

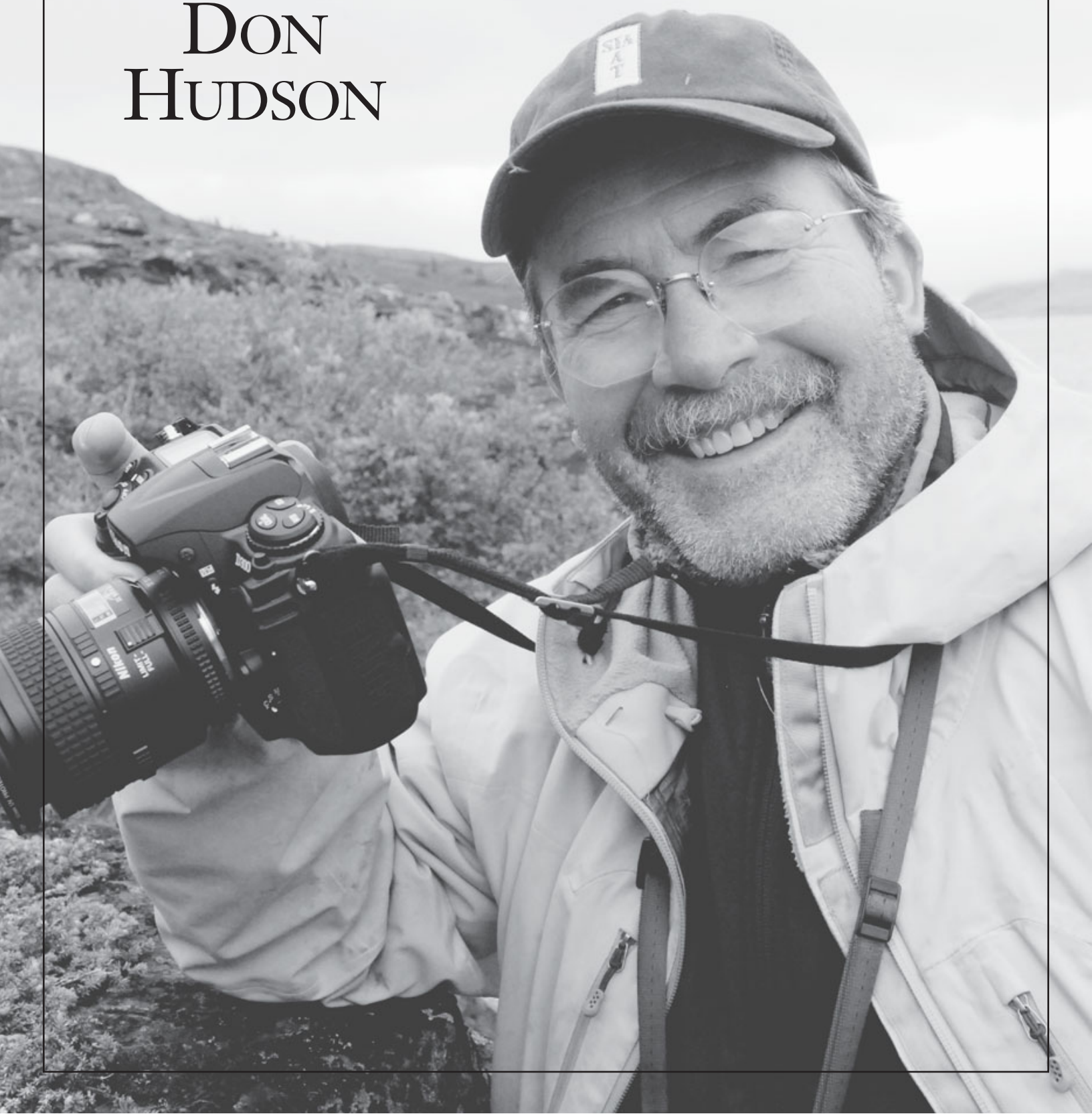
*The  
passion and  
heart of*

**DON  
HUDSON**

SPRING 2010



**CHEWONKI  
CHRONICLE**



## CHEWONKI FOUNDATION STAFF

Don Hudson, President  
 Mark Adams, Big Eddy Campground Staff  
 Susan Adams, Big Eddy Campground Manager  
 Garth Altenburg, Camp for Boys, Director  
 Scott Andrews, Semester School, History  
 Carob Arnold, Facilities Manager  
 Peter Arnold, Sustainability Coordinator  
 Tom Arnold, Outdoor Classroom  
 Paul Arthur, Semester School, English, Assistant Head of School  
 Peter Bakke, Outdoor Classroom  
 Sandy Bandhu, Camp & Wilderness Trips Assistant  
 Kate Braemer, Outreach/Outdoor Classroom  
 Sarah Burgess, Kitchen & Dining Manager  
 Emma Carlson, Outdoor Classroom, Assistant Director  
 Jason Chandler, Semester School, Teaching Fellow  
 Lauralyn Citizen, Reception/Office Manager  
 Margaret Youngs Coleman, Farm & Woodlot Manager  
 Betta Stothart Connor, Director of Communications  
 Keith Crowley, Traveling Natural History Program, Assistant Director  
 Jane Cullina, Outdoor Classroom  
 Blair Currier, Cook & Girls Camp Kitchen Manager  
 Todd Dowling, Outdoor Classroom Lead Instructor  
 Eric Duffy, Assistant Health Care & Safety Coordinator  
 Rachel Edelman, Outdoor Classroom  
 Bill Edgerton, Cook  
 Phine Ewing, Volunteer Gardener  
 Lisa Ferrel, Cook  
 Lynne Flaccus, Head Naturalist  
 Ginny Freeman, Camp Registrar  
 Rebecca Graham, IT Manager  
 Becky Harth, Outdoor Classroom  
 Leah Kramer Heyman, Outreach Educator  
 Bill Hinkley, Semester School, Math  
 Abby Holland, Semester School, Spanish  
 Lucy Hull, Director of Development  
 Anna Hunt, Traveling Natural History Program, Director  
 Katie Hyman, Semester School, Teaching Fellow  
 Libby Irwin, Semester School, Asst. Dir. of Admissions & Alumni Relations  
 Carol James, Housekeeping  
 Rachel Jones, Outdoor Classroom  
 Rebecca Kosakowski, Semester School, Admissions Director  
 Aaron LaFlamme, Outdoor Equipment & Logistics  
 Don Lamson, Director of Operations  
 Bethany Laursen, Outdoor Classroom  
 Anne Leslie, Foundations Coordinator  
 Addie Liddic, Outdoor Classroom, Program Assistant  
 Ryan Linehan, Summer Wilderness Programs Director  
 Prema Long, Lead Outreach Educator  
 Chad Lorenz, Outdoor Classroom  
 Tamothy Louten, Health Care Coordinator, Supervising RN  
 Holly Lowe, Development Assistant  
 Dana Mark, Outdoor Classroom  
 Rachel Marks, Outdoor Classroom  
 Colin McGovern, Outreach/Outdoor Classroom  
 Trish McLeod, Business Office  
 Willard Morgan, Semester School, Head of School  
 Ashley Nadeau, Outdoor Classroom  
 Nancy Percy, Human Resources Manager  
 Scott Peterson, Waterfront & Boatshop Manager  
 Megan Phillips, Farm Apprentice  
 Ben Redman, Semester School, Math  
 Chris Riley, Wilderness Programs Assistant Director  
 Christina Roach, Outdoor Classroom  
 Amy Rogers, Semester School, English  
 Caitlin Scott, Semester School, Admissions Fellow  
 Greg Shute, Wilderness Programs Director  
 Chris Snell, Outdoor Classroom  
 Peter Sniffen, Semester School, Science  
 Jamie Sonia, Business Office Assistant  
 Jeremy Tardif, Assistant Farm Manager  
 Dick Thomas, Chief of Staff & Director of Alumni Relations  
 Leah Titcomb, Outreach Educator  
 Edward Tittmann, Chief Financial Officer  
 Katie Tremblay, Outdoor Classroom, Program Director  
 Tom Twist, Sustainability Assistant  
 Genell Vashro, Camp for Girls, Director  
 Matt Weeks, Outdoor Classroom  
 Sue West, Semester School, Art  
 Marjolaine Whittlesey, Semester School, French  
 Peg Willauer-Tobey, Assistant Director of Development  
 Ken Wise, Carpenter  
 Tom Zaleski, Maintenance Mechanic

## CHRONICLE STAFF

Elizabeth Pierson, *Editor*  
 Betta Stothart Connor, *Assistant Editor*  
 Fall Design, *Graphic Design*

## PROGRAMS

Semester School  
 Camp for Boys  
 Camp for Girls  
 Wilderness Trips for Teens  
 Wilderness Vacations for Adults & Families  
 Outdoor Classroom for Schools  
 Traveling Natural History Programs  
 Sustainability Office

# Contents

## 3 President's Notes

## 4 News from the Neck

## 8 Don Hudson: Keeper of the Vision

After 44 years, Don prepares to retire.

## 13 Dot Lamson

A boss, co-leader, and good friend eases into retirement.

## 14 Willard Morgan

A talk with Chewonki's next president.

## 16 A Visit from Bill McKibben

When it comes to activism, he told us, don't worry if you're ready—just begin.

## 18 Art of the Handwritten Letter

There's nothing more treasured than a handwritten letter.

## 21 Off the Grid and On the Farm

At Semester School, sustainability and renewable energy are part of the curriculum.

## 24 Pushing Our Limits

It's time to start climbing!

## 26 Learning to Teach

Outreach trains undergrads to teach with wildlife.

## 28 People

## 31 On My Bookshelf

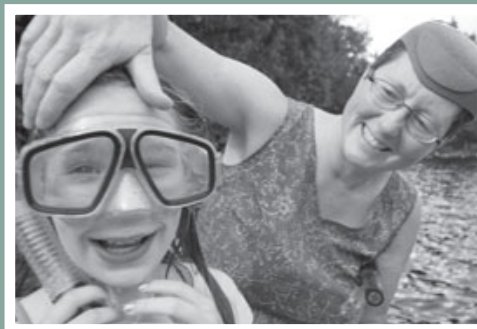
Greg Shute reviews *Nature and Renewal* by Dean Bennett

## 31 Step It Up for Sustainability

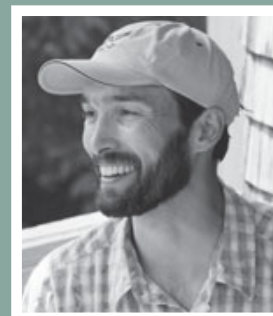
Get a home energy audit!



Page 8



Page 13



Page 14



Page 21



Page 24

## Parting Words

The untimely passing of Tom Bertocci this April reminded me of so many things about my time at Chewonki. Tom was a dear friend who took me under his wing many years ago. We had a glorious time together at Lake Umbagog in 1967, paddling, hiking, cutting and splitting wood, and cooking all of our meals on the campfire.

Casting back to those days has unearthed countless wonderful memories of wilderness trips, time spent in the kitchen and shop, and days upon days of tromping around Chewonki Neck and nearby haunts with campers and students in search of wild things—plants and birds and, mostly, adventure. I fell in love with Chewonki on a Sunday in July 1959 when our family had a picnic at the Point with my older brother Dave and his cabinmates. My parents, Bill and Mardi Hudson, returned in 1962 to work for Clarence Allen. We all went to camp! Later, in the early 1970s, my brothers and sister—Dave, Ben, and Mardi—were my colleagues on the tripping staff. It was Dave's counselor in 1959, Bob Elmore, who called me in December 1990 to tell me that the Board of Trustees had selected me to follow Tim Ellis as executive director. What wonderful connections!

These memories of mine are never solitary. They are filled with the faces and voices of hundreds—probably thousands—of individuals. I know firsthand that Chewonki changes lives because my life has been shaped and changed by people and events here for almost 50 years. Tim Ellis and Dave Campbell, co-leaders on my first trip to Katahdin, introduced me to the joys of climbing mountains, and I know for certain that 10 days on and around Katahdin in 1963 did more to put me on the path to becoming a wilderness tripper and naturalist than any other experience in my life. If I tried to enumerate the collective group that has left its mark on me, it would take several pages of this *Chronicle*!

The many friends and colleagues with whom I have shared a wilderness trip, a classroom, a birdwalk, or simply a walk in the woods have all touched me in one way or another. A few days ago, I got a great lift—at 6:15 A.M.!—when one of my Semester School students recognized a Chipping Sparrow. That moment outside the Barn tripped a cord. Into my head popped the image of Clarence Allen, sitting outside the Farm House on a Sunday afternoon in July 1962, helping me and a couple of other campers learn to recognize a Chipping Sparrow. “The Boss’s” quiet and enthusiastic instruction left an indelible mark. A collage of such memories will no doubt punctuate my reveries for the rest of my life, and I look forward to the experience.

So, as the time grows short, I want to send a collective thank-you to all of you who have helped to make my work and my life fulfilling. Chewonki has allowed me to live my dreams and my convictions. You have all embraced our time together with enthusiasm, joy, and a generous sense of shared commitment, and I am forever grateful.

As I pass the baton to Willard Morgan, I look forward to hearing and reading about new Chewonki adventures, lessons, and discoveries for years to come.

Kenne-bee-bee!

DON HUDSON



August 1965, along the trail from Chimney Pond to Roaring Brook in Baxter State Park. I was fifteen—45 years ago, and the summer before I started working at Chewonki. The photo was taken by my father, on a family trip.





