

# the afterglow

Issue 93, Fall 2018

## ***Follow the Gleam.... Kirsten Talken- Spalding***

by Emily Montgomery

It's easy for Kirsten Talken-Spaulding to draw a connection between her summers at Nature Camp and her career with the National Park Service. Reflecting on a couple of her notebooks from her 1984 and 1985 sessions at Camp, she says, "Wow, I was such a nature nerd." That passion for the outdoors wasn't all she took away from camp, though. "Not only did the academic studies help lay the foundation for future learning, but the connection of being part of a team such as we had for various activities at camp helped me grow as a person in a social setting," she says. This directly prepared her for her future career. "The lessons from camp, along with the confidence one gained with the vigorous work, helped me get my first positions in land management, initially with the Virginia State Parks and then as a ranger with the National Park Service," she adds. She is now superintendent of Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park.

Kirsten attended Camp as a teenager in the late '70s and early '80s. By her last summer of Camp, she was already employed with the Virginia State Park system. "I got the time off from work to go to Camp," she remembers. "In many ways it was a kind of graduation for me."

Kirsten boasts an impressive—and, for many Camp-affiliated people, enviable—resume. After working with the Virginia State Parks, she began her career with the National Park System in 1988 at Virginia's own Shenandoah National Park. She later held positions across the United States before returning to Virginia: at Mojave National Preserve in California, at NPS Headquarters and the National Mall and Memorial Parks in Washington, D. C., at Haleakala National Park in Hawaii, and at different parks in the National Capital Region including Prince William Forest Park and National Capital Parks-East. From 2010-2011, she served as a staff member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee and as special assistant to the NPS director as a Bevinetto Congressional Fellow. This 2-year fellowship is a very competitive, rigorous training and development program for NPS employees. She has also worked with the NPS Legislative and Congressional Affairs office.

Kirsten's current position is her second as a superintendent for a National Park. Previously, she was the first superintendent of the newly designated Fort Monroe National Monument in Hampton, Va., where she was tasked with setting the groundwork for a new National Park. "As the superintendent you are not only well-versed in the mission of the National Park System, but of the park you serve directly," she says. "Through the work of the park staff you maintain and improve the resource protection of the unit you work in while balancing that conservation with use by visitors. Ultimately, by learning about the stories and resources of a park, we help to protect it," she adds, "not unlike the learning we got at Nature Camp."

Thinking back on her days at Camp, she remembers an interactive Limnology class that foreshadowed the kind of resource management and study she'd later direct. During the class she and her peers "aligned



rocks in the stream to encourage the development of small pools that would bring in fish. We turned over each rock looking for nymphs and other signs of a healthy aquatic environment,” she describes. She also remembers other defining classes, such as Astronomy, Botany, Conservation, Ecology, Entomology, Geology, and Herpetology. “Heck, I loved them all!” she says.

She has many favorite memories of Camp outside of the classroom also. “Between the academic endeavors and the physical play in the mountains, the days always seemed longer than you could imagine,” she says. “Nights were spent singing songs, and mornings with Reveille. As a trumpet player I recall getting to sound Taps a night or two. There was that smell in the library, where old taxidermied animals and old books lined the shelves,” she describes. “I spent a lot of time deep in study in that space when I wasn’t out in the woods doing hands-on learning.”

Kirsten was at Camp along with many folks who have proved to be some of Camp’s most dedicated alumni, including Nell Fredericksen (née Jefferson), Philip Coulling, Todd Fredericksen, John Diller, Katie Hoffman, and Chuck Story. She believes that her mother learned about Nature Camp through her active involvement with the Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs. “She knew of my love of the outdoors, despite not understanding it herself, and thought the camp programs would be just up my alley,” Kirsten says. “I vaguely remember going to that first session and being super nervous,” she adds. “Like most kids I didn’t think I fit in anywhere and while Nature Camp didn’t necessarily take that feeling away, I did find a place I could challenge myself and learn more about the natural world around me.”

Kirsten received a Bachelor of Science degree from the College of William & Mary, and a Master of Divinity degree from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. She is also a member of the Fredericksburg Area Running Club, and enjoys long distance endurance motorcycling.



One especially memorable

experience was a two-week rally in 2015, during which she visited 68 National Parks in 26 states, traveling over 11,800 miles. Kirsten shares her life with her wife, Jennifer (an anthropologist with the National Park Service) and their two pups Bela and Riley. They are both avid runners (Kirsten and Jennifer, even though the pups do like a short jog on occasion).

