

# The Afterglow

Issue 99, Spring 2021

## *Follow the Gleam - Joe Garvin*

As you may recall from our last issue, our Nature Camp family lost Joe Garvin. This hit the NCF and NCI board members extremely hard as Joe was serving as NCI Vice President - sharing his wisdom, kind heart, and that incredibly amazing laugh. So we decided to ask some of those that knew him best to share some of our many memories of Joe. John Diller, Katie Hoffman, and Ann Garvin Johnson (Joe's sister) share their stories. I (Nell Fredericksen) for one, was thrilled to reconnect with Joe after so many lapsed years and



to have him working with the NCI board. Like so many others, my musical education was due to hearing Joe play and sing and then buying albums at the end of the summer based on the list of songs he sang. I must have learned well since he would pop by at regular intervals and borrow albums during our grad school years at VA Tech. A few years ago, I was in the kitchen cooking for Service Weekend when Joe came back onto the scene. There was this white-haired guy that came through the food line, said "Hi Nell!!" I said hi back but did NOT recognize who that was. Then from out in the LS I heard that laugh - and knew Joe was here. I scared everyone in the kitchen as I squealed and ran to the LS to find Joe, that white haired guy, and gave him a huge hug. I cherish the time that that we spent chatting about a whole lot of everything and I will forever miss that laugh.

John Diller:

Joe and I came on staff together after first session the year after he won Best All-around Camper. Having started in fourth session at the same time we were good friends by then, especially after several first

sessions. The campers loved him. The kitchen became an all-day locus for music after Gerry Wass initiated the tradition of veteran counselors running the kitchen. When he was ready to move on, he asked Joe and I to take over. I was nominally the head cook, but we made all the decisions together. Joe put his stamp on the musical atmosphere, notably emphasizing the broad importance of Bruce Springsteen that many of us had somehow overlooked. With detailed analysis, while mixing pancake flour and various concoctions, we determined (definitively) that "Layla and Other Assorted Love Songs" was the best album in the universe. More to the point of cooking, he maintained the growing recipe book, had good ideas, and was very patient in accommodating special food requests we occasionally got. We organized a "cooks' class" in ornithology the second year, the only time we taught together, though for practical reasons not always at the same time. We had some troubles with starches cooking on time, and some meals got held up. These unfortunate events led to the "Uncle Ben Converting the Rice" skit with Colonel Reeves as the spiritual leader.

Some say a picture is worth a thousand words. Over the last 8 months I have spent a lot of time looking at photos of Joe. Most pictures include a guitar and then a song will go through my mind. He was always playing music for me and saying, "Have you heard----- I think you'd like them". Of course, most conversations

were about the Boss- Springsteen of course! He would always get the newest album on day one of the release. Joe had a wide range to his musical repertoire which most people do not know. My earliest memories of Joe playing and singing are when he was part of a group in our church, then I started going to Nature Camp and got to listen to Joe nightly at evening programs.

Ann Garvin Johnson:

These moments are among my fondest and most cherished. I loved to hear Joe play his guitar and he played it so much at Camp it was a treat! He would cringe when anyone would ask for "the Cat" and he looked as if he was tired of singing "Rocky Raccoon" but he usually humored us all and sang them anyway. One counselor talent night Joe told me he wasn't going to sing or play- he was tired and didn't want to. I threw a major little sister fit but he said NO. Then during the show, out he walks- guitar in hand and his smile that I miss so much today and he starts to play the song I had requested. I was so surprised and happy- I had the coolest big brother. Years later Joe surprised me again by bringing his guitar to my wedding reception, telling the band that he wanted to play something and singing a special song- Joe was always full of surprises.



I never understood the magic of Nature Camp but I wanted to be like my big brother and go when I was old enough. In the summer of 1980, I got my chance. I arrived for 4th session with my Mom and Dad and was greeted by Joe who was on staff at the time- I was immediately deemed "Garvin's Little Sister". I don't even think some counselors ever knew my name was Ann but I didn't care- I was a camper at Nature Camp and my big brother was on staff. I majored in Ornithology of course- was there any other major? Joe didn't cut me any slack but I was nowhere near as gifted as he was with birding or any of the sciences. I remember getting my notebook back at the end of the session and seeing all the corrections Joe had made. That first summer I had friends who were homesick and sad and I remember being so lucky to have my brother there- I didn't miss home. Joe never treated me like I was annoying during those summer sessions at camp. It was our special bond.

