



# CHEWONKI CHRONICLE

SPRING 2021

back side is  
more muted green  
with little to no  
yellow or brown  
white spots



- \* seems to have a  
little more damage  
than the other leaves
- \* the right side has  
more brown on the edges

## Zoom out:

- \* far away from  
the batch of  
similar plants  
~3 ft away

- \* all by  
itself

- \* drawn  
on site  
map to  
the x's  
left

- \* very sturdy  
in the  
wind



- \* many  
and  
around

- \* g  
s

- \* acorns





# MAINE COAST SEMESTER at CHEWONKI



Intellectual challenge. Cooperative learning. Unmatched coastal setting.  
Discover an education that's more than book-deep.



*Chewonki inspires transformative growth, teaches appreciation and stewardship of the natural world, and challenges people to build thriving, sustainable communities throughout their lives.*

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Our thanks go to the staff members, students, and friends who took the photographs in this issue of the Chewonki Chronicle.

## President's Notes

It has been a remarkable time of adaptation and resilience at Chewonki. From the earliest days of the pandemic, I have watched our staff and faculty rally with passion around a central idea: "We must find ways to keep going; the children need these opportunities to learn and grow together in nature."

I am reminded of the astonishing vigor we see in the aftermath of an extreme fire or weather event; deserts bursting with flowers, charred forests springing back to life, explosive hatchings, a rebirth of the natural world.

As you will read in the pages within, our community responded to the challenge at every level, creating a new ground-up approach to supporting health and wellness at Chewonki, embracing our roots and competencies in outdoor teaching and learning, developing new strengths for online programming, and much more. Everywhere I look, I see inspiration, resilience, and tremendous hope for the future.

What most strikes me is how the solutions to our challenges emerged from the Chewonki community itself - the participants, families, staff, alumni, trustees, advisors, partners, donors, funders, and friends - as well as through the collective effort of government at all levels. We have learned so much about what it takes to "...build thriving, sustainable communities..." as described in our mission statement. And, throughout the alumni news, I see so many ways that our community is living the mission "...throughout their lives."

On March 13, 2020, I sent an email to the Chewonki community that ended with these words: "...this global pandemic is a challenge that none of us have ever encountered. It will require each one of us to dig deep, care for ourselves, our families, and our communities in new and creative ways. I want to extend my appreciation and gratitude to the entire Chewonki community, our families, alumni, students, staff as we support one another."

Today, fourteen months later, those words are more true than ever. Thank you and please keep in touch.

With appreciation,

Willard Morgan  
President





# A Picture of Health

Rethinking Health & Wellness at Chewonki in the Time of Covid

When COVID-19 descended on Maine last spring, Chewonki, like all educational institutions, came to a near standstill. Maine Coast Semester 64 and Chewonki Elementary School students went home. School programs were suddenly wiped off the calendar. Summer programs? What summer programs? Boys Camp, Girls Camp, and Leadership Expeditions were scratched from the docket. An eerie stillness hung over Chewonki Neck.

Not everything stopped, however. An effort to upgrade Chewonki's healthcare facilities and services, sparked by trustee Karen Scheu [see sidebar], had begun before the pandemic and suddenly accelerated when it became clear that top-notch health services would be the key to getting students and staff safely back to Chewonki.

The challenge was daunting, the learning curve steep, and there was not a moment to spare. Today, thanks to Scheu's vision, funding from her family's charitable giving vehicle, the Abele Family Foundation, and heroic work by the Chewonki facilities team, the Health and Wellness Committee, and OPAL architects, Chewonki is rolling, with bright, efficient, functional healthcare facilities and larger nursing staff ready to handle whatever arises, COVID or no

COVID. Maine Coast Semester and Chewonki Elementary and Middle School have been in full swing since September and Camp Chewonki will restart in June.

"It's almost a miracle," says Chewonki President Willard Morgan. "The revitalization of our healthcare facilities and pro-



Above: Sue Childress, Susan Andersen, Nancy Bannon, Rebecca Fowlie and Lora Laffan. Right: The health team stages an open-air screening station for the opening day of Semestert 64.

gram had begun, but the pandemic created an emergency we had to manage very, very quickly. We were extremely fortunate to have Karen's expertise and generous funding from the Abele Family Foundation to make this possible. Thanks to their leadership, young people can come to Chewonki at a time when they deeply need a sense of safety, belonging, and joy, and a nurturing

connection to the natural world."

No one at Chewonki during the first 90 or so years could have imagined how healthcare needs would evolve as Chewonki grew. Nurses in earlier years were kept busy with cases of poison ivy, too many blueberries, bee stings, bedwetting, homesickness, cuts, scapes, and the odd summer cold. Those problems are still present, of course, today, but the Chewonki nurses of today also field a host of more complex problems and a much larger community: over 2,000 young people pass through Chewonki programs each year, add 90 year-round staff members, and another 150 summer staff, and you have a caseload that exceeds many small clinics. Reflecting national trends, Chewonki has also seen increases in food allergies, Type 2 diabetes, mental health issues, and attention deficit disorders, not to mention tick bites and browntail moth rashes, once rare. In parallel, there has been a dramatic increase in medication use with minors, which must be carefully administered and monitored.

On the upside, a better understanding of what constitutes good health has brought mindfulness, yoga, and reiki to healthcare. The benefits of good nutrition and exercise are widely known. And technical advances such as easy-to-carry epinephrine injectors and inhalers have opened opportunities for more





children and adolescents to venture into the outdoors. These burdens and benefits began to weigh on Chewonki's healthcare system as it began to outgrow its modest infirmary, once housed in a simple cabin, in the 1990s. The staff eventually created a new home for healthcare in the Wallace Center's ground-floor space, originally designed for housing

and storage. The community and medical complexities continued to expand, however, putting heavy demands on nurses and the facility itself. Karen Scheu [see sidebar], who joined Chewonki's board of trustees in fall 2019, noticed that the healthcare needs of Chewonki had grown. As a Family Nurse Practitioner, she began thinking

about how to help. Karen offered to kick off an effort to update and improve Chewonki's healthcare system, beginning with a complete assessment. A Health and Wellness Committee, including Scheu, was formed and chose Elevate Health Consulting, a firm with extensive school experience, to inventory Chewonki's needs and make recommendations. (Cont. p. 6)

## Just What We Needed

Sue Childress had just retired from 38 years as a nurse, including the past 14 as director of nursing services at the Huntsman Cancer Institute in Salt Lake City, when COVID arrived, derailing her plans for a celebratory trip to Machu Picchu. During a family Zoom call last summer, her "sweet nephew Andrew," that is, Maine Coast Semester history teacher Andrew Hunter, tossed her an idea: "Hey, Aunt Sue, there's a nurse position open here at Chewonki. Wanna come?"



"When he said that," Childress says, "I thought, oh, wouldn't it be a gift to spend a year in Maine and be able to reconnect with family?" Decisive, unflappable, and adventurous, Childress applied for the job. Vice President for Schools and Health Services Susan Feibelman reviewed her resume and called her immediately to ask if she

would consider not the nurse's position, but the directorship of health services, overseeing the transition to a newly renovated Health and Wellness Center, training and settling in four nurses, and managing all-important COVID protocols and practices.

"I had all these friends out there saying, 'Are you kidding? You're doing what?' she laughs. Undeterred, this skier and cyclist left Utah in her 1997 VW camper on August 31 and started work at

Chewonki on September 11. "When I arrived, the paint in the Health and Wellness Center was still wet," she says. "I've got a white stripe on one of my jackets to prove it."

Childress made clear when she was hired that she would stay for one year to get Chewonki's revitalized healthcare program up and running,

but she has immersed herself fully in the work and the community. Soon after she arrived, she began reading *Chewonki: 100 Years of Learning Outdoors*, the book honoring Chewonki's 1915 centennial, "so I could understand the culture," she explains. "I want to make decisions honoring the culture, what makes Chewonki special." She constantly asks herself and her staff, "What can we do even in the middle of the pandemic to make kids feel the real Chewonki? I want to support them having as normal an experience as possible."

She has also been helping to develop recommendations for how the Health and Wellness Center will operate going forward, even envisioning a time after COVID. Her staff are well-trained medical professionals who are also skilled in alternative practices including yoga and Reiki. "We're working on how to integrate that knowledge into Chewonki as a whole," says Childress.

Described by Chewonki peers as "awesome" and "dauntless," Sue Childress has, according to Feibelman, "really been just what we needed."

## Karen Scheu: Creating Change Aligned with Her Passions

A Maine Coast Semester 3 alumna, mother of two Chewonki campers and trippers, educator, and environmental advocate, Karen Scheu thought she understood Chewonki pretty well before she became a trustee in November 2019. She found herself looking at the organization with fresh eyes, however, as she sought a way to make an impact, something meaningful to her that would be of real benefit to Chewonki.

Because she is a Family Nurse Practitioner--she volunteers at a free medical clinic in Baltimore and teaches at the University of Maryland School of Nursing--her instincts bent toward healthcare. That fall, she sat in on a meeting about dispensing medications to students; visited the infirmary; and talked with the nurses--always seeking to understand and identify ways to meet challenges.

Months before anyone knew the word COVID, Scheu said, "One of the things I would like to see happen is for Chewonki's health services to become more robust." The Abele Family Foundation shared her enthusiasm, so they offered to fund a healthcare consultant to make a complete assessment and draft recommendations; and to support the first steps forward.

"The timing was right," Scheu says. "I recognized there was a need. The staff were talking about the need. All I was doing was listening."

The timing became even more right when the pandemic hit. Suddenly healthcare became the critical factor in allowing Chewonki to run programs. "I feel as if COVID and everything else we were starting dovetailed

together," Scheu says. "It propelled things to the forefront...I knew we needed more structure, policies, support, more staff, and mental health services."

With or without COVID, Scheu emphasizes, health services at Chewonki must meet "complex" needs. Nurses care for a variable patient population that includes, among others,

like Chewonki work," Scheu says, "you have to support the wellbeing of everyone." The Abele Family Foundation initiative has drawn on many of Scheu's talents and interests. "I'm a nurse practitioner first, and a teacher," she says. "I was a student at Maine Coast Semester, I went to camp, and I am a person who cares about the environment.



Above: President Willard Morgan, VP of Schools and Health Services Susan Feibelman, Trustee Karen Scheu, and Director of Development Peg Willauer-Tobey at the Maine Coast Semester 30th anniversary reunion

eight-year-old first-time campers; young adult counselors and trip leaders; Maine Coast Semester high school students; Chewonki Elementary and Middle School students; visiting school groups; and adult year-round staff. Some live on Chewonki Neck; others are in the field, including wilderness settings; others return to their own hometowns every night. "To make a community

Now what's so lovely is that I get to combine all that in this project." Chewonki's Health and Wellness Center is now vibrant testimony to Karen Scheu's vision.

Thanks to Karen Scheu, and the Abele Family Foundation for their foresight and partnership making the Chewonki Health and Wellness Center a reality.



When the pandemic hit, however, the focus shifted almost immediately to how to make Chewonki safe for students and staff so that at least some programs could reopen. Deep into the first wave of Covid-19 closures, it became clear that expanding the health-care facilities and growing the nursing staff was now top priorities. Last spring, Maine-based OPAL architects began designing renovations in both the Wallace Center infirmary and the Warren, a multi-unit dormitory designated for quarantine space. Facilities Manager Carob Arnold and his team began installing hand-sanitizer dispensers

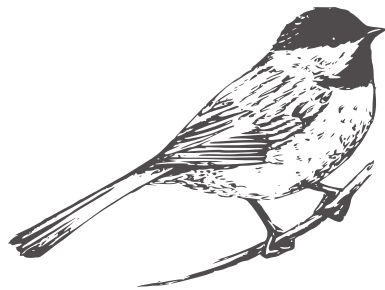
and hand-washing sinks as the OPAL team drew new spaces. It was a bit like waiting for Houston to call the astronauts to the rocket for lift-off. “Some of the highest anxiety for me and my team was waiting for the design process to play out,” Arnold remembers. When they got the go-ahead in mid-June, they knew that completing the work before Maine Coast Semester 65’s opening day in early September would be “a Herculean amount of work,” especially as COVID-related breaks in supply chains began to delay deliveries. “It was a very tight timeframe,” says Arnold. “We were flat out all summer,

just crushing it. We were working weekends, the contractors were working weekends...” They gutted the old Wallace health center and constructed a new waiting room, triage room, treatment/medication room, and nurses’ station; supply space; a bedroom and bathroom for an overnight nurse; and three recovery rooms. They improved ventilation and installed new flooring and lighting. The interior of the Warren was redesigned to allow a COVID-positive patient to be isolated short-term with a nurse and a family member until being moved home or to a hospital. “And what’s really cool is that we have never had to use it for

a COVID case,” says Arnold. After upgrading facilities and hiring Director of Health Services Sue Childress [see sidebar] and four nurses, Chewonki’s next priority is responding to a list of recommendations generated by Elevate Health and Chewonki’s Health and Wellness Committee. This next phase includes creating an integrated healthcare curriculum for the whole of Chewonki. Executive Assistant and Special Projects Manager Anne Schlitt, who is helping to guide the project, explains, “We are asking ourselves, Where does healthcare fit into the work of Chewonki?