As someone especially knowledgeable in public lands use, Kirsten emphasizes the uniqueness of Nature Camp as a place. “It wasn’t until years later, as I traveled to various public lands for work, that I realized just how special Nature Camp is as a physical space within a National Forest.” She summarizes the magic and importance of Camp, “From its humble beginnings in 1941 to the sessions just completed this past summer, generations of students have held hands in the chapel and sung songs and learned that by knowing more about the world around them they can make a difference.”

“Nature Camp is a window into the natural world where you can explore the complex workings of the environment while learning Camp songs, drink bug juice, and generally goof around,” she adds, and we couldn’t agree more.



## ***Update your information!!!***

The Foundation wants to have the best information on our supporters as possible so please update your contact information at <http://www.naturecampfoundation.org/update-your-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://www.naturecampfoundation.org/update-your-profile/>

## ***Almost Annual Fall Hike Day - October 20, 2018***

**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. Please bring a check, made out to the Nature Camp Foundation, for payment.

**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. All minors must be accompanied by parent or legal guardian.

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 13 to Adam Rotche at [arotche@gmail.com](mailto:arotche@gmail.com) or Flip Coulling at [director@nature-camp.net](mailto:director@nature-camp.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 2018

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. We ended up with so many good pictures of all the classes and activities we want you to experience them too. The theme this year was The Invisible in Nature and many of the classes had interesting takes on that theme.

Macro lens close up photography with Terry Richardson:



Solar made an appearance in both Art and Science:



And String Bands, Bows and Arrows, Field Trips, Birthdays and Friends:



## News from Nature Camp

- Philip Coulling, NC Executive Director

2018 was the year that.....

- \* New hand lenses, purchased with a grant from NCF, received extensive use in botany, nature journaling, and other classes.
- \* No fewer than seven campers attended First Session having just graduated from High School.
- \* The Turk's Cap Lily, monitored and protected from the ravenous appetite of deer for about a decade, finally bloomed near Buttermilk Springs.
- \* A Sunday hike serendipitously encountered a Whippoorwill's nest on December Ridge.
- \* We introduced a new course in environmental history which explored such topics as environmental racism, the impact of the canteen, and the conceptual construct of "wild".
- \* A warp in the space-time continuum resulted in Sunday hikes on Saturday, and the once-in-a-blue-moon celebration of Blorpus during Third Session.
- \* The Torry Ridge hike wound up on the Bald Mountain Overlook Trail instead, but had a good time nevertheless.
- \* Entomology classes took field trips to visit hives of a local beekeeper.
- \* The male staff revived the old tradition of singing "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" during the counselor talent show.
- \* The artificial Ficus tree, which Ventry and Sheryl Smith disposed of last fall, managed (like a certain feline oft remembered in song) to make its way BACK to Nature Camp via a trash hike on the 4th of July.
- \* Cooks Danny Sternfeld and Dustin Roberts started dragging the custom made charcoal grill onto the playfield for end-of-session picnics.
- \* The Limnology Class Nature Camp Vesuvius Claire Mills Memorial Celebrity Giardia Awareness Pro-Am Fun Run Race for the Cure was held.



Although attendance was down slightly from the previous summer, enrollment for girls in all four sessions, and boys in Second and Third, was at or near capacity. A number of vacancies remained for boys in Fourth Session, so if you know a 5th or 6th grade lad who might be interested in, and benefit from, the Nature Camp Experience, please point him our way! Registration for next year's sessions will begin on January 28th.



## ***Board Development Survey*** - Sarah Hulcher and Joe Garvin

The joint Nature Camp, Inc. and Nature Camp Foundation Board Development Committee is tasked with assessing the volunteer needs of the two organizations and connecting willing members of our Nature Camp community to available volunteer opportunities. The committee has put together a short survey for folks to fill out expressing their interests, areas of expertise, and to make suggestions. The survey was distributed in paper form at the Spring Service Weekend and the committee is working to get an electronic version of that survey available on the Nature Camp Foundation website. Please keep your eye on social media for an announcement that the survey is live and then take a few minutes to fill it out if you would like to become more involved with Nature Camp.

