

the afterglow

Issue 92 Fall 2017

Follow the Gleam... 75 Years, A History

***An excerpt from this summer's Third Session Woodland Echos,
written by Philip Coulling, Director, Nature Camp***

This year marks Nature Camp's diamond jubilee, and the first Thursday of Third Session was the 75th anniversary of the *very first day* of the *very first session* of Nature Camp. Twenty-four campers, 14 girls and 10 boys, gathered on Monday, 20 July 1942 on the shores of Sherando Lake, near Lyndhurst in Augusta County, for a two-week period of study, recreation, and fellowship intended "to develop in the minds of the young people an interest in and appreciation of wildlife, plants, and natural resources." First proposed, it would appear, by Helen Worth Gordon (on the left in the picture), Conservation Specialist with the United States Forest Service; endorsed and supported by Carrie Curry, President of the Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs, and her successor, Linda Crosby; and shepherded forward by Lillian Schilling (on the right in the picture), Nature Camp could hardly have begun at a less auspicious time in the history of our nation, which had not yet fully recovered from the Great Depression of the 1930s and during the first summer in which the U.S. was engaged in World War II and fighting on fronts in Europe and the Pacific. A promotional flyer evidently circulated to publicize this new camp in the spring of 1942 did not seek to sugarcoat the serious mood of the country or the dire circumstances it faced, but emphasized the particular importance of an enriching camp experience for American youth at that juncture in history:



"This coming summer, when we are going to need camps for our young people as we have never needed them before, isn't it grand news to hear that the Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs is sponsoring a Nature Study Camp for boys and girls. Angelo Patri, in one of his recent newspaper articles on camps, said, "They used to be considered luxuries; now they should be considered necessities." What a grand opportunity this is to get our young people out of the cities, away from the talk of war and destruction, and into the quiet and peace of the hills, where they can learn in the best way possible to conserve and protect our natural resources, such as soil, forests and wildlife, which conservation and protection are as necessary to the future of America and the winning of the war."

That Nature Camp should have had available access to the existing recreational facilities at Sherando Lake, which offered an open-air dining shelter, cabins, and bathhouses, as well as the lake itself, was no doubt instrumental to the early success of Nature Camp. The wheels that launched Nature Camp had been set in motion barely 18 months earlier by a still-fledgling organization that had itself been in existence for less than

a decade, and the Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs (VFGC) lacked the financial resources both to establish a camping enterprise and to construct new buildings in such short order. In many ways Sherando Lake proved to be not only a fortuitous but also a highly favorable location: the lake provided a setting for daily swimming, a large open field and established trails afforded additional recreational opportunities, and proximity to extensive, forested lands of the George Washington National Forest presented nearly unlimited potential as a boundless outdoor classroom. One of the campers that first session, Ruby Cook, wrote in her essay entitled “What the Virginia Nature Camp Has Meant to Me” (for which she received five dollars in defense stamps), “My first glance at camp left the impression I will always have—that at last I had found the ideal camp!” During the final campfire program of that first session in 1942, a roundtable discussion took place in which campers shared what their experience had meant to them and were given the opportunity to share suggestions for improvement. One camper remarked, “Don’t make many changes. It is perfect now and if you change it you may ruin it.”

Yet even as we celebrate Nature Camp’s beginning and remember its origin in the North Fork Back Creek valley in the Potomac-Shenandoah watershed, I have been thinking lately how fortunate it is that Camp is now located—and has been for 65 years—somewhere else. For although Sherando Lake offered several advantages, it also presented many challenges and drawbacks. Because of other uses and users of the site, the VFGC was limited to at most two sessions during the decade that Nature Camp was held there, and even when camp was in session, visitors still had access to the lake. Moreover, increasing fees for maintenance, garbage disposal, and vending services led the organization to explore alternative locations. In 1952 Mrs. Schilling and the VFGC entered into a new agreement with the Forest Service to relocate Camp to a then undeveloped site on the lower reaches of Big Mary’s Creek in the upper James River watershed.

