

FALL 2008



THE CHEWONKI FOUNDATION CHRONICLE



Preparing for the next 100 years

Chewonki sets
five major goals
for its future

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PROGRAMS

Maine Coast Semester
Camp Chewonki for Boys
Camp Chewonki for Girls
Wilderness Trips
Outdoor Classroom for Schools
Traveling Natural History Programs
Sustainability Office

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More than 2,000 children a year visit our Outdoor Classroom, most of them from public schools in Maine. Now, budget cuts are forcing many of those schools to drop their visits.

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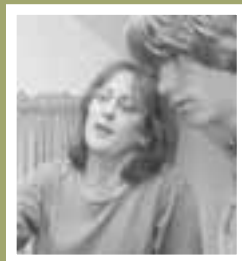
What can *you* do about phantom energy?
Plenty, it turns out!



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Beneath the Surface



CHRIS AYERS

Teaching and learning are the stuff of Chewonki, and all the life around us is the grist for the mill.

One of my favorite spots on Chewonki Neck is Hoyt's Point. The salt marsh that stretches north on both sides of the estuary—Montsweag Brook—is one of the few extensive tidal marshes along our stretch of the coast. It is relatively small, but it is a fine example of the more extensive marshes that rim the Atlantic to our south. A botanist loves this marsh because of the handful of hardy species that can tolerate both the brackish waters and the tides, which alternately flood and then leave the marsh high and dry. Others love the marsh for what we do not see. The muddy sediments support clams and marine worms, and the water teems with life. The river is slightly brown from the algae that thrive in its water—trillions and trillions of single-celled organisms. This ecosystem is the most productive in Maine, with the aid of the sun turning more CO₂ into life than any other ecosystem. Yet all we see is the wind moving through the grass and rippling across the water.

There is a lot going on behind the scenes at Chewonki as well.

When an organization sets out to meet ambitious goals like those of our Pathway to the Future campaign, it takes a gargantuan effort on the part of our Board of Trustees and Advisors as well as our staff. The planning began four years ago with a complete assessment of the institution, from top to bottom. We pulled this operation apart to discover weaknesses and remind ourselves of the long-held values and expertise that are essential to successful programs. We examined all of our human and physical assets and assessed them in relationship to our program goals. Where we saw needs, we articulated goals. The Board of Trustees endorsed this plan and created a steering committee with the guidance of expert counsel, Tina Mattingly. This group has been led for the past two and half years by Gordy Hall, Josh Marvil, and Fay Shutzer. These three leaders pulled together a team of even more volunteers. Together they secured the full support and participation of all of our trustees and advisors and quietly raised nearly \$5 million from them—a remarkable and unparalleled level of support. Meanwhile, the staff has provided the glue to keep the works together, led ably by Lucy Hull, Betta Stothart Connor, and Dick Thomas.

In the past year this group has added almost \$2.4 million from another fifty donors, and they have done it with skill and efficiency and little fanfare—just like the autumn breezes moving through the salt meadow hay off Hoyt's Point!

Each of the stories in this issue of the *Chronicle* is linked in one way or another to the central goals of our campaign. We celebrate the first summer of Camp Chewonki for Girls and twenty years of the Maine Coast Semester. Our work with Summer Search is emblematic of our principal goal to increase financial aid for all programs. We want this institution to better reflect society at large, and we will need creative and productive relationships with others to make it happen.

We want our campus to be a superb model of sustainability—a concept with ancient roots that essentially means living within means and with limits set to minimize adverse impacts to people and the planet. Everything we teach at Chewonki embodies this concept, yet we must never stop walking the walk and being the best example possible.

Teaching and learning are the stuff of Chewonki, and all the life around us is the grist for the mill. Enjoy these many stories. Just like at our salt marsh, there is a lot going on beneath the surface!

DON HUDSON

Steering toward Energy Independence

The manufacturer calls it a “sleek, hip, electric rickshaw.” Chewonki sustainability coordinator Peter Arnold calls it “a small but very exciting step toward energy independence.” Whatever you call it, the zero-emission, solarized Kronosport electric vehicle is generating a lot of excitement in Maine.

On September 5, Peter, his assistant Tom Twist, and Don Hudson joined the Wiscasset Board of Selectmen and state, local, and company officials at the Wiscasset Town Hall for a press conference and the unveiling of Kronosport’s new solarized taxi. Calling the event a “momentous occasion,” town manager Arthur Faucher lauded a collaboration among public, private, and non-profit partners that has the potential to provide a significant economic boost for midcoast Maine.

Kronosport, a Philadelphia-based company, currently assembles its vehicles in Mexico, but that may change. An important part of this project was the design and manufacture of a carbon-fiber canopy that supports three 85-watt solar panels. Kronosport has agreed to have all future solar canopies for its product line produced in Maine and may eventually manufacture all of its vehicles here.

With a fiberglass body atop a skateboard-like platform, the solar-powered taxi weighs about 500 pounds less than a golf cart and requires proportionally less energy. It uses a 36-volt, 1-kilowatt electric drive and can travel about 25 miles before its batteries need recharging. For models with the solar canopy, the sun recharges the batteries in the same time an electrical outlet would. The maximum speed is about 12 miles per hour. Kronosport describes its innovative vehicles as ideal for transporting people and products in urban centers, resorts, universities, airports, convention centers, and similar venues.

In 2006, Kronosport founder and CEO Ed Kron donated one of his prototype vehicles to Chewonki, with the agreement that Chewonki would help develop a solarized design.

The project was financed by a \$15,000 grant from the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development to the Town of Wiscasset. Local engineer and Chewonki trustee Bart Chapin designed and installed the canopy, Steve Hassett of Custom Composites in Bath built the carbon-fiber canopy, and Peter served as fiscal agent and project coordinator.

At both the state and local level, enthusiasm for the new venture is unanimous. Peter Arnold is elated. “This vehicle is not only fun to drive but



It’s our surry with the solar panels on top: the Kronosport, driven here by sustainability coordinator Peter Arnold.

brings together important sustainability themes: electric-powered transportation, solar electricity production, and lightweight composite construction, to name just a few. Getting Kronosport to move to Maine would ice the cake nicely!”

Peter also notes that with Kronosport, Chewonki has taken on a new role. “We’ve been teaching people about renewable energy and demonstrating it on our own campus for years. Now we’re playing an entirely new role by helping advance new technologies at the pre-commercialization stage. Kronosport vehicles made in Maine could bring jobs, promote fuel security, and help lower our carbon emissions. It’s been fascinating and incredibly exciting for Chewonki to be part of this project.”

The *Chronicle* had just gone to layout when we learned of the death of honorary trustee FRANK SAYRE. For twenty-seven years, the Very Rev. Francis B. Sayre Jr. was dean of the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. For far longer, he was a dear friend and supporter of Chewonki. We look forward to celebrating the life of this great man in our next issue.

Chewonki Cited as Premiere Energy Lab

When the *Portland Press Herald* hit the newsstands on June 20, 2008, no one was more pleased than Betta Stothart Connor, our director of community relations. “The Chewonki Foundation has become a testing ground for renewable energy systems at its property in Wiscasset” read the front-page headline.

“I was thrilled to see such a prominent story in Maine’s largest daily newspaper giving Chewonki credit for our leadership role in sustainability and renewable energy,” said Betta.

Describing Chewonki as “perhaps the state’s premier real-life laboratory for renewable energy,” *Press Herald* staff

writer John Richardson wrote that “as Maine and the rest of the world look for energy sources that might someday replace oil, Chewonki is busy testing them out.” Among the projects he cited were Maine’s first hydrogen energy system, the new photovoltaic system on the roof of the Wallace Center that provides both electricity and hot water, the biodiesel project, and the solar-powered taxi-like Kronosport, “soaking up sunshine and charging its battery.” He also noted that Chewonki eventually will have a windmill and a geothermal system that will help heat the Center for Environmental Education.

Richardson quoted John Kerry, director of Maine’s Office of Energy Independence and Security, on the importance of Chewonki’s work. “We have to go through a transition period where we develop these technologies and employ them. I see Chewonki as one of the primary educators regarding energy and environmental issues in the state of Maine...[and] they actually install them and use them.”

You can read the story online at the *Portland Press Herald’s* website, <http://pressherald.maintoday.com>.

MCS Teaching Fellows Program Earns an A+

Head of school Willard Morgan says he “couldn’t be more pleased” with the new MCS Teaching Fellows Program.

Now beginning its second year, the ten-month program welcomed what Willard calls “another stellar trio” in late August: teaching fellows Emily Irwin and Elana Snow and sustainability fellow Pete Sniffen. They replace first-year fellows Meg Guiliano, Cory Cramer, and Ted Oxholm, who have moved on, respectively, to graduate school in climate policy at Duke University, serving as academic director of the nonprofit foundation Ocean Classroom, and working for Maine congressman Tom Allen.

“The program is an enormous boon to us,” says Willard. “The fellows bring great energy, ideas, and skills. They help tremendously with faculty workload and are a wonderful resource for students.”

Each fellow apprentices with a core faculty member in an academic class, not in a true training program but rather as a mentor. This year Emily Irwin is working with Willard to teach Environmental Issues, while Elana Snow is assisting English teacher Amy Rogers. Pete Sniffen works in the Sustainability Office with Peter Arnold and also assists with the science course. “I’m so happy to be a part of an organization that is really trying to put the essence of environmental education into practice,” Pete said recently.

