

HOLMES CAMP & RETREAT CENTER

Outstanding Alumnus Award



Think of Holmes and many things come to mind: the trees and trails, the lakes, the friends and, not least of all, the buildings. Long-time board member Gary Wolf has had a hand in every one of those buildings over the last 60 years, which is just one of many reasons that the board of Holmes Camp and Retreat Center is pleased to honor Gary with the Outstanding Alumnus Award.

For 50 years Gary chaired the Holmes Board site committee which oversees buildings and grounds at Holmes. He has helped manage the construction of new buildings, identified the most pressing needs of older buildings, and has even moved buildings from one location to another. And when cor-

nerstones have been laid or new buildings dedicated at Holmes in the last 60 years or when major projects have been accomplished, Gary has been there every time.

The dedication of Nunemaker in 1972, Gary was there. The cornerstone for Agape in 1982, that, too. Hayden in 1987, the moving of camper cabins from Westminster up to the North and South Units in 1981. The refurbishing of Steidl 1981. That, too. But most important was overseeing the construction of Charlotte's Room in 1998 - 1999, which was named in honor of Charlotte M. Hostetter. Gary worked closely with Paul Verdesi on that project and said, "We poured our heart and soul into that building."

Gary was also was chairman of the site committee for Minden Retreat Center in Bridge Hampton, Long Island.

Gary is a longtime member of Community Presbyterian Church of Deer Park, NY, and first came to Holmes as a camper in 1955. (He has a picture of his name scribbled on a wall of his cabin from back then.) In 1963 he started as a counselor, coming to Holmes as a volunteer for a week in the summer. Gary and his wife, Kathy, whom he knew from the Deer Park church, married in 1966 and continued as counselors together for several years. He and Kathy were among the first to lead canoe trips sponsored by Holmes. Gary and Kathy volunteered as counselors for Junior II campers at Denton for many years and then Gary was the volunteer director for Week II for many years at Westminster. Over the years, Gary and Kathy returned to Holmes with groups from the Deer Park church for camping weekends at Robinson in June, retreats in November, and work weekends. They also joined Holmes director Don Hostetter on a dozen or more of Holmes sponsored international and U.S. trips in the 1980s and '90s. "We had a blast on those trips," Gary said.

During Gary's half century as chair of the Holmes site committee, he has helped keep buildings in good repair and saved money for Holmes. For example, when windows for Charlotte's Room were estimated at \$90,000, Gary found a Long Island contractor who did the job for \$30,000. And Gary often brought "Gary's Goodies" to Holmes, including hardware, tools, and plumbing supplies from his personal stock, and desks, file cabinets, tables, and light stands from his professional job as a defense industry project manager on Long Island.

Gary and Kathy have three daughters, Jayne, Karen, and Nancy, who were Holmes campers and, later, life guards. They also have 3 grand children, Ayla, Cassidy Bradley, and Richard Silverblade.

We are grateful to Gary for his 60 years of service to Holmes and the Holmes board.