

The Interim

Spring 2024 Vol 87, No. 1 Spring 1



Published in the Interim between camp seasons
by Farm & Wilderness Foundation



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Dear Friends,



I'm writing on April 1st which always puts a little spring in my step. Even though spring is still a few weeks away, all of us at Farm & Wilderness and Farm & Wilderness Conservation are thinking summer camp!

Our Spring Interim is the one publication we print and send to everyone on our mailing lists: current camp families and staff, alumni, former staff, and lots of friends who have come to know Farm & Wilderness. All together, we are a community of thousands of folks across the country and around the world. We recognize that there is an environmental impact to a print publication, AND we also know that for so many folks who receive the Spring Interim, it's their primary source of connection to F&W and FWC.

As I shared in my last community email, I'm nearly three months out from having a knee replacement. I'm able to walk, bike and swim like I did in the before-times, but I still need to gain some strength and stamina to be ready for all the up-and-down walking, hiking and running around that is such a part of camp.

This year Timberlake celebrates its 85th anniversary. Established in 1939 by Ken and Susan Webb, our very first camp, Timberlake, originally known as "Mehrlicht" or "more light" in German, has been a beacon of warmth and camaraderie for generations. Stay tuned to learn more about upcoming celebrations honoring Timberlake's rich history, including festivities at Fair on August 17th. To all Timberlake alums, we invite you to share your cherished memories and mementos with us. They will be part of our 85 Timberlake Stories.

Many of the stories in this issue focus on ways we increase the ecological resilience of our wild and





2024 Summer Camp and F&W Event Dates

▶ **TIMBERLAKE, FIREFLY SONG, TAMARACK FARM & SAM**

Session 1: July 3 - July 25

Session 2: July 28 - August 18

▶ **BARN DAY CAMP**

Session 1: July 1 - July 5

Session 2: July 8 - July 19

Session 3: July 22 - August 2

Session 4: August 5 - August 16

▶ **FAIR WEEKEND:** August 17, 2024

▶ **FAMILY CAMP:** August 24 - 30, 2024



working lands, and ways that we are equipping folks—campers, camp staff and year-round staff as well as our neighbors here in Vermont— to be good stewards of the land, water and wildlife all around us. After all, Wilderness is in our name! As you read, you'll learn about the incredible work of Farm & Wilderness Conservation, meet two new Trustees who help guide our organization's path, hear from Camp Directors about specific parts of their camps' programs, and understand more about the research-backed impact of camp on campers. Some readers may wonder why I'm not referencing the many challenges gripping our country and the world at the moment. Please know it is not for lack of awareness, curiosity, or care. Rather, I am focused on working with my colleagues to welcome our camp staff and campers to experience F&W in its fullness—exploring, connecting and reconnecting, reflecting, being challenged, growing, and having all kinds of camp fun!

I want to take a moment to appreciate Ann-Marie White, who will complete her second term as a Trustee and Clerk of the Inclusion and Equity Committee and a two-year term as Clerk of the Board of Trustees in May. She has led with insight, curiosity, and a vision for our shared future.

I am so grateful for all the ways our community keeps the work of Farm & Wilderness going, and I hope the stories we share kindle the spirit within and energize you to stay connected or, if you've fallen out of touch, reach back out and get connected!

Wishing you peace,

Frances McLaughlin
Executive Director

▶ **ABOUT THE INTERIM**

The Interim is the newsletter of the Farm & Wilderness summer camps. We welcome submissions of news, writing, drawings, cartoons, photographs, or other work. To submit your work to the Interim, email us at: interim@farmandwilderness.org, OR via postal mail to: Interim/Farm & Wilderness, 401 Farm & Wilderness Road, Plymouth, VT 05056.

