



NORTH STAR CAMP

PREPARING FOR CAMP

STAFF - SUMMER 2026



We are so thankful that you have chosen to spend your summer at North Star. We know it will be one that you will not forget!

Just as our campers are a little apprehensive about coming to camp for the first time, we know that our staff can also experience some pre-camp jitters. We put together this document to answer many of the questions or concerns you may have. If anything is not answered, please ask questions in the staff WhatsApp group or call/email us -- we're happy to help! You can also reach out to Dan at dan@northstarcamp.com or Glick at glick@northstarcamp.com.

Our camp community will consist of staff and campers from around the world and we know the group we have put together shares our vision of providing a meaningful summer experience for our campers. Returning staff will be invaluable to us as we welcome our new staff and pass on some of our camp traditions. However, we encourage our first time staff to bring new ideas and suggestions as well. After all, some of our best traditions were once just someone's good idea that had never been done before.

We look forward to meeting all of you in person soon!

2026 CAMP SEASON

New Staff Orientation: June 2 - June 15
(your arrival date may vary and be before June 2 - see your contract)

Returning Staff Orientation: June 7 - June 15 (some returners arrive June 6)

Summer Camp: June 15 - August 7

Post Camp (optional, earn extra \$300/week): August 7 - late August

CONTACT INFORMATION

Before May 15:

2220 W. Medill Ave, Chicago IL 60647

After May 15:

10970 W. Boys Camp Road
Hayward, WI 54843

Phone/Text: 715-462-3254

Fax: 866-255-1566

Email: office@northstarcamp.com

"There is a destiny that makes us brothers; none goes his way alone." - Edwin Markham

ONBOARDING via CAMPINTOUCH / CAMPANION

In order to get every staff member up to speed and ready for camp, there are a variety of forms and information we need each person to fill out. This information helps with planning arrival dates, certifications needed and more.

Each staff member has a personal login page through our [CampInTouch](#) system (where you signed your contract) where you can view forms. You may also download the accompanying [Campanion App](#) to access the forms on your mobile device. If you do not know your login information, click "Forgot Password" to troubleshoot or email dan@northstarcamp.com for more assistance.

Below are the required forms that will need to be completed ahead of the summer:

FORMS

- Staff Information
- Staff Standards Checklist
- Staff Voluntary Disclosure
- Drug and Alcohol Policy
- Health History
- Immunization
- Getting To Know You Before The Summer



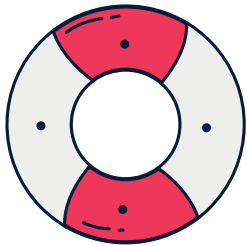
Please note: in the Health History Form, there is a section for your immunization history. If you are unable to complete the form on your own, you can take the separate Immunizations form to your doctor to get completed and then either fax or scan/email it in.

CERTIFICATIONS

The Staff Information Form asks about your current certifications as well as the certification courses you would like to take at camp. We will need copies of all of your current certifications on file, including lifeguarding, swimming, boating, First Aid, CPR or any other certifications you hold. If you are already certified in something, **please send copies of your certifications to Dan at dan@northstarcamp.com** or via WhatsApp to 1-773-817-5647.



All Senior Counselors (college age and up) and certain Junior Counselors on specialized activities will need to be trained in First Aid and CPR. We work with the Red Cross to provide blended learning, meaning that you can do much of the content online and then take the practical test at camp.



All waterfront staff will need lifeguard training and/or must hold current certification in the craft you will be using. Waterfront activities at camp include canoeing, fishing, sailing, swimming, stand up paddleboarding, waterskiing, wakeboarding and windsurfing. All wilderness trippers are also be required to be lifeguards. If you do not hold a current waterfront lifeguard certification, please let us know so we can help you find a class. We will also be offering lifeguarding training courses at North Star during new staff orientation.



