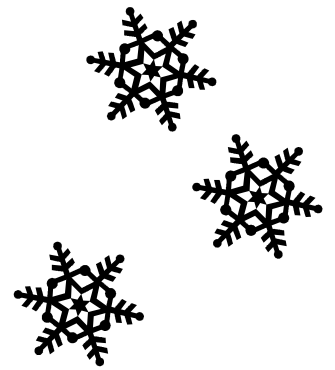


# AMUUSE NEWS

January, 2012



## A Note from Your President...

I hope you all had a pleasant holiday season and are looking forward to what the New Year will bring you. I am writing this on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> and heard this morning that this year will boast three Friday the 13ths so let's hope that none of you are superstitious! I know I hope to have a better year this year and am taking steps to make it happen. We have heard from the Presbyterian Camp and it looks like we will be there another year. That is good news. Due to the leap year, however we did not get the June week we were anticipating, and the dates will be the 10-16<sup>th</sup> instead. We are also looking forward to trying the new digs at Kettunen Center in Tustin, Michigan. It is nice to be able to offer a couple of different options this year. I do have some sad news to impart, however, and that is the loss of another AMUUSE camper, Howard Hughes. His simile and gentle ways will certainly be missed. As you are contemplating your plans for the year, I hope you will join us either for a week or a weekend, and that some of you we haven't seen for a while will pay us a visit. It is wonderful to have people who haven't been to an AMUUSE event for several years check us out again. Even if you haven't come around for a while, you are never forgotten and are cherished as much as those who come each year and the newcomers. For now, I'll hold you in my heart, my friend.

Hugs, Gwen

### March Weekend-March 16-18 The Wearin' o' The Green

It's time to get together again. Let's start our spring right this year with a St. Patrick's Day weekend at Saugatuck.

Arrival time will be 5PM. There will be no dinner at camp on Friday, so you need to either eat on the way or plan to join folks going to a local eatery to share a dinner together. In November, about 25 or so of us ate at The Butler in Saugatuck. Opening will be around 8:30 or 9:00, depending on how folks arrive. Bring an old name tag to wear. I am sure most of you have a few. I will have extras, but would love to see you recycle.

After folks begin to register, Sharon will send out more information.

Mail a check to AMUUSE for \$145 to Sharon Spencer, 336 Birchwood Ct., Vernon Hills, IL 60061 along with the following form:

Male or Female

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State/zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Accessibility needs? \_\_\_\_\_

Food allergies? Vegetarian? \_\_\_\_\_

## NEW CAMPGROUNDS FOUND

There's going to be a July camp this summer at a new location: Camp Kettunen in Tustin, Michigan. Tustin is 120 miles north of Saugatuck. Not worth the drive, you say? Wait till you see it. It's an upgrade in facilities and it's air-conditioned too. The grounds close to the center buildings are more kept than our traditional, rustic Saugatuck location, and all the facilities are more modern. The rest of the site is wooded; there's nature trails and a small lake for swimming. Check out the site for yourself: [www.kettunecenter.org](http://www.kettunecenter.org).

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner will offer a selection of foods from which you can choose. Our space will be limited to 29 lower bunks in Cedar Lodge. Everyone will have access to indoor showers. If you want to have your own hotel style room with a private bath and linens supplied (yes really!), you can stay in the White Pine Wing. If you do, the camp will charge an upgrade fee for that and it will be passed on to you.

Many camp sites, at the price range to which we've grown accustomed, were found lacking for one reason or another. Some were downright unacceptable. And several acceptable locations were found too, but the cost per camper would have been significantly higher.

Most campers know that our Saugatuck location is for sale. So the need for an alternative is really a no-brainer. In fact, the Board has been a scouting sites for years. An important determinant was to keep the cost as affordable as possible while delivering a beautiful setting.

When a committee of eight visited Kettunen, all were pleasantly surprised. At last, no doubts about it. So it's on the agenda. Just know that our location may change, but the camaraderie and warmth of all our camps will stay the same wherever we meet.

If you like what you've read and what you've seen on the website, you might want to consider signing up fast because space is limited. At the end of camp, everyone

will be given an opportunity to express their own opinions of the site. Hopefully you'll agree with the committee. Because when all is said and done, it's your opinions that matter the most.