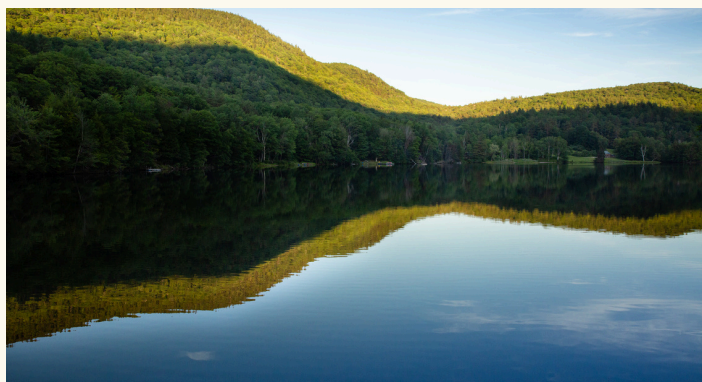
Reconnect and share your news or story with us at:

farmandwilderness.org/stay-connected

FARM & WILDERNESS CONSERVATION

By Adair Arbor

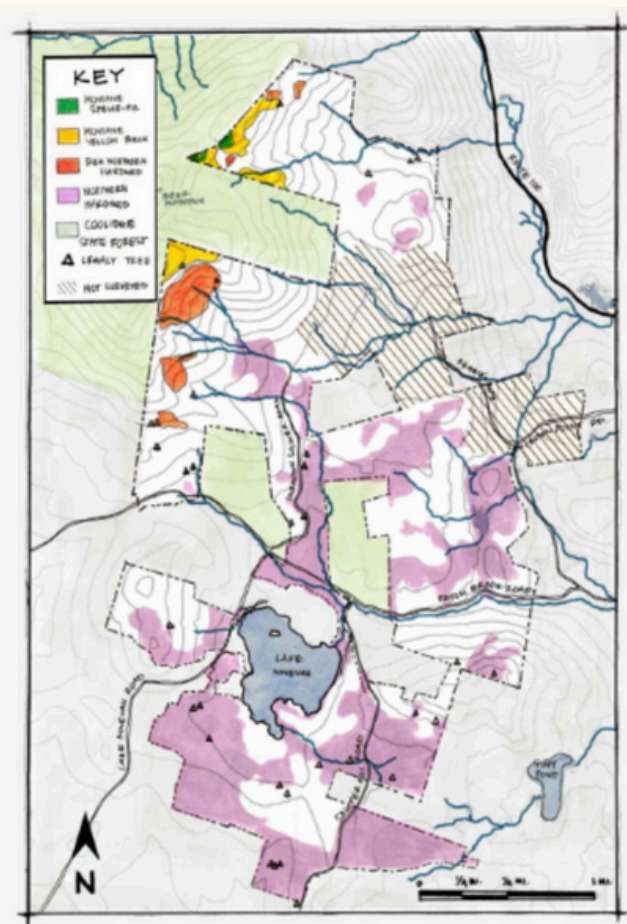
When most Interim readers think of Farm & Wilderness, it's our camps that come to mind—and we're more than camps. Through Farm & Wilderness Conservation (FWC), we play a leading regional role in conserving and increasing the ecological resilience of 4,800 acres mostly around Lake Ninevah and Woodward Reservoir. FWC grew out of the Ninevah Foundation, a non-profit conservation organization started by camp families and alumni of Farm & Wilderness decades ago. FWC's work ensures that our wild and working lands and nearby water bodies are healthy, resilient, beneficial to wildlife, and accessible for responsible recreation.



Read on to learn more about FWC's work, and we hope you are game to expand your thinking about who we are and what we do!

Farm & Wilderness Conservation has a New Website!

Go to www.fwcvt.org. This platform serves as a digital resource hub for the entire F&W/FWC community, our neighbors in Plymouth and Mt. Holly and others interested in conservation in our part of Vermont. It offers a wealth of information about FWC's wild and working lands and nearby waterbodies and the larger ecosystem they are a part of. Visitors can access blog posts, event updates, and educational resources. Several long-time supporters of FWC who live in other parts of the country have shared how much this website helps them stay connected to a place they love and learn what's going on.