All waterfront staff will also need a boating safety card per State of Wisconsin law. If you have a boating certification from another state or country, that will suffice. We will cover the cost of this certification if you do not currently have it and will email you with further details on how to obtain this certification.

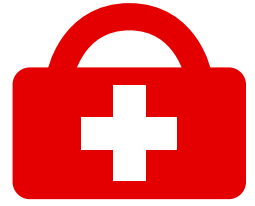
Please contact us with any questions or if you need assistance with the certifications.

HEALTH HISTORY

All staff members must fill out the Health History Form, which will be submitted online through the [CampInTouch](#) or [Campanion App](#) system. All health information is confidential. We need these forms on file to meet both State and American Camp Association standards.

Some other important information:

- We want all staff to be and feel well while they are at North Star Camp. We ask all staff to submit their health information and current medications on the Health History Form so we can help support your wellness and make well informed health based decisions.
- All medication must be stored in either the Health Center or locked in staff lockers. This includes general pain medications and over the counter meds. Medication is **not** allowed in the camper cabins.
- Counselors-In-Training (CITs) who take regular medications have the option to sign up for the CampMeds program that our campers use (www.campmeds.com).
- Kitchen staff will be sent an email regarding our kitchen health requirements to ensure that they are able to safely prepare food for our community.
- We expect staff to be up to date on the following immunizations: DTaP/DTP, Tdap, MMR, IPV, HIB, PCV, Hep B, Hep A, Varicella, and MenACWY/MCV4. Staff who are not up to date with immunizations must contact camp and submit a Vaccine Waiver to be reviewed.



TRAVEL TO CAMP

Part of the Staff Information Form asks how you are getting to camp or if you need help arranging your travel. We are happy to help coordinate travel to and from camp. Please refer to your contract as you may arrive on a different day than other staff members depending on your role or any certification courses you may be taking.

Staff travel reimbursement works differently for each staff member. Your contract will detail whether or not you are eligible for any travel reimbursement, as well as the total reimbursement amount. New international staff travel is determined by the terms of the agreement with your agency. If you are unsure how your travel arrangements work or if you need assistance, please email Dan at dan@northstarcamp.com.



If you are driving to camp: please arrive at camp by late afternoon on your arrival date so that you have some time to get settled (and even unpacked) before dinner.

If you are flying to camp: please communicate and double-check your flights with Dan before reserving anything. We want to minimize your wait time at the airport, so we'll do our best to coordinate arrival times of staff arriving on the same day. A North Star staff member will pick you up from the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and drive you the approximate three hours to camp. We will aim to be at camp before dinner, but if timing doesn't allow for that, we'll provide dinner en route to camp.



We will be sending a separate "Traveling to Camp" guide ahead of your arrival date that includes airport information or driving instructions depending on your method of transportation.

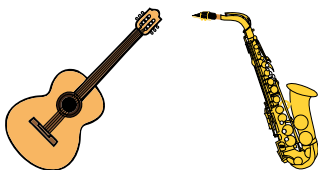
WAGE WITHHOLDING (W-4 and I-9 FORMS) -- Filled out AT camp

We are required to file wage reports like any other employer. Therefore, all staff are required to fill out W-4 and I-9 forms to select how much of your wages will be withheld for tax purposes. You will fill out this form at camp with members of our office team. **To complete this process, please bring either your passport, OR a copy of your driver's license AND social security card with you to camp.** We will help international staff members get a temporary social security card once you arrive at camp.

PREPARING AHEAD OF CAMP

Ahead of your arrival, we ask that you take some time to prepare. If you will be teaching activities, make sure to refresh your skills so you are ready to provide instructional programming to the campers. We will provide you with support and orientation to our program, including objectives and lesson plans for each activity, but the more you can prepare for your activity ahead of time, the better.

