



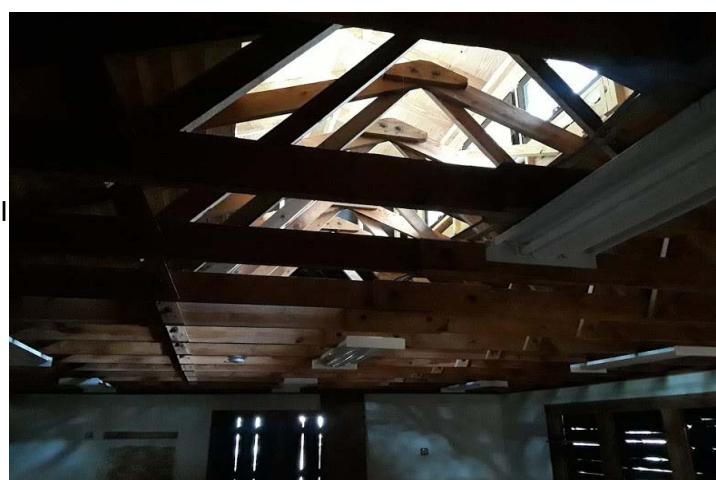
The Afterglow

Issue 97, Spring 2020

Follow the Gleam...

The Education Building Renovations

A sneak peek.....



New Monitors on the roof of each section of the building bring in much needed natural light and allow for ventilation to reduce heat buildup.



New doorways between all sections of the building allows for movement between all three sections from inside!!



New adjustable shelving in the library and lab give much more flexible storage space for books and equipment.





News from Nature Camp

By Philip Coulling, NC Executive Director

I am writing this on the 15th of April. It has been eight months since Fourth Session ended and we were getting ready for the start of the 30th annual Adult Session, seven months since a cadre of eager volunteers boxed up the contents of the Education Building for winter storage so that renovations could commence, six months since a record crowd gathered for another wildly successful Fall Hike Day, and exactly three months since registration opened for this summer's youth session. Five days after the first applications were submitted, the United States reported its first case of coronavirus to the World Health Organization. Few could have imagined what the next 13 weeks would bring. Ordinarily at this time of year I would be preparing to mail health forms to registered campers, anticipating the Spring Service Weekend in another month, and looking forward with the staff and scores of campers to the start of First Session one month later. But of course this is no ordinary year.

Anything I might write now about the status of Nature Camp and our summer season would undoubtedly be out of date by the time you receive this issue of the Afterglow in your inbox or mailbox. Despite lingering uncertainties about when restrictions on public gatherings will be eased, social distancing can be relaxed, and folks will feel comfortable and safe resuming some semblance of their more carefree pre-pandemic lives, we know unequivocally that COVID-19 will be with us for some time to come, and for logistical, jurisdictional, safety, and ethical reasons, we don't know if it will be possible or feasible to hold on-site sessions this summer. Guidance from national, state, and local agencies and authorities will guide our decision-making, but the ultimate question will likely be whether operating Nature Camp this summer can be done without jeopardizing the health of our campers, staff, and camp families.

Over the past few weeks, I have participated in an online forum of nearly 3000 camp professionals from across the United States, Canada, and other countries. Nearly all the other members are people I have never met, and I don't even recognize the vast majority of the names. But I have made connections, however ephemeral, with folks who have answered my questions, provided useful resources, challenged me to think out of the box, and inspired me with their dedication, determination, selflessness, creativity, and commitment. I've never considered myself much of a camp person. (Before you rush to judgment, let me clarify: I have for more than four decades been a Camp person—i.e., a Nature Camper.) But one thing I have gained during this pandemic is newfound and newly expanded appreciation for and admiration of those thousands of individuals who believe with every fiber of their being in the importance and power of camp. And I have never been more proud to be a member of the camp community (or of the Camp community).

What I have come to realize is that yes, this summer will look different, perhaps very different, and subsequent summers may as well. At Nature Camp young people may not have the opportunity in 2020 to slide down the chute at Table Rock or hear the call of a whippoorwill in the middle of the night or gather with friends for a desultory conversation in the Gus Deeds Memorial Pavilion. But camp will endure—and so will Camp. If there is a silver lining in this awful, frightening, tragic situation, it is that we have an opportunity—well, an opportunity has been forced upon us—to reconsider and reimagine what camp—and Camp—is, to expand the ways in which and the time over which we connect with one another, and to explore new avenues for learning about and fostering an appreciation of the world around us. We are already making plans to take Nature Camp into the virtual realm, plans that will almost certainly materialize whatever the summer holds. There is, of course, no small irony to making greater use of our digital devices to fulfill the mission of Nature Camp, but while we are apart physically, the cyberworld offers us a chance to stay connected—and to build new connections, ones that just might persist once life returns to something like normalcy. And that opportunity excites me.