In 1844, Henry David Thoreau wrote of Williams College, my alma mater located in the Berkshires of northwestern Massachusetts, “It would be no small advantage if every college were thus located at the base of a mountain.” The same could be said just as appropriately about a summer camp. As a youth, your director did not attend any other camps, except for week-long (and generally unsatisfying) band and engineering camps, both held on college campuses and neither of which seems to merit consideration as a true summer camp. In more recent years, I have visited a number of other camps, but none conveys the feeling that this place does—a sense of intimacy and closeness without claustrophobia or overcrowdedness, of protection and nurturing and comfort in a world still troubled by war and threatened by significant-global environmental problems. Indeed, a word that springs to mind to describe Nature Camp and its long-standing association to this particular place is propinquity, which connotes not only physical nearness maintained by close proximity, but also kinship stemming from shared beliefs, interests, and experiences.

A 1970 newspaper article, written by Jerry Simpson for Charlottesville’s *The Daily Progress*, opened with the line, “Beside a creek that tumbles down between two mountains, fingertips are taught to see.” I have long loved this description of Nature

Camp, for it underscores not only the great fortune we enjoy to be in this place (and to have this place essentially to ourselves), but also the simple pedagogical approach we embrace here—that of hands-on, experiential, place-based, outdoor-oriented teaching and learning. Later in that same article, Peter Mehring, then the assistant director, elaborated on the educational philosophy and experience of Nature Camp: “It’s not really a teacher-pupil relationship, but two friends talking. It’s not teaching; it’s sharing. Everyone has five senses, but most of us use only one or two. Here we try to get everyone to see and hear and smell and taste and touch.”



Much has changed over the years at Nature Camp—the bunkhouses and T-houses now have electricity; the dark green, opaque hue of the stream-fed swimming pool has been replaced by a clear, chlorinated blue; a clump of Kentucky Coffeetrees shades the area in front of the Girl’s Bunkhouse and Staff House; a deep well rather than Buttermilk Spring supplies drinking water; and the Gus Deeds Memorial Pavilion invites campers and counselors into community where the brick incinerator formerly stood—but much remains the same. Alumni continue to remark on the familiarity of this place upon returning to Camp after an absence of a few to several years, and the buildings look fundamentally the same as when they were first built. And while the staffing model has changed over time, as mostly college-aged counselors have replaced the often itinerant professors, forest rangers, wildlife biologists, and adult amateur experts as the class instructors, the basic methodology remains the same: teaching about the natural world around us through direct, personal experience.

Earlier this summer, a First Session camper asked me what I would like to see in Nature Camp’s future. I hemmed and hawed an answer that was probably unsatisfactory for both him and me, for I too often embrace a mindset and viewpoint that thinks and considers matters only one year at a time, or even just session to session. I have long believed, however, that the greatest enemy of Nature Camp is complacency—that we are destined to fail, as an educational institution and as an enterprise that seeks to promote wise and res-



ponsible stewardship of our shared environment, if we simply rest on our laurels, comfortably content with our successes and naively presuming that what we have done has worked, still does work, and will continue to work in the future. I don’t mean to suggest that we should constantly change our program or class offerings or that we should introduce lots of technological bells and whistles to bring Nature Camp fully into the 21st century. (Indeed I firmly believe that it is important that we teach and show you campers that you don’t need a bunch of fancy equipment or expensive gear to study, enjoy, appreciate, and learn about nature.) But I do think that we always need to make sure that we stay relevant, for Camp can continue only as long as campers want to come here, parents feel comfortable and content sending them, and young adults aspire to work here as counselors. So it may lack the clarity or appeal of a concrete idea, but my wish for the future is that Camp remain *relevant*—and fulfilling and enjoyable and inspiring—so that it may continue to transform lives for the next 75 years and beyond.

Update your information!

The Foundation wants to have the best information on our supporters as possible so please update your contact information at <http://naturecampfoundation.org/my-profile/>. Updated and concise contact information will help the NCF provide the right information to you in the format you prefer.

Additionally, ask your Camp friends to do the same. There are plenty of folk still not in the “Circle” and we certainly want to inform them of the great things going on at Camp.

<http://naturecampfoundation.org/my-profile/>

Find us on Facebook!

You can connect with the Nature Camp Foundation at:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Nature-Camp-Foundation/107552817467>

You can stay in touch with Nature Camp, Inc. at:

https://www.facebook.com/pages/Nature-Camp/324806714283350?ref=br_tf

Almost-Annual Fall Hike Day - October 14, 2017

WHEN: 10:00 AM through the evening, RAIN OR SHINE. If the weather is really unfriendly, call Camp to be sure we're still going hiking: 540-377-2491

WHERE: Nature Camp

WHAT: "Sunday Hikes" (We know they're on Saturday, but like to call them by their traditional name) followed by dinner and relaxation. **BRING YOUR LUNCH!**

WHO: All friends of Nature Camp

COST: \$20 per person over 10 years of age, or \$50 maximum for a family. Those 10 and under free with a parent.