What kind of structure is required to support it?” Vice President for Schools and Health Services Susan Feibelman elaborates: “Elevate Health’s findings have helped us better understand the relationship between a robust, multifaceted health services program and the work we do in our camps and schools. It’s always been part of our philosophy to hold the whole child. Excellent healthcare is intrinsic to carrying out that mission.” The Abele Family Foundation’s support made this deep thinking and updated facilities possible. “It was absolutely a game-changer,” says Feibelman, “and we are very grateful. Chewonki as

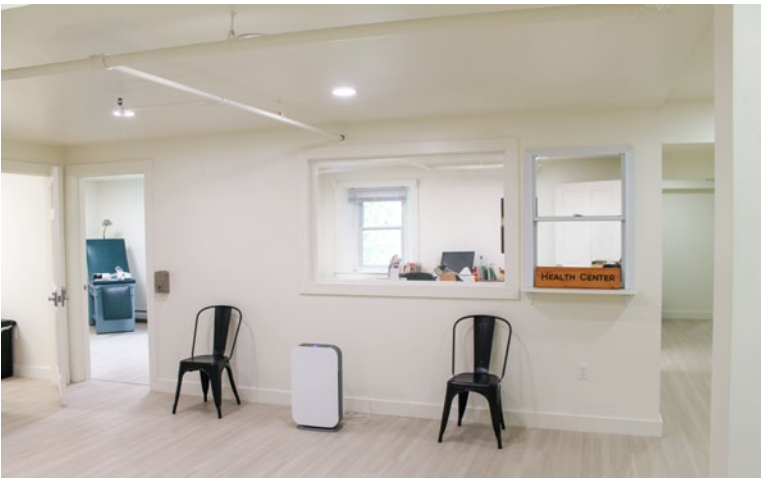
a whole is now better prepared than ever to meet today’s needs in highly professional, holistic, and compassionate ways.” Amidst pandemic pandemonium, the evolution of Chewonki’s healthcare system has been a silver lining. And the laughter and conversation rising again from the Quad? That’s golden.



A Chronicle cartoon from 1946



A view of the new treatment room.



Bright & light: the updates provided a dramatic face-lift to the interior.

## The Beginnings of Backcountry Medicine

No one has shaped Chewonki’s health-care practices and philosophy more profoundly than Margaret Ellis (1939-2011), who was director of healthcare and risk management for 25 years. She came to Chewonki in 1965 when her husband, Tim Ellis, became head. She was already a nurse and a midwife when she met Tim while both were working at an international school in Switzerland. Later she also became a nurse practitioner and earned a master’s degree in nursing. Ellis, who spent her early childhood in London during World War II, imbued her work with compassion and resolve. She possessed a deep love of nature; a passion for learning and teaching; and a holistic view of health that included nutrition, outdoor exercise, gardening, and environmental advocacy. She was practical and disarmingly straightforward; her laughter and warmth leavened the seriousness with which she practiced medicine. Ellis transformed Chewonki staff training, integrating Advanced First Aid, Wilderness First Responder skills, and

risk management into teaching counselors and instructors about the “Ages and Stages” of human development. As Chewonki’s emphasis on wilderness expeditions grew, she was a relentless advocate for proper preparation. “In so many ways, Margaret was on the cutting edge of wilderness medicine,” says Greg Shute, Chewonki vice president for land and waters. He attributes her state-of-the-art approach in part to her first-hand experience. “She and Tim and their children made so many wilderness trips as a family,” he says. “She fully understood what wilderness trip leaders face. She had them carrying epinephrine pens before anyone else was. And she taught them some unconventional field techniques that really worked,” such as covering a wound with three plastic bags to draw out infection. “She did not mince words,” Shute says with an appreciative smile. “But she also had a great ability to use her amazing bedside manner when it was needed.” Ellis left Chewonki in 1990 but had no plans to retire. She worked in private



Above: Tim and Margaret Ellis practice, taught, studied, and took her expertise to Native American communities and rural parts of the Dominican Republic. It is easy to imagine how delighted she would be to see the revitalized Chewonki Health and Wellness Center--and to know that Karen Scheu [see sidebar], one of the Maine Coast Semester students who benefited from her care, provided the leadership to make it possible.



# Refugia

Learning in the In-between Spaces



In the days before welcoming Semester 65 to Chewonki, Julie Barnes, our Dean of Students, sent out a message which resonated deeply with our learning community and has been on our minds ever since. Julie spoke of a passage from the book *The Great Tide Rising* by Kathleen Dean Moore. This excerpt was about the eruption of Mount Saint Helen in 1980 and how scientists believed that all life would be wiped out from the mountain, and that it would not return for centuries.

The author comments: “What the scientists know now, but didn’t understand then, is that when the mountain blasted ash and rock across the landscape,

the devastation passed over some small places hidden in the lee of rocks and trees... Refugia, they call them: places of safety where life endures.” Julie’s hope was that Maine Coast Semester could be this place, one that “protects and nourishes life, healing, and transformational experience – for our students, for ourselves, and for our world.”

During the countless hours of planning over the summer, it was clear that in order to create this safe refuge for the students, we would have to get back to our roots and lean into our place-based model more than ever. Changes were made: classes would be held outdoors as much as possible, and every inch

of our 400 acres of land would be explored as potential learning spaces. While teachers worked tirelessly to adapt their curriculum to these new guidelines, the normally vibrant campus was empty, and we all eagerly awaited the return of our students.

Now, walking across campus yields a much different picture: laughter rings out from all directions, students sit under the changing leaves while learning, and the toll of the bell signals the end of a lesson. Shifting to a majority of the time outdoors has even had some unintended benefits. Teachers cite less screen time, more connection with the natural world, and sweet and serendipitous moments such

as picking apples right from our trees for a quick snack.

Sarah Rebick, our English teacher, says: “being outside allows for more expansive thinking when our minds are not constrained by four walls and a ceiling.” Students have spotted bald eagles flying low overhead, and even shared a learning space with a friendly woodpecker. The outdoors has truly become our classroom, and we are grateful for the safe haven it has provided for us during these difficult times.



“...when the mountain blasted ash and rock across the landscape, the devastation passed over some small places hidden in the lee of rocks and trees”





# Camp Chewonki@Home

Keeping the Flame Alive, Despite the Distances



Last year, it became clear that the pandemic was going to force the closure of many traditional summer activities, including summer camp. The collective feeling of disappointment rising up from kids (and parents) all over the country was intense.

But camp directors never give up, and our team asked themselves, “How can we still help the kids? How can we stay connected? What can we do?”

What emerged was one of the most irreverent, innovative, and imaginative summers we’ve ever had – the first-ever season of Camp Chewonki@Home. This remote seven-week program featured fun activities to connect kids

with the natural world at home, and was offered at no cost to any family that wanted to join. “We earned five out of the seven badges,” said Joseph, 13. “The Naturalist, the Farmer, the Polar Bear, the Artist and the Chef.” Joseph and his brother Victor, 9, of Brunswick, ME were among the hundred of campers who participated from all over the United States, as well as China and the United Kingdom.

“The campfire was really fun – the trivia and Natural History Mysteries were exciting,” said Joseph. “I answered one of the trivia questions correctly and Charlie [Director of Camp Chewonki for Boys] had to tend the campfire

like a chicken!”

Our camp team proposed the idea of creating an at-home summer camp experience in April,



Camp@Home Care packages helped keep the summer busy

a time when most schools had switched to remote learning, and screen-weary Chewonki families expressed a serious need for screen-free nature-based activities for their kids.

Charlie Fear, Emily Bell-Hoerth, Jen Adams, and a supporting cast of dozens, pivoted, planned, and produced Camp Chewonki@

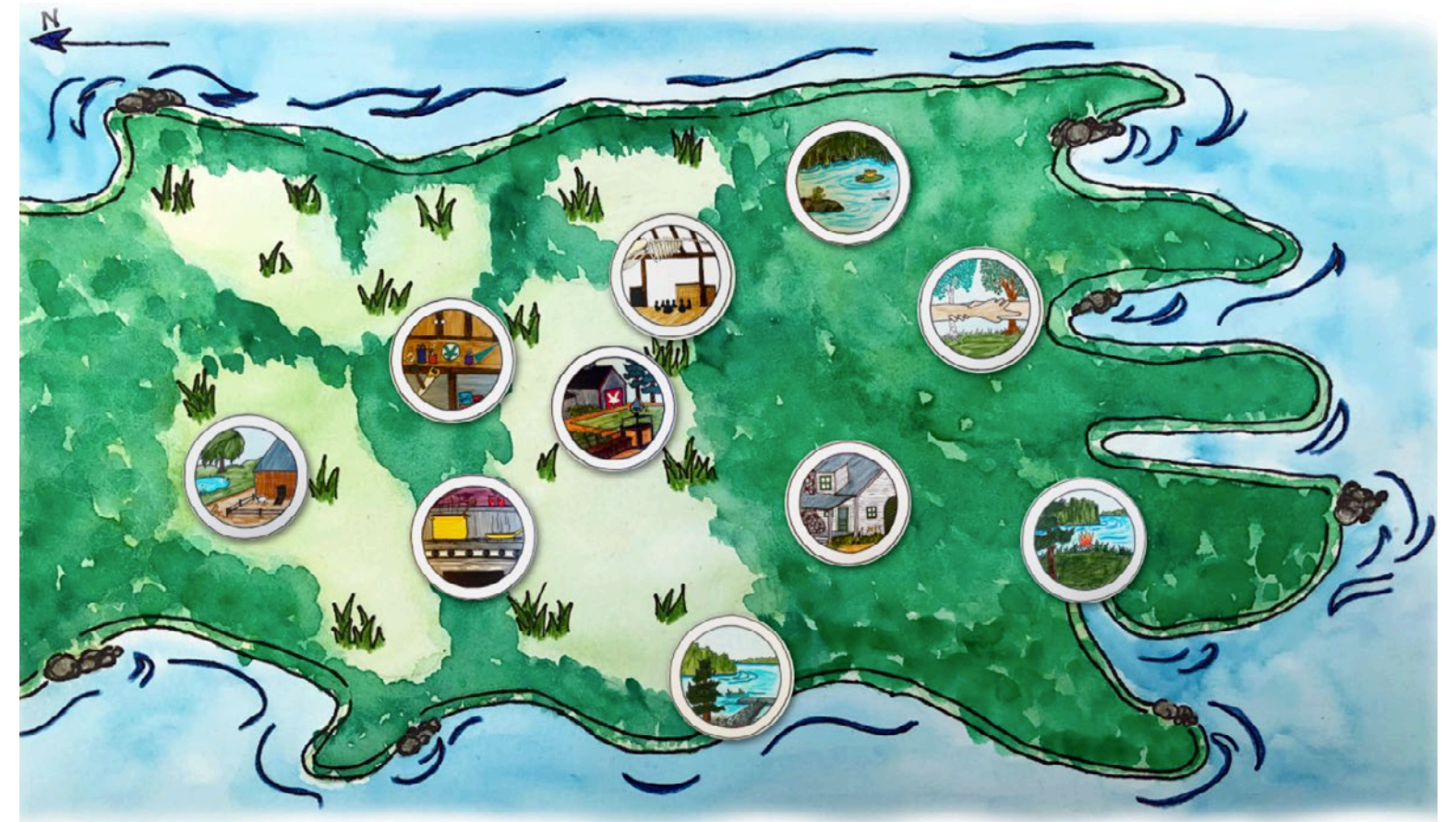
knit, and want to do a cross stitch next.” Victor used his finger loom to make a bookmark for his pen pal, George, who sent a weaving project in return.

Camp Chewonki@Home featured over fifty nature-based activities organized around seven weekly themes: place, adventure, growth, appreciation, grit, energy,

had a tub of it!” said Victor.

“We would connect our laptop to the TV and watch the bird of the week videos as a family,” said Victor.

Throughout the summer, our virtual Chapin Hall filled up with images of freshly baked campfire biscuits, whimsical art projects, playful fairy farms, living room



Campers visited our Camp@Home website to upload their projects, visit galleries, and catch the latest @home videos

Home in just eight weeks – including the entire curriculum, more than 50 videos, weekly live-streamed campfire sessions, pen pal and badge programs, camp care-package, and a community website.

“My favorite part was the weaving project,” says Victor. All campers received a finger loom in their summer care package. “It was very fun and easy, and I’d never done it before. I like to crochet and

and celebration. Activities were self-paced, required no special equipment, and adaptable to urban, suburban, and rural settings.

“We loved the polar bears, too,” says Victor. We took polar bear dips in the laundry bin, a baby pool, with the hose... we did like fifty pools.”

The brothers also had fun trying out the Chewonki@Home recipes. “We liked the granola – I had a million servings of it,” said Joseph. “I

forts, and dozens of other photos documenting campers exploring the natural world.

Camp Chewonki@Home was a unique opportunity to reimagine our purpose and programs in a time of global crisis. We are so proud of the work that went into creating this program, which will remain a freely accessible resource on our website. We are grateful, also, for all families who joined us remotely this summer.





# Schools Without Walls

Learning Abides in the Natural World

For the 34 students attending Chewonki Elementary and Middle School last year, the return to classes meant leaving traditional classrooms behind and adapting to life outside. The students spent as much as seven hours each day in “outdoor classrooms,” to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission, and the new format yielded many unexpected benefits.

and water, and especially your field journal.” All students from grades 1-8 made daily natural history observations, filling their journals with “phenology,” detailed descriptions of plant, animal, and natural systems.

“I’ve been teaching place-based education for over 20 years, and living and teaching this philosophy,” says Cassidy. “But this year felt like

natural world to this extent, and at this developmental stage, they desperately need social-emotional learning, a connection to the natural environment, and time with their peers.”

When asked about the long-term impacts of COVID-19 on the students’ education, Cassidy remarked “...as educators, of course we worry. So much of the day is



*Suitably Suited: students stand ready for any weather*



*Time for a Snack: long days in the cold call for extra calories*

“When we’re outside, we feel normal,” says Kat Cassidy, the Head of Chewonki Elementary & Middle School. “We can spread out and lower our masks. We can see each other’s faces and smiles.”

The outdoor classroom spaces created by the school offered a central rallying point for each class, complete with weather protection, camping chairs, and whiteboards. Each student was expected to maintain their own backpack of school and personal supplies, allowing teachers to take their classes anywhere on Chewonki’s 400-acre campus.

“You need the Big 5 in your backpack every day,” says Cassidy. “Hat, coat, mittens, boots, and core layers. Plus school supplies, food

we moved to a higher level in terms of embracing what this means and how it impacts what we do each day. The enthusiasm that we see in our students, for being outdoors and learning about the world around them, is exactly what we’re aiming for.”

Outdoor schooling presents its own unique challenges to the students and faculty. Hauling fully-equipped backpacks, exposure to the weather, extra physical activity, and COVID-delayed pick-up and drop-off routines resulted in long days and tired students.

