



# THE LION'S ROAR

Summer 2017



## Message from the Summer Director

September 2017

Dear friends,

On a pleasant August evening, as campers and staff bid farewell outside the chapel following the Candlelight Service, I found myself reflecting on a summer filled with milestones and happy memories. Going into the season, with a revamped leadership team and fewer campers than preferable, there had been many uncertainties. Now, as O-AT-KA's 112th season of building boys drew to a close, we all felt tremendous pride in a season well-summarized by King Matt Varga's final password, "upward trend."

Earlier in July, we had a chance to showcase our staff and programs during our American Camp Association standards visit. An incredible nine binders of documentation needed to be prepared for this visit, and I'm very proud of all the work our Program Director Tom Salamone, other members of the leadership team, and all the staff put in to help O-AT-KA pass with flying colors. We are now accredited until the 2022 season! Our lead visitor commented, "the deep commitment and professionalism of your fine staff

is very apparent and genuine." This strong collaborative effort, led by new Executive Director Heather Plati's example, was sustained throughout and resulted in a very smooth summer operation.

On the program front, there was also much to cheer. In the first session, we awarded middler Tristan Caudill the 5000th chevron since the program was reinstated in 2005. Overall in 2017, boys earned 438 chevrons in 30 different crafts; the arts, athletics, aquatics, and outdoor skills are all represented in the top ten most popular crafts, which is a very healthy balance.

In the second session, it finally happened! Grey's winless streak in Green and Grey competition, which had dated back to second session 2007, finally came to an end. The enthusiasm that erupted in the Commons after the announcement was so tremendous they could

probably hear us at Wohelo! Even a few Greens joined the light-hearted celebration, recognizing that their friends were "overdue."

Twelve new lifeguards were certified by trainer Carrie Bonnefond over the course of the season, seven boys (continued next page)



## Message from the Summer Director (continued)

graduated from the CIT program, and eleven learned valuable skills as part of our new half-season Leadership Cabin. Trip gurus Cat Fletcher and Matt Derrah led dozens of boys on twelve different wilderness

adventures ranging from Saco River canoeing to Mt. Katahdin hiking to Kennebec River rafting. In athletics, at the Four-On-The-Fourth Road Race in Bridgton, camper Ethan Jacunski finished first place among all campers from all camps running the race and staff member Dan Allara finished in thirteenth place overall. Nine camps in the region visited for our Archery Invitational, the O-AT-KA regatta proved popular once again, and Camp Fernwood visited for the Global Camps Africa Race. Of all the season highlights, perhaps the

one I am proudest of is the awarding of eighteen five-year jackets – our largest class in many years. Building boys is O-AT-KA's mission, and seeing so many reach this milestone is a testament to the strong community our staff has helped create.

It was a truly special summer, and we aim to build on our upward trend in 2018. If there is a boy you know that would benefit from the O-AT-KA experience (and who wouldn't?), please help us spread the word and encourage his family to contact us. We are grateful for your continued support.

Regards,

Charles Donovan  
Summer Camp Director



## Moment of Reflection

The opening password for Summer 2017 was “New Beginnings” and the closing password was “Upward Trend.” These two phrases truly capture exactly what we wanted to accomplish during this camp season and beyond. And what a summer it was! I am humbled and proud of our staff, campers and leadership that took on the challenge to make this year's camp experience spectacular for all that were involved.

When I reflect about O-AT-KA, one of the areas I am most astounded by is the leadership we are blessed with. This is evident with our veteran team of unit heads and program staff, counselors that emerge as mentors, CIT's that are eager to take the next step in their camp journey, and boys in the cabins that self-identify as a person that others want to be around and emulate.

We have O-AT-KA leaders that care deeply about our organization through their work on the board of directors and corporation. We have donors that lead by example and chose to make camp a priority in their philanthropic choices. And we have volunteers that give endlessly of their time as ambassadors of camp.

