



The Afterglow

The Newsletter of the Nature Camp Foundation

Number 66

December 2005

Save the Pool!

One of the earliest ideas behind the creation of the Nature Camp Foundation was to provide a means for former campers and friends of camp to help support a place we all love dearly. Once again, we have an opportunity to do that in a very direct and meaningful way for two important projects, one of which is actually underway and one of which will begin as soon as the end of the 2006 session.

First project: At the end of this summer, the health inspectors found that the swimming pool needs major restorative work, so much so that it would not likely survive the winter so as to pass the mandatory inspection next spring. The tiles are disintegrating, the plaster needs a complete rework, and the cover is no longer effective as an environmental control.

The cost to redo the pool this fall is substantially cheaper than to redo it next spring when demand (and prices) will be higher for such work, but even the cost this fall is not trivial. It is estimated that it will cost some \$45,000 to bring the pool up to proper standards. For any organization, this is no small sum, particularly on short notice. The VFGC had not budgeted for that large a maintenance expense, and while the VFGC Board is seeking funds where it can, this is also an opportunity for all of us, for we all know how important the pool is to the camp experience.

To that end, the Board of Directors of the Nature Camp Foundation would like to offer the VFGC the direct support of its membership, as the VFGC undertakes its own funding and management effort. We propose to do this with a special fundraising effort this year. We ask that you please donate an amount, in addition to your regular dues for 2006, towards the "Save the Pool" fund. In an effort to make your dollars work twice as hard, the Foundation has pledged to match every gift for the pool from members, dollar-for-dollar. Obviously, the more promptly you can send your contribution in, the more quickly we can put it to work.

Second project: While the swimming pool project is urgent and had to be addressed now, a longer term issue has been looming for some time. The entire camp electrical, water, and sewer systems need to be wholly upgraded. This infrastructure upgrade will involve digging up the road and paths to lay new pipes and cables, and redoing the fixtures within each of the buildings. The state of the electrical system is perhaps most acute -- fans, lights, and appliances, for example, have been added to buildings over the years, but the original wiring has not kept pace with the changes. This need has been under discussion for some years.

Now action will be taken. Under the leadership of Nancy Hargroves, President of the VFGC and of the Board of Nature Camp, Inc., and Flip Coulling, Director of Nature Camp,

several schedule and cost estimates have been sought. Though still in the planning stages, it is work that will take a number of weeks. The hope and expectation is that the work could start after the end of the last session of camp next summer, and the work be completed before the ground freezes in late fall 2006. Total costs will likely run in the \$150,000 to \$200,000 range, maybe higher.

This is a major effort that your Board also believes merits the support of our members and friends. Next summer, we will send out another call in a second fundraising effort to help offset some of the costs for this major undertaking. By that time, more specifics will be known of the exact costs and scope of the project, so you can be better informed as you make your decision.

The dues forms that accompany this message include only the first appeal to support the swimming pool. Nevertheless, the Board believes it only fair that you should also know that a second fund raising effort will be launched next summer for the infrastructure upgrade.

It is our hope that over the next year, together, we can provide a meaningful contribution for camp in its time of need. It is a central principle upon which this Foundation was founded.

The entire Board thanks you for your support.

Powell Hutton, President

Dues and Directory for 2006

Your editor is having trouble believing this, but it's time to republish the directory as we do every two years. It'll be updated from information you return with your dues forms (hint, hint) and distributed in spring. Since it's upwards of 16 pages, the copying and mailing add up to a couple of dollars per person, so we also post it in the password-protected area of the website, hoping to save on mailings. You will not receive a paper copy unless you request it on the dues form -- which you are very welcome to do. Your editor herself is a paper person.

As always, \$25 entitles you to one membership (\$10 for students). If you would like to have two voting members, but a single newsletter delivered to one address, the dues are \$40. This year all contributions above and beyond dues will go toward the pool fund. Also as always, \$500 lump sum makes you a Life Member and nets a free registration at Adult Session. Those who break \$1000 cumulatively above and beyond dues become Lillian Schilling Fellows and Life Members. If you paid dues after July this year, we will count that as dues for 2006.

State of the Investments

Goal	\$500,000
Current Level (approx.)	250,000
Donations for 2005	11,563
Lillian Schilling Fellows	48
Sustaining Members for 2005	37

Service Group Tackles Water Problems

We had another very successful Fall Service Weekend September 16-18, 2005 with a great turnout of folks. Seven of the attendees were on staff this past summer. Of the 49 folks who attended throughout the weekend, 17 had never attended a previous Service Weekend. The weather was dry and I thought it was quite warm.

NCF paid \$676 for supplies, which included a compressor to blow the water from the water lines so they won't freeze and crack during the winter. I had a 2-page list of nearly 130 tasks. We did well at whittling down the list. We hauled some logs from the girls' swimming hole. We repaired many screens, screen doors, and shutters. We did a Ranger A run (Adopt-A-Highway) along 608 above and below camp. We added boards to the compost pile to make it taller to accept more stuff.

We extended the back-flush line from the canteen to the road and made a rock gutter to hold the 200 or so gallons of water that is back-flushed through the filters each night. We also extended the well overflow pipe to the trees near the canteen to eliminate the puddle.

The steel gate near the bridge was bent when a tree fell on it during Hurricane Frances in 2004. We straightened the gate using a rope winch and 2 propane torches. We then scraped and repainted it. It looks good and can once again be locked.

We bleached, primed, and painted the ceiling and walls in one of the rooms of the BTM. A tree had fallen during Hurricane Frances and punctured the roof. The rain that entered through the hole in the roof resulted in black mold on the ceiling and walls. We also painted the foyer and sickroom ceilings and walls in the infirmary.

During the regular session of camp this year, the tree supporting the wires to the chapel fell over. We ran a new underground power line from the LS to the chapel light posts. We also purchased 4 outdoor lights that will be used to replace the carriage lights that once illuminated the paths to the chapel.

For many years we have tried to stop a leak in the GBH. We finally got it repaired in May of this year, but much damage had been done from the water running down the valley rafter. The ends of some of the rafters were rotted away along with the soffit and fascia. We removed and replaced the rotten wood.

Ariana and Beth deserve the hero awards for the weekend. They each dressed up in Humpty-Dumpty tyvek coveralls, with a hood over their heads and painted carbolineum over head from an extension ladder on the new rafters and plywood in the infirmary back porch. It was a nasty job, and I appreciate them taking on the task.

And at the end, we shut off the water to Camp and drained the lines for winter.

Thanks so much to Jimmy for running the kitchen for the weekend. He had great help from Shirley, Mary Jo, and lots of other folks. Train wreck was a special treat for dinner. I had heard about it for years, but never tried it. We also had home-made bread and rolls at nearly every meal, even home-made french bread for french toast one morning. Jimmy did a wonderful job of using the food that was left over after the regular and Adult Sessions of Camp. I don't know how much was spent on food for the weekend, but I think it was very little. We sang in the LS on Saturday evening. I think it was too warm to gather around a campfire. -- Jim Brooks

Typos, Typos Everywhere

Flying fingers forge flaws, and it happened twice in the Sept. *Afterglow*, both in the article about Adult Session. Peter's fascinating recordings of animal sounds were slowed down to 1/8 and 1/16 frequencies, which got merged into 1/18. Even more drastic, Walter was presented as a speed-demon builder, completing his recycled log-cabin house in a mere 3 years. The actual number is 30, count them 30, years. As a modest recompense, we've included a photo of the result in this issue.



News of Old and New Friends

Liz Hutton is now a medical student at Brown University.....Clay Campbell, '92-'99, joins us from Indiana.