Engaging Content and Events

To keep the community engaged, FWC regularly updates www.fwcvt.org with nature-related blog posts and event announcements. From in-person hikes to virtual speaker series, there's something for everyone to participate in and learn from. Particularly noteworthy is the conservation and farm departments' collaboration in expanding their visits to local after-school programs to eight schools, a testament to FWC's commitment to growing future stewards of the land.

Conservation Milestones

FWC's conservation efforts continue to make significant strides. With the addition of its fifth Forest Legacy Easement, FWC now cares for five protected forests, safeguarded from development in perpetuity. We are currently pursuing a sixth easement, demonstrating FWC's dedication to expanding its conservation footprint, ensuring the preservation of vital ecosystems for generations to come.

Exciting developments are also underway regarding land in Bridgewater, which may potentially become part of the Appalachian Trail corridor. This 85-acre parcel, generously donated by an alum many decades ago, holds immense ecological value and stands to benefit from protection under the stewardship of the National Park Service. It will transition to public recreational use and wildlife habitat.

Team Transition and Continuity

Amidst these endeavors, FWC bids farewell to Kelly Beerman, our first Conservation Director, as she embarks on new career opportunities. Jay Kullman, our long-time Sustainable Resource Director, Plymouth resident, and big-time advocate of being outdoors and caring for all the wilderness around us, will serve as Acting Conservation Director.



Silos Roberts, our long-time forester, is in the process of retiring. FWC is excited to welcome a new team of forestry consultants who align with the organization's ethos of growth and conservation. Their focus on wildlife habitat preservation ensures that FWC's commitment to land stewardship remains unwavering.

Looking Ahead

We are starting a conversation with Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, which oversees the disbursement of state and federal funds dedicated to creating more affordable and supportive housing and conserving and protecting Vermont's agricultural land, forestland, historic properties, important

natural areas, and recreational lands ~ all of which are of primary importance to the economic vitality and quality of life of the state. This is part of a broader effort to identify new groups to partner with and find additional sources of funding.

We know that climate change will continue to impact our area, and so we are also investing to increase the resiliency of the lands we care for: rotational grazing for our farm animals, crop farming that enriches rather than degrades the soil, and maintenance of our trails and pathways.

Our Executive Director, Frances, sees an opportunity to increase our camp families and alums' awareness of our conservation work. "So much of what we do at camp rests on our connection to the land and nature all around us. And sometimes we can assume that, of course, it's always been here and always will be just as expansive and wild. Without the incredible foresight of the founders of Farm & Wilderness and the Ninevah Foundation, our part of Vermont might look very different. And it's really our collective responsibility to keep the work going. FWC is a big part of how we live into the 'Wilderness' in our name."



CAMP AS THE ANTIDOTE

By Beth Schwarzapfel



For campers spending the summer in a place as rustic and rugged as Farm and Wilderness, it's easy to miss how much intentionality and study goes into everything they do here. All of the activities are carefully planned to contribute to the camps' goals, such as fostering agency, independence, creativity, accountability, and community. Achieving these goals, of course, means we must measure whether and how well they've been met—which means asking campers and staff.



Over the last three years, Chris Moncrief, an alum of Timberlake and Tamarack Farm, former camp staff member and, today, an exceptional program designer

and strategist, worked with a team to survey hundreds of campers and dozens of staff members to ask what they were most proud of accomplishing that summer; what they would tell people about their time at camp; and what was most meaningful to them. They also pulled scores from last year's annual parent feedback survey. Together, the data painted an encouraging picture: that camp makes a lasting impact on campers' sense of self and how they walk in the world. Camp can serve as an "antidote" to many of the stressful, alienating aspects of life as a teenager in 2023.

The surveys were structured around measuring how effectively camp accomplished each of three core goals that drive everything we do.