“We’re all tired,” says Cassidy. “But happy and tired. Some of the students say this feels more fun, like camp. Many of these students had never been engaged in the

devoted to “the other things” like hygiene practices, or lining up and spacing out before every activity. However, the kids don’t seem to notice this as much as our faculty. The important thing is that we’re here, we’re together, and we’re making it work. Ultimately, we’re still getting in all of the academics and stretching to learn new skills.”

Cassidy also noted a dramatic increase in her student’s “executive function abilities,” the habits and practices of impulse control, self-discipline, and personal organization. “Living and learning this way has shown students the immediate impact of their choices, and it’s helping with their mental flexibility, time-management, and self-resilience,” says Cassidy.



“In the past, it may not have been such a big deal to leave supplies in a pile on the floor, or rely fully on adults to manage decisions about gear, but now students have to take responsibility for their daily experience at school. This will only help them in the long run.”

“I love seeing our students tromping around campus, backpacks loaded up, with everything they need to be comfortable, safe, and ready to learn. They’re smiling and excited for whatever is next, tuned into their own bodies, and the world around them,” says Cassidy. “The pandemic is challenging for all of us, but we’re gaining some practices that I’ll be happy to keep when this is all over.”



## An Invitation to Join Our Team

For 106 years we have welcomed eager students, campers and trip participants to join us at Chewonki for life-changing learning, discovery, and fun in the woods and waters of Maine.

This grand tradition is only possible because we are joined by a fantastic team of passionate individuals like you, eager to share their joy for the natural world.

We are currently hiring for a wide range of positions for the upcoming season and we invite you to check out our job opportunities.

**Your next adventure awaits!**

[chewonki.org/jobs](https://chewonki.org/jobs)



Ah, mushrooms; so alluring, so fascinating, so mysterious. Like magic, they seem to pop into existence out of nothing. And, oh how mushrooms add such a welcome touch of color to an otherwise drab forest floor. Yet, how little it crosses the mind that almost all of the fungus and most of the real action occurs out of sight, underground, in that “dark domain” -- the Pedo-rhizosphere.

The mushroom is just the tip of the iceberg, an above ground sexual reproductive organ produced by the thin, intertwined strands (hyphae) of two genetically different fungi. (A single organ formed jointly by two separate organisms is not as outlandish as it seems; consider the human placenta.)

Most of our common forest mushrooms—the gilled agarics (amanitas, brittlegills, milkcaps, and more), pored

boletes, trumpet-shaped chanterelles, etc.--are made by basidiomycete fungi symbiotic with the roots of trees. We call them mycorrhizae (=“fungus-roots”), and because this particular group makes comparatively superficial connections with roots, ectomycorrhizae.

It’s a two-way street: the fungus provides the tree with limited mineral nutrients plus moisture, and the tree in turn provides the fungus with rich organic food. Tree roots and fungal hyphae find and connect with each other through mutual chemical attraction and subtle developmental manipulation. Each tree may have several fungus partners, perhaps of



different species, and each fungus may partner with several trees, again perhaps of different species. Both the trees and mycorrhizal fungi have coevolved over millions of years to be entirely codependent. Without this, there would be no forests as we know them today.

The ectomycorrhizae are relatively new on the evolutionary firmament, having arisen independently several times in the Jurassic and Cretaceous Periods from saprotrophic/ woodrot ancestors. Because they are tree specialists, it should come as no surprise that the timing of their origin coincides with the advent of flowering trees and the expansion of coniferous

forests.

But, this is not the whole story. Ectomycorrhizae, as important as they are, associate with just 3% of all plant species (mainly trees). Over 80% of the remaining 250,000 plant species (also including many trees and shrubs) are symbiotic with a far more ancient group of fungi, the Mucoromycota. Since these establish much deeper and more intimate connections with



*Monotropa with Mycorrhizae*



*A large Pinesap Hypopites monotropa found at Chewonki*



*Boletinus Sclerotia with aphids*



*Monotropa Uniflora found at Chewonki*



*Boletinus Merulioides found at Chewonki under a white ash*

root cells, they are called endomycorrhizae. And, with nothing above ground to betray their existence, they go largely unnoticed. Collectively, the ecto- and endomycorrhizae knit together entire communities of plants into stupendously complex Common Mycorrhizal Networks, or in the case of a forest, a Woods Wide Web (www).

In any complex, dynamic arrangement like this there are always opportunities for “hackers” to game the system. For example, the woods of the Northeast are home to three species of unusual plants that completely lack chlorophyll, and therefore cannot sustain themselves by photosynthesis. Nevertheless, the

ghostly-pale Indian Pipe (*Monotropa uniflora*) and sickly yellow-pink Pinesaps (*Hypopitys monotropa* and *H. languinosa*) are able to flourish by hacking into the WWW. They do this by coercing tree ectomycorrhizae (usually brittlegill mushrooms) to connect with their roots, giving them access to the nutritional largess of nearby “nurse trees”, while they contribute little or nothing in return to the WWW. The arrangement persists so long as the hackers “stay under the radar” by remaining few and far between.

This brings us to the strange case of a WWW-hacking fungus. Wherever ash trees (*Fraxinus* spp.) are found in our region, one is sure to encounter the unmistakable Ash Bolete mushroom (*Boletinus merulioides*). The association is so consistent and specific that, even without direct evidence, the fungus was once thought surely to be an ectomycorrhiza of ash. However, we now know that ash trees (and presumably all members of their plant family) are strictly endomycorrhizal, and that the Ash Bolete is a hacker, through and through.

It works like this. Ash trees are plagued by a species of sap-sucking aphid (*Prociphilus fraxinifolii*) that in one life stage feeds on roots. The Ash Bolete fungus mycelium produces small hollow capsules (sclerotia) around ash root tips, enclosing them and feeding aphids in a protective shell. This is mutually beneficial for the fungus and the aphids because in exchange for protection, the waste excreted by the aphids (called “honey dew”) provides rich food for the fungus. (Recall the well-known, similar situation in which ants protect “herds” of sap feeding aphids in exchange for honey dew.) But it is also a case of WWW hacking because not only are Ash trees being indirectly exploited by the bolete fungus (via the aphids it protects), but so is the Common Mycorrhizal Network that sustains the trees. It’s unknown whether the fungus makes sclerotia entirely on its own, or if the aphids are responsible for inducing them. Fungus galls, anyone?

So, if you’ve ever been the victim of computer hacking, it may be of some consolation to know that in Nature, hacking is a time-honored, though perhaps disreputable profession, one that long predates the Information Age.

# Hacking the Web

Noticing Nature with Doc Fred Chichocki



Fresh food is central to the Chewonki experience – students and campers help our farm team generate nearly 1/3 of the meat and produce needed for the 78,000 meals we serve in a typical year. Planning and preparation for the summer season begins months in advance - far before the Covid-19 pandemic swept the United States in March. When campus closed and in-person summer programs were canceled, we had a tremendous challenge on our hands: what to do with all this food?

“When the crisis began, we reached out to our local hunger relief organizations asking “what do you need? How can we be helpful?” says assistant farm manager Lisa Beneman. It turned out that local organizations needed more than just food. They needed help processing the large amount of bulk products they were receiving into ready-to-eat meals. They were also finding themselves with large quantities of unpopular ingredients, like canned peaches and dried beans, that clients did not know how to cook or have the ability to prepare.

In addition to producing hundreds of prepared meals, Chewonki has also donated over 400 gallons of milk, 7,398 eggs, 272 loaves of bread, 320 pounds of granola, and an incredible amount of produce, including greens, carrots, onions, broccoli, and tomatoes all grown on Chewonki Neck.

We started accepting items and processing them into ready-to-eat meals and desserts, often with the addition of produce from Salt Marsh Farm. Pork, baked beans, peach cobbler, and chili have been going out weekly to the Bath Food Bank, the St. Phillips Help Yourself Shelf in Wiscasset and Midcoast Hunger Prevention in Brunswick.

“Thanks to the collaboration between Mid-Coast Hunger

Prevention and the Chewonki Foundation, People Plus has been able to distribute approximately 45 meals a week to the seniors in our community this summer,” writes Sarah Deck, People Plus office coordinator. “This has allowed our community members to have a night off of cooking at least once a week and helped to keep people socially distant by reducing the number of times our seniors need to travel out for food.” Chewonki is grateful to be able to utilize the talent and resources of our kitchen staff and farm crew to support our neighbors during this challenging time. In addition to the incredible generosity of the Chewonki donor community that makes this possible, in May, the United Way of Midcoast Maine awarded Chewonki a \$5,000 grant to support our work with local food



dozens of individually wrapped breakfast sandwiches made with Chewonki farm eggs and home-made english muffins.”

“People get excited when the Chewonki van arrives at the food bank,” says Shumaker, “you can hear them inside saying ‘Chewonki is here! Chewonki is here!’ The bread is particularly popular and people have started calling it “Chewonki toast,” sweetly reminiscent of the on-campus tradition among students.

“I was disappointed when I learned that we wouldn’t be cooking for campers,” says Shumaker, “because a big part of cooking for me is seeing how people react to the food.” But Shumaker, along with the rest of our kitchen and farm team, are incredibly proud of the impact we’ve made on food security in our local



banks.

“The quality of the food is really good,” says cook Russell Shumaker. “For example, we recently got a large donation of smoked cheddar from Pineland Farms in Gloucester, that we made into a delicious batch of mac and cheese. There was also a morning where we dropped off

community. “It feels good to give back,” he says.

We are grateful to all the organizations that helped make sure the food we produced this summer made it to those who needed it most.



# Cooking for Our Community

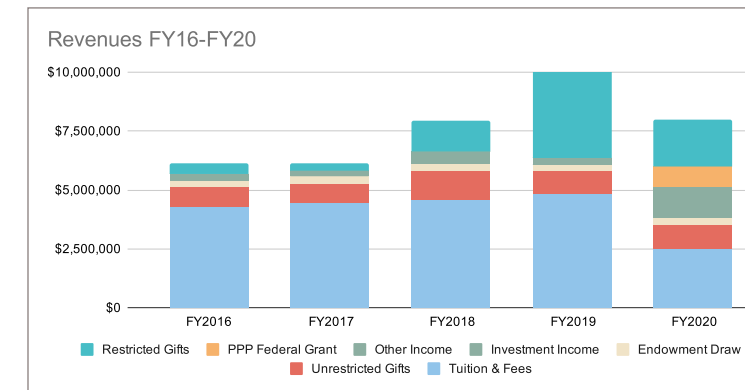
Pandemic Produces Productive Partnerships



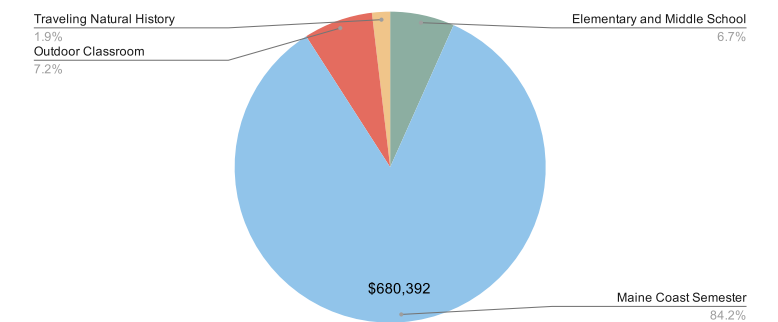
# Chewonki by the Numbers

Our FY2020 Annual Report

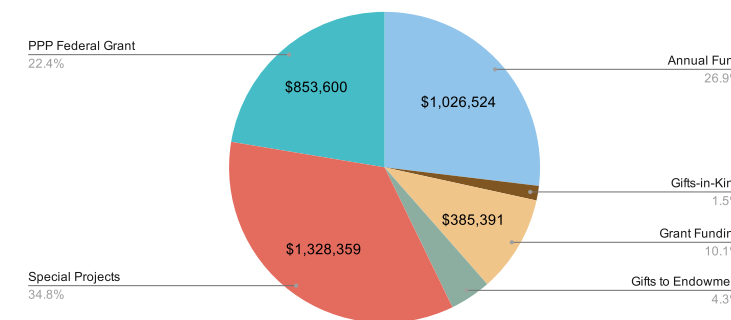
Like every household and organization in the world, we experienced a dramatic roller-coaster of events and challenges last year, including temporary program closures, revenue loss, and the need for extensive modifications to our teaching and living spaces in order to meet the best practices for covid-safety. Despite these difficulties, we have been able to weather the worst of the storm with the generous support of our alumni, aid from federal grant programs, and windfall investment income, for all of which we are extremely grateful.



