

# CAMP WINNEBAGO COUNSELOR HANDBOOK

We are addressing you at this time to give you some factual information and a statement of our aims and ideals that we think will be very helpful to you in preparing for your work at Winnebago. Please read this carefully and consider the pertinent material contained in it as an aid to you in making your summer enjoyable and fruitful. Bring this to camp, as it will become part of a larger Counselor Handbook that you will receive at the beginning of Orientation.

## INFORMATION

Location: Winnebago is on Echo Lake, about one mile from Fayette, Maine, 17 miles west of Augusta, the State Capital, and 72 miles northeast of Portland, the largest city in Maine. Winthrop, about 10 miles away, is the closest shopping area.

Address: 19 Echo Lake Rd., Fayette, Maine 04349

Telephone: There is a telephone at camp exclusively for staff use. There is another telephone only for camp business, however, which is located in the camp office and in our homes. We regret that we will not be able to call you to the camp phone unless it is a true emergency, although we can take a message and give it to you at the next meal. Counselors are called to the telephone and may **make phone calls only when off duty** and preferably after the campers are in bed.

Remember: The camp phone is in our homes. Make sure no one calls you before 7:30 a.m. or after 11:00 p.m. unless it is an emergency. Advise all friends of the time difference, if any.

## BRIEF HISTORY

Frederick L. Guggenheimer ("Chief") and his wife founded Winnebago in 1919. Howard Lilienthal (uncle Howie) bought Winnebago from Chief in 1942 and became the director. Mr. Guggenheimer died in 1956 and his wife thereafter retired from a role in camp. Phil Lilienthal became director upon the death of his father, Uncle Howie, in 1974. Andy was a camper and counselor. He returned to camp in 2000 and assumed the directorship in 2003. The site of camp was the old Smiley farm and had no buildings on it except a barn and an old farmhouse located near the camp entrance. The farmhouse was rebuilt in 1992 after a fire. Mr. Guggenheimer and the local builders planned the layout and buildings, and virtually every year since 1974 has seen important additions and improvements. Since its inception Winnebago has generally been considered one of the outstanding boys' camps of the country. It has established certain definite aims and ideals, and above all, an important reputation for sportsmanship and good manners, which is highly cherished and which we expect every camper and counselor to help maintain.

## AIMS AND IDEALS

Camp Winnebago is widely known for the personal interest taken in each camper and counselor. It is our aim to instill the benefits of group living, to encourage native abilities, and to develop and strengthen character so that each member of our camp will eventually become a useful and self-fulfilling member of society. We try to avoid regimentation and aim to be progressive educators in the best sense of the

word. We encourage freedom for each individual but only to that point where such freedom may begin to interfere with the freedom of others. Instead of absolute and unrestricted freedom, we like to call our type supervised or directed freedom. Counselors who have been with us before appreciate that our program is geared to this aim. New counselors will quickly grasp this during the pre-camp orientation session in June.

Personal improvement and development are stressed no matter what the inherent ability of each camper may be. Winnebago is not only for the boy "who can"--but it is primarily, for the boy "who will." Participation is encouraged and praised. One, who shows real effort, even though no real improvement is achieved, deserves encouragement, for this is an incentive to try again. We recognize all-around achievement, effort, and improvement. We want a boy to leave camp believing that he can enjoy an activity even though he is not the best.

Athletic sports are taught to improve form and ability, but it is the **camper** who is taught, and not the activity. The game is played for the fun of playing and not solely to win. Competition lends spirit to the contest, but sportsmanship is stressed so that having fun and being a good sport are much more important than becoming an outstanding athlete or emerging victorious. We seek to impress upon each camper the importance of doing **his** best, not of being **the** best.