Here's what we found:

First of all, we looked at skill development, our camps first core goal. This matters not because every child needs to know how to build a fire or weed a garden in order to succeed in life, but rather because mastering new skills fosters self-efficacy and empowers campers to overcome challenges at camp and beyond. "We teach with intentionality, guiding campers to develop unique capabilities that go beyond just



'having fun' and instead demonstrate that they are capable of great things," Chris said. The next time a camper faces a challenge—at school, let's say—they can draw on their experience of having experienced both trials and success learning new skills at camp. Being open to and knowing how to learn new things is a skill in and of itself.

Our impact data shows that skill development was a meaningful and powerful component of many campers' experiences.





71% of campers at TL and FS, and almost 90% of campers at the specialty camps said that developing skills was “a key aspect of their summer experience.” Many of those highlighted their new skills as a point of pride. 89% of Barn Day Camp staff said skill development was crucial to their campers’ experiences.

“If skill development helps our campers feel powerful, community development helps them feel meaningful,” Chris said. Community development—the camps’ second core goal— is anchored in the camps’ Quaker philosophy, and community living and cooperation is key to the camp experience. Overall, 1 in 3 campers of all campers surveyed point to communal effort as a highlight of their experience this summer. This includes small tasks like managing and maintaining chores and large initiatives like building campfires and barns and gardens events.



One beloved Flying Cloud tradition geared toward community is Honorings. These are recurring, grand celebrations held throughout each session, publicly honoring each community member. 90% of Flying Cloud campers said this was an important part of their camp experience, and most of those said it was something they took pride in or found uniquely meaningful.

The third core goal is identity development: teaching campers to continually reflect on their evolving identities and how their own identities interact with others’. At Farm & Wilderness, we pride ourselves on our ability to create spaces for campers to explore, evolve, and even experiment with new or better versions of themselves and who they want to be. We focus on the development of both individual identity, and understanding how that individual identity operates in a larger social context: equipping them with the developmentally appropriate language and tools to understand the dynamics of race, class, gender, sexual orientation as it relates to their experience at camp and in their lives beyond. We want all of our campers to be advocates of a more peaceful, equitable, and loving world.

Across all of our programs, our surveys showed that 68% of campers said identity development is an important part of their summer experience and an additional 13% say it’s the thing they want to tell others about.

These data show us we are on the right track and give us the energy to make the next 85 years as meaningful, effective, and fun as the last. As one parent remarked, “The camp operates on our values but with a sense of community and silly fun that instilled those values in our son in a way we never could.”



BOARD MEMBER PROFILE: EMILY JONES

By Beth Schwarzapfel

Meet Emily Jones, a new member of the Farm & Wilderness Board of Trustees!

When Emily Jones first visited Farm & Wilderness, there was a huge circle on the lawn of kids and adults—a familiar sight to many of us, but potentially quite strange to a newcomer. “When they see somebody walking toward them, they very quietly open up the circle to make a space. This is the norm. You walk in and take their hands.” Her first introduction to the place was so meaningful to her — and also, in some ways, familiar. That’s because she had served for 15 years as the head of the Putney School, a progressive boarding school in southern Vermont.

Putney and Farm & Wilderness are “similar in ideals,” Jones says. She was visiting that day with a student of hers, who was also a Farm & Wilderness camper.

“So many institutions treat kids as ‘incipient villains’—don’t do this, don’t say that, you’ll get hurt, stop,” Jones says. By contrast, both Putney and Farm and Wilderness want kids to learn by doing—to make mistakes, to try things that are hard; to find the joy in feeling useful and competent. Jones retired from her role at Putney at the end of the 2021-2022 school year, and soon after joined Farm & Wilderness’ Board of Trustees.