Nature Camp was one part of my brother Joe, and I was the privileged one in the family to share in the same experiences. I could go on forever talking about my big brother. Joe used to get so uncomfortable when I would say how much someone liked him or when someone would ask about him. He was a humble man that was gentle and kind. Joe made this world a better place and his passing has left a huge void. The place in the circle has a hole where I search for signs of Joe- he has left this world but we must continue on following the gleam. We are all forever changed and I am forever "Garvin's Little Sister"

Katie Hoffman:

Once while we were both at William and Mary, Joe came by for a visit. We were just sitting around talking, and he happened to pick up my student directory and flip through it. I was a sophomore at the time, living as close to the center of campus as I could manage. Joe had ventured in to see me from the farthest-flung, least populated dorm he could find. Flipping through the pages of my directory, he asked me, "What are all these check marks by people's names?" "Oh, those are all the people I've met so far," I explained. Oh, the look on his face! Joe found my answer hilarious, unfathomable, and also admirable, and he said so. A less kind and mature person would just have made fun of me. Not Joe. He understood our differences as one of the best things about our friendship.

While everyone else around him was busy being young and stupid (sometimes really stupid), Joe was our anchor—wise, calm, steady, and measured. But he managed to be responsible without being boring or self-righteous, which was part of why we all loved him. His sense of humor was one of his best qualities. As Nell has always said, Joe had the best laugh ever. It's a gift to us that Ryan has his own version of it. We'll still hear a beautiful echo at Camp every time Ryan laughs. Or when he sings--because Ryan has his own version of Joe's beautiful voice, too.



Music was always at the center of my friendship with Joe. One of the greatest pleasures of singing with him was how it sounded. But even greater was how he taught me to choose my material. I learned to pay attention to what a song meant. I learned to hear where a song needed to go and to find just the right harmony. What a teacher!

Joe had such a beautiful singing voice because Joe had such a beautiful heart. He knew how to listen—not just to music, but to people. He taught the rest of us a thing or two about that. He heard the best in us, because he believed that it was there. And when he heard it, he stayed tuned in, even when we couldn't do that for ourselves.

If I had thirty seconds to speak to Joe right now, I'd tell him this: "I wasn't ready for this goodbye. None of us were. Once we became 'grown-ups,' you and I didn't talk or see each other much, but it was always a comfort to know that I had such a friend in the world. I really miss you. But I'm so glad to have had you around. I keep discovering all that you left us—lessons that you taught us without our even noticing until you were gone. And I'm damn jealous of the angels who get to sing with you now. Learn some good new stuff, and keep the guitar tuned up for when I get there. And find me a printed directory, so I can start checking people off right away."

## ***Service Weekends***

There is just no good way to say it. There will be no 2021 Spring Service Weekend and the crystal ball is cloudy (although with puffy white clouds rather than the swirling dark grey and crackling lightening of this time last year) when we look to the fall.

We had no Service Weekends in 2020 and for many of us, that was a real loss. Coming together to care for Nature Camp is like visiting the old home-place and having an extended family reunion as well as getting the chores done.

As the situation evolves, and more and more of us are getting vaccinated, there is hope for a return to many of the gatherings which we used to have, and in that hope, we are planning that there will be a Fall Service Weekend in 2021. There may well be CDC and Virginia COVID restrictions in place and the need for altered behaviors to adhere to those restrictions to assure that we can gather safely. We will send out additional communication as we have answers and plans. Please look for updates via our website, Facebook page and email.

### **2020 Socially Distanced or Solitary Special Service**

Is it a Service Weekend if you have to bring your own food, and don't see anyone other than your immediate family members? I kinda think... no. Even so, there were a handful of folks who came at different times in the spring of our pandemic year to get a few critical projects done.

A new access was added to the personal quarters of the infirmary. Carolyn and Jerry Wine came three separate times to make the door happen, from cutting and framing the opening, to installing the door and storm door which they built to match the existing camp style. Mack and Liam Carr created the steps and landing. Krista, David, Lydia and Helena Samson came to paint the Ed Building.

Many thanks to these committed souls!