The fellows live on campus so are fully immersed in academic and residential life. Like other MCS faculty, they help students with schoolwork outside of class, participate with students in Work Program and morning chores, and serve as academic advisors, cabin parents, and trip leaders. “Both in and out of the classroom, they’re great role models,” says Amy Rogers. “They’re so capable and have so many good ideas. It’s really fun to infuse their ideas into the curriculum.”

The program emerged directly from the self-study conducted in 2006–2007 for MCS’s accreditation. One of the eight action steps in the self-study was to improve faculty quality of life and retention. Significant improvements have already been made in housing and compensation, says Willard. “However, in keeping faculty longer—which of course is good—we worried about losing



MCS fellows Pete Sniffen, Elana Snow, and Emily Irwin.

the regular influx of young teachers we’ve always had and the fresh energy they bring. The Teaching Fellows Program guarantees that we maintain this youthful energy and perspective.” Although it does take faculty time to mentor the fellows, Willard says “the balance is certainly a net gain.” Another plus he cites is that when the fellows depart, they take Chewonki’s ethos and mission with them and serve as Chewonki ambassadors.

In addition to receiving mentoring from several core faculty members, the fellows compose a professional development plan. “The skills they develop here are applicable to a wide range of positions in the fields of education, renewable energy, and environmental policy,” says Willard. He hopes that in addition to being of enormous help to MCS, their fellowship is a valuable step toward a new career.

Meg Guiliano, who was last year’s sustainability fellow, recently said she feels “so lucky to have experienced so many different ways of teaching and learning. In the Sustainability Office, I had the opportunity to follow Peter, Tom, and Brendan around, and I learned much from them directly. I was also able to work independently on a number of projects; since my arrival at Duke, I’ve been surprised to discover how much I absorbed about sustainability and renewable energy during my time at Chewonki.”

MCS is already accepting applications for the three 2009–2010 fellows. A job description and application are posted under “Jobs” at www.chewonki.org. Chewonki alumni interested in a career in education are encouraged to apply.

RHAN FLATIN

Summer 2009 Programs Already Enrolling

Summer camp 2009 enrollment is underway, and at least two of our wilderness trips are already full! The 2009 schedule for Camp Chewonki for Girls, Camp Chewonki for Boys, and Coed Wilderness Trips is available at www.chewonki.org. You can even register online. We've also prepared three new brochures. A \$100 discount is available to all who register by December 1. Our staff looks forward to greeting many campers and their families at camp fairs and Chewonki gatherings in the months ahead. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact us if you have questions or need assistance. We are well prepared to help, and you are most welcome to call or email us (207-882-7323 or camp@chewonki.org) at any time.



NEW! for 2009

Ultralight Hike Coed Wilderness Expedition (age 15–18): June 28–July 31
Hike, Paddle, & Surf Coed Wilderness Expedition (age 14–17): July 8–August 10
Penobscot Whitewater Kayaking for Girls (age 14–16): June 23–July 14
Allagash Expedition for Girls (age 14–16): June 23–July 14
Ten-Day Session for Girls, Fourth Debsconeag Lake (age 9–11): July 19–28

Do you know someone who might be interested in Camp Chewonki for Girls, Camp Chewonki for Boys, or our Coed Wilderness Trips? If you send us their name and address, we'll be happy to send them a brochure.

Remembering Lizanne Chapin

Elizabeth Parker Chapin, a longtime friend and once a regular visitor at Chewonki, died on May 27, 2008, in Boston at the age of 89. Known by her friends as Lizanne, she attended Smith College, was an avid gardener, reader, and traveler, and worked for many organizations as an indefatigable volunteer. Together with her late husband, Melville Chapin (Camp '27–'33, Camp Staff '33–'40, former trustee), she was also an ardent supporter of several educational institutions.

Lizanne and Mel married in September 1940, at the end of Mel's last—and fourteenth—season at camp. Over the next 63 years, until Mel's death in the spring of 2004, they hosted countless Chewonki gatherings at their home in Cambridge. They were also instrumental in helping to establish the Osprey Society, for people who include Chewonki in their estate planning. "Few people have had as enduring a relationship with Chewonki as Mel and Lizanne did," said director of Alumni Relations Dick Thomas.

Lizanne is survived by their two children, Elizabeth and Allen (Camp '53–'55), and seven grandchildren, among them Sam Chapin (Camp '81), Eric Klaussman (Camp '85), and Peter Chapin (Camp '02–'03).

Don Hudson Joins Neotropical Education Committee

Chewonki's reach in environmental education and sustainability seems to be growing all the time. One way we can gauge that is by the increasing number of invitations our staff receive inviting them to participate in workshops, conferences, and other collaborative efforts. They can't always accept—this summer alone, Don Hudson had to turn down invitations from Australia and Switzerland—but when they can, there are tremendous opportunities for professional cross-fertilization.

Such an opportunity arose in August, when Don spent a “whirlwind” four days in the Caribbean lowlands of Costa Rica, at La Selva Biological Field Station. Owned and managed by the international non-profit Organization for Tropical Studies, La Selva is one of the most important sites in the world for research on tropical rain forests. Don—who is himself a botanist and evolutionary biologist—was there as a member of a newly formed educational advisory committee to the Four Neotropical Forests Working Group, a research collaborative funded by the National Science Foundation.

Dr. Deedra McClearn, director of La Selva, invited Don to join the committee because of her familiarity with Chewonki and its reputation in environmental education. “Deedra knows of our work because her daughter did a few wilderness trips and also because she reads the *Chronicle*,” said Don.

The Four Neotropical Forests Working Group represents two biological field stations in Central America and another two in

South America. Under Deedra's direction, scientists at the four stations are working together to better coordinate how they share the results of their research, and also to reach a wider audience with their results. The education committee consists of science educators who have experience helping the public understand environmental issues. Like others on the committee, Don gave a presentation at La Selva on his work with science education and on how to communicate complex scientific concepts to various audiences.

He also offered some impromptu advising on sustainable campuses, a subject near and dear to his heart. “That was secondary,” he said. “These neotropical field stations face the same kind of energy problems we do, except they have to cool their buildings rather than heat them. They also have to monitor humidity, particularly in labs that house a lot of sensitive equipment.”

Overall, Don described his trip to Costa Rica as “a very rich experience.” It was also a terrific person-to-person experience. “You wouldn't believe how much I learned in my four hours in the San Jose airport with crow expert Kevin McGowan from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology,” he enthused.

The education committee will meet again in 2009, at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Station on Barro Colorado Island in Panama. Don will be there, with his binoculars around his neck. Among the many new birds he saw in Costa Rica were Slaty-tailed Trogon, Great Curassow, and Keel-billed Toucan.

North Woods Family Camp a Big Hit

The weather was perfect, the lake refreshing, the hiking outstanding, the blueberries abundant, and as participant Judy Burgess noted, “the food was *divine*.” To sum it up, Family Camp 2008 was just about perfect. Seven families joined us this summer at our newest location at Debsconeag Lake Wilderness Camps for four days of fun, discovery, learning, and relaxation.

Chef Blair Currier treated guests to an enormous variety of fresh-baked goods and delicious offerings made with ingredients from local farms in Greenville. Lynne Flaccus, Chewonki's head naturalist, provided natural history mysteries and guided bird walks. Director of Wilderness

Programs Greg Shute provided guided canoe trips and fishing trips to remote ponds. And director of Community Relations Betta Stothart Connor led hikes to the waterfall and to the cliffs overlooking the entire Nahmakanta region.

The camps, situated in a chain of lakes and ponds permanently protected as an ecological reserve, sit at the base of a magnificent set of granite cliffs that rise 800 feet from the pristine lake. A short hike to the top of the cliffs provides views to the north of Baxter State Park. The area is home to a wide variety of wildlife.

Asked if Family Camp will be offered again next summer at our newest northern location, Greg, Lynne, and Betta all agreed it will be and quickly volunteered to provide staff support. Dates and fees are posted on our website (www.chewonki.org/alumni).



Family Campers 2008, on the cliffs above Fourth Debsconeag Lake.

BETTA STOTHART CONNOR

Into the Future

DON HUDSON

The history of Chewonki is a brightly colored mosaic that grows episodically, fueled by the passion and energy of successive generations. The picture we assemble is one of memories and permanent records. The permanent records are the vibrant, colorful tiles. Memory is the mortar that holds them together.

Two and a half years ago, we embarked on a new era in Chewonki's history when we began the very early and quiet phase of a campaign to raise \$11 million. We know from years of experience that our programs change people's lives forever—igniting their thirst for learning, sharpening their sense of adventure, and developing their capacity as leaders. Now we aim to make this place even stronger and more resilient, and to reach a broader segment of society. If we succeed, we will position Chewonki for another hundred years of outstanding programs.

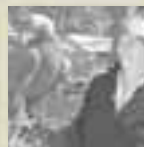
Our transformation in the ninety-four years since Clarence Allen founded his saltwater camp for boys has been remarkable. In the past ten years alone, much has transpired both on our campus and in our programs. We have evolved to better serve our participants, and our core programs have become nationally recognized for the transformative experiences they provide. We earned accreditation for Maine Coast Semester. We bought a campground on the shores of the West Branch of the Penobscot River in one of Maine's premiere wilderness areas. We built the first 4.5 miles of a trail that will eventually stretch 12 miles from Chewonki to the Town of Wiscasset. We established a Sustainability Office, because the effort to conserve energy and resources at Chewonki that began more than thirty-five years ago has grown into one of our most important activities.