Jones’s path to Farm & Wilderness took her from the upper echelons of US education to a variety of cultures and ecosystems. After graduating from Milton Academy and Harvard, she arrived in Gaborone, Botswana with a teaching internship in 1981. Botswana’s independence was still brand-new—its first democratic elections after independence from Britain were just 15 years prior—and the city hung its first traffic lights while Jones was there. She quickly discovered “I had received the best education money could buy in the United States. And nothing I had learned seemed to be the least bit helpful,” she told the Putney Post in 2022. “I didn’t know anything

about the world. I didn’t know the map of Africa or anything about economic development. I could tell you all sorts of arcane facts about literature. People in Botswana had heard of Harvard, and they were incredulous, and would good-naturedly say to me, ‘You didn’t really go there, because you don’t know anything!’” She ended up staying in Botswana for four years, and marrying a British man she met while she was there. The two of them went on to teach in Watertown, Connecticut, Chiang Mai, Thailand, and Portland, OR, before finally arriving in Vermont in 2007.

One of her first assignments on the board is on the Conservation Committee, which feels fitting: her grandfather, the publisher of *Silent Spring*, was very close to Rachel Carson, and Emily’s mother founded the Monadnock Conservancy in New Hampshire. Environmentalism is a key family value.

Emily says she revels in the wonderful qualities that young people and especially teenagers bring to everything they do: their earnestness, their desire to be useful and to do something meaningful in the world. Her work at Putney, and the work she will do at Farm & Wilderness, will help foster those qualities and shape them. The values of Putney School and Farm & Wilderness have much in common. She quotes a line of Putney’s “Fundamental Beliefs” that she feels is especially poignant: “To work not for marks, badges, honors, but to discover truth and to grow in the knowledge of the universe and in the understanding of man, to treasure the hard stretching of oneself, to render service,” she said. “We’re trying to turn out people who will be good citizens.”



SILOS ROBERTS: CULTIVATING A LEGACY OF SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY AT FARM & WILDERNESS

By Adair Arbor

For over three decades, Silos Roberts has been a steward of the land, furthering the foundational goals of sustainability and conservation at Farm & Wilderness. From the dairy farms of Wisconsin to the lush forests of Vermont, his journey has been one of dedication and passion for preserving nature's bounty.

Arriving at F&W in 1992 with his partner, Camilla, Silos was our farmer, and then in 1996 became our forester and also forested for the Ninevah Foundation. With guidance from Dan Wilson and Len Cadwallader, Silos immersed himself in forestry, recognizing the unique challenges and responsibilities it entailed.



As a forester, Silos learned to think in terms of decades. That was a paradigm shift from the timelines he was used to as a farmer. Attending workshops and consulting county foresters, he honed his skills in managing forests as a sustainable resource. With inherited conservation plans and stewardship frameworks, Silos embraced the dual objectives of timber harvesting and maintaining wildlife habitat.

At the heart of his work lay the Legacy Project, a visionary initiative to connect the fragmented habitats of the Green Mountain National Forest. Through meticulous inventorying and strategic management, Silos ensured the preservation of vital wildlife corridors, particularly for the black bear population. From creating wildlife corridors to apple tree releases, his efforts were guided by a commitment to maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem health.

In 2014, the Farm & Wilderness Board of Trustees recognized his contribution as follows:

“We are grateful for your long association with Farm & Wilderness, starting in 1992 as our Farmer, living at F&W with your family, and continuing from 1996 as the Forester for both F&W and Ninevah Foundation. Your whimsical spirit, hard work, and ability to both light and put out fires has been noted and appreciated by all.

“Your effective management of over 4,000 acres of land has resulted in healthy forests, timber revenues, local jobs for our loggers and mills, hundreds of thousands of board feet of lumber used for F&W cabins and barns, and a thriving wildlife population. We have been graced by your Light and good spirit. For these reasons, we recognize you today as a member of the Circle of Light.”

Reflecting on his tenure, Silos takes pride in accomplishments such as securing tax reductions through the current use program and expanding protected areas around Woodward Reservoir. It's his



dedication to sustainable forest management that defines his legacy. Implementing diverse management styles, from selective harvesting to large-scale openings, Silos has nurtured our forests for future generations.