DETAILS: You and your friends and family are invited for a day at Nature Camp. Paul Cabe and Leigh Ann Beavers are once again devoting their time, talent, and tithe to a wonderful fundraiser to benefit the Nature Camp Foundation, which provides generous and invaluable financial and other assistance to Nature Camp. You can help support Nature Camp while enjoying a fall day in the woods, great food, and fun people. Activities will include counselor-led hikes (and possibly in-Camp activities for those who prefer to remain more sedentary). Paul, Leigh Ann, and company will be busily preparing dinner while all the hikes are out, so you can come enjoy a turkey dinner after your hike (vegetarian and vegan options will be available). We will NOT be able to provide babysitting, so choose your hike accordingly if you have small children.

Hikes will LEAVE CAMP by 10:30 AM, so please arrive in time to be ready by then. **PLEASE BRING YOUR LUNCH**, trail snacks, and plenty of water bottles with you.

PLEASE RSVP by October 8 to Flip Coulling at director@naturecamp.net or 540-460-7897. Also please note if you are a vegetarian or vegan.

Bring checks, payable to the **Nature Camp Foundation**, with you.

Adult Session 2017

This year's Adult session was a memorable mix of hands-on learning, cloud spotting, creativity, sharing, music, fermenting and brewing, history, and a rare solar eclipse. Take a look:



Home brewing



Fermenting



Metal clay pendants



Book sharing



Maple Flats Fieldtrip



Eclipse Watching

News from Nature Camp

- Philip Coulling, NC Executive Director

We bade a sad farewell to caretaker Gary Barker just before the summer began. Gary came to us four years ago this fall and quickly proved himself a valuable and valued member not only of the staff, but of the Nature Camp family. His legacy will persist in many tangible ways, not the least of which is the handsome wall he built by hand behind the Gus Deeds Memorial Pavilion two summers ago. Gary has returned to North Dakota to work at a school, and we wish him well in his new adventures—and we hope that he'll visit us from time to time! The acuteness of Gary's departure was lessened somewhat by the unexpected but welcome return of former caretaker Charlie Truxell, who came out of retirement to fill in for the summer. It was delightful to have Charlie back with us, and he picked up right where he left off. He constructed a storage rack for the myriad guitars and other stringed instruments which find a home in the L.S. during the summer, helped design a new system for covering the swimming pool for the winter, and was instrumental in managing to move our new reach-in refrigerator and freezer into the pantry. (More on those later.)



At the beginning of Fourth Session, new permanent caretaker Ventry



Smith arrived, and he and his wife Sheryl are now settled into the house on the hill, a home in which Ventry first aspired to live nearly four decades ago. Welcome aboard and welcome home, Ventry; we look forward to having you with us for years to come.

The new appliances in the kitchen, generously funded with a grant from the Nature Camp Foundation, immediately improved food storage, making leftovers more accessible and increasing capacity for produce, meats, and dairy products in the walk-in. It was a bit of a spatial challenge to get them in place, but the staff eagerly answered the call, as they did so many times this summer, for “able-bodied counselors” to perform manual labor. Although it was not a particularly hot summer (we even had a few mornings in the upper 40s during First Session), the cooks greatly appreciated the new wall-mounted fans in the kitchen, as well as the additional intakes for the attic exhaust fan. And campers and staff alike made use of several new microscopes, sampling nets, and other educational equipment, all furnished as well through the magnanimity of NCF members.

Although it's hard to say just what the most popular meal was this summer (all the food is good, and so many dishes rank among the favorites of the campers), the most popular major classes were mammalogy and herpetology, and “MTA” claimed the distinction of the most requested song before evening program, especially toward the end of the summer. Sunday hikes explored White Rock Canyon and Irish Creek for the first time in several years, and Environmental Philosophy returned to the curriculum after an absence of two decades.