Regardless of your position, be sure to brainstorm ideas for suitable stories, games, songs, trivia, skits, campfire activities and rainy day programs. Come prepared to participate in staff shows and campfires. If you play a musical instrument and want to show off your skills, please bring it to camp (if you have space in your luggage and it is not super expensive). Funky hats, costumes, masks and games also come in handy for special days. *Note: we define talent very loosely at camp so don't be shy.* If you are an international counselor, we encourage you to share some cultural information and customs from your country; we want our campers to benefit from the cultural exchange.

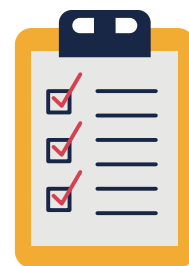


PRE-CAMP ORIENTATION

During pre-camp orientation, our aim is to get you acclimated to your new surroundings and coworkers, as well as give you the tools to succeed. Working at camp is a very difficult, but also a very rewarding job. We will teach you skills during orientation and partner with you to apply those skills over the course of the summer to help navigate a variety of situations that may arise. We are confident these skills will benefit you now and in the future as an individual, in relationships and in your career. There are a plethora of seasoned camp directors, teachers and staff members who will be great mentors for you to learn from this summer!

KEY CAMP POLICIES

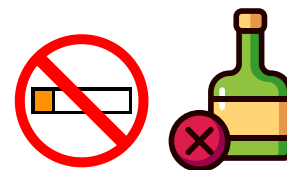
When you returned your contract or CIT Agreement, you were asked to also return an initialed checklist that detailed our key policies. We are very serious about our policies. If you are unable to abide by these camp policies and state laws during the camping season, you should contact us immediately and cancel your contract. We may terminate your contract if you deviate from camp policies.



As a camp staff member you are in a position to have a great impact on our campers. When you choose to be in a camp environment, you are choosing to adhere to a lifestyle that is appropriate for working with kids. You were hired to be a role model regardless if you work directly with the kids or in one of our non-cabin counselor areas (kitchen, maintenance, etc.).

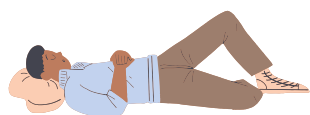
Drug and Alcohol Policy

Every staff member was sent a copy of our Drug and Alcohol Policy which can be found on [CampInTouch](#). Everyone submitted a signed acceptance of this policy when returning their contract. Please make sure that you are familiar with this policy and that you will be able to comply with it.



Camp Curfew

North Star has a 1:00 AM in-bed curfew. Staff members are expected to return from time off by 12:45 AM and be in their own beds with lights out at 1:00 AM. Some activities at camp can be dangerous if safety precautions are not adhered to and we need everyone to get a good night's sleep to be ready to work the next day.



Curfew violations will be taken very seriously. If a staff member comes back to camp after curfew, or is found to be not in their cabin after curfew, they will lose a night off for the upcoming week. Repeated violations of curfew may result in more serious consequences and a meeting with the Camp Director, including the possibility of dismissal.

Additional Policies

- Please do not bring any questionable magazines, videos or music to camp. Pornography is strictly prohibited.
- Tattoos of inappropriate content must remain covered.
- Please remove body piercings such as tongue studs, nipple rings, etc., prior to coming to camp or discuss any jewelry related questions with a Camp Director. Earrings are acceptable when not excessive.
- **PETS ARE NOT ALLOWED WITHOUT THE PERMISSION OF THE CAMP DIRECTOR.**

If you have any questions or concerns about these policies, please contact us immediately.

PAYCHECKS & STAFF ADVANCES

We will pay your salary, exactly as written on your contract, at the close of the camp season. You may request a staff advance from our office manager to draw against your salary up to the amount you have earned. In many cases, we are required by the state and federal governments to withhold a portion of your salary for the payment of income taxes, social security taxes and Medicare. If we are required to do that in your case, the amount of income withheld will be shown on your final paycheck.

Staff members are asked not to accept any tips or gratuities from the parents or relatives of campers.



