

YMCA Campfire Conference 2018

Brightest Ideas!

Resident Camp:

WINNER: SOCIAL MEDIA PLAN- Kate Oldham/Camp Cheerio

Camp Cheerio

Social Media Engagement

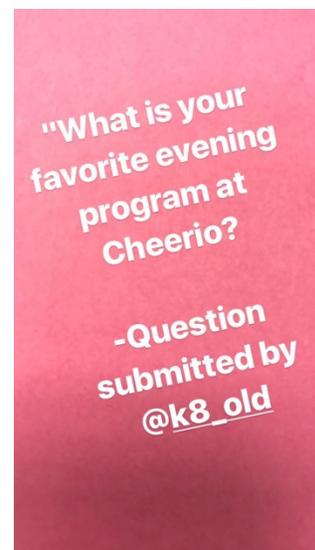
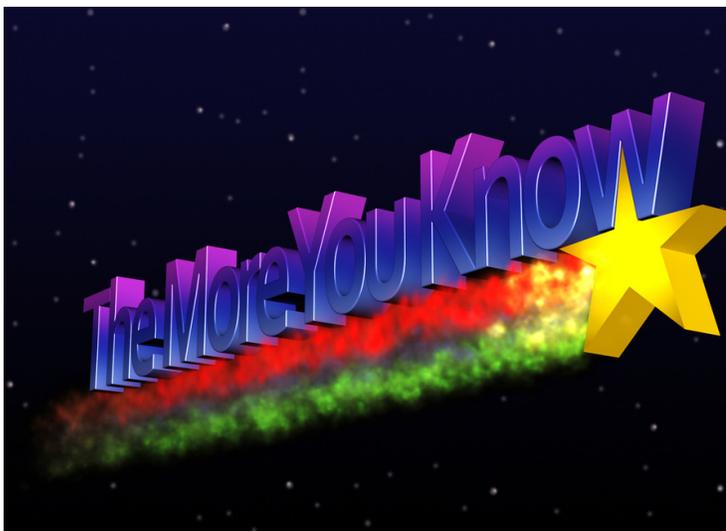
Camp Cheerio has recently made efforts to be more intentional about engagement with its followers on social media (including Instagram and Facebook). We have done so in a few ways.

We have found that our interactions and followers look a bit different for each platform, and adjusted our efforts accordingly. We mainly see lots of campers/younger staff on Instagram, and parents/alumni on Facebook.

- **“Take Your Pick Tuesday”** – This utilizes Instagram stories poll option to get the temperature on followers. Poll options include favorite camp meals, best camp song, favorite color team in the Cheerio Olympics, etc. Our first poll (shown below) was Favorite Camp Meal – Chicken Patties vs. Mac & Cheese. We had about 2,000 votes, and Chicken Patties won! Not only is this a great way to interact with our followers and campers in the off-season, but also an opportunity to get feedback on what our campers like.



- **"The More You Know Monday"** – We have not implemented this idea yet, but are excited to get it started in the New Year. For this effort we will feature one of our full time staff members bi-weekly. Followers will have an opportunity to submit questions they would like that full time staff member to answer in an Instagram story or video. We will choose 5 questions, feature the questions, and tag the person's Instagram handle. Our goal is for our followers to submit questions, look forward to hearing the answers, and get to know our full time staff a little bit better.



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- **Facebook Prize Giveaways** – After Campfire, we are excited to do a Crazy Creek Giveaway. We will do one for Facebook and one for Instagram. To enter the contest, participants will have to make sure they are following or “Like” Camp Cheerio, tag three friends in the comments, and say where at camp they would like to sit in their Crazy Creek. We are hoping this will increase our followers, as new friends are tagged. We will randomly select a winner out of all the entries.
- **March Madness: Camp Songs** - March Madness is a HUGE deal in North Carolina. During the Basketball NCAA tournament, we are planning to have a “bracket style tournament” using a series Instagram and Facebook polls, to determine the “National Champion” of favorite Camp Cheerio songs.
- **Photo Contests** – A few months ago, we created a “Camp Cheerio Alumni Staff” Facebook group, in an effort to expand our communication with alumni. We chose to start with Staff Alumni, and had about 500 members within the first few days. To build on this excitement, we chose to have a Facebook photo contest. The contest was centered around a beloved apple tree that had just fallen during a storm. Participants submitted their photos in the group, and we loved seeing the interaction of positive comments on each others photos. It was a great way to reminisce and for people to reconnect. The winner, Amelia Luke, won a “slice” of the old apple tree.

f Camp Cheerio Staff Alumni Q

Camp Cheerio Staff Alumni

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Kate Oldham

👤 Admin · November 28, 2017

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Congratulations to [Amelia Gleaton Luke](#) for winning our first Camp Cheerio Staff Alumni photo contest with "Fire on the mountaintop"! Amelia will win a "slice" of the apple tree! Thank you so much to everyone who participated - it was a great way to remember our special tree.



👍 Like
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[Amelia Gleaton Luke](#), [Corey Washburn](#) and 81 others

Kimo Teta Gorgeous! Missing me some Cheerio time!
 Like · Reply · November 28, 2017 at 1:54pm

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RUNNER UP: MOMS ON THE MOUNTAIN: Camp Harrison/Lindsey Buffaloe – a program in which we have 2-3 camp moms come for each session of summer camp. The MOMs serve as an added support system for our staff and an extra set of eyes during camp. They also help us take pics and deliver camper mail. During the non-summer months, our moms are ambassadors for camp and our biggest fans

SPELIOBOX-Camp Cheerio/Cheerio Adventures: an indoor cave/maze. Multi-level maze created for hours of fun (see photo)

ARROWS OUT- Luke Overmire/YMCA Camp Tippecanoe: a program focused outside the walls of the Y.