-Armeneh Mazian

## WHY I GO TO CAMP

In the last 20 years I have gone to camp 33 times. I must like it!! From the very first time I knew that camp was not a place to continue my normal life. I used the camp experience to discover who I was, what I wanted, where my boundaries were, where other people's were, to play full out, and to be outrageous. In the process I learned to lead Morning Groups - something I never thought I could do. I NEVER went looking for a partner, although several times a partner found me. I fell in love many times, with both men and women, all of which taught me valuable lessons. I returned year after year to play more, to laugh more, to entertain if I could, to see old friends, and to immerse myself in an atmosphere of acceptance and love. I began to think of camp as "the real world", and the other 51 plus weeks as the "false world". Most times I cried as I turned onto Perryman St, reveling in the natural beauty of the environment, and remembering all the wonderful, powerful experiences I've had over the years. If I rode with someone I would insist that we be quiet for that last few minutes of the drive.

I've come to realize that the camp experience is not perfection. I have been judged harshly and wrongly by those who I thought were my friends, without ever being asked for my side of a story. And yet the sum total of the past 20 years at camp, has been the most positive, the most loving, the most fun, and the most growth filled, of all my 70 years on the planet. I plan to be there again in 2012. – **William Watson**

## Memoirs of a November Weekend

Our November reunion was more sedate than the summer camps, but so very comfortable in different ways ... and fun. This time it was warm, serene, and kind of enchanting. Sharon Spencer was our week-end director. In all we had 33 attendees including one new camper. We hope to see everyone back again!

We started Friday evening with a lovely dinner at the bustling Butler Hotel in always festive, downtown Saugatuck. There were so many of us that we had to sit at different tables, wherever we could be fitted in. It's always good to catch up with each other. Then with our bellies full, we returned to camp and spent the evening talking with friends, old and new, while munching on snacks. (Can you believe that!)

After Saturday breakfast, the morning groups started. This year I chose to be in a fun, discussion group led by Jerry Kaup. I can't remember what the subject was, but does it matter? These things sometimes take on a life of their own. It was supposed to be light-hearted but sometimes it became deeper and more serious instead, thanks to Nancy James who knows how to help us gain insight into almost anything. And Beth Kearns is known for livening up many conversations. Needless to say, there was a good, fun flow of talk and laughter, sometimes peppered with intelligent observations...just a lot of light hearted fun.

Sheldon Beck led a discussion group, and Sharon Spencer stood in for Joanne Lagattolla (who had to run to Grand Rapids to get her car repaired) led a craft group. Some decided to skip all the chatter and walk the beach and explore the woods instead. Hey! Where else can you spend a November morning surrounded by friends, conversations, a crackling fire, still woods, and gorgeous waters?

The afternoon was free time. Some went to town to shop, some took a nap, while others continued working on their crafts. Saturday evening was auction night. People were asked to either bring two items from home to auction off or to provide a service to auction- the sillier, the better ... humor counted. Then our fun loving, but keen-eyed Donna Davis coolly assessed the appraised value of our offerings. (No bias there.) Actually, she did admit to liking services the best and paid more for them. We were then given some "funny money" for whatever we offered. And we used that to bid on whatever caught our fancy. The highest bidder took home his/her new treasure (?) or enjoyed the service(s) they bought- Massage anyone? Sunday morning coffee in bed?

All too soon, our reunion came to an end. I had to leave early. After our usual closing ceremony, some who weren't quite ready to call it quits so soon, decided to linger on in town for a bit of shopping, lunch, or coffee (everyone's welcome) before journeying back to the real world.

-Armeneh Mazian

### May Weekend- May 5-6

This weekend usually is one week after Mother's day, but this year it is one week before Mother's day! That will mean that the yard sale won't be going on that weekend! We will have to find a new, exciting activity for that weekend. If you are interested in coming up with an idea and would like to coordinate this weekend please email Gwen at [gwencody@hotmail.com](mailto:gwencody@hotmail.com).

### Crafts to Benefit AMUUSE

If you do a craft- jewelry making, knitting, crocheting, painting, sock monkeys, etc. and would like an opportunity to offer them for sale at AMUUSE functions, we would like to accommodate you! All you need to do is to donate a part of your sales to AMUUSE. We are not setting a special consignment split, but would like you to decide what a reasonable donation would be. If you are interested, contact Kathe Merritt to let her know what you would like to sell.

# Summer Camps 2012

## Saug in June

June 10-16

Dates not confirmed

### Back to Bedrock- Rosie Beymer, Director

Go back. Go back in time and let your primal nature take over for our June camp at the beautiful Presbyterian Camp at Saugatuck, Michigan. We'll have lots of cave men (and women!) stuff going on at "Back to Bedrock" and you can be a part of it all!