## ***Upcoming Elections*** - Sarah Hulcher and Joe Garvin

The Nature Camp Foundation elections are coming soon! Ballots will be mailed out and electronic voting will be available as well. Secretary, Treasurer, and one Member-At-Large position will be up for election. A brief description of each of these positions follows; if you are interested in serving and feel qualified for any one of these positions, or if you know someone who would be an excellent fit for one of the positions, please contact Sarah Hulcher at [hulchers@gmail.com](mailto:hulchers@gmail.com) to express your interest in becoming a candidate. The NCF Board Governance Committee will be reviewing the qualifications of potential candidates and putting together a slate ahead of this fall's vote.

The Secretary is responsible for drafting and distributing meeting materials for all NCF Board meetings, keeping minutes at the meetings, maintaining contact information for Board members, keeping the minute book for the Board up to date, working in coordination with the Treasurer to issue bill payments and check preparations.

The Treasurer is responsible for managing the banking affairs of NCF, managing gifts received by NCF, supporting the Finance Chair in managing NCF's investment accounts, preparing financial reports for the NCF Board, drafting the annual budget, completing tax filings for NCF, arranging for periodic audits of NCF accounts, and attending both NCF and NCI board meetings.

The Member-At-Large is responsible for attending NCF Board Meetings, reviewing pertinent Board Materials, and planning and coordinating various special projects as needed.

Please let us know if you are interested in a position!

## ***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](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Nature-Camp/324806714283350?ref=br_tf)***

## ***Prospective Camper Day - Saturday, July 21, 2018***

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

On our fourth annual Prospective Camper Day, held this summer, 20 families (with children ranging in age from toddlers to 15-years olds, plus one adorable French Bull dog) arrived to an unusually quiet scene on the middle Saturday of the Third Session of camp. A weather forecast projecting rain on Sunday had prompted a decision to flip the weekend schedule, and campers and staff were off-site for the day on the traditional Sunday Hike! Under a lightly overcast sky, the mild temperature, dry air and drifting breezes made the day picture perfect.

The calm and quiet, however, did not detract from the enjoyment of the nearly 50 attendees who came to learn and explore. In addition to families preparing to send children to Nature Camp, for the first time, for the upcoming 4th Session, we hosted many first time visitors from across Virginia looking at camp for 2019 and beyond. As always, the day afforded everyone a relaxed opportunity to make connections, familiarize themselves with the grounds and facilities, ask questions, and for those 4th Session campers, to nip those naysayer first-timer fears in the bud.

Our thanks go to Collin Yurish, former camper and returning staffer (fresh from a summer forestry workshop) who conducted a mini-botany class in the chapel. Thank you Collin!!! We are also grateful to Head Cook Danny Sternfeld for taking time from the traditional post-hike day turkey feast preparation, to give an overview of Camp's amazing local food. He also shared perhaps the most perfectly ripe, juicily delicious Nelson County peaches with the group.

Mark your 2019 calendar for our 5th annual Prospectives day - once again the middle Saturday of 3rd Session - which will fall on July 20th. As always, we will 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!

## ***Nature Camp Foundation Development Committee***

- Amy Gonzalez, Development Chair

You've heard that we're planning to renovate the Education Building from the Project Chair, Katie Hoffman. That renovation will cost money – as you can well imagine. So yes, we are planning a new Capital Campaign to finance this renovation. The initial phase of the Campaign will seek funding from foundations and those members of our community who have been particularly helpful in the past. If anyone finds themselves in a situation where they have a generous donation they want to put towards the Education Building, and they have not been a larger donor in the past, don't hesitate to seek me out. I'll be happy to speak with you!

In the meantime, the Foundation's usual commitment to helping fund Service Weekend activities, smaller capital improvements, scholarship support, and camp equipment does not cease. We need your ongoing support for the Annual Fund, for which we have a goal of \$75,000 this year. I am delighted to say that donations so far this year (in mid-August) have put us about 50% of the way to our annual goal. Your generosity never ceases to amaze me! That's not to mention the manual support we get at Service Weekends. We truly have a committed group of supporters. Thank you for believing in this special place.

If you want a speaker for your club or organization, or you just have questions about ways to help Nature Camp through the Foundation – please contact me: Amy Kasdorf Gonzalez, amykgonzalez@gmail.com.