When I look at what we have accomplished on this peninsula, I feel a deep sense of pride. All of our programs are vibrant, and they all emerge from the same place: *to connect young people with the natural world*. More than anything else, this is what sets Chewonki apart. We believe there are no limits to opportunities for life-changing experiences at Chewonki.

Each of the goals of our "Pathway to the Future" campaign has its own story and history. The Board of Trustees organized a task force to identify our greatest needs, and we established a steering committee to help us meet the challenge. Our early work has resulted in gifts and pledges that now total almost \$9 million. The Kresge Foundation, which helped us with grants in 1985 and 1998, has pledged a remarkable \$850,000 for improvements to our model campus—if we can raise \$2.9 million by March 1, 2009. I am confident we will do it, but we will need all the help we can muster in the months ahead!

This is our fifth capital campaign since the nonprofit Chewonki Foundation incorporated in 1962, and it is by far our largest. The last one, in 1998, was for \$4.5 million. In our past campaigns, every penny went to infrastructure. This time, 60 percent will go to endowment. Established in 1985 with a \$50,000 bequest, our endowment has now reached almost \$4 million, but is still far too small to ensure the long-term health and longevity of Chewonki and the continued fulfillment of our mission.

Increasing the endowment for financial aid is the largest single component of our current campaign. We are committed to making a Chewonki experience available to as many students



as possible, regardless of their economic circumstances. More and more, people need financial aid to attend our programs. As a society, we now have as big a gap between the rich and the poor as we did in the 1920s. We are determined above all else that our programs reflect the broad diversity of society, which is why we work so hard to develop strong and lasting partnerships with organizations such as Summer Search; see our story on page 12.



Increasing the endowment to support our talented staff is our second goal. This is critical, because our faculty and staff are the heart and soul of Chewonki. We owe much of our success to them and can make no better investment than providing them with the pay, benefits, equipment, training, tools, and resources they deserve. See page 18 for some wonderful testaments from our staff about what teaching at Chewonki means to them.

Our third goal has been a dream for years—and now is finally a reality! We have long wanted to offer girls what we have offered boys since 1915. Camp Chewonki for Girls opened its doors at Fourth Debsconeag Lake in the heart of Maine’s North Woods in June of this year. Preparing for the first summer at girls camp was an enormous task, and our staff pulled together under tight circumstances to ensure that the site provided a comfortable home for our first young participants. More work remains, but the seed has been planted and has begun to sprout. Seventy-five girls attended the camp this summer, and many have written to tell of their transformative experiences. We expect next summer to be even better. You can read more about it on page 22.



Our fourth goal, a model sustainable campus, speaks to a broad institutional commitment. With more than thirty-five years of experience seeking ways to use energy more efficiently, Chewonki has become a recognized leader in sustainability in Maine and the Northeast. Our award-winning buildings and our lessons are examples for everyone of how to live better with less. In our forests and farm, our classrooms and community spaces, we put ideas about sustainable living and renewable technologies into practice and offer our participants hands-on experiences that can inform a lifetime of behavior. Sometimes we turn to simple, old-fashioned technology, such as our use of natural light in the newly renovated Wallace Center. Other times we turn to cutting-edge technology, such as the new system of solar panels that Ascendant Energy in Rockland installed on the Wallace Center, producing both electricity *and* hot water! As we move ahead with new projects—geothermal, tidal power, wind power, and an innovative wastewater management system to conserve water—Chewonki will continue to play a leading role in New England’s conservation movement.





The last tile we hope to place in the Chewonki mosaic is one that will guarantee access to wild places for campers and students forever. I cut my teeth as a young camper and counselor traveling the length and breadth of Maine. Back in those days, you didn't have to ask permission to camp on an island; you just did it! Access has dwindled steadily, however, and a few years ago we realized we were looking at a future that would not allow us to lead any extended coastal trips.

Exploring the woods and waters of Maine has been at the heart of a



Chewonki experience since our founding days. If we are successful in raising the funds to acquire Hungry, Black, Russ, and Campbell islands, we can be assured that our participants will be able to paddle or sail the coast of Maine forever. These undeveloped gems link our long-established and permanent campsites to a stretch of the Maine coast extending all the way to Mount Desert Island and beyond. The public also benefits from our ownership, as all four islands are part of the 350-mile-long Maine Island Trail and are available for public use.

I am continuously energized by what we accomplish each year at Chewonki. Our community of enthusiastic and generous supporters is large and growing. Our programs are always evolving and remain deeply relevant in a changing world. Each year we touch the lives of nearly 40,000 young people. I believe strongly that Chewonki can continue to provide life-changing experiences for at least another 100 years.

I invite everyone to help us add another chapter to the history of Chewonki. If we are successful, our future will be bright.



"No one is untouched by his or her Chewonki experience, whether in a semester program, camp, classroom, or on a wilderness trip. The Chewonki ethic is powerful, and each individual is encouraged to grow and learn about himself or herself in relation to community and the natural world. As a parent, you cannot ask for a more fulfilling experience for your child."

~Fay Shutzer, trustee and campaign co-chair

Campaign Goals

The Board of Trustees defined five specific areas of need at Chewonki:

1. Financial Aid for Our Programs

Endowment to promote greater diversity amongst participants...\$4.4 million

2. Staff Enrichment and Salary Support

Endowment for Maine Coast Semester, Camp, and Outdoor Classroom staff—our most important resource today.....\$1.2 million

3. Camp Chewonki for Girls

Land, facilities, and scholarship endowment for girls.....\$1.6 million

4. Securing Access to the Coast

Acquiring Hungry, Black, Russ, and Campbell islands..... \$800,000

5. A Sustainable Campus

Modeling the sustainable management of natural resources.....\$3 million

Total Need.....\$11 million

Campaign Kick-Off Events a Grand Success

More than a hundred people gathered on Chewonki Neck on September 5 to help celebrate the launch of the public phase of our historic "Pathway to the Future" campaign. Staff, alumni, and friends of all ages gathered in Chapin Hall on a beautiful twilight evening for hors d'oeuvres (most of them fresh from Salt Marsh Farm), energy tours of the newly renovated Wallace Center, a warm welcome from Board chair Josh Marvil, and remarks from Don Hudson.

No one knows the campaign story better than Don, Chewonki's president since 1991 and one of the few people involved with all four of the foundation's previous campaigns. Standing under the whale skeleton and beaming with pride, Don spoke eloquently and passionately about Chewonki's need to secure its future and what supporters can do to help. The evening concluded with a wonderful slideshow of Chewonki people, places, and programs, complete with original music written and produced by Outdoor Classroom teacher and wilderness trip leader Jay Avis.

Two more celebrations followed in October, at the Boston Museum of Science on October 15 and at the Yale Club of New York City on October 22. We were delighted that more than 100 guests attended each of these events as well.

More campaign events will follow in the coming months; be sure to check our website for updates. If you would like to host a gathering in your area, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact Dick Thomas, director of alumni relations, at dthomas@chewonki.org or at 207-882-7232.

The Best Part of Our Jobs

The best part of any capital campaign, and thankfully also our jobs, is meeting and reconnecting with friends.



Dick Thomas & Lucy Hull

"My Chewonki experience meant more to me than my four years in high

school or at college." How many times have we heard those words? It is such a joy for those of us who work at Chewonki to hear the stories of how Chewonki has influenced so many lives. These stories and testimonials generate continued enthusiasm for our work. Whether it was through a five-day school program, a three-week summer experience, or the Maine Coast Semester, Chewonki alumni are quick to extol the significance of their time with us.

A former camper and counselor recently said to us: "While from my office in Connecticut, Chewonki and the Maine Coast seem very far away, I still feel very connected and proud of my Chewonki history. I am also consistently impressed by the mailings and newsletters I receive, all of which illustrate that the people and values that made my camp experiences some of my favorite summer memories as a child have remained strong at Chewonki."

While we sit on a spectacular peninsula in midcoast Maine (and now at a few other locations around the state), Chewonki is really about people: the dedicated staff and faculty who provide the programs; the leaders who arrange the logistics; and the participants who contribute so eagerly. Without the people, our mission could never be fulfilled!

Our current Pathway to the Future campaign is aimed, above all else, at making the Chewonki experience available to young people regardless of their economic circumstances. We have been astonished and overjoyed by the groundswell of support we have received since we began this campaign. We are deeply gratified by the generous support and also by the wonderful stories that so many of you have shared as you contemplated making a gift to Chewonki.

We look forward to keeping you apprised of our progress in the coming months as we move toward our momentous goal. We hope we'll have the special opportunity to see you at an upcoming event.

Visit www.chewonki.org/alumni to learn more about these events, which we hope to hold across the country. We would love to see you there!

Dick Thomas is Director of Alumni Relations.

Lucy Hull is Director of Development.



Editor's Note: Increasing the endowment for financial aid is the largest of our capital campaign goals. As Don Hudson says, "Providing access to participants from all walks of life is central to Chewonki's mission and critically important to our value as educators." If we are to continue our goal of increasing the ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic diversity of our programs, we must improve our ability to meet the growing need for financial aid.

Every program at Chewonki receives requests for aid. The requests increase annually, both in total number and amounts needed. Today, the amount of aid we can provide is 12 to 15 percent of gross tuition. The campaign will allow us to raise this to 20 percent.

Each year, financial aid opens the door to a Chewonki program for a wide array of youngsters. They often tell us that their experiences here are life changing. What gets less attention, perhaps, is how much financial-aid recipients enrich us. The examples are countless, but there may be none as dramatic as those of Summer Search.