Visit with the Flintstones or the Rubbles, try your luck at the Bedrock Bowl, or have a chat with Peter, Wiley, and the rest of the BC gang who I've heard will be visiting.

We'll have a yabba dabba do good time! UGH!

Morning groups include:

### **Crafting Fun & Conversation –Nancy Beu**

Come join us to craft and converse - sharing our thoughts while using our hands to make dear things. Each day will start with a circle of sharing and perhaps a short reading or poem (maybe yours). Then we'll do our "thing". There will be a small project for the group each day and/or if you prefer do your own project that you brought from home. Projects might include a necklace including beach gatherings, starting a Swedish hook rug, a collage, a special rock on a cord necklace, etc. Look forward to a morning of relaxed fun, good sharing, and perhaps something special to take home or to gift a new friend.

### **Photography, Hiking, and Photo Networking-Barb Kuntz**

Explore your inner child and be one with nature as we comb the natural setting along the beach of Lake Michigan. We will hike the rustic campgrounds for unique images and unusual angles to photograph. One day we will go into town on the chain ferry to explore the bright colors and rich landscaping of the artistic community of Saugatuck. Don't forget the big attraction of Mount Baldy and the broad vistas from above the sand dunes. We will walk up the stairs to the top of the sand dune and take the sand path down to the beach capturing memories of the experience along the way. In addition to hiking and snapping images, we will learn how to use websites like [Blogger](#), [Flickr](#), [Picasa](#), [Animoto](#), and [Cooliris](#) to share our photographic collage. Make sure to bring your **hiking shoes**, **raincoat**, and **water bottle** in addition to your **digital camera**. You will need a computer if you want to post your images to the Internet. Consider bringing a theme object or small item that you can include in your photos as we explore our surroundings. We will combine nature, walking/hiking, and digital technology in this **active** morning group.

### **Line Dancing- Kathe Merritt**

*Look for another group to be added*

## July at Kettunen Center

Tustin, Michigan

### Simplicity - Gwen Valore, Director

July 8 - 14, 2012-Confirmed

Summer is the time to relax and make your life easy. It is time to enjoy your surroundings and your friends. It is a time of simplicity, a chance to get away from it all! Come to a place where we are all new **comers, Kettunen Center, and spend an exciting week getting to know new surroundings and making** new friends. The Center sports a lake with a waterfront and acres of woods as well as a workout room and lots of good food. Here you can really get away from it all. We will have the traditional costume party called "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle." You can reuse former costumes or make yours out of reusable outfits! Start preparing your songs and writings for coffee house and camp show. Prepare to have fun and enjoy the simple things in life.

2012 Morning Groups will include the following **and one to be added!**

#### ***Nature, Conservation, and the Environment- Lary Wasserman***

This will be an outdoor oriented group. Guided walks will explore the local area and environment. There will be group discussions of past and potential changes as a result of human and natural action. We will have a good time kicking around 'global warming' (real or convenient political strategy )and even try to figure out what, if anything, is happening to the climate here in North America.

#### ***Listening- Joanne Lagattolla***

Morning group members meet daily to share their stories, thoughts, feelings and perspectives on a given topic, exploring themes and experiences in our lives. Topics will include listening, gratitude, balance and friendship. Members are welcome to bring their own materials to share with the group on the above discussion topics. We will focus on active listening of others, minimizing feedback and advice giving. We will use a process of readings, checking in, deep sharing and listening as outlined in Heart to Heart by Christine Robinson and Alicia Hawkins. Group members may purchase the book ahead on their own. Current cost of the book on Amazon is \$10 for kindle and \$12 new, not including shipping and handling. Facilitator will also purchase books in bulk, as needed. Please notify facilitator book is needed two weeks prior to camp start date..

#### ***Discussion and other Activities Group-Len Proctor***

The theme of this group will be (1) enjoying each other's company through fun exercises, games and discussions and (2) a sharing of our personal understanding of life in all its aspects. An atmosphere of acceptance and respect will be encouraged, but egotistical rambling will be discouraged or at least frowned upon.

After morning check-in and some brief warm-up activities, we will choose from the following:

1.) Discussion of the book "How to Live - or - A life of Montaigne in One Question and Twenty Attempts at an Answer." by Sarah Bakewell.

2.) Physical and mental warm-up exercises and games.

3.) Topics from a hat: Put your issue, question, theory or whatever in a hat. We will draw and discuss items for no more than 15 minutes.