The first Thursday of Third Session marked the 75th anniversary of the first day of the very first session of Nature Camp, and we celebrated the occasion with ice cream sundaes, an embodiment of “75” on the playfield, and a retrospective slide show in the evening. And as we continue to celebrate this historical milestone, we look forward to the next 75 years of Nature Camp, including the upcoming and exciting renovations to the Education Building. Many thanks to all of our supporters for enabling us to get to this point and for creating and maintaining a structure that will allow Nature Camp to continue to thrive for generations to come.

The following Organizations that provided support to Nature Camp, Inc. were accidentally left out of the NCF 2016 Annual Report. We extend our apologies for this oversight and our continuing gratitude as always for your support.

Canterbury Garden Club

Charlottesville Garden Club

Community Foundation of Rockbridge, Alleghany and Bath

Green Hills Garden Club

Kingsmill Garden Club

Lexington Garden Club

Little Garden Club of Winchester

Midlothian Garden Club

Natural Bridge Garden Club

Oxford Garden Club

Piedmont Garden Club (Charlottesville)

Piedmont Garden Club (The Plains)

Rivanna Garden Club

Thomas Jefferson Garden Club

Town & Country Garden Club (Lexington)

Virginia Native Plant Society, Jefferson Chapter

York River Garden Club

Spring Service Weekend

The past Spring Service Weekend, which took place the third weekend of May (as it does each year), resulted in the completion of many smaller projects as well as progress on those continuing from weekends prior. Service weekend is an opportunity for those who believe in Camp's mission to gather there, enjoy the company of others who share those feelings, and contribute through a unique donation of time and effort to the place we all love. The spring is spent rousing camp from its winter dormancy and preparing it to serve our community by fostering a love and appreciation for our natural world and resources in the young minds that annually gather there.

The sound of shovels shucking shingles and the rhythmic pounding of many hammers was absent from Service Weekend in May 2017 due to the efforts of those who have spent nearly every Service Weekend prior for several years removing old roof covering and applying new in order to protect the sacred spaces below. We actually now have a break from re-roofing the buildings!!

The iconic dark siding and brown foundation block seen on every building around camp was renewed on many of the buildings and will continue to be reapplied until each building is looking its best again. Lighting and air circulation was increased in the infirmary to better serve those who work and receive care there and the exhaust fans in the bunkhouses were re-wired to better serve camp on the hottest days of the summer. The kitchen, which is a constant hive of activity during every gathering at Camp, was improved through several projects including better lighting in the walk-in refrigerator, relocation of ceiling vents, and installation of large fans to keep those working there cool. Special thanks to our head cook during these weekends, Nell Fredericksen, for consistently providing a variety of remarkable meals. The foundations of the buildings around camp needed to be adjusted so that access can be provided for the crews who venture underneath to assess and replace the joists that

provide support for our floors. After these holes were carefully created, access doors were assembled and fitted to those openings so that future monitoring of those spaces can easily take place. Screens make up a great deal of the vertical surfaces on the bunkhouses, T-houses, LS, and Education Building and must be maintained or replaced frequently. Old, worn frames were repaired and new screen attached and the screens re-installed.

Various cleaning projects take place during Service Weekends and I extend a special thank you to those who welcome these project



assignments with a smile as they utilize buckets, rags, brooms, and mops to remove old build up and revive our indoor spaces for those who learn and reside there. Camp takes care of trash removal from many of the roadways nearby and a “trash hike” provided a leisurely walk with good conversation making it a much more pleasant experience than the name may indicate. Many of the sinks around camp were repaired and improved to make them more stable and to protect the walls behind those fixtures.

Thank you Ventry, Taimir, Bill, Mac, Penny, Sheryl, Brett, Katie, Sarah, Steven, David, Stephanie, Tyler, Sam, Maggie, Debbie, Bess, Ryan, Collin, Matthew, Eleanor, Luke, Katie, Gary, Jennifer, Annie, Alan, Alexandra, Paul, Sarah, Michael, Dan, Jeff, Adam, Charles, Theta, Kim, William, Mary Frances, Jackie, Dan, Jeff, Adam, Charles, Ryan, Kevin, Amy, Rick, Jason, Larry, Reid, Mia, Flip, Alex, Glenn, Mike, Austin, Chris, Sam, Nell, Todd, Liam, Maria, Tristan, Caleb, Joel, Kevin, Leah, Hanley, Langston, Jonah, Indra, and Jareth! Your dedication to preserving our beautiful facilities saves camp thousands of dollars every year!