People are different. No two, even twins, are exactly alike. Each boy has a personality of his own and there is no such camper as an "average" one. Thus it is necessary to study each boy in your cabin in order to know him. Letters from parents on file in the office must be read as they often will be helpful to you in understanding the boy. Whenever a situation is difficult or a problem arises, discussing it with your Section Head, the Program Director, the Head Counselor, or the Director is important. We do not purport to know all the answers but our experience might be helpful in ironing out a problem. Besides, a solution might become clear merely by talking about it or in obtaining somebody else's point of view.

Many matters, which amplify the philosophy of Winnebago, will be brought out during group discussions at camp. It would make this communication too long if an effort were made to include all the details here. In order to acquaint you better with the aims, ideals, program and physical layout of Winnebago, a pre-season orientation program just prior to the opening of camp is held for all counselors.

Our program has been thoughtfully devised and successfully tested, but times change and what is suitable for one group may be outmoded for another. At all times we welcome your point of view and ask you to aid us in improving our program as new ideas may come to you. Never feel that criticism or suggestions from you will not be well received; but we ask that you do not draw a conclusion until you have had an opportunity to observe our program and absorb our philosophy over a period of time and especially as experienced in an overall context.

Above all, remember that the health and safety of the boy comes first. A doctor and nurse are always in attendance in camp and they can be found either in their office in the infirmary or elsewhere about camp. If a boy should see the doctor, take the boy to the infirmary. Be with him during the doctor's examination. If he is to stay overnight, you, or his cabin mates, take him, his pajamas, toilet articles, and clean clothes.

Corporal punishment of any nature, even "in fun," no matter how slight or indirect, is to be avoided at all costs. Similarly, there should be no need for any kind of punishment of a boy at camp. Most boys will conform readily. For those who do not, a heart to heart talk and explanation of the reasonableness of a request should be more than sufficient. For anything further, please see your Section Head, Program Director, the Head Counselor, or the Director.

## **SOCIAL LIFE**

Your fellow counselors at Winnebago have been chosen with great care. You will spend the summer with many engaging and interesting personalities. Among them you will find friends who will especially interest you, but I urge you not to form cliques. This diminishes the camp experience both for you and for the excluded people. Most of your enjoyable evenings will be spent at camp talking, singing, reading before a fire in the Lodge or library, or chatting over a snack in the counselors' building. These evenings will give you great satisfaction and will be remembered by you during the winter months.

Camp Vega for girls is located a short distance from Winnebago. We enjoy cordial and friendly relations with this camp and want to continue to do so. Thoughtlessness or indifference must not jeopardize these friendly relations. Naturally, certain reasonable regulations have been set down by the directors of Vega which must be honestly and rigidly adhered to. Your cooperation in this is asked for and expected.

## **COUNSELOR ASSIGNMENTS AND TIME OFF**

There are a few special assignments which most of you will have occasionally and therefore you should have some idea of their nature. We will go into these more specifically at camp.

Rest hour and night duty - these assignments are requisite for quiet and order during rest hour and after the boys are in bed. During rest hour at least two counselors in a section will be on duty. Two counselors from each of the five sections of camp will be on duty each night. Experience has taught us that the counselor must be present for a few minutes after his group has retired to insure quiet and to remain outside for a few minutes thereafter.

In all of this there is no thought that any counselor will not have sufficient time for relaxation. There are several times during the day when you will be free of camp duties. After taps (the time the boys go to bed) most counselors are unassigned. However, some of the counselors must be in camp at all times to meet any possible emergency. If you have no other assignment you may be out of camp after the boys have gone to bed and quieted down.

Everyone needs a change both in scenery and activity. A day out of camp is beneficial. During the summer, five days off can be arranged, but generally no more than one a week. They will usually be on the same day every week. The day off begins after cabin clean-up (about 9:30 a.m.) and you are expected to be back by 1:00 a.m. You will have a regular day off and, in exceptional circumstances it may be changed after consultation with your Section Head, activity department head, and the Head Counselor.

Camp Winnebago is a community of about 250 people. Community spirit is good both for the camp and the individual. Thus, it has become traditional for the staff to gather each Sunday night after taps to discuss general matters of concern and to help in planning activities.

