



# GREETINGS FROM CAMP KRETINGA

## *COVID-19 UPDATE AND CAMP ANNOUNCEMENT*

In May 2020, the Government of Ontario ordered overnight camps in the province closed due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. For the first time in our history, Camp Kretinga could not welcome campers. Our hearts broke, as we were unable to celebrate our summer traditions together as we have done for more than four decades. In the months since, it has been an emotional journey for many of us, as we navigated new waves of the virus and life without so many of the community activities that we all enjoy.

As vaccinations roll out, there is hope on the horizon; however, public health guidance continues to encourage social distancing and the avoidance of large gatherings. As a result, we must keep the gates of stovykla closed again this summer to protect the health and safety of our campers, vadovai, cooks, groundskeepers and the entire camp community. Like you, *we had hoped* to be together again. *We all would like camp to re-open*, as we do, so that our children can see their friends once more, enjoy nature and share in the beautiful traditions of our Lithuanian heritage. Nothing pains our hearts more than having to miss another summer of song, joy and friendship. Public safety, however, must continue to be our number-one priority.

## VIRTUAL DAY CAMP...STAY TUNED

We're excited to take Kretinga online this summer, offering virtual day-camp programming during July 12-23. Our vadovai will be back to lead campers through traditional morning classes and mini courses, putting a remote spin on them. Whether your child is interested in cooking, music, the arts, or just connecting with fellow cabin mates and counsellors, this platform will provide new opportunities to catch up, do activities together and make the most of our time at home.

In the coming weeks, we will share more information about how to register and program schedules. In addition, depending on Simcoe-Muskoka Public Health guidance, expected to be available closer to summer, outdoor Sunday mass will be held at Camp Kretinga during the month of July (4th, 11th, 18th and 25th), if permitted to do so.

We realize that nothing can replace the one-of-a-kind experience of cabin stories, singing around the lauzas, dressing up for dances in the sale and swim days at Wasaga Beach, but the spirit of camp has always been the connection we hold in our hearts to one another, our community and homeland, Lietuva.

## TELL US WHAT'S NEW...

To keep our connection strong, we're asking all campers, counsellors, cooks and other volunteers - past and present - to share your stories with us at [kretinga.board@gmail.com](mailto:kretinga.board@gmail.com). Please ask your friends, alumni, any person who has walked the grounds of stovykla, to contact us. We want to hear about what you've been up to this year, what you cherish most about camp, or are looking forward to in the future. Tell us about small wins, big milestones (weddings, births) and everything in between. We will put these stories together in a new

Kretinga newsletter, which will be emailed out every quarter, starting this June. If we don't have an up-to-date email address for you or your child, please send your current contact information to us.

## GRADUATES - WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Finally, to all of our Kretinga Graduates - we understand how hard it must be to miss out on the time-honoured tradition of moving on as a camper to become a counsellor, alongside your best friends and cabinmates. Our arms are around you, and we will celebrate together as soon as it's safe to do so. In the meantime, we want to share a special memento with each of you. If you were set to graduate in either 2020 or 2021, or if you were set to be a CIT in 2020, please send us your date of birth and favourite camp memory to [kretinga.board@gmail.com](mailto:kretinga.board@gmail.com) by June 1, 2021. Aciu!



## KRETINGA, MUSU SUKIS LIETUVA

As we said last year, we will rise and shine again.  
May the Lord's love light the way, be kind to one  
another and keep the spirit of stovykla in your hearts.  
Iki pasimatymo!

Fr. Jonas OFM and the Kretinga Board