

# The Giving Tree – 2009



Each summer the Greater LaGrange YMCA hosts 10 weeks of summer camp. The program consists of structured activities and at least 2 offsite field trips.

Children are enrolled in the program for a variety of reasons. Some kids participate for a one-week session to give them something different to do while giving their mom or dad a break during the summer. For other children, camp replaces the day care component of school. Often the parent or parents are working and cannot afford to stay home when their children are not in school and this YMCA program provides a positive environment for children to spend their time.

About 30% of the kids in the program come from homes that cannot afford to pay for summer day care. These are not kids from the inner city; they are kids from right here in our community.

In 2008 the YMCA provided over \$168,000 in summer camp, and other program assistance. The Prairie Trail Federation runs the Giving Tree program annually to raise money for this important program. As a Federation, we have raised more than \$136,000 over the last seven years, including over \$24,600 last year. Our contributions have helped fund improvements to the program while allowing the YMCA to accept more children than would have otherwise been possible. It is a worthwhile program that improves our own neighborhoods and helps our neighbors.

The Federation Board is again asking all tribes to consider sponsoring at least one child for a week of the program this summer. Once again, we will have our initial push at the Spring Campouts. **The cost of each summer camp scholarship remains \$205.** Please speak to others in your tribe about sponsoring a child for a week or two or perhaps longer if the size of your tribe permits. As you consider the Giving Tree this year, give some thought to ways you can engage your young braves in helping raise money for your contribution. Last over 60 tribes contributed to the program with many tribes sponsoring multiple weeks. This allowed us to sponsor over 120 weeks of Summer Camp in 2008. Even if your tribe can't sponsor an entire week, please know that any contribution will help and is appreciated.

As an incentive for our participation, the Greater LaGrange YMCA will again offer a party to any tribe that contributes over \$2,000. Each tribe that sponsors two weeks or more will have their name entered into a drawing to win a party. Winners will have a choice of a pool, rock climbing or ice skating party at one of the YMCA's partnering facilities. Additionally, sponsoring a Camper qualifies as a "Civic Activity" and will earn your tribe 100 honor points. As an added incentive this year, the Greater LaGrange YMCA is offering a three month family membership, a \$230 value, to the tribe that provides the largest contribution. Each family in that tribe will be entered into a raffle to win this membership.

**Checks should be made out to: Greater LaGrange YMCA**

Checks can either be mailed to Ron Bandyk, 422 N. Kensington Ave., La Grange Park, IL 60526, or turned in to Ron at the May or June Longhouse Meetings.

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