

Megan Stead

Board of Directors Chair

This has been a year of learning for the Burry Heights Board of Directors. With a large turnover in Board Members over the past couple of years, it has been a year of trying to figure out all of the things we didn't know we needed to know! The biggest struggle has been in Finance, as there are a lot of moving pieces and tiny details, made even more complicated by the fact we have not been able to find a Treasurer with a knowledge of accounting. In the interim, everyone on the Board has really stepped up to help out and it has been a lifesaver. While we are still learning the ropes, I have no doubt that it will all work out.

This year has been a challenging year for our physical space, as well, with the building and equipment needing many, many repairs. It seems like every other week something that is vital to our operations needs to be repaired or replaced, which has been a drain on the small amount of savings we had managed to amass. Over the past twelve months, we have: replaced our dishwasher at a cost of \$35,000, done major electrical repairs costing nearly \$10,000, and just last week our septic system backed up which cost over \$6,000 in a single day! We are so lucky to have the continued support of Jacob Brentnall, head of our Maintenance Committee. As a Journeyman Carpenter, Jacob always knows exactly who to reach out to when he can't complete the repairs himself and while it has been an expensive year of repairs we are so lucky to have his expertise.

Summer 2025 was another extremely successful year for our Summer Camping Program, with over 600 campers signing up to attend. Even more impressive, over a hundred and fifty young people signed up to volunteer a week of their time to work with our campers. The summer did not pass without issues however, as a backlog in Police Record Checks meant some volunteers did not get theirs in time for their week and we were impacted by the wildfires in our area. With a fire in Holyrood and then near Paddy's Pond, we made the difficult decision to end two weeks of camp early. It was not an easy decision to make, but with all of our campers having to travel the highway and a large portion of our population coming from towns affected by the Kingston Fire it felt like the right thing to do. While it was obviously not ideal, the way our camp community came together was impressive. From the staff who made ninety phone calls in record time, to the volunteers who made sure the kids were kept calm and entertained, and the parents who showed up without complaint as quickly as possible; it was a truly remarkable sight to behold.

As we head into Summer 2026, we are once again in great shape, with camps filling in record time and a large number of volunteers. We would like to send a sincere thank you to everyone who has helped out this year, especially those who sent donations to help with the cost of our new dishwasher!