# Spring Service Weekend

- Theta Miller, Service Weekend Chair

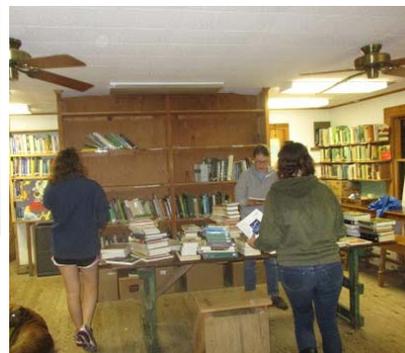
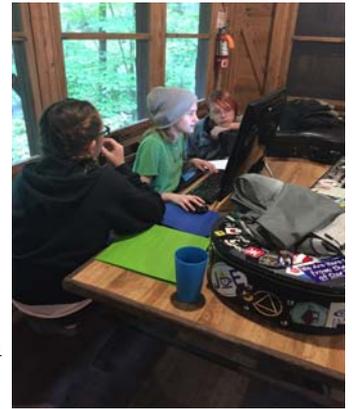
Spring Service Weekend 2018 was a resounding success. There was a threatening forecast of heavy rain for the entire weekend, but the weather was not as bad as expected. The rain that did fall did not discourage the 64 intrepid adults, and 18 adventuresome minors, from doing things all over camp and in the surrounding woods.

The dead brush of the past winter was cut up and hauled off to piles, transferred to the truck and moved to its final resting place in the woods. This job involved almost everyone at one stage or another. There were big pieces for those who wanted a bit more exercise and smaller pieces for everyone else. Camp, in the middle of the forest, will eternally need tree parts and brush moved. That is a skill any of our volunteers have! Those of you who wonder how you can help at a Service Weekend, look no further than moving brush during the day, then enjoying a hot shower before great food at dinner and fun music after the sun goes down.

In the library there was a great inventorying and renumbering of the books. A compendium of the current library volumes was created. The camp library's chosen numbering system was maintained but the books were better grouped together by type and assigned new consecutive library numbers. Additionally, the best use of library shelf space was addressed. Organization of one of our best resources has been vastly improved.

The young people kept busy finding numerous dedication plaques around camp and in the surrounding woods; a surprising 46 plaques were located and described in a spreadsheet. Moving forward, these plaques will be cleaned and refurbished.

Many upgrades, repairs and odd jobs were done around camp. For example, windows and screens all over camp were assessed and documented for future repair and improvement. In addition, all the kitchen, infirmary, and most of the staff house florescent light fixtures were replaced with more energy efficient LED fixtures. The installers managed to get the kitchen job done without a single screw, piece of wire, or light fixture being discovered in anyone's dinner. In the boy's T-house there had been a shortage of functional "seating". One toilet was repaired and resealed and another was replaced. The shower curtains were moved further into the showers in both T-Houses so now there will be less water on the floors. New shelving was installed in the canteen. The large pieces of wood that had been stored behind the garage were relocated behind the museum so that all the camp wheelbarrows could be mounted to the garage wall. Now the wheelbarrows look like an art installation with each one bearing the marks of its camp history, and now they are out of Ventry's way in the garage! Trees were removed for safety or pruned for their health and from the trunks of a couple of white oaks, new bench material was saved. The remaining old floor joists under the staff house were replaced. Camp's battle with the autumn olive invasion was rejoined along the road and camp paths. The garden was cleared for spring planting, repairs were made to the porch screens behind the infirmary. A new light was installed to light the play field area. Spring cleaning was done in all the living and social areas. So much was accomplished!



Mixed in with all this productive labor was the core joy of simply being in this special place, supporting a mission we all share, and visiting with old and new friends. Callie Houghland, who has been serving in the Peace Corps, gave us an interesting presentation on her experience in Mexico. She won the prize this time for the farthest distance traveled to come to a Service Weekend! Every evening, there was music and time to chat. Mike Meads donated a pig and we had an incredible barbecue dinner on Saturday. As always, the food was plentiful and really delicious! Many thanks to Nell for her tireless commitment to our culinary satisfaction and accommodation of our assortment of dietary restrictions! When I think of Service Weekend, my mouth says "YES, I'm ready. Let's go!"