### **CERTAIN REGULATIONS HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED FOR THE WELFARE OF THE CAMP:**

1. Smoking is not permitted at camp or off camp grounds. Alcoholic beverages, marijuana and drugs may not be brought into camp or consumed at camp or during any time you are on duty. It must not affect your judgment or performance when you are back at camp.
2. Boys have first call on all equipment and facilities. There is plenty of time for counselors when there will be no conflict with the campers. Counselors are not to borrow anything from the boys and we suggest you do not lend anything to the campers. If something is lost or damaged, it can cause hard feelings and lead to great expense.
3. It should be clear that your actions outside of camp reflect on the camp reputation. Please keep this in mind whether you are on a trip with boys or on a day off. It should be your policy not to do anything that will cause adverse criticism of you or of camp. Consideration of our neighbors, our kitchen workers, our grounds and maintenance crew and each other is basic to a successful relationship in close community living. Criticism of camp, its program, philosophy, or the administration, when made to the campers or their parents or outsiders, is always in bad taste. Any feelings you have may be freely expressed to your Section Head, the Program Director, the Head Counselor, or the Director, who will be happy to explain the reason for any decision or camp policy and to listen to your suggestion.
4. Salaries are paid at the end of camp, but you may always draw cash or obtain a check from Andy to apply against your salary. You do not need to bring a substantial amount of money to camp.
5. You are always expected to be well groomed, to dress neatly, and to wear one of the several staff shirts that we supply to you for your use during the summer.

### **SOME THINGS IT'S NICE TO KNOW**

Bedding We provide sheets, blankets, pillowcases, and pillow.

Laundry Laundry is done weekly by our laundry staff. You bring your clothes up at breakfast and they are ready after lunch. This is a commercial laundry. Do not bring delicate items or clothes needing special treatment to camp unless you plan to wash them by hand.

Personal Possessions We ask that staff and campers deposit valuables in the camp office upon arrival. While we are a safe, honest community, we are essentially open and we encourage you not to bring anything that you can't afford to lose.

Reading Library We have a library at camp. You are free to borrow any of the books for your enjoyment at camp. We also have a Book Fair at camp where you can purchase books for yourself.

Bunks Our cabins are called bunks. Most of them house 4 campers and 1 counselor, although five of

them house 6 campers and 2 counselors, and the Senior Lodge for 15 year-olds houses as many as 28 boys and 2 counselors. Of the bunks, only the Senior Lodge has electricity. There are 2 central wash houses with electricity, hot and cold running water, flush toilets, and hot showers.

Women Counselors We generally have eight to ten women counselors who are also specialists in an activity. They are full participants, and while they do not live in the cabins with the campers, they are afforded the opportunity to be fully engaged with one of the cabins as a counselor for all purposes other than living there. They share cabin responsibilities and eat meals with the bunk.

## YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AND STATUS AS A COUNSELOR

We often wonder how many of you realize how great a responsibility is assumed by the director when a boy comes to camp. It may be said that we become a parent of each boy. Multiply this consideration by 160 and you get an idea of what is involved. The conscientious camp director gravely feels this responsibility. Thus when we entrust boys to you it is with the hope that you understand this point of view. Counselors are guiding the boys each day of the camp season just as their parents do at home. The boys' character and health should be a matter of great and primary concern to you. As a rule the boys are observant and bright; therefore what you as an adult take for granted must be carefully watched in your boys. Correct health habits, proper clothing, table manners, use of good language and friendly relations with others are some of the things with which you may have to help them. More is expected of you at camp than you might find during the rest of the year. You are a role model. Your example is very important. Your close contact and association with your boys also give you the unique opportunity of feeling that you have younger brothers around you. Character is caught as well as taught.