4.) Brief walks

5.) "Google Bell" Whenever anyone is so inclined they can ring a bell and ask for a speaker's word to be "googled" (defined and explained either correctly or in a grossly incorrect manner) by the person to the speaker's left. The explanation can then be "edited" no more than twice by anyone else ringing the bell.

6.) An activity you suggest.

## **Saug in Aug.**

August 5 - 11, 2011

Note: Dates not confirmed

## **STOP THE PRESSES at AMUUSE! – Sheldon Beck, Director**

If you're tired of meeting deadlines, and your nerves are a jumble, come to the sandy shores of Lake Michigan where there's never a cross word to be heard.

You'll spend sunny days on the beach doing a little investigative digging, sure to scoop the competition. At night, you'll enjoy sports and entertainment. And in between, there's plenty of leisure living to be had.

Enquiring minds want to know : who will you be for the costume party? A cub reporter? Half of Woodward & Bernstein? Dear Abby? A memorable headline? Whatever you choose, don't forget to bring along your special "edition" - your buddy who's just dying to come to camp.

So grab your press pass, a palm pilot or a notepad or two. We'll see you in the funny pages!

2012 MORNING GROUPS:

### ***Write anyway. Write on! ~ ~ Jill Lange***

You are unique and have a story worth telling. We'll explore aspects of our lives through memoir and poetry, with an Eastern perspective of simplicity and present moment awareness. Some meditation is involved. Bring writing material. Bring a favorite poem or excerpt from a memoir that is important to you.

**Jill is a long time camper who has facilitated many morning groups including as spirituality and mediation.**

### ***Life. Let It Be A Dance! ~ ~ Jane Perry***

Both John Michael Montgomery and Ric Matson wrote songs about Life being a dance. We might sing their songs, but we are more likely to dance to them. And, like Ric says, "Sometimes you lead and sometimes you follow". Hopefully we will learn some basic steps to several dances, and we will seriously learn to lead and learn to follow. But most of all we will have fun.

Jane has been attending AMUUSE for a loooong time. She has served on the board, led several morning groups, been volunteer coordinator, activities person, hospitality, and even directed five camps. She taught dance on a cruise. Hopefully we will have a mix of experienced dancers as well as those just starting out.

### ***Becoming Aware/Expanding Ourselves ~ ~ Sharon Spencer***

What does that mean, well, Sharon is still working on it and you will certainly know before you have to make a final group selection. We will do some of the following - guided meditation, maybe Tarot, vision boards, ritual, some spiritual discussion, soul collage, Neuro Linguistic Programing exercises. Much of what Sharon facilitates depends on the needs and desires of the group. The main goal will be to create a safe and happy place to share with each other. Since we may be doing online (or mail if no email) registration before camp, you will get some materials or suggestions of what you might bring before the week begins.

Sharon has been in a few hundred groups over the years and loves to share some of the things that have helped her. She is a NLP Master Practioner, has led a number of groups over the years, has taught college and currently is a Montessori Directress.

**Extra, Extra, Sing All About It ~~ Gretchen Suhre**

**Massage ~~ Raoul Iacono**

This class will be geared for the beginner through the intermediate and will focus on the various modalities such as Eselan, Shiatsu, and Swedish methods. Oil and lotions will be provided but you may want to bring a beach towel. See you there!

Raoul has provided entertainment to AMUUSE camps for years including directing camps, teaching morning groups in guitar and massage and as special events coordinator for the costumer parties and many, many sing-alongs.

**Improv ~~ Len Proctor**

Improv: We will use games and exercises to get relaxed with each other and to explore the basic structure of Improvisational Theater. A fun, supportive atmosphere will be maintained and our activities will be adjusted to the interests and abilities of the group. You do not need previous stage experience to enjoy this class. Those with previous experience will also find the class useful and challenging.

You will learn (1) How to start a scene by creating an (imaginary) environment. (2) How to offer and respond to dialog and (3) How to create an interesting story. We will also address acting skills, how to build a character and how to enjoy yourself onstage.

We will be creating short improvised scenes in which you will usually perform as a slightly modified version of yourself. I teach a form of Improvisational Theater wherein players focus on truth and authenticity, rather than gags and jokes. "Aim for truth and you will hit comedy. Aim for comedy and you will hit mediocrity."

Therefore you will be encouraged to be as natural and authentic as possible. There will be short explanations and discussions, but this will be primarily a "learn-by-doing" experience.

Len took his first improv class at AMUUSE many years ago and instantly feel in love with it. Since that time he has continued to teach classes in improv to improve his skills and has taught it as a morning group at AMUUSE and also in his home town of Baltimore.

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