Everyone is welcome at Service Weekend regardless of prior experience as a camper or staffer and all skill levels can be put to use. We welcome families and the rec field or the surrounding national forest provides an excellent opportunity for those who desire to camp as a group. The traditional, separate male and female bunkhouses and bathhouses are fully available for use during the weekend while very limited alternate accommodations are available on-site. Those requiring or desiring other accommodation are encouraged to check out the various lodging options available in nearby Lexington. Please contact me (Corey Basham) at swhawk-er@gmail.com with any requests or concerns regarding sleeping accommodations or dietary restrictions including allergies. Please go to www.naturecampfoundation.org and click the “Stay Connected” link in the upper right corner to update your information in our system in order to receive communications regarding upcoming NCF events.

- Corey Basham, Service Weekend Chair



News from Nature Camp, Inc.

I was fortunate to be able to sit down with this summer's staff at the beginning of the season and again at the end. As I spend time with them, I am amazed at what wonderful people they are. These young men and women are our ambassadors for Nature Camp. It's their job to mentor campers, watch over their health and well-being, and teach them important information in the natural world. They do it with grace and sensitivity, great humor, and a touch of silliness. They create and nurture the bonds for all our young campers. Thank you Philip Coulling for selecting such a stellar staff each year. I know that our community will continue to thrive for generations to come.

News of the Prospective Camper Orientation on July 22nd can be found in a separate article by Stacy Luks, our Director of Publicity and Promotions. But I will say it was successful!

The Education Building project update is also detailed in a separate article authored by our task force facilitator and our NCI VP, Dr. Katie Hoffman.

This is the last update from me, Amy G, as president of the Board of Directors of NCI. I'm rolling up to the end of my 2nd three year term. Before that, I was the NCI VP/Secretary for two years. It is time for NCI VP, Dr. Katie Hoffman, to assume the position of President of NCI in November. Stand by for news of my next Nature Camp adventure!!

- Amy Gonzalez, Nature Camp, Inc. President

Editors note: All of us - the NCF board, NCI board and Nature Camp Family - wish to express our deep gratitude for the years of service, leadership, grace and humor Amy Gonzalez has given to Nature Camp Inc.

New Virtual "Nature Camp Canteen"

Ten T-shirts Designs now available!!

Ten NEW Designs Coming Soon!!

You can now order T-shirts, sweatshirts, onesies, kids wear, mugs, etc. from our new online "canteen" We have 10 of the most requested designs available in our shop or you can purchase the designs for use on a huge variety of items.

Please visit our SpreadShirt shop at:

<https://shop.spreadshirt.com/Nature-CampFoundation?noCache=true>

The \$2.50 we earn from each sale goes to support our scholarship fund!!!



Prospective Camper Day - July 22, 2017

The middle Saturday of this year's 3rd Session presented glorious weather for our gathering of 30 visitors from throughout Virginia and beyond, who came to participate in Camp's third annual Prospective Camper Day. As in past years, most attendees were families preparing to send children to Nature Camp for the first time, either for the upcoming 4th Session or for 2018. The day afforded all a relaxed opportunity to make connections, familiarize themselves with the grounds & facilities, meet current campers, staff (& resident felines), and nip those nascent first-timer fears in the bud.

Our gratitude goes to former camper/staffer/head counselor Barak Brashear, who extended his visit as Friday's evening program guest speaker to conduct a mini-herpetology class in the lab with Saturday's group, as well as an exploration of salamanders in the outside classroom by Big Mary's Creek. Thank you, Barak!

Mark your 2018 calendar for our 4th annual Prospectives day – once again the middle Saturday of 3rd Session, which will fall on July 21st. As always, we'll anticipate families/campers who are due to attend Nature Camp in 4th session and want to get a look and feel of the place before they arrive. We also welcome anyone who would enjoy a short-afternoon summer dose of Nature Camp!

Quote from a thank-you email from a camper's dad:

"It was great and very glad we saw the camp before our visit! If I run into any "what do I need to pack" issues, I'll certainly let you know!"

- Stacy Luks, Publicity and Promotions, Nature Camp, Inc.