TIME OFF

As a staff member, you will be working hard. Time off is vital to recharge your batteries and ensure that you maintain a healthy energy level. Every staff member will receive one night off and one day off per week. We also try to give you free time every day when you are not assigned to an activity.

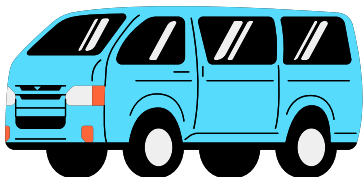


Days off will begin after the first week of camp. Each staff member will receive three full days off per four-week session as well as a half day off during pre-camp orientation. You will have input over your day off. Your preferences, as well as cabin coverage and activity coverage, will be taken into consideration when assigning your day off. Days off begin at 8:00 AM. Staff are expected to check back into camp by 12:45 AM in order to be in bed by the 1:00 AM curfew.

Nights off begin at 5:00 PM. Similar to days off, staff are expected to check back into camp by 12:45 AM and be in bed by the 1:00 AM curfew. Night off requests must be made by 9 PM the evening prior so our Program Director can accommodate your absence during the final project period the following day.

There are some specific days and nights where time off will not be allowed in order to maintain coverage for special programs and events. The time off calendar can be found in the Staff Manual you will receive during orientation.

AUTOMOBILE USAGE



If needed, we will provide staff with a camp vehicle for their time off. It is the responsibility of the people going on time off to coordinate who is going in the camp van as only one vehicle will be provided by North Star per day off and per night off. Staff members who use the camp vehicle will have mileage and gas costs deducted from their paycheck. This will be divided equally for all those in the vehicle.

Staff members may bring their own vehicle to camp if they are 18 years or older. Junior Counselors may bring their own vehicles at the discretion of the Camp Director. Staff are responsible for their own vehicles and must decide if other staff are able to use their vehicles on time off. North Star is not responsible for any damage done to staff personal vehicles on or off camp property.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Any time off other than official time off will be considered a leave of absence (i.e. family emergency, school commitment) and will be handled on an individual basis. This will include a discussion with the Camp Director regarding departure and return dates as well as adjustments to salary.

INSURANCE

All U.S. citizens and resident aliens are covered by Wisconsin Worker's Compensation Law. North Star provides insurance to supply those benefits. We are responsible for accidents or injuries covered by Wisconsin Worker's Compensation Law. You agree not to hold us or the camp responsible for accidents, special medical or hospital services unless they are within the provisions of the Wisconsin Worker's Compensation Law. Any extension of chronic illness is not covered. Staff members from overseas who are not resident aliens or citizens are usually covered by health insurance provided by their sponsoring international exchange agency.

HEALTH CARE

We have a full on-site Health Center team of nurses and health aides to provide you with health care should a medical situation arise. If medical supplies are given to you for treatment of a medical condition, we will charge you the same rate for those supplies as we would charge our campers. Services or supplies provided without charge to our campers will be provided without charge to you as well.



DISCIPLINE

At North Star, we follow the philosophy that "mistakes are opportunities to learn." When errors in judgment occur, we will respond accordingly. The staff member will have a meeting with the Camp Directors and a course of action will be determined. Depending on the incident, this course of action may include probation, loss of time off or a fine. In extreme cases where dismissal is required, the staff member will forfeit their transportation allowance and salary will be pro-rated to include only the portion that has been earned. Reimbursement for trainings required for the job will be forfeited as well.

Pre-camp orientation is designed to educate staff to the expectations of the job. We will make it very clear what our expectations are and we want to reassure you that we are fair. Rarely is it necessary for us to dismiss a staff member, however, we are required to notify our staff of our discipline policy. North Star will take appropriate disciplinary action with any employees who are found to have engaged in sexual harassment, up to and including dismissal. At times, we will also have deadlines for paper work (i.e. parent letters, project reports, etc.) for some of our cabin counselors and/or activity instructors. When deadlines are not met, time off will be forfeited. We will provide extra time to do these things when necessary.

