

Camp Olympia Newsletter

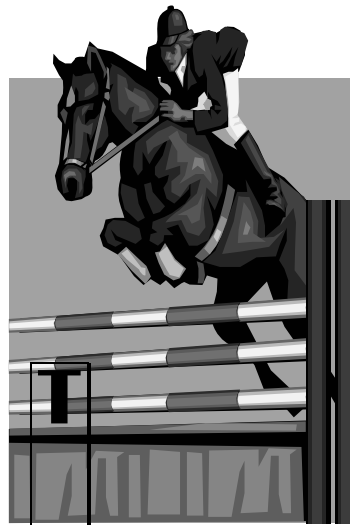
Director's Letter

Thank you for helping us to celebrate our **fiftieth** summer season at Camp Olympia Summer Camp. I can hardly believe that my wife and I started this dream and turned it into our business 50 years ago! In the beginning we started with around 10 campers. We now average between 150 – 200 campers per week. It's really rewarding to look back at all of the lives that we have touched throughout the many years and the memories that have been made at the Camp. Everywhere I go I run into my former campers and I love to hear their stories. We have enjoyed our 50th summer very much and hope that you feel the same way.

In this newsletter, I would like to tell you a little about our beginning, our philosophy, our staff (one of the BEST ever!), our year round horseback riding program and riding teams, and our nursery school/ kindergarten.

As you may know, my wife and I started this camp in 1958, after immigrating to the United States from Hungary. We started it because of our love of children, our love of sports, and a definite lack of GOOD physical education programs available in the US. We believe that physical education is not just a summer activity, but a year-round, life long endeavor. You need not have natural talent to become an Olympic athlete, but you must have determination, patience, and discipline. However, you need not be an Olympic athlete to enjoy sports. It is our goal to introduce the children to a wide variety of sports, so that they can later choose which ones that they enjoy. We emphasize and teach the fundamentals such as gymnastics and track and field which will lead to success in all other sports. Balance, coordination, speed, and conditioning are all required to become better athletes regardless of the sport such as soccer, horseback riding, basketball, tennis, swimming, etc. As you know our summer schedule changes daily, so that we can continually build on skills learned during the week and so that we can expose the campers to all different activities. Our greatest joy comes from watching your children's improvements.

We consider it a privilege to work with your children. For those of you that are returning campers, it confirms your faith in our program. I thank you for all of your referrals to friends and neighbors. Most of our new campers come to us because of you, and that means a lot to us! Thank you very much!! For those of you that are new to Camp Olympia, we realize that going to camp or a new camp can be a scary but exciting experience for your children, especially the young children. The transition into an organized program such as ours can be difficult. We work very hard with the children to get over this, but as parents you can also ease their anxiety by trusting our program and your decision to select us. After all, we've been doing this since 1958. It is through a joint effort of working together (teacher and parent) and through trust in my experience and my counselors' abilities, that we are able to educate your children. We want them to learn **FITNESS IS A GREAT FEELING** and that physical education is fun!



Thank you again for selecting Camp Olympia and being part of our 50th summer!

Meet the Staff

As you will see, we are lucky to have many counselors return year after year because, like you, they believe in our program and philosophies. I will

recognize them in order of their years of dedication to Camp Olympia in parenthesis after their names.

In addition to the returning staff, we always have new counselors. Some come to us from the local area and others come from the Camp America selection program. The Camp America staff comes to America to share their enthusiasm, sports expertise, and culture with the campers. Usually it is their first trip to America and their first "real" exposure to life in the USA. So, please tell your children to keep up the good work and the good behavior, so that our staff can return to their homes with a good impression of America.

I will begin with a formal introduction of my background.

Stephen Benedek, (founder), is a Georgetown University Athletic Hall of Fame Professor/ Coach. He is now retired from Georgetown after teaching for over 25 years, but is still active in teaching and coaching at the camp. He named the Camp, Camp Olympia, because of his Olympic affiliation in his native country, Hungary. He was the Olympic coach of the gold medal pentathlon team. Steve was forced to leave his country when the communists discovered that he was a member of the Hungarian Revolution Party. He would like to be active in riding, skiing, and swimming. However, he underwent ankle surgery earlier this year and is still recovering.

Elizabeth Benedek, (founder), is the retired director of women's athletics at Loyola College in Baltimore. Prior to that she taught PE at Stoneridge and National Cathedral. She is a former member of the Hungarian National Women's basketball team, which is how she and Steve met--he was the coach! She still has a GREAT free throw and is planning on participating in the Senior Olympics in September.

Andrea Lingwood, (30 years), has been involved at Camp Olympia for over 30 years. She began her riding career as a beginning rider while attending Magruder High School. Through Stephen's coaching, she has enjoyed many successful seasons

as a competitive event rider. Andrea is now the Director of the Camp Olympia Country Day School and the Assistant Director of the Camp Olympia Summer Camp.