—BETTA STOTHART CONNOR,
ASSISTANT EDITOR AND DIRECTOR
OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Summer Search: Where Change Begins

ELIZABETH PIERSON

Nadiyah was laughing, remembering what she thought when she first saw the kayaks. “I didn’t even think I would *fit* in such a tiny boat!” She certainly didn’t anticipate that in another few weeks she’d be confidently running rapids in that sleek piece of polyethylene. Katia confessed she had felt the same way, and then she too was laughing, recounting how she dumped her boat a whopping total of fourteen times. “*Fourteen?! That has to be some kind of record,*” laughed Tasha. “Nadiyah and I only dumped twice!”

On an overcast afternoon in late July, Session I of Camp Chewonki was wrapping up. In their bantering and camaraderie, the three girls sitting at a picnic table behind Packout sounded like any other trippers just returned to campus. And they were. With two leaders and five boys, these girls had spent the past three weeks whitewater kayaking on the West Branch of the Penobscot, one of the most spectacular rivers in the East. Based at Big Eddy Campground, the group had honed their paddling and camping skills, explored the region’s human and natural history, climbed Katahdin, and completed a service project. The eight teenagers came from vastly different backgrounds and parts of the country, but on the river they were equals. “We became a little family,” said Nadiyah, and her voice held both pride and tenderness.



Nadiyah lives and goes to high school in urban Philadelphia. A year ago, she never dreamed such a trip was in her future. Neither did Tasha or Katia, or twenty-eight other teenagers who came to Chewonki this summer through a program known as Summer Search.

In its own words, Summer Search is a “leadership development program with a unique commitment to providing ongoing and long-term support for low-income high school students.”

*“This trip showed me the other side of me.
If I set my mind to something, I can do it, no matter how
mentally or physically challenging it is.”*

~Seandre, Oakland, CA; Maine Appalachian Trail Backpack, 2008

Visit our website at www.chewonki.org



Founded in San Francisco in 1990, it now operates seven offices nationwide and each year places more than 900 students on a path of positive change. It aims to serve 2,000 a year by 2012. Almost all of the students come from generations of poverty. Ninety-three percent are students of color, and 94 percent represent the first generation of their family to go to college. All have been identified as being remarkably resilient and having the potential to become responsible and altruistic leaders.

Students are invited to apply to Summer Search during their sophomore year in high school, usually at the recommendation of a teacher. Many have never heard of the program until then, and few anticipate how intense the application process will be. Nadiyah and Katia both said they cried during their interviews, because they let so much out. “I have so many problems. You might look at me and think I’m smiling, but inside I have a lot of problems. It felt so good to talk about them,” said Katia, who is from San Jose, California.

Carolina, a Boston student who enrolled in Chewonki’s five-week Boatbuilders Expedition this summer, echoed the point. “I was interviewed by four people, and it was definitely intimidating,” she said. “A big aspect of Summer Search is getting you to open up and talk about yourself. It’s good, and it made it a lot easier to talk to people when I got here.”

About half of the applicants are accepted. They receive year-round one-on-one sessions every week with a staff mentor, from acceptance through high-school graduation; full scholarships to two summer experiential education programs; college and financial aid advising; and alumni support throughout college and beyond. The program’s eighteen-year track record is remarkable: 100 percent of Summer Search seniors graduate from high school, 97 percent go to college, and 89 percent of those enrolled in college graduate or stay on track to do so. According to Summer Search, nationally only 21 percent of low-income high-school students finish college. An impressive 72 percent of Summer Search students are active in community service.

Chewonki has welcomed Summer Searchers every year since 1991—216 in total, including 31 this past summer: 29 on coed wilderness expeditions and 2 at Camp Chewonki for Girls. “The number has grown in recent years as the program has

“It’s impossible to overstate the impact a wilderness trip with Chewonki has on Summer Search students. The triumphs, challenges, and expanded horizons of a long wilderness trip unlock our students’ sense of their own potential and opportunities. We then build on those changes in our mentoring, so that our students can overcome the low expectations and lack of opportunity that surround them, and change the course of their own lives. Summer Search simply couldn’t do what we do without the generosity of Chewonki.”

~Jay Jacobs, CEO, Summer Search

opened more offices,” says camp registrar Ginny Freeman. As is the case with more than a hundred Summer Search partners around the country, Chewonki shares its program offerings and awards part of each student’s tuition. “Depending on the total number of students in a given year, we donate anywhere from 25 to 40 percent of each child’s tuition,” says Wilderness Programs director Greg Shute.

Greg has been involved with Summer Searchers since the first summer they came to Chewonki. “It’s a privilege for us to partner with Summer Search,” he said recently. “*Everyone* at Chewonki benefits from having these kids with us. They’re amazing leaders and add tremendously to our programs.” Genell Vashro, director of Camp Chewonki for Girls, said the students bring “diversity, culturally rich perspectives, a motivation to achieve, and an understanding that this experience is a once in a lifetime opportunity.” Boys Camp director Garth Altenburg concurred. “Summer Search students help Chewonki reflect a more accurate picture of what the rest of the country, and the world, is like. This is immensely valuable to all of our participants.”

Gareth Crosby, a former Outdoor Classroom teacher who has led many Chewonki wilderness trips, was delighted to hear on a July visit to campus that Chewonki had more Summer Searchers than ever this year. “I love those kids,” she said warmly. “Oftentimes they’re the superstars of a trip. They have to work really hard to get here and really want to be here. They make quite an impression on their peers.”

The partnership works well for Summer Search as well. Nationally, Chewonki is among the organization’s top five partners in terms of number of student placements.

“It’s impossible to overstate the impact a wilderness trip with Chewonki has on Summer Search students,” says Jay Jacobs, Summer Search’s CEO. “The triumphs, challenges, and expanded horizons of a long wilderness trip unlock our students’ sense of their own potential and opportunities. We then build on those changes in our mentoring, so that our students can overcome the low expectations and lack of opportunity that surround them, and change the course of their own lives. Summer Search simply couldn’t do what we do without the generosity of Chewonki.”



“I learned that it’s important to do what you love.
Do what will make you happy in life.”

~Vinh, Seattle, WA; Maine Appalachian Trail Backpack, 2008

At the end of Session I this summer, the *Chronicle* asked if any Summer Searchers were willing to be interviewed. Every student who was on campus that day answered the call. On their last afternoon here, they pulled themselves away from unpacking wannagans and dry bags, playing Frisbee on the Quad, or just relaxing on the grass with friends and sat down to talk. Often with surprising candor, they spoke at length about their experiences of the past three weeks.

All said that coming here was hard. Most had never been away from home before, and none had ever done a wilderness trip, or anything even remotely like it. Homesickness, unfamiliar foods, and the unrelenting challenge of meeting new experiences every day were common themes. “The first week felt like forever, but the last two weeks flew by,” said Seandre, a soft-spoken boy from Oakland, California, who backpacked on the Maine Appalachian Trail. He had mixed feelings about going home, as did the others. His trip mate Vinh, who was heading home to Seattle, said, “I’ll miss everything, but I’m excited to go home too. We’re excited about telling our families what we saw and did.”

They were excited about telling their mentors too. Summer Search describes the weekly mentoring sessions as “the glue that locks in and builds on each student’s summer program experience.” Nadiyah provided a telling example of how deep the mentors’ commitment is: “My mentor ran 3 miles with me before I came here, to be sure I was fit.”

Everyone mentioned that their time on the trail had made them stronger, and several proudly flexed a bicep to prove it. “Carrying boats! All that paddling! That’s *hard!*” said Dorian, a tall and sturdy boy who was on Maine Coast Kayak. Far more impressive, however, was the students’ awareness of how much they had grown mentally and emotionally. “I learned to take initiative, to be responsible for making things happen myself. I learned how to just go ahead and do things,” said Seandre. Nadiyah put it more succinctly: “I learned to push through anything.”

Asked about the highlights of their trip, most of the students had the same immediate response: the friends they made. “I got to talk to and hang out with a lot of kids I wouldn’t ever get to know otherwise,” said Katia. “Rich kids,” interjected Nadiyah, giving Katia a gentle jab in the ribs. “Yeah, rich

kids,” Katia said matter of factly. “They’re cool,” said Tasha, and admitted she hadn’t really expected them to be. Nadiyah agreed, but also said that hanging out with them was sometimes hard. “Sometimes they’d say something, not to be mean, it was just a fact. Like talking about when they were in Australia or went skiing in Switzerland. Some of them have been all over the world, which we haven’t. But we were basically equals on this trip.” Tasha nailed the common denominator: “Everyone had the same jobs in camp.”

To the students’ surprise, it turned out everyone had problems too—even rich kids. “One of the boys on my trip told me he eats dinner alone every night, and I thought that was so sad. It made me really appreciate my family and everything we do together,” said Katia. Gaining insights like that, she said, had made her “mentally tougher.”

To listen to these kids discuss their futures is to hear a litany of hope. Alula, who did Umbagog Whitewater and is from Boston, wants to go to Boston College, Northeastern, or MIT. His trip mate Antoinette, also from Boston, dreams of Spellman and then Harvard Medical School. Nadiyah wants to be a nurse, Tasha a neonatologist. Katia aspires to be a judge so says it’s law school for her. “Harvard and Stanford are my top choices, so I really have to work hard.”