Bill Hinkley (kneeling) teaching math. Photo by Scott Andrews.

## Bill Hinkley to Serve as Interim Head of School

**C**hewonki announced in late March that Semester School faculty member Bill Hinkley will serve as interim head of Chewonki Semester School. The announcement came in the wake of the appointment of Willard Morgan as the next Chewonki president. Bill will assume his new position in July, when Willard moves to the President's Office.

Bill has taught math at Chewonki since August 2002. He has also been instrumental in crafting a service component for Semester School, which has allowed students and staff to provide labor to those in our community. Bill is well known on campus as a dedicated teacher, father of three boys, and husband of architect Amy Hinkley, who has been integral in developing Chewonki's model campus. The Hinkley family owns and works an organic blueberry farm in Waldoboro.

Bill grew up in Maine and graduated from Brunswick High School. He earned his BA from Cornell University and master's degree in mathematics from the University of Illinois. Before coming to Chewonki, he taught at Deerfield Academy in Massachusetts and Gould Academy in Maine.

Don Hudson said he was delighted with Bill's appointment. "I am pleased that we have such a committed and qualified person to step into this interim role. Bill is a dyed-in-the-wool educator and an incredibly capable, intelligent person. We are lucky to have him." Chewonki will open a search for a permanent head of school later this year and expects to appoint a successor to Willard in spring 2011.

## Prestigious Awards Bestowed on Don Hudson

**I**n the wake of Don's announcement that he will retire, there has been a wave of recognition for his life's work and steadfast efforts on behalf of the environment. This spring, Don has been honored with the following four awards. With his trademark modesty, he said he was "surprised and delighted" by them. "The work for which I am getting credit has actually been accomplished by hundreds and hundreds of others," he said. "Each one of these awards reminds me, yet again, how lucky I have been to work for so long with so many wonderful and dedicated people."

On April 22, at Faneuil Hall in Boston, the New England Office of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recognized Don with an Environmental Merit Lifetime Achievement Award. This award, bestowed annually for more than 30 years, recognizes outstanding environmental advocates who have dedicated their lives to preserving and protecting New England's natural resources. Don received the award from Curt Spaulding, who was selected last fall by President Obama to be the EPA's administrator for the region encompassing Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, and ten Tribal Nations.

Maine Coast Heritage Trust (MCHT), a statewide land conservation organization, named Don as the recipient of the 2010 Espy Land Heritage Award. The award was presented on May 1, during MCHT's annual Maine Land Conservation Conference in Topsham. MCHT presents the award each year to an individual, organization, or coalition for exemplary conservation efforts in Maine and for inspiring and educating others.

Warren Whitney, MCHT's Land Trust Program Manager, said Don stood out among the many nominees because "his life work includes such an impressive commitment to conservation. That work combined with his focus on environmental education made him the most compelling candidate." The award includes a \$5,000 cash gift for the winner to direct to the conservation charity of their choice. Don will direct his gift to Chewonki Camp for Girls Scholarship Fund.

Since its founding in 1970, MCHT has permanently protected more than 133,000 acres and 290 coastal islands in Maine.



JOCK MONTGOMERY

## Wallace Center Renovations Completed!

Three years ago, we began making plans to improve the kitchen and dining facilities in our beloved Wallace Center. Construction began in 2008, was largely completed in 2009, and at last is done.

"I've been cooking for 30 years, and this is the nicest and most efficient kitchen I've ever worked in," says cook Bill Edgerton. A new south-facing dormer floods both the kitchen and dining room with natural light, and a new entry provides a much-needed airlock between indoors and outdoors.

New windows, floor, ceiling, and lighting were installed in January between semesters—but just barely! Only hours before the Semester 44 students and their families arrived, most of the Chewonki staff were washing windows, moving furniture, and

mopping. Since then, new wall treatments, new doors, and even some new furniture have been installed. There's also a beautiful new porch. In early March, it was already attracting readers, guitar players, and sunbathers.

Solar hot water and electricity, a flood of natural light, energy-saving fixtures, efficient appliances and refrigeration, and super insulation have made the Wallace Center "greener" and more energy efficient than ever. When the Roger Tory Peterson paintings, the large portrait of Clarence Allen, and the nearly 50 flags that represent the homes of Chewonki constituents over the years are re-hung in a few weeks, we will know the renovations are really over.



Don and Outdoor Classroom director and MEEA board member Katie Tremblay show off the Bachman's Warbler print Don received.

On March 26, the Maine Environmental Education Association (MEEA) recognized Don with a Lifetime Achievement Award for his "dedicated and inspired leadership." MEEA board member and Chewonki Outdoor Classroom director Katie Tremblay presented the award at the organization's annual conference. Don was delighted to learn that the award included a print by artist William Zimmerman of Bachman's Warbler, a species now presumed to be extinct.

Don has a long history with MEEA, having served for 15 years as a board member and also as president and treasurer. MEEA helps promote and expand environmental education in Maine and acts as a clearinghouse about issues and events.

And finally, on May 15, Don will deliver the keynote address at the 99th commencement of the University of Maine at Machias. He will also receive the university's Distinguished Service Award that day. UMM president Dr. Cynthia Huggins, who will present the award, said she has long been a "quiet admirer" of Don's work and of Chewonki. "Your background in environmental education and sustainability, and your exemplary leadership of the Chewonki Foundation, make you a perfect fit to inspire and encourage our young graduates," she wrote Don.



Chewonki Boatbuilders on Penobscot Bay. Photo by Bill Thomas.

### Build It. Paddle It. Take It Home!

Participants on Chewonki's five-week Boatbuilders Expedition will once again launch a beauty of a boat this summer. Two years ago, Maine boatbuilder Bill Thomas gave this popular trip for teens a fresh new identity with the introduction of a new, lightweight design: the 17-foot Sea Willow Kayak.

Wilderness Programs director Greg Shute could not be happier with the change. "Having had two summers of experience with it now, I can tell you this is a great boat," he said recently. "Our previous kayaks were like Studebakers: solid and serviceable, but heavy. The Sea Willow is more like a Prius. It's sleeker, more efficient to paddle, and visually stunning."

Greg is equally pleased with the boat's designer. Bill spends 10 days at Chewonki helping participants build their boats. Later, when they launch them and embark on a three-week trip up the

coast, he joins them on the water for a few days. "Bill is such a Chewonki enthusiast," says Greg. "He's passionate about what he does, and it shows in his work with the kids. They really relate to him."

Beginning with a pre-cut kit, participants learn the basic techniques of boatbuilding from frame to finish. In between sessions, they learn paddling skills on the Chewonki waterfront. In just two weeks, their beautiful boats are ready to launch. At the end of the trip, the boatbuilders take their kayaks home, where they can look forward to paddling them again and again for many years.

The Boatbuilders Expedition is for ages 14–18. It will run this summer from June 27 to July 30. For more information, visit our website and click on "Wilderness Trips for Teens."

### *Tom Bertocci – A Life Well Lived*

A dear friend, fellow counselor, colleague on the Maine Reach faculty, and long-time Chewonki Advisory Board Member, Tom Bertocci, passed away on April 3. He was 65 years old.

Tom was one of our great teachers and mentors. He grew up in Bath, and first came to Chewonki when Clarence Allen hired him to run Woodcraft and lead wilderness trips in 1965. Tim Ellis gave Tom the same responsibilities in 1966, and in 1967 Tom led the first summer-long trip to Lake Umbagog. He worked at camp again in 1968 and 1970, and returned in 1973 to lead Maine Reach, the year-long program that later morphed into Chewonki Semester School.

One former Maine Reach student, Isaiah Wyner, said, "I don't remember him being the most organized of teachers but he certainly understood the essential truths of progressive education, something I'll paraphrase as 'If you aren't walking in it you aren't understanding it.' I've always looked at that year as the definition of 'real' learning."

Tom's stamp was all over Maine Reach. As a graduate student in education at the University of Wisconsin, Tom had been teaching at a place called the City School in Madison before coming back to Maine to direct Maine Reach. Much of the structure of our days, and the ways in which we approached learning, Tom brought from his experience at the City School. He enjoyed being with people, valued education, and believed that citizen action was an important tool for improving people's lives. Those same interests propelled Tom to take a job with U.S. Senator George Mitchell as a field representative, and from 1980 to 1995 he worked tirelessly for individuals, communities, and businesses in Maine.

Tom and his wife, Cindy, lived in Thomaston with their children, Elena and Philip, and Tom remained a close advisor to Chewonki. He cultivated friendships, lived every moment to the fullest, and appreciated all those around him.

We've lost a dear friend and mentor, but we will not forget what he taught us. We are honored that gifts in Tom's memory can be made to Chewonki's Fund for Teaching and the Environment.

DON HUDSON



## Chewonki Featured in Green Living Movie

**W**e were thrilled to have a visit last August from the Green Living Project, a Los Angeles-based media company whose mission is “to educate and inspire individuals and communities to live a more sustainable lifestyle.” The team spent three days on campus profiling how we incorporate sustainability into all we do at Chewonki, and they returned in January to premiere their first-ever Maine multi-media event at Frontier Café in Brunswick.

The result is a wonderful 7-minute video about Chewonki. It features Peter Arnold, Maine Department of Conservation commissioner Patrick McGowan, MCS 40 alumna Lucy Bates-Campbell, and Don Hudson—along with plenty of familiar Chewonki sights and sounds.

To watch it, click on the YouTube icon on the bottom of our home page. You’ll also find a series of Camp and Wilderness Trip videos here.

## Listen Up! To Chewonki Sustainable Energy Podcasts

**L**ooking for something good to download? We have a great new offering on our website: a series of catchy renewable energy and sustainable living podcasts. Created by sustainability assistant Tom Twist, the podcasts are designed to cover the energy systems we showcase here at Chewonki, as well as the latest in green-technology innovation.



Three episodes are currently available, and more will be forthcoming. Episode 1, “Living Off the Grid,” follows the story of eight Semester School students who commit to taking their cabin off the grid. Tom chronicles the girls’ struggles and triumphs as they work to produce all of their own electricity for a full semester with “Hubert,” a bicycle-powered generator with a personality all his own. (What makes Hubert both better and worse than a boyfriend? Tom hears about that too!) Episodes 2 and 3 are “Geothermal: The Dark Horse of Renewable Energy” and “The Humble Home Energy Audit.”

Tom calls the podcasts “both a lot of fun and a lot of work to produce.” He relies heavily on Semester School students, who are especially helpful at finding public-domain music to accompany the podcasts. “Each episode is very much a collaboration with the students,” Tom says.

Director of Communications Betta Stothart Connor is delighted with the new offerings. “Tom is like our very own Ira Glass of ‘This American Life.’ The podcasts are edgy, fun, and informative. I think people will love them.”

To read more, download episodes, or listen online, visit our website and click on “Sustainability Office.”

## Sustainable Campus North

**C**hewonki’s main campus gets a lot of attention for being a model campus. Well, look out Wiscasset. Our property at Fourth Debsconeag Lake, aka Camp for Girls, has just completed phase one of a multiyear sustainable campus plan. The recent installation of



five 170-watt PV panels allows the Main Lodge refrigerators and lights to run on solar power and has seriously reduced the need for the gas-powered generator.

Phase two of the plan includes installing solar panels on rooftops of the property’s six rustic cabins, as well as eight more 170-watt PV units. Ultimately, the amount of solar power we can tap is limited only by the amount of appropriate roof space, according to Director of Operations Don Lamson. “Unfortunately, the cabins at Debsconeag are not all oriented for maximum solar gain,” says Don. “Chewonki is also being extremely thoughtful about how it places panels so they are in keeping with the rustic nature of the camps.”

The great news for everyone is that Chewonki’s campuses—north and south—are moving closer every day to carbon neutrality.

## Chewonki Discontinues Wildlife Rehabilitation

**“T**his was a tough decision, and certainly not made lightly,” said Anna Hunt, director of Traveling Natural History Programs. While Chewonki will continue to field phone calls and help transport injured wildlife, it has discontinued its wildlife rehabilitation services.

In a letter sent to other rehabilitators and to local vets and police departments, Anna explained that caring for injured wildlife has simply become too time consuming for her staff. “Our commitment to our educational animals comes first, and often we find ourselves spending an entire day fielding calls, transporting, or caring for injured wildlife,” she wrote. In recent years Chewonki has taken in about 150 injured animals a year and fielded twice that many phone calls.

The change will not affect Chewonki’s ability to take in non-releasable animals from another facility for use in its educational programs. Outreach currently cares for more than 20 such animals, among them birds, a bat, a woodchuck, and various arthropods and amphibians. “It’s a huge amount of work to care for our own animals as well as present educational programs,” says Anna. “We can’t do all this and still keep up with the latest in rehabilitation.”

Chewonki president Don Hudson fully supported the decision, noting that “every hour Outreach spends on rehabilitation is an hour not spent on its core programs.” At the same time, he is delighted that Anna and three other Outreach staff have become adjunct faculty in Captive Wildlife Care and Education at Unity College (see p. 26).

## NEW FUND HONORS DOT LAMSON

Dot Lamson, who taught environmental education at Chewonki for 28 years and directed the Center for Environmental Education for 26 years, eased into part-time retirement this past December (see story on p. 13). In her honor, Chewonki has established the Lamson Fund, to support programs that teach young people about the natural world. To make a gift, visit [www.chewonki.org/support](http://www.chewonki.org/support) or contact Lucy Hull, Director of Development, at [lhull@chewonki.org](mailto:lhull@chewonki.org) or at 207-882-7323 x127.