Financial Aid Awards FY20



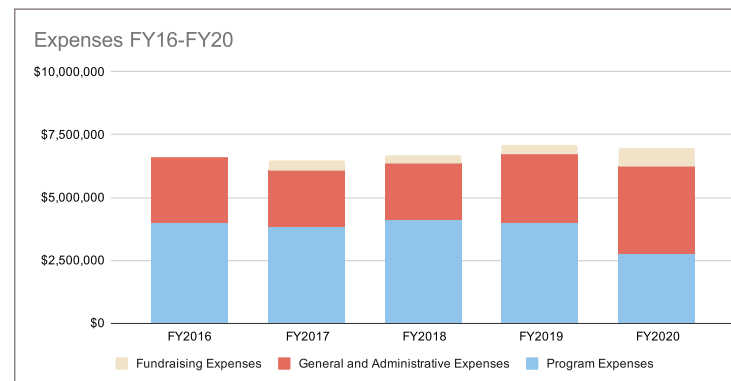
Charitable Contributions FY20



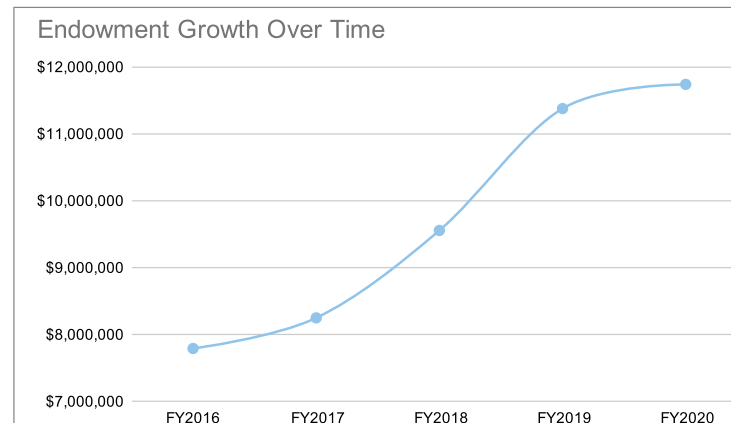
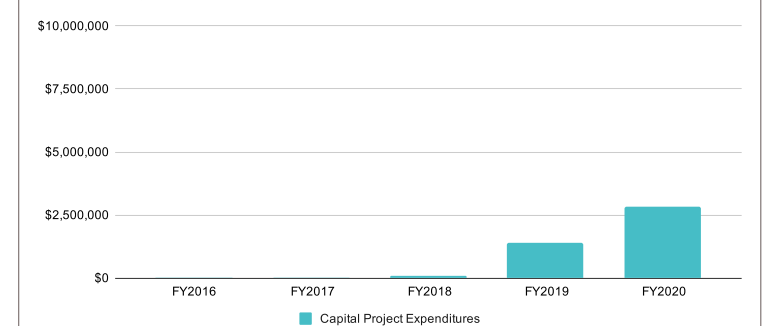
## Special Thanks

Our special thanks to the many donors and grantors who make our programs possible, including:

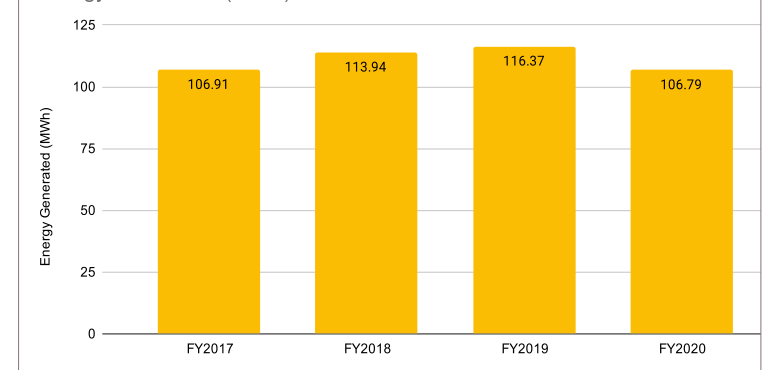
- Abele Family Foundation, Inc.
- Aldermere Foundation
- Ecology School
- Elmina B. Sewall Foundation
- Emanuel & Pauline Lerner Foundation
- Onion Foundation
- United Way of Mid Coast Maine



Capital Project Expenditures FY16-FY20



Energy Generated (MWh)







MAINE  
COAST  
SEMESTER  
at CHEWONKI



## Maine Coast Semester 64 & 65

Spring 2020 - Fall 2020



Semester 64

*\*We were unable to capture an all-class photo because of the unexpected shift to remote learning for Semester 64. More photos are available on our Flickr account.*



Semester 65



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## Stay Connected

Do you have important news to share, or need to update your contact information?

Contact:  
[alumni@chewonki.org](mailto:alumni@chewonki.org)





# People News

Dear Reader, please note that we updated the program name of Chewonki “Wilderness Trips” to “Leadership Expeditions” in 2019, and you will find those program affiliations marked as “LE” rather than “WT.” For more information about this name change, please visit the Camp Chewonki website.

Program Affiliation Guide:  
BC - Boys Camp  
GC - Girls Camp  
LE - Leadership Expeditions  
MR - Maine Reach  
MCS - Maine Coast Semester  
EMS - Elementary & Middle School  
OC - Outdoor Classroom  
TNHP - Traveling Natural History Program  
WP - Waypoint Program

## CAMP CHEWONKI

### 1940s

**Renny Little** (BC ‘42-’48, BC staff ‘53-’55, ‘60) reports “I am now living with the old folks in Cambridge, MA. I am in my second childhood but not residing in Boulder as I was in the summer of 1942.” **Joe Scott** (BC ‘47-’52; BC staff ‘58-’60, ‘62, ‘64) is a board member at International House of Rhode Island.

### 1950s

**Hank Davis** (BC ‘53-’55) wrote in with memories of Boys Camp under Director Clarence Allen.

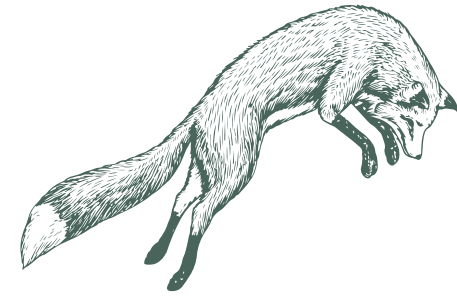
### 1960s

In 2020, **Francis Eberle** (BC ‘64-’65) Ph.D., published *Connected Workforce*:

*Engage Your Workforce to Lead Themselves.* He lives in Phippsburg, ME with his wife, Diane, and works as a leadership and organizational advisor at Price Associates. **Peter Slovenski** (BC ‘64-’68) lives in Brunswick, ME and has worked in education for 40 years.

### 1970s

**John Little** (BC ‘70-’71, LE ‘72, ‘76; BC staff ‘77-’78; LE staff ‘79-’81) is still president of the Missisquoi River Basin Association and member of the steering committee of the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Committee. **Tom Mott** (BC staff ‘70-’75) thru-hiked the Appalachian Trail in 2017-2018. **Ken Grant** (BC staff ‘71-’78, ‘84-’85) has retired after 40 years of teaching and administration at the Hyde School. He and his wife, Claire, recently moved to Woolwich, ME. **Suzanne Strongheart** (BC staff ‘73-’74) and her partner are building a solar, off-grid log cabin in Steuben, ME, with rainwater catchment and composting toilet. After many years working in schools and a brief period of retirement, **Stu Work** (BC staff ‘73-’74, ‘77) has been working part time for the Association of Independent Maryland Schools. He and his wife have five grandchildren. **Josh Marvil** (BC ‘75-’76; BC staff ‘77-’78) and his wife, Becky, live in Maine, where he works in finance and she is a computer programmer. Their daughter, Cayla, lives in Massachusetts. They were able to meet in Vermont last fall to hike some of the Long Trail, a beautiful and welcome change to the routine of hunkering down at home with limited visits due to the pandemic. “I am a general aviation pilot,” Josh



writes, “and in the last few years flew around the world three different times with some friends in their single-engine turboprop airplane. Eastbound, Westbound, and Polar circumnavigations (the only pilots to be awarded the trifecta of circumnavigation diplomas by the National Aeronautic Association). So glad we were able to do that before the pandemic.” **Scott Keller** (BC ‘76; LE ‘77; BC staff ‘80-’81) built a house and moved to Sandwich, NH in 2020 “to be near great hiking.” In January 2020, **James Patterson** (BC ‘78, ‘80-’81; LE ‘81-’82) began as the clinical director of Right Turn Outpatient Addiction Treatment Center in Watertown, MA. **Lee Huston** (BC staff ‘82, ‘93-’94, ‘96-’06; LE staff ‘79-’81) recently sold Center Street Cycles in Brunswick so he could have more time in the summer to do the things he enjoys.

### 1980s

**Kupambazua Furaha** (BC ‘80-’84) is married with two sons and remembers his Chewonki days fondly. Brothers **John Saaty** (BC ‘80-’81) and **Dan Saaty** (BC ‘83) founded Decision Lens, a software company used by government agencies for prioritization and budget allocation. Agencies using their software include the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and other areas of the Department of the Interior. **Preston Irving** (BC ‘87-’88) moved back to Pennsylvania after being promoted within the Boy Scouts of America.

### 1990s

**Steve Melamed** (BC ‘90-’91, ‘94, ‘96-’97; BC staff ‘98, ‘00-’04, ‘06) and Marisa Shuman welcomed Asher Merlin Melamed into the world on March 2, 2020. **Andy Baker** (BC staff ‘93) is still leading the Burlington City & Lake Semester program. He reports: “BCL got an award from United Nations University’s RCE Centre, which named us an ‘Outstanding Flagship Program’ for the way we incorporate the Sustainable Development Goals into our teaching.” **Ponch Membreño** (LE staff ‘93-’95; staff ‘90-’94) is co-owner of Intrinsic Provisions, an outdoor lifestyle shop based in Massachusetts. The store is one of only two BIPOC-owned outdoor shops in the United States. **Tom Hurter’s** (BC ‘97-’99; BC staff ‘00-’04) company is now the 18th largest roofing company in America. **Jon Wilson** (BC ‘98-’02) is climbing in the Sierras. He’s also working hard as an engineer testing autonomous vehicles in CA, AR, and MI.

See MCS 3 for news of Brandon Stafford (BC staff ‘93-’95, ‘97, ‘04-’06); MCS 4 for Amber Aponte (BC staff ‘94); MCS 7 for Meghan Jeans (BC staff ‘92-’94, ‘97); MCS 18 for Forrest Fleischman (BC ‘92, ‘94; LE ‘96; BC staff ‘01, ‘03-’04) and Sarah Klain (BC staff ‘97-’99); MCS 20 for Malin Pinsky (LE ‘94); MCS 21 for Andrew Gustafson (BC ‘95-’96; LE ‘97-’98); MCS 24 for Charlie Hudson (BC ‘91-’93, ‘95; LE ‘96-’98; BC staff ‘02-’03); MCS 26 for Annie Stamell (LE ‘98-’99); MCS 40 for Collin Knauss (LE ‘08); Semester 56 for Evon Magnusson (BC ‘08-’12, ‘15; LE ‘14; BC staff ‘15, ‘17).

### 2000s

**Caitlin Ellis** (BC staff ‘01-’02; ‘06) resigned from her Montessori teaching job so she could serve as pod coordinator for her son and four other children’s online-learning modules. In March, she will be celebrating 4 years with Beautycounter. **Ann Budreski** (LE staff ‘02) is now Anjali Budreski.

She leads her own soul coaching and yoga company, based in Montpelier, VT, offering classes, retreats, and one-to-one coaching. **Paul Taylor** (LE staff ‘03, ‘05, ‘07-’10), wife Claire, and daughters Zola (age 4) and Ruby (age 2.5) live in Portland, OR. Paul is the Portland Program Director at Northwest Outward Bound, and is the Technical Director at Post 58, a student-led climbing and mountaineering organization. **Noah Tuthill** (LE staff ‘05) and wife, Emily, have moved back from Oakland, CA to New Hampshire.



**Garth Altenburg’s** (BC staff ‘06-’18) camp was closed in 2020 due to the pandemic, and Garth says that he, his wife Heather, and kids Will, Ben, and Phoebe “all found a little extra time and space to enjoy family time outside walking on local beaches and trails and visiting our family camp on Sebec Lake. Will and I paddled the Allagash in late July with a father-son group of high school seniors.” In January, **J.R. Jennings** (BC ‘07-’09, ‘12; LE ‘10; BC staff ‘13-’15, ‘17; LE staff ‘18) took a 21-day trip rafting through the Grand Canyon. **Luke Melas-Kyriazi** (BC ‘08-’12; LE ‘14) was selected as a Rhodes Scholar from Harvard; a Harvard School of Engineering and Applied Sciences article celebrating his selection features his Chewonki-built kayak.



**Emma Mabel Carlson** (LE staff ‘09-’10; ‘12-’14) writes, “Otto Elliott Risch launched into the world on October 23, 2020.”

See MCS 2 for news of Kirstin Edelglass (GC staff ‘02-’05, ‘08-’09); MCS 27 for Annalee Sweet (BC staff ‘02-’04; ‘07); MCS 29 for Bea DeGrand (LE ‘00; BC staff ‘03, ‘05); MCS 33 for Jasmine Smith (GC ‘04; BC staff ‘05; GC staff ‘08-’09); MCS 34 for Kit Hamley (LE staff ‘09, ‘11; GC staff ‘10-’11); MCS 35 for Amanda Warren (BC staff ‘07); MCS 37 for Colin Barry (LE ‘03, ‘05); MCS 38 for Ariel Kobayashi (LE ‘04); MCS 40 for Collin Knauss (LE ‘08); MCS 46 for Teddy Ward (BC ‘04-’07; LE ‘08, ‘11); Semester 56 for Evon Magnusson (BC ‘08-’12, ‘15; LE ‘14; BC staff ‘15, ‘17); MCS 60 for Tzevi Aho (BC ‘09-’12; BC staff ‘18).

### 2010s

In 2020, **Bethany Laursen** (OC ‘09-’11; LE ‘10-’11) became Assistant Dean at Michigan State University’s Graduate School. She is also running a monthly global webinar on tools for spanning boundaries in research teams that seek to solve complex social and environmental problems. Bowdoin student **Mo Mohammedsheet** (BC ‘10-’13, ‘15; LE ‘14; BC staff ‘15) interned at Waynflete School in Portland, ME,



as a Spanish teaching assistant and visiting artist. He created a mural, reflecting students’ hopes for their future, in a downtown study space. **Liam Nawara** (BC ’13-’16; LE ’17) will be attending the United States Naval Academy. **Alicia Heyburn** (LE staff ’16, ’18) is working with Teens to Trails, helping Maine high schools start and sustain outing clubs.



**Angus Fake** (BC staff ’17-’18) has continued working on building a small house for his parents.



“As part of my work for my master’s degree at UMass Amherst, I spent the summer of 2020 interviewing over forty female woodland owners and forestry professionals,” writes **Olivia**

**Lukacic** (LE staff ’17-’18). “This research guided the creation of a new outreach publication, “Women on the Land,” which aims to help women landowners better understand their woodlands and make informed decisions to meet their goals. The publication is co-sponsored through Women Owning Woodlands Network and is being distributed throughout the eastern U.S.”

See MCS 45 for news of Eric Nathanson (LE staff ’16-’18) and Eloise Schultz (GC ’11; LE ’12; GC staff ’13, ’16); MCS 51 for Gemma Laurence (LE ’12; BC staff ’15-’16); MCS 60 for Miles Ackerman (LE ’17).