# ***News from Nature Camp***

***By Philip Coulling, NC Executive Director***

Yes, Virginia, there will be Camp this summer. Governor Ralph Northam's announcement in late February that overnight summer camps would be permitted to resume operations in 2021 was no doubt met with many sighs of relief and shouts of joy across the Commonwealth. Although other camp directors and I had already received word that this decision would be forthcoming, the official declaration allowed us to begin making concrete plans to reopen our doors in compliance with restrictions and guidelines intended to keep campers and staff safe and healthy this summer. Several weeks before the governor's executive order, Nature Camp had decided to reduce capacity to no more than 50 campers per session, chiefly so that we could achieve sufficient physical distancing in the bunkhouses and Lillian Schilling Building; in order to accommodate more campers over the course of the summer, we are also shortening each session to 10 days and adding two sessions to the schedule. This year's capacity just happens to be twice the number of campers permitted in a cohort, or family unit, under the reopening guidelines, so we will have two cohorts in each session this summer. Campers will do most activities within their cohort (including classes, meals, and recreation), but there will be opportunities to interact with those from the other cohort. As usual, we'll spend the better part of each day outside, and we'll continue the same precautionary measures that we've all grown accustomed to over the past year: wearing masks, maintaining physical distance, and practicing good personal hygiene. Thanks to a generous grant from NCF, we will be well equipped with personal protective equipment, including soap and hand sanitizer and masks, plus fans to improve air circulation in the buildings. NCF has also funded the badly needed replacement of the floor in the kitchen. And of course, we are eager to unveil the newly refurbished Education Building and excited to explore the myriad new possibilities that this space will afford.

This will be a year unlike any other in Nature Camp's history, and it will be challenging to balance the desire to cram a 14-day experience into only 10 with the critical need to abide by COVID restrictions. But it will still be Camp: it will be no less thrilling, no less educational, and no less memorable, even behind a mask and six feet apart. The buildings, the creek, the playfield, the chapel, the mountains have all missed campers over the past 20 or so months; they—and we—can't wait to welcome them back home.

## ***Nature Camp Roll of Honor:***

For the past several years, Carolyn Wine (camper 1993-1998) and her father, Jerry, have been regular attendees at Service Weekends, during which time they have enthusiastically undertaken a number of projects required skilled carpentry, including new shelving in the canteen and a handrail for the steps to the Education Building. They even took it upon themselves to repair one of the Best All-Around Camper plaques in the Lillian Schilling Building. But in 2020 they really went above and beyond in their service to Camp. First they built a new exterior door for the nurse's quarters, which allows access to this room without having to pass through the sick room of the infirmary. Then they crafted two exquisite oak tables for the refurbished museum and a bench for the porch of the Girls' Bunkhouse, using materials which Jerry donated. Nature Camp is incredibly fortunate to have such dedicated and talented craftspeople in our midst, and in recognition of their extraordinary contributions and exceptional generosity, we are pleased to induct Jerry and Carolyn Wine as new members of the Roll of Honor in the class of 2021. Congratulations and thank you, Carolyn and Jerry!

## ***Nature Camp Adult Session***

I feel as though I've written this before....

The good Lord willin' and the creek don't rise, there will be Adult Session this August! Much uncertainty lies before us in the months ahead, of course, including the availability of the COVID-19 vaccine for all prospective participants, the possibility of further easing of restrictions on the size of indoor gatherings and recommendations for mask wearing and physical distancing, and the feasibility and prudence of including a field trip that requires transportation by crowded multi-passenger van. But this much we do know, with as much certainty as one knows much of anything more than a year into the coronavirus pandemic: Adult Session is scheduled to take place from Friday, August 20, to Tuesday, August 24, and we will roll over into 2021 the theme that had been selected last year, "The Language of Nature." The tentative lineup of classes and other activities includes opportunities to explore the natural world through the written word, the songs and calls of birds, 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 night sky with an even cooler telescope than we've had the pleasure and privilege of using before. Registration is now open at [www.nature-camp.net](http://www.nature-camp.net), and updates to the schedule will be posted there as the spring progresses. Please stay well, get your shots, bring some face masks, and join us in August!

## ***NCF Reunion..... 2022***

The Nature Camp Foundation misses our whole Nature Camp family and we so want to be able to gather again on the banks of Big Mary's. However, we have decided that it is in the best interest of our community to again postpone the Nature Camp Foundation Reunion. The purpose of these reunions is to hug and laugh and sing and to share meals with old friends and new ones - and we don't feel that we can do that safely this year. We are planning to hold our next reunion over Labor Day weekend, 2022. We will also celebrate the completion of the Education Building renovations at that time with a grand and fun party! Until then, stay safe and spend some time outdoors looking for something beautiful with the people you love!

## ***NCF Fall Hike Day***

**Save the date!** The Nature Camp Foundation will be hosting (hopefully) another Almost-Annual Fall Hike Day on Saturday, October 23rd, 2021. This event is a fundraiser for NCF and a much-needed opportunity for all members of the Nature Camp community to gather in our favorite valley and explore the surrounding mountains together, reconvening for a turkey dinner to swap stories of all their adventures. We'll be extremely mindful of COVID safety and plan to implement some new protocols to this event to ensure we can all leave feeling happier and healthier than when we came. Mark your calendars and check social media for details as we get closer to the date.