I cannot speak for the myriad other camps represented in my new online community, but it seems likely that some will thrive, some will just get by, and some may have to close their doors permanently. But I have no doubt that the future of Nature Camp is strong and bright. We have endured other anxious and uncertain springs (such as 1942, when Lillian Schilling and others tried to get a new camp off the ground during the first year of American involvement in World War II; 1952, when Mrs. Schilling had to cancel camp at the beginning





of June because construction of new facilities at Big Mary's Creek had not progressed sufficiently; and 2007, when negotiations to take over ownership from the Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs and the long wait for a new Special Use Permit from the U.S. Forest Service extended into May), and we will endure this one as well. Thanks to the foresight, generosity, and loyalty of countless members of the Nature Camp Foundation and the greater Camp family, we are poised to overcome the short-term financial hurdles we may face and emerge from this crisis well equipped to continue to inspire wonder, stimulate a lifelong love of learning, and transform lives. Such is the importance and power of Camp.

May the Lord watch between me and thee, while we're absent, one from another.

Nature Camp Roll of Honor

By Philip Coulling, NC Executive Director

Paul Cabe and Leigh Ann Beavers served as directors of Nature Camp from 2000 through 2003. On the middle Sunday of each session, they would release the cooks to go hiking with the rest of the staff and campers and would stay in camp to prepare a hearty dinner of roast turkey, mashed potatoes, and all the usual trimmings. Although Nature Camp had long served a big meal after the return of Sunday hikes, the menu would often vary from summer to summer, but the tradition that Leigh Ann and Paul established continues to this day—the Thanksgiving feast, that is; current director Flip Coulling has never felt up to putting together such a meal by himself.

When Nature Camp faced the daunting task of having to raise nearly half a million dollars to pay for much-needed upgrades to the electric and water infrastructure in 2007-2008, Paul and Leigh Ann proposed an idea for a fundraiser at Camp: a day of hiking in the fall followed by an early Thanksgiving dinner which they offered to prepare. It is unclear whether they originally envisioned only a one-time event, but wittingly or not, they created a new tradition: Fall Hike Day has become a staple on the annual Nature Camp calendar, and for 12 of the past 14 years, Leigh Ann and Paul have graciously and generously provided all of the food and spent an entire Saturday in October lovingly preparing a scrumptious meal (usually with the assistance of several other pairs of capable hands) for all the hikers. This event has drawn hundreds of participants and raised thousands of dollars for the Nature Camp Foundation; just as important, Fall Hike Day has strengthened and expanded the bonds of the Nature Camp community. In recognition of their contributions, the Nature Camp Board of Directors is pleased and grateful to induct Paul and Leigh Ann into the Roll of Honor for the class of 2020. Congratulations and thank you, Leigh Ann and Paul!

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/Nare-Camp/324806714283350?ref=br_tf



Fall Service Weekend

by Theta Miller

Fall Service Weekend 2019 saw 97 volunteers gather and work together on our beloved Nature Camp. We keep hitting new records for participation!

Much of the work of Service Weekends recurs each time we gather, and I can never make it sound glamorous. We always tend trees and eradicate invasive plants such as autumn olive. We clear brush and paint foundation block, clear paths and reset edging, clean bunk houses and tee houses and repair screens and shutters and drainage ditches. We create benches and shelving and community. We ready Camp for the summer season and put it to bed afterwards. Individuals who regularly attend the Service Weekends seem to find some niche they enjoy, and they just take up their familiar tasks. It's pretty well a given that Mike will be cutting autumn olive, Nell will be in the kitchen, and Andrew will be up a tree somewhere. Walter will be supervising the hewing of oak logs for benches, Jerry and Caroline will be methodically building or repairing something, and Amy G. will get pictures of us all in action! Now that I have started naming names, it's hard to stop! There are many committed regulars



with special talents and interests and many more that come just willing to do anything requested.