# DON HUDSON

## *Keeper of the Vision*

ELIZABETH PIERSON

**F**ifty-one years ago this July, nine-year-old Don Hudson visited his brother Dave at Camp Chewonki and shared a picnic at the Point with their parents and Dave's cabinmates. That day has never faded from Don's memory. "It was the first of countless experiences that are the measure of my life," he says.

Consider the other Chewonki experiences that have contributed to that measure: camper, 1962–1963; counselor, 1966–1977; Maine Reach faculty, 1972–1976; wilderness trip leader, 1977–1982; head naturalist, 1982–1991; executive director, 1991–1997; and president, 1997–2010. (Asked about the difference between the last two titles, Don says, "Nothing. Strictly nomenclature.")

Except for the year he married Phine Ewing, Don has spent every summer since 1966 at Chewonki. He has been on the staff for 44 years, worked here year-round for 32 years, and been at the helm for 19 years.

On July 12, Don will retire. Since he made the announcement last June, both he and his extraordinary tenure have drawn attention. There have been interviews, accolades, and awards. And they are not going away, at least not anytime soon. "I'm tired of hearing about big shoes!" Don joked a few weeks ago. He may as well resign himself to it, though. As July draws closer, the applause is only getting louder.

**O**n a sunny day this winter, Don sat down in the Wallace Center and related how he arrived at a lifetime of learning and teaching at Chewonki. Camp was "a perfect fit" for him, he recalled. In 1962, his father was the assistant camp director, his brothers and sister were at camp, and

his mother was too. With no need to waste even a minute being homesick, Don promptly fell in love with Maine. He reveled in his first experiences with wilderness travel and began learning about birds and plants, amphibians and mammals. Later, as a counselor, he learned something about leadership too. "I learned that my job was to be positive, to encourage people, to help them think and work cooperatively."

After graduating from Dartmouth in 1972, Don took a job helping organize Maine Reach, a program for high-school seniors and recent graduates that Chewonki ran from 1973 until 1984. He was office assistant, kitchen manager, expedition organizer, and faculty member. He also helped design the first Outdoor Classroom lessons. When he left in 1976 to pursue a master's degree in botany at the University of Vermont, he figured he was starting down a new path. "I loved Chewonki, but I certainly wasn't planning a career here," he said. "I was starting down the path to be a college professor, an academic scientist."

For a while, at least, he was on that path. He earned his master's degree in 1979 and that fall entered a PhD program at Indiana University, one of the nation's leading research and teaching institutions. Four years later he had a doctorate in ecology and evolutionary biology—and was back at Chewonki. His career plans had done an about-face.

"Indiana was a huge and fascinating place," remembers Don. "I worked in the same five-story building where Alfred Kinsey did his famous research on sexuality. There were people lined up to get Nobel prizes. Intellectually it was very stimulating, but there were elements of high-powered academic life that I didn't like at all. I appreciated the experience, but I knew I had to figure out a way to do something different, more collaborative, with my education."

*Continued on page 10*

Both of Don and Phine's boys have been Chewonki campers and counselors. Reuben (left) is in a PhD program in "green" organic chemistry at McGill University in Montreal but will be back at Chewonki this summer. Older brother Charlie, who graduated from Vassar (as did Reuben), is back in Maine and setting up a videography and film business called Hudson Media Empire. Photos by Jock Montgomery.

"This place attracts amazing people, and if you support them they'll do amazing things. Dozens and dozens of incredibly capable, passionate, and dedicated people do the real work of this place. My job is to watch the compass and keep an eye on the horizon."

—DON HUDSON

In 1982, when Chewonki created a full-time position for a head naturalist, Don applied for and got the job. That August he and Phine drove east, leaving the first draft of Don's thesis in his advisor's hands. He made two short trips back to Indiana, to revise and then defend his thesis, and settled into full-time work at Chewonki.

Twenty-eight years later, he is still at it. Few people these days have the kind of run at one place that Don has had at Chewonki. Asked what has kept him here so long, he doesn't hesitate: "It's the mission, which focuses on people and is fundamentally educational. It combines really important things in my life: the study of natural history, a love of wilderness and adventure travel, and introducing people to issues and the world around them. We have a mission to help young people grow up, work with others, learn to care for the world, and live with a softer footprint."

Looking at Chewonki today, Don sees much that makes him proud. At the top of that list is the 2008 opening of Chewonki Camp for Girls, an effort that was almost 20 years in the making. He cites the expansion and creativity of the Sustainability Office and the many ways the Center for Environmental Education has found to reach out more broadly to the public. "Chewonki should continue to work toward its mission of having a more involved citizenry that takes the environment into consideration. We want the world to work better," he says. He's proud of Chewonki's 40-plus years of demonstrating the wise use of resources and modeling a sustainable campus. And he's delighted with this year's successful completion of an \$11 million capital campaign.

Where Don finds his greatest satisfaction, however, is in the simple fact that Chewonki figured out how to make environmental education an activity to which people can devote their lives. "In the early 1970s, the year-round staff numbered seven, and only one of them made a salary you could live on. No one could build equity. Pretty much everyone who worked here moved on. We still have people moving on because many of our jobs are entry-level jobs. But a lot more staff can look forward to a long-term career at Chewonki now. Our year-round staff numbers about 65 and our summer staff about 225. That's a big accomplishment, because ultimately the world needs more organizations like Chewonki to make transitions in behavior and the use of resources."

## A Sketch of Phine Ewing

ANNE LESLIE

As the wife of Chewonki's president, Josephine Ewing has had every right to grab a bit of the spotlight for herself—but that would be counter to her nature. Instead, she has concentrated on what she has always loved to do, with a passion different in character than Don's but like in intensity. She is an artist, she sings, she plays the fiddle and the mandolin. She gardens. She is a mother. She has been chairman of Arrowsic's conservation commission since 1997 and also served as the town clerk and on the board of the Kennebec Estuary Land Trust. She loves to be outdoors; animals, plants, and insects fascinate her and find their way to the tip of her pen. She enjoys skating, walking, cross-country skiing, swimming, and biking. She draws strength from time alone.

Observers have called Phine (pronounced *fee-nee*) "Don's anchor" and note that theirs is a marriage of equals with interwoven interests and shared values. The packaging, however, is



very different. Phine is reserved and reflective while Don is expansive and ebullient. His face radiates when he's amused while the serenity of her face belies her dry wit. She has a "surprising, sometimes irreverent, and wonderful sense of humor," says Lucy Hull, director of development at Chewonki. "Phine can be very quiet on the surface, but inside is an active, quick mind, and little eruptions of humor give glimpses of that mind at work."

Josephine Wilcox Ewing is the youngest of four children who grew up in a seaside town north of Boston. Her father and mother were committed conservationists who spent every weekend outdoors.

Their interest in nature took root in Phine. She worked for the Appalachian Mountain Club before enrolling at the University of Vermont (UVM), where she majored in botany.

At UVM she also met Don. The stars aligned, and they married just after finishing. They moved to Indiana for Don's PhD program, and Phine earned a master's degree in botany. A few years later, the young couple headed back east, toward Chewonki.

Much of this growth has been achieved during Don's 19-year watch. As Board chair Josh Marvil observed, "Under his leadership, we have strengthened Chewonki in all areas—significantly advancing programs, attracting and retaining an extraordinary team of faculty and staff, increasing endowment, improving lands and buildings, and expanding Chewonki's reputation regionally, nationally, and internationally."

There are reasons—many of them—for Don's success. Betta Stothart Connor, director of communications, cites one of them. "It's critical for a staff to believe in the leadership of their president, and vice versa," she says. "Don doesn't spend time second-guessing his staff. He trusts us to do our jobs. He also has proven over and over that he not only cares deeply about us, but that he's willing to do any of the jobs that we do to make Chewonki thrive. This includes hefting a chain saw on Chewonki Day, working in the dish room, and resupplying a wilderness trip on the 4th of July because the trip office needs help."

For years, Don has won the hearts of his staff with his holiday book run to Boston. His tradition has been to purchase and inscribe a used book for every member of the staff and to ceremoniously hand them out at the annual holiday party. Last year, when the bookstore where he has bought books for the last two decades closed, he replaced the books with an equally touching surprise. "Don gave each of us a bonsai tree, a beautiful ceramic pot, potting soil, and a book of essential bonsai tips," said a bemused Betta. "It was unbelievably touching!"

Phine remembers her first visit to Chewonki Neck. Don introduced her to Tim and Margaret Ellis and their little children, Ben and Jenny. Margaret had just returned from a run, and Phine thought to herself, "I'm going to have to get to know her!" Their friendship continues today.

People at Chewonki respect Phine for the thoughtful contributions she makes in the realms that suit her interests. She is a member of the Girls Camp Advisory Committee, "committed and involved since the visioning and dreaming stages," says Genell Vashro, camp director. "She has a modest way of bringing beauty and style to Chewonki."

Thanks to her artistic sensibility and hard work, Chewonki's perennial beds are flourishing. Anna Hunt, director of the Traveling Natural History Programs, says, "I am reminded of Phine's sweet and quiet presence when I see the flowers in full bloom."

Phine's exquisite pen-and-ink drawings of animals and plants, shaded with thousands of precise ink dots, have graced Chewonki note cards, book plates, T-shirts, and brochures for nearly three decades. "Accuracy and composition," Phine says, are the goals of her art. Her ability to comprehend natural forms and interpret them in ink on paper produces images that teach as well as please the eye. "The natural world is filled with beautiful and interesting organisms," she says. The edge of a feather, a turtle's shell, the

From nearly everyone's vantage point, Don does *not* look like a man preparing to retire. Although inclined to limit the decisions he makes about Chewonki's future management and direction, he is as engaged as ever in steering the ship he loves. He continues to teach his weekly bird class to Semester School students and is preparing to lead two trips to the Arctic. He is also working closely with trustees and staff to facilitate the transition of leadership this summer. In short, he's working harder than ever.

Of his approaching retirement, Don says, "I've been tremendously lucky to be in this position for so long. But I look forward now to letting someone else take the wheel." A year-long sabbatical lies ahead, and he will spend part of it drafting a portion of Chewonki's 100-year history, overseeing the Montsweag Brook restoration project, and perhaps rewriting Chewonki's land use plan. Later he hopes to begin an autobiographical almanac and would love to do some hands-on work such as trail building and trip leading. He'll also continue his committee work with numerous organizations, among them the International Appalachian Trail (of which he was a founding member), Allagash Wilderness Waterway Advisory Council, Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment, Penobscot River Restoration Trust, Gulf of Maine Marine Education Association, and National Marine Educators Association. And he'll especially enjoy having more time to spend with Phine and their two grown sons, Charlie and Reuben.

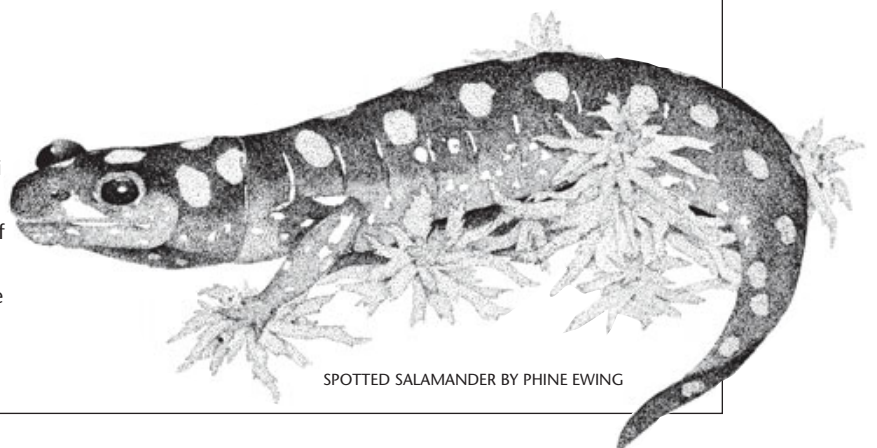
*Continued on page 12*

webbing of a bat's wing—through her drawings we learn to see with her wonder.

What's it been like to be married to Don? Sometimes, especially when their two boys were young, the time Don devoted to Chewonki was trying. "Luckily for me," she says, "I share his enthusiasm for what Chewonki stands for and has achieved over the years."

In her understated way, she sums up Don's 44 years at Chewonki this way: "I think they've been very good for each other." And Phine Ewing has been very good for both.

*Anne Leslie works in Chewonki's Development Office.*



Visit our website at [www.chewonki.org](http://www.chewonki.org)



**"Don has brought brilliant creativity to his work on behalf of Chewonki and has found new, powerful ways to connect people of all ages with nature. He has led the organization in bold directions with great success such as with the acquisition of Big Eddy, the girls' camp at Fourth Debsconeag, and the cutting-edge work with renewable energy."**

**—KARIN TILBERG, SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR FOR GOVERNOR JOHN BALDACCI**

As July 12 grows closer and applause for Don continues to swell, he deflects the attention with characteristic humility and a bow to others. It was Clarence Allen, Don notes, who in 1918 moved a fledgling boys camp to an old sheep farm in Maine. And it was Tim Ellis, Don's predecessor and "the father of our core programs," who first searched for ways to cut Chewonki's dependence on fossil fuels.

"With the end of the path in sight, I am acutely aware that Chewonki is far less about me than about others," says Don. "This place attracts amazing people, and if you support them they'll do amazing things. Dozens and dozens of incredibly capable, passionate, and dedicated people do the real work of this place. My job is to watch the compass and keep an eye on the horizon."

