



VOLUME 48, ISSUE 1

VIBRATIONS

NEWSLETTER

Mark your Calendar - The 48th Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting and Board Elections will be held on Saturday, March 14th at 6 p.m. Central Time. The meeting will be held at the Hickory Hills Country Club at 8301 W. 95th Street in Hickory Hills, IL.

We will have a catered meal with a cash bar for \$60 per attendee.

You must purchase tickets online or by mail, no later than Saturday, March 7th. **You must have a ticket to attend. There will be no walk-ins allowed! We need an accurate headcount to ensure there is enough food for everyone.** This event is open to people 18 or older. Raffle prizes, a silent auction and much more are in store for everyone.

We are currently looking for raffle prize donations as well as people will to sponsor gift baskets.

Looking for 100% of all our membership to be present!!! See you there

The agenda for the evening includes...

***Board Election results**

(you must vote no later than Friday, March 13th online, March 14th in person)

***Board Meeting and New Officers announced**

***Raffle and Silent Auction Prizes**



**Buy tickets / renew
your membership
here!**

2025 OSA Board of Directors Candidates

Term Expires 2026	Term Expires 2027	Term Expires 2028
Jennifer Kotwasinski **	Paul Kerchberger	Jacob Klein
Pat Troy	Kevin Oster	Mike Dorich
Edgar Wolff-Klammer	Chris Sanchez**	Jason Roepke

**Two term limit goes into effect

Edgar Wolff-Klammer



Edgar, 65, lives in Skokie, IL. He is married and has three sons who are Eagle Scouts. Edgar worked at Owasippe for five summers (CIT 1975, Camp Blackhawk 1976 to 1978, and maintenance staff in 1982). He has been a Life Member of the OSA since 1985 and has been active at work weekends and other OSA events. Edgar is currently completing his term on the OSA board and would like to continue for another three years.

He enjoys woodworking and woodcarving, and you may have seen his work at OSA auctions. The OSA has contributed many camp improvements, materials, and opportunities to enhance Owasippe for the staff, scouts, and leaders who attend. Edgar would like to continue this work and expand the OSA's mission at camp so that current and future generations of scouts can experience the best of Owasippe.

Jeffrey Nowik

Jeffrey Nowik, 51, lives with his wife, Jaime, and son Hunter in the Garfield Ridge neighborhood of Chicago. Jeff works as an Account Payable/Accounts Receivable Supervisor for B.L. Duke, a scrap metal company in Forest View, Illinois.



He was introduced to Owasippe at Camp Blackhawk – Go! - as a camper in 1985. In 1986, his troop switched to Camp Wolverine – Zaxie! He began his staff years in 1996 and 1997 as a Commissioner at Blackhawk. In 1998 he was the Shooting Sports Director at Wolverine, taking over for Jerry Lutz as he became Assistant Camp Director. During his tenure in scouting, he was a Life Scout. From 2004 through 2010, Jeff was the Training Chairman of the Iroquois District. In 2010 Jeff was asked to take on the position of Advancement Chairman of the Iroquois District, a position he held until 2014 when he stepped up to the Assistant District Commissioner role.

Two years later, he moved up to the District Commissioner position. Jeff held this position until 2019. In 2020 Jeff was asked to take on the role as the Central Area Adviser of the Takone Lodge. In 2021 he was asked again to serve as District Commissioner of the Iroquois Trails and, after the merger of districts happened, the Iron Horse District. In 2024, Jeff became the District Chairman of the Iron Horse District, which he currently still serves. Jeff was also honored to receive his Vigil Honor in the Order of the Arrow in August 2024. Most recently in 2025, he received the prestigious Silver Beaver award. Jeff is also a life member of the Owasippe Staff Association.

Jeff helped on the last Trade-O-Ree that the OSA had. Some of his favorite OSA events are the Trade-O-Ree, work weekends, and the Annual Meeting.

If elected to the OSA board, he would like to get more members to step up and run things with a committee behind them to make for a more successful and growing organization. Jeff would also push to get more 18-21 more active.

2025 OSA Board of Directors Candidates

Kevin Troy

Kevin Troy, 27, currently resides in downtown Chicago. His family has deep roots in scouting, as his parents met at Owasippe, and his mother fondly remarked, “You got your scout!” when he was born to his father.



Though he spent most of his summers at a different camp, Kevin attended Owasippe both as a Cub Scout and a Boy Scout, including the 100th anniversary celebration. Kevin has five years of camp staff experience at two different camps before joining Owasippe, starting as a boat driver at Camp Blackhawk and then serving as the Assistant Reservation Director for three years. Having worked at several camps, Kevin can confidently say that the staff at Owasippe Scout Reservation is the best in the country.

Having served on the admin team at Owasippe, Kevin has a unique perspective on staff needs and where OSA outreach efforts would be most effective. His main goal is to engage more members of the current staff through new social media initiatives and to increase the OSA's year-round presence. He believes the OSA could strengthen its presence during the summer by organizing day-off activities for staff, and is eager to see more opportunities for younger OSA members outside of the summer season.

Professionally, Kevin is an event and stage manager with experience in Broadway and events at Radio City Music Hall and the SNL stage. His expertise positions him well to contribute to the OSA's growth and development. He looks forward to leveraging his skills to help the organization thrive and achieve its goals.

Kevin Leahy



Kevin Leahy, age 27, lives in downtown Chicago with his roommate Kevin Troy. Kevin's connection to Owasippe has been shaped through both family and friendships, with many relatives and close friends having served on staff at OSR over the years. He attended Owasippe as both a Cub Scout and Boy Scout and was proud to be part of the reservation's 100th Anniversary celebration. In recent years, Kevin has returned to Owasippe both as a volunteer and as paid staff, supporting the reservation by photographing summer and camp and capturing marketing material.

Kevin spent two summers on camp staff at Camp Shingobeek, where he gained firsthand experience supporting camp programs and operations. In addition to his program roles, he has continued to support Owasippe through photography and drone media, helping document camp programs, facilities, and special events. Beyond summer camp, Kevin has remained actively involved in Scouting through the Order of the Arrow. Kevin grew up as a member of Pachsegink Lodge and more recently served as an advisor for the OA Adventure Program at the PTAC Camporee.

Professionally, Kevin works as a Software Support Engineer in the industrial automation and technology sector, supporting large-scale manufacturing operations. His career centers on technical systems, digital infrastructure, and problem-solving in complex operational environments.

Kevin is passionate about strengthening the bond between current staff, alumni, and the broader Scouting community. If elected, he hopes to help expand year-round engagement, grow alumni participation, and support programs that keep staff connected to Owasippe long after the summer season ends.

Owasippe has played a formative role in Kevin's Scouting journey, and he is excited for the opportunity to give back to the reservation that has created so many lasting friendships, traditions, and memories. He looks forward to serving the membership and helping ensure that Owasippe remains a thriving home for future generations of Scouts and staff.

2025 OSA Board of Directors Candidates

Randy Etapa

Randy Etapa, 47, is a resident of Chicago on the southwest side. He is a widower to the late Brooke Bielski-Etapa and a single dad to Matthew (Eagle Scout), Michael, and Amanda. He is a member of Local 1001 LiUNA Chicago Laborers Union. For the past 13 years, he has worked for the City of Chicago's Department of Streets & Sanitation Bureau of Forestry as a Certified Tree Inspector. When he is not working or doing Scouting stuff, Randy likes to coach baseball, hockey, and softball as well as volunteer at his daughter's elementary school.



Randy joined scouting as a Tiger Cub in Pack 3465 in 1984. In 1996 with Troop 465, he achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. Over the last 29 years, he has served in various adult leadership positions including Scoutmaster, Cubmaster, Troop Committee, Den Leader, District Member at Large, Roundtable Commissioner, and District Training Committee, and currently serves as the District Advancement Chairperson. He also served two years as the president of the Chicago Area University of Scouting. He is a Brotherhood member in the Order of the Arrow where he served as a Chapter Chief and performed call-out and pre-Ordeal ceremonies at camp as a youth member. In his 40+ years in scouting, Randy has earned some prestigious BSA awards such as the District Award of Merit, Silver Beaver, Distinguished Commissioner Award, and Doctorate in Commissioner Science.

Randy's first experience at Owasippe was as a Reneker camper in 1985. In 1989, he began camping with his troop at Wolverine. In the summer of 1993, he joined the camp staff as a CIT. He worked in aquatics on the Blackhawk waterfront from 1994 to 1997 serving as an instructor through Assistant Aquatic Director. In the summer of 1998, he served as Senior Commissioner/Program Director at Wolverine. He has spent the past 26 years camping at Wolverine as a leader and Reneker with his family. Randy joined the OSA in 1998 and became a Life Member in 2018.

If elected to the OSA Board of Directors, Randy's top priority is membership. He sees an urgent need to recruit new and younger members, as the current membership is dwindling. Other goals include OSA lead involvement in a CIT program, revamping the Bog Trail, continuing to preserve Owasippe history at the Goodman Museum, developing a volunteer corps for an Owasippe Trail Guide program, and seeking approval and funding for a permanent lodge or pavilion structure at Reneker.

Javier A. Montano



Javier A. Montano is 26 years old from Berwyn, IL. He has been a member of the OSA since 2017 having attended several dinners, fix-its, and other events.

Javier first came to camp in 2010 as a Wolverine Camper, and started as a CIT at Owasippe in 2014. Over the years Javier has worked at Camps Blackhawk & Wolverine, the Ad Center, as well as other camps such as Rainbow Scout Reservation and the National Summit Bechtel Reserve. He has also served on staff as a Lead Project Adviser in Communications at 2 National Order of the Arrow Conferences. Most recently in 2025, he returned to camp on the Reservation Administration Team and as the Assistant High Adventure Director. This summer Javier will be returning for summer #12 serving again in the Administration!

Javier is an Eagle Scout, Vigil Honor Member of the Order of the Arrow, and a Life Member of the Owasippe Staff Association. Aside from camp, he is active in Scouting as an Assistant Scoutmaster for Troop 301 in Berwyn. He has also been on the Owasippe Museum Committee since 2019. Outside of Scouting, Javier has served the City of Berwyn Police Department since 2020, enjoys cycling, and regularly supports local community events.

"I share our love for Owasippe and the mission the camp serves year after year to deliver the best program in the nation for our youth. If elected to the Board I wish to further support our CIT program, grow OSA involvement from current staff, and focus on the projects that support current staff operations and camp experience overall!"

President's Perspective

By: Jen Kotwasinski

Wishing everyone a Happy New Year! 2025 is behind us, and 2026 is full of opportunities to connect, contribute, and celebrate together! Tickets are now on sale for our Annual Meeting being held on **Saturday, March 14, 2026** (SECOND Saturday of March) at **Hickory Hills Country Club** in Hickory Hills, IL.

Reminder: Members must be in good standing to vote in the board election—your voice matters!

Despite the snow, Pizza Night was a huge success this past November! Events like these remind us how great it is to see familiar faces and make new friends. Hope to see everyone again next year.



48th Anniversary Annual Meeting - Raffle

The 2026 raffle website as well as the complete list of raffle prizes will be announced in the end of January—don't miss your chance to win exciting prizes!

If you are interested in donating a raffle prize or donating money to sponsor a prize, please contact Jennifer Kotwasinski at (224) 223-3489.

OSA Board & Voting

The OSA is managed by the nine members of the Board of Directors whom you elect. Since each term is staggered, three positions must be elected each year. Elections are held and announced during the annual meeting held the second Saturday in March. Each OSA member that is currently registered (2026) can vote for up to three candidates on one ballot. It is highly encouraged to vote early online!

Join us at the March 48th Annual Meeting to see your new OSA board members!

Online Voting will be open February 6th through March 13th

A separate email will be sent with the link to voting

Thank you to the following people for your financial donations in 2025.

Your generosity means everything to the OSA and to the projects we do at Owasippe.

- American Online Giving
- Susan Blew
- Erwin Brinkman
- Jerry Brown
- Jessica Brogan
- Norville Carter
- Gary Hanson
- Frank Chlebek
- Ken Gedgaud
- Rich Gudmundson
- Laurette Leist Hart
- Gary Hanson
- Adam Keene
- Devin Kenny
- Rebecca Levine
- Steve Mangas
- James Nothnagel
- Michael O'Connor
- Suzanne Smyth
- Deborah Tiberi
- Troop 468
- Philip Pappas
- Vernon Victorson
- The Wolff-Klammer Family



Thank you for all those donations in memory of the Kantorski Family, Chlebek Family and others.



Thank you to everyone who volunteered and provided supplies and materials during 2025.



Another Way to Help: Trivia!

By Paul Kerchberger

On Saturday January 24th, we'll be hosting a Trivia Night at Palmer's Place in La Grange, IL. Doors open at 6:00 PM! For the cost of \$30 you get the knowledge that you have directly supported the OSA in helping camp. We use those funds to do work projects at camp and make life a little bit nicer for the staff. And, this way you get to play trivia with your friends!

Teams encouraged, but not required!

We are limited to 40 seats, and we've already had reservations!

Use the QR code to reserve! Then please use Zelle to pay!



Roofs, Roofs, and more Roofs

By Edgar Wolff-Klammer

During recent OSA work weekends, some of the work crews have noticed that several shingle cabin roofs need replacement. Some roofs are in such poor condition that water leaks have begun, which could potentially cause mold, rotted wood, and ceiling damage. As a result, the board reached out to roofing contractors and obtained several bids. At our January board meeting, we approved spending \$64,160.00 for the labor and materials to install new metal roofing on ten cabins. The deposit has been sent, the roofing work is expected to be completed by June 1, 2026, before the summer season.

If you wish to donate money to help with this project, you can do so by following:
Checks: Made payable to the Owasippe Staff Association and mailed to Owasippe Staff Association, P.O. Box 7097, Westchester, IL 60154

Bank Transfer: Zelle® to osainfobooth@gmail.com

Credit card:

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=ZZUV28LZFET6S. Here you will see the OSA's online store.

Fidelity: If you have a Fidelity's online charitable giving account just search Owasippe Staff Association. An electronic transfer directly to the OSA can now be made.

2026 Fix-It Weekends:

Spring: May 15 - 17

Fall: September 18 - 20

Upcoming OSA Dates

January

24.....Trivia Night 6:00 CT

March

14.....Annual Meeting 6:00 CT

February

4.....Board Meeting 7:00 CT

May

15-17.....Spring Fix-it

Reneker Weekend - September 4th - 6th

By Jen Kotwasinski

Reneker Weekend is back for a second year. The Pathway to Adventure Council has offered the OSA use of Reneker cabins the weekend of **Friday September 4th through Monday September 6th 2026** (Labor Day Weekend) as a thank you for the hard work and dedication. Current (dues paid through 2026) and Life members are offered the use of these cabins for **\$40** for the long weekend. If you would like to attend, please send an email directly to **osainfobooth@gmail.com** requesting a cabin. You will be contacted by an OSA board member for cabin availability and payment completion.

Things to Note when making a reservation:

- Must be either a Life member or dues paid through of 2026
- Limited cabins available
- Limit one reservation per member
- Member making reservation must attend weekend (family and friends welcome to join member in cabin).
- Reservations are first come first serve (no special cabin # requests)
- No group activities planned
- Reservations are not finalized until payment has been received and cabin number is assigned.
- The pools will be closed
- Wolverine waterfront will be open
- REMINDER: Owasippe is pet free and alcohol free

Welcome to our New Members

Jackson Grage, Kevin Leahy, Kaylyn Vivienne, Brian Richter, John Bell, Jim Weis

New Life Members

Michael Pavlik, Javier Montano, Kim Winkler

We're excited to have you join the OSA!

Pizza Night Recap

By: Jacob Klein, OSA Board Member

Thank you to everyone that came out and braved the blizzard for our annual pizza night held at the Berwyn Moose Lodge. We had 42 people in attendance for a night of friendship and fellowship. This was a great casual evening for current and past staff members and campers to share stories and laughs. This was an exceptional night for membership as well; we had 5 annual membership renewals and even a lifetime membership upgrade! Let this also serve as a reminder that it's never too late to renew your membership for the year or consider upgrading to a lifetime membership.



Vibrations is published four times per year by the Owasippe Staff Association.

Editor: OSA Board

The opinions stated by contributors to *Vibrations* are those of the authors and are not by fact of publication necessarily those of the Owasippe Staff Association or its Board of Directors. Publication does not imply endorsement. All materials are subject to editing.

Articles, tidbits, and photos are encouraged. Submissions can be made out to osa.vibrations@gmail.com or mailed to: OSA Vibrations Editor, P.O. Box 7097, Westchester, IL 60154. All materials which the author wants returned must be accompanied by a self addressed stamped envelope.

Deadlines for submitting materials for publication are as follows:

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| • Spring | (Issue 1) | January 5 |
| • Summer | (Issue 2) | April 1 |
| • Fall | (Issue 3) | July 1 |
| • Winter | (Issue 4) | October 1 |

Connect with us!

The Owasippe Staff Association
P.O. Box 7079
Westchester, IL, 60154



Owasippe Staff Association



osa.alum



@osa.alum



osa.vibrations@gmail.com



The newsletter for the members of the Owasippe Staff Association