## ***Development Committee & Capital Campaign Update***

***by Amy Kasdorf Gonzalez***

I am delighted to announce the successful completion of our Capital Campaign to Renovate the Nature Camp Education Building, affectionately known as Building on Tradition. We started the campaign quietly in late 2018. At that time, the expected cost for the renovation and ancillary expenses would approach \$300,000 so that's what we set as the goal. We also set an end date for the campaign at the end of 2021. We got a bit louder about the campaign in 2019 and our community pitched in generously. Then 2020 happened. Many people opted to give in an effort to help the world in some way. Your generosity continues to overwhelm me. At the last count, we have reached 64% of that \$300,000 goal. The good news is the Education Building Renovation is essentially complete, and thanks to our contractor, L.G. Flint (President Andy Flint is a former Nature Camper and Nature Camp Staffer), the cost has been SO much less than \$300,000. We are declaring the Capital Campaign complete. Thank you so very much. We are planning a dedication celebration during our Reunion scheduled for Labor Day weekend in 2022. Come party with us!

A word about 3rd party fundraising for the Nature Camp Foundation: Bottom line up front, we are all for it! What is it? Facebook is the most-used platform for folks to set up fundraisers in celebration of their birthdays or other special days that benefit a specified charitable organization. We have received a number of checks from the Fundraiser Manager for Facebook: Network for Good. By the time we receive the payment the money arrives in an aggregated sum. The Nature Camp Foundation has no way of knowing who the individual donors are or how to thank them. I am sharing this in the spirit of expectation management. We are profoundly grateful for these gifts, we just have to thank our community as a whole, as I am doing here. Thank you, thank you very much!!

In other parts of the Afterglow, you will read from the Flip Coulling, Executive Director of Nature Camp that Nature Camp is working hard to provide a safe and enriching in-person experience this summer. The Nature Camp, Inc. administration has worked hard to identify and mitigate the costs of altered operations in this new Covid-safe environment and the NCF is poised to provide additional funding when needed. Won't you please consider an additional donation to the Nature Camp Foundation to help defray this new expense? Let us get back to having a Nature Camp as familiar as we long for yet as safe as we need.

To give, drop a check in the mail to:

The Nature Camp Foundation

P.O. Box 265

Studley VA 23162

If you'd like to give electronically, please visit us at [www.naturecampfoundation.org/give/](http://www.naturecampfoundation.org/give/).

## ***Find us on Facebook!!!***

You can connect with the Nature Camp Foundation at:

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

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[https://www.facebook.com/pages/Nare-Camp/324806714283350?ref=br\\_tf](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Nare-Camp/324806714283350?ref=br_tf)



## ***Barbara Orcutt Keeton - 1938-2021***

A kind, gentle soul passed from this world in the early hours of March 10, 2021. Bobby Keeton was born and raised in Blacksburg, Virginia by her parents, Fred and Katherine Orcutt. Roaming the woods of the Blue Ridge Mountains as a child, and spending part of high school in Hawaii, she developed a life-long love of natural history, which later developed into staunch advocacy for conservation. While a counselor at the Virginia Federation of Garden Club's Nature Camp in the Shenandoah Valley, she developed a romance with her future husband, William (Bill) Tinsley Keeton (b. 1932 - d. 1980), whom she married in the summer of 1958. First attending Virginia Polytechnical University, she later transferred to Cornell University in Ithaca, NY to be with her husband, then a newly minted faculty member at Cornell.

Bobby completed her B.S. in Natural Resources at Cornell in 1959. She continued with graduate studies in animal behavior working with Professor William Dilger, but the demands of raising three young children prevented her from completing her masters. Nevertheless, her zeal for exploring the natural world continued, taking her on research expeditions and trips to a host of exotic locations, including remote corners of Mexico, Peru, the Pacific Northwest, and Micronesia. Bobby and her family lived in Germany for two years while her husband was on sabbatical, first in Munich (1972-1973) and later in Konstanz (1978-1979).

It was in the 1980s that Bobby's conservation work took off. She began working actively with The Nature Conservancy, serving as treasurer of the Central and Western New York Chapter for 11 years. She was a tireless advocate for and supporter of the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Environmental Defense Fund, and The Wilderness Society—among others. A donation of ecologically significant land in Florida to The Nature Conservancy earned her an honorary lifetime membership. Many an Earth Day or other celebration around the Ithaca area saw Bobby creating and staffing information booths for one (or sometimes multiple!) conservation organizations. Bobby joined the Finger Lakes Land Trust (FLLT) at its inception, helping promote one of upstate New York's most successful land conservation organizations. In the early '90s she donated 66 acres as "trade land"—land sold with a conservation easement, with the proceeds plowed back into conservation work. Later she and her family donated another 111 acre parcel, which became the Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve. In recognition, FLLT awarded her its Conservationist of the Year in 2001.

