



The Afterglow

The Newsletter of the Nature Camp Foundation

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March -April 2008

A Great Loss: CHARLES THORNTON

In late November 2007 Nature Camp lost one of its best and oldest friends. Charles Thornton was devoted to camp through 65 years of his life. His mother was a member of a garden club in Norfolk, and Charles attended the very first session of camp at Sherando Lake in 1942. During his college years majoring in geology at UVa (1944-1949) he continued coming to camp as an instructor, even though one year he had to bicycle for miles each weekend to and from an Army camp where he was stationed. It was Charles who introduced the tradition of Sunday hikes. He went on to Yale for his MS and PhD degrees in geology, with a specialty in volcanology. After decades as a professor at Penn State, he retired in the mid-1990's and returned to his beloved Virginia, where he got in touch with Mary Jane Layne, whom he remembered from their Sherando Lake days. From then on, Charles was an enthusiastic participant in Service Weekends and Adult Session, right up until he was diagnosed in August of 2007 with inoperable lung cancer. He was a multiple recipient of the Lillian Schilling Fellowship for his generous annual contributions to the NCF. He passed away in late November, after surgery attempting to repair holes in his lungs. His ashes were scattered on a favorite lake by his sons.

We have received over two pages of tributes to Charles. We wish we could print them in full, but have reluctantly limited ourselves to a short selection from each. They are posted in full at the web-site www.naturecampfoundation.org/thornton and we urge everyone to read them, as a way to pay your own tribute to this most loveable and admirable of Nature Campers.

Charles referred to himself as "Camp's living fossil". I really did think he was indestructible! I was standing behind him at the first crossing on the trail to Table Rock a few years ago. His hiking pole slipped and he went tumbling down the hill and landed face-first in the water. It didn't take him long to pick himself up again and head back to Camp to get patched up. He didn't do any more hiking that weekend, but he certainly didn't go home either! Maybe he was home.

--Shirley Napps



I've always been impressed with Charles's tenacity in supporting Nature Camp, his upbeat approach to life and his sense of humor. He was always willing to share his knowledge and stories of his trips to countries rich in volcanoes. He delighted us with his self introduction as "The Living Fossil."
-- Peter Mehring

I admired Charles greatly, both for his intense interest and great knowledge of geology, willingness to meet me at my elementary level and grab my interest. His steady work on those screens even when he was on oxygen was amazing. He always found a way to contribute.

-- Walter Mehring

The thing that always made me look forward to seeing Charles again was a youthfulness of spirit that never seemed to leave him even when his health was failing.....He came back to Nature Camp after an absence of more than forty years and fit right in. In a sense he'd never left- and never will.
-- Steve Fisher

My recollections of him from "back when" are of someone 8 feet tall, knowledgeable to an almost unfathomable degree, a teller of tales extraordinaire, often tales of incredible encounters that he really had experienced, and a taker of memorable photographs.
-- Polly Barksdale Garbee

I met Charles Thornton in 1947, my first summer at Nature Camp at Lake Sherando. Wearing khaki army fatigues for his trip across the mountain from Charlottesville, he peddled up the dirt road on his bicycle loaded down with gear for his two weeks at camp. The shout went up, "Here comes Charles!" and I knew he must be somebody special. The next day he led a Sunday hike to find Balcony Rocks which he had heard about but never seen. We got lost and arrived back at camp very late in the back of a farm truck Charles had commandeered from a sympathetic neighbor on Love Road. The director, with dinner waiting, was not pleased. Thus began my nine year association with him at Sherando and Vesuvius where he was a walking encyclopedia of nature lore which he patiently dispensed to the eager campers in his care. --Mary Jane Layne

Summer Sessions Filling Up

By the time the *Afterglow* goes out, First Session will almost certainly be full and may have a waiting list for the first time since Jim Jordan was director. It's hard to predict how many spaces might still be available in Second or Third Sessions. But since enrollment in Fourth continues to lag far behind the other three, I would like to make a special plea for recruiting current 5th and 6th graders into this session. Applications are available on the website, which will also note availability of spaces throughout the spring.
-- Flip Coulling, Camp Director

Please send any questions to Flip at director@naturecamp.net

How Nature Conserves and Recycles: Adult Session in June

Adult Session will be June 6-10 this year, with an emphasis on natural recycling processes. We'll have everything from stellar processing of matter (Terry Richardson) through recycling of forest litter (Tom Dierauf and Peter Mehring), from recycled art (Ali Wieboldt and Betsy Bangley) to nature poetry (Sharon Spangler). New instructors include Chuck Bailey from William and Mary's geology department, and a special keynote discussion on global warming from Bill Ruddiman of the University of Virginia.

Brochures with application forms have been mailed to previous attendees of Adult Session, and we've got about ten people enrolled already. You can download an application from the website, or contact Connie Sancetta with questions: csancetta@yahoo.com

Calendar of Events

Spring Service Weekend	May 16-18
Adult Session	June 6-10
Fall Service Weekend	Sept. 19-21
Annual Meeting of Members	Sept. 20, 1:00, LS Building

Construction at Camp begins!!!