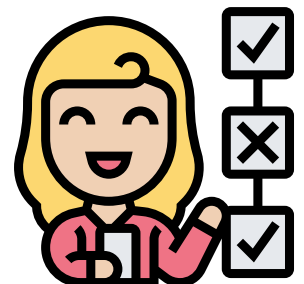
We will be running a background check and driving history report on all of our staff members.

GRIEVANCES

Should there be a disagreement over the interpretation of camp policies, or a grievance related to one's duties or relationships with fellow staff members, it should be reported to the Camp Directors.

FEEDBACK AND EVALUATIONS

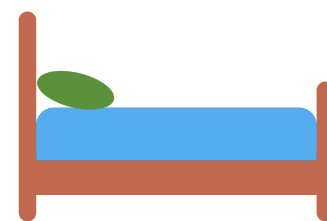
We believe feedback is essential to help you do your job well and it will be given regularly throughout the summer. Feedback will be available for all staff members on your job performance by your direct manager. During the first and second sessions, cabin counselors & activity instructors will do a guided self-evaluation and will also receive program, camper & village evaluations and director feedback. We will give you as much help and advice as we can in any matter relating to your job whenever you need it. The Leadership Team's role is to help you do the best job you can do. We will share with you the criteria that you will be evaluated on in pre-camp orientation.



WHAT TO BRING...AND WHAT NOT TO BRING

When packing, we ask you to remember that you have been hired to be a role model for children. Here are some guidelines and tips:

- All staff are asked to use discretion when selecting clothes to bring to camp. Provocative clothing is not appropriate in a camp setting.
- Clothing that contains questionable content not suitable for a children's summer camp should be left at home (i.e. anything related to drugs, alcohol or sex are prohibited).
- All swimsuits should be comfortable, functional and modest.
- We will ask you to wear shoes at all times at camp and appropriate footwear for athletics (i.e. closed toe athletic shoes).
- When following our [staff packing list](#), **please keep in mind that you will need about ten days worth of clothing.** Our laundry staff will wash your clothes or if you prefer to wash your own clothes, there will be opportunities for you to do so on camp grounds.
- The weather will vary. Daytime temps average between 70-85°F (21-29°C), while evening temps average between 55-65°F (12-18°C). It can get even cooler in May and late August, so be prepared to layer!
- It is very important to have an old pair of shoes/boots for mud and rain, as well as a rain coat. You may be asked to help with some work details in pre-camp, so a set of old clothes will come in handy for moving camp equipment, painting and/or dirty jobs.
- All domestic staff members must bring their own blankets and bed linens for a twin size bed. We ask that you do not sleep in a sleeping bag all summer long. We will supply linens (pillow, sheets, blankets, towels) for our international staff.
- Electric blankets and electric fans are not permitted since our voltage is limited and our electric wiring is not able to handle large electric demands.
- North Star is not responsible for any damage done to personal items by either campers or staff members. North Star also cannot be held accountable for lost or stolen items. Please take this into consideration when packing any expensive items for camp.



PACKING FOR CAMPING TRIPS (CABIN COUNSELORS AND TRIPPERS)



All cabin counselors will accompany their campers on at least one overnight camping trip. You will be out of camp anywhere from one to eight nights, depending on the age of your cabin group. The weather is variable in the Northwoods. Please follow our [staff packing list](#) and bring the gear indicated to ensure your comfort and safety while out on these trips. **A good sleeping bag and outerwear are essential.**

Several groups of our oldest (15 year old) campers will be going to Canada during the first week of camp for a 9-day canoe trip. Senior Counselors (college aged staff and above) should bring a passport if you have one in case you are assigned to these cabins. **All trippers need to bring a passport if they have one.** While we do not guarantee a spot in this age group, we know that we cannot place any staff without passports in these cabins. If you need to get a passport, we recommend that you start this ASAP as the process can take some time.