How lucky are our campers to be in this type of community? How lucky are our staff to be part of something bigger than themselves? How lucky are our alumni to be able to call O-AT-KA home – now and forever. And how lucky am I to be a part of O-AT-KA.

Thank you to everyone that made this summer such an amazing experience. As I hit the road this Fall to recruit new families and talk about what an O-AT-KA experience can mean to them, I will be proud to make known, “How lucky is your son to have the opportunity to become part of the O-AT-KA family.”

I love hearing from each and every one of you so please continue to send your thoughts, comments and stories.

Best wishes from Sebago,  
Heather Plati



## King Matthew Varga – Candlelight Password – 8/11/17



Before I start, I'd like to thank someone very special, someone who dedicates his time and effort to making all of this that we do happen and run. Roy Heller, thank you for your leadership and guidance... you will probably hate me for thanking you like this, but get over it.

Before camp started, about a week before, I lifeguarded a wedding here. I showed up the night before at like 10pm, and they were doing a rehearsal dinner of some sort. I walked into the kitchen and the first person I saw was Heather Plati. The first thing Heather did when she saw me was to give me a hug and to say "Welcome Home." At first in my mind I was whoa, I don't know you that well lady, but then I thought, wow this is different, but this is welcoming. This person, who doesn't know me that well, had this understanding about how much I love camp and how passionate I am about camp. She cares, and after that moment I felt a good omen about camp for this summer, and understood how different, but how fun and absolutely fantastic, this summer was going to be.

Now, at the close of this summer, it is obvious that the changes that have happened in camp have been for

the better. The smiles and attitudes of the campers and staff have been heartwarming. The love and appreciation and dedication shown from the top to the bottom and from the bottom to the top was something I haven't felt as a staff member before. Because of this, I believe camp is pointed in the right direction.

It is pointed toward a path that is both new but also values the traditions that we hold close to our hearts here at camp, and that the alumni outside of camp hold close to their hearts as well. This is when camp is at its best: when we are moving forward with new ideas, but valuing and loving the traditions that we have here.

If you don't feel the same way that I have felt, then frankly you either haven't been paying any attention or else you haven't worked here or been a camper here for a long time. Ask anyone, Chris Kohl, Roy Heller, Charles Donovan, anyone who has been here a long time; they will tell you how special this summer has been. Leaving this year, I feel really good about the future of what we do here. It makes me want to continue to come back, and come back, and come back again. When the leaders of camp make everyone feel like family, it creates the tradition of people coming back year after year, which is a truly special thing.

So, as you leave here tonight, and you go home to school and the rest of your families, I truly hope you have the feeling that camp is on the upward trend and that you know, deep down, certain things:

I hope you know that when you come back next year, new and cool things will be available, but the things that you have cherished all along will still be here.

I hope you know that when you are

home you can always rely on the fact that your fellow campers, and your fellow staff members love you, and think of you like family, and you can use this to comfort you in times of need.

I hope you know that when you are in times of need, you can think of camp, you can think of the things you don't get to do while you're at school or at home and think of the people you know here, and it will always help in those times.

And I hope you know that when you are away from camp, you shouldn't feel weird about contacting these people you live in close quarters with for 1,2,3,4, or 7 weeks long.



Former Kings L to R: Tanner Skilton '13, Don Nickerson '58, Doug Ellison '79, Matt Varga '17, Hank Ellison '15, and Dave Fox '60.

Tonight, when you are hugging people outside of the Chapel, and when you are accidentally dripping hot wax on peoples arms and clothes, or when your tears accidentally fall on the flame and put it out, know that another summer at O-AT-KA is right around the corner, and know that O-AT-KA, this clearing in the woods, is moving forward at a very special pace to a very special place.

And, finally, appreciate the fact that in a few shorts months, you will be right back at camp again. Thank you all for coming today, and thank you to the campers and staff who have made this summer unforgettable and welcoming on a whole new level.