On a beautiful summer night in late July, however, those dreams were suspended far off in the distance. After a welcome home feast in the dining hall, the Session I trippers were heading over to Chapin Hall to celebrate the end of their journeys with a slideshow, songs, and skits. Looking at the procession of smiling faces, the arms casually slung over friends’ shoulders, no outsider could have known which of these kids were here tonight because of Summer Search.

For everyone, it was a night to savor memories. Vinh, who had hiked the Appalachian Trail from just south of Saddleback Mountain in Rangeley to Mt. Washington in New Hampshire, said he would always remember the views from the tops of the mountains. “You look down at where you’ve come from and you’re like ‘Wow! Did I really climb that far?!’”

It was almost certainly unintentional, but in that simple, heartfelt sentence, sixteen-year-old Vinh revealed the essence of Summer Search.

Summer Search’s eighteen-year track record is remarkable: 100 percent of Summer Search seniors graduate from high school, 97 percent go to college, and 89 percent of those enrolled in college graduate or stay on track to do so.

AN URGENT NEED

Public-school requests for financial aid are on the rise

The requests Chewonki receives for scholarship assistance come not just from individual families and students. Increasingly, they also come from schools, and particularly public schools. “The requests are growing at an astounding rate,” says Don Hudson. “Public schools nationwide are seeing drastic cuts in their funding, and it often makes the difference in a school’s ability to enroll in a Chewonki program.”

More than 2,000 schoolchildren a year visit Chewonki’s Outdoor Classroom. Coming from both public and private schools, they stay with us anywhere from a day to a week to learn about ecology, sustainability, teambuilding, and outdoor living. Several schools come from Massachusetts and New Hampshire, a few from as far away as Pennsylvania and North Carolina. The vast majority of visits, however, are from public schools in Maine.

Katie Tremblay sees a disturbing trend. “Basically, I wouldn’t be surprised if we lost many to most of our public Maine schools in the coming years,” she said recently.

As the Outdoor Classroom program director, Katie schedules all of Chewonki’s school visits. Better than anyone else on campus, she knows exactly how enrollments stand. “Our largest local schools—Bath, Wiscasset, and Damariscotta—all had to cut their Chewonki trip from the budget this year or last year. All three communities fought for their Chewonki programs, and all three *are* returning this year. But for many of our public schools, it’s really touch and go now, given all of the budget cuts,” she said.

The rising cost of fuel has also had an impact, with schools being reluctant to bus students any farther than absolutely necessary. “Even some of the wealthiest public school districts in Maine are considering cutting their Chewonki trips,” said Katie.

Although saddened by the trend, Katie is heartened by how much support communities have expressed for Chewonki. In Damariscotta, for example, many of the students’ parents came to Chewonki when they were in the sixth grade, and they want their children to have the same experience. The retired principal was one of the key players in getting the program back after it was cut, said Katie. In Bath, an anonymous parent



came forward and donated the money to pay for an additional day that had been dropped because of budget cuts.

“These are wonderful stories,” said Katie. “But they don’t erase the fact that we have an urgent need to increase our financial aid for schools. Can you imagine a day when Maine children—children from our own communities—can’t afford to come to Chewonki?”

We can’t. It’s yet another reason why increasing our endowment for financial aid is the largest of our capital campaign goals.

“We’ll hear your names for weeks after our return to school—and the memory of these days will live in our children’s hearts forever.”

~Teacher, Bath Middle School, Bath, ME

Scott Andrews, Founding Director and U.S. History Teacher, Maine Coast Semester



I've always felt that we're a bit presumptuous to think that what and how we teach at MCS is somehow better than what other teachers and schools do. Almost all schools have their share of excellent, creative, rigorous, and innovative teachers. And one only has to read some of the literature to know that there are lots of great curricular and pedagogical ideas out there that are, by any measure, as good or better than anything we do. However, I think that we are especially successful for two primary reasons: first, we have an extremely dedicated and energetic faculty. This, by itself, would not be terribly remarkable, but the second reason is what nails it. The fact that the MCS community is so small and personal, and that there is so little difference between student and teacher, makes the relationships between both sides much more intimate, effective, and respectful. Of course, the relationships that we build are also nurtured by real work, by offering trust and responsibility, and by the fact that the students themselves are primed and ready for the experience—ready and eager to take it on.

I love teaching at MCS, and Chewonki more generally, for many of the same reasons. We are a small and fairly intimate community; we have lots of very dedicated colleagues; we are given lots of respect and trust; we are blessed with strong and eager students; we are largely allowed to develop our own curricula. I love teaching U.S. history and never tire of it, but I suspect that I would have lost my spark long ago were it not for the relationship I have with the students. They are almost always delightful, fun, funny, challenging, highly capable, and loving.

Scott led MCS for its first seventeen years, before returning full time to the classroom in 2004. This year he is enjoying a well-earned sabbatical—his first ever. He plans to do some writing, photography, music, fishing, and some significant rethinking and retooling of his history course. Scott is married to MCS teacher Sue West, and they have a daughter, Margaret.

Paul Arthur, Assistant Head of School, English Teacher, Maine Coast Semester



What I like best about teaching at Chewonki is severalfold. First and foremost, I like the students we attract, who are energetic, engaged, and committed to learning. They work very hard and, with few exceptions, study for the joy of learning. With such students, most days in class are, as I've sometimes said, like a trip to the candy store. I learn with and from my students every day.

It's also exciting to teach at a place where I get to know students outside the classroom, while eating meals, shingling roofs, or canoeing the West Branch of the Penobscot River. The relationships we build with students are genuine and rich.

Paul is assistant head of school for MCS and teaches English. He attended Colby College, holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Colorado, and has taught at both of those schools. Paul is also a Registered Maine Guide, a canoe racer, and a guitar and mandolin player.

Anna Hunt, Outreach Director



There is not just one thing I love about teaching at Chewonki. There are a few.

I think it's the community, our reputation, and my work diversity that keep me at Chewonki.

I came to Chewonki on the advice of others, and I have never felt let down by those recommendations. I love the community of people I get to see at work each day. These are the same people I often eat lunch with or meet on the weekends. Many of my closest friends are people I met when I was teaching for EE (now the Outdoor Classroom) and still live nearby.

As for my work, I take pride in offering quality traveling natural history lessons throughout our state. Being able to

“Years later I can still point to experiences from my semester that illustrate the core values of MCS, like a conversation with a faculty member while picking beans in the rain that continued over dinner that night.”

~Former MCS Student

show an owl to Maine school kids, meeting elderly residents, or greeting a room full of people ranging from toddlers to grandparents keeps life interesting. The people we meet often want to tell us of their Chewonki connection, or enthusiastically learn more about what we do. I feel fortunate to work with a staff of educators who thrive on this everyday diversity and share my enthusiasm for the lessons we teach and the non-profit for which we work. Working with live animals each day isn't half-bad either!

Anna began working at Chewonki in 1997. She is a graduate of Fort Lewis College in Colorado and completed the Professional Residency in Environmental Education program at the Teton Science School in Wyoming. In addition to coordinating Chewonki's Outreach program, Anna is a licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

**Dot Lamson, Director,
Center for Environmental
Education**

Teaching at Chewonki for the past twenty-five years has been so rewarding because of the amazing people with whom I have worked. Chewonki's strong reputation draws enthusiastic and dedicated teachers with a real passion for sharing the natural world with their students. Working with these young teachers and watching them grow right along with their students is an inspiration to me. Although it has been hard to say good-bye to so many fine teachers when they have finished their terms, it is most rewarding to think of all the knowledge and passion they carry with them to the world beyond Chewonki Neck.

Chewonki is unique in its core values. We place a very strong emphasis on community and have students live, work, study, and play together in small groups. The focus on respect and responsibility within these communities is a key component of all our education programs.

Dot has been directing environmental education at Chewonki since 1984. She also helped start our Maine Coast Sea-Kayaking program and continues to lead wilderness trips. In 2007, the Maine Audubon Society recognized Dot as its Educator of the Year.



**Amy Rogers, English
Teacher, Maine Coast Semester**

I love the fact that I might well mop a bathroom floor, plant bulbs in the garden, spin a bit of Chewonki fleece into yarn, talk with an advisee while watching sheep graze North Pasture, and take part in rousing discussions of a Wendell Berry essay in class and a presidential debate at supper—all in the course of a single school day.

In terms of what makes teaching at MCS different, I would say that it centers on our ability to make ready and ongoing connections between the ideas we are reading and writing and talking about in class—what it means to be “placed,” why wilderness matters, how to live responsibly—and the experiences our students are having each day beyond the classroom, as they work on the farm, carry out morning chores, live together in their cabins, and head off on science field trips. We are able to provide plenty of opportunities to make provocative links between the theoretical and the actual—which is still rare in school settings.

Amy has been at MCS since its first semester, teaching the ever-evolving course Literature and the Land. Two years ago, she was the recipient of MCS's first-ever faculty sabbatical. In addition to reading, reading, and then reading some more, she visited the Spannocchia Foundation in Italy—a place she describes as “spiritually akin to Chewonki but in an ancient setting”—and traveled to Dorset, England, to research a potential MCS alumni trip.

**Greg Shute, Director,
Wilderness Programs**

What do I like most about teaching at Chewonki? I like the fact that our participants realize some of their most meaningful learning from time spent in wild places. The outdoors is the great equalizer, and the lessons learned there are often among life's most important. If there is a better place to teach than the outdoors, I've not yet found it. And at Chewonki we have the opportunity to teach



in wilderness regions from the subtropical Everglades to the tundra of the Canadian Arctic. That is just one of the reasons I can't imagine working anywhere else.