POCKET KNIVES

Counselors who have a pocket knife may bring it with them for overnight trips and cookouts, but it must be stored safely away from campers.

WEAPONS OR FIREARMS ARE PROHIBITED

Concealed weapons are not allowed on North Star's property nor may staff carry concealed weapons off camp property while on camp business (i.e. camping trips, off site field trips). Staff members wishing to bring rifles or archery bows for the program must discuss storage of these items with the Camp Director ahead of the summer. These items will always need to be stored according to camp procedures. All other weapons should be left at home.

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

While we have communal equipment for use around camp, staff members may bring personal sports equipment, climbing gear and other items if they desire. Personal equipment must be stored according to camp procedures and should never be used by campers.

NO DOUBLE STANDARDS: FOOD IN CABINS

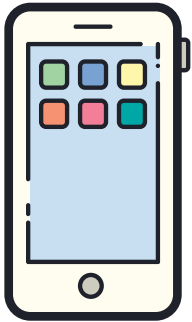
We do not have double standards at camp and campers are very quick to pick up when staff are doing things they shouldn't be doing. Therefore, we wanted to cover two areas where double standards could occur: food and electronics.

We do not allow food in our camper cabins. Campers and staff are well fed throughout the day by our wonderful kitchen staff. Every year, various critters including bears, mice and cockroaches come into camp because they smell sweets and food located in the cabins. Trust us, you don't want a black bear realizing there is some hidden sweets in your cabin! Campers and staff also have various food allergies. Cabin counselors are allowed to have food at camp, but it must be stored in their staff lounge locker.



NO DOUBLE STANDARDS: CELL PHONES/ELECTRONICS

While everyone is used to having their cell phones available around the clock for calls and texts, things are a little bit different at camp. Our campers are not allowed to bring electronic items to camp except for radios or MP3 players that do not have video/app capabilities. We aim to keep camp an unplugged, low-tech experience where kids are exploring the great outdoors, making friends and trying new activities. Staff members are welcome to bring their devices to camp (laptops, tablets, and/or cell phones) to communicate with friends and family back home. There is WiFi located in certain areas around camp. Cell service can be somewhat limited at camp but is generally very good in town. Our cabin counselors will write parent letters to their campers' parents and personal laptops come in handy for those, but we have Google Chromebooks for staff to borrow on an as needed basis.



Every staff member is given a locker in our staff lounge to store their electronic devices and those devices are only to be used during free periods or after campers are in bed (in designated areas around camp only, such as the office, Lodge or staff lounge).

Laptops, tablets and cell phones are not allowed in the camper cabins, even after campers are asleep. If you are a cabin counselor who typically uses your phone as an alarm clock or watch, please make sure to bring a watch or cheap alarm clock with you. Apple Watches are not allowed around campers either.

Violations of this policy will be taken seriously. If a staff member is discovered with their phone in a camper cabin or in prohibited areas, a member of the leadership team will confiscate the phone and bring it to the camp director's office. For the first offense, the phone will remain in the camp director's office for 24 hours. A second offense will result in a 48 hour penalty. A third offense will result in the phone being held in the camp director's office for 7 days.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

By working at North Star, you will also be representing North Star in the community at large. We ask that you are mindful of North Star's positive reputation in all of your dealings with the public, including on your time off in the local town of Hayward.




While social media is a great tool to keep in touch with your camp friends, there are also some risks. The nature of some social media services can leave people vulnerable to unwanted accusations and negative reputations. We have put together some staff [social media guidelines](#) on how to interact with campers after camp and general social media advice for your protection.



