

The Giving Tree

2011

Each summer the Greater LaGrange YMCA hosts 10 weeks of summer camp. The program consists of structured activities and at least 20 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; these are kids from right here in our community!

In 2010 the YMCA provided approximately \$173,000 in summer camp, membership, Special Olympics and other program assistance. The Prairie Trail Federation sponsors its annual Giving Tree program to raise money for this important program. As a Federation, we have raised almost \$185,000 over the last nine years, including over \$19,200 last year. Our contributions have allowed the YMCA to accept more children than would have otherwise been possible. It is a worthwhile program that helps families living right in our own neighborhoods.

The Federation Board is again asking all tribes to consider sponsoring at least one child for a week of the program and access to others this summer. We will have our initial kick-off 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 40 tribes contributed to the program with many tribes sponsoring multiple weeks. This allowed us to sponsor just less than 67 weeks of Summer Camp. 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 has again generously agreed to donate parties for a raffle that will be held for each tribe that sponsors two weeks or more of camp. Winners will have a choice of a pool, rock climbing or ice skating party at one of the YMCA's partnering facilities. As an added incentive this year, the Greater LaGrange YMCA is offering a three month family membership, a \$230 value, to the tribe that contributes the most to the program.

Additionally, sponsoring a Camper qualifies as a "Civic Activity" and will earn your tribe 100 honor points.

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.