Silos emphasizes the intrinsic value of forests in supporting outdoor recreation and environmental education. Recognizing the transformative role of wilderness in shaping camp experiences, he credits the transition of the Wilderness Community at Lake Ninevah from a for-profit to a nonprofit focused on stewardship in the 1990s as pivotal in safeguarding natural landscapes long-term.

Looking ahead, Silos sees promise in the transition to a new generation of foresters at F&W. Willing to mentor and share his wealth of experience, he anticipates fresh perspectives and innovative approaches to forestry. With an emphasis on carbon sequestration and invasive species management, he envisions a future where forests thrive as vibrant, resilient ecosystems.

For thirty years, Silos Roberts has been a steady guardian of our forests, a custodian of their wellness, and a champion of their inherent value. We are so grateful for Silos' work and friendship over the years and wish him well as he embarks on the next phase of his journey.

Sam Arfer's Classic Three Bears Chicken Recipe

1. Lay out your favorite form of chicken (dark meat, white meat, bone-in, wings, boneless) in a baking dish.
2. Sprinkle lightly with salt and pepper and bake at 350 until almost done (chicken must be cooked to an internal temperature of 165).
3. While it's cooking, whisk together these three ingredients:
 - 1/4 cup soy sauce
 - 1/2 cup honey
 - Hot sauce to taste (start with a tablespoon)
4. Pour the sauce over the chicken and bake for a few minutes more.
5. Serve to an appreciative crowd and accept compliments graciously.

This sauce is also great on baked tofu!

It's called 3 bears chicken because at Saltash Mountain Camp we keep our hot sauce, soy sauce, and honey in honey bears! At camp, this meal is typically served with a giant bowl of skin-on mashed potatoes, steamed broccoli with garlic sauce, and pumpkin pie for dessert.

This meal is especially delicious when you've been on a backpacking trip for five or six days!



THAD GIBSON: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR AT TF

By Beth Schwarzapfel

Tamarack Farm Assistant Director Thad Gibson thinks back on one memorable night from the first trip he ever took as a young camper at Timberlake. It was...not fun. At least at first. “I remember crying going up the side of Pico,” he says. The group’s stove broke, so making dinner took forever, and then, once he finally got his dinner—a bowl of couscous—he spilled it all over his sleeping pad. It was one of those Z-rest pads filled with little divots, “and I had to suck it out of all the individual holes,” he says, laughing. Despite how miserable he was in those first few nights, that trip sparked a love of backpacking—and of camp—that continues to this day. It was the first of many times that being challenged at Farm and Wilderness was transformative.



“One of the things I most appreciate about camp is that it encourages people to explore their full potential and presents them with adverse or challenging situations in structured ways,” he says.

He says that with his work now at Tamarack Farm, he revels in watching campers take on similarly meaningful challenges. “Seeing the construction and carpentry immersion build an entire cabin in three weeks is mind-boggling,” he said. Years ago, he had supervised a group of campers building what is now Bobcats cabin, and it took two full seasons. So, “I had serious doubts as to whether we could pull it off.” But the passion of the kids, under the leadership of the Construction and Carpentry immersion lead, Sam Vale, made it happen. Sam discovered his passion for carpentry when he was a camper at Tamarack Farm several years earlier. Now he’s going to school to learn carpentry, and to learn how to teach carpentry.

“And he’s incredibly enthusiastic and passionate about sharing his passion, and getting the kids amped to build things and make tangible contributions, lasting contributions to the community.”

That experience felt a bit full-circle for Thad, who, as a camper at Tamarack Farm almost 20 years ago, helped to build the stone steps at the Tamarack Farmhouse. Although the immersion structure is a new concept for Tamarack Farm, “I was basically doing a stone masonry immersion,” he said. “It wasn’t structured that way, but my experience was exactly the kind of thing I’d like our current campers to experience.”

