



The Afterglow

The Newsletter of the Nature Camp Foundation

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June 2006

Update on Renovations and the Decisions to be Made

The two dozen members who attended the annual open meeting of the Nature Camp Foundation on May 20 saw the completed swimming pool, shining in the sunlight, ready for the first plunge this summer. Together, the Foundation, members and friends contributed almost \$28,000 to "Save-the-Pool," over half of the \$46,000 bill to renovate it. There can be no better testimony to the loyalty and support of alumni and associates for our camp. Thank you.

Unfortunately, we have not enjoyed the same progress for the remaining big task of upgrading the camp's electrical, water, and sewer systems. By this time of year, we had hoped that the planning and estimating process would be well underway. That has not been the case. As of this writing, the plans have not yet been approved by the Forest Service where they have lain since early May. This may be understandable since the Forest Service is under-funded, and our camp isn't at the top of its priority list as summer season opens. But it is a setback for our hopes.

Moreover, many actions are necessarily consecutive, not concurrent. Only once the plans are approved, can they go out for bid. Then it would take at least another month for bids to be received. At that time, we would know how much money had to be raised - and that could be anywhere from \$250,000 up to \$450,000 given camp's rocky soil. Finally, we could let a contract, but most contractors will want a guarantee of cash on hand before undertaking a major effort. Then our work would join the queue of existing jobs, a long queue for many firms given the national workload generated by Hurricane Katrina. Even firms in the Lexington and Richmond areas have long backlogs of work, and a relatively remote job such as ours could not generate the interest that one nearer home base would.

The long and the short of it is that our hopes of having work started at the end of this summer's session seem dim.

When Nancy Hargroves, President of the Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs (VFGC), gave her report at the general meeting, she shared not only progress with planning, but also some other considerations affecting the decisions the VFGC must make. At issue is the long term future of Nature Camp. Declining enrolment is one (350 campers in 1998; 271 in 2005; this year so far, it's back up to 305). Competition from a number of other camps that didn't exist when Nature Camp was started is also a factor. With camp on leased property it doesn't own, the VFGC Board is concerned that access to funds will likely be limited to what we in the Foundation and other specifically interested parties can raise. While Nature Camp's base of supporters is passionate, it is not necessarily very broad. These are issues that must be weighed by the VFGC once the funding estimates are in, Nancy reports.

In the meantime, your Foundation Board and many of our members are working to mitigate these challenges and support camp. Our marketing efforts have seemed to be paying off. Service Weekend, May 20-21, with Jim Brooks' gifted planning and execution, was a real success. Adult Session, June 9-12, once again so ably led by Connie Sancetta, brought out the usual happy suspects and some

enthusiastic new converts. Flip Coulling has the summer sessions' staff on board, and another season of adventure in nature begins. Nature Camp is doing what it does best - opening the eyes and ears, hands and hearts of young people to the natural wonders about them.

May we all work to help ensure it continues to do so.

-- Powell Hutton, President, NCF

Haiku from Adult Session 2006

Sharon Spangler gave us a class on interpreting poetry, at the end of which we wrote haiku and other poems. Here are some of them, with names removed to avoid embarrassment, but we will tell you that one had considerable help from Sharon's daughter Rachel (14).

Brisk and damp the air
The musty smell of cabins,
A leaf drops softly

Splitting the soft air
The voice of the whippoorwill
Calls me to morning.

Mary's Creek laughing
Stones smooth-worn lie in shallows.
A fern is drinking.

Walter's swift fingers
Dance over the banjo strings
Scattering sweet notes.

Adult session was full of many other classes and outings as seen below:



Heads Up, Editor Moving

Tired of the relentless development of Fairfax County and looking with horror at the plans for a new metro line and "urban center" (translation: masses of high-rise condos starting at \$1M) barely five minutes from her back door, your editor is fleeing to quieter waters, specifically eastern Ohio where she has several favorite cousins in an area of open rolling countryside and small towns strikingly lacking in strip malls, big-box stores, and high-rises. The move will take place in September, and the next issue of the *Afterglow* will be winging its way to you from Moreland Hills, OH. New email, address, and phone will be announced in that issue.



Another successful Service Weekend

We had another very successful Spring Service Weekend May 19-21, 2006. We had 48 volunteers who attended at least part of the weekend. Eight had never been to a previous Service Weekend. NCF paid \$696 for supplies, including \$136 for a new exhaust fan motor for the GBH.