That may be true, but there's no denying that for 19 years Don has been the keeper of the vision. He has been a passionate, inspired, and tireless leader, and his commitment to Chewonki has been deep and abiding. Both at Chewonki and beyond, there has been an outpouring of thanks and admiration for a job well done.

"Don's passion for creating a sustainable planet through innovative educational opportunities may be unmatched in Maine and New England," wrote Michael Tetreault, executive director of The Nature Conservancy in Maine. Said David Littell, Commissioner of the Maine DEP: "Don's dedication to environmental education

and conservation is witnessed by an unmatched career-long set of accomplishments." To read these and so many other testimonials is to understand how far Don's influence has extended and how vast his contributions have been.

Karin Tilberg, a Chewonki advisor and Senior Policy Advisor for Governor John Baldacci, may have summed things up best: "Don has brought brilliant creativity to his work on behalf of Chewonki and has found new, powerful ways to connect people of all ages with nature. He has led the organization in bold directions with great success such as with the acquisition of Big Eddy, the girls' camp at Fourth Debsconeag, and the cutting-edge work with renewable energy. His leadership on the Allagash Wilderness Waterway Advisory Council has enabled a fresh and thoughtful era of positive management of the Waterway. He has accomplished all this with a sparkle in his eye and kindness in his heart that are an inspiration to us all."

**O**n March 3, when the announcement was made that Willard Morgan will succeed Don, no one could have been happier than Don himself. "I am so proud of Chewonki—and of Willard," he said later that day. "Oddly, I have no mixed emotions. I feel overwhelming enthusiasm for this choice, and I am getting a big kick out of the outpouring of affection for Willard. It is well deserved, and I think it bodes well for him and for the future of Chewonki. I have great confidence that this place will continue to thrive." It was vintage Don: warm, generous, collegial, forward looking.

We will all welcome Willard to the President's Office on July 12. In the meantime, it is time to celebrate and honor Don. For so many of us, at Chewonki and far beyond, Don is a friend. He believes in us and supports us. He reminds us every day—whether it is over lunch or in a meeting or watching a distant hawk in a tree—of the value of commitment and creative thinking, of the joy to be found in collaborating with each other and in working to make the world a better place.

So many lives and communities and pieces of this earth are immeasurably richer because of Don Hudson and his life's work. There are no words that can adequately express our gratitude to him. But we can all start with "Thank you, Don"—and hope he can hear us over the applause.

## *Please Join Us in Honoring Don!*

**The greater Chewonki community looks forward to celebrating Don's 44 years of service to Chewonki. Please join us for a unique and memorable tribute to our beloved leader.**

**WHEN: Saturday, June 5, 2010. Appetizers at 5:00 p.m., dinner at 6 p.m., followed by festivities.**

**WHERE: Chewonki Campus, 485 Chewonki Neck Road, Wiscasset**

**RSVP: Please RSVP to Dick Thomas at [dthomas@chewonki.org](mailto:dthomas@chewonki.org) or 207-882-7323 x124.**

*Chewonki is quietly planning for the creation of the Don Hudson Natural History Chair, an endowment fund supporting all of Chewonki's programs. Exciting details of the fund and how you can participate will be announced at the party and on the Chewonki website.*

# Dot Lamson, A Career in Education

ANNA HUNT

*Editor's Note: Dot Lamson began teaching environmental education at Chewonki in 1982, and from 1984 to 2009 directed the Center for Environmental Education. After 28 years of exceptional leadership, Dot retired in December. Thankfully, we are not losing her altogether. Dot will lead occasional wilderness trips and will serve as assistant director at Girls Camp.*

**F**rom leading Chewonki's first sea kayaking trip to serving as director of the Center for Environmental Education, Dot Lamson has been our boss, co-leader, inspiration, and good friend for 28 years, and counting.

On the evening of December 4, 2009, we celebrated Dottie with songs, skits, stories, and an album of photos and writings. Dot's dedication to Chewonki and ease into retirement were honored by coworkers, friends, family, and a handful of lively college friends who took the party back to Dot and her husband Don's house long after the rest of us went home.

Dottie's shining personality and energy have been the backbone of our environmental education for years. Wilderness Programs director Greg Shute wrote, "The greatest legacy from Dot's time at Chewonki is the hundreds, maybe thousands, of individuals for whom she has been boss, trip leader, mentor, and role model. It's mind boggling to think of all the students and educational institutions that now benefit from teachers trained by Dot."

Betta Stothart Connor, director of communications, told Dottie "You are in the bricks and mortar of Chewonki, you are in the heart and soul of Chewonki, you are in the history of Chewonki. Your imprint is here forever."

Don Hudson cited the vital role Dot has played in building a strong and cohesive framework for the public side of Chewonki's work. "Dot Lamson is one of the finest and most skilled leaders at Chewonki—*ever!*" said Don. "No one here has a greater appreciation for the importance of environmental education in our lives."

Dot has influenced so many of us over the years. Her influence on the development of environmental education has extended throughout Maine and beyond, and she has inspired not only her students but also her peers. As Katie West (Outdoor Classroom '97-'98) said, "Dottie was the first 'boss' to believe in my potential. She treated all of us with respect and with the expectation that we would shine at what we were doing. And in turn, we did. Dottie gave me the sense that what I was doing really mattered in the world."

Although "boss" has been removed from her list of roles, we can happily add assistant director at Chewonki Camp for Girls to Dot's list of post-retirement plans. "We're incredibly fortunate to have Dot, with her decades of experience in environmental education, so involved and invested in Girls Camp," says director Genell Vashro. Dot also brings a lively sense of fun to her work. Waterfront director Kate Braemer reported that last summer Dot convinced the entire camp to "climb aboard the brand new dock and paddle it like pirates out to the middle of the pristine lake for its inauguration." I wonder what she has up her sleeve for Summer 2010!

Farm intern and former Outdoor Classroom teacher Megan Phillips may have said it best. "If my time at Chewonki was represented as a cookie, you would be the chocolate chips: Essential. Sprinkled throughout. Sweetly defining."

Thank you for all the great memories, Dottie. We will miss your smile and contagious energy on campus every day. Visit us often.

*Anna Hunt directs Chewonki's Traveling Natural History Programs.*



Dot at Girls Camp, Summer 2009. Photo by Bridget Besaw.

# Welcome, Willard

## A CONVERSATION WITH OUR NEXT PRESIDENT

**O**n Wednesday morning, March 3, after a yearlong national search, Chewonki's board of trustees unanimously voted to appoint Willard Morgan as the third president of The Chewonki Foundation. That same day, board president Josh Marvil drove to Wiscasset and made the announcement to an elated crowd in the dining hall. As the head of Semester School for the last six years, Willard is no stranger to Chewonki. He is a graduate of Williams College, where he majored in geology, and he has a master's degree in botany from the Field Naturalist Program at the University of Vermont. Willard and I had a chance to sit down on the Farm House porch to talk about what inspires him most about Chewonki's mission, what drives him to be a leader, and what changes he sees for Chewonki in the near future. —BETTA STOTHART CONNOR

---

### **Where were you when you got the news that you had been selected to be the next Chewonki president?**

At the Wiscasset Community Center with Jenn and Sierra [his wife and daughter] on a cold and rainy evening. I had to step outside into the wind-driven rain to get reception and conduct the conversation. It felt like an appropriate way to receive news of appointment to the leadership of an environmental education organization—in the elements!

---

### **What was your reaction?**

Immediate jubilation and relief. The hiring process took about 10 months from the first on-campus visit by the search firm until the final selection on February 24. When the news finally came, I felt the great rush that comes with stepping through a newly opened door.

---

### **Being a leader is a demanding job. What drives you to want this role?**

Nothing gives me more satisfaction professionally than being part of an energetic, soulful, and productive group of people working together toward a shared goal we care about. A twelfth-grade teacher of mine first described my predilection for problem solving, systems thinking, and education—he said I was a “big picture thinker.” At the time I had to ask him what that was! At first, I did this thinking quietly, behind the scenes, but when doors to leadership opened, I followed the call. I see my job as assembling the resources—human, natural, and financial—so that the people I work with can excel in what they are passionate about.

---

### **What lessons have you learned in your role as head of school that apply to this new role?**

By nature I am a listener and observer. I have learned the pros and cons of this over the past six years. Faculty and students often tell me they appreciate my willingness to listen; I love to ask questions and learn from others. However, I have also been told that I need to explain more of my thought process when making decisions because I am what some call an “internal processor.” That feedback has made me a much more effective leader. As president, a primary part of my role is to articulate Chewonki's mission and vision. I also need to describe and explain the process by which decisions are reached, whether those decisions are mine alone or of a larger group. Communicating often and being transparent myself will I hope set a good tone for the whole organization.

---

### **Can you tell us a little about your childhood? Where you grew up and what childhood influences led you to this moment?**

I grew up mostly in Pound Ridge, New York, which is within the sphere of New York City, but we had 14 acres and abutted a 4,000-acre county park. My mother is originally from Belgium and a photographer with an unwavering commitment to my education. She guided me through a Montessori pre-school and then a public education. Meanwhile, my father was a printer and publisher of photography books who followed some of the back-to-the land tenets. I spent many weekends working outside with my father—processing firewood, building things, and clearing

land for horses. Starting at age nine, I spent my summers away from home, at a wonderful farm and wilderness-based camp in the Adirondacks and then on climbing and backpacking trips in the western U.S. and abroad. I was an awkward and shy kid, but by age 16 I was a committed mountaineer and budding environmentalist, and I was becoming more comfortable in my own skin. I was an avid athlete: basketball, volleyball, and field events were my focus by the end of high school. Leadership came to me then—in sports, clubs, student government, and the Boy Scouts too. Many of my childhood experiences reinforced for me the progressive ideals of education. I believe in holistic living and learning, a community focus, the centrality of family, hard work, experiential learning, self-motivated discovery, and stewardship of the environment. Maybe somewhat paradoxically, I also believe in sound organizational structure, limits, and accountability—this probably comes from both my father and brother, who were military men, as well as my Boy Scout experience.

---

### **Do you see any changes for Chewonki in the near future?**

It's exciting that the trustees and advisors are embarking on a strategic planning process in the next year, and I look forward to leading the staff in a process of self-reflection, evaluation, and forward thinking as part of that. In the short term, I plan to focus on faculty and staff development, support of our natural science curriculum, and exploration of difference among staff and participants across all programs. Our Outdoor Classroom program has been buffeted by changes in school funding, and





ROB STRONG

we will need to carefully consider how we continue to provide environmental education to school groups. There is energy and room to grow our summer trip offerings, so we will consider that as well as the potential for educator workshops. I would also like to see if we can provide more local food and products to our programs. Finally, I would like to accelerate our efforts to decarbonize Chewonki's operations in pursuit of the board-approved carbon emissions reductions. Chewonki has the ability and responsibility to be a leader here.

---

**What are Chewonki's biggest challenges today?**

Probably the biggest challenge is the financial condition of our country and the

affordability of education. This is putting demands on Chewonki like any other school, camp, or nonprofit, and we must find a way to balance the mission of providing high-quality environmental education with the expenses of running our programs. These are not easy issues to resolve.

A second challenge involves the changing demographics and health of America's children. Young people today are less and less prepared for an outdoor learning experience. They have had less time outside and less connectivity with the natural world, and increasingly, they come with specific needs that require more planning, effort, and preparation on our part.

---

**What aspect of the Chewonki mission inspires you most?**

That's a hard question to answer—there's so much to love about our mission. But I would say it's the centrality of the natural world in all that we do at Chewonki. There is recognition here that by simply experiencing the natural world there is learning. This is at the core of all we do, and personally it is also how I have been shaped. Most schools and camps, while they may include time outdoors, don't have the same definition of the natural world. They may be talking about a ball field or a porch; we're talking about rivers and ocean and woods.

---

**What was Jenn's reaction to the news?**

She was thrilled. In fact, Jenn has spent more of her adult life at Chewonki than I have. She's the one who brought me here, when we came to lead the five-week Mistissini canoe trip in 2003. Jenn's life has been profoundly shaped by Chewonki, and she has a deep love for this place. [Jenn has been Traveling Natural History assistant director, Semester School English teacher, OC instructor, trip leader, and now instructs science field trips for Semester School.]

---

**Do you and your family plan to move off campus? Any immediate thoughts about where you will live?**

We're fortunate to be able to stay on campus until July 2011. This will give me a chance to take a close look at all our programs in my new role as president. I look forward to being involved with the camps, wilderness trips, and Outdoor Classroom programs while they're here on campus, and to spending time at campfires, on encampments, and up at Girls Camp. Of course, I am happy on a personal level too. This is a beautiful place to live, and Sierra, who is three now, will get another year of growing up with the freedom and resources of this campus. In a year, we'll move off campus to a neighboring community. I want to keep the commute short for time and environmental reasons and be active in the surrounding midcoast community.

# Turning the World Around— A Visit from Bill McKibben

TOM TWIST

“He’s changed, you know, since I last heard him talk,” a friend whispered to me in the crowd. I nodded in consent. Actually, I had no idea what he was talking about.

On a beautiful spring day in March, activist and writer Bill McKibben visited the Chewonki campus to have Sunday brunch with us and to talk to the Semester School students about climate change. Bill McKibben is the founder of 350.org, one of the most influential climate change organizations on the globe, and has been writing about the warming of the earth since his publication of *The End of Nature* in 1989. When Willard Morgan heard that Bill would be speaking in Freeport in March, he invited him to come to Chewonki, and Bill graciously accepted.