MAINE COAST SEMESTER

1 (Fall 1988)



**Paige Ruane** writes, “I recently reconnected with Emilie Sommerhoff after about 29 years. Turns out we are neighbors in the Hudson Valley. We have as much fun as we did when we were 16. I’ve also been in touch with Scott Andrews and Sue West, which warms my heart.” Paige has been working on Lifeboats HV, a recently launched pilot program that helps towns transition to sustainable/regenerative practices. “It feels full circle to be working on climate issues after a long ago awakening at MCS 1.”



2 (Spring 1989)



**Kirstin Edelglass** (GC staff ’02-’05, ’08-’09), husband William, and six year old twins Sarah and Jasmine live on a homestead in Marlboro, VT. “I continue to focus my professional energy on supporting young adults through counseling and holistic education programs,” writes Kirstin. “In addition to hosting about 25 WWOOF volunteers on our homestead each year, this summer we are launching a 3-week program called Touching the Earth: A Homestead Retreat for Young Adults.” **Katherine Day** has co-founded Dovetail Workwear, a women’s workwear business.

3 (Fall 1989)

**Brandon Stafford** (BC staff ’93-’95, ’97, ’04-’06) is running a makerspace at Tufts University. “I’m basically a pale imitation of Lee Huston in the woodshop, except I don’t know how to build boats. I spend a lot of time teaching groups of young people who think they’re learning how to build robots and rocketships, but really they’re learning about the power of focused, collective effort. Oh, and also, last year, I’m pretty sure I successfully saved my 3 year old son’s life by applying the Heimlich maneuver to the area below his xiphoid process, ejecting some food from his throat. Many, many thanks to Dot Lamson and Ingrid Albee for drilling that skill into me during CPR training in the summers of the 90’s, and

to Margaret Ellis for making us take safety seriously.”

5 (Fall 1990)

**Amber Aponte** (BC staff ’94) is back in graduate school to become a secondary school English teacher.

6 (Spring 1991)

**Will Willis** recently taught a short course at Mercersburg Academy entitled “Environmental Justice is Social Justice.”

7 (Fall 1991)

**Katie Deans** and her husband live in Hawaii. **Jeremy Delinsky** has three children: daughters Ruby (age 13) and Wrenna (age 5), and son Maxwell (age 11) who will be attending Camp Chewonki this summer 2021. He shared that his 13 year old daughter, Ruby, who attends Nobles (where both of her parents went to school) “is adamant about going to the Island School vs. MCS... am working on it” and his 5 year old daughter, Wrenna “skillfully runs the whole house through a combo of charm and terror.” **Katie Fahey** lives in Concord, MA with her husband and three kids (ages 10, 13 and 14). She works in sales for a local bakery but has “mostly been a stay at home mom recently...during COVID...weird times for sure.” **Katie Gibson** lives in northwest London with her husband Chris and daughters Zara (age 12) and Annabelle (age 10). She works in sustainable development at the global drinks company Diageo. **Brooke Guthrie** reports: “since the pandemic I have been helping my 3 daughters with online school.” **Meghan Jeans** (BC staff ’92-’94, ’97) lives in Tiverton, RI, with her husband, two stepchildren, and 6 month old daughter. She works on the philanthropic side of conservation, including Maine-based efforts to save the critically endangered North Atlantic Right Whale

from extinction.  
8 (Spring 1992)

**Jan Forman** is a registered midwife with Cedar House Midwives, and lives in Vancouver Island, Canada with her partner Kelly and daughter Maizie (age 10).

10 (Spring 1993)



**Adam Borden** just started a new job as the VP of Digital Marketing at Live! Hotel & Casino, a regional gaming and hospitality company based in Baltimore, MD. He and his family decamped to Stowe, VT, for a month this winter, where they continued to attend work and class remotely. “It was such a welcome relief to have a change of scenery and get in some great skiing,” he writes. Adam is not sure yet whether his kids will return to Chewonki for summer camp but says they are “always looking for a reason to return to Red’s!” **Julianna Obeid (Rosenbluth)** and her family moved from New York to Boulder, Colorado, and love their new locale. “It’s amazing,” writes Julianna. **Besty Stubblefield Loucks** (BC staff ’94-’96, ’98) officially became an employee of Brown University, where she had been consulting for several years before COVID hit. Her new position is Research Partnerships Manager, “which means I herd cats and develop strategies for complex projects on a wide range of topics (ever the generalist) including environmental policy, the opioid addiction crisis, and artificial intelligence.”

11 (Fall 1993)



**Jess Green** is an English teacher navigating hybrid instruction, as well as parent to two teenagers. “This fall,” she writes, “I welcomed fellow English teacher Dr. Jill Biden to my backyard for a Pittsburgh Suburban Women for Biden rally on election eve.”

12 (Spring 1994)



**Lara Fox** recently welcomed son Max; they have been enjoying treks together up and down the hills of San Francisco during the pandemic. “My family remains healthy and safe,” writes Hayden Smith Temin. “Owen (11) and Cameron (9) are handling full time virtual school as well as can be expected; my husband Jon is able to work from home with the boys; and my work continues to challenge and impact.”

(Continued on page 32)



"I was told at the beginning that I would have to work with candidates I didn't agree with," says Maine Coast Semester at Chewonki alumna Kanghee Lee (MCS 55). Fortunately, that isn't what happened. Lee, a 22-year old communication major at NYU, spent the summer of 2019 interning for Pete Buttigieg, the first openly gay candidate to launch a major presidential campaign.

Lee felt an immediate connection to Buttigieg when she saw him on the news for the first time in early 2019, even though he was still relatively unknown. "He seemed very genuine and had a lot of heart," says Lee. "We forget that gay marriage was only legalized five years ago. This person served in the military in Afghanistan but was closeted until his mid-30's because he couldn't be out. If he could fight through that, then he could be my president," says Lee.

Lee resolved to work for Buttigieg's campaign. By the spring, she was hired as a finance intern in New York and began supporting campaign events. "We did a lot of events with the older, queer population," says Lee. Buttigieg would invite his husband on stage and introduce him to attendees as the love of his life. "These were people who had lived through the AIDS epidemic and never believed they would see this. A lot of the older men cried. To see a candidate understand their life experience – it gave them so much hope and happiness," says Lee.

Lee herself has a deep understanding of what it means to feel othered. She emigrated from her birthplace in Seoul, South Korea, to Los Angeles at age three and later attended a majority-white boarding school in New England. "I like to say that I didn't know I was Asian until I went to high school," says Lee. "Suddenly, I was forced into a role that I had never assumed before."

By the time Lee was a sophomore, she was looking for an alternative. One day, she noticed a stack of Maine Coast Semester viewbooks in her high school guidance office. "I remember looking at

the brochure and thinking that this place couldn't be real," says Lee, recalling pictures of Chewonki's coastal campus, wilderness trips, and Salt Marsh Farm. She applied and was accepted to attend the following spring.

Unlike most of her semester mates, Lee didn't visit campus before the first day of the semester, and she hadn't spent a lot of time outdoors. "I couldn't swim," says Lee, and camping was a foreign concept to her. "All these outdoor things are very white activities," says Lee, "I hadn't faced a lot of physical challenges before."

Her favorite memory of Chewonki is when kitchen manager Bill Edgerton helped her prepare a traditional Korean



*Harvest time with Kanghee Lee and a group of Semester 55 students*

meal for the whole semester. "It was hard to find all the ingredients, but Bill got everything – the pepper paste, the seasonings..."

Lee says that was never something she would've done at her high school. "Even though Korean food is popular now, my whole life it was considered gross. My classmates yucked my yum," she says, using a phrase that commonly refers to a western judgment of other cultures' cuisine.

"The night I got to share Korean food with my semester was the moment that they really became family," says Lee.

Lee's Chewonki experience did more than reaffirm her identity; it helped her redefine her comfort zone's boundaries. "The best thing I learned at Chewonki

was not to be afraid to meet a challenge head-on," she says, recalling a white water kayaking trip and frigid polar plunges, "whereas before I would seek ways to avoid it."

Lee decided to get into politics after the 2016 election. "I felt the need to be involved and do my part in moving our congress and senate into a body that better-represented people." Soon after, Lee was hired by Susie Lee's congressional campaign in Las Vegas, Nevada, (no relation), a Democrat running in a district that had voted 51% for Trump in the 2016 election. The congressional hopeful had started the first homeless shelter in Las Vegas and hoped to reform public education funding.

It was a small team of just six to eight people, and Lee says she did a little bit of everything. Their campaign ended up winning against a conservative candidate known for his anti-LGBTQ+ views, flipping the seat blue.

What advice would Lee give to other Chewonki alumni considering a career in politics? "Don't compromise who you are," she says. "You can navigate [American politics] by being yourself, even if it feels like the space wasn't made for you or people who look like you." Lee explains, "Asian Americans are not considered an important voting block. There's never been a

Korean American elected official, not in the lower house or the senate." Lee even faced pressure to Anglicize her name. But, "If people can learn to pronounce Schwarzenegger or Buttigieg, they can learn to say Kanghee, too," she says. "You can stay yourself."

Lee is currently in her junior year at NYU and although she's not sure she'll ever run for office herself, she plans to always stay civically engaged. "I find purpose in politics," says Lee. "I don't think I'm the kind of person who could do a job where I didn't feel like I was working towards [change] every day."

*Facing page: U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg and Kanghee Lee*



# Kanghee Lee Finds Purpose in Politics



13 (Fall 1994)

**Carrie Miller** is in her last term of doctoral studies with Johns Hopkins University. She is exploring the role of teacher collaboration in culturally responsive teaching to increase Native American high school student graduation rates. She lives in Park City, UT with her husband and two boys.

14 (Spring 1995)

**Kate Barton** is in her final year at the University of San Diego School of Law. She lives in Minnesota with her husband, Taylor; they are expecting their first baby, a girl, in June 2021! In February 2020, **Erika Brown** was appointed to the Durango, Colorado 9-R school board. **Cynthia Jaggi** is a Founding Partner and Director at Climate Adaptive Infrastructure. **Drew Mowery**, his wife, and two children recently moved to Belmont, MA. He works for a biotech company leading efforts to identify and recruit patients for clinical trials to treat rare genetic diseases.

15 (Fall 1995)

After 10 years at the firm of Holland & Knight in New York City, **Brooke Daly** took a job as general counsel for the M/V The World and moved to Coconut Grove, FL in 2019.



Shea O’Sullivan’s son, Patrick

Joseph O’Sullivan, was born February 24, 2020. The family relocated from Boston to Pittsburgh, PA, where Shea grew up.

16 (Spring 1996)

**Clark Childers**, and husband Adam, recently opened The Mary Todd House, an expansion of their boutique hotel, The Lincoln, in Marfa, TX. Clark has also been staffed on a limited series called Truth or Consequences. **Hilary Walrod** serves on Farm to Institution New England’s Farm & Sea to Campus Network Steering Committee. She is also working on designs for the international Foodicons Challenge in advance of the UN Food Systems Summit.

17 (Fall 1996)

**Tracey Wheeler** lives in Houston, TX, and is completing her post-doc fellowship in Clinical Psychology with at-risk youth in the juvenile justice system.

18 (Spring 1997)

**Forrest Fleischman** (BC ’92, ’94; LE ’96; BC staff ’01, ’03-’04) is an assistant professor teaching Environmental Policy at the University of Minnesota in St. Paul. **Sarah Klain** (BC staff ’97-’99) had a baby in January, and is in her second year as an assistant professor in Environment and Society at Utah State University.

20 (Spring 1998)

**Malin Pinsky** (LE ’94) and family spent a sabbatical year in Leipzig, Germany. Malin was at the German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv). They are now back home in Princeton, NJ.

21 (Fall 1998)

**Katie Cairoli** and family moved to the

south coast of England at the end of 2018. Katie has continued designing edible landscapes for clients back in the U.S. **Andrew Gustafson** (BC ’95-’96; LE ’97-’98) wrote that he “enjoyed doing the virtual Camp Chewonki with my nephew Liam Clarke and my sister Danielle Gustafson Clarke (MCS faculty ’95-’97).”

22 (Spring 1999)

**Clare Gupta** and her husband Drew Myers and welcomed their third child, Aidan Parker Myers, into the world on Feb 26th. He joined big sister June (age 3) and big brother Theo (age 5).



**Rachel Wilson** is a physical therapist at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston. She lives in Cambridge, MA with her partner, Chad Leahy, and their 16 month old daughter, Juno Leahy-Wilson.

23 (Fall 1999)

**Marselle Alexander-Ozinskas** just wrapped eight years as a grantmaker at the S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation. “I have now transitioned into consulting,” she writes, “where I work in partnership with multiracial teams to help people, teams, and organizations to build the awareness, skills, and relationships they need to center racial equity in their personal lives and professional work.” **Elizabeth**

**Cedar** and family have been enjoying life in Massachusetts. **Ariane Lotti** is still managing her family’s farm in Italy, growing and developing organic products. She is also expecting her first child. **Will Morris** continues to work in carbon mitigation technology. He, his wife Elise, and big sister Vera, welcomed daughter/sister Clara in January of 2020. **Andrew Schapiro** got engaged in May to his long-time partner, and recently started a new role leading creative for the mental wellness company Calm. **Marissa Vahlsing** lives in Washington, D.C. with her husband, Patricio and her toddler, Mateo. She is still working as a human rights and environmental justice lawyer for EarthRights International.

24 (Spring 2000)

**Charlie Hudson** (BC ’91-’93, ’95; LE ’96-’98; BC staff ’02-’03) reports: “Katherine and I were married last year, welcomed Theo into the world in spring 2020, and will be taking over management of the Thompson House and Cottages in New Harbor in 2021.”