The buildings at Camp are all about 50 years old now, and are beginning to deteriorate. We spent a good deal of time replacing rotten wood. We replaced fascia boards on the staff house, infirmary, and education building, soffit boards on the staff house and education building, 1x6 roof sheathing on the staff house, and framing and porch decking on the education building. We added two cedar posts in the chapel and wired them with spot lights. We built two garden boxes near the road between the staff house and BBH, in front of the BTH. We used 2x12's to build two garden beds 12'x4' and filled them with rotten wood chips and compost from the compost pile. Flip had started tomatoes, peppers, basil, and lettuce plants to fill the two beds. During the winter, a tree blew down on the trail to Buttermilk Springs. We cleaned up the downed tree and brush. We spent a good deal of time hauling wood chips from the area next to the compost pile to the new garden area. We swept the roofs, porches, and buildings. We built a new routed sign and installed it down at the fork in the road. But, mostly, we got Camp ready for the upcoming NCF Adult Session and the regular summer session.

Joe Irby and Mark Chilton were the heroes of the weekend. Joe supplied the 10-ton jack to lift the education building porch for the necessary repairs and the two cedar posts that we used in the chapel. Mark volunteered to paint all the new wood with carbolineum, and anybody who volunteers for that nasty job is definitely a hero.

The food was fantastic. Chuck and Jen ran the show with help from many others. We had spaghetti, many kinds of pizza, French toast, sandwiches and salads, many kinds of cookies, and many kinds of pies. We sang in the LS on Friday and Saturday evenings. We had a fire going in the LS in the morning because the mornings were chilly.

-- Jim Brooks, Service Committee



Construction of the new garden proceeds with lots of help!

Calendar of Events, 2006

Fall Service Weekend Sept. 16-17

NEW LILLIAN SCHILLING FELLOW FOR 2006
 Paul Schwobel

NEW LILLIAN SCHILLING SUSTAINING MEMBERS FOR 2006
 Phyllis Kline Appler Blue Ridge Garden Club Todd & Nell Fredericksen
 Tom & Margaret Hicks Judy Riley Raymer
 Jerry Trammell & Katherine Hoffman Tom & Ali Wieboldt Doug Woodworth
 Clark Realty Capital at request of Steve Seidman
 In Honor of Gladys Moon from Esther Small & Lesa Rowey

Welcome to New Members

Nell Jefferson, mother of board member **Nell Jefferson Fredericksen**, joins us from Danville, VA, where she is a garden club member.....**Andrew Clark**, camper from the '90's, found our website just in time to attend Adult Session last year.....**Patrick Kelly** is in St. Paul, MN.....**Amber Shiflet Cook** '94 and family are out in Texas now....**Eileen Naples** '04 is now in Arlington, VA.....**Reid Downer**, a recent counselor, joins us from Blacksburg.....Welcome to **Anne Dumper** from Broadford, VA.....Welcome **Sarah Van Auken Hulcher**, still in Richmond, and **Cecily Hutton**, ditto in Arlington....**Kelly Gravely Mattox** is now in Lynchburg.....**Betsy Epperly**, camper 1964, is retiring this month from the University of Prince Edward Island where she has been a professor of English, president of the university (the first woman in that position) and founder of the L.M. Montgomery Institute (honoring the author of *Anne of Green Gables*)....**Carmelia Neville**, a member of the Purcellville Garden Club, attended Adult Session. She and her husband run a cruise-travel agency.....**William and Elizabeth Wilkerson** are the proud parents of campers **Elizabeth, Mary and Catherine**....**Genez Malebranche**, a potter from Virginia Beach, attended Adult Session.

News of Friends

Susan Clements has finished her sophomore year at Shepherd University, majoring in Environmental Studies, thanks to the inspiration of camp and **Jim Jordon**. She is also working at the Conservation Fund of the Freshwater Institute.....**Robin Jones Eddy** is still dealing in green real estate, living close to **Trudy Reeves Melvin** and Robin's cousin **Joe Irby** who is building a new house. Her son is at UNC-Asheville; brother **Freeman** is a retired colonel, **Wayland** is a surveyor in Richmond and sister **Rebecca** is teaching in Richmond.....**Brian Scruby** went to Mississippi shortly after Hurricane Katrina to help the

State of the Investments

Goal	\$500,000
Current Level	\$268,000
Donations for 2006*	\$2,140
Lillian Schilling Fellows	52
Sustaining Members for 2006	51

*This does not include the \$16,000 given for the pool fund in December 2005.