Congratulations Sarah Francisco Conservator of the Year

Each year Valley Conservation Council works to recognize someone in our community that has provided a substantial impact on conservation in our region. At the annual meeting on September 10, we were proud to recognize Sarah Francisco, Director of the Virginia Office of the Southern Environmental Law Center. In Sarah we recognized a leader who serves to protect our natural resources, including George Washington National Forest, provides an uplifting and hopeful vision to others in a turbulent time, and whose continued efforts will provide a lasting impact on conservation issues important to our region, our future, and our children's children's children's future. Thank you for your work Sarah!

Editor's note: Sarah Francisco was a Nature Camper from 1990-1996 and was feature in the Afterglow, Follow the Gleam article in the October 2012 Issue. The Nature Camp Family is proud of you Sarah!

Education Building Renovation Updates

By Katie Hoffman, Task Force Facilitator

On August 17th, a small but enthusiastic group of community members gathered at Camp for a charrette led by Glavé & Holmes Architecture (G&H), the firm selected by the Education Building Task Force (EBTF). We engaged Glavé & Homes to lead us through the process of planning the renovation. This charrette further focused our efforts, taking into account the information we have been gathering from the community since last fall's interest group meeting in the Library, including responses to the questionnaire that we recently sent out, and Philip Coulling's recent conversations with the teaching staff on this topic.

The team from G&H included Lead Architect Gibson Worsham, G&H senior partner Randy Holmes, and Kaylee Hartman. After enjoying coffee, conversation, and some delicious doughnuts generously provided for the group by Amy Gonzalez, we went to work. The morning session began with a PowerPoint presentation. Gibson provided some very interesting insight into the historical and cultural context of Nature Camp, and showed how the architecture of the place affects our experience of it. We all agreed that he should come back and do an evening program or teach some Adult Session classes that delve even more deeply into these topics. Our main task that morning, however, was sorting through the feedback received—some of it conflicting—and determining from that store of information what our priorities should be. Gibson had taken all of the information that we sent him and organized it, allowing us to prioritize based on community input. By the end of the morning session, we had identified our wish list, and the Nature Camp folks were dismissed to go and enjoy themselves for a couple of hours.

Except for breaking to enjoy the delicious lunch cooked for us by Lucas Gillenwater and Ben Camber, the G&H team worked diligently for several hours. Bent over their drafting tables and computers in the back of the LS, they worked hard to come up with some concrete ideas for addressing problems and adding in the top elements from the community's wish list. When we reconvened in the afternoon, Gibson presented us with four different architectural drawings to consider. Now, the EBTF is sorting through the four drawings presented and choosing from each of the elements that best fit our purpose and goals. All of us agreed that it was exciting to see our hopes and dreams shaped into real plans for reworking the Education Building, making it even more central to our mission.

The EBTF deliberated over the four drawings and collected feedback from those who attended the charrette and we handed our choices over to G&H at the end of August. Gibson and his colleagues have begun the process of coming up with two options for addressing each of the items on our list of changes,

and the cost associated with each choice. The committee will then meet again to deliberate on these. Once the final choices are made, G&H will give us an estimated timeline for the actual construction and renovation.

We hope to have some artist's renderings presented at the 75th Anniversary Celebration that was held at the Fall Service Weekend on Saturday, September 16th (while this newsletter was at the printers and getting ready for mailing). This whole process showcases how we work together as a community to ensure that our educational mission continues into the future.



Calendar of Events 2017-2018

Fall Hike Day	14 October 2017
NCI Board Meeting	11 November 2017
NCF Annual Board Meeting	20 January 2018
Spring Service Weekend	18-20 May 2018
NCF Annual Open Meeting	19 May 2018
NCI Board Meeting	2 June 2018
Adult Session	7-11 June 2018
NCI New Camper Orientation	21 July 2018
Fall Service Weekend	14-16 September 2018

Clippings of a Two Week Getaway

By Mollie W.

Reminds me of being alone on a rooftop
in the middle of the night on a Tuesday.
Two katydids call to each other,
buzzing and humming like maybe they're long lost friends.
I wonder what they saying.
I wonder what they would say.
I wonder how it feels to be the creek
flowing over the rocks
or the breeze or the clouds
or an ant at the bottom of a tree.
Or the tree.
I'm trying to hold on to the place
and the feelings and the sounds.
You cannot hold Camp in your pocket,
you can't bring all of it home.
You cannot ask the creek to wait for you.
You cannot beg a hemlock to keep on living when it's already dead.
I am not ready to go back
to polished floors, coffee, or air conditioning.
I am not ready to go back
to a place where I can't hear crickets and frogs at my window at night.
I imagine my heart beating in my chest
but it's shaped like the dogwood flower.