26 (Spring 2001)

**Amy Aloe** lives in Brunswick, ME, and has a 1 year old and a 2 year old. **Anna Bondarenko** and husband Emmanuel welcomed their son Aurèle in October. Anna is the COO of Owkin, a French-American start-up developing innovative machine learning software solutions applied to medicine. The family lives in Dubai. **Betsy Peretti** and husband John welcomed Hadley Hastings Peretti on September 28, 2019. The family lives in Oakland, CA, and Betsy works at Bain Capital building the digital innovation business. **Andrea LaRosa Scott** has enjoyed hearing snippets of life from fellow MCSer, “Certainly a bright spot in these relatively quiet winter months in Vermont. My little family has kept busy stoking the

wood stove, playing outside in many forms, and slinging hay to our cows and scraps to our chickens while trying to give away as many eggs as we can.” After 13 years in Santa Monica, CA, **Annie Stamell** (LE ’98-’99) plans to move back to Portland, Maine in spring of 2021. She will continue to work remotely as a screenwriter and content producer. **Zach Strassburger** works as a lawyer for the City of Philadelphia; in the fall of 2020 he was part of a team arguing election law cases against the Trump campaign. In Maine, **Laura Sunderland** (Bond) is on a leave of absence as a middle school art teacher, and is enjoying life at home with her 2.5 year old and 5 year old. **Caitie Underdahl** recently graduated from veterinary school, and is practicing companion animal medicine in Norwalk, CT. **Rachel Walman** shared news of a move from Manhattan to Brooklyn with husband Adam, 3 year old Oscar, and almost 9 month old Ralph. She works as the education director for Green-Wood Cemetery, a national historic landmark.

27 (Fall 2001)

**Whitney Bystran** and partner Adam welcomed their second child, Fern, in August, joining older sibling Casimir. They are also preparing to launch their mushroom foraging and cultivation business, Forest Gnome Mycology. **Alex Franqui de Solo** reports that baby Miriam Rebecca Nichols Franqui was born March 23, 2020. Annalee Sweet’s (BC staff ’02-’04; ’07) daughter Nora will be attending Camp Chewonki for Girls this summer!

28 (Spring 2002)

“2019 was a big year,” writes **Blair Cserjes**. “I married a total dreamboat and visited Alaska, my 50th state.” **Caitlin Gucker-Kanter** is working as an architect for MASS Design.

29 (Fall 2002)



**Nellie Brewer** has a new baby! **Bea DeGrand** (LE ’00; BC staff ’03, ’05) had a daughter, Grace, in January 2019.



**Becca Spiro** runs The Frosted Flamingo, a mobile art studio based in Breckenridge, CO. She and her husband welcomed Levi Spiro Anderson on June 26, 2020.

30 (Spring 2003)

**Carly Berger** and family moved from New York City to Portland, ME for Carly’s new job as an architect at Winkelman Architecture, designing single-family homes throughout Maine. After finishing his PhD, **Evan Schnidman** (Semester 30, BC ’98-’99) started a data company, which he sold last year. He now works in





# Recipricology

An Interdisciplinary and Cross-Cultural Approach to Environmental Stewardship

“Things are changing, and there’s no going back. We need to go forward in a way that connects people with the land and revives traditional practices while adapting them to a modern context,” says Sarah Klain. “The metaphor of a braid is apt. We’re not mashing it all together. Each strand is distinct.”

Klain is an alumna of Maine Coast Semester at Chewonki (18), a former Camp Chewonki staff member, and Assistant Professor of Environment and Society at Utah State University. For the past two years, she has been collaborating with the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation to create a land stewardship plan for Boa Ogoi, a 585-acre parcel in southeastern Idaho where the US Army Cavalry and settlers massacred over 400 tribe members in 1863. Led by tribal leader Darren Parry, the

Northwestern Band of the Shoshone purchased the land in 2018 to build an interpretive center and restore the pre-massacre ethos of the landscape. Klain hopes that this can be a place for the tribe—a geographically dispersed population who has never had a reservation, “to affirm their identity, engage both tribal and non-tribal youth with NWBSN culture, and tell their story to the larger world.”

Creating a land stewardship plan for Boa Ogoi is far from straightforward, however. For generations, the Shoshone seasonally migrated to hunt game, catch fish, and gather plant foods including pine nuts, chokecherries, and roots. They often made a winter camp near the hot springs of Boa Ogoi. In the 150 years since the massacre, however, the land of Boa Ogoi has been farmed and grazed extensively by cattle. Irrigation systems,

canal-building, run-off from upstream agriculture, cattle feedlots, intensive grazing and invasive species have decimated native plant and animal populations. A stream that once provided drinking water and habitat for endemic trout now runs dark and murky. Beyond the many challenges presented by the site, Boa Ogoi also exists in a region already feeling the effects of climate change via increased temperature variability, reduced winter snowpack, and reductions in annual precipitation. The species that flourished 150 years ago may not be able to sustain themselves without intensive human intervention now or in the coming 50 years.

How does one begin to rebuild? Perhaps part of the answer is embracing the idea that no singular discipline or way of knowing can show us the way.

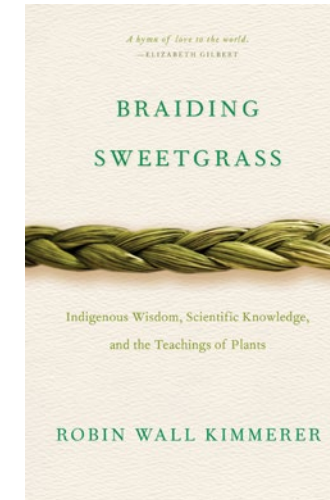
Instead, it is only by weaving together indigenous knowledge with modern environmental science, local knowledge, a sense of history, and appreciation for human cultures that we can begin to regenerate Boa Ogoi and damaged landscapes like it.

In her 2014 book *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Robin Wall Kimmerer uses the eponymous practice as more than a literary device - it’s a call to action. A member of the citizen Potawatomi nation and “card-carrying scientist” (in the words of Maine Coast Semester faculty Megan McOskar), Kimmerer’s writing represents what Klain calls a paradigm shift in environmental science.

“There is a growing recognition of how conservation, as a movement, has looked down on, excluded, or marginalized indigenous voices,” says Klain. “For decades, creating protected areas often entailed clearing indigeneous people from the land. However, if you look globally, on average, land and water controlled by indigenous people have maintained more biodiversity than areas seized by colonists.”

While Kimmerer calls for indigenous wisdom to be elevated in our efforts to repair the landscape, she doesn’t position this type of knowledge as more important than another. Instead, indigenous knowledge is a critical strand among many that Kimmerer calls us to weave together into a strong and sturdy rope.

For Klain’s stewardship project at Boa Ogoi, this means weaving together the knowledge of many - some of whom may be surprising. Detailed ethnobotanical journals created by Mae Timbimboo Parry, a NWB of Shoshone elder and grandmother to Darren Parry, provide information about the sites’ once essential plant species. Interviews with local families furnish more recent data and a sense of the socio-economic influences that drive land-use decisions. Klain is also weaving in the work of other Utah State University students and faculty, including botanists, ecologists, habitat restoration specialists, and more.



Klain anticipates that Boa Ogoi will be a long-term collaboration between the NWBSN and Utah State University. She sees it as an opportunity to right a historical injustice and a way to connect indigenous students with research opportunities that align with their values. “There’s an educational gap when it comes to Native students in America. I see an important role for land grant institutions, including UMaine, USU, Cornell, and over one hundred others, to address this educational disparity more intensively,” says Klain, who also notes that land “grants” often consisted of acreage seized from Native peoples.

“Kimmerer’s voice and approach to science captures an aspect of what we’re trying to teach at Chewonki,” says Sarah Rebeck, an English faculty. “She speaks to the intersection of art, science, culture, and literature, underscoring that you can’t understand one discipline in isolation from another.”

Rebeck recently led a discussion group on *Braiding Sweetgrass* with the six members of Semester 65. “Wendell Berry wrote that if you don’t know where you are, you don’t know who you are. We are looking at lines from *Braiding Sweetgrass* that speaks to that,” says Rebeck. Students will end the section by giving presentations on why Kimmerer’s book is important to read at this particular moment in history.

For most Maine Coast Semester students, Natural History and Ecology of the Maine Coast will be the only high school science class that brings them outside. “Traditional high school science focuses on biology, chemistry, and physics,” says McOskar. “And, with biology, the focus is on microbiology, not ecosystems.”



Sarah Klain

“Emphasis on abstract knowledge combined with the urban nature of most schools is really impactful,” says McOskar. “By the time a student reaches high school, their separation from the natural world is nearly complete.” McOskar’s class offers a counterpoint to this trend. “Everything we do, as a principle, is anchored in what students can directly experience,” she says. “Another thing that’s great about Kimmerer is that she’s based in the Adirondacks, so the species and ecosystems she writes about are familiar.”

“What is the right relationship between people and nature?” asks Klain. Indigenous voices like Kimmerer are helping us to see the answers more clearly. Instead of seeing plants and animals as commodities, Kimmerer presents us with a different paradigm. It’s not just the end product that sustains us - food, clean water, healthy trees, breathable air - but the act of tending itself.

“Most of us don’t think about our relationships with other people, pets, or wild animals in terms of their economic value,” says Klain. “If we can begin applying relational values to the way we interact with nature more broadly, we can tap into fundamental drivers of human behavior.” Most

crucially, reciprocity. “We need to ask - is this relationship feeding both of us?” says Klain.

Back at Boa Ogoi, the NWBSN are using three principles to drive the design of their cultural interpretive center: reverence, resilience, and reconciliation. Klain hopes that the regenerated landscape will speak to these concepts. “This can be a prominent and transformative place,” she says. Indeed, Boa Ogoi has

the potential to embody the new paradigm that Kimmerer expounds upon in *Braiding Sweetgrass* - that humans and the natural world are so closely twisted together that stewarding the earth is a fundamental way that we care for each other.



independent consulting, advising early stage startups on how to build a business, and larger companies on building a comprehensive data strategy. He and his wife Whitney live in Higganum, CT. **Lindsay Leone** lives just outside Portland, ME, and has a 1.5 year old. **Jason Lilley** and his partner live in Bowdoinham, ME. He works for UMaine Cooperative Extension as a Sustainable Agriculture Professional, supporting farmers throughout the state in developing sound production, business and marketing plans. **Seth Silverman** lives in New York City. He works in impact investment focused on developing world markets (especially East Africa and India). His shop is called Factor[e] Ventures; they back startups with innovation that can help build more equitable and sustainable pathways for economic development. **Tessa Solomon-Lane** and her partner recently moved to southern California for Tessa’s faculty job at the Claremont Colleges. She teaches Neuroscience in an interdisciplinary science department, and does research with students to understand social behavior and how it develops and is regulated.

31 (Fall 2003)

**Connor Dow’s** family, including two boys Thomas (age 5) and Weston (age 3) live just outside Boulder, CO. He reports, “We’ve loved sharing the spirit of the outdoors with our two boys, and so much of that I learned from MCS.” **Benjamin McGee** works with a heart transplant team in Seattle as a nurse practitioner. In Summer 2021, **Courtney Walter** and family, including her spouse, 1 year old daughter and 8 year old dog, will be moving to Maine to work in healthcare in Portland and Damariscotta. **Taylor Wilmer** and her husband moved to the Washington, D.C. area, where she works as a clinical psychologist. Their son Wyatt was born on May 30, 2020.

32 (Spring 2004)

**Grace Rumford** is a senior manager for business development for a team at BP that provides clean energy solutions for large corporations and cities 33 (Fall 2004)

**Ian Rutkowski** is currently traveling the Northeast and Southeast consulting and designing commercial hydroponic systems. He has part ownership in a botanical extraction lab in Michigan, and still calls Pittsburgh home. **Jasmine Smith** (GC ’04; BC staff ’05; GC staff ’08-’09) lives on Mount Desert Island, ME where she founded and directs The Community School of MDI, a place-based elementary and middle school. The school is in its seventh year and will be graduating their first class in the spring!

34 (Spring 2005)

“Surviving homeschooling and lockdown with the crew in North Carolina!” reports **Rebecca Dickson**.



In the fall of 2020, **Kit Hamley** (LE staff ’09, ’11; GC staff ’10-’11) and her partner **Reuben Hudson** (BC ’95-00, LE ’01-’04, LE Staff ’05-’07 and ’09-’11) ran a residential experiential education semester for College of the Atlantic from their home at Maple

Hill Farm in Monroe, ME. Kit is a PhD candidate at the Climate Change Institute at the University of Maine, and Reuben is a Chemistry professor at College of the Atlantic. Their son, Beau, is 18 months old.

35 (Fall 2005)

**Amanda Warren** (BC staff ’07), husband David, and their first child, Harriet, welcomed identical twins Rosemary and Beatrice in April 2020. Since 2015, Amanda has been a teacher and director at Bridge School in Middlebury, VT.

36 (Spring 2006)

**Rose Hyson** is in a PhD program in Comparative Education at University of Minnesota, and is hoping to defend in late Spring 2021.

37 (Fall 2006)

**Colin Barry** (LE ’03, ’05) is a hydrogeologist living in Fort Collins, CO.



**Tarara Deane-Krantz** and Darren Wang had a daughter, Ethela, on March 20, 2020. Tarara works at Bloomberg Philanthropies with fellow Chewonki alum **Brett Miller** (MCS 43), who is on the creative team.

38 (Spring 2007)

**Evan Deutsch** is earning his MBA at Northwestern (Kellogg) with a focus in early-stage investing in clean tech and sustainable consumer businesses. **Clarion Heard** has begun a career as a software engineer, working for a company dedicated to increasing the accessibility of personal loans. **Liddy Hepner** works as a small animal veterinarian in Maryland. She recently bought her first house in Catonsville, MD. “We had a baby, Wes Picton Kobayashi, on September 15th!” **Ariel Kobayashi** (LE ’04) writes. **Emmy Masur** is a psychiatry resident at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, where she will start a fellowship in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry next year. “Charlie Patterson and I got married in our backyard this past December,” she reports. “Our family joined our special day via Zoom!” **Olivia Woollam** got married in November 2019 to her wife Jaclyn. Olivia is working on building a law practice focusing on housing and worker cooperatives.

39 (Fall 2007)

**Anna Kanter** is in her first year of medical school at SUNY Upstate, and is getting married in July. Samantha Leahy writes that she “would be happy to discuss the challenges of being a special educator working with young children virtually.” **Maddy Woodle** spent a few years in Washington, D.C., working for several different political organizations. As of March 2020, she was managing a political campaign in Bend, OR.