In addition to the routine and eternal tasks of Camp maintenance,

there is often a special project and this time it was the GREAT EDUCATION BUILDING EMPTYING AND DEMOLITION! Construction on the Education Buildings is probably almost complete as you read this. It was necessary that everything in the buildings be removed before construction commenced. Team leads for each of all three areas (Ryan Garvin handling the lab, Jerry Trammell the museum, and Claire Lant the library), made plans ahead of time to document, label, and pack up all materials for storage during the fall to spring construction season. Over the weekend, they guided and facilitated their teams' packing and transporting items to safe storage in the shipping container that was rented for the season and to other roomier locations throughout Camp.





When the building was completely emptied, folks got down to the business of dismantling shelving, taking down light fixtures, removing dropped ceilings and even the wallboard and walls. Salvaged lumber was de-nailed and stacked for reuse. It was quite an experience at the end of the weekend to stand in the museum and look through the wall to the fireplace in the library.

All of the work of the weekend, from cleaning the toilets to demo of the Ed Building, saves money that would have to be spent if there was not the committed volunteer labor of those who love Camp.

Lest this sound like we only work, I assure you that as always, the food was delicious, and the evenings filled with music and camaraderie.

Thank you to Adam G., Adam R., Amy B, Amy C, Amy G, Andrew, Andy, Art, Audrey, Banjo Mike, Barak, Bennie, Bob B, Bob E, Bob R, Brett, Bridgette, Brooke, Caleb, Carolyn, Claire L., Claire S., Clarissa, Corey, Dave, Doug, Eleanor, Emma, Eric, Ethan, Evan, Flip, Fox, George F., George S., Gisela, Grey, Jake, Jerry, Jes, Joel, Kajsa, Karen, Kate, Katherine, Katie, Kaye, Kellogg, Kendra, Kim, Kyle, Leah, Leia, Liam, Lock, Louise, Lucy, Luke, Lynne, Mack, Maggie, Manuel, Maria, Marieke, Martha, Mary Kathleen, Matthew, Mike, Mitch, Naomi, Nell, Noah, Paul C., Paul G., Pebbles, Penny, Rachel, Randy, Rob, Ryan, Sara, Sarah H., Sarah O., Sheryl, Shirley, Stephanie, Sylvia, Theta, Tolly, Troy, Ventry, Violet, Walter, and Will!

Come join us next time. Everyone is welcome at Service Weekends 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 and surrounding National Forest provide an excellent opportunity for those who wish to camp. Single sex bunk houses are available for those wishing the ease of just throwing a sleeping bag on a bunk. Spring Service Weekends are always the third full weekend in May (except this spring) and Fall Service Weekends are the third full weekend in September. Mark your calendars and join the fun.

**** Editor's Note: Due to the effects of the Corona virus and how it is disrupting all our lives, the the 2020 Spring Service Weekend will not be held at the regular time in May. We are hoping the situation will allow us to reschedule so that we may continue to provide the material, physical, and task-oriented support that Camp will surely need as we move into a rather unusual summer. As soon as we are able to communicate plans to you, we will. Please look for updates via our website, Facebook page, and email.**





Nature Camp Adult Session 2020 Rescheduled to August 14-18.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Nature Camp has decided to postpone Adult Session from June to August. The good Lord willin' and the creek don't rise (and the peak of the curve well behind us), Adult Session is scheduled to be held from Friday, August 14, to Tuesday, August 18. The theme for the weekend is "The Language of Nature;" we will, as one might expect, explore the natural world through the written word (both that of famous and not-as-famous nature writers and of participants themselves), but also consider the communication of birds through song, the dance of honeybees, and the signals that plants disseminate through the air and their interconnected fungal networks. And of course, there will be the language of music, informal folk singing in the evenings and the always popular Appalachian string band workshop. We'll also take a look at the sky (clouds during the day, Jupiter and Saturn at night), learn about deceit in aquatic organisms, freeze time as we imbed the beauty of nature in resin, and discuss the energy ecology of human relationships. Registration is now open at www.naturecamp.net, and updates to the schedule will be posted there as the spring progresses. Please join us in August!

News from Nature Camp, Inc.

By Katie Hoffman, Nature Camp, Inc. President

I won't lie. It's been a maelstrom lately—for all of us. COVID-19 has certainly disrupted normal operations for most of us, and Nature Camp, Incorporated is no exception. But amid all of the confusion and consternation, I remain incredibly grateful for the leadership and common sense of Philip Coulling and our board members, who are working hard to try to figure out how to proceed. Philip has been tracking how other camps are handling some of the decisions we will need to make, and on March 31, he shared his findings with the Executive Committee of the NCI Board. In the coming weeks, our committee will organize this information and schedule Zoom meetings for the full board so that we can make some important decisions (See Philip's News from Nature Camp for more on that.)

