

# Timeline



**1945**

*E.O. Olson acquires farm and timberland property in the Longville Minnesota area which will eventually become Olson Farm YMCA Camp.*

**1950**

*During the summer, Mr. Olson confides to (NCA) North Central Area YMCA Executive Director, R.J. Ramser of his intent to bequeath his Longville property to the NCA YMCA. Informs him in November, that he has done so.*

**1951**

**1952**

*NCA YMCA engages in many meetings and discussion about how to deal with this gift. They determine it will become a residential YMCA camp for youth.*

**1953**

*October 12, Mr. Olson signs property over to NCA YMCA.*

**1954**

*Max Clowers of the NCA YMCA is appointed as Founding Director. Camp Olson Committee under NCA YMCA formed, Tracy Barber, organizing Chairman. Lower Cabin built. Pioneering camper groups from Minot, Worthington and Winona present in late summer. Grading for cabins and dining hall begins.*

**1955**

**CD, (Camp Director)-Malcom Peters, Organizing Chairman- Tracy Barber**

*"Jack Uhlenhop, Director of the Duluth YMCA Camp Miller and wife Mary Ann (this from her diary) met with Max Clowers in the spring to stake out the cabin and main lodge sites." Max was personally involved in designing the cabins and*

*the lodge and selected the same architect that designed the Camp Miller facilities. The log exteriors and blue roofs were to simulate the woods under a blue sky. Mrs. Clowers terminally ill with cancer which limits Max's involvement for the next several years. Malcolm Peters of NCA YMCA on site director. Cabins 1, 2&3 completed and cabins 4&5 finished later in the year. First girls come from Austin.*

**1956**

**CD-Malcom Peters, Cm.(Chairman)- C. James Caldwell**

*Lodge and sanitation facility completed. Ray Mork, Mr. Olson's attorney, begins long-term helpful relationship with Camp Olson.*

**1957**

**CD-Malcom Peters, Cm.- C. James Caldwell EF- (Enrollment Figures)-162**

*Farming operation discontinued. Chester and Loretta McCann remain as caretakers and begin a relationship of love, service and dedication to Camp. June 23, Olson Farm YMCA Camp officially opens with a staff to camper ratio of one to one. In the fall, name changed to Olson YMCA Camp.*

**1958**

**CD- Max Clowers, Cm.- C. James Caldwell EF-286**

*Max Clowers back as Camp Director. Dedication of Camp, August 8<sup>th</sup>.*

**1959**

**CD- Max Clowers, Cm.- C. James Caldwell EF-291**

*10,000 pine and spruce trees planted in cabin area and along shore of Little Boy. Bill Elliott/Janet Striepe, staff members, are wed in outdoors chapel June 13<sup>th</sup>.*

**1960**

**CD- Max Clowers, Cm.- C. James Caldwell EF-239**

*First wilderness canoe trip launched from Camp Menogyn in arrowhead.*

**1961**

**CD- Harold Rudolph, Cm.- Harold E. Kamm EF-258**

*Harold Rudolf takes over as Camp Director. Extensive consultations with area foresters about managing our woodlands.*

**1962**

**CD- Richard Carey, Cm.- Earl Jorgenson EF-278**

*Richard Carey takes over as Camp Director.*

**1963**

**CD- Richard Carey, Cm.- Earl Jorgenson EF-310**

*Strong emphasis on tripping. Everyone out on a trip. 575 campers served.*

**1964**

**CD- Richard Carey, Cm.- Earl Jorgenson EF-344**

*All reports positive. Staff included multicultural persons: India, Japanese/American, and Colombia. 5 additional cabins by this date: 11 total.*

**1965**

**CD- Richard Carey, Cm.- Earl Jorgenson EF-337**

*Horseback riding program added thru area stables. New road from Longville-south planned. Concern about proximity to Shurds.*

