

Farm and Wilderness Camp 2021



Introduction

Throughout the 5 days of Farm and Wilderness Camp (FWC), 13 campers between the ages of 11 and 15, and 15 staff, cooks, and workshop leaders bonded over amazing food, early morning farm chores, wholesome workshops, and the creative personal projects that our youth participants chose for themselves. Although the participants' personal projects were the main focus of FWC, both campers and staff alike learned about each other and the land through workshops about the original peoples and traditions of the Laurentians, music making using the sounds of nature, a mushroom foray, and a respectful chicken butchering. Creative personal projects were developed by the campers and included incredible ideas such as jewelry made with invasive species, pots made from locally harvested clay from our river bed, story-telling using inspiration from the land, art made with locally found materials, digital music production using recorded sounds from nature, lots of delicious dishes and more. With the help of

generous grants, and a fundraiser created with our campers, we managed to make this opportunity completely free for our youth participants, and hope to keep this tradition going for years to come.

Daily Specials

Day 1



The first day was more of a logistical day as our campers arrived just before lunch. We did an in-depth land acknowledgment through a gratitude meditation in order to set the tone of respect for each other, our food, the land, and its original people. We spoke briefly about everyone's personal projects that stimulated some creativity and brainstorming within the group. Once everyone was introduced and icebreakers were played, we ate a nice lunch and jumped right into some introductions on wilderness skills. Our participants learned the different ways that you could capture and purify water, had a water boiling competition, and learned how to build a shelter in case this

was something they wanted to try to do on our camping trip. The night ended with smores and games around the fire.

Day 2



The second day was packed with meaningful adventure. We participated in a respectful chicken butchering, with a lot of conversation around why we believed it was important for us as a society to remember where our food comes from, and foster an attitude of respect and gratitude for all of the nourishing foods that we have access to. Next, campers introduced their personal project ideas and were paired off with staff members that would mentor them through the creation of their projects. After a

delicious three sisters stew with some fresh, homemade biscuits, we packed up for our camping trip. Before the hike to our campsite, we learned how to heighten our animal senses, and proceeded to stealth walk to our campsite. Dylan Johnson, an Ojibwe workshop leader, spoke about what traditional vision quests were meant to do for his people. We then did a 45 minute quiet sit spot to observe our surroundings and get further in touch with ourselves and our senses. The evening ended with some food and hilarity around the fire as we played silly games and enjoyed each other's company.

Day 3



The next day, Dylan Johnson led another workshop about plant medicines, and worked with everyone to make a small medicine bag. The rest of the day was filled with kids and staff working on their personal projects as well as a big mushroom foray.



Day 4



Day 4 was another unique and busy day. We had a memorable workshop about how to produce music with recorded sounds from nature, and together, we came up with a song with quirky sounds from our camping trip. This was the last day for final touches on personal projects, and in the evening, we had a big presentation where we got to see and taste everyone's final product, as well as hear about their processes. The evening ended with a lively dance party.

Day 5



This last day was filled with tired campers that had experienced so much in the past few days. In the morning, the farm chores involved harvesting vegetables for the market we would be attending in Montreal the next day. We wrapped up FWC by playing some frisbee, ping pong, puzzling, as well as some close-out facilitations. The very last activity

we did was a closing ceremony where each camper got a personalized award that the staff collectively decided they should get. Some examples included the "Farm Spirit" award, the "Philosopher" award, the "Iconic" award etc.

Market Day



The next day, we did a farmers market in the city where some of our campers came to participate. Although it was raining, and we did not have that many customers, we still enjoyed each other's company.

Fundraiser Day



Because FWC is free for our participants', we like to involve them in the fundraising process in order to support next year's FWC. The campers came up with some pretty brilliant ideas, and we followed through on the ones that seemed most feasible. In November, campers got together with two staff members to make some self-care products like an immune boosting tea with some chaga we harvested during our mushroom foray, as well as a salve made with wild and farm herbs that are good for skin, muscle and even bone repair! We then went to a holiday market at Batiment 7 called Marche Leon. It was really special to reconnect with our campers, hang out, and best of all, to hear what our campers had to say to customers that came by our table to see our products. One of our campers shared how FWC was a lot of fun for him as well as an opportunity to get connected to himself, his friends, and the land. The campers that showed up were eager to make big sales in order to ensure FWC continuity.

Budget

Overall, we managed to cover most of our FWC expenses, however, we landed in a deficit of \$1,210. This remaining balance was covered by the generous Camp Amy Molson board of directors who did this through their individual fundraising efforts.

Revenues		
Type of Revenue	Source of Revenue	Actuals
Grants	AFESH	\$1,000
	Arc'Teryx	\$2,500
	CSU Community Action Fund	\$3,000
	QPIRG McGill (250\$); QPIRG Concordia (300\$)	\$550
<i>Subtotal</i>		\$7,050
Fundraiser	Epicerie Moderne	\$217
	Marche Leon	\$1,302
<i>Subtotal</i>		\$1,519
Total REVENUES		\$8,569
Expenses		
Type of Expense	Description of Expense	Actuals in \$
Salaries and benefits	Salary for 4 workshop leaders/supervisors present for 6 days with a salary of 500\$ each, plus 2 honorariums for helpers	\$3,450
	Salary for organizers in pre and post program phases	\$203
	Salary Cook (traded for veggies)	\$0
	Honorarium for invited Indigenous workshop leader	\$500
	Honorarium for graphic design	\$170
<i>Subtotal</i>		\$4,323
Travel	Bus	\$724
	Gas	\$180
<i>Subtotal</i>		\$904
Supplies and Equipment	Food for staff for 6 days and youth for 5 days	\$872
	Workshop materials	\$180
<i>Subtotal</i>		\$1,052
Other Direct Project Costs	Rent and Utility costs	\$3,500
<i>Subtotal</i>		\$3,500
Total EXPENSES		\$9,779
BALANCE		-\$1,210

Reflections

Although FWC was truly an incredible experience for both campers and staff alike, there are always areas to be improved on. We handed out FWC feedback forms for our campers to fill out in order to better understand the impacts that FWC had on them, be it positive or negative. The main challenges that the kids seemed to have were the shelters they built during the camping trip as well as the big hike with all of our gear to get us to our campsite. This will be something we will address for next year. When we asked them what they would have liked to do more of, the majority of them said that they wanted more time cooking and farming. Overall, the main goal of FWC is to create an environment where our participants learn how to acquire farming skills, wilderness skills, and most importantly, a sense of connection and responsibility to the land. For this reason, it was great to hear that most of our participants felt that they had learned some of these things. The biggest testament to this was an unprompted comment from one of our campers "I like farm camp because we have a lot of freedom, but with that freedom comes more responsibility, which I also really like".