

The United Church of Canada's 2008 Camping Award



Awarded to

*Thirteen Invaluable Staff and Volunteers
from United Church Camps*

*In recognition of distinguished service
and with deep appreciation and respect
for their contributions to United Church camping
and to the lives of children and youth across Canada.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Phil.", written over a horizontal line.

*Moderator
The United Church of Canada*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. S. Harry Brown", written over a horizontal line.

*Executive Minister
Congregational, Educational, and
Community Ministries Unit*



*Presented at Connections 2008, Saturday, September 27, 2008
Pearce Williams Christian Centre, Fingal, Ontario*

We are pleased to recognize and celebrate the following thirteen (13) staff and volunteers associated with United Church camping, and the extraordinary contributions they have made to the camping ministry within the church and, most importantly, to the lives of children and youth who attend camps across Canada:

Linda Stonehouse	<i>West Haven Camp</i>	<i>Newfoundland</i>
Nancy Beaulieu	<i>Sherbrooke Lake Camp</i>	<i>Nova Scotia</i>
Bill Stevens	<i>Camp Big Canoe</i>	<i>Ontario</i>
Luella & Tom Stephens	<i>Sparrow Lake Camp</i>	<i>Ontario</i>
Lloyd Allen	<i>Pearce Williams Christian Centre</i>	<i>Ontario</i>
Marilyn Elgie	<i>Camp Menesetung</i>	<i>Ontario</i>
Calvin Loth	<i>Camp Tapawingo</i>	<i>Saskatchewan</i>
Kathy Yamashita	<i>Canyon Church Camp</i>	<i>Alberta</i>
Shane Bell	<i>Camp Maskepetoon</i>	<i>Alberta</i>
Chuck & Mary Clarke	<i>Camp Koolaree</i>	<i>British Columbia</i>
James Bowlby	<i>MacKenzie Camp</i>	<i>British Columbia</i>

*Stretching from east to west, north to south, across six time zones, and over 2 million lakes,
Canada is home to 64 United Church of Canada camps.*

*These camps are rich with staff and volunteers who give of their time, energy, and hearts
to enrich the lives of children and youth across the land. For each one of them, we are eternally grateful.*

The 2008 Camping Award from East to West

Over the past year, camps were invited to submit nominations for staff, volunteers, board members, ministers, or youth counsellors at a United Church camp for at least two camping seasons on either a full-time or part-time basis. Nominations were submitted by eleven (11) camps for individuals who met the criteria for the award (*see below*). All nominees are individuals who have demonstrated an energetic commitment towards the continued success of their camp. While only one nomination per camp was requested, exceptions were made in the acceptance of nominations of couples. Nominations were reviewed by Judy Sullivan (Coordinator of Camping Ministries, General Council Office) in consultation with the members of the National Planning Committee for Connections 2008, as well as the Camping Cluster staff in the General Council Office.

Criteria to be met: expressing a personal faith witness to the camping community; contributing to a positive culture within the camp; bringing the best of themselves to their work on a regular basis in performing their duties; and being a good ambassador for the camp. Other important factors for nominators to consider: exceptional service to campers; innovative and enthusiastic approach to work; team work; and contributing to a healthy work environment/wellness.

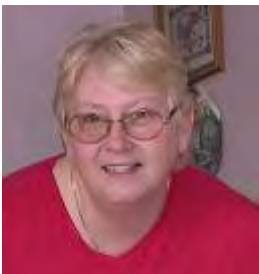
“This is the second time that we have bestowed The United Church Camping Award (the first was at Connections 2006). Reading through the nominations and preparing the awards and booklet for this event have become one of the highlights of my work. It is such a joy to read about the dedication and enthusiastic determination of each of the nominees, and it makes me proud to be associated with United Church camping. It’s like viewing our camps through a wide-angle lens, providing an opportunity to see both the individual limbs that make each tree strong and healthy, but also the entire forest. I know the stories that follow are a reflection of the thousands of staff and volunteers scattered across Canada who bring the same enthusiastic dedication to their camps.

As we all know, these individuals are integral, not only to the success of the camp, but to the leadership development and spiritual formation of children, youth, adults, staff, and volunteers alike. It is because of people like these 13 that young people are introduced to the richness of faith in community, and many are inspired to continue working within our camps as well as sharing their leadership skills with the rest of the church and community.

On behalf of the General Council Office, and the Camping Cluster staff (Rick Garland, Amy Crawford, and Bev Oag), I am proud to introduce to you the 2008 winners of The United Church Camping Award. Congratulations to each of you!”



Extra-ordinary Camping Staff and Volunteers



Linda Stonehouse

West Haven Camp, Newfoundland

Linda Stonehouse is the epitome of positive culture at West Haven Camp. She has been involved with West Haven for 26 years as a board member, director, and program director. Anybody connected with our camp will tell you she is the reason we are still there today. There have been times when finances were extremely tight, but Linda would never let that get in the way of our important ministry. She always has an idea of how to beat the odds and come up with a plan to overcome any issue. For example, when the stove that was being used in the kitchen could not be nursed along any longer she came up with a plan to ask the local UCW to fundraise. Today a lovely shiny commercial stove now serves the camp community.

Linda always brings her best, she never gets down in the dumps, and she goes above and beyond. She has researched and ensured that West Haven applies and receives grant support from the government and other agencies. A few years ago, Linda had to have a double knee replacement, which made it very difficult for her to be at camp for long periods of time. However, she continued to support the staff and volunteers throughout her recovery and visited camp when she could.

Linda promotes West Haven Camp at her own church, talking to the congregation about the camp and how they can get involved, and she has for years led the Camping Sunday service, encouraging youth to apply to camp and adults to volunteer! At our West District meetings Linda encourages people involved in all our camps to get together to share ideas and successes. She often receives phone calls at home during her personal time, but is always pleasant and provides the information required. Linda has attended Connections conferences on several occasions representing our camp. She is an awesome and positive ambassador for West Haven Camp. Her involvement is only a part of living out her faith; she is also the Chair of the Board for her congregation and serves or has served on many committees in her congregation, the district, and the province.

A few years ago when The United Church of Canada came out with the camping standards and accreditation requirements, Linda took on the challenge. She quickly brought the program committee team together and got to work coordinating the compilation of the required policies, writing many of them herself. Where expertise was required, she found experts to advise her. Linda used compassion and thought to ensure that policies would provide appropriate security of campers, staff, and volunteers of the camp. One of our board members said, "The standards project would not be what it is (or maybe would not be...) without Linda's steadfast and continuing efforts." Due to Linda's commitment and efforts in this area, West Haven is proud to boast that we passed our first accreditation visit from the national church!

We all know that a successful camping person requires a sense of humour. A few years ago we used recycled pin-on buttons to identify colour groups at a camp. Linda was spray painting the buttons as part of getting ready for camp. When the spray can wasn't working right, she turned it around to investigate the nozzle and proceeded to spray herself in the face! (Fortunately, glasses protected her eyes.) Just at that moment someone came to the door. Linda, trying hard to suppress her laughter, greeted them. You might say she was "red-faced" over her silly mistake. We have shared years of laughing together over that incident. One year her sons were getting tired of waiting for mom to finish at camp and decided to turn on the car to listen to the radio. Somehow they inadvertently got the car in gear and ended up knocking down the flagpole!

Linda is always quick to volunteer to sit above the dunk tank, have cream pies thrown at her, and many other things that not only raised money for the camp but added to the fun and memories that we all enjoy. She is an awesome and positive ambassador for our camp, and brings the best of herself to ensure the continued success of West Haven Camp.



Nancy Beaulieu

Sherbrooke Lake Camp, Nova Scotia

We are honoured to give our support for the nomination of Nancy Beaulieu for The United Church of Canada's Camping Award. Nancy continues to work behind the scenes of camping even since her retirement as director. While many of us let camping eventually take a back seat to life and other obligations, Nancy stays a camper first and always will be a camper.

Her first summer at Sherbrooke Lake Camp was in 1977, when she served as an adult helper. When the director was called to do a funeral, Nancy was asked to fill in for him and was hooked! Since then she has served over many summers as a volunteer director, joined camp council in 1979 (and has served as a member ever since), sat on numerous committees, served as secretary for five years, is always on site to help with work, and continues to be a member of the personnel committee to this date.

In the early 90s, Nancy became involved in Maritime Conference camping and visited many United Church camps throughout the Maritimes. She became involved in the national camping level in the mid 90s and served there for close to 10 years. Her local church has been fortunate to have her organize many family camp weekends, and she always speaks in church on camping Sunday to inform members of news in the camping world.

Nancy's laugh and warm hug make people feel instantly at home. Over the years, she has shown by example what it means to be a true camp leader—she is hard working, compassionate, sincere, and caring about all those around her—and the twinkle in her eye lets you know she has a keen sense of the fun to be had at camp. She is an energetic, enthusiastic part of the camping family, who puts all her energy into making the camp safe and successful in every way. Working with Nancy is a pleasure as well as a learning experience. She encourages individuals to become involved with leadership if she feels they will bring something positive to the camp, and she personally makes sure they have every opportunity to learn the importance of a nurturing and spiritual camp for all ages. It is because of Nancy that many youth continue their camping experiences into adulthood. She has a love for camping that is contagious.

Roseanne Williams first met Nancy at a senior camp when she was 14 and Nancy was the director. There were only six campers at that camp and “they were a difficult crew to say the least.” Nancy could have managed them for the week and sent them on our way, but instead she decided to turn six troubled teens into counsellors, making them feel important and turning their view of the world around. They stayed that summer as counsellors for two junior camps and camp became a huge part of their future. Roseanne writes, “I am confident to say that Nancy's influence that summer helped shape the adult I became and fostered an ability in me to work with teens myself in later years. Let me say a heartfelt thank-you from all of us who followed her and became much better adults for her efforts.” Nancy is camping's best example of leadership. She has taught her campers to be proud and respectful of all things and people around them. The most precious gift she gave was the ability to carry that back home and utilize it in our everyday lives.

Over the years, we have watched camp personnel come and go from the camp, each going his or her separate way. Most stay in touch and remain close associates of the camp, but Nancy is in a league of her own. She has been involved in Sherbrooke Camp since its beginning and today continues this same involvement. While others have grown older, taken on other commitments, Nancy continues to be dedicated to Christian camping. She has not let her age, her job and, later, her retirement interfere with this commitment. Rather, she has made it part of her life and that of her family. Lorraine Burch writes, “Dear Nancy, bless you and thank you for being you—for sharing your love of camping with all who have attended Sherbrooke Lake Camp.” Nancy Beaulieu has brought and continues to bring more to camp life than any individual we have had the pleasure to work with. We know of no other individual who is more deserving of a national Camping Award.



Bill Stevens

Camp Big Canoe, Ontario

The spirit of Camp Big Canoe can only be described as everlasting and one of a kind, the type of spirit that sparks upon driving the kilometre and a half dirt road on the way to camp for the first time and remains with you through the off-season. After a certain amount of time this spirit becomes one with your own, entwining itself with your everyday life. Bill Stevens is no exception to this. Every year his spirit is renewed and is contagious to those around him. He is always open to exciting new ideas proposed by young staff and manages to come up with a few of his own. And he has never failed to take part in the long-time tradition of dressing up for banquet dinner.

Bill greets each morning with an enthusiasm unmastered by many of his staff. He is the first down to the water every morning for the traditional polar bear dip. 1-2-3... and running, running, splash! Bill has entered the often-chilly water of Hart Lake, setting an example for all of those to follow. This story reflects Bill's approach to performing his duties in general. He doesn't muss about or procrastinate. If there is a job to be done, Bill does it to the best of his abilities, setting the example for all to follow.

At the end of every summer orders are placed for staff clothing. The hot topic around camp becomes who is getting what and in which colours. Each summer Bill orders a couple of t-shirts to add to his ever-growing collection, and proudly displays them at all the events he attends (national, international and local camping conferences as well as everyday affairs). Bill is our walking billboard—constantly promoting Camp Big Canoe.

We have a program called Rediscovery, our Christian education/stewardship program, and since Big Canoe prides itself in welcoming people of all religious beliefs, this program can be challenging. Bill encourages the programmer to make the program his or her own under the condition that Christian values are being taught. He expects the program to teach our campers about respect, love, and truth (to name a few) through a non-denominational way, yet still upholding the standards and values of The United Church of Canada.

Teamwork is an asset to any large group trying to accomplish a goal. From the beginning of December Bill begins to assemble his team of staff that will contribute to accomplishing the goal of giving each child at camp the time of his or her life. The selection process is not easy or quick, but in the end Bill manages to assemble a team that makes each summer better than the previous. I have always attributed the success of this team to the man who starts it all, Bill Stevens. At the end of summer 2005 a junior boy went home from camp ecstatic and dreaming of returning to camp the next summer. When his mom asked him why he wanted to go back he replied, “Because I told Bill I would see him next summer!” Each camper has special needs; the difference between Bill and other directors is that he takes the time to learn what they are.

It was late one evening after a major rainstorm during my first summer on staff. All campers and many staff had long since gone to bed. A few of us staff decided that it would be fun to splash around in the puddles in front of the dining hall, which is located in the same general area as Bill’s cabin. We could see Bill’s lights were still on, as they often are at that time of night. Much to our chagrin, one of the staff went over to Bill’s cabin to ask him to join us in the puddles. At the time this seemed like an awful idea as we were just learning who Bill really is and didn’t think drawing attention to our late night activity would be a good idea. To our great surprise and delight Bill’s response to his question was, “Just let me get by boots on!” We spent the next 30 minutes splashing, sliding, and rolling in mud puddles with our boss. Smearing mud on Bill Stevens is a moment none of us will ever forget. I think we learned more about the type of person Bill is and what type of people he hopes his staff will grow to become in those 30 minutes than many of our peers learned all summer. Bill is not afraid to play, and he’s constantly working towards his goal of creating the best camping environment for all those who are lucky enough to spend time at Camp Big Canoe.



Luella and Tom Stephens

Sparrow Lake Camp, Ontario

Luella and Tom Stephens joined our camp board activities about four years ago. Their daughter Janet, who had attended camp since she was five years old, is now in her mid-twenties and has moved up through the ranks to become the associate director. Tom and Luella wanted to give back to the camp that had given their daughter so much joy for the past 20 years—and give back they have! They’ve worked tirelessly on many projects, improving the camp board and the camp itself by setting a great example of selfless dedication.

Luella has worked hard to create and maintain the Friends of Sparrow Lake group, planning activities, writing newsletters, and trying to keep the spirit of camping alive in our alumni. She’s made her special “secret recipe” cookies for the entire camp—and campers remember those cookies! Luella created our policy manual, no small feat considering we didn’t have one to start with. She went through our archived minutes to create a list of all the policies ever passed. Most of these archives were not electronic, so she *re-typed them all*, creating a professional-looking document.

Tom is an associate member of the property committee, and has been involved with many projects that have created a better site for our campers and staff. He attends every work weekend and many of his other weekends are spent fixing cabins, painting washrooms—whatever needs to be done. He created our fire procedure manual,

developed a property asset list, painted the washrooms, worked on plumbing, levelled cabins, and the list goes on and on. The property manual that Tom created for our camp was so well received by Toronto United Church Council that he is doing it for other camps in our Conference.

Luella and Tom have organized our silent auctions and all of our fundraising initiatives for the past four years. They are in charge of our Centennial Celebrations (in 2012 we will be 100!), and began our dollar-a-year campaign (asking people to donate \$1 for every year the camp has been operating). They are always willing to try a new idea to help the camp, from dinner theatres to marathons!

Luella does church visits, which involve everything from setting up a display, speaking to the church, and doing the children's story. When she heard of the *7 years of Plenty Campaign* being organized by the Toronto United Church Council, Luella volunteered a day a week to help get it going. This campaign benefits all the churches in our Conference and helps get the word out about United Church camping. The thing that makes Tom and Luella unique is their commitment to camping. They have generously given their time by helping other United Church camps in addition to Sparrow Lake Camp.

Here is a quote from one of our board members: "In a non-profit organization such as Sparrow Lake Camp, volunteers are the life blood of the executive and ancillary committees. One of the most difficult roles for committee members is the recruitment of new members to the volunteer committees. Asking someone if they want to volunteer is a tricky undertaking—you want them to join the team but at the same time you don't want to scare them off with all the details. In the role of recruitment of volunteers, Tom and Luella do a great job of leading by example. They do such wonderful work, and have such a good time doing it, that you want to follow them and join the team."

Tom and Luella Stephens are quite the pair. They have both retired but didn't realize they would be working just as hard but without getting paid! Whether it is raising funds for the camp, fixing things on site, even creating a fruit basket out of a watermelon—they are always up for anything that will help the camp.

Luella and Tom Stephens represent all that is the spirit of Sparrow Lake Camp and United Church camping. They not only meet the criteria for this award, they surpass it. As a board we want to show them how much their contribution means to us, and when we heard about this award we couldn't imagine a more deserving pair of volunteers. It is hard to summarize their accomplishments and contributions in this nomination, but we hope that we have been able to convey a small glint of how much they mean to the camp, and what they have given to the board, the staff, and the campers.



Lloyd Allen

Pearce Williams Christian Centre, Ontario

When I first arrived at Pearce Williams three years ago, one of the first people I heard about was our "supervolunteer" Lloyd Allen. I wasn't sure what a "supervolunteer" was, but I was soon to find out. Lloyd has been actively involved at Pearce Williams Christian Centre for over 45 years. He turned 91 on September 24, 2008.

Lloyd began as a volunteer with Pearce Williams in 1963 and has since been involved on the board of directors, as a volunteer, construction manager, maintenance hand, and overall fix-it-guy. His skills have touched every building and every person at camp. Now in his 90s, Lloyd continues his support for Pearce Williams in the form of donations. He has been the camp's biggest individual donor for many years.

Lloyd has always been a person who wants action instead of just talk. He played an integral role in the building of our dorm facilities, our cabins, the dining hall, Pearce Hall, and the upkeep of our potato peeling machines. Lloyd is an advocate for Pearce Williams, always bringing people to the site, always trying to get the local community more involved in Pearce Williams. He can tell you stories about the numerous items that he has had donated to Pearce Williams through sheer determination and willpower. Lloyd has always challenged his own

congregation to become more involved in Pearce Williams. He has spent many hours working for Pearce Williams long after his day job was done.

Lloyd is a storyteller. He loves to tell stories of past experiences at Pearce Williams. One of the best stories comes from the time he found a furnace that Pearce Williams could use. The company that had the furnace did not want any publicity and said if Lloyd could haul it away, then he could have it. Lloyd worked late into the night and eventually got the furnace out of the basement of the building and hauled onto a truck. The next day his wife was quietly reading her paper when she told him that she had received phone calls the night before from a number of people asking about the noise coming from the basement of the business building! Everyone wanted to know what he had been up to, but more importantly, they knew it was Lloyd!

We believe that Lloyd Allen is the best nominee for The United Church of Canada's Camping Award for Pearce Williams Christian Centre, and are proud to nominate him.



Marilyn Elgie

Camp Menesetung, Ontario

Marilyn Elgie has been on the Board of Directors of Camp Menesetung for eight years. As a retired school teacher and a Christian she felt that she could be of some value helping with one of the most crucial outreach missions of The United Church of Canada, Christian camping.

Marilyn took on the Adopt-a-Cabin program, where various United Church pastoral charges in Huron County have taken responsibility for the cleaning, maintenance, and furnishing of a camp cabin. Based on her belief that if we have a facility to offer the public we should be proud of what we have to offer, she has encouraged UCW groups and individuals to adopt the same philosophy. As well, she makes a point of getting to know and communicating with the staff, making them feel that they have something of value to offer to the campers and that in return they will be blessed.

No one can deny that Marilyn is a driving force when there is a job to be done, and that job is to make sure that Camp Menesetung is the best that it can be. She spearheads the spring clean-up, sets a good example by pitching in, and undertakes special projects on her own time, often at her own expense. In 2006 she refinished the concrete floor in the girl's washroom as a trial project, and in 2007 she undertook to paint the outside of the girls' cabins. Behind the scenes she uses her many resources, including computer skills, to create wonderful newsletters and media reports. When there is a special event or rental group on site, she raids her own garden to decorate the dining hall with flowers. She has also been known to dress the part to present a campfire reading. In 2002 when the camp was faced with a \$100,000 septic system project, she dressed up as a plumber to make a presentation to Huron-Perth Presbytery.

Marilyn and her husband, Paul, are frequently asked to be guest speakers at local churches. On many occasions they plan the whole service. They are always excellent ambassadors for Christian camping and The United Church of Canada, encouraging young people to attend camp and/or pursue leadership opportunities at the camp. Inevitably, any monetary compensation is signed over to the camp as a witness to their personal faith. Marilyn firmly believes that the positive influence of Christian camping on the youth cannot be matched. She is always looking for ways to educate the public about what Camp Menesetung has to offer.

Despite her incredibly busy life, Marilyn always finds time for the camp. She is actively involved in her church, the Goderich Horticultural beautification, and several community groups. Often she can be found planting and tending town gardens before she tends her own. She is also the wife of a town councillor. Her enthusiasm is infectious. She shows leadership by example, and is very generous with her time. Often she is up at 4 a.m. working on newsletters or promotional material for the camp. Quite often she does not seek compensation for the materials that she uses, but may ask for a charitable receipt instead. She is a perfectionist and strives to think of everything, down to the last detail, when the camp holds an event or fundraiser.

When asked to recognize outstanding volunteers associated with United Church camping, and Camp Menesetung in particular, Marilyn Elgie certainly stands out. As a retired teacher, and with a solid Christian background, the positive influence that youth experience with Christian camping is her passion. She works tirelessly to ensure that success. Whether speaking at a local function, dressing up to tell campfire stories, filling in when ministers have not been available to do Christian Education, or wielding a paint brush, she strives to make Camp Menesetung the best that it can be. She sets a high standard by example because she cares. For many children this is the only connection to religious knowledge that they have experienced, and she wants it to be a lasting memory. With adult volunteers she strives to help them realize that their contribution, no matter how great or small, is crucial to making the Christian camping experience work to its ultimate potential.

The board of directors and staff of Camp Menesetung have nominated Marilyn Elgie for recognition as an outstanding volunteer because of her dedication and hard work on behalf of all those associated with the camp. She is an inspiration, and although she would deny that her efforts are outstanding, we beg to differ. Thank you, Marilyn!

Calvin Loth

Camp Tapawingo, Saskatchewan

We are pleased to nominate Calvin Loth for the 2008 United Church of Canada's Camping Award. Calvin's first experience with Camp Tapawingo was in the early 1990s when his eldest daughter attended camp. In 1996 he agreed to join Camp Tapawingo's board and was a member-at-large. In 1998 he was appointed secretary and gained an education on the work that goes on in making our camp such a positive environment for our children and youth.

In 2000 Calvin agreed to chair the committee and he held this position until 2006. His last year as chair he also filled the position of treasurer. In 2006 he resigned as chair, however he agreed to stay involved with our committee as our treasurer. To date he continues to hold this position. Even after Calvin's two daughters graduated from camping at Tapawingo, Calvin continued to be involved with the board. He assists each year with the camp set-up, winterizing project, staff hiring process, pre-season camp clean-up, property management, picking up supplies for the camp, and the list goes on and on and on.

In the 12 years that Calvin has been on the board he has spent countless of hours volunteering his time and, most important, his talents for the betterment of our camp. As Camp Tapawingo celebrates its 60th anniversary in 2008 it is because of people like Calvin Loth that Camp Tapawingo is a true "Place of Happiness" and has impacted on the lives of so many children and youth!

We believe that Calvin has made an extraordinary contribution to our camp and we are honoured to nominate him for the 2008 United Church Camping Award.



Kathy Yamashita

Canyon Church Camp, Alberta

Kathy has impressed us all with her caring ways. Over the past eight years we have had the privilege of attending several camps with her. Not only has she tirelessly served as a volunteer in various capacities, but she also served on the Canyon Church Camp Board for many years. She held the positions of secretary, promotions chair, registrar, rental coordinator as well as leadership chair. She did these tasks in the same energetic way she did her volunteering.

Kathy seems to glow in the atmosphere of the camp. She is a wonderful example to all she meets at camp. She puts everyone at ease. Her rapport with the counsellors, resource staff and campers is wonderful. From her many years of service to the camp she knows how things are to be done and goes about accomplishing this in her own quiet way. She makes everyone feel comfortable and an important part of the camp team.

Kathy is as comfortable helping out in the kitchen as she is as medic, bandaging a cut or cleaning up a scrapped knee. Her bottles of vitamins became a ritual at the morning meetings. Bottle 1: vitamins to keep you healthy. Bottle 2: special vitamins (“Skittles”) to give you spark to carry you through the day. We called her Doctor Dynamite. She is dynamite with her affection, love, and dedication to the camp and campers. Kathy is a family physician, so busy in her own right, but still puts a lot into camping.

Kathy truly exemplifies our camp mission statement: “to nurture Christian faith through fun and fellowship in God’s outdoors.” We are pleased to honour her with The United Church of Canada’s Camping Award for all the thankless hours of dedication she has provided to Canyon Church Camp campers, staff, and board.



Shane Bell

Camp Maskepetoon, Alberta

Shane Bell’s efforts have made an important contribution to the success of Camp Maskepetoon, more than any other volunteer. His enthusiasm and commitment for camping have been an inspiration to all those he has worked and volunteered with.

Shane’s dedication has benefited the camp in countless ways over the years: from his enthusiasm as a counsellor and permanent staff, to his wisdom and commitment as a board member and registrar. At camp Shane is truly in his element, entertaining around the campfire with his storytelling and the always-popular guitar playing! When Shane’s car pulls up at the main lodge, everyone breathes a sigh of relief. His cheerful attitude and helpful nature are always welcome during a tough week.

Shane truly goes above and beyond the call of duty when it comes to his work at camp. He has been active for over 30 years in every conceivable position, including camper, counsellor, dishwasher, summer permanent staff, director, board member, program committee member, trade show volunteer, and now as camp registrar.

Shane—owner of the world’s largest collection of Camp Maskepetoon t-shirts—is one of the camp’s most valued promoters. One of his first ideas was the creation of a video, documenting the weekly camp experience, which has become a great tradition for campers and brings back fond memories of their time at camp. Shane volunteers many nights each summer putting these videos together. When Shane sets his mind to promoting our camp, be it through a trade show, volunteer fair, or sporting event, his commitment is astounding. He is the first to volunteer his help if a particular event or project needs assistance. Shane’s dedication makes him one of the most motivating and enjoyable colleagues in the camping industry.

At Camp Maskepetoon we strive to provide programming that develops the United Church philosophy: “interpretation of scripture, affection for the concept of exclusivity, and passion for social justice.” No counsellor, programmer, or board member has been more successful in this endeavour than Shane Bell. Shane has worked tirelessly to ensure that the spirit of the United Church remains strong at camp.

Shane consistently thinks of new ways to guarantee that camp remains accessible to all campers regardless of socio-economic factors that may prevent inclusion. He has championed a program of “camperships” which allows underprivileged youth the opportunity to experience all that camp offers, and he is always looking for new ways to allow more campers the chance to attend. It is through this dedication to serving others that he exemplifies the spirit of the United Church and serves as a true role model for all.

Shane’s commitment to camp is best seen in his participation at every single camp event. Not only does he organize almost every camp function, he does so with a positive attitude, ensuring the activity will be a resounding success.

Shane has an amazing ability to draw in the shyest of campers with his gentle smile and his genuine kindness. “As a former camper I remember watching Shane at the fire pit starting one of his famous ‘magic fires.’ He would keep a camp full of children enraptured with a story about the magic of camp, while secretly starting a

fire right in front of them, a trick that continues to delight even to this day. He has the ability to draw you into his stories and make you believe in the power of camping. As campers we felt that Shane appreciated all of us, and seemed to understand what we were going through. Camp was an escape, and Shane was the role model we all needed to understand that being a nerd wasn't only acceptable, it could be darn fun.... Suddenly enjoying nature, dress-up, campfires, and singing was not all that weird."

As campers have grown up and been involved with camp through a variety of positions, Shane continues to be one of their most respected role models. Countless campers, volunteers, and staff have been able to enjoy camp as their true selves—no changing, no hiding, no faking, just themselves. All are indebted to Shane for this gift.

Camp Maskepetoon is an organization of committed volunteers, and it is recognized that Shane Bell's commitment far exceeds that of most. For this reason, we believe that his contribution is worthy of special recognition. Shane truly is a remarkable man whose generous heart has made our camp what it is today.



Chuck and Mary Clarke *Camp Koolaree, British Columbia*

In 1977, the Clarke family was invited to spend the summer at the camp (that had been closed for a couple of years) and were in awe at the beauty. During the summer Chuck and Mary and their six children worked hard to repair buildings and clean the grounds that had been neglected and vandalized. Upon their return to Fruitvale, they contacted members of the United Church to find out how the camp could resurrect itself. Surprisingly, they discovered that the camp did have a committee, but not one that was interested in actually running youth camps.

During that year Chuck and Mary worked hard to establish a board of directors that would actively run and promote camps that would be geared towards outdoor Christian community outreach in the West Kootenays. Their enthusiasm drew many talented people into the outdoor ministry and soon the camp was flourishing with directors and campers. The camp was soon offering various programs geared to different age groups: teens, junior girls, junior boys, novices, and families (a camp which the Clarkes still direct). Chuck and Mary were members of the original board of directors, with Chuck serving continuously on the board since its inception, and both remain dedicated to providing Christian outreach through outdoor ministry.

Chuck and Mary Clarke know the true value of believing in God and serving in an outreach capacity for the Lord. They have given their all to providing campers and leaders with a loving, welcome greeting for each day, and have always shown a cheerful attitude even in the most difficult situations. Working as a team, she as a nurse and he as a schoolteacher (both are now retired), their combined gifts have complemented one another in providing the campers and leaders with a calm, keen understanding of the required aspects to contribute to a positive and safe environment. They always start the day with a hug and a hot drink for the leaders and campers. They have a unique ability to recognize everyone's gifts and to show them how to use those gifts for God's work in our everyday lives.

One of Chuck's gifts is working with those who have special needs. As a teacher he worked with special needs students for many years and brought many of his students out to the camp during the school term. Mary is always showing the campers and leaders how to bring out the best in themselves by showing them how to believe in their own individual qualities and uniqueness. In her daily walk with the Lord, her light shines as she continually encourages those around her to be the best they can be. For many campers who are away from home for the first time, Mary has provided them with a safe and secure shelter under her wing, bringing them the reassurance they require to overcome their fears.

Chuck and Mary have been instrumental in ensuring that local communities are aware that attending a Christian camp can have a positive impact. They have visited service groups, schools, and churches to promote outdoor ministry and they have not gone unnoticed! All six of their children grew up in the United Church, and all have

been deeply involved in outdoor ministry, promoting the camp wherever possible. Their daughter is organizing a reunion camp in 2008 for those who have been touched by their experiences at Camp Koolaree.

Chuck and Mary know the value of effective teamwork when it comes to running a camp. To ensure that the operation of the camp is carried out in an efficient manner, Chuck has encouraged congregational and community members to become part of a well-oiled team, inspiring them to complete the necessary tasks to ensure the camp is a safe place for all who attend.

We have not been able to find anyone else who can fix just about anything that is broken: Chuck's skills include mechanical, plumbing, electrical, and the list goes on! Camp Koolaree is a 137-acre wilderness camp on Kootenay Lake with no roads, radios or electricity, and only accessible by water, so maintenance requires expertise in many areas. Chuck and Mary have definitely developed all these skills over the years!

Camp Koolaree is a mission field for The United Church of Canada and thanks to Chuck and Mary Clarke, many of the youth have become involved in the United Church in some capacity. They are more than deserving of the honour of receiving the Camping Award.



James Bowlby

MacKenzie Camp, British Columbia

James is an outstanding volunteer associated with MacKenzie Camp and the United Church camping ministry. Shortly after he retired from teaching at the Salmon Arm Secondary School, he responded to a call for help from the local United Church camp. MacKenzie Camp, on Mable Lake, had been unable to operate one summer and the future looked bleak, but with James' passion and guidance the camp has been recharged, and untold children, youth, and future leaders have benefitted from his dedication.

James has contributed to a positive culture in the camp through seeking funding grants to build a new lodge, assist the directors with excellent staff training, being on call at any time of day for assistance, encouraging the inclusion of new programming, initiating involvement with international students, and making connections with resource people in many areas of the camping ministry.

James always brought the best of himself to his work. He attended and gave leadership at resource fairs and was instrumental in the creation of a new faith formation resource entitled *Peace Talks* used at the camp. He has answered the telephone at all hours of the day and night, given up family time for camp meetings and conferences, ensured that campers had transportation, opened his home to staff members who are from another part of Canada, and shared his home with a First Nations family. He has been a part of every detail of the camp's operation, including building, repairs, programming, worship, recruiting staff, personnel issues, and promotion. He has spoken at most of the five supporting local United Churches, and played a role in many fund raising events.

In the past loans were secured through the United Church, both nationally and within B.C. Conference. The national loan has now been repaid. James has served at spaghetti dinners, spoken at local churches and, because of his intense involvement and love of theatre serving as director, author, and actor, we now have a drama camp as part of our regular program. Frequently he has not taken his nominal salary. It is certain that as a volunteer he now works more than full time. At present the new lodge is complete, thanks to James' leadership. We celebrate being able to use the camp in all seasons, welcoming school groups, off-season rentals, and a full summer program. Over 300 campers attended the summer camps in 2007, with over 700 campers attending during the year.

James has been a good ambassador for the camp and The United Church of Canada. He has represented camping on the BC Conference level, chaired the Outdoor Ministry Task Group, represented camping at Presbytery, served on the National Planning Committee for Connections 2006, and attended a number of the events. Many BC camps have benefitted from his expertise.

This past spring MacKenzie Camp successfully hosted the Outdoor Ministry gathering with camp representatives from all areas of British Columbia. More than 30 people shared their experience and knowledge and James was instrumental in the organization of this event. The camping ministry has also benefited by his close work with Katimavik and with international students who have attended our camp.

Teamwork, enthusiasm, contribution to wellness, and service to campers are all a part of James' passion for the ministry of camping. He has encouraged the board and staff to take on responsibility for policy, programming, property maintenance, finances, legal issues, and fundraising. James makes the two-hour round trip to camp several times a week, communicates with the camp directors regularly, and empowers staff to embrace their responsibility of ensuring that our mission statement is fulfilled.

Picture this.... Camp is across the mouth of the Shuswap River. Every stick, pipe, 2x4, sheet of drywall, etc. required to build our new lodge, and all the parts of a new septic system and the new water lines, were loaded by hand onto a barge, unloaded off the barge, and taken up to camp by teams of loyal supporters. And James Bowlby was there for every single item. The sight that stopped me in my tracks was seeing James standing on a six-foot ladder *in the river*, pounding in posts to erect a screen to protect the fish from the drilling of a water line.

We are honoured to nominate James Bowlby to receive the United Church Camping Award for his distinguished service over the past 10 years, and to express our appreciation for all that he has contributed to the lives of children and youth in Canada and internationally.

Ways in which Camps Recognize Staff and Volunteers

West Haven Camp (Newfoundland) has a wonderful group of staff and volunteers who complement each other on a regular basis. For people who are long-standing members of the board of directors we bestow the honour of lifetime member.

Sparrow Lake Camp (Ontario) nominates staff to receive the Helen Swartz Memorial Award and the Marr Ross Spirit Award. The Helen Schwarz Memorial Award is for a counsellor who demonstrates a high level of enthusiasm, commitment, compassion, and dedication. The Marr Ross Spirit Award recognizes staff members who make an exceptional contribution. The Galilee SLC Volunteer Award recognizes a volunteer who has made a significant contribution to the camp. The winner is invited to the AGM to receive the award.

Pearce Williams Christian Centre (Ontario) has the Lloyd Allen Volunteer Award that is handed out annually to a deserving volunteer and/or group. We also recognize our volunteers at our yearly open house and in our camp newsletter.

Summer volunteers of **Camp Maskepetoon** (Alberta) are recognized in a number of ways. They receive a thank-you card from staff acknowledging their hard work and dedication, and they are recognized through a series of events that include karaoke parties, dodge ball tournaments, and dances. In addition, a thank-you dinner is thrown for the summer permanent staff at the end of camp by the board of directors.

Sherbrooke Lake Camp: The Western Nova Scotia Camp Council recognizes the contributions of the council. Every year a council member is nominated for an award presented by the Camping Association of Nova Scotia (CANS). A letter stating why they are deserving of this award is sent to the CANS. A special dinner and ceremony is held with winners receiving a framed photograph and brass plaque. Several camp buildings have been named for council members whose contributions to the camp have been outstanding.

MacKenzie Camp (British Columbia) recognizes core staff through equitable wages to ensure that we have quality leadership. Volunteers receive honoraria for number of weeks worked, and the camp season is completed with a staff/volunteer dinner. We host an open house honouring those people who have contributed financially or otherwise by an opportunity to see the camp in operation, and a letter of thanks written to all who helped throughout the year. The board has a Christmas gathering at the end of each year.

Camp Menesetung (Ontario) pays tribute to the volunteers who assist with the smooth operation of the camp. This celebration has taken many forms, from a formal dinner supplied by the camp, to an informal gathering with games, activities, and sharing of ideas. Certificates of appreciation and thank-you gifts are presented to the church groups and individuals who have adopted a cabin, and those individuals who have volunteered their time, talent, and countless hours over the year.

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