**The Password for this evening is  
"Upward Trend."**

## Refer a New Camper

One of the best ways you can support O-AT-KA is by referring a new camper. As a camp ambassador, you are our best recruiting resource. A simple introduction will enhance your camp and provide an experience of a lifetime for a future camper. If you know a family that may be interested in O-AT-KA, please send us their information so we can invite them to consider camp.

To make a referral, please e-mail Annie Bowe at [abowe@campoatka.org](mailto:abowe@campoatka.org) or use the camp referral form on the website: [www.campoatka.org/refer](http://www.campoatka.org/refer)

We also have a new promotional video that you can share with your friends. We want to extend a huge thank you to our counselor Adam Hardwicke and his camper assistant George Klein for their time and dedication to create this fabulous video. To view, please visit our website and YouTube channel (O-AT-KA).



## Host an Open House!

Another great way to support camp is by hosting an open house in your community! We will be reaching out to our network of alumni, families, and friends throughout the Fall. If you are interested in helping us with this important initiative, please e-mail Annie Bowe at [abowe@campoatka.org](mailto:abowe@campoatka.org) or call the office at (207) 787-3401.

## Renew Your Love For Camp With An Annual Gift

O-AT-KA's strength comes from its loyal and dedicated community. Camp's success is because of YOU. We are asking you to pledge your commitment to O-AT-KA with an annual gift. Whether this is your first gift to camp or you are renewing your support, now is the perfect time, as gifts made before October 1 will be credited in this fiscal year and put to immediate use to help get ready for Summer 2018. Please consider supporting your camp with a gift that is a true testament of your dedication to O-AT-KA.

### Ways to give:

Online: [www.campoatka.org/alumni/giving-opportunities](http://www.campoatka.org/alumni/giving-opportunities)

Phone: 207-787-3401

E-mail: [info@campoatka.org](mailto:info@campoatka.org)

Mail: Camp O-AT-KA, PO Box 239, Sebago, ME 04084

## Veteran's Memorial

On July 29, O-AT-KA dedicated its new Veteran's Memorial! We want to extend a huge thank you to John Redding and Jeff Moore for spearheading this important project and to everyone who helped support it. Thank you to all of our veterans (past and present) for your service.



L to R: Corporation Members Paula Watson and Jeff Moore, Executive Director Heather Plati, Corporation Member John Redding, and Board President John Hall

## MRRRA Affiliation



Camp O-AT-KA is now affiliated with Maine Resource Recovery Association

With our long history of appreciation for the natural world around us, Camp O-AT-KA is pleased to have become a member of the Maine Resource Recovery Association (MRRRA). Boys in our Leadership Cabin expressed interest in recycling and sustainability as one of their projects this summer.

They note that recycling helps to reduce our reliance on landfills and incinerators for waste disposal. Campers, staff and guests will be encouraged to utilize the recycling containers that will be located near trash bins along the camp road.

MRRRA represents a wide range of organizations and interests that believe in the need to support sound environmental policy that promotes eco-friendly practices and reduces the amount of waste we bury or burn every year.

## Congratulations

Congratulations to our newly elected Board and Corporation members:

### Corporation

Bailey Tuthill  
Mary Anderson  
Norm Black

### Board of Directors

Bill Kumler  
Rob Bennett  
A special thank you to outgoing Board Member Marsha Trill



# Congratulations to our 2017 1st Session Award Winners

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## Basketball

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**Junior:** Nico Kirby  
**Middler:** Manuel Nogueira  
**Senior:** Ethan Aspiras

## Baseball

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**Junior:** Desmond Francis  
**Middler:** Bryson Shaub  
**Senior:** Peter Rodgers

## Soccer

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**Junior:** Crance Castle  
**Middler:** Hugo Marquis  
**Senior:** Brendan Strey

## Archery

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**Junior:** Owen Coleman  
**Middler:** Tristan Caudill  
**Senior:** Isaiah Bailey

## Riflery

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**Junior:** Gabe Weinreib  
**Middler:** Kahil Mulla  
**Senior:** Jack Spencer

## Tennis

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Jasper Bennett

## Ultimate

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Ian Good

## Track

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Garrett Jacunski

## Sailing

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Jack Borsch

## Swimming

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Ian Good

## Photo

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Marc Garcia

## Stained Glass

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Jack Spencer

## Goff Medal

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Brendan Strey

## Trips Medal

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Bryson Shaub

## Trips Plaque

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Liam Bjarke

## O-AT-KA Day High Point Man

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**Junior:** Gabe Weinreib  
**Middler:** Manuel Nogueira  
**Senior:** Ethan Jacunski

## O-AT-KA Day High Point Cabin

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**Junior:** Kenilworth  
**Middle:** Harwick  
**Senior:** Falkirk

## 5-Year Jackets 1st Session

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Jon Box  
Jack Borsch  
Zach Pedowitz  
Marcus Bjarke  
Christian Torney  
Ethan Jacunski  
Will Chu  
Campbell Abelow  
Jasper Bennett  
Conrad Bennett



# Congratulations to our 2017 2nd Session Award Winners

## Basketball

**Junior:** Davonte Brandao  
**Middler:** Holden Daggett  
**Senior:** Jesse McMillan

## Baseball

**Junior:** Jeff Adey  
**Middler:** Holden Daggett  
**Senior:** Zeno Marquis

## Soccer

**Junior:** Jeff Adey  
**Middler:** Matt Adey  
**Senior:** Wyatt Carlson

## Archery

**Junior:** Jeff Adey  
**Middler:** Michael Mortimer  
**Senior:** Ben Adey

## Riflery

**Junior:** Tom Bader  
**Middler:** Jack Boyle  
**Senior:** Martin Jefferson

## Tennis

Jeff Adey

## Ultimate

Jacob Shulman

## Track

William Van der Rhoer

## Sailing

Kahil Mulla

## Swimming

Kahil Mulla

## Photo

Alden Rice

## Stained Glass

Ethan Aspiras

## Goff Medal

Jack Boyle

## Trips Medal

Kai Jimenez

## Trips Plaque

Alden Rice

## O-AT-KA Day High Point Man

**Junior:** Jeff Adey  
**Middler:** Kahil Mulla & Matt Adey  
**Senior:** Auden Oliver-Yeager

## O-AT-KA Day High Point Cabin

**Junior:** Blanchard  
**Middle:** Carlisle  
**Senior:** Berwick

## 7-Weeker Recognition

Victor Lee  
 Kahil Mulla  
 Auden Oliver-Yeager  
 Ethan Aspiras  
 Wyatt Carlson

## 5-Year Jackets 2nd Session

Edward DeCourt  
 Connor DeCourt  
 Matt Adey  
 Ben Adey  
 Jay Oliver Schwartz  
 A.J. Tabaka  
 Eli Read  
 Payton Cunningham

## Galahad Shield

**Lad** Jeff Adey  
**Page** D.J. Harris  
**Esquire** Charlie Brontas  
**Knight** Daniel Allara



## Stay Connected

Follow & Like us on:

**Facebook** @Camp O-AT-KA, boys summer camp

**Twitter** @oatka1906

**Instagram** @campoatka



## Upcoming Deadlines:

Friday, Oct. 14: CIT Applications are due

Tuesday, Oct. 31: Early enrollment for returning campers ends

Wednesday, November 1: Open enrollment for new campers

## Mark Your Calendar: Green & Grey

The annual Green & Grey celebration will be held on Saturday, November 18th at the Hilton in Woburn, Massachusetts. This event is a wonderful gathering of the camp community in support of our Dennen Program



and Summer Camperships for deserving boys. The evening will kick off with a lively silent auction and cocktail reception; followed by dinner, camaraderie and remarks from members of O-AT-KA. Details will be sent in early October but we ask you to make plans now to join us! Overnight rooms are available at the Hilton under keyword "OATKA" and can be reserved by calling 781-932-0999.

Donations for the Silent Auction are already coming in and we can use your help! Tickets, services, collectibles, experiences - its great to have a variety of items available and all proceeds benefit the campership programs.



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