**1966**

**CD- Richard Carey, Cm.- Hugo Kutchenmeister EF- 334**

*E.O. Olson Dies. Staff member drowns at Camp. New road in progress.*

**1967**

**CD- Gaylord Thomson, Cm.- Hugo Kutchenmeister EF-360**

*Gaylord Thomson takes over as Camp Director. 10,000 pines and spruce planted. New road construction presents some problems; closer to Shurds than anticipated; dirt and noise.*

**1968**

**CD- Gaylord Thomson, Cm.- Hugo Kutchenmeister EF-437**

*Effort begun to purchase Camp from NCA YMCA. Sheep Barn/Administration Building updated. Craft shop re-located from Coop to back of Administration Building.*

**1969**

**CD- Gaylord Thomson, Cm.- Hugo Kutchenmeister EF-484**

**1970**

**CD- Gaylord Thomson, Cm.- Phil Chamberlain EF-564**

*North Central Area Council of YMCA's joined with West Central Area Council of YMCA's to form the Mid America Region of YMCA's. As a result, Camp Olson Committee disbanded and YMCA Camp Olson Board of Directors formed. Management was transferred to four YMCA's, Rochester, Winona, Austin and Worthington each of whom furnished Board Members in proportion to their level of participation.*

**1971**

**CD- Gaylord Thomson, Cm- Phil Chamberlain EF-612**

*Coop dedicated as Mc Cann building in honor of Chester who dies in October.*

**1972**

**CD- Gaylord Thomson, Cm- Phil Chamberlain EF-631**

*Frank and Marlys Burton begin as caretakers. Begin a relationship of love and dedication to Camp Olson.*

**1973**

**CD- Gaylord Thomson, Cm.- Phil Chamberlain EF-651**

*Les Blackloc, outdoorsman, photographer and writer spends one month at Camp leading to an ecological model and inspiration for the future.*

**1974**

**CD- Gaylord Thomson, Cm.- Bill Elliott EF-672**

*Lowell Linnes, Board person and lay leader dies at age 46y/o.*

**1975**

**CD- Gaylord Thomson, Cm.- Bill Elliott EF-757**

*School Craft built. Homestead program started. Camp Director's position becomes full time.*

**1976**

**CD- Gaylord Thomson, Cm.- Bill Elliott EF-588**

*Frank Burton dies.*

**1977**

**CD- Gaylord Thomson, Cm.- Ken Huizenga EF-721**

*Al McEvoy and Emma begin as caretakers.  
Sauna built in memory of Lowell Linnes*

**1978**

**CD- Gaylord Thomson, Cm.- Ken Huizenga EF-666**

*Keeper of the Dream award established.*

**1979**

**Ex.D.- Gaylord Thomson, Cm.- Ken Huizenga EF-588**

*Max Clowers, Les Blacklock, Clem Peterson and Holly Hughes receive Keeper of the Dream Award. Dave Hartwig/Holly Hughes wedding 5/26. Lower Cabin winterized.*

**1980**

**Ex.D.-Jack Murdock, Cw. (Chairwoman)-Colleen Hughes EF-435**

*Jack Murdoch begins as Camp Director. Sauna re-built after fire.*

**1981**

**Ex.D.- Jack Murdock, Cw.- Colleen Hughes EF-379**

*Board of Directors became independent of other YMCA's. An independent YMCA. Dave Rogers quote, "hard times." Camp became Coed. Logged wood which was sold in Rochester to raise money.*

**1982**

**Ex.D.- Jack Murdock, Cw.- Colleen Hughes EF-229**

*Soccer program initiated*

**1983**

**Ex.D.-Jack Murdock/Dave Rogers, Cm.-Jim Reith/Dave Perkins EF-358**

*In the Fall, there is serious financial strife. 200+ acres sold on West side of Hwy. 84. Cass County assesses taxes on Camp Olson Property. Board votes to return camp to North Central YMCA. NCA responds with appointment of a committee to reorganize and with a loan to continue operation. Dave Rogers takes over as Camp Director and Dick Perkins as Chairman, together, they saved Camp Olson as we know it today. Al McEvoy retires.*