With permission from the Forest Service to begin trenching granted, work on the upgrades to camp began in February. In mid-February a working group consisting of representatives from both NC, Inc. and the NCF, met with the construction crew to discuss specific plans for the work to be completed this spring. The hope is that all construction will be completed this spring, however, we all know the realities of construction work.... Therefore, they have been asked to define a “stopping point” by May 15, so that May Service Weekend, Adult Session and our Nature Camp summer sessions can continue as usual. Any unfinished work will be done in September. At present, electrical upgrades are being carried out in the buildings, the old plumbing has been removed and is being replaced, the new plumbing and new grease trap is being installed in the LS Building. Site work that will entail trenching for the new plumbing pipes and laying of electrical lines has begun. This work is being carefully supervised on site by our wonderful caretaker Charlie Truxell.

-- From information submitted by Jim Brooks



Heavy machinery on site to begin the trenching for new pipes and electrical wires.



Out with the old, and in with the new


News Notes


[Editorial note: We will no longer be using dues forms to collect personal news. We've been told that many people enjoy reading this part of the *Afterglow*, so please do continue to send your news to the editor at 3988 Wiltshire Rd., Moreland Hills, OH 44022 or csancetta@yahoo.com.]

Betsy Bangle and her family are building an environmentally-friendly house in rural Pennsylvania, living in a trailer and using what her girls call Barn-Mart for storage. Betsy, on of the world's best recyclers, says "My yard-sale approach to shopping both provided wonderful new school clothes, canning supplies, toys and gifts...and also introduced me to my friendly rural neighbors.".....**Tom and Ali Wieboldt** had a wonderful trip to California in June, as a surprise birthday trip for Ali: Death Valley, Yosemite, the San Francisco Bay area with Ali's sisters **Nan** and **Kit Davenport**, both former campers and professional artists.....**Steve Fisher** badly broke his right wrist on the Boston ice in December but was playing viola in a production of Mozart's opera *Don Giovanni* less than two months later. He'll be glad to see the end of his last Boston winter and looks forward to moving back to Virginia in the spring.

Proposed 2008 NCF Budget

Income		Expenses	
Contributions	\$110,000	Construction	525,000
Interest & Dividends	<u>10,500</u>	Printing and mailing	15,000
Total Income	\$120,500	Service Weekends	5,000
		Marketing	4,000
		Professional fees	3,500
		Administrative	1,100
		Insurance	1,000
		Licenses and Permits	250
		Bank Service Fees	<u>150</u>
		Total Expenses	\$555,000

Explanatory notes:

Income - The Campaign for Nature Camp has been collecting generous donations from supporters to meet the major construction costs at camp, and these have not been counted as normal income. See the Annual Report for more information on the NCF financial situation. *Printing/Mailing* - The *After-glow* is now mailed to 2000 people, including former campers and parents of current campers. A grant has been received to cover a portion of these costs. *Marketing* - Expenses to advertise camp to parents and potential sponsors, plus increased visibility for NCF. *Professional fees* - Annual audits will be done by a professional CPA. A part-time bookkeeper is also needed to help the treasurer. *Insurance* - will protect the Board of Directors from liability. Both of these measures are for the protection of funds entrusted to us by our contributors.

Investment Policy Defined

The NCF Board of Directors at its January meeting approved a new Investment Policy Statement (IPS) as part of its initiative to update governing policies and organizational documents in consideration of the recent transformational changes in the role and scope of the Foundation's support of Nature Camp. The new IPS was drafted with input from a number of individuals with expertise and experience in this area, including Amy Clark, Chuck Story, Paul Schwobel, Joe Irby and Powell Hutton. The new IPS provides strategy, policy and administrative guidance for the investment and management of the financial assets of the NCF, including annual independent audits and explicit thresholds of expenditures that can be authorized by the Treasurer, the Finance Committee and the NCF Board. It also provides for the segregation of the assets of the Foundation into the following three accounts based on the source of funding and purpose for which it is to be used.

The Capital and Operating Account is comprised of funds accumulated as part of The Campaign for Nature Camp from 2007-2009 and through the Foundation's annual giving campaign from 2008 forward. The purpose of this Account is to provide funding to meet capital improvement needs, to support the annual operations of NC Inc. and NCF, and to support camp operations as needed. Typically, income and principal may be used to advance the purposes of the Account. Excess amounts in this fund may be transferred to the Legacy Account.

The Legacy Account is comprised of funds accumulated through dues and donations prior to 2007 and through designated future gifts, and is used primarily to provide financial security to protect the long-term interests of Nature Camp and the Foundation. In addition, annual income from the Legacy Account may be transferred to the Capital and Operating Account to support the maintenance and operations of Nature Camp.

The Nature Camp Scholarship Account is comprised of donations or Foundation allocations designated for the purpose of providing financial assistance to deserving campers.

A copy of the IPS is available upon request to Amy Clark, breezyhillva@verizon.net.

