in the smiles, the laughter and the joy echoing from the shores of Camp Kawartha for many years to come!

By: Jacob Rodenburg