Greg has been Chewonki's Wilderness Programs director since 1991. A Registered Maine Guide who serves on the board of the Maine Youth Camping Foundation, he is chairperson of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Trip Leader Program and a founding member and co-president of the Maine Wilderness Guides Organization.

Katie Tremblay, Program Director, the Outdoor Classroom

Teaching in the Outdoor Classroom is unique because there are lessons embedded in every action we take with our students. Collecting compost and slop after meals or making the cooking fire are lessons in sustainable living. Listening at the campsites to Barred Owls hoot at night or watching fish jump in Montsweag Bay are lessons in animal ecology. Collecting salt water for washing dishes is a lesson in how tides work, and being outside in a rain shower is a lesson on the water cycle. Carrying food and gear to campsites and setting up tents are exercises in team building. Staying overnight away from home is for many students a lesson in independence and taking care of oneself.

While our formal lessons introduce many of these topics, it is the daily chores and routines of life lived "the Chewonki way" that make the lessons real. The art of being a good teacher for the Outdoor Classroom is flexibility. Nature is an unpredictable "team teacher," and you never know what it will bring! This is a challenge that keeps me from getting bored. The unpredictability of our classroom is endlessly exciting! Experiential education is certainly not new. But at Chewonki, it's more than just a teaching method. It's a way of life.

Katie has been on our Outdoor Classroom administrative staff since 2002. She is an enthusiastic naturalist and has studied ecosystems all over the U.S. as well as in Mexico and Canada. Along with her administrative duties, she leads our extended sailing and canoeing trips.



Sue West, Art Teacher, Maine Coast Semester

I am always excited about teaching at Chewonki because of the care and respect that are so rich here. I can delve into any issue in the classroom or community and feel not only a lot of support but also a lot of energy for listening and considering and, if necessary, working on solutions.

I don't teach art because I'm dying to teach a particular technique. I teach because I want to teach patience, perseverance, how to deal with struggle, about being on the edge. That's why I love teaching in the arts. I'm teaching the human being, not the subject.

Every semester, I'm ready again. I have forty new faces in front of me, and that keeps me alive as a teacher. I find it exciting and challenging to work one-on-one with every student. I begin each semester wondering not "What can they learn from me?" but "What can I learn from *them*?"

I feel so supported in this community. The mix of age and wisdom with new and fresh energy is great. It warms my heart again and again to walk across this campus and hear a student yell out "Hi!" to a faculty member as enthusiastically as when they greet another student.

Sue has been at MCS since it opened its doors, teaching Art and the Natural World. She is a singer, canoeist, spinner and weaver, gardener, storyteller, and a frame drum percussionist. She is married to MCS teacher Scott Andrews, and they have a daughter, Margaret.



"Noah listened to the kids and showed them great respect. He was funny and patient and gentle and kind. We all learned from the way he treated others. He is a natural teacher and the kids adored and looked up to him."

~Teacher, Mast Landing School, Freeport, ME

A SUMMER T

*With the opening of Camp Chewonki for Girls,
Chewonki established a new North Woods home and served
more than twice as many girls as in any previous summer*

GENELL VASHRO

A new era began this summer at Chewonki: the creation of a girls camp. It was a heroic summer for the leaders and participants alike who ventured out to pristine Fourth Debsconeag Lake to create a community and a culture, to discover the natural world around them, and to create traditions for Camp Chewonki for Girls.

Last November we received unanimous support from Chewonki's Board of Trustees to establish a girls camp on the exquisite shoreline site of Debsconeag Lake Wilderness Camps. Announcements were sent far and wide throughout the Chewonki community, and girls and young women from around the country came to spend a summer at Camp Chewonki for Girls.

In May, just as the ice was going out, crews of volunteers headed north to Fourth Debsconeag. It took many hands, many hours, many barge loads (from the boat landing to the site), and lots of enthusiasm to haul in supplies for yurts, a

composting toilet system, a new cedar swim dock, and program materials. We owe countless thanks to all who helped.

The first two weeks of June, the trip leaders and staff assembled the yurts with their own hands. It was an empowering experience for all of us to feel the sweat of building a camp and watch a vision come to life. Once they were up, the beautiful green yurts nestled into the woods as if they had always belonged there.

On June 24, we welcomed the first participants of Camp Chewonki for Girls! Our progression-based tripping model offered both in-camp activities and wilderness travel for girls ages 11 to 17, in two sessions that were each three and a half weeks long. We also offered a five-day introductory session for younger girls (8–11) on Chewonki Neck in August. In total, 75 girls participated in an all-girl Chewonki program this summer—more than double any previous summer!

At Fourth Debsconeag, our small group of just over 30 people each session, staff and campers, created a community



O REMEMBER

that welcomed laughter, redefined “costume box,” overcame challenges, reveled in accomplishments, ate delicious homemade food, explored miles of wilderness, and developed lasting relationships with each other and the natural world. We had a tremendous group of people working to make it all happen; a group that faced challenges with gusto and came out smiling, that brought laughter and harmony to our tables, and that stood up independently to try something new. I knew we had a unique community when after two weeks of rain everyone returned from their trips wearing ear-to-ear smiles.

In August, the youngest girls who attended camp on Chewonki Neck charmed everyone on campus. We had to expand this session in response to the strong demand. Giggles and laughter erupted from the cabins, and the dining room was filled with singing, to everyone’s delight. Every girl said she

wants to return next summer, several of them to Fourth Debsconeag.

Throughout the summer I shared regular updates with parents, and hoped they could sense the spirit of excitement and deep satisfaction I saw in the girls and leaders of Camp Chewonki for Girls. Here are two short excerpts:

June 26, 2008, Day 3, Fourth Debsconeag Lake

I am sitting in the loft of the main lodge listening to the chatter of a group of girls preparing lunch (chicken salad, bean salad, and homemade bread) with Blair, our fabulous cook. It is general swim time; the other girls are enjoying a dip in the lake, relaxing in their yurts, participating in drama, or carving out their paddles.

The morning was full of activities! Three guests joined us to share their expertise with the girls. One of them, Chewonki head naturalist Lynne Flaccus, presented binoculars and a *Peterson Field Guide to Birds* to each girl. Thanks to a generous donor, each girl received her very own pair of binoculars to use at camp and to take home



**“I think Ali’s first letter home describes it best:
Camp is perfect.” —Parent 2008**

**“Just to let you know—as far as this camper and her
parents are concerned, Chewonki camp for girls is a
huge success!” —Parent 2008**

Visit our website at www.chewonki.org

“It was a really great experience and I learned a lot...I feel like I can handle anything now! I also learned many useful skills while on camping trips. I’m really good at canoeing, tying the trucker’s hitch and bowline knots, and I’m comfortable portaging canoes since we did it a lot and at times for long distances! At the end of each portage trip everyone felt very accomplished (after all, it is pretty challenging). That was my overall feeling after camp was over: Accomplishment. I will definitely remember this camp experience for the rest of my life!” —Camper 2008

with her. The nature activities that followed included flower pressing and creating landscape sculptures with our leaders Prema Long, Lilly Betke-Brunswick, and Hannah Plekon.

July 5, 2008, Day 12, Fourth Debsconeag Lake

Yesterday, at the crack of dawn, we watched the Trout Lily group (the oldest girls in camp) paddle away in the mirrored waters to begin their 9-day canoe trip. The image and sound of them gunneled up (holding onto each other’s boats side by side) and singing in unison the Girls Camp cheer remain ever present. The girls propelled themselves with paddles they

carved and decorated themselves—everything from polka dot paddles to fern-leaf paddles to paddles covered in poetry.

I ran the trail this morning that connects Third and Fourth Debsconeag Lakes and imagined the girls walking those final steps toward home next week. I got goose bumps thinking about the sense of pride and accomplishment that will most likely fill them!

Thank you all for sharing your daughters with us. It was indeed a summer to be remembered.

Genell Vashro is director of Camp Chewonki for Girls.

TWO Challenges in Support of Camp Chewonki for Girls

As many of our readers know, the Canoe Expedition for Maine Girls was one of the springboards from which our new Girls Camp emerged. We never could have made it this far without the generosity of so many supporters. With grants over three years from the Quimby Family Foundation, challenge grants from Lynn Harrison, and support from an enthusiastic and growing community, we have been able to expand our vision into a permanent and lasting camp.

The Girls Program Advisory Committee challenged us to double the number of girls we were reaching, while applying the essential Canoe Expedition wilderness elements to a full camp community. These elements showcase what Chewonki does so well: introduces girls to Maine’s natural world, builds intimate, trusting communities where each member is valued, and inspires girls to excel with new skills and new dreams. Meanwhile, our commitment to Maine girls has not wavered.

Lynn Harrison’s generous challenge grant of \$100,000 for financial aid and facilities at Camp Chewonki for Girls has been joined by a second challenge! Charlie and Irene Hamm have also pledged \$100,000, specifically for financial aid for this new program.

The Canoe Expedition for Maine Girls was able to meet the financial needs of every participant because of the generosity of Lynn and a marvelous group of supporters in Maine and across the country. We now have two scholarship funds for girls, one of them specifically for Maine girls.

With Charlie and Irene’s new challenge, we have added incentive to build our endowment for all girls and know that in these difficult times we can continue to offer experiences to a broad spectrum of deserving girls from around the country. Please help us reach *both* of these important challenges!