Thank you to Adam, Amy, Andrew, Angelina, Ann, Asa, Austin, Barak, Ben, Bennie, Brent, Brett, Callie, Caroline, Carolyn, Cate, Christopher, Chuck, Clarrissa, Corey, Cori, Dave, Elizabeth, Emily, Eric, Erika, Ean, Flip, Flora, Fox, Gary, Hannah, Hannan, Jane, Jason, Jay, Jerry, Joel, Kamiya, Kate, Katie, Katie, Kaylani, Kim, Leah, Leslie, Liam, Lily, Louise, Mack, Mackenzie, Maria, Maria, Mason, Matthew, Mike Molly, Molly, Nancy, Neil, Nell, Penny, Peter, Porter, Rayne, Rebecca, Sarah, Sarah, Sarah, Sarah, Sharon, Sheryl, Shirley, Stacy, Stephanie, Theta, Todd, Tony, Trey, Ursula, Valerie, Ventry, Violet, Walter, Willow, and Wynne.



Come join us next time. Spring Service Weekends are always the third weekend in May and Fall Service Weekends are the third weekend in September. Mark your calendars and join the fun!



She said YES!!!



## ***Jessica L. Pierson, 1983-2018***

It is with deep sadness that we must inform you of the passing of Jessica Pierson. Jessica was a Nature Camp camper from 1994 to 2000. She was also a counselor in 2001, 2002, 2004 and 2005. She touched the lives of many in our Nature Camp family. Her sister Emily was also a camper and counselor.

Jessica Lee Pierson, 35, of Harrisonburg passed away Wednesday, August 29, 2018 from complications of Addison's disease. Jess was born in Fredericksburg on June 27, 1983, to Janet Pierson and her late husband, Charles Parke Pierson. Jess attended James Monroe High School where she was a stellar athlete and honor scholar. After graduating from James Madison University, she spent two years on the mission field in Peru, sharing her love for the Lord. Residing in Harrisonburg, Jessica excelled at her job as a social worker for Rockingham County and nurtured her clients with compassion, respect, and gentleness. She was an active member of Covenant Presbyterian Church, continually embraced by her family of faith who journeyed with her since her days as a college student. Jess had a beautiful smile, and a sweet and simple demeanor that won the hearts of many, who even now are being inspired by her witness of faith. She was utterly devoted to and dearly loved by her close-knit family. Survivors include her mother, Jan Pierson and husband Frank Graebner; brothers Daniel Pierson (Anne) and Christopher Pierson (Elissa); and sister Emily Moore (Michael). Her signature gift of loving thoughtfulness, especially in her role as "Tia" to her beloved niece and nephews, Mary Claire, Lukas, Nicholas, and Parke, overflowed through her kindheartedness, unselfishness, and generosity, and will never be forgotten.

## ***Dawn Louise Maguire, 1933-2018***

Mrs. Dawn Louise Maguire (née Breu) died peacefully in her home on July 9th, 2018 in Scottsville, VA at the age of eighty-five.

Dawn is survived by her husband, Charles; her children, Arthur Maguire, Catherine Maguire, and Marie Feyes; grandchildren, John Maguire, Rian Maguire, Hayden Feyes, and Emily Feyes; and her brother, Joseph Breu of Chicago, IL. She is preceded in death by her sister, Marian Harlan, of Lake City, FL.

Dawn was born on May 18, 1933 in Carlisle, PA to Joseph and Ada Hummel Breu. She graduated from Carlisle High School in 1951 and then Lockhaven College in 1955 with a degree in Education. She married Charles "Mac" Maguire, a naval Communications Technician in 1964. After moving to Virginia Beach, Dawn began working for the Civil Service as an Administrative Records and Appointment Coordinator. Her children remember her as a wonderful supporter of all their activities, and she never missed a play or sporting event. She always encouraged them to pursue their goals.

Dawn loved playing and following sports and often could be found keeping up with the Washington Redskins or her favorite golfers. She was a generous individual who loved Nature Camp (in Vesuvius, VA) and who was passionate about helping students and young adults pursue endeavors in caring about the world. She and her husband Mac loved to go camping and often travelled to see their children with a camper trailer. Later in retirement they volunteered at Meals on Wheels.

A funeral mass was held on September 22, 2018 at St. George's Church in Scottsville, VA. If you would like to celebrate Dawn Maguire's life, please consider sending donations to Nature Camp at <http://www.naturecampfoundation.org/give/> or the American Diabetes Association.

Condolences can be sent to the family at 1531 Riding Club Rd, Keene, VA 22946.

## *Calendar of Events 2018 - 2019*

Fall Hike Day	20 October 2018
NCI Board Meeting	17 November 2018
NCF Annual Board Meeting	26 January 2019
Spring Service Weekend	17-19 May 2019
Prospective Camper Day	20 July 2019

### **Nature Camp Foundation Board of Directors**



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