## ***Ned Brinkley- 1965-2020***

The birding world lost a luminary on Sunday, November 22, when Edward S. (Ned) Brinkley died during a birding trip in southern Ecuador. Ned was a Nature Camper from

Brinkley, 55, was the editor of *North American Birds*, the journal of ornithological record published by the American Birding Association for the past 20 years, and for many years, he wrote its always-insightful "Changing Seasons" column. He was the author of the *National Wildlife Federation Field Guide to Birds of North America*, and he held a Ph.D. in comparative literature and film from Cornell University and was formerly a professor of literature and film at the University of Virginia. He also co-owned a birders' bed-and-breakfast in Cape Charles, Virginia. We mourn for Ned, for his family and loved ones, and for the gaping hole this leaves in the fabric of the birding community into which he was so tightly woven."

## ***Therin Brooks - 1961-2019***

BROOKS, Therin, 37, a fine artist and resident of Eureka, Calif., died on November 15, 2019. Born on December 28, 1981, in Richmond, Va., Therin is survived by their parents, Katherine Moody Brooks and James F. Brooks (Fran); brother, Whit Brooks (Emily Haenselman); nieces, Daisy and Oriane; in addition to numerous uncles, aunts, cousins, a family of dear friends; and Loubert, their family's beloved pit bull. Therin was a Nature Camper from 1993-1995. Therin received a BFA in fine arts in painting from the Pratt Institute of Art and Design in Brooklyn, N.Y., in 2004. Their work, often rich in allegorical symbolism, was represented in galleries worldwide. At the time of their death, Therin was pursuing a master's degree in clinical psychology to become a licensed therapist. Therin's lifelong love of the outdoors and adventure was best illustrated by a cross-country trip on a tall bike that they built. Indeed, their community and friends stretched around the globe. Deeply and exuberantly loved by so many, Therin's was an indomitable spirit that lives on beyond this life's confines.

## ***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.

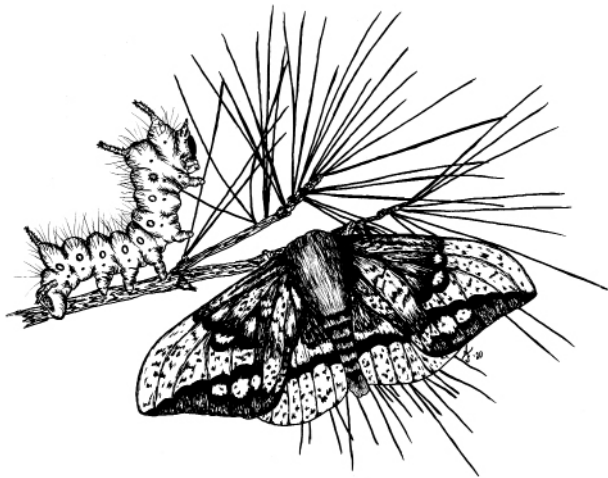
Please visit our SpreadShirt shop at:

<https://shop.spreadshirt.com/NatureCampFoundation?noCache=true>

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

## ***The T-shirt that wasn’t, but will be...***

Every year campers, staff, and alumni wait patiently to see what the Nature Camp T-shirt design will be. This past summer, however, because all of the normal activities at Camp were cancelled due to Covid only a small group of Staff shirts were printed. Yes, there was a design, even with a hidden small Covid virus.



We had planned to help Camp, help fund the Education Building renovations, and give everyone the chance to own a 2020 Nature Camp T-shirt by putting this in our Virtual Nature Camp Canteen as a special limited time fund raiser. HOWEVER, it was decided that this should be the Tshirt design for the summer of 2021. It will not be available on the Virtual Canteen until after this summers sessions have ended. We will post on Facebook, on the NCF website, and send out an email with the link as soon we actually get this up and available.

## ***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/>



## ***Calendar of Events 2021***

This is our tentative schedule for this coming year. Due to gathering restrictions still in place there will be no Spring Service Weekend, but we do plan to hold events in the fall if possible.

NCI Board Meeting  
Adult Session  
Fall Service Weekend  
Fall Hike Day

June 5, 2021  
August 20-24, 2021  
Sept 17-19, 2021  
October 23, 2021



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