In other news, the Education Building seems to be moving along at the expected pace, and should be renewed and pretty much ready for use by the time we open Camp again. The new adjustable (!) library shelves are up, and the carpenter has sent plans for the cabinetry in the rest of the building, which is right in keeping with the feel and patina of Nature Camp. There will be a beautiful new vivarium in the lab, where live specimens will be held. The museum will have a new space in the back that will accommodate rainy-day classes and other types of meetings. It's going to be great!

We are entertaining ideas for alternate Camp activities to keep us all connected and entertained during the Time of COVID...more on that soon. Let me end with a special shout out to Ventry, who has had more on his plate than usual this year with the Girls T-house septic system replacement and the Education Building renovations. Thanks for all the extra time and effort, Ventry! And another special shout out to Philip, who has worked with Ventry on those two projects, plus handled the COVID-19 situation like a champ.

Please stay safe, stay well, and keep the faith. When Camp reopens, we will celebrate as a community—there's a place in the circle for all.





A Note from the Nature Camp Foundation

With the challenges and impact of the Corona Virus, our world has shifted since the end of 2019. Nature Camp, Inc. is assessing its plans and schedule for the summer and Adult Session has been postponed until August. We will be adapting NCF plans (mainly Service Weekend) to coincide with Nature Camp's schedule and needs as they become clearer in the months ahead. Nature Camp, Inc and the NCF will keep you up to date on plans through Facebook pages, websites, and emails.

We want to assure you that the Nature Camp Foundation remains in good financial shape, even though we have lost much of the 2019 gains in our investment accounts due to the drop in financial markets as a result of Corona Virus concerns. After \$65,400 in first quarter payments to Nature Camp Incorporated for capital equipment (\$20,400) and the Education Building renovation (\$45,000), net assets as of early April were \$768,839.

Please know that we join Nature Camp, Inc. in wishing all in our amazing community good health, comforting time with family, and the ability to connect and share that place in the circle from a distance.

NCF Nominations and Elections

by Sarah Hulcher

Voting in the 2019 election for President and At-large Board Member ended in December, 2019. Thanks to Nancy Lowry's careful tallying, the results showed that you elected Nell Fredericksen for President and re-elected Adam Rotche for At-Large Board Member. Amy Gonzalez was appointed to the position of NCF Development Chair and Theta Miller was appointed to the position of Service Weekend Coordinator.

This year the position of Vice President is up for election and the positions of Communications Chair and Finance Chair are up for appointment.

The NCF Governance committee will develop a proposed slate of nominees to be approved by the NCF board of directors and ballots will be mailed in November to all qualified voters. Those who contributed money or in-kind contributions during 2019 or 2020 are eligible to vote and will receive ballots with short candidate biographies. We will be using our electronic voting option, but will continue to offer traditional paper ballots.

If you would like to nominate someone to serve on the NCF or NCI board (NCI will be looking to fill the positions of Treasurer and Scholarship Coordinator this year) or would like to serve yourself, please contact me, Sarah Hulcher for NCF positions (hulchers@gmail.com) or Joe Garvin for NCI positions (joe.sue.garvin@gmail.com).

We are always wanting to broaden and strengthen our boards, so please do not hesitate to contact us to learn about the many ways in which you can become involved. If you are not interested in a board position, keep in mind we have special projects and events that need committee volunteers as well.





Development Committee & Capital Campaign Update

by Amy Kasdorf Gonzalez

Many of you all have already heard from me in the special solicitation for the *Building on Tradition* Capital Campaign. The letter went out in the US Mail in late February and the email went out on March 12th. The contributions are coming in. The NCF remains limitlessly grateful to you all for the gifts you give. As of April 7th, we are 54% of the way to our \$300,000 goal. And the gifts to our Scholarship Funds and to our Annual Operating Fund are continuing to come in. Such wonderful news! I will direct your attention to the article from NCI President Katie E. Hoffman and to our "Follow the Gleam" feature for the updates on the Education Building itself.