TYPICAL DAY AT CAMP

While there truly is no such thing as a "typical" day at camp, here is what most of days will look like:

A graphic of a clipboard with a red and yellow handle. The clipboard contains a circular logo for North Star Camp, the title "North Star Camp Daily Schedule" in green, and a star icon with crossed paddles. Below is a list of activities with times, followed by a paragraph of text and a "1:00 AM In Bed Curfew" line. At the bottom, it states "Staff members will receive 1 'Skip Breakfast' per week. Days off begin at 8 AM. Nights Off begin at 5 PM."/>

 **North Star Camp** 
Daily Schedule

8:00 AM Wake Up Bell
8:15 AM Flagpole Announcements
8:30 AM Breakfast
9:15 AM Cabin Cleanup
9:45 AM 1st Period (Instructional)
11:05 AM 2nd Period (Instructional)
12:15 PM Warning Bell
12:30 PM Lunch
1:15 PM Rest Period
1:45 PM 3rd Period (Instructional)
3:00 PM Cabin Time & Snacks
4:00 PM 4th Period (Group Activity)
5:00 PM 5th Period (Organized Free)
6:00 PM Warning Bell
6:15 PM Dinner
7:15 PM Announcements/Wanegan
7:30 PM Evening Program
8:45 PM End of Day Bell
9:30-11:00 PM Lights Out (Varies by Village)

After lights out and the campers are asleep, staff members are free to do what they choose within camp. Oftentimes, there will be a pick up basketball game in the Fieldhouse, and card games, movies, staff snack and general hanging out in the Lodge. Or feel free to get a good night's rest and go to bed early!

1:00 AM In Bed Curfew

**Staff members will receive 1 "Skip Breakfast" per week.
Days off begin at 8 AM. Nights Off begin at 5 PM.**

Your exact working hours will vary based on your position. We try to provide ample free time throughout the day to recharge and relax, depending on other area coverage and needs. As mentioned previously, each staff member will also receive one day and one night off per week.

CAMP TRADITIONS

One thing that you will discover quickly: there are a lot of camp traditions and songs. We will teach you the camp traditions and songs throughout orientation and the first few weeks of camp. While there are too many to list here, we wanted to share two very important ones that you will hear multiple times this summer.

THERE IS A DESTINY THAT MAKES US BROTHERS

Before the first meal and final meal of each session begins, we recite this traditional grace:

*"There is a destiny that makes us brothers.
None goes his way alone.
All that we send into the lives of others,
comes back into our own.
I care not what his caste or creed,
one thing holds firm and fast,
that into the days and deeds gone by,
the soul of a man is cast." -Edwin Markham*



FOREST GREEN

Every Friday evening, the entire camp gathers at the Council Ring (a beautiful spot, pictured left, overlooking Clear Lake). We end our Friday Night Service by singing our camp song, *Forest Green*. We'll teach you the tune during your first Friday Night campfire!

*Forest Green by rushing stream
Helps to fill each camper's dream
Helps to soothe me while I roam
'Bout my North Star home.*

*Moonlight glistening 'cross the lake
Sunset colors that will make
Sweet words in a lovely poem
'Bout my North Star home.*

*Play by day and then by night
Stories told by campfire light
Campers, counselors we have met
Faithful friends we won't forget
We'll remember all we've known
'Bout our North Star home.*



POST CAMP WORK

Our campers will arrive on Monday, June 15th and depart on Friday, August 7th. Unless otherwise indicated on your contract, you will be free to leave late morning/early afternoon of August 7th after you have completed all of your assigned jobs. There will be an opportunity for a few staff members to stay on for additional post-camp groups and earn extra pay at a rate of \$300/week. We have post camp groups who will be onsite through late August, so if you are interested in staying and helping with programming, want to earn some extra money and help close up camp, please let us know! Space is limited.

FINAL THOUGHTS

We hope that you share our enthusiasm for the upcoming camping season and our desire to create a happy, safe, fun and meaningful experience for our campers. We cannot wait to meet our amazing staff and see the impact you will have on our campers this summer. With your help, we are positive we can reach our goals.

Keep your fires burning and we look forward to seeing you soon!

Chairs up!

-Andy, Dan, Robyn and Glick