If the boys respect you, your work will be pleasant and easy. But respect does not come easily. It cannot be bought, nor can it be obtained by being hard or soft. When a boy knows that what you expect of him is fair, that you are helpful and kind to him, he will look up to you. It is best that he should understand this at the very beginning of the camp season. He will try to imitate you, both your good and bad qualities. If you expect a boy to do things that you yourself do not do, he will quickly lose the respect he had for you. In your relationships with boys, warmth and understanding should be emphasized. A friendly smile will go far but all the rapport you have built up will be lost if you resort to ridicule or sarcasm or indifference. No matter how minor you think a camper's concern is, give it your earnest attention. Try to correct a boy in private. A great deal may be accomplished by a heart-to-heart talk with a camper while paddling a canoe, or sitting at our council ring, or walking together along the nature trail. Be yourself in the best possible sense.

Simple rules such as getting up with the boys in the morning, making your bed, cleaning your area of the bunk, being prompt in responding to bugle calls, and avoiding privileges not accorded to the campers help create a healthy relationship. Boys like to feel their counselors are closer to them than teachers, more like big brothers. Playing games, going off for an outdoor supper, even camping out overnight with them helps tremendously in building up an esprit between campers and counselors.

It will be helpful if you get to know the boys in your cabin immediately upon their arrival. If your assigned activity does not bring you into much contact with your bunkmates, we urge you to get to know them through conversations at mealtime, rest hour, and as the youngsters prepare for bed. Inform

yourself about the boys through inquiry of other staff members who have some relationship with them. You will be expected to have some insight into those campers by parents' visiting weekend, which is halfway through the camp season. Toward the end of camp you will be asked to submit a written report on each camper in your charge, consisting of a record of his achievements and development over the course of the summer.

When you reflect that a boy is with you during the summer for more actual waking moments than he is with a teacher in school all the remainder of the year, you can realize what a wonderful opportunity it is to guide him. Moreover, his learning at camp is in a fun-filled and stress-free environment. It is a perfect learning environment.

Correct attitudes and habits can easily be taught in camp. More habits, both good and bad, are acquired at camp than in any other environment, and good habits are just as easy to acquire as bad ones. You must set the example. For example, it is futile to expect boys to make their beds and clean their cabin if you do not. You must be prompt and orderly if you expect the same from the boys. Your language must be above reproach if you expect your campers to avoid obscene and profane language. A camp day includes varied activities, all for definite periods of time. You can readily understand that being late to an assignment means delaying that activity and all others that follow.

Every adult at camp is primarily a counselor. Good counselors are those who view their function in camp from a community point of view. They do not consider themselves as part of the camp only to carry out their particular assignments and then close their eyes to everything else. Our most successful counselors show interest in all phases of camp and get to know all campers, as well as their own cabin group. Counselors should be helpful in any way they can, especially if they have talent along other lines than their specialties. There are many opportunities where you can show your versatility, such as helping to plan an evening entertainment or campfire program. It is hoped that every counselor will be prepared to plan at least one evening assembly during the summer. Further, counselors are expected to attend all assemblies. This contributes to the morale of the camp and helps with order as well. A counselor's absence is noted by the boys who then assume the content of the assembly is not worthy of attendance; or if the counselors do not have to be present, why should they, the campers, have to be?

To those of you who are new to Winnebago we can assure you that you will quickly find yourself among congenial people. This letter is sent as a friendly gesture to acquaint everyone in a general way with some of our important policies. You will be told about the details relating to program scheduling, trips, mail distribution, dining room procedures, camp store purchases, fire drills, laundry, weekly cards to parents, and the like, later at camp. You should feel that Andy and Laura's cottage and the Program Director's and Head Counselor's cabins are part of camp, and you are welcome to visit socially or to discuss camp problems. **Please bring this handbook with you to camp.**

We hope we will be a happy family and that you will find your summer at Camp Winnebago a most enjoyable experience which you will repeat for many fine seasons and to which you will always look back with satisfaction.

Sincerely yours,

Andy Lilienthal