I have more exciting news to share with you! Well, it *is* exciting to us on the Development side. By the end of April, we will have transitioned from PayPal to Blackbaud Merchant Services as our payment processor for your on-line gifts to the Nature Camp Foundation. In addition, we will have an on-line Event Registration capability we can use to sign up for events like Reunion or Fall Hike Day.

Please Note: When you donate to the Nature Camp Foundation through our website or by check, it is so important that you notify us if you want the funds directed to a specific purpose, such as the Education Building renovation or one of our scholarship funds.

I wanted to take this opportunity to talk with you about 3rd party fundraising for the Nature Camp Foundation. Several people in our community have initiated fundraisers as birthday gifts, or to commemorate a lost loved one. The Nature Camp Foundation has been the grateful recipient of the funds generated. I am going to speak about what we see most often: the Facebook model. The checks that come to us are from Network for Good, as a lump sum, with no indication of which fundraiser generated the funds. It is our understanding that each donor to the Facebook fundraiser has received their tax receipt from Network for Good. We also understand that the originator of the fundraiser does get notified of who makes individual donations. The Nature Camp Foundation wants to express gratitude to those who have given to us, but we want to be clear that our appreciation will be very general, given the general nature of the way the funds come to us. So don't stop creating these fundraisers – just know that we aren't able to acknowledge the individual who originated the fundraiser unless you notify us, nor can we acknowledge the individuals who make donations via this route.

Life is uncertain at this point in time, but I am certain about my commitment to Nature Camp. It is a place that means hope to me. How we teach the next generation about caring for our natural environment will make such a difference, and I am honored that you all are still choosing to support the future of Nature Camp through your donations to the Nature Camp Foundation. Thank you.

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 folks 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/>





Obituary - Tessa Rane Majors



It is with deep sorrow that we share the loss of one of our own. Tessa was a long time Nature Camper and loved by many in our Camp family and she was taken from all of us way to soon. Her family shared that one summer at Nature Camp her major was Mycology and for the next two years every mushroom, lichen, and fungus was pointed out with relish.

Tessa was a 2019 St. Anne's-Belfield School graduate in her freshman year at Barnard College, was fatally stabbed near the college's campus in New York City. She is the daughter of Christy and James Inman

Majors. At her celebration of life, more than 25 young musicians and Majors' friends performed many of her favorite songs on a stage at St. Anne's, leading off with Paul Simon's "Graceland" and closing with "Prom Queen," a song she wrote for her band, Patient 0.

Throughout her too-short-life, Tessa was fiercely independent and loyal, according to friends and family who celebrated her life with music, poems, memories and prayer at St. Anne's-Belfield School. She was a writer, a musician, and a loyal friend who loved nature, her cats, her brother Maxwell and her family and friends. She liked to discover new things and then to share that discovery freely. She liked to introduce old friends to new ones and just expected everyone to get along. Hers was a big umbrella and getting bigger. And that is what her friends and family are most proud of.

Calendar of Events 2020

Spring Service Weekend
NCI Board Meeting
Adult Session
Nature Camp Reunion
Fall Service Weekend

TBD
June 20, 2020
August 14-18, 2020
September 5-7, 2020
September 18-20, 2020

Virtual "Nature Camp Canteen"

You can now order T-shirts, sweatshirts, onesies, kids wear, mugs, etc. from our new online "canteen." We now have 20 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/NatureCampFoundation?noCache=true>

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





Nature Camp Reunion 2020 - Register Now!!

The 2020 Nature Camp Reunion is just around the corner! Come reunite with your Nature Camp family as we gather for a long weekend of nostalgia, friendship, and celebration at Camp over Labor Day weekend, September 4-7, 2020. Over the course of the weekend you can expect hikes to your favorite spots around Camp, games of the more and less organized varieties, a team scavenger hunt, music making and storytelling around the campfire and in the LS, and much, much more! All weekend long there will be delicious local food cooked up by a rotating cast of talented Nature Camp cooks who will be whipping up your favorite Nature Camp classics and bringing their own fresh recipes to the table! Between the exhilarating activities and the satisfying meals there will also be plenty of time to lounge around and catch up with your old friends - and to meet new ones, too! Please join us for all or part of the weekend festivities.

Registration is required and is now open - please register by AUGUST 15, 2020!!

You can register and pay for Reunion online at:

<https://app.etapestry.com/onlineforms/NatureCampFoundation/reunion.html>

Or you may mail the registration form found on the back of this page along with your payment to Adam Rotche (address on the registration form).



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