Seven Weeks of Summer

Why a longer camp experience enriches everyone

GARTH ALTENBURG

It's hard to believe that less than twenty-five years ago, everyone at Camp Chewonki came for the entire summer. This year, reflecting a nationwide trend in summer camp enrollments, only 33 of our 328 boys at camp were with us for the full summer.

When Clarence Allen opened camp in 1915, there was only one session and it ran a full eight weeks. In the early 1980s we shortened that to seven weeks, and in 1985 we introduced our three-and-a-half-week sessions, which quickly became the norm. I was only twelve that summer, but my predecessor, Dick Thomas, remembers that the change was made for a variety of reasons. Family finances certainly played a role, as did the growing number of summer options. Unfortunately, the rising divorce rate probably contributed as well. When kids have to split their summer between two families, there is often less time for camp.

The unique developmental experience of Camp Chewonki is only enhanced when a child is with us for the entire summer. Stronger friendships are formed. A greater awareness of self emerges. Connections to the natural world deepen. Campers have the time to further immerse themselves in their activities, gaining more skills and experiencing a broader range of all we have to offer. Our seven-week campers continue to be the backbone of our summer community, providing leadership and familiarity with the ways of Chewonki for our shorter-term campers. I expect that will soon be true for our new girls camp as well.

I recently spoke with the mother of a camper who made the switch this year from three and a half to seven weeks at camp and enjoyed her insights:

"My son pushed for the seven weeks due to two close friendships that he formed at Chewonki over the previous summers. These three boys connected on a level far above any of the numerous friendships that my son had at school. Coming to Chewonki for seven weeks was his way of getting to spend more time with these friends. Looking back on this past summer, I can now see that seven weeks allowed for him to have the full Chewonki experience. One reason my son didn't go for seven weeks in the past was that he was afraid he would miss



out on things here at home. What he came to realize after Chewonki was that not much happened around here while he was gone. He did so much more at Chewonki than he would ever do at home. He took an important developmental step by going away for the summer. He learned that he could go away, be challenged, learn to handle the world, and have fun while doing it. He is preparing to take appropriate steps into adulthood as he enters high school, not having to confront independence all at once as he enters college. Seven weeks at Chewonki allowed him to become more responsible for himself."

As you plan for the coming summer, I hope you will consider allowing your son—or now daughter—to join us for a longer period of time. Letting go of your child isn't easy, I know, but a summer at Chewonki offers a unique experience that can't be found at home or at school. You will miss your child (you *are* allowed to visit!), but my guess is you will be thrilled with the outcome.

Garth Altenburg is director of Camp Chewonki for Boys.



Another Magical Summer for Boys Camp

Not to be outdone by the new girls camp, Camp Chewonki for Boys also enjoyed a terrific summer—its 94th! “With the exception of the Session I Puffins, which had a few open spaces, Chewonki Neck was jam-packed,” said director Garth Altenburg. The 328 boys, most of whom attended for three and a half weeks, came from 23 states and 12 foreign countries.

From the traditional opening-night sing-along to the last Cabin Night, Campfire, and Sunday Service at the Point, campus was abuzz with an exciting new level of activity. Among the many highlights were a Wild West Treasure Hunt, the Chewonki Man Triathlon, a new Letterman-type talent show called “After Minutes,” an all-camp carnival that featured a dessert auction, and some of the best Scouting Games between the Sags and Hocs in years.

Returning campers were delighted to find several changes on campus: a newly renovated shower house, two new waterless toilet facilities that will help us save 150,000 gallons of

water a year, an expanded and highly energy-efficient kitchen and dining hall, and six new sailboats on the waterfront.

A notable 36 wilderness trips, in addition to an overnight for every cabin, took boys well beyond Chewonki Neck. In canoes, sailboats, kayaks, and hiking boots, they covered a sizeable chunk of Maine, traveling as far north as the Canadian border on the St. Croix River and as far west as the Mahoosuc Mountains near Bethel.

And who could forget the rain that was such a big part of Session II? Rather than dampen the Chewonki spirit, it became a source of inspiration! The kayaking staff rigged up a rope tow for the kayaks, and campers and counselors took turns towing each other across the lower field. The kayaks skimmed and slipped across the mud and provided a thrilling ride. Boys of all ages also seized the opportunity to get wet and muddy, leading to several full-fledged “mud runs.” Garth said, “I’ve never seen so many campers slide so far on their bellies across so much mud.” Thank goodness for our excellent laundry staff.

Plans are well underway for another magical summer in 2009.

Jack Little's Big Tree

On a blustery day last March, a letter arrived on Don Hudson's desk that quickly made the rounds of our Farmhouse offices. It was from Jack Little (Camp '38-'39) of Brookline, Massachusetts, and attached to it was a photo of him standing beside a towering white pine. His wife had taken it a week earlier in their yard. The tree, wrote Jack, was "perhaps 2 inches tall" when he dug it up at Chewonki in the summer of 1939 and brought it home in his mess kit cup. It "grew in our house in pots of increasing size until the late 1950s, when I planted it outside in its present location....It cannot help but remind me of camp."

FRANÇOISE C. LITTLE



part: "I was pleased to know that you have been thinking about camp and that your tree is still alive. I hope it grows to be a huge one and will remind you for years and years to come of the camp and all your friends at Chewonki."

Although Chewonki has remained a steadfast memory in Jack's life, he never returned. His brother Renny (camper, counselor, former trustee, and current advisor) became an institution here, but Chewonki was not the place for Jack. "I was totally unathletic, and I was not the camping type," he told us. "However, I was very interested in science." As Dr. John B. Little, Jack has had a distinguished career in medical research at the Harvard School of Public Health. He is also a faculty member at Harvard's John B. Little Center for Radiation Sciences and Environmental Health, where he has been working since 1965 to determine how and why radiation causes cancer.

The unexpected envelope that blew into Chewonki Neck last March brought us a small

Eager to know more, we called Jack.

One of the first things we learned is that he is just over 6 feet tall. Extrapolating from the photo, it looks like his tree is at least 60 feet tall now.

The man who was 9 years old in 1939 has vivid memories of digging up the tree. "I don't think it was exactly a typical thing for a Chewonki boy to do then. As a kid I was rather experimental, I guess." Or maybe he was prompted by the longtime tradition (still extant) of campers taking some small thing home, typically a piece of bark or a stone, to remind them of camp.

Jack also enclosed a copy of a letter he received from camp director Clarence Allen. Dated August 18, 1939, the letter reads in

but memorable gift. To think that Jack's piece of Chewonki Neck is still thriving in Brookline 69 years later is remarkable. As Don Hudson said, "It's a wonderful example of how one small act can help us remember an important time in our lives." It's also an example of how Chewonki often stays with people forever—though rarely as literally as in Jack's case!

For those of us who are immersed in Chewonki's current campaign, Jack reminded us of something else too: even the smallest gift can grow over time into something magnificent. As we work to successfully complete our "Pathways to the Future" campaign, the photo of Jack next to his towering white pine is a powerful reminder of what we can accomplish. Thank you, Jack.



Labrador, Summer 2008/Greg Shute

Trips for Adults Too!

Do you adults ever look wistfully at our summer offerings for youngsters and wish you could travel with Chewonki too? Well, you can! We've been offering trips for adults, families, and senior citizens for years. Our trained leaders know how to combine adventure and fun with a pace set to enhance exploration and appreciation of the natural world. They also know how to cook! Chewonki's trip meals are legendary.

Most of our trips require no previous experience, and they are not endurance tests. We travel and camp as comfortably as possible, but we do assume participants are willing to pitch in with setting up tents and preparing meals. Unless otherwise stated, children 16 and under must be accompanied by an adult.

Enrollment is limited. We hope you'll join us in 2009!

2009 SCHEDULE

Family Ski/Snowshoe at Wood Cove in Attean, Maine	February 14-16
Camping at Cumberland Island National Seashore, Georgia	February 19-24
St. John River Trip for Adults	May 10-16
Family Camp at Debsconeag Lake Wilderness Camps	August 12-16
Russ Island Adult and Family Sea Kayaking	August 13-16
St. Croix Adult and Family Canoe Trip	August 17-22
Allagash Adult and Family Canoe Trip	August 15-23
West Branch Elderhostel Canoe Trip (minimum age 55)	September 6-12
Allagash Adult and Family Canoe Trip	September 13-19

In addition to the trips listed here, we regularly plan and lead custom trips for groups and individuals. For information on how to organize a custom trip, contact our Wilderness Programs office at trips@chewonki.org. For more information, go to www.chewonki.org and click on "Wilderness Trips," or contact the Wilderness Programs office.

Celebrating 20 Years of MCS

On August 15, 16, and 17, the population of Chewonki Neck swelled to over 300 people as we celebrated 20 years of MCS. Traveling from as close as Wiscasset and as far away as Costa Rica, MCS alumni, former faculty, and their families joined current faculty and Chewonki staff for a weekend of wonderful conversation, delicious food, and beautiful weather.

Thank you to all of the alumni and faculty who made this celebration such a success, particularly the volunteers who helped before and after the weekend, and everyone who donated to the Solar Panel Challenge. We've raised over \$13,000 already, and there's still time to contribute! For more information about the Solar Panel Challenge and to see more photos, visit www.chewonki.org/alumni/20yearsofmcs.asp.





“What a wonderful celebration of a wonderful program and place.
Much gratitude to those over the years who have made this possible.”