40 (Spring 2008)

**Lucy Bates-Campbell** (MCS faculty & staff ’15) is excited to celebrate her engagement with **CJ Kanozak** (BC ’03-’04), who she met while teaching at Chewonki! She lives in Philly, where she’s making art and working for a small consulting company.

**Audrey Boochever** lives in Oakland, CA, where she works in the district office for Aspire Public Schools. **Douglas Gledhill** is studying for an MBA and an MA in Global Affairs from Yale and hoping to go into political risk consulting after he graduates. “I’m hoping that I can attend in-person classes in New Haven, CT this fall,” he writes, “and am currently planning to study at LSE next spring before graduating in May.” **Collin Knauss** (LE ’08) is in his final year of graduate school at the University of Michigan, pursuing a dual MBA/MS degree in business and sustainability. This summer he interned for a social venture and water infrastructure analytics company called BlueConduit, which addresses equitable access to safe and clean water. **Rachel Madding** is in her fourth year of medical school in Philadelphia, and recently submitted her applications for OB/GYN residency. **Jenna Paul-Schultz** is in her third year of medical school at UCLA. After college, she worked abroad for a year in Nepal, then was in the Peace Corps for two years in Zambia. **Eliza Taylor** has moved to the NJ suburbs with her fiancé. Their wedding was planned for October 2020, but was postponed until July of 2021, and they’re hoping it will be safe to celebrate by then! **Lila Wilmerding** is finishing her MBA at UVA Darden this spring.

41 (Fall 2008)

**John McCormick** (BC ’03-’05; LE ’06-’07; BC staff ’11-’12, ’14) is studying marine biology in Australia.

42 (Spring 2009)

**Diego Kendrick** is engaged, and works in marketing in Perth, Western Australia.

43 (Fall 2009)

In Spring 2020, **Katie Burns** was awarded third place in a national

science communication competition, FameLab Ireland. She is still living in Ireland, and plans to submit her PhD thesis on the importance and conservation of insect pollinators in early Summer 2021. She also recently got engaged to her partner, Beau Williams. **Sara Clark** is studying at Berkeley Law, focusing on voting rights and election law. This summer, she will be on the Democracy team at the Brennan Center for Justice in New York. **Jamie Harrison** completed a PhD in Ecology in May 2020. She studied how the forests of New England are responding to climate change, specifically focusing on nutrient cycling. **Mia Ritter** works at Lawrence Academy in Groton, MA as an assistant director of college counseling, coach alpine skiing and varsity girls lacrosse, and helps lead annual two-week trips. **Katherine Shor** is a first year MA student in the Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning program at Tufts University, where she is also a Gill Fellow at the Center for the Study for Race and Democracy examining Black feminist radical theory in youth-led organizing praxis. She lives in the Piedmont area of North Carolina with her partner. **Cora Thaxton** writes, “Hello Chewonki Community! Hola todos y todas. I’ve been living in Mexico City for the past 2 years, immersing myself in the Spanish language and spending time with my partner and his family here. Pandemic life has been challenging, especially in a condensed city, but I’m happy to be here in the sunshine.”

See MCS 37 for news of Brett Miller.

44 (Spring 2010)

This fall, **Chris Broecker** worked for the National Parks Service in Yosemite. He started his own business, Hyperion Arbor Services, doing professional tree care. **Delger Erdenesanaa** started a graduate (Continued on page 40)





# Viral Volunteerism

Callum Becvarik Answers the Call

When the Covid-19 pandemic interrupted the last few months of his senior year, Callum Becvarik, (an alumnus of Maine Coast Semester 61 and Camp Chewonki) went to work in service of others. He signed up for the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), a national volunteer network that responds to natural disasters and public health emergencies. While American social life and economic activity slowed to a standstill, Becvarik drove to New Mexico and began working twelve-hour-a-day volunteer shifts caring for underserved populations.

Becvarik's first assignment in New Mexico placed him at a casino-turned-field-hospital. The temporary facility provided shelter for medical workers and family members of people who had tested positive for Covid-19. Becvarik

helped by checking in with patients via phone on a set schedule. After his volunteer stint was over, he drove back to Colorado, only to be called again by the MRC a few days later.

During his second stint in New Mexico, the intensity of the work began to ramp up. Becvarik was placed at a step-down facility in Gallup, New Mexico – a center for patients who no longer needed to be in the hospital, but were not yet well enough to return home. A significant portion of the nearby population is Native American, including Navajo, Hopi, and Zuni tribe members. The facility provided much-needed care in a community where many families live in multi-generational households, sometimes lacking electricity and running water. What Callum thought would be a two-week commitment turned into

two-and-a-half months, ending in a twenty-five-day streak of twelve-hour shifts – 6:30 pm to 7:30 am.

Although the pace was exhausting, Becvarik was prepared. He's been training for this type of work most of his life. As a child, Becvarik accompanied his father when he responded to emergency calls. Later, he served on ski patrols in both New Mexico and Colorado. For the last year, Becvarik has been readying himself to begin his pre-medical degree at the University of Vermont College of Health Sciences, completing over two-hundred hours of clinicals (way above the required 40!) and a four-hundred hour internship at his local hospital. Becvarik also obtained his EMT and IV certifications soon after his eighteenth birthday last August, in addition to his Wilderness EMT upgrade.

At the end of his stint in Gallup,

Becvarik briefly returned to Santa Fe to help with Covid-19 testing efforts and then drove the eight hours back to Steamboat Springs, Colorado, for his high school graduation. But his work with the MRC wasn't over. When we spoke to him, Becvarik had just returned from another two-and-a-half-week stint in New Mexico. The patient numbers at the step-down facility in Gallup had decreased, so Becvarik was placed in an emergency room as an ER Tech, and then an intensive care unit at a local hospital.

Becvarik says that his time at Maine Coast Semester helped him develop the robust leadership skills he's relied on in New Mexico. Becvarik also says that Maine Coast Semester helped him learn how to live and work with people who are different than himself. There were a few bumps along the way, but living in a cabin with six other boys from around the country helped him appreciate how people with different perspectives can effectively collaborate. The tight-knit community that Maine Coast Semester famously fosters also strengthened Becvarik's confidence. He left Chewonki with not so much a newfound sense of self, but a heightened self-awareness and ability to effectively articulate his thoughts to others.

What's next for Becvarik? He's already back in New Mexico with the MRC. Then he hopes to put his EMT skills to use in Boston this summer before beginning his freshman year of college in the fall. We hope to see Becvarik back at Chewonki soon, but until then, thanks for all the work you are doing to serve the community, Callum!

## Chewonki Student Selected for National Writing Award

Maeve Tholen, an eighth-grade student attending Chewonki Elementary and Middle School has been selected to receive a Scholastic National Gold Medal for her short story A Painted Seashell. Tholen's story was chosen from among more than 230,000 entries received by the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers as part of the annual Scholastic Art & Writing Awards.



Maeve Tholen

"I logged onto my Scholastic Account right when the awards were released and I found out that I had received a gold medal," says Tholen. "My mom (who is also my teacher) had logged on as well and was already with my sister and step-father as I came down from my room, and we all stood there and hugged in total shock. I couldn't believe my story was chosen for a gold medal."

Less than 1% of entries to the national competition receive top honors, with gold-medal winners selected by a jury of the foremost leaders in the visual and literary arts, including Langston Hughes, Robert Frost, Judy Blume, Billy Collins, Paul Giamatti, Francine Prose, Edwidge Danticat, David Sedaris, Lesley Stahl, Nikki Giovanni, Roz Chast, Wangechi Mutu, Andres Serrano, Kiki Smith, Jill Kraus, Shinique Smith, Rashid Johnson, and Waris Ahluwalia. Jurors look for works that exemplify the Awards' core values: originality, technical skill, and the emergence of personal voice or vision.

"I'm thrilled that we have an 8th grade student who received a Scholastic national gold medal," says Kat Cassidy, the head of elementary and middle school at Chewonki. "This is fantastic feedback for Maeve as a young writer, and it's a huge honor for me, as a literacy teacher."

Founded in 1923, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards are the nation's longest-running, most prestigious educational initiative supporting student achievement in the visual and literary arts. The program has an impressive legacy of being the first to acknowledge creative talent and is today's largest source of scholarships for creative teens.



journalism program at NYU this fall, focused on covering science, health and the environment. Deirdre Swanson’s daughter, Aoife, was born in September in Vienna.

45 (Fall 2010)

**Walker Conyngham** wrote an opinion piece titled “Investigate whether waste at Smurfit mill site is leaching into Clark Fork River,” which was published in The Missoulian. **Eric Nathanson** (LE staff ’16-’18) lives in Maine, and recently became certified as a registered Maine sea kayak guide. He is spending the winter in Rangeley working as a snowboard instructor and a ski tech, and in Portland coaching youth rock climbing and ski club. In June 2020, **Eloise Schultz** (GC ’11; LE ’12; GC staff ’13, ’16) successfully defended her MFA thesis in creative writing (poetry) at Oregon State University. Since then, she has started a new role at Mount Desert 365, a nonprofit on Mount Desert Island dedicated to supporting the long-term economic vitality of the region. **Alana Thurston**, Master’s student at Lincoln University, Canterbury, New Zealand, has received a Te Papa Atawhai (Department of Conservation) postgraduate scholarship for 2021. She also won the Master’s section of Lincoln University 2020 Three-Minute Thesis competition and was placed second overall. She presented on finding a solution to kauri dieback by investigating the role that fungicides might play in treating the disease.

46 (Spring 2011)

**Teddy Ward** (BC ’04-’07; LE ’08, ’11) manages a team of engineers at Kevala, a company that suggests data-driven policies to achieve 100% clean energy by 2035. He writes, “My obsession with renewable energy started with making solar ovens with Tom Twist at Chewonki.”

47 Fall 2012

**Emma Dadmun** is completing veterinary technician school in Asheville, North Carolina, and enjoying time with Angie, “the best cat in the world.” **Francesca Governali** is working for the Continental Divide Trail Coalition in Golden, Colorado, and feeling grateful to be able to explore public lands in the West. **Maegan Stump** is halfway through her first year of law school at Vermont Law School.

50 (Spring 2013)



**Rose Edwards** is a cook at the Blue Hill Co-op Cafe. She is working towards getting her captain’s license, and creates art on a regular basis. She especially loves painting food, sea creatures, and the human figure.

51 (Fall 2013)

Before graduating from Middlebury College last year, **Gemma Laurence** (LE ’12; BC staff ’15-’16) released her debut album, Crooked Heart. She is currently living in Brunswick, ME, and working on her second album. **Maret Smith** works for the California State Fish and Wildlife Commission in Big Sur, documenting the spawning habits of steelhead trout.

52 (Spring 2014)

**Ania Wright** serves as the youth representative on Maine Governor Janet Mills’ Climate Council, and began

working as the Grassroots Climate Action Organizer for Sierra Club Maine in August 2020.

53 (Fall 2014)

**Elsie Pryor** is a nurse and an officer in the United States Army. She is stationed in San Antonio, TX where she works at Brooke Army Medical Center, taking care of military members, veterans, and trauma patients. **Zoe Shields** graduated from the University of Denver in March 2020 and moved to Atlanta, GA, where she is in law school at Emory University.

56 (Spring 2016)

**Kenny Letts** runs Letts React LLC, a YouTube/entertainment business. He just moved to Charlotte, NC. He is graduating from Hamilton College with a BA in Theatre, and a minor in Environmental Studies and Music. He works part time for an animal sanctuary/husbandry program called Paws of Grace. **Evon Magnusson** (BC ’08-’12, ’15; LE ’14; BC staff ’15, ’17) is a senior at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, majoring in Ecosystems Science and Forestry.



**Molly Patton** studies Environmental Studies with a concentration in Conservation and Society at Warren Wilson College. She writes that she is “currently employing my skill of wood chopping on the Forestry

Crew here at WWC.” **Sydney Rosh** is a senior at Tufts University studying Child Development. Next year, she will be teaching in New York for Teach for America. Since Maine Coast Semester she has started a blog, written a novel, and started a Tufts chapter of The Body Project, a program designed to combat eating disorders. **Sienna Santer** is a junior at Harvard University studying Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. She is currently spending a year attending the University of Oxford and working on her senior thesis. She runs a successful YouTube channel, inspiring young people to reject the status quo and follow their passions, and has been featured in a series of Business Insider articles where she discussed creator economics and how she balances college and running a full-time business.

57 (Fall 2016)

**Lily Feinberg** recently started a knitting Instagram called @knithappen. **Maddie Korbey** is a Religious Studies major at Bates College.

58 (Spring 2017)



**Lucy Chatfield** is a student at Georgetown University, where she’s studying Environmental Biology.

59 (Fall 2017)

**Sydney Ireland** earned the Boy Scout Eagle rank and was featured in Forbes as an inclusive thought leader. Dominic Pelosi is a student at Colby College, and spent the fall semester in Salamanca, Spain. **Grant Pinkston** is now a sophomore at Dartmouth College studying Economics and Quantitative Social Science. **Emily Robbins** is studying English and Religion at the University of Vermont. She self-published her first book, *The Mountains Called and So I Went*, about a year ago, and has been working on her second. She is also a Mitchell Scholar, having received a scholarship from the Mitchell Institute.

60 (Spring 2018)

**Miles Ackerman** (LE ’17) is taking a year away from courses at Colorado College. On a leave of absence from Skidmore College, Tzevi Aho (BC ’09-’12; BC staff ’18) has been building an energy-efficient tiny home for his aunt.

61 (Fall 2018)

Last year, **Alexandra Barron** was awarded five regional Scholastic Arts awards for her photography. She graduated from Milton in the spring and is now at Barnard College. **Callum Becvarik** spent several months volunteering with the Medical Reserve Corps in New Mexico (*see article*), working in largely Native American communities. Alex Chapelle is a student at Lewis & Clark College, where he is assisting the Environmental Studies department in creating a Fall 2021 symposium surrounding the theme of “post-truth.” **Miette Gourlay** is taking a gap year doing conservation work in Hawaii and hiking in Alaska. In the fall, she will be attending Emory University. “During my gap year,” reports **Rhys Mahoney**, “I took a permaculture

and ecovillage design course while living in an intentional community at Lost Valley, OR.” **Karina Martir** was elected first-year senator for Middlebury College’s Student Government Association, and was a runner-up for the Spencer Prize Competition, an oratory competition. **Lorelei Smillie** writes, “**Sabine Bos** and I are currently on a gap year traveling together in Patagonia, Chile! We are working on a permaculture farm and taking lots of long walks together in the forest. I (Lorelei) am going to Colorado College this fall.”

62 (Spring 2019)

**Emma Barker** took a gap year, and in the fall of 2020 did a semester program with the High Mountain Institute. In Fall 2021, she will begin her freshman year at Bowdoin College.

63 (Fall 2019)

**Jules Gross** will be attending Barnard College as a member of the class of 2025.



**Andrew Lee** got a world record for his Atlantic Bonito, caught in September 2020. **Bailey Novy** will be attending Princeton University in Fall 2021, majoring in Public Policy & Environmental Studies. **Ruby Peterman** was accepted at Harvey



Mudd College. She has continued to work with Maine Youth Climate Strikes and Maine Youth for Climate Justice. She also helped found her school’s Voices in STEM club for underrepresented groups interested in STEM careers.

MAINE REACH



**Craig Campbell** (MR VII) writes that he’s “winding down a career as an environmental hydrogeologist. Still happily married to the same girl (Peggy). Have two sons, older now than when I was at MR VII.”



**James Brewer-Calvert** (MR V) lives in Atlanta, GA where he is a pastor at the First Christian Church of Decatur. He writes that after 44 years, he finally completed the southernmost section of the Appalachian Trail, which he began in the autumn of 1977 during Maine Reach at Baxter State Park, the northmost section. “It was well worth the wait to walk in the snow, cold, and sunshine,” he reports. “I thought a lot about the gifts given to me by Chewonki and my fellow Maine Reachers. I gleaned

skills in community living, forgiveness, and bread baking and learned how to relish life outdoors. Thank you, to one and all. Shalom!” James has also completed sections of the AT in NY, NH, NC, and TN. He invites any Maine Reachers visiting Atlanta to “come on by.”

STAFF

**Sam Bernstein** (LE and OC Staff ’17, Equipment and Logistics Coordinator ’18-’19) is working at Mid Coast Hospital in the Emergency Department. He is preparing to apply for Physicians Assistants school.

**Ann Carson** (Head of Semester School ’11-’16) writes, “Life is good in Colorado.”

After completing graduate school with a master’s in education for clinical mental health counseling at North Carolina State University, **Chris Percy** (Staff ’12-’18) moved back to Maine to work as a therapist at Ironwood Maine, a therapeutic boarding school focusing on adolescents between the ages of 13 and 18. “In the coming months, I will be expanding my education and experience in equine assisted psychotherapy (EAP) to work in relationship with horses and do healing work for humans.”

**We Want to Hear from You!**

Do you have important news to share with your friends from Chewonki? New baby? New Job? New Adventure? We want to hear from you!

**Contact:**

Alexis Grillo  
Alumni & Friends Coordinator  
alumni@chewonki.org



William B. Tyler 1925 - 2021

Longtime camper, counselor, Board leader, and Honorary Trustee, William B. Tyler, passed away on April 9, 2021 at home in Newton, Massachusetts, surrounded by his family.



Chewonki was part of Bill Tyler’s life for more than 85 years, as he first arrived on Chewonki Neck as a young boy in the mid-1930s. Bill was immediately taken by his experience at camp, and he came to understand that the appreciation of nature—of all life on Earth—set Chewonki apart. In May 2009, Bill wrote, “This association that has remained intact to this day has been fostered by the high esteem with which I have always held Chewonki’s mission in raising public awareness of how the state of our environment influences the quality of our lives on this planet.”

Bill and his wife, Anngie, worked as counselors at Chewonki in the 1940s (Anngie was a summer tutor), and their children and grandchildren have come to Chewonki for camp and trips. Along with Bill, Anngie has been a strong advocate for Chewonki, especially programs for girls. Their daughter, Susan, was one of the first young women to participate in a Chewonki Wilderness Expedition (1976 Thoreau Wilderness Trip).

Past Chewonki President, Don Hudson, shared, “I first met Bill at a Chewonki Board meeting in 1973. The big topic for the day was the imminent launch of Chewonki’s first school year program—Maine Reach. Bill had turned the reins and chairmanship of the Board to Bart Chapin, Sr. the year before, and together the two led a somewhat reluctant group of Directors to support Tim Ellis’s vision for what we now call place-based education. As we often say at Chewonki, the rest is history!”

Jean Tilton Wilkinson 1928 – 2020

Long-time Board leader and Honorary Trustee, Jean Wilkinson, died peacefully on June 15, 2020, in Falmouth, Maine. Jean was a Vice President and Manager of Personal Trust Relations for Fleet Boston Financial Private Clients Group for 18 years, retiring in 2000. She was the epitome of class and grit, characteristics especially evident in her Chewonki activities. She participated in many Chewonki family trips over the years, ever ready for adventure, and always engaging to the fullest with everything she did. Jean clearly loved the outdoors as well as the family and friends who joined her on these adventures.



Jean’s service to Chewonki began in 1984 when she joined as an advisor and continued when she agreed to serve as a trustee from 1990 until 2011 when she became an Honorary Trustee. Jean was an early supporter of Girls Camp and served on the initial Girls Camp Advisory Committee.

Jean and generations of her family members were Chewonki participants either through trips or as campers. Her daughter, Laura Wilkinson, did the Mistassini Trip in 1979. Her daughter, Kate Wilkinson, was a longtime camp staff member beginning in 1978, working on the farm as well as leading trips, and then in 2002 followed in Jean’s footsteps to become a Chewonki Trustee serving for many years as Treasurer.

Jean exemplified her favorite sayings: “make the most of every day,” “never miss an opportunity” and “it’s not worth doing if you don’t do it right.” She was an active volunteer and worked tirelessly to build community and philanthropic support for Chewonki. She was an engaged board member attending most meetings until only a few years ago. Jean’s work ethic and commitment to her community is an inspiration to us all.





# The Dirt

The Cultivation of a Team by Megan Phillips

These days, I'm learning to drive (again). Already a car, truck, tractor, and single horse driver, I'm learning to drive a team of horses.

When the long-time equine member of our farm crew, Sal, died in 2018, the farm crew reckoned with the reality that some of our work needs had grown to outstrip the capacity of a single animal. Chewonki is both a blessedly beautiful and intensely challenging working environment for a draft animal given the range of work and the constant stimulus of literally thousands of children annually engaging with the farm. For a farm crew moving in many directions and trying to make the leap to two horsepower, we've sought to find two settled horses who know their job, who get along well, and who can teach us what we don't know.

Enter Bob and Ted. Bob has been on the farm now for almost three years, coming to us from former Chewonki Farm Manager and current Vermont-based logger, Brad Johnson. Bob is a doer, the penultimate worker. He has a low tolerance for drama shows up with an "Ask and I will" attitude every single day.

Ted came to Chewonki this past fall, having worked in southern Vermont for his early years on a diversified farming and logging operation and, more recently, on a flower farm. He is handsome and gentle and outrageously unflappable. He is cool (sometimes slow-moving) water to Bob's fiery drive.

In shifting towards working

them together, I am deeply grateful for the mentorship of Izzy Ruffin. Izzy was a Semester 50 student, summer staff member, and a full-time Farmer/Educator at Chewonki for two years. Having worked teams of draft horses at two different work colleges and studied equine management, Izzy held the vision for how to take two seasoned working animals and create a team.

And I, once her teacher, became her student, a familiar experience at Chewonki, where relationally-driven education is oftentimes reciprocal education.

And so, in the midst of a global pandemic, when communion with other humans is limited, I have been engaged in an intimate relationship as a multi-species team of horses and human. Some elements have been familiar, but driving a team is fundamentally

different than driving a single animal. The horses can take cues from each other instead of wholly looking to me. Other pieces I've learned include the practical elements of harnessing and hooking up a load, the differentiation of directions to two connected animals, the sheer power of 3000-plus pounds of muscle and sinew. For a short while, the boys made crisp right-hand turns and only very wide left-hand ones when I was on the lines. Luckily, we've figured that one out: now we are equal opportunity pivoters. It has certainly cultivated empathy in me as I've felt a little clunky and inexperienced throughout the learning process. Let me say this clearly: I am humbled daily by the work that these two horses do together. These days, they walk in lockstep, maneuvering in cramped spaces and with careful steps through deep snow and over frozen ground and ahead of heavy loads.

I'm tempted (persistently, doggedly) by metaphor. In this





particular moment in time, I see so many parallels and lessons that these horses have to teach. Watching Bob's progression from being too forward and pulling too hard after years of being worked singly to remembering how to downshift and work as a teammate, I wonder about the collective human experience of that dynamic. How will we culturally and socially reclaim being together instead of going it alone, which feels so much our myopic story in these pandemic times?

And then there's this: when Bob gets anxious, when I see the anticipation of the work take over his capacity to stay in the present moment, Ted has a tendency to turn his head and nuzzle his nose into the space behind Bob's right ear, as if to say, "Take it down a notch." And they both settle. I want to find my inner Ted, to self-regulate and de-escalate, and to acknowledge the external Teds in my life who keep me in check.

I cannot dwell on metaphor, though, when I'm on the lines. Horses require a sort of singular and full presence from their humans. Be here, they ask: firm but gentle, observing and actively participating in both the whole and the details. And so it is the privilege and responsibility of our farm crew of four to show up to the work. Today we will carry the heavy harness to the horses, hitch them to each other in tangible ways and maybe less tangible ways to us, and move forward. Together.



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## Elizabeth Simpson 1933-2019

The Chewonki Osprey Society is a group of special supporters who have made a lifelong commitment to Chewonki and its mission. Typically Osprey Society members let us know they have included us in their estate, retirement, or life insurance planning. Sometimes, however, a bequest comes to us from someone who made that commitment and didn't let us know prior to their death (and this happens more frequently than one might anticipate). The \$180,500 bequest from Elizabeth "Beth" Bedker Simpson, received in 2020, was a surprise to us and is the result of a fortuitous interaction between Beth, Don Hudson, and Chewonki staff.

In 2007, Beth attended a book discussion sponsored by the Cornerstones of Science at Curtis Memorial Library in Brunswick, ME, on the Pulitzer Prize winning *Beak of the Finch: A Story of Evolution in Our Time* by Jonathan Weiner. Don spoke about the book, laying out the big story. The idea was to have a good discussion. And, as Don recently noted, "it sounds like at least one of the participants enjoyed the session!"

Apparently, had seen an Owls of Maine lecture at the Freeport library several years prior but she had no idea what Chewonki did or what its scope of operation was. Inspired by Don's talk and an urge to learn more about Chewonki, she dropped by campus soon after. In typical Chewonki fashion, various staff members gave her a wonderful tour and ended on the farm, sending her home with some of the season's final tomatoes. Twice during that impromptu tour Beth said "Chewonki does everything I believe in." Thirteen years later, we learned of Beth's commitment when we received her incredible bequest.

From a story written by Beth in 2003

and shared by her executor, Mari Smith, we know the Bedker family (Helen Bruns Bedkar and Ernest Calvert Bedkar) moved Portland and into the undeveloped countryside of Freeport just prior to the start of World War II. Beth described these years as "a wonderful time of discovery" when she was "in almost daily contact with the wonders of these woods." She learned where the ladyslippers grew, where the partridges roosted, and where to collect owl pellets and bones. As the years went by, she went away to school, left Maine, married John L. Simpson, and taught English at schools in New England.

Beth later moved back to Maine and to the farm in Freeport. Over time, Freeport had changed, and growth resulted in rising real estate taxes. In her 2003 story, Beth wrote, "The land that I held so dear was being taxed out from under me." Her solution was to put the woods into the state tree growth program, and eventually, a conservation easement was drawn up for the whole farm. Her dream had been to remain in her family home, surrounded by the fields, woods, and creatures who lived there, and she was fortunate enough to do so until her death on August 1, 2019.

We deeply appreciate Beth's commitment to providing future education opportunities for the next generation of budding young naturalists. What a wonderful legacy.



Individuals who let us know they have included Chewonki in their estate, retirement, or life insurance planning become members of The Osprey Society, a group of special supporters who have made a lifelong commitment to Chewonki. Membership in The Osprey Society is an enduring personal affirmation of your belief in Chewonki's mission.

If you have made a provision for Chewonki in your will, trust, or retirement plan, please let us know and become a member of The Osprey Society. If you would like to discuss a planned gift or joining The Osprey Society, please call and we will be happy to speak with you.

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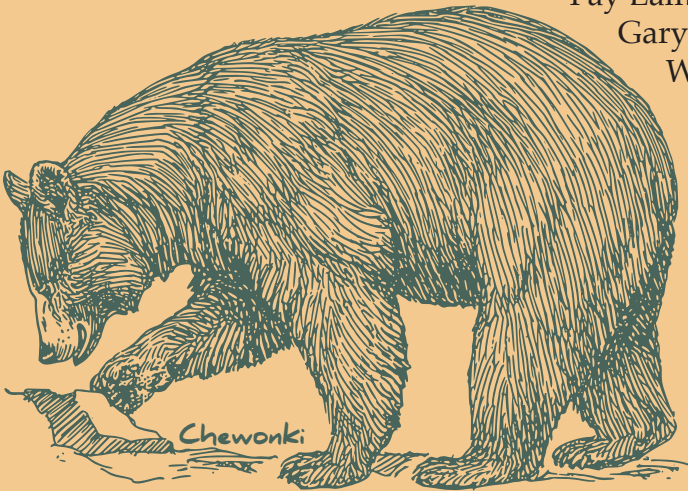
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\* Right green with a  
few yellow sections

\* 15 points on each  
side

\* the top  
most leaf  
of the plant

\* the back side is  
a more muted green  
with little to no  
yellow or brown