(Published in the First Session 2017 issue of Woodland Echos)

Friedrick “Fritz” Schilling

Schilling, Friedrich (Fritz) age 82, died in the hospital in Knoxville on July 20, 2017 of complications associated with an infection. He was the minister of Westminster Presbyterian Church for 19 years (1985-2004), interim at First Presbyterian of Knoxville (2006-2007), formerly of Providence Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC (1968-1974) and Beckley Presbyterian Church in Beckley, WV (1974-1985), and an integral part of all three communities. After retiring in 2004, he was a passionate leader of disaster relief efforts including hurricane Katrina. Fritz was a graduate of The University of the South in Sewanee, TN, where he majored in forestry. After college he served in the Air Force. He then attended Yale Forestry School and briefly practiced as a forester before returning to Yale Divinity School and then Union Theological Seminary where he received his doctoral degree in theology. He was born August 2, 1934 and grew up in Nelson County, VA. He devoted his life and his career to others, embodying a message of compassion, inclusion and love. He was preceded in death by his father, Friedrich Schilling and mother Lillian Siler Schilling, as well as his wife Barbara Huey Schilling. Survivors include their four children: Tom and his partner Christine of Irvine, CA; Kathryn and her husband Richard Oakes of Knoxville; Anne and her partner Will of Dallas, TX; Jonathan and his wife Emily of St Paul, MN, as well as three grandchildren Clara, Madeleine and Fritz. Memorials can be directed to Westminster Presbyterian Church.

Nature Camp Foundation Board Development

NCF Board Position Updates

Annie White gave us 3 plus years of faithful, dedicated leadership as NCF President and has helped to add needed structure to many of our processes. Her tireless commitment to moving Nature Camp forward will surely be missed! Completing the end of Annie's term and assuming the mantle of President is Nell Fredericksen. Nell comes to us after 9 years and countless hours of work as our Communications director. Before that she was a counselor and camper and her two children are current campers. She also designs the camp t-shirts each year and prepares delicious meals at Service Weekends. We are delighted to have her at the helm for the next several years!

Sharon Keith has been appointed to fulfill the remainder of Nell's term as Communications director this year and to fill the position for the next full term starting January 1, 2018. Sharon was both a camper and counselor and has had both of her children attend Camp. Since moving back into this area she has wanted to get more involved and brings to the position new energy and a strong knowledge base.

After helping camp transition to more socially responsible investing as Finance chair during this last term, Kevin Wheeler will be stepping down. We are grateful for his service and expertise in helping camp achieve its long term financial goals. At present, we are searching for a replacement. Please email me or talk to a board member if you know someone with financial or business experience.

Finally, we will be searching for candidates for the Vice President position on the NCF board. This is an elected position that will carry with it a bit more responsibility than in past years (see below for Board Development Committee news). If you know someone with an interest in locating and recruiting talent among the greater Nature Camp community, please email me at the address below.

Topher.Chamberlin@gmail.com 434-426-5550

Board Development Committee

A recent meeting among members of both NCF and NCI boards brought forth a pressing issue: camp is growing and the responsibilities of our hard working board members are increasing; however, we only utilize a small fraction of the many talented people who wish to provide support for camp. Thus the idea of a committee, henceforth called the Board Development Committee, to identify and recruit talented people to help serve on sub-committees was born. The BDC, chaired by the NCF Vice President, will help staff several committees by contacting interested individuals and facilitating their transition to the board. At present, we have a strong need for a Communications Committee to help share the work of the Communications Chair. We also would value a Development (fundraising) Committee to help our Chair reach out to those who wish to give money to support camp. If you have any interest in serving on the BDC, please don't hesitate to contact me at the address below. I look forward to reaching out and expanding the breadth of in-kind support for Nature Camp!

Topher.Chamberlin@gmail.com 434-426-5550



Nature Camp Foundation Board of Directors

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Chris Chamberlin, Vice-President
Louise Bowling Manilla, Secretary
Amy Wingfield Clark, Treasurer
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