~Forrest Fleishman, MCS 18, Farm Intern MCS 31 & 32, Camp '92-'96, '01

From Farm to Kitchen

The Chewonki community provides a sensible model for producing and eating local food

Sometime this December, Chewonki's farm and kitchen staffs will sit down together and begin to plan for 2009. Farm manager Margaret Youngs will have a list of everything the farm has produced this year. Her records are meticulous. For years, Salt Marsh Farm has recorded every variety of vegetable it grows, how many pounds of each one it harvests, and what the retail values are to the kitchen.

Kitchen manager Sarah Burgess will also have a list. She too keeps careful records, of produce received, meals served, and food put by in the freezer and canning jars. Sarah will note what the kitchen liked and didn't like this year (there's rarely anything in the later category), if harvest quantities need to be adjusted, and if there are any new varieties she'd like to have. Margaret will then map out next year's crops and prepare Chewonki's January seed orders.

The annual planning session is but one example of how Chewonki's kitchen and farm work together year-round to feed our community. On one acre, Salt Marsh Farm now harvests between 10,000 and 12,000 pounds of vegetables a year, which have a market value of \$20,000 to \$25,000. It takes careful planning and management to get such a high yield. It also takes careful coordination with the kitchen. No one wants to see food wasted. And no one really wants more rutabagas than they can use.

"Each year we try to improve our efficiency on the farm so we don't waste food and don't overwhelm the kitchen. I think we've worked out a lot of the kinks and have really improved our system," says Margaret. Sarah agrees. "The system works really well," she says.

Spring through fall, the farm gives the kitchen a weekly list of what will be harvested, so the kitchen can plan its menus accordingly. "I also try to give them a heads-up if we'll have a particularly large harvest of something," says Margaret.

A steady stream of greens and seasonal vegetables make their way into the kitchen all summer. By early September, the stream becomes an onslaught. "There's always about a two-week period when it seems like all we do is eat and put up tomatoes," says Sarah. "It can be trying at the time, but in the winter it's wonderful to be cooking with our own tomato sauce." With the help of Maine Coast Semester students, the kitchen freezes several hundred pounds of tomatoes every year (the 2008 crop weighed in at 2,070 pounds!), puts up pickles, makes and freezes its own pesto, and grinds hundreds of garlic bulbs into oil that "freezes beautifully" says Sarah.

The farm staff oversees the storage of beets, carrots, potatoes, winter squashes, parsnips, rutabaga, pumpkins, onions, and garlic. These crops comprise almost half the annual harvest. "The onions and garlic easily take us into the spring, and everything else could too if we had better storage conditions," says Margaret. Happily, that will soon change. The Wallace Center renovation includes a new and expanded root cellar.

With the farm and kitchen working together so closely, culinary yield and taste are maximized. By late August when the MCS students arrive and the gardens are overflowing, a good majority of the food we serve in our dining hall is centered around our own harvest.

"I love the way the kitchen highlights the farm food," says Margaret. "If we have a really big harvest of broccoli, for example, they don't just serve steamed broccoli. They prepare some special dish that really highlights it."

Sarah wouldn't have it any other way. As she finished preparing lunch recently, she said she was already looking forward to next year's harvest. "I already know I want more sweet potatoes and soybeans," she said. "Oh, and more lemon cucumbers too! They're delicious."



Farm manager Margaret Youngs and assistant manager Jeremy Tardif ensure a bountiful harvest for the kitchen.

First You Have to Row a Little Boat: Reflections on Life and Living by Richard Bode

This is a book for anyone who knows in their heart that the trials and tribulations of outdoor travel helped them to become a certain kind of person. It is for anyone who believes that learning the ins and outs of a craft—be it canoeing, kayaking, hiking, or sailing—serves them each and every day as an adult. Richard Bode fell in love with boats and sailing at the age of twelve on Long Island Sound. *First You Have to Row a Little Boat* (Grand Central Publishing, 1993) is a reflection on the sailing misadventures of Bode's boyhood, which he uses as a metaphor for the challenges of sailing through life.

Chapter by chapter, Bode tells how he came to learn the craft of sailing. Every lesson he learned the hard way, every "ah ha" moment he experienced, is translated into a metaphor for how to cope with the real life of adulthood. In the chapter "The Shortest Distance Between Two Points Is a Zigzag Line," Bode describes the first time he tried to reach a destination that was directly into the wind. For hours he struggled, frustrated and miserable, until he finally figured out the art of patiently tacking in zigzags, slowly making headway.

He tells of his boyhood dreams of becoming a writer, something he did not do until he was much older. Life, says Bode, is not always a straight downwind tack; sometimes many a zigzag is necessary before a goal can be reached. For Bode, the major zigzag of life was getting married and raising a family. He is quick to point out that while some zigzags are miserable, others are as enjoyable and important as the goal: the age-old *the journey is as important as the destination*. "In due course," he writes, "we arrive. If it can be said that we ever fully arrive. The truth is that there are destinations beyond destinations, and so the confirmed sailor goes on tacking forever."

Another chapter relates Bode's first experience being fogbound. Scared and confused, he continued sailing into the mist. He soon found himself lost with absolutely nothing to guide him. Eventually he remembered the advice of his mentor, the captain: head into the wind and stop if you aren't sure what you are doing. So he did just that and dropped the



anchor, determined to wait it out until the fog cleared or he discovered where he was. Sure enough, the wind came up and the shoreline appeared.

Bode also writes of a tough time he went through later in life, when "I found myself in a fog so permanent, so pervasive, that I thought it would never lift." He feels sad, he says for people in this state, for "unable to see, they steer without purpose, without direction until they founder and disappear."

Recalling the sailing days of his youth, he writes that "whenever I feel myself slipping into that hopeless state, as I sometimes do, I remember the words of the captain, uttered so long ago, and I let go of the tiller and head into the wind."

While at times Bode carries his metaphors a little too far, overall the book is a lovely musing on the importance of presenting children with challenges, of learning things the hard way, and of mastering a craft. I've never led a Chewonki sailing trip without a dog-eared copy of this book in my dry bag.

KATIE TREMBLAY

Reducing Phantom Energy

STEP IT UP

FOR SUSTAINABILITY

PETER SNIFFEN, MCS TEACHING FELLOW

Have you heard the terms "phantom energy," "ghost draw," or "vampire appliances"? They refer to the electricity that many appliances and electronic devices use even when they're turned off. Computers, microwaves, coffeemakers, TVs, and cable boxes, for example, often draw small amounts of energy even when turned off, to power digital displays and standby modes. Gadgets that use rechargeable batteries and plug-in adapters are some of the most aggressive "vampires," because the adapters draw power even when the gadgets themselves aren't plugged in.

This energy use can really add up—and is growing all the time. In the U.S., phantom energy reportedly costs consumers more than \$5.8 billion a year, generates more than 87 billion pounds of atmospheric CO₂ a year, and accounts for 5–10 percent of household electricity usage.

What can *you* do about phantom energy? Plenty!

- By far the easiest solution: unplug appliances when they aren't in use.
- Plug appliances into a power strip and switch it off when you aren't using them.
- To find out how much energy your appliances "secretly" use, purchase a Kill-a-Watt or similar product. This simple device costs about \$25 and can calculate consumption by the hour, day, week, month, or year.
- For a small investment, purchase a product like the Smart Strip Power Strip or the

WattStopper. They "know" when an appliance is being used and disconnect the power when it's not. This is great for bundled electronics like your computer, printer, and scanner.

- When buying a new appliance, consider energy usage. The Federal Energy Management Program endorses an online database of appliances and phantom energy use: http://oahu.lbl.gov/cgi-bin/search_data.pl.
- Finally, perhaps the best advice is to keep it simple. When buying appliances and gadgets, consider if you really need all the extra features. Chances are good they come with secret energy needs.

The bottom line: By reducing phantom energy use, you'll lower your electric bill and your carbon emissions.

This column takes its name and logo (with permission) from the Step It Up 2007 National Day of Climate Action that took place on April 14, 2007. For more information, visit www.stepitup2007.org.

Vacation in Maine with Chewonki

Looking for a spectacular and affordable vacation spot, in a truly pristine wilderness? Look no further. Our cabins at Debsconeag Lake Wilderness Camps are available for rent—and they're within an easy day's drive of much of New England! With the exception of mid-June through mid-August, when girls camp is in session, we welcome visitors any time from ice-out through late fall. September through mid-October is especially nice, with crisp weather and beautiful foliage.



Each of our smokefree, rustic housekeeping cabins is equipped with a gas cooking stove and lights, sink, woodstove, and simple but comfortable beds. You provide the rest: sleeping bag, towels, and food. In the not-too-distant future, we hope to offer a meal plan, just like Maine's traditional sporting camps do, for guests who prefer to have their meals provided. Discussions are in the works, so stay tuned.

The camps are about an hour-and-a-half drive from Greenville, mostly on very good logging roads. From the parking lot, it's a short boat ride or a half-mile walk to the cabins and main lodge. Once there, you'll find the perfect combination of rustic comfort, exquisite setting, and an unparalleled opportunity to enjoy Maine's famed North Woods.

Rates are posted on our website. For more information, contact Greg Shute at 207-882-7323 or gshute@chewonki.org; or visit www.chewonki.org/about/DebsconeagLakeCamps.asp.

Please recycle the *Chronicle* by passing it along to friends or public officials or donating it to a doctor's office, school, retirement home, or library.



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