Celeste McGee, (20 years), is our year round Director of Riding and the coach of our two riding teams. Celeste has won MANY blue ribbons at dressage and eventing shows over the years and as always, she is excited to impart her knowledge of horseback riding to the children.

Dottie Davis, (12 years), started at camp when she was eight years old. She earned a B.A. in psychology in 2004 from the University of North Texas. This was her seventh summer teaching riding.

Tessie Phugphud, (8 years), works part time in our year round nursery school program and is originally from the Philippines. She has three grown children, 2 girls and a boy. Tessie is an excellent cook as she used to run a restaurant and we are always excited when she brings us some samples of her home made dishes.

Luisa Pasco, (7 years), has her BA degree in Business Administration from a university in the Philippines, where she is originally from. Luisa is one of nine children, hence her love of children. She joined Camp Olympia in September 2001 as a full time nursery school teacher.

Ian Lingwood, (7 years), will be a senior at Southern Methodist University this fall. He did several internships for part of the summer in the hotel industry working for one of our former campers who is now a Chief Financial Officer. Ian enjoys all sports but especially loves basketball and soccer.

Ashley Read, (7 years), has competed at the National level in swimming and was the manager and captain of his school swim team. Ashley was so excited about returning to the Camp this summer, that he took a vacation from his full time job as a sales person to come and work with the Camp Olympia campers. We hope to see him again next summer!

Angie Edwards, (4 years), is another one of our year round nursery school teachers and enjoys cooking, exercising, gardening, singing, and artwork! She is originally from the Philippines. Angie is a former accountant, but has found her true calling as a teacher. You will see her all over the Camp either exercising or planting flowers.

Caitlin Jones (4 years) is our barn helper who can be seen helping with the riding lessons. Caitlin just earned her assistant level teaching certificate in horseback riding. She is a member of the Camp Olympia riding team and will be a senior at Poolesville High in the fall.

Stevie Lingwood, (4 years) will begin his sophomore year at University of Maryland in the fall. Stevie has been at camp from an early age since his mother, Andrea, is the Assistant Director. He enjoys playing guitar, basketball, and running.

Zsuzsa Antalffy, (2 years) is from Budapest, Hungary. She has her PhD in Physical Education and is the proud grandmother of four grandchildren. She loves teaching swimming and sports to the children and specializes during the school year in teaching the physically challenged.

Matthew Nicholson, (2 year), is an exercise and fitness instructor back home in England. He has many sports interests, including soccer, cricket, basketball, swimming, and weight training. He was excited about returning to camp for his second summer as the head Group D counselor.

Rachel Feakes, (2 year), completed her degree in Sports Science last year and is now studying finance. Her favorite sport is swimming and she was a member of England's junior team.

She also is an avid cross country runner. Rachel was one of our Group E leaders.

Laura Mitchell, (2 year), is working on a degree in Physical Education and Youth Sport. She enjoys netball, soccer, basketball, and cheerleading. She hopes to become a P.E. teacher upon completion of her degree. This year Laura was our very popular Group A leader.

Jessie Pulcinella (2 years) will be a senior at Damascus High School. She has been a camper for nine years and enjoys cross country, lacrosse and track. Jessie enjoyed working with the preschoolers all summer.

Olivia Winant, (2 years), started at the camp as a young child. She will be attending Frostburg State University in the fall and plans to play on the soccer team. She hopes to pursue a career in teaching. Olivia worked with the preschoolers.

Lee Blackhurst (1 year), spent most of his summer mainly with group B, our older boys. He earned his national diploma in Sports Development and Fitness. He enjoys working with children and playing all sports. One day he hopes to swim across the English Channel.

Catriona (Miss Kit Cat) White, (1 year), is from Edinburgh, Scotland. She is studying history in school and enjoys all sports. Cat worked primarily with the preschoolers.

Tom Pemberton, (1 year), is from Sheffield, England. He enjoys soccer and cricket and hopes to become a soccer coach. Tom was one of our group D leaders most of the summer. He also worked with our preschoolers for the last couple of weeks.

Luke Woollard, (1 year), enjoys golf, soccer, and learning new things. He earned his national diploma in Sports and Fitness and was one of our group C leaders.

Emma Greenhalgh, (1 year), is from Manchester, England. She just earned her national diploma in Sports Science. Emma loves all sports and hopes to pursue a career in teaching. She was another one of our group D leaders.

Emily Fewster, (1 year), was at the pool all summer where she helped the children gain confidence and skill in the water. She just finished her degree in Sport and Exercise Science and hopes to obtain her next level of swimming certification.

Scarlett Smith, (1 year), worked with group D. She enjoys soccer and cricket and hopes to pursue a career in sports. Scarlett was also our special soccer instructor.