**1984**

**Ex.D.- Dave Rogers, Cm.-Dick Perkins EF-360**

*White Palace remodeled. Budget balanced. Cass County Taxes assessed in 1983 are due. Legal activity regarding taxes begins.*

**1985**

**Ex.D.- Dave Rogers, Cm.- Dick Perkins EF-468**

*30% increase in campers. Finances solid. Legal activity regarding Camp Olson's claim to be a charitable organization and therefore not subject to taxation.*

**1986**

**Ex.D.- Dave Rogers, Cm.- Dick Perkins EF-538**

*Colleen Hughes and Ray Mork receive Keeper of the Dream Award. Dispute with Cass County over tax status results in necessity to sue Cass County for relief. This ongoing matter is the source of much anxiety, consumes much time and effort, is a distraction from Camp Olson's mission, and is a financial drain.*

**1987**

**Ex.D.- Dave Rogers, Cm.- Hollie Feeser EF-455**

*Hollie Feeser works at camp on leave from IBM who supported the leave. Results in computerized office system, expanded sustaining drive base and good Board and Committee members. Start of Day Camp. Tax Court upholds our charitable status and Cass County ordered to refund taxes paid. Unfortunately, legal fees have pretty well consumed the refund. YMCA Camp Olson, name changed to Camp Olson YMCA.*

*Rick Burton hired as Facilities Manager.*

**1988**

**Ex.D.- Dave Rogers, Cm.- Hollie Feeser EF-322**

*Hollie Feeser receives Keeper of the Dream Award.*

**1989**

**Ex.D.- Dave Rogers, Cm.- Dave Blegen EF-471**

*Lee Recknor-Volunteer of the Year. Terry Fellenz finishes his 18<sup>th</sup> summer of staff duties and says "good bye." Jessie Garoutte, Facilities Manager. Wind surfing and bike trips added to programs.*

**1990**

**Ex.D.- Dave Rogers, Cm.- Dick Wayne CW-559**

(For 1990 and beyond figures for those attending camp are given as "Camper Weeks" and do not include day camp or family camp)

*Dave Rogers accepts another position in Missouri and will move on. Leadership Development Program begun. Over 20% scholarship campers.*

**1991**

**Ex.D.'s- Tony Lockhart and Audry Butts, Cm.- Jack Van Stratten CW-missing**

*Tony Lockhart and Audry Butts begin as Camp Directors. Homestead log cabin erected. Horse barn started. Audry accepts another position at end of year.*

**1992**

**Ex.D.- Tony Lockhart, Cm. Jack Van Stratten CW- 563 as of May 20.**

*Walk in cooler installed. Tom Healy, assistant Director. Maple syruping being done.*

**1993**

**Ex.D.- Tom Healy, Cm. Jack Van Stratten CW-590**

*Tom Healy begins as camp director. Dan Drews, Facilities Manager  
Dot Cachiaras retires after 9 years as Camp Olson Secretary. Septic systems updated.*

**1994**

**Ex.D.- Tom Healy, Cm.-Jim Benike CW- 644**

*40<sup>th</sup> Camp Olson Celebration. Jenny Sall/Eric Balcerzak wedding 10/15. New rifle range location.*

**1995**

**Ex.D. - Tom Healy, Cm.- Jim Benike CW- 692**

*Palace remodeling finished. New archery range location. Andy Healy, Facilities Manager*

**1996**

**Ex.D. - Andy Healy, Cm.- Jay Burke CW-585**

*Andy Healy begins as Camp Director. Homestead Barn roof raising-October. Computer system updated. Ranch House heating system upgraded. First camp internet connection. New maintenance building constructed.*

**1997**

**Ex.D.- Andy Healy, Cm.- Shaun Palmer CW-595**

*New rifle range building. Maintenance building constructed. Eric Julsrud, Facilities Manager.*