BUDDY NIGHT- Chelsea Schwabe-Camp Ocoee: Partner up old and new campers to help with integration and camp comfortability

ESCAPADES- Mille Wolfe-Warner-Tully: Counselors plan a night activity such as a cabin swim, brownie bake, stargazing, basketball game, etc. They clear it with directors and sign up for a night but make the campers think it is a secret escapade. We act shocked when we see them out of their cabins.

REPURPOSED WALL- Letha Lineberry-Camp Hanes: We had to remove a climbing wall due to a storm. Once it was removed, we built picnic tables with the wood. We even left the holds on the table top.

TEACHING CITS LIFEGUARDING- Rory O'Brien/Camp Kanata: Over the past two summers we have sent one of our staff to LGI training so they could lead a guard class for our CITs. They were very excited to walk away with a hard skill/certification so they can get a job at a branch if they wish. It also has fixed our guard shortage we historically had each summer.

TINY HOUSE: Ray Jackson/Camp Weaver: Have campers and counselors build a tiny house for the homeless as a project. This will help to teach them about their role in improving society.

KIDS SELECT: Will Gilmore/YMCA Camp Cherokee: We will have three planned evening activities that are set up and ready to go. We announce the activities to the campers and choose one camper to represent each one (they must want to do that activity). From there, the kids can "hype up" or persuade campers to vote for their activity, or have a series of minute to win it games. The winning camper would then have their evening activity chosen. We have had success with this as it involves all campers and gives them ownership.

Day Camp:

WINNER: POSTCARD-Cody Carpenter: Gaston County YMCA- Give kids a branded postcard at camp open house or other pre-season event. Have them write two or three things that they would like to experience at camp. Have parents address the card and put it into a box. 2-3 weeks before registration opens, send card and registration info to family!

RUNNER UP: COMMUNITY GARDEN- Patti Clark-Limestone YMCA – We are building a community garden this year (with grant money). We will work with our day camp, silver sneakers, homeschool group, nursing home residents, special needs youth and adults, and anyone else who wants to join. We will grow the food, harvest it,

and in August we will work with a local community college culinary department to make a meal and do a fundraiser.

CULINARY ARTS SPECIALTY CAMP- Tyron Ashley: Family YMCA of Greater Augusta

INDOOR SNOWBALL FIGHT- Carol Jenkins/Greenville/Family YMCA Emporia – Using giant size marshmallows as snowballs, you divide into teams, set the rules, and start throwing. Remind them please don't eat the snowballs. It's a great way to release stress for staff and tons of fun for everyone who plays.

PARTNERSHIPS- Kassie Scott/GA Mountains YMCA: Partnering with school professionals in specialized departments (special needs, behavior, socio-emotional delays, cognitive, etc) and developing programs which allow relationships to build within staff, the Y, community, and of course, our children.

SECOND PLACE TROPHY- Rebecca Murphy-Camp Ironwood/Greater Kingsport Family YMCA: Each week camp staff vote on the counselor who put the kids in their group first. (Best example and model of being all about the kids). The group carries the trophy all week and when the new vote happens, they hand it to the next staff to "pass the torch." Great peer to peer recognition and appreciation and kids are excited to brag on their leader.

STATE WILDLIFE AGENCIES- Jamie Retzloff-Lakeland Family YMCA: Many state wildlife agencies (dept of natural resources, Florida Wildlife Commission, etc) have initiatives to get kids outdoors. They offer borrowing programs for equipment (kayaks, canoes, archery, gps, etc) as well as trainings for certifications and free curriculum.

MONTHLY MENTOR MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS- Jared McLeroy/Northwest Family YMCA: Meetings between LITs, CITs, etc and a pre-existing camp counselor to build leadership and mentoring; at the workshops, LITs and CITs go over skills, policies, and training throughout the year leading up to camp.

WEB OF KINDNESS- Nate Gonyea-Sarasota YMCA: Campers come up in front of camp and thank someone, either a cabinmate, counselor, parent, etc. As they say their thank you, older campers weave yarn through a hula hoop or another large ring to make a web. The web acts as a visual representation of the kindness shared that week.

RIBBON CEREMONY – Stephannie Holman/Greater Kansas City: Use the four core values and recognize campers using tying ceremonies throughout the week

INSTAGRAM- Jared McLeroy/Northwest YMCA: Follow our Instagram @WCYteens

SURVIVOR RELAY- Cynthia V. Genovese/Twin Rivers YMCA: Divide participants into groups and have a team activity where they can go against each other. For example: hunger game: Blindfold the participants and have them eat different kinds of weird foods and have them taste and identify the food. (food examples: smashed spam, spaghetti noodles, baby food)

EXPRESS CAMPS- Ben Runyon: Hold express camps on Saturdays to help train staff before and during the summer

THEME- Marissa Killingsworth: Create a camp with one cohesive theme throughout the summer—make an effort to connect all ten weeks

CHARACTER TRAITS: Chelsea Correll Byers/Davie Family YMCA: We have brought a new friend into our program, Sir Thumper Hopps a lot. He has curbed negative behavior in our programs, has helped us teach responsibility, caring, honesty, and respect! The children have a weekly sign up sheet for caring for him: walking him, feeding him, refilling water, changing bedding, etc. In the spring the children will grow him food.

SPORTS LEADERSHIP: Jeremy Langley: A sports leadership camp that integrates a camper's love of sports and teaches them the different levels of leadership as they progress through the week, i.e. captains, teammates, coaches, execs.