James McDonald Grayson 1913-2008

Dr. Grayson was a long time friend of Nature Camp, as well as introducing many campers to entomology in the 60's. He brought his daughters, their friends, and many graduate students into Nature Camp and always asked about camp in later years.

James McDonald Grayson, 94, of Blacksburg, Virginia, died at home on Thursday, March 6, of cancer. His lifelong love of Entomology served him well in his career. In 1959 he was instrumental in establishing the Department of Entomology (formerly a division of Biology) at Va. Tech and served for 20 years at its first chair. During this period, the department was twice recognized nationally by the American Council on Education for the excellence of its graduate programs. A pioneer in research on insect resistance to insecticides, Dr. Grayson established one of the most respected cockroach research programs in the world. He spent 42 years as a professor at Va Tech, continuing to inspire students there as he did at Nature Camp.

Frances Townsend Martin 1920-2008

Beloved aunt of fourteen nieces and nephews and their children and cherished friend of many others, Frances died on Monday, March 31 of lung failure at Fairfax Hospital.

Frances was devoted to her family and treasured the time she spent with them. Her home and property were the site of many happy gatherings of family and friends.

Frances spent much of her life teaching people about the love of this Earth, and was a living example of the Nature Camp philosophy. Great nephew Devon Burton is a former Nature Camper.

The family has requested donations in lieu of flowers be made to Nature Camp and Lungusa.org.

New NCF Board Takes Office

The new board of the Nature Camp Foundation met on January 26, 2008, and results from that meeting are reported throughout this issue. Readers will recall that only one elective office had several nominees: the position of At-Large Delegate. Teller Nancy Lowry reports that 161 ballots were returned and, in a very close result, Anna Lowry was elected for the position. The Board wishes to thank Lyt Wood and Stephanie Lape, who so generously offered their time as additional nominees. We are fortunate to have so many people supporting camp.



St. Mary's On Fire:

A recent fire that started in Saint Mary's Wilderness area burned over 4500 acres before being contained. This photo was taken by Philip Coulling from 608 near Cash's. This should provide some interesting opportunities for this summer's Ecology class!!

We Still Need Your Help

In this first NCF publication of 2008, we expected to announce the conclusion of the Campaign for Nature Camp and the launch of the NCF's Annual Fund, the proceeds of which will support operating costs such as the mailing of *The Afterglow* to more than 2000 recipients, provide scholarships for Nature Campers, and better prepare Camp for a strong future. However, a recent NCF Board discussion presented two reasons to make one final campaign push and postpone introduction of the Annual Fund until the next issue.

First, while some people have heard informally that there will be a permanent display at Nature Camp featuring campaign donors, we want now to communicate broadly that the threshold for inclusion has been set at gifts or pledges of at least \$1000. So, if you would like to see your name included in the commemorative display, please take this final opportunity to complete the form in this *Afterglow* and make your campaign gift or pledge (payable over three years) today. And if you have intended to participate in the campaign, but not at this level, be assured that your gift or pledge in any amount is truly appreciated and does make a difference.

The second reason for this last campaign appeal is that funds are still needed. While the astounding generosity of so many Camp supporters has resulted in a total of nearly \$600,000, a portion of these funds was designated for non-construction items such as scholarship support, publications, service weekends, and other important donor-directed needs. The remaining gifts and pledges, when fully paid, will cover the *estimated* cost of the plumbing and electrical work currently underway at Camp, but it would be prudent and indeed essential to provide for the cost overrun that is to be expected on any construction project.

Please consider adding your name to the many campaign supporters that we have gratefully listed in this *Afterglow*. Generations of future Nature Campers will know that, at this pivotal time in Nature Camp's history, an extraordinary group of Camp friends of every age and from all walks of life gave selflessly to ensure that Camp's magic endures.

- Anne Rottenborn Balto, Campaign Chair -- Latham Schweitzer Coates, Development Chair



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Nature Camp, Inc. Board of Directors

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Shirley Napps, Promotion and Publicity	napps@alum.dartmouth.org
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The Campaign for Nature Camp: Gift & Pledge Commitment Form

NAME: _____

CAMP AFFILIATION: _____

(camper, counselor, alumnus/alumna, parent, friend, etc.)

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

_____ I have included the Nature Camp Foundation in my estate planning.

_____ I have included contact information for other Camp alumni and friends on the reverse of this form.

I am pleased to make a campaign pledge in the amount of \$_____.

This pledge will be fulfilled:

_____ In one sum, to be paid:

_____ Now, with my enclosed check (*payable to Nature Camp Foundation*)

_____ By credit card: Card Type _____

Name on Card _____

Card Number _____

Expiration Date _____

Verification Code _____

_____ At the following time: _____.

_____ In three annual installments, 2007-2009 or 2008-2010 (*circle one*).

_____ My first installment is enclosed.

_____ As follows: _____

Please return this form in the enclosed envelope to:

Chuck Story, NCF Treasurer

P.O. Box 3091

Lynchburg, VA 24503

The Nature Camp Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit entity with 501(c)(3) status.

Your generous contributions are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Please write on the reverse the names and addresses of others who might be interested in supporting Nature Camp. Thank you.