**1998**

**Ex. D.- Andy Healy, Cm.- Shaun Palmer CW-661**

*Chapel built. Andy Healy/Sarah Estry wedding. George Lutz memorial building at the Shurds finished. After school program begins. Big storm July 14. Some border and logging issues. New riding ring and wood fencing around corral. Archery shelter built. Camp Olson office moved from Rochester to Longville. Marla Jacobson first local Office Manager. Annex burned. Longville area Halloween party. Jay Mahon, Facilities Manager.*

**1999**

**Ex.D.- Andy Healy, Cm.- Joe Cartney CW-681**

*"Ted's Cabin" finished. Nine timber frame buildings built since 1990. 200+ acres placed in conservation easement. Ray Mork dies. Kitchen renovated (three years to accomplish). Camp Olson designated as Cass County Conservationist of the Year. Jay Mahon and Sue Brown exchange wedding vows at Camp September 25<sup>th</sup>. Boat storage building constructed. Joyce Greer retires.*

**2000**

**Ex.D.- Andy Healy, Cw.- Terri Seims CW-800**

*Camp Seclusion purchased 1/6/00-50 acres with 4000 feet of shoreline. Adventure Outpost (Camp Seclusion) established. 4<sup>th</sup> Timberframe Cabin completed. Trail connected around Shurds.*

**2001**

**Ex.D.- Andy Healy, CD- Ray Zetye, Cw.- Terri Seims CW-967**

*Board establishes the position of seasonal Camp Director. Cooper Lake conservation easement. Camp Offices relocated to Ranch House Garage. Bill Schroer, consultant under contract for strategic planning. All 5-timber frame cabins construction finished. Amphitheater built. Dennis Spreng, Facilities Director.*

**2002**

**Ex.D- Andy Healy, CD- Beth Toepke, Cm.-Shaun Palmer CW-792**

*Andy Healy resigns to finish Ph.D. Coop 0 moved to corral area and 2<sup>nd</sup> riding cabin constructed in same location.*

**2003**

**Ex. D.- Russ Link, CD-Beth Toepke, Cm.- Don Beed CW-737**

*Russ Link begins as Executive Director. Beth Toepke begins as Camp Director. Camp Director position becomes full time. New granite entrance sign on Highway 54.*

**2004**

**Ex.D.- Russ Link, CD.- Beth Toepke, Cm.- Dick Perkins CW -721**

*Heritage Club initiated. Preparation for 50<sup>th</sup> Celebration in August. Adopt-A-Cabin program established. Memorial Benches established. Dennis Spreng resigns and Jay Mahon returns as Facilities Director. Amy Johnson hired as Office Manager. Gay Thomson, Dave Rogers, Dick Perkins receive Keeper of the Dream Award.*



**2005**

**Ex.D.- Russ Link, CD.- Beth Toepke, Cm.- Dick Perkins CW - 784**

*McCann Building (Coops) demolished. New annual call campaign initiated. Adopted a cabin project on going. Colton Altobell hired as Camp Director.*

**2006**

**Ex.D.- Russ Link, CD.- Colton Altobell, Cm.- Dick Perkins CW - 878**

*Adopt-A-Cabin project completed. Fire suppression system added to kitchen. New water well at the corral. Permanent fishing pier placed on Cooper Lake. New website design launch in June. Management office remodeled. Patch logging in the Shurds of mature aspen. Shaun Palmer receives Keeper of the Dream Award.*

**2007**

**Ex.D.- Russ Link, CD.- Colton Altobell, Cm.- Todd Schwartz CW – 978**

*Dining Hall Renovation Phase One – Complete renovation west end, new window west end and new commercial window east end. Homestead barn moved into new camp and remodeled to become new Nature Center. Cooper Lake home construction, new home built in 3 months almost entirely by volunteers. New John Deere 42hp Tractor.*

**2008**

**Ex.D.- Russ Link, CD.- Colton Altobell, Cm.- Todd Schwartz CW – 1030**

*Dining Hall Renovation continued. South and north window replace new commercial door throughout entire building. New convection oven added to kitchen. Steel roofs added to Ranch House and Little Boy Lake House Capital Campaign begins for new health center and bathhouse. September 15, construction begins on new health center and bathhouse. Bill Elliott receives Keeper of the Dream Award.*



**2009**

**Ex.D.- Russ Link, CD.- Colton Altobell, Cm.- Eric Sorenson CW – 1003**

*Completion of new health center and bathhouse, May 15. Campers return to Isle Royale for backpacking. 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Dining Hall floor restored to original concrete and then polished and stained. Horse barn demolished and preparations begin for a new barn in 2010. Jacob Woodworth replaces Jay Mahon as Facilities Director. Ken Huizenga receives Keeper of the Dream Award.*

**2010**

**Ex.D.- Russ Link, CD.- Colton Altobell, Cm.- Eric Sorenson CW – 1065**

*Completion of a new horse barn and significant other improvements made to the horseback riding program. Former Camp Director Gay Thomson passes away in February. New website launched. End Statements created to help guide our future. A record 36 CITs are served in the summer camping program. National YMCA initiates new brand and logo. Significant growth in camp's International Immersion Program.*

**2011**

**Ex.D.- Russ Link, CD.- Colton Altobell, Cw.- Margret Swanson CW – 1034**

*Fundraising begins for a new Trips Center in memory of Gay Thomson. Gay Thomson memorial celebration brings alum back to camp in September with ground breaking for the new trips center. Camp Seclusion cabins demolished and construction begins on new Thomson Trips Center. New Leadership Cabin (Ripley) built in memory of Dan Arenberg. Ranch House kitchen remodel. Sauna burns in July rebuilt in October.*

**2012**

**Ex.D.- Russ Link, CD.- Colton Altobell, Cw.- Margret Swanson CW – 1130**

*Construction completed on the Trips Center and new boathouse at camp Seclusion. Mountain biking program new for 2012 summer. Sauna fire again, contractor error, rebuilt in June. Heavy rains flood Camp Olson shoreline, boathouse under 2 feet of water. A record overall attendance and 37 CITs participate in summer program. Construction begins on two new cabins for our riding campers. Facilities Manger Jake Woodworth is married at Camp Olson in September. Camp Director Colton Altobell weds in December.*

**2013**

**Ex.D.- Russ Link, CD.- Colton Altobell, Cm.- Mike Van Straaten CW – 1144**

*Construction completed on the new Willy and Yaqua cabins for the riding program. Another record summer attendance. Planning begins for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in September of 2014. International program serves*

over 100 camper weeks. Rochester Fest Mile a new fundraiser to support the scholarship program. New professional trail maps for all camp trails. Little Boy House kitchen remodeled. Planning begins for new kitchen and white palace. Stand-Up Paddle Board program added to the canoe and Kayak area of main camp. Janet Rich received Keeper of the Dream Award.

## 2014

### Ex.D.- Russ Link, CD.- Colton Altobell, Cw. Julie Street- CW – 1231

60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration occurs on Labor Day weekend. The 3(60) campaign is announced at the event in order to raise funds for a new kitchen, dining hall renovation, new white palace and to establish an endowment fund. Terry Fellenz, Pierce Johnson and Lee Recknor received Keeper of the Dream Awards. A record attendance is recorded for camper weeks including 39 CITS in three sessions. Camp Olson sends 4 groups to BWCA as part of the Leadership Program. Basement remodeling completed on Little Boy House.



## 2015

### Ex.D.- Russ Link, CD.- Colton Altobell, Cw.- Lucy Bahn CW – 1238

Timberframe cabins, lower loop cabins, and Target Sports Pavilions are refurbished with steel roofs. Record CIT attendance, 42 total. Lindsey (Woodworth) Abrahams hired as Camp Director to replace Colton Altobell, begins October 2015. Former Director Dick Carey passes. Former Board Chairman Phil Chamberlain passes.

## 2016

### Ex.D.- Russ Link, CD.- Lindsey Woodworth, Cw.- Lucy Bahn CW – 1240

Fundraising for new bathhouse and Kitchen as part of the (3)60 campaign. \$1,650,000 goal achieve June 1, 2016, ground breaking October 2016. Severe summer storms cause two large blow downs on the north and south side of second Shrud and other significant tree and building damage in main camp. Record attendance. Demolition occurs on the original bathhouse & Kitchen following the summer camping season.

**2017**

**Ex.D.- Russ Link, CD.- Lindsey Woodworth, Cm.- Tom Shepard CW-1245**

*Memorial Day weekend ribbon cutting and dedication for the new kitchen, renovation to the dining hall and the new bathhouse. Phil Chamberlain, Dick Carey and Bruce Swanson have names engraved on Memorial Benches. Margret Swanson, Betsy Furman, Kristi Elliott and Pete Woodworth receive "Keeper of the Dream" awards. New record attendance. Jake Woodworth, Property Manager resigns in November, Aidan Windebank hired as Property Manager.*

**2018**

**Ex.D.- Russ Link, CD.- Lindsey Woodworth, Cm.- Tom Shepard CW-1303**

*Record attendance. Tear Drop in road by kitchen and dining hall established as permanent location for "Keeper of the Dream" recipients. Third riding ring constructed for riding program. Ice-out at the bathhouse causes severe shoreline damage and nearly takes out the bathhouse. Beach renovation including \$40,000 in new docks. New outhouse for the sauna & beach area. Bathhouse retaining wall repairs completed. Pasture management plan put into place. Construction begins on staff lounge. Tree plantings in main camp. Record attendance and a record 60 CIT's in four sessions. Record International camper enrollment and first China Immersion program. Search begins for a full-time Assistant Camp Director.*

**2019**

**Ex.D.- Russ Link, CD.- Lindsey Woodworth, Cm.- Mike Holmes CW-1288**

*Demarie Kapler hired as new full-time Assistant Camp Director in April. Staff Lounge construction complete in June and is located behind the White Palace. Fiber cable buried in camp bringing new internet to the offices and staff lounge. New 37-acre conservation easement along Cooper Lake finalized with MN Land Trust. 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration over Labor Day weekend. Mark Bahn, Andrew Healy and Jack Van Straaten receive Keeper of the Dream Award.*

**2020**

**Ex.D.- Russ Link, CD.- Lindsey Woodworth, Cw.- Lori Jonason – CW – 0**

*COVID-19 closes summer camp operations. Carmen & Jim Campbell gift 103 acres to camp which borders south side of the Shurds property. 70 acres of property east of main camp is protected in a conservation easement with MN Land Trust. Lindsey Abrahams resigns as Camp Director, Demi Kapler named interim Camp Director. New staff housing units constructed near target sports area (coop 1 & coop 2).*

**2021**

**Ex.D.- Russ Link, CD.- Demi Kapler, Cw.- Jennifer Sall – CW – 1,150**

*Camp operates during the COVID-19 pandemic and conducted a successful summer with purposeful enrollment limits and program modifications despite operational issues caused by the pandemic. The property around the Shurd Lakes and the Campbell property were both protected in conservation easements with the MN Land Trust. Camp Olson YMCA was recognized as Partner of the Year by the MN Land Trust. Carmen & Jim Campbell, Mike Holmes and Larry Pederson receive the Keeper of the Dream Award. Margret Raasch was hired as Assistant Camp Director in October. A year-round home and 4 acres is purchased from Alum, Shaun Palmer on Cooper Lake. The Camp Olson Endowment grew to over \$2 million. Anita Dunham retires as Food Service Manager after 18 years of service. The final Camp Seclusion cabin was demolished (Yukon). Two alumni weddings take place at camp.*

**2022**

**Ex.D.- Russ Link, CD.- Demi Kapler, Cw.- Jennifer Sall – CW –**

**Code:**

**NCA = North Central Area Council of YMCA's**

**CD = Camp Director**

**Cm = Chairman**

**Cw = chairwoman**

**Ex.D.= Executive Director**

**EF= Enrollment Figure**

**CW= Camper Weeks**