



May 30, 2026

Dear St. Croix Community Members,

There's a special energy felt this time of year around Camp St. Croix as the land awakens and camp comes to life again.

Trails begin to fill with the footsteps of children exploring the woods and prairies with our Outdoor Education staff. Windows in the dormant camper cabins are opened. Life jackets and canoes are checked. Each day, the barren trees become noticeably lush and greener.

You can almost feel the anticipation building for the meaningful moments that are just around the corner: the shy camper who will find their voice in a cabin circle; the teenager who will discover their leadership potential under the canopy of the woods; the friendships that will form in unexpected places and last far beyond the summer.

You are a vital part of each moment, story, and experience.

Here at camp, we believe that nature is the greatest teacher, but your generosity is what provides the classroom — helping to ensure that our mission to build confident, connected, and kind young people remains accessible to everyone in our community.

As we count down the days until the docks are back in the river and campfires are lit, I'm excited to share what your support is making possible this year:

- Over the past year, we've seen strong engagement across programs and events. Our annual **Breakfast with Santa welcomed 400+ families**, while our **Little Seeds Nature Preschool** continues to be a daily highlight with **41 families enrolled** and fall 2026 registration already full.
- In addition, last fall was especially active as we hosted **30 school groups and 12 weddings**, demonstrating the wide reach of camp programming year-round. Momentum continues into the upcoming season, with **summer enrollment for both day and overnight camps trending ahead of last year.**
- This summer, we're also excited to bring back **DayCroix Family Night** in a refreshed format focused on skits and songs, giving campers and staff the chance to take the stage. We're continuing **Pizza Night on the Farm** as well — a favorite opportunity for alumni and families to stay connected to the Camp St. Croix community.



- We are excited to be introducing **two new overnight camp experiences**: Trotters, a one-week horse- focused camp, and Trekkers, a one-week hiking-focused camp — both already seeing strong enrollment and enthusiasm from campers.
- **Donor support** continues to make an impact across every aspect of our camp community, from DayCroix and Overnight Camp to The Farm, our Outdoor Learning Program serving 50+ school groups annually, and our off-season retreats/events — all of which are seeing strong programmatic growth. Ongoing generosity (from folks like you!) is especially critical in **sustaining scholarship support that removes financial barriers**, ensuring all young people can access the transformative, confidence-building experiences that camp provides.



- I remain immensely proud of the **collaboration among our team members** working across our five core program areas to deliver exceptional experiences for every camper and visitor year-round. This spirit of teamwork was evident during a recent partnership event with River Valley Charities for **The Coldest Night of the Year**, where staff, board members, and camp families came together to support neighbors facing food and housing challenges.

These updates represent more than just projects or programs; they represent the growth of a community and the strengthening of a legacy that you help sustain.

Looking ahead to summer and beyond, we're filled with gratitude and excitement for all the moments to come — the big ones, the quiet ones, and everything in between that make Camp St. Croix "The Grandest Place We Know."

Thank you for being such an important part of it all. We're honored to have you alongside us as a partner and friend, helping us keep this beloved place and all it stands for shining bright.

Here's to another unforgettable summer!

Gratefully,

Dan O'Brien

Dan O'Brien
Executive Director, YMCA Camp St. Croix