Bill spoke to the students and faculty for about an hour—first briefly addressing current issues, and then transitioning into what was being done about it globally. I found that Bill speaks like he

writes—he is extremely personal, and refreshingly unapologetic. He spoke of the seminal experiences that inspired him to become a climate change activist—like lying in a hospital bed in Bangladesh, stricken with dengue fever. This is a disease that was previously rare in that country but is being exacerbated by climate change. Looking around from his hospital bed, the unjustness of the situation struck him—Bangladesh, a country with virtually no carbon dioxide emissions, was suffering under the burden of someone else’s negligence. Quickly doing the math, Bill calculated that since the U.S. (with only 4% of the earth’s population) produces 25% of the world’s emissions, then one full hospital bed in every four was “on us,” so to speak. It was this realization, with all of its associated implications, that spurred Bill to take action.

In 2006, Bill McKibben coordinated the largest demonstration for climate change yet held in the U.S.—he and 1,000 supporters walked 49 miles over five days from Robert Frost’s summer cabin



Join 350.org’s 10/10  
Global Work Party

On October 10, 2010, people all over the world will participate in an international day of service. Those of us on Chewonki Neck will be among them, and we hope you will too!

Writing on the 350.org website, Bill McKibben says “in every corner of the world we hope communities will put up solar panels, insulate homes, erect windmills, plant trees, paint bikepaths, launch or harvest local gardens. We’ll make sure the world sees this huge day of effort—and we’ll use it to send a simple message to our leaders: ‘We’re working—what about you? If we can cover the roof of the school with



Bill McKibben (bottom row, third from left) with Semester School students and staff in March. Photo by Addie Liddic.

in Ripton, Vermont, to Burlington. It was clear in the way he told the story that the swelling of support that he received for this grassroots action caught him by surprise. What had started small had snowballed into a huge movement. He went on to organize Step It Up in 2007, as well as 350.org's International Day of Climate Action, which became the most widely distributed political movement in history. But what really hit home for me wasn't the sheer numbers or sweeping impact of these actions; it was Bill's statement, "We had no idea how we were going to organize all these global events, but we just went ahead and did it, and it worked."

As the talk wrapped up, Bill took a few questions from the students, and spoke informally on what they could do locally to raise awareness on climate change. They were as interested and engaged as I've ever seen them. One student expressed the desire to stow away in the back of Bill's car.

As Bill was driving off, my friend walked back up to me. "Yeah—his earlier talks used to be kind of pessimistic. Now he seems to be more hopeful, more . . . buoyant."

"Why the change?" I asked.

A shrug of the shoulders was all I got for a reply. It was a dumb question anyway. I knew the answer, just like every one of the students knew the answer.

More than anything else, the story that Bill told was of his own personal journey—from a person sitting on the sidelines to someone actively engaged in his world—an unfolding of a life fully lived, with all of its twists and turns and leaps of faith. And he made it clear that no preparation was necessary in order to start. A simple message: don't worry about whether you're ready or not—just begin.

*Tom Twist is Chewonki's sustainability assistant.*

solar panels, surely you can pass the legislation or sign the treaty that will spread our work everywhere, and confront the climate crisis in time.' 10/10/10 will take a snapshot of a clean energy future—the world of 350 ppm—and show people why it's worth fighting for."

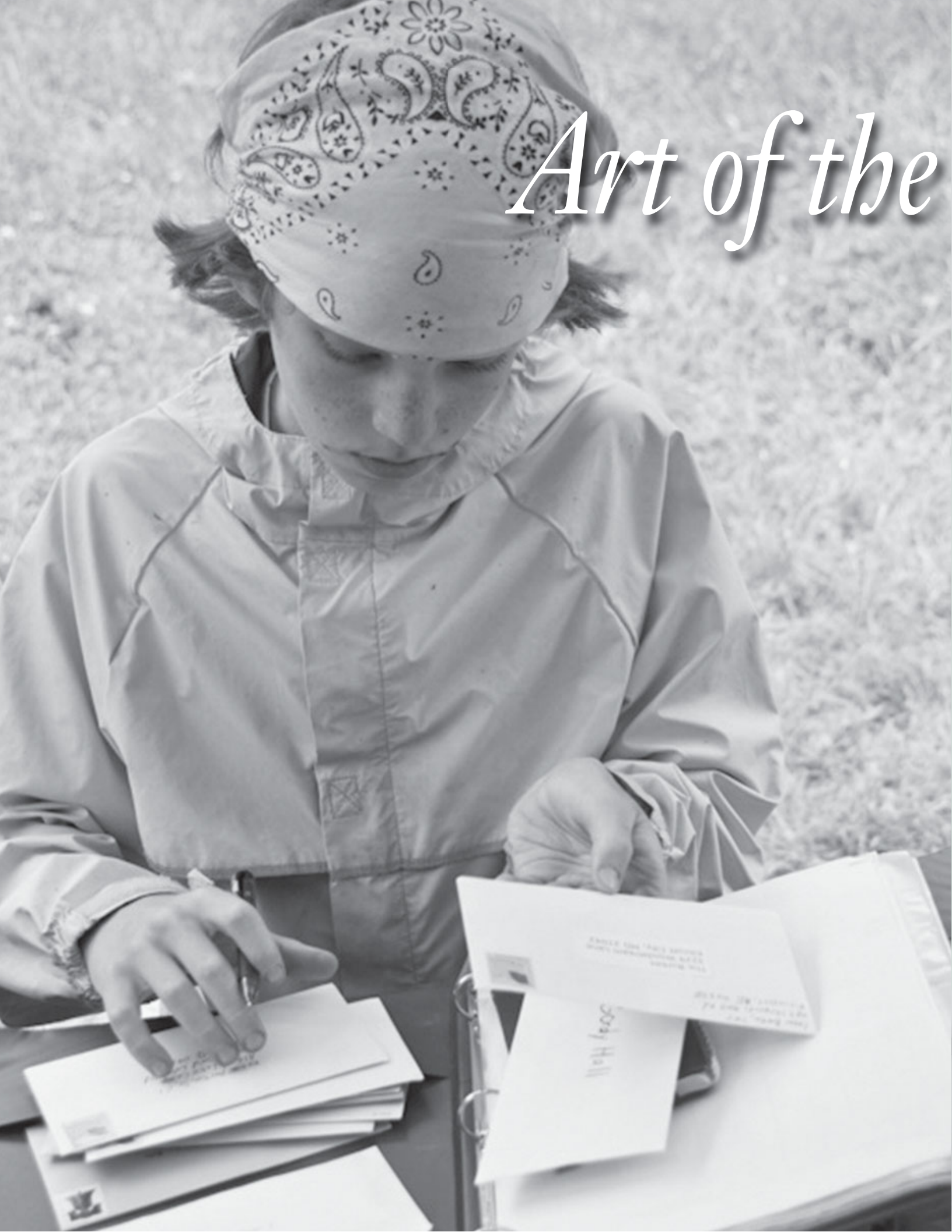
When Bill shared news of the upcoming event with us on his March visit to Chewonki, he inspired an idea about how the whole Chewonki community can get involved. **Please mark your calendars for the first International Chewonki Day of Service in coordination with 350.org.** We want all of our alumni and friends to engage in service projects that accomplish the

Chewonki mission: to "foster an understanding, appreciation, and stewardship of the natural world and [to] emphasize the power of focused, collective effort." You can sign up now, at [www.350.org](http://www.350.org).

In the meantime, please help us spread the word. You can learn more about the 10/10 Global Work Party, and find ideas for actions, at [350.org](http://350.org). Look for messages about how Chewonki will participate in the Global Work Party on Facebook, Twitter, and at [www.chewonki.org](http://www.chewonki.org). We look forward to sharing ideas with you. Together, we can make a difference.



# *Art of the*



# Handwritten Letter

*Nothing is more personal and treasured  
than a handwritten letter*

GARTH ALTENBURG

Chewonki campers do not have access to computers or telephones. They don't email, text, IM, twitter, post, or call. Instead, they write letters, and they certainly look forward to receiving letters. For 95 summers, letters have been the only form of communication between Chewonki campers and their parents. The place of letter writing may have diminished elsewhere in our world, but for campers on Chewonki Neck and Fourth Debsconeag Lake—and especially for those on wilderness trips—it remains the lifeline for communication.

Why hasn't Chewonki taken the step toward electronic communication with campers? As with most things here, the answer is driven by the goals and values of our program. But there's a practical answer as well. Both on Chewonki Neck and at Fourth Debsconeag Lake, we simply don't have the facilities to allow for campers to be in regular email contact. (And on wilderness trips, email just isn't an option.) We want to maintain a sense of consistency with our campers. If they can communicate only by letter, it makes sense that the mail they receive is also a letter. We do print and deliver emails to campers, especially to our foreign campers for whom mail from home might be very slow, but campers cannot reply by email. We encourage letters through the mail as the best way to support the camp experience.

But really, letter writing is aligned with the general approach we take to everything at Chewonki. So much of what we do is handcrafted or homemade. We make our own music rather than rely on radios or iPods. Most of our food is made from scratch in our kitchen. We propel ourselves on our wilderness trips with our feet, arms, paddles, or hand-rigged sails. When we can't sail, we

row! We do without electricity in our cabins. We make our own skits and games at campfire, rather than import outside entertainers. We look at wildlife outdoors instead of on the Discovery Channel. This hands-on approach empowers our campers to grasp the essence of every activity. It helps each of us step outside of ourselves, interact with one another, and be present in the experience.

Experts also agree that letters from home can greatly support the camp experience. Dr. Chris Thurber, a clinical psychologist and one of the country's leading camp consultants, is an expert on homesickness who has been widely published in the academic and popular press. In the spirit of full disclosure, Chris was my counselor at a camp in New Hampshire, years before I ever stepped foot on Chewonki Neck. "In my research," Chris told me, "one of campers' preferred ways of coping with homesickness is maintaining a connection with home through letter writing. So the number-one reason why parents should write back (or write at all, even one-way) is to provide support and encouragement."

Former camper and counselor Dave Hudson (Camp '59-'63; Camp Staff '73-'79), who is Don Hudson's older brother, recently recalled how much his mother's letters meant to him when he was at camp. He still has them and considers them among his greatest treasures. "Letters assure us that we are loved and worthy and safe in a way that other forms of communication can't," he said. "When we hold a handwritten letter in our hands, we hold an offering from a loved one—we hold *them*. We know we hold them because we know, subconsciously, that they have held the letter, and because we recognize the distinctive hand. And we can hold it again and again—and read it again and again."

*Continued on page 20*

*"When we hold a handwritten letter in our hands,  
we hold an offering from a loved one—we hold them."*

*—Dave Hudson, former camper and counselor*



BRIDGET BESAW

Equally memorable, of course, are the letters that campers write home. Many a Chewonki adventure has been chronicled in full detail to the farthest reaches of the world via the postal service. Some of these letters are expertly designed to make a parent want to get in the car and immediately drive to Wiscasset. Others genuinely express the joys of a summer making new friends, exploring Maine, and trying new activities. Just as we hang the artwork created by our children on our walls, letters to home from camp are something our children have touched and crafted with their own hands. They are a snapshot of who they are at that moment in time, both in terms of developmental features such as their spelling and penmanship and the experiences they are having. Their letters also remind us that being away from home for an extended period is one of the great steps toward adulthood and achieving independence and self-confidence.

A camp mother, veteran of four Chewonki summers, shared some insights about her son's letters home. "Getting letters are a high point for parents, but don't be disappointed when they don't write much. That means they're having fun and are busy. If you get a sad letter, remember it is at least three days old." This same mother told me that by her son's fourth summer at camp, she and her husband had forgotten to write as much. "We heard about that," she said. "We realized he really appreciates our letters."

"Every camper wants mail," says Girls Camp director Genell Vashro. "It's a huge deal, especially at Fourth Debsconeag where we don't get deliveries every day." Both there and on Chewonki Neck, letters are distributed quietly during rest hour, which is a calculated move. As Genell notes, mail is exciting for those who get it but can be disheartening for those who don't. "We really encourage parents to write their campers," she says.

On wilderness trips, where letters may come only one or twice with a resupply, mail is the "carrot that gets the kids to finish up the resupply," says Wilderness Programs director Greg Shute. "All they want to do is rip onto their mail," laughs Greg. "We have to hold it back until they get everything transferred and repacked."

June 22, the opening day of Camp and Wilderness Trips, will be here before we know it. I hope you will be inspired this summer either to go back through some of your own camp letters or to pick up a pen and write to an old camp friend or to your son or daughter while they are with us. Remember that letters needn't be long to be memorable. The thirteen-year-old camper who last summer wrote his parents "I can't wait to hear from you!" and signed it "Your son and pen-pal for the summer" didn't need to write another word to melt his parents' hearts.

*Garth Altenburg is the director of Chewonki Camp for Boys.*

## *Letter-writing Tips for Parents*

- Try to time the arrival of your first letter for the first or second full day of camp. After that, it is nice for your child to receive a letter at least twice a week.
- Write letters that are cheery and newsy. Letters that convey happiness and confidence in the things being experienced at camp make children feel good about where they are and what they're doing.
- Letters needn't be long, nor do they even need to be "letters." One Chewonki father finds a funny photo on the Web, pastes it on a piece of paper, and writes a clever caption for it. His son finds these regular missives hilarious and enjoys sharing them with his cabinmates.
- Try not to inadvertently unsettle your camper by referring to tender home situations. Expressing how much you miss your child or how sad her dog is may heighten feelings of homesickness. Likewise, downplay special events happening at home such as family reunions or July 4th festivities.
- We do ask campers to write home. You can help us reinforce this expectation by telling your camper how much you look forward to their letters.
- Send your child to camp with stationery and self-addressed, pre-stamped envelopes.
- Remember, a handwritten letter or postcard is more personal than a printed fax or email.





# Off the Grid

RHAN FLATIN

## and on the Farm

*In twice-weekly seminars, Semester School students get a close-up view of sustainable living and renewable technologies*

ELIZABETH PIERSON

**O**n a chilly morning in mid-February, a dozen Semester School students were gathered in the living room of Hoyt's Cabin, one of Chewonki's small staff houses, listening to a presentation on home energy audits. The day before, Paul Kando and Topher Belknap of the Midcoast Green Collaborative in Damariscotta had done audits on Hoyt's and two other Chewonki buildings. Now they were walking students through the process, sharing what they had learned, and answering a *lot* of questions.

Beginning with a 25-minute PowerPoint titled "Energy Audit Basics," Paul and Topher introduced students to a subject that, for almost all of them, was entirely new. There was talk of "R" (thermal resistance) values and heat exchangers; of weatherization and caulking guns. The students watched as a blower door measured the airflow through Hoyt's and as an infrared camera found the defects in its insulation. They were stunned to learn that the average Maine home wastes 52 percent of the energy it uses; that energy consumed 5 percent of the average Maine family budget in 1998, 20 percent in 2008, and is expected to consume 40 percent in 2018. "That's incredible!" said one girl, and several heads nodded in agreement.

*Continued on page 22*

In this one-hour lesson, these high-school juniors made important connections between energy use and costs, the built environment, and human behavior. And on a day when almost everyone was bundled up in a wool scarf and hat, the lesson didn't come across as even the least bit esoteric.

## SUSTAINABILITY SEMINAR & FARM TALKS

### Sustainability Seminar

Feb. 4: Introductory Tour: Renewable

Energy Systems at Chewonki

Feb. 11: Fossil Fuels and Climate Change

Feb. 18: Energy Audits

Mar. 3: Solar I—Passive Solar

Mar. 9: Field trip to Maine Standard

Biofuels in Portland

Mar. 11: Solar II—Photovoltaics,

Solar Thermal

Apr. 1: Biofuels (Biodiesel)

Apr. 8: Wind

Apr. 15: Geothermal/Hydrogen

Apr. 22: Technical vs. Non-technical

Solutions to Conservation Problems

Apr. 29: Bringing It All Home I

May 6: Bringing It All Home II

### Farm Talks

Feb. 4: Introduction to the Farm

Feb. 10: Sheep Shearing

Feb. 11: Fiber/Wool Arts

Feb. 18: Woodlots and Firewood

Mar. 4: Basics of Nutrition

Mar. 11: Seed Starting

Apr. 1: Lambing

Apr. 8: Conventional Meat

Apr. 15: Chewonki Meat

Apr. 22: Horsepower 101

Apr. 29: Dairy or Soy?

May 6: Pasture/Grazing

May 13: Calendar Lesson

May 20: Bringing It All Home

Peter Arnold, Chewonki's Sustainability coordinator, was beaming. The energy audits are new this semester, and he was watching closely to see how the lesson would be received.

"This is a pretty cheap way to have a big impact," he told the class. "It might be hard to convince your parents to blow new insulation into your house or to put up photovoltaics. But an energy audit you could talk them in to! Energy audits are in the news, but almost no one knows what they really are and what their value is. I want you to understand them, and get them to happen in your world. In a few years, you'll be making energy decisions of your own, and this is good stuff to know."

Deirdre Shea, who attends The Taft School in Connecticut, was sold. "My family is doing some of these things already, but other things were new to me," she said later. "This was really interesting. I can't wait to call my parents and say 'Guess what I learned today? You should do this too!'"

Week after week, that kind of response is exactly what Peter and his staff hope to hear. Sustainability assistant Tom Twist and Sustainability fellow Jason Chandler were also pleased with the lesson. It's Tom and the Sustainability teaching fellow who each semester coordinate the series of twelve sustainability classes. By the end of the semester, they hope they've given students some new ways to think about

sustainability, some ideas for projects to implement at home or at their schools, and real skills they can use, such as making storm windows. As Tom put it, "We hope to make the lessons a personal experience for them."

Earlier in the day, the students had attended a 45-minute farm talk by assistant farm manager Jeremy Tardif. The topic was "Woodlots and Firewood," and given that Semester School students split and stack all the wood that heats their cabins, the class provided yet another opportunity for students to make connections between how they live and how they use resources.

Margaret Coleman, Chewonki's farm and woodlot manager, has done these talks for years and feels they are an important supplement to the students' regular farm chores and Work Program. "They're an opportunity for us, as farmers, to teach in a slightly more formal way," she says. "We elaborate on topics that working on the farm may expose students to only briefly, such as soil health, lambing and the life cycle of sheep, and composting. We also attempt to address some of the bigger issues of agriculture and food systems such as nutrition, conventional versus grass-fed meat, and the loss of farmers and farmland."

In many cases, farm talks can only scratch the surface. One of their goals, says Margaret, is to help create educated consumers who ask questions about what they're eating, where it comes from, and how it was raised. "As much as possible, we try to present information and to avoid saying 'this is right, and this is wrong,' because food choices are very individual." For many students, a Chewonki farm talk is the first time they have stopped to consider the link between farmland and the food they eat, or whether the cow that their dinner came from was fed on grass or grain. "At the very least, we hope to begin a dialogue that carries through the semester and beyond," says Margaret.

Whether it's "Horsepower 101" or "Fossil Fuels and Climate Change," these lessons provide unusual opportunities for students to learn about sustainable living and renewable technologies. "We aren't unique in teaching this," says head of school Willard Morgan. "There are some other secondary schools that have terrific sustainability programs. What's different at Chewonki is the *way* we teach it. There are so many opportunities here for students to get close to the lesson, to actually touch it, and to use it in their everyday lives." There probably isn't another secondary school in the country, for example, that has its own farm and woodlot, biodiesel production facility, *and* hydrogen energy system.

"These non-graded seminars complement students' five traditional academic classes and dovetail perfectly into Chewonki's core curriculum," Willard continues. "They bring the Semester School faculty and the Sustainability Office and Farm staffs together, and they also connect meaningfully to our science course."

Peter Arnold calls the classes "expanders" that allow the Sustainability Office and Farm to share their work more broadly with the Chewonki community. "These lessons result in intercon-





Students show off one of their “quaint little cardboard passive solar houses.” Erica Lehner of Semester 44 calls the project “a great example of the way we get to learn interactively here everyday.” Photo by Tom Twist.

nections all across Chewonki!” Peter exclaims with his trademark enthusiasm. Each semester, Peter hopes to see two things in particular happen. “One is that we want the campus to operate as efficiently as possible, and having more people on campus aware of how this can happen helps *make* it happen.” The other is that he wants to give students knowledge they can apply and then translate into action. “We want to foster a can-do attitude. We want students to leave Chewonki with a sense that renewable energy and sustainable agriculture are powerful,” he says.

And the students? Everyone on the Semester School faculty will tell you that the farm and sustainability talks are hugely popular. But you don’t have to take their word for it; just visit the Semester School blog.

“Learning how we can be a sustainable society is fascinating and relevant,” wrote Erica Lehner of Concord Academy on March 16. The students’ project that week had been to build “quaint little cardboard passive solar houses,” the effectiveness of which would later be tested with a special laser thermometer. “By having this hands-on experience, everyone was able to thoroughly

grasp the concepts behind passive solar and the notion that a house needs to be warm in the winter and cool in the summer and this can be achieved in a house solely by working with the environment being built in,” Erica wrote.

Although her own house didn’t fare too well in the thermometer test—“it got a little breezy” and never got above 43 degrees—Erica concluded on an upbeat note: “This project was a great example of the way we get to learn interactively here everyday.”

From faculty and students alike, then, these parts of the Chewonki curriculum get a big thumbs-up. “The students’ positive response constantly makes us think about our core curriculum and how we might include more formal sustainability education as a partner to our traditional natural science class,” says Willard. “We’re exploring content areas that are completely new, especially in the secondary school setting, as well as different ways of delivering the lessons.”

Future students take note: Semester School will continue to offer an educational experience that is exciting, relevant, stimulating, challenging—and yes, a lot of fun too.





# PUSHING OUR LIMITS

*Chewonki's popular  
Barn Climb is not  
just about ropes  
and carabiners*

**"P**retty much everybody who comes to Chewonki ends up in the Barn." That's Lauralyn Citizen

speaking, and she should know. Lauralyn is Chewonki's reception and office manager, and she doesn't miss a beat.

What's the big attraction in the Barn? The Barn is home to Chewonki's popular indoor ropes course. Known on campus simply as the Barn Climb, the course consists of ten different climbs, each of which offers its own unique challenge. The Spider Web, for example, looks just like its name; it doesn't take you very high off the ground, but it requires a lot of coordination. The Straight and Narrow involves scaling up the barn wall (the easy part) and scaling right back down the same way (the hard part). There's the Rope Ladder, which you can do with the bottom of the ladder either secured *or* floating free. And for those who love heights, there's the Cormorant's Walk at the very tiptop of the Barn.

Every Barn Climb takes place under the watchful eye of a Chewonki Outdoor Classroom instructor who has been specially trained and certified as a "Barn Master." All climbers wear a helmet and

The Straight and Narrow. Photos by Chris Riley.

climbing harness and are hooked into safety lines at all times. And no climb begins until the entire group has participated in a comprehensive lesson on safety and equipment. After that, it's time to start climbing!

Eleven-year-old Drew had a serious case of ants in his pants waiting to hear those words. He had listened carefully to Barn Master Bethany Laursen's introductory lesson, taking in every word, watching like a hawk as she demonstrated how to secure the carabiner and check the safety lock. "Screw *down* so you don't screw up," Drew had repeated with his classmates. He couldn't wait to start climbing.

Now he was 10 feet above the ground, inching his way across a narrow ledge that runs around the Barn's perimeter. It was slow going, step by step, hand by hand, and it didn't take long before Drew's initial enthusiasm began to flag. "It's a little scary. I'm a little scared," he said.

"That's okay. It's perfectly normal to be scared, Drew. I'm so proud of you for challenging yourself!" Bethany was right there on the ground, a model of steadiness and reassurance, watching Drew's every move and ready to offer whatever encouragement it might take to keep him moving. Bethany knew Drew was ready for this moment—all the kids are once they've been properly instructed—but she wasn't sure *he* knew it yet.

When Drew came back with "I kind of wanna turn around now," Bethany was ready for him. She hears those words almost every day.

"Drew, if you stop now, do you think you'll have any regrets? Will you be sorry later that you stopped at this point?"

"Not really," he said.

"Are you sure?" The question was simple, matter of fact. Bethany was challenging Drew, but ever so gently.

"Drew, I think you can do it. You look good up there!" That was Madison now, Drew's classmate and climbing partner. Madison would get her turn next. Right now, her job was to keep her eyes on Drew and, together with Bethany, be sure he

followed all the safety protocols they'd learned. Chewonki climbers always work with a partner, and the encouragement they offer each other is often key to a climb's success.

"OK, I'll keep going." Strengthening his resolve, Drew continued across the wall, his face tight with concentration. And then, a breakthrough. "I wish Mr. Chamberlain could see me now!" he sang out. "Who's Mr. Chamberlain?" asked Bethany. "My gym teacher! He wouldn't believe this!" Bethany laughed and broke into a huge smile. She sees this sort of transformation all the time, but it never fails to thrill her.

A few minutes later, when Drew said he really did want to turn back, Bethany didn't push him. "Have you challenged yourself?" she asked. "Yeah," said Drew. He inched his way back across the wall and then started down the beam. "This is a lot harder than going up," he noted, but he was an old pro now and handled it well. Both feet hit the floor with a thump, and Drew looked both relieved and full of pride. "That's somethin' different. Somethin' *really* different," he said, looking back up at the ledge. He was tired. A little shaky. Happy. And already contemplating his next climb.

Each year, hundreds of young people—and sometimes not-so-young people—do a Chewonki Barn Climb. Outdoor Classroom students. Summer campers. Family campers. Semester School students. There's even a Barn Climb for staff. (And yes, Lauralyn has done it. She even did the Cormorant's Walk!) It's a classic teambuilding exercise, and for many people it's a high point—literally—of their visit to Chewonki. This is especially true for Outdoor Classroom students, whose visits are typically limited to four to five days.

"The Barn Climb really helps kids learn to expand their challenge zone," says Katie Tremblay, program director for the Outdoor Classroom. Like eight other teambuilding lessons offered by the Outdoor Classroom, it provides a



The Spider Web.

structure in which students can discover inner reserves of strength and become comfortable identifying risks and accepting new challenges.

Katie loves the fact that some of the climbs are physically challenging, whereas others are more of an emotional or mental challenge. "There really is something for everyone," she says. "The Barn Climb often gives a kid who isn't an athlete at school a chance to shine. Their peers haven't seen them in this light before, and it's great." When a student has a new awareness of their own personal capabilities, she says, it often allows them to grow beyond their accepted role in a group. She also loves the way climbers work in pairs and how it encourages genuine concern for the well-being of others.

"Teambuilding through challenge education"—it can sound like so much fluff on paper. But it isn't. It's real. And it's happening almost every day in the Chewonki Barn.





# LEARNING TO TEACH

*Chewonki pairs up with Unity College to  
train the next generation of wildlife specialists*

BETTA STOTHART CONNOR

Nicki is a first-year undergraduate at Unity College. Today she is learning to handle a Corn Snake, a Bearded Dragon Lizard, and an Eastern Box Turtle with Chewonki head naturalist Lynne Flaccus. Nicki will learn that box turtles live to be well over 100 years old and to weigh about 650 grams; that their bony shell, like that of all turtles, comprises two parts, an upper portion called the carapace and a lower portion called the plastron; that they are land turtles with no teeth but a hard ridge they use to cut through their food.

Nicki is majoring in Captive Wildlife Care and Education at Unity, a small environmental college about 30 miles south of Bangor. The class Nicki is attending today is Introduction to Wildlife Care and Education. Over the course of the semester, she and 65 classmates will begin learning how to handle, transport, and teach with a variety of wildlife, all under the expert eye of Chewonki's Traveling Natural History Programs staff.

"Chewonki is honored to have been asked by Unity to help teach classes," said Traveling Natural History assistant program director Keith Crowley, who is himself a Unity grad. "This collaboration provides our staff with an exciting challenge, and it allows Chewonki to pass on its expertise in a broad and meaningful way."

Since 1988, Chewonki's Outreach programs have been transporting non-releasable wildlife to classrooms, libraries, and other facilities across Maine and

Unity College student Nicki Petronio of Danvers, Massachusetts, takes a turn handling Chewonki's resident Corn Snake. Photo by Betta Stothart Connor.





making an impact on thousands of people of all ages each year, says Keith. “This is the first time, outside our own staff training, that we have taught adults to do what we do, and thereby shared our knowledge of how to *teach* with wildlife.” In addition to Keith and Lynne, two other Outreach staff also teach at Unity: lead educator Prema Long and director Anna Hunt.

The partnership with Unity began a year ago. In addition to assisting with the introductory wildlife class, the Chewonki teachers also offer more focused lessons on owls and reptiles. “The lesson on owls allows us to get into specifics like wildlife permits and standards,” says Keith. “We can teach students about how to train and handle birds on a glove, how to select program birds, equipment needs, teaching props, and all the other considerations that are made before, during, and after a program.”

Another serious consideration for anyone handling wildlife is protecting against disease transmission—both from animals to humans and vice versa. “Bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites are all easily transferred, which is why we are so diligent about using disinfectants and protection, such as heavy-duty gloves, and why we are constantly washing our hands,” says Lynne.

In fact, teaching students how to ensure that animals stay healthy and safe is an important component of the classes. “We discuss the philosophy of using animals in education, and how we can be sure we are doing what’s in the best interest of each

animal,” Lynne explains. “We talk a lot about keeping the animals comfortable and safe in their homes as well as while they are being handled and on the road.” As the Chewonki educators know—and the Unity students are learning—it’s essential to find a balance between maintaining and caring for animals and using them in a teaching program.

**B**ack in the classroom at Unity, it is strikingly clear just how eager the students are to handle the wildlife. With their hands disinfected and their jewelry removed, they are keen to get their hands on the snake, lizard, and turtles that Lynne and Keith have brought. Many are even prepared to handle Chewonki’s resident alligator, which is on loan from the state after game wardens confiscated the animal.

With its mouthful of sharp teeth and its long neck, an alligator can be dangerous to handle, and Lynne gently explains to students that it takes some time and experience to hold this particular crocodilian. In fact, Chewonki will need to place the reptile with another facility once it outgrows its home and traveling container or gets too heavy to handle safely.

Toward the end of the three-hour class, students divide into smaller groups and make mock presentations to their classmates. Nicki, Eli, Jessie, and Maria take turns presenting the Corn Snake. Each of them readily holds the reptile, supporting its long, wriggling, and constantly curling body, as they walk around the classroom reciting its characteristic traits.

“There are nine snakes in Maine. The Corn Snake, which does not reside in Maine, has black-ringed markings called saddles,” explains Nicki, as she gently redirects the snake around her arm. “Snakes have a long ribcage that extends almost the entire length of the body, and the muscles that attach to them allow for lots of flexibility and movement,” explains Jessie. “They have a 12- to 20-year life span and lay a clutch of 3 to 17 eggs, which will hatch in 45 to 60 days,” says Eli. “You can see that this snake is about to shed her skin because her eyes are milky...”

The students each take a turn handling the snake, some with more confidence than

others, and at the end of each presentation, their classmates rate their performance. “You seemed comfortable holding her.” “You did a good job memorizing the facts.” “You seemed to find balance between what you were doing and what the snake was doing...”

The comments are designed to be positive and to inspire confidence in the first-year students, who still have many years, and many, many tests, before they are ready to take their presentations live.

Professor Julie Kosch, who teaches this course at Unity along with Professor Sarah Cunningham, looks on with a big smile. Later Julie explains what is special about the classroom visits from Chewonki. “The classes with [the Chewonki teachers] are

**“This is the first time, outside our own staff training, that we have taught adults...how to *teach* with wildlife.”**

—KEITH CROWLEY, TRAVELING NATURAL HISTORY  
PROGRAMS ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

extremely popular, and the hands-on aspect is great,” she says. “For some of the students this was their first attempt at educating with live animals in front of a group.”

The classes may well be the beginning of a long and fruitful relationship between Chewonki and Unity College. The partnership has already grown to include additional collaborations: Unity students have been volunteering in Chewonki’s Outreach Lab, attending Chewonki teaching presentations around the state, and have created “enrichment items” to help increase sensory stimulation and physical activity for Chewonki’s resident wildlife.

These efforts come at a particularly significant time, given that Chewonki recently discontinued its own wildlife rehabilitation services (see p. 7). “Wildlife rehabilitators are few and far between in Maine,” says Lynne. “We’re very pleased to have the opportunity at Unity to help spread our knowledge and experience to the next generation of wildlife specialists.”



RHAN FLATIN

## 1940s

Traveling in New Zealand last winter, Chewonki neighbor **Jim Spencer** met a charming Englishman who'd been sent away from London during the Blitz, to Boston. As a treat during his stay, **Peter Crofton-Atkins** (Camp '44) was sent to Chewonki. The adventure has lived in his heart ever since, he said. With Jim's help, Chewonki reestablished contact with Peter after a 55-year lapse. Peter confirmed that his one summer at Chewonki was indeed wonderful. "I had such a glorious time it almost makes me cry to think of it."

## 1970s

Photographer **Jim Balog** (Camp Staff '71-'73) is well known for his footage of shrinking glaciers. He's the founder and director of EIS, Extreme Ice Survey. Last December, Jim spoke on behalf of NASA and the U.S. State Department at the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference. You can learn more at [www.extremeicesurvey.org](http://www.extremeicesurvey.org).

Composer **Gregg Coffin** (Camp '74-'77; Camp Staff '80-'82) has great news: "My new musical, *Right Next to Me*, just received a National Fund grant supporting its full production at the Human Race Theatre in Dayton, OH, in 2011."

The Fall '09 issue of the St. Anselm alumni magazine had a wonderful story on **John Little** (Camp '70-'72, '76; Camp Staff '77-'81). John lives in Montgomery Center, VT, where he's a science teacher, paddler, wilderness trip leader, canoe builder, and skier. He's also president of the Missisquoi River Basin Association, a local nonprofit he helped found to preserve and protect water quality on the Missisquoi.

**Chris "Crow" Swartz O'Brien** (OC & Camp Staffs '78-'82) writes, "Chewonki is giving me hope that it's possible to be sustainable and hold onto one's culture while not fossilizing." Recently retired husband Mike plans to hike the Idaho Centennial Trail this fall. Meanwhile, Crow is looking for the recipe for Chewonki's "Golden Bricks"!

## 1980s

We were delighted to hear from longtime friend **Connie Brown** of Manchester, MA, who served as a chaperone on many Manchester fifth-grade school trips to Chewonki. At age 86, Connie still volunteers in her local schools and is active with the Council on Aging. Connie is the mother of **Peter Brown** (Camp Staff '76).

Wonderful news from **Kate Goodrich Day** (MCS 2; Camp Staff '93, '96; Advisor) and husband **Adam** (Camp Staff '96): John Quinlan Day came into the world on 3-31-10. "Kate and Quinn are both doing great, Nolan is a

proud big brother, and I'm a very lucky dad," writes Adam.

"Life is busy," says **Peter Herrick** (Camp '82-'84; Camp Staff '90) of South Portland. He hopes to visit the Neck soon and also plans a trip to Big Eddy.

**Quentin Merritt** (Camp Staff '87-'88) lives in England's Lake District and enjoys keeping up with Chewonki. "I often think about the time I spent there and never miss an opportunity to tell others about Chewonki. Never has the work you do been more important." His consulting business ([www.wingspan-consulting.co.uk](http://www.wingspan-consulting.co.uk)) specializes in community development and environmental management.

A big, warm welcome to Lucy Matilda Morgenstern, born 1-18-10 to **Mike Morgenstern** (Camp '87; MCS 12; Camp Staff '93-'04) and wife **Mish** (OC & Camp Staffs '99-'04).

**Kaz Thea** (Fall Outdoor Leadership '85; OC Staff '86-'87, '89, '91-'92) lives in Hailey, ID, with her husband and 7-year-old son. Kaz is a biologist who also manages the Hailey Farmer's Market and serves as board secretary for Idaho's Bounty ([www.idahosbounty.org](http://www.idahosbounty.org)), an online food co-op that supports a local, sustainable food system in southern Idaho. "My time at Chewonki teaching Environmental Education and guiding wilderness trips has continued to be my inspiration in the work I do today and all that I value."

## 1990s

Warmest wishes to **Robert Bates** (Camp '92, '94-'95), who married Mariola Tortosa in Murcia, Spain, on 11-27-09.

**Margaret Chapin** (Camp '98-'01; Camp Staff '08) is living in Portland, ME, and loving the Nurse Practitioner program at USM. Brother **Miles Chapin** (Camp '97-'04) married Kyra Sparrow-Pepin on 12-22-09 in Chittenden, VT. Miles and Kyra finished at College of the Atlantic in March and have moved to Marion, MA, where Miles is about to start work on an organic farm and has studio space for stone sculpture. Kyra will be working at the Marion Institute.

**Jon Connolly** (Camp '96-'01) is studying French in Geneva on a grant from Cambridge University. Brother **Alex Connolly** (Camp '99-

'04) is a junior at Stanford, majoring in Philosophy and Literature and very involved with theater. He spent the fall in Chile.

**Kevin Connors** (MCS 15; Trustee) married Jamie Jacobs last June in Edgartown, MA. Jamie is a freelance event planner in New York, and Kevin is completing an MFA in film at NYU.

**Grace Davie** (Camp Staff '92-'94) has a PhD in history from the University of Michigan and enjoys teaching at Queens College. "My husband and I have two boys, ages 4 and 1. We are already hoping they can summer in Wiscasset!"

It was great to see **Maureen Bayer Hodson** (Camp '97-'98) last August when she came to pick up brother **Ian Allen** from camp. Maureen married David Hodson in Glen Ellen, CA, on 9-26-09. They've just purchased and moved into their first home, in San Rafael.

**Betsy Stubblefield Loucks** (MCS 10; Camp Staff '94-'96, '98) and husband Eric are expecting twin girls in June. You can follow along at [www.stubbleloucksmunchkins.blogspot.com](http://www.stubbleloucksmunchkins.blogspot.com).

**Matt Motley** (Camp '92-'95; Camp Staff '97, '01-'02) is in a PhD/MD program at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York.

We're delighted to know that **Ryder Scott** (Camp & OC Staffs '96-'99) is still sharing his passion for teaching and the outdoors with young people. After working at Chewonki and then for Outward Bound in Newry, ME, Ryder is now program director at Bryant Pond 4-H Camp and Learning Center in Bryant Pond, ME.

Congratulations to **Chloe Stevenson** (MCS 19; Camp Staff '98-'02) on her marriage to Nachiket Pandya on 7-25-09.

From Big Sky, MT, **Seth Turner** (Camp Staff '98-'99) writes: "It has been a while since I worked at Chewonki, but the *Chronicle* still brings me great enjoyment. I hope to make it back for a visit sometime."

Short, wonderful news from **Ben Urquhart** (Camp Staff '97, '99, '01-'03) and **Julie Shoemaker** (OC & Camp Staffs '01-'02): "Boy, April 19th, 1:41 pm, 8 lbs 14 oz, 20 in.



Gregory Thomas Urquhart." Julie has also earned her PhD in Earth and Planetary Science from Harvard.

**Damaris Wollenburg** (MCS 15; Camp Staff '96-'97) married Mountain School alum Reid Maclean on 7-15-09 in Washington, D.C. "I also changed my name to Damaris Wollenburg Maclean."

## 2000s

**Amanda Barker** (Camp & OC Staffs '08) is setting up an urban farm/garden in Worcester, MA, and is delighted to be closer to Chewonki. "I still use my solar recharger we made at boys camp, and always get lots of compliments on it."

**Maura Dudley** (Camp Staff '04-'05) was thrilled to see a photo in the Palo Alto Patagonia store of two Chewonki boys in Baxter State Park, taken by Chewonki photographer Jock Montgomery. "It made the Neck seem a little closer to CA."

**Henry Field** (Camp '05-'09) is a sophomore at the Thacher School in Ojai, CA.

Kudos to **Brendan Kober** (OC & Camp Staffs '04-'07) on his recent acceptance to the master's in nursing program at the University of San Francisco. He starts this summer.

After a road trip with friends last summer and a fall trip to Nepal, **Cayla Marvil** (Camp '05) headed off to college in February. She's at Middlebury, Class of 2013.5.

It was wonderful to hear from **Seth Silverman** (MCS 30; MCS staff '07; Advisor). Since we last saw him, he's received both his undergraduate and master's degrees from Stanford, driven across the country, done a three-month fellowship at the Natural Resources Defense Council, traveled to India, taken the LSATs, and started a fellowship at the White House Council on Environmental Quality.

## From Tim and Margaret Ellis

After more than a year of traveling and working out West and in the Dominican Republic, Margaret and Tim returned home to Maine in April, so Margaret can undergo treatment for a rare form of intestinal cancer. "Our life has become topsy turvy, ... but I'll not let it put me in the dumps," she writes. You can leave messages for Margaret and read her journal at [www.caringbridge.org/visit/margaretellis](http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/margaretellis). She loves hearing from friends and reads the messages daily, as do Tim, Ben, and Jenny. On a much brighter note, Margaret and Tim are thrilled to have a new grandson: Reid Harwood Wilson, born 2-24-10 to Jenny (Camp '83-'84; Camp Staff '89-'90) and her husband Seth.



## People

Warmest wishes to **Isabelle de Trabuc Smith** (Advisor) on her marriage to Gerald Stephen Smith on 8-8-09 in New York. Isabelle teaches kindergarten at the Hewitt School in Manhattan, and Jerry is a senior counsel in the New York City Law Department.

A hearty congratulations to **Annalee Sweet** (MCS 27; Camp Staff '02-'04, '07) and **Bryan Berge** (Camp Staff '05), who married on 11-25-09 in Pawling, NY.

**Tristan Taber** (Camp '01-'03) spent last summer in Kenya planting trees in a reforestation project. Tristan is a landscape architect student at Iowa State University.

Chewonki farm manager **Margaret Youngs** and **Chris Coleman** (Camp & OC Staffs '01-'06) were married at Chewonki Campground on 10-12-09. They live with their dog, Jordy, in North Pasture and later this year will welcome another family member. Margaret and Lola, the farm's cow, are expecting at about the same time.

### New Babies on The Neck!

Eric Duffy (Assistant Health Care & Safety Coordinator) and wife Kelley Duffy (MCS 41 faculty) are the delighted parents of **Fiona Claire Duffy**, born 8-31-09. Big sister Helen wasted no time in letting her parents know she was ready to assume care but might let them help out occasionally. Danny and Tamothy Louten (Health Care Coordinator) were thrilled to welcome **River Daniel Louten**, born at home on 9-29-09. On 11-29-09, Rebecca Kosakowski (Semester School Admissions Director), husband Todd, and big sister Ava welcomed **Isaac "Ike" Wilmot Kosakowski**. And just in time to make this issue came sweet little **Paloma Tittmann Ferrer**, born 4-12-10 to Edward Tittmann (Chief Financial Officer), wife Amy Ferrer, and big brother Gabriel. A big warm welcome to them all!

## IN MEMORIAM

**Helfried Anderl** (Camp Staff '66-'67) of Plum Borough, PA, died on December 21, 2008. A native of Austria, Helfried was one of Chewonki's first international counselors, and he stayed in touch with his friends from the Neck for many years. He had a long career as an electrical engineer and international utility projects manager with Westinghouse and Asea Brown Boveri. After retiring, he traveled widely and continued to pursue his lifelong passion for skiing. Helfried is survived by his wife, Kendra, and many relatives in Austria.

**Samuel Waterman Maier** (MCS 8; Camp Staff '92), age 34, died on March 25, 2009, in Haugesund, Norway. Sam was born in Portland and graduated from Waynflete School. He attended Maine Coast Semester in 1992, and his family says it was here that he cultivated a love of nature drawing, outdoor life, and farming. Later, he attended an outdoor school in Norway where he met his wife, Maud. He held a master's degree from Stavanger University in Norway and taught English to adult learners in Haugesund.

Sam is survived by his wife and three young children, Liv, Dag, and Solveig; his parents, James and Elizabeth Maier of Scarborough, ME; and his sisters, Sarah Peterson and Lydia Maier of Portland. A funeral was held in Haugesund last April and a memorial service in Maine last summer. Gifts in Sam's memory can be sent to the Semester School Scholarship Fund at Chewonki.

**Mark A. McClellan** (Camp '70), furniture maker, boat builder, and avid sailor, died on December 20, 2009, in a boating accident in Rockport, ME. Mark graduated from Lawrence Academy and the University of Massachusetts, where he studied wood technology. After settling in Maine, he worked in several shipyards and later designed and built furniture. Mark loved the outdoors and traveled extensively. He is survived by his wife and two young children, Thomas (Adventure Camp '09) and Amelia.

**Roy B. Merritt** (Camp Staff '46-'47) of Westwood, MA, died on August 25, 2009, at the age of 90. He was a USCG veteran of World War II. After the war, he devoted 60 years to teaching and coaching in prep school, college, and public high school. Roy was also a poet, and after he "retired" he served many years as a volunteer visiting poet in public and private elementary schools. He is survived by four children (one of whom is Posie Taylor, a dear Chewonki friend and director emeritus of the Aloha Foundation), four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

**Ernesto Vogeler** (Camp '73-'77) of Caracas, Venezuela, died on September 18, 2009. Ernesto enjoyed many ties to Chewonki, beginning with his uncle, Eugenio Mendoza (Camp '64, '66), who to the best of our knowledge was Chewonki's first Venezuelan camper. Since then, campers have come to Chewonki from Venezuela almost every summer, among them Ernesto's brother Juan (Camp '75-'80) and sons Ernesto (Camp '04-'05) and Rodrigo (Camp '04).

Widely regarded as one of the most talented of a new generation of Latin American business leaders, Ernesto was described in the Venezuelan press as "a pioneer of industrialization in Venezuela and social responsibility as an employer" and "a brilliant son of Venezuela." He is survived by his wife, Maita; sons Ernesto and Rodrigo; daughter Anna Margarita; brother Juan; and many other relatives.

## Please Write!

We love hearing from you, whether by regular mail or email. If the latter, we're just a click away, at [www.chewonki.org/alumni](http://www.chewonki.org/alumni). You can update your contact information, send us your news, and sign up for Chewonki e-news here.

### *Nature and Renewal: Wild River Valley and Beyond* by Dean Bennett

I'm a fan of Dean Bennett's writing. His latest book, *Nature and Renewal: Wild River Valley and Beyond* (Tilbury House, 2009) chronicles the changes over time in the easternmost region of the White Mountain National Forest where it spills into Maine.

A talented photographer and illustrator, meticulous researcher, and passionate wilderness traveler, Dean is professor emeritus at the University of Maine at Farmington. Among his earlier works are *Allagash, The Forgotten Nature of New England*, *The Wilderness from Chamberlain Farm*, and several children's books. My bookshelves include signed copies of all Dean's writings. Without fail, I find in his books answers to long-standing questions I have about the human and natural history of the regions of Maine through which I travel and of which he writes.

In *Nature and Renewal*, Dean traces the human history of the Wild River Valley from 10,000 years ago to the present day. Central to the story is a 300-year-old hemlock that stands as witness to the most recent changes. The hemlock has survived forest fires, hurricanes, floods, and over-logging and still survives in a remote part of the valley. We never learn its exact location, providing a reason (as if one were needed) to continue to explore the valley.

Today the Wild River and Evans Notch region is a wilderness best known for its hiking trails and mountainous terrain. A hundred years ago, visitors found a very different scene: a bustling community of 300 people at Hastings, a railroad, and a post office. In the 1830s, early settlers were drawn to the region for its timber resources, which by the 1930s had been

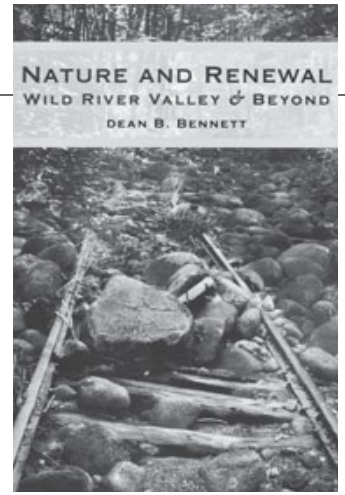
used up, and to Hastings. The story of this village and the surrounding lands is a powerful example of the shortsightedness of people and the restorative ability of nature.

In the 1980s and 1990s I spent a good deal of time knocking about in the Wild River Valley while leading Chewonki hiking and ski trips. We chose this area because it was a relatively short drive from Wiscasset and provided just the right level of challenge and remoteness for our groups. We saw little evidence of the valley's more civilized past. But even today the observant visitor can still find artifacts emerging from the forest duff.

I remember vividly my own experience with such a relic. Our group was camped at Blue Brook Shelter, and we rose early anticipating a hearty breakfast of oatmeal and sausages—only to find we'd left our fry pan behind. I remembered earlier seeing the blade of an old spade just off the trail. After careful cleaning and "sterilizing" in the campfire, the shovel proved an adequate replacement for our fry pan. Our sausages soon began to sizzle, and later we enjoyed a brilliant spring day atop Eagle Crag.

I still marvel at the fact that less than a generation later this region is reforested and designated a federal wilderness. *Nature and Renewal* has for me completed the story of the human and natural history of the Wild River Valley with a detail only Dean Bennett could provide.

GREG SHUTE



# STEP IT UP

## FOR SUSTAINABILITY

### HOME ENERGY AUDITS

#### Get a Home Energy Audit

JASON CHANDLER, SUSTAINABILITY FELLOW

Looking for a low-cost step you can take immediately to conserve energy and reduce your carbon footprint? If you haven't already done so, get a home energy audit. It's a relatively inexpensive way to have a big impact. As Sustainability Coordinator Peter Arnold says, "This is where we can all get the biggest bang for our buck when it comes to saving the planet."

A home energy audit calculates how much energy your home uses, determines the efficiency of your heating and cooling systems, identifies where energy is being lost, and evaluates measures that can make your home more energy efficient. Although you can perform a simple audit yourself, a professional audit will be much more thorough and is likely to save you significantly more money.

It's a sad fact, but most homes in the U.S. have traditionally been constructed to rely on cheap energy, without much consideration for their ability to retain heat and conserve energy. According to our friends at the Midcoast Green Collaborative in Damariscotta, the average Maine house wastes 52% of the energy it consumes and uses 93% more energy for heating than its European counterpart built to meet the latest energy standards. The average Maine home could easily cut its heating fuel use by half. With fuel costs expected to rise, the benefits of saving energy will only become greater.

A typical home energy audit takes about two or three hours and costs between \$400 and \$500. Federal tax credits and state-level incentives are available to help offset this cost. Depending on what the audit finds, the payback can be very quick; in some cases, just sealing the air leaks found by an audit will pay for the audit in only one year. The Midcoast Green Collaborative estimates that following the recommendations of its energy audits results, on average, in a 40% reduction in energy consumption, a savings

on heating bills of \$1,333 per year (more if fuel prices rise), and a reduction in carbon emissions of 3.75 tons per house per year.

There's a wealth of information about home energy audits online. A good place to start is with the U.S. Department of Energy, at [www.energysavers.gov](http://www.energysavers.gov). You'll find information on how an energy audit is conducted, what it accomplishes, and how to find a reputable company to do one. In Maine, check out Efficiency Maine ([www.efficiencymaine.com](http://www.efficiencymaine.com)) and the Midcoast Green Collaborative ([www.midcoastgreencollaborative.org](http://www.midcoastgreencollaborative.org)).

You can also learn about home energy audits on the Chewonki website! Our newest podcast, created by Sustainability assistant Tom Twist, is "The Humble Home Energy Audit." It's fun, informative, and well worth a listen.

**The bottom line:** Getting an energy audit for your home is probably the most efficient step you can take to reduce your carbon footprint and your energy bills.

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.



485 Chewonki Neck Road  
Wiscasset, Maine 04578-4822

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Lewiston, ME  
Permit No. 82



**Mixed Sources**

Product group from well-managed  
forests, controlled sources and  
recycled wood or fiber  
www.fsc.org Cert no. SW-COC-002383  
© 1996 Forest Stewardship Council



## Chewonki Goes North!

The scenery will be breathtaking, the Aurora Borealis eerie and beautiful. Our itinerary includes waters that are home to whales and seals, walrus and polar bears, and numerous seabirds. For anyone with a keen interest in natural history, archaeology, and adventure, it should be the trip of a lifetime!

Chewonki has been leading small groups north for more than 25 years. Now, for the first time, we'll travel well beyond the Arctic Circle, on a 10-day cruise with the Inuit-owned company Cruise North Expeditions. The dates are September 6-16, and our co-leaders are veteran arctic travelers Don Hudson and Greg Shute. It's an extraordinary opportunity to travel with Chewonki friends and also to celebrate Don's retirement.

The 328-foot *Lyubov Orlova* will take us from the Inuit village of Resolute through Lancaster Sound, down the east coast of Baffin Island, and across Ungava Bay to Kuujuaq. With Inuit guides and hosts, we'll have a unique opportunity to see the Arctic through Inuit eyes. Cruise North was named one of National Geographic Adventure's Best Travel Companies in 2009.

For more information, contact Wilderness Programs director Greg Shute at [gshute@chewonki.org](mailto:gshute@chewonki.org) or 207-882-7323.



MAP AND JEAN WELLER PHOTO COURTESY OF CRUISE NORTH