There were many similar magical moments at Tamarack Farm last summer, Thad says, from watching the campers in the art immersion stage an elaborate puppet show—with beautifully crafted puppets of all sizes and a score they composed themselves—to a camper in the Counselor Apprenticeship Program using the skills she’d learned training as a cabin counselor to moderate a challenging town meeting.

Since his final summer as a camper, Thad has worked as a staffer in many different positions at both Timberlake and Tamarack Farm. Beginning as a cabin counselor, he went on to spend two summers as work projects head.





Since his final summer as a camper, Thad has worked as a staffer in many different positions at both Timberlake and Tamarack Farm. Beginning as a cabin counselor, he went on to spend two summers as work projects head.

That feeling of being in over his head—now comfortably uncomfortable from his many previous experiences at Farm and Wilderness—pushed him to rise to the occasion. Today he sees structures that he helped design are still in daily use. Later, Thad became senior lodge head and then Assistant Director at Timberlake, before stepping in as Assistant Director of Tamarack Farm last year.

“You can't control everything about the world. But if you do live in a community where you are open to the possibility that you can see eye to eye and talk to each other and be honest and forthright about the things that are within your control, you can make really big difference in the world,” he says. “That’s what TF is all about.”



Some TF 2023 Highlights!



HAPPENINGS at FIREFLY SONG

By Beth Schwarzapfel

First it was the pandemic. Then the “Special Edition” pandemic summer. Then, in 2022, staffing shortages. There were a lot of reasons Firefly Song campers were “metaphorically out of shape” from tripping, said Firefly Song director Clarissa Thompson.

Senior Lodge campers “who in before times would have had years of experience camping, hiking, tripping, canoeing, pack out, pack in, be out, manage their feelings”—by 2023 had little or no overnight trip experience, Clarissa said. But last summer marked a return to this aspect of Firefly Song that is so elemental to all of Farm and Wilderness: all the kids went out. The trips were not without hiccups, but they were successful, and the experience of all those kids pushing themselves to do something they might never have done before—something hard and magical—is a core part of Firefly Song accomplishing its learning outcomes.

Those learning outcomes are identity, agency, and interdependence. The idea is to help kids develop skills, and for those skills to translate into a sense of empowerment and self-efficacy that can apply to areas of life far beyond the trail, Clarissa said. “I have the skill to climb the mountain. I have the skill to put up the tent. I have the skill to feed myself when I am not in a dining hall where food is put in front of me. And I think that helps them develop that sense of identity around strength and competence.” Amid that sense of self is also a sense



of community—of interdependence. “A small group needs to work together to make the group be able to move forward physically and metaphorically,” Clarissa said



One of the new traditions that campers began this summer was the Pioneer: a 15-mile hike along the Long Trail that ends with the campers hiking back into camp. Much like the Grand Circuit—a 3-mile swim around the perimeter of Woodward Reservoir—a goal that many FS campers work towards, Clarissa hopes this long hike will be an epic camp accomplishment that kids talk about for years. “And so if we can keep working that and making that happen, we’re creating a culture where we’ve got these really big, big accomplishments.”

Another beloved tradition that returned in 2023 and will be back this summer is Cocoa House—the F&W twist on open-mic night at a coffee house: Campers do skits imitating their counselors. They take pop culture and fairy tales and Farm and Wilderness lore and weave it together into something totally new. “These kids just love to get up in front of each other and ham it up, or act, or do something serious, or do something hysterical, or do something incomprehensible,” Clarissa said.

As in past summers, Senior Lodgers will have the option this year of choosing an apprenticeship: much like the immersions program at Tamarack Farm, campers choose a single activity area to stick with through the entire 3-week session, instead of rotating through them week by week as the younger kids do.



HIKING WITH THE F&W COMMUNITY: GOAT HIKES

By Adair Arbor

Looking to kindle the spirit within and connect with other F&W community members all year round? Come join us for a hike near you on May 11!

GOAT Hikes are a new F&W tradition, inspired by REI's #OptOutside initiative, