

Thank you for a wonderful summer



Dear ,

As the autumn leaves begin to fall and the cool breeze sets in, I'm reflecting on a summer I will never forget.

This past camping season, we eagerly welcomed 287 campers, filling our cabins for the first time since the pandemic. The laughter overflowing from the dining hall, the late-night reflections of tired but happy staff, and the bustling energy in our shared spaces brought Camp Scugog back to life in the most incredible way.

One of the great highlights for me was our new high ropes course. Installing the course came with challenges—as is often the case with building something grand and new. We experienced delays due to supply issues, weather, and springtime mud preventing the trucks from getting into the woods! So, when the course was finally ready to climb in second session, the anticipation was overflowing. With four elements, it's not only an exciting addition to our summer programming but also something that will make Camp Scugog even more appealing to school groups. I had the chance to climb with a longtime camper who I look forward to seeing each summer. We had a blast shuffling along the beam in the sky—it was a great moment of teamwork and vulnerability for both of us. I loved watching campers on the course—conquering their fears, cheering each other on, and seeing the pride on their faces as they reached new heights was an absolute joy.

Something I've been thinking about a lot, both during the summer and into the fall, is how incredible young people continue to be given the opportunity to flourish. Our LIT/JC's both individually and as a group, were absolutely awesome. Given the chance to be in a positive community, without screens, and well taken care of, these young leaders thrived, growing, embracing challenges, and showing a real kindness and compassion to themselves and each other. I have always believed in the power and potential of young people, and in a time when things seem extra challenging for so many, seeing this group was a real beacon of light and hope for me—a true testament to the power of young people, community and camp.

Of course, a personal highlight for me (as it always is) was our Moms and Kids camp—not just because it's the week my grandchildren come! I recently asked one of our moms about her favorite part of camp, and without missing a beat, she said, "how relaxing and organized it is." With the stress of everyday worries lifted, she was able to fully enjoy her time with her kids and connect with other moms. "No stress, no making food, no worrying about shopping—just relax and enjoy time with the kids."

Our Nature School Day Camp thrived this summer as well. From tanning hides to enjoying waterfront activities, the day campers brought wonderful energy to the site. While their programming differs from our overnight camps, we found meaningful ways for both groups to interact during special days, creating a shared sense of community. Nature School is currently in its first fall session, soaking up the last few weeks of canoeing, loving archery, and learning about all the changes in nature as the seasons shift. If you're interested in learning more, I encourage you to [check us out on Instagram here](#).

Last Thursday, we welcomed our first fall school group, a student council retreat, and they had a blast connecting, working on their critical thinking and leadership skills, and ending the day with a great view of the Aurora Borealis. While we still only have a handful of bookings, we're optimistic and excited about the future. If you're interested in learning more about our Leadership Center, or know of a group of young people who could benefit from time at Camp Scugog, [please check us out!](#) Both our Nature School and Leadership Center provide incredible programming and help generate revenue to send kids to camp.

Lastly, I'd like to ask for your help in closing our revenue gap. We welcomed campers this summer in good faith, knowing they needed time at camp, and trusting in the generosity of our community to help. Our annual fundraiser, the Camp Scugog Quest, is just around the corner on October 19th. It's a fun-filled scavenger hunt style event for the whole family. I'd love you to join for the day, or if you're unable to attend, please consider making a donation to help reach our ambitious \$60,000 fundraising goal. [You can learn more, register or donate here](#).

I'll wrap up by saying a heartfelt thank you. Every donation, and every hour volunteered helps make the magic of Camp Scugog a reality. Camp changes lives, and it's because of friends like you that we can continue this important work. As we head into the fall I wish you nothing but the best, and hope you're surrounded by love, laughter and friendship.

Yours in camping,

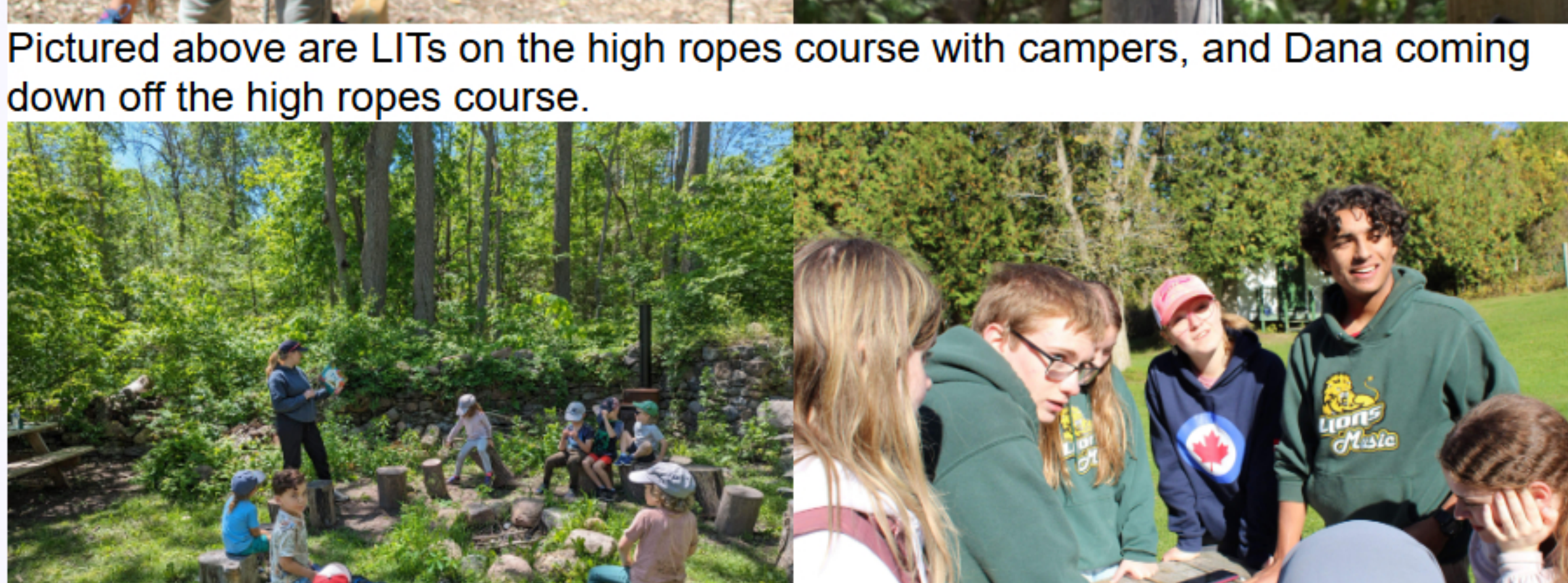
Dana Leahey
Executive Director



Pictured above are campers and staff playing in Lake Scugog, Dana and a camper on the high ropes course.



Pictured above are LITs on the high ropes course with campers, and Dana coming down off the high ropes course.



Pictured above is our Nature School's Fall Bumblebee class, and our first Fall group at Camp Scugog's Leadership Centre completing the Escape Room Challenge.