Most of our UK staff will be touring various parts of America at the end of camp. The women are off to various parts of California, while the men are off to Florida. We wish them safe travels, and hope to see many of them next summer!

Meet the Dogs and "Snowy," the Cat

In addition to our many horses, Camp Olympia is also home to several friendly canines:

Civa is a four year old Yellow Labrador owned by Steve and Elizabeth. She enjoys sunbathing, rides in the golf cart, and tidbits of Hungarian sausage.

Cameron is a four year old Black Lab whom Dottie rescued from a shelter in Texas. He is very energetic and playful, and he loves to take mud baths in the creek behind camp.

Lily is a 3 year old Hungarian Vizsla, a breed known as the oldest hunting dogs in the world. Steve and Elizabeth

handpicked Lily from a litter of pups in Hungary, and brought her back on the airplane for Celeste. She loves to run and play with Ciya and Cameron, although this summer she pulled a ligament and is now nicknamed, "Limping Lil."

Nicki and Bruno are two friendly Dobermans owned by Andrea. Despite their size, they are gentle and obedient. Check out Bruno's special "bent ear" which gives him personality and flair.

Oliver and Reggie are both handsome English Sheepdogs who are very devoted their owner Martha. They win the award for Best Groomed!

Snowy is a white Persian cat who LOVES his life at the Camp! He is our resident mouse catcher as well as beggar of attention.

All pets at Camp Olympia are loving, friendly, and intelligent animals. They enjoy children and are happy to have a nice pat on the head.

Goodbye Friends

Sadly we lost two members of our horse family during the last year. Reggie was a favorite for pony rides and will be remembered for his patience with the children and devotion to his best friend Big Boy. Ivy was a beautiful Thoroughbred who was a true gentle giant and died of old age. They will be missed!

On a brighter note, we also have three newcomers whom the campers have enjoyed getting to know all summer. Mocha and her baby, Pityu, have adjusted nicely to camp life. Domino is our flashy black and white pony who not only can be ridden but is also trained the pull a cart. We are happy to welcome them to our family!

Congratulations!

Great work Caitlin Jones, our newest certified riding instructor! Caitlin worked hard to prepare and we are proud of her accomplishment. Due to her young age she earned an Assistant Level certificate, but could have gotten a higher level based on her knowledge. Caitlin joins our other certified instructors: Steve, Andrea, Celeste, Dottie, Anne Marie and Martha. The certification process is very intensive and takes a lot of preparation. Participants are evaluated on safety, horsemanship, teaching skills, group control, accident prevention, stable management, and professionalism.

These certifications are important because horseback riding is definitely the most challenging and dangerous sport which we teach at the Camp. We are proud of our excellent safety record and plan to keep it that way. This is due to the high quality of instructors and good behavior of the horses. Our horses live with us year round and are comfortable with their familiar surrounding and with all levels of rider ability.

Our goal is to teach riders to "RIDE" (influence the horse), not to just be a passenger. Everyone wants to canter and jump, but it is much more difficult than it looks! Many parents and children will be complimented on their good seats, hands, and legs that have been developed while riding at Camp Olympia. Why not continue that basic training/ foundation to higher levels through our year round riding center. It takes many years of repetition of basic exercises to develop balance and coordination on the horse. There is NO substitute for practice and safety.

Fall Riding Lessons

Fall riding will begin on Saturday, September 13. Group lessons will be held primarily on Saturday mornings and Monday and/or Tuesday evenings. Private and semi-private lessons are also available any day of the week. The group lessons are \$480 for 12 lessons. We teach ALL levels of ability and ALL ages. Registration forms are being included with this newsletter. If you would like to register, please fill out the form and mail it back with your check. Someone will call you by Thursday, September 11, to let you know your class day and time.

Riding Team Tryouts

At Camp Olympia we have two competitive riding teams (Juniors and Seniors – based on experience, NOT age), who compete against other area riding schools. The team members go to other schools and ride the horses at each farm. It's great fun and provides wonderful experience for the children to improve their level of skill. Celeste will be holding tryouts after fall riding begins. If you are interested, please let her know.

4H Club

Did you know Camp Olympia has a 4H Club focused on horse education? The Club organizes various educational activities such as visiting the horse hospital in Leesburg, going to the race track, etc. If your child would like to join, please come to a new member meeting, Thursday, October 2, at 6:30 pm.

Camp Olympia Country Day School

If your child enjoyed our summer preschool program, he/she will love our year round nursery school. The children enjoy daily hikes and fun, innovative teacher-directed activities. It's an excellent program with adult, professional teachers. Please speak to Andrea if you are interested in our year-round preschool and kindergarten for ages 2-5.

Thanks Again for Selecting Camp Olympia!!

Remember the Olympia motto:

Faster, Higher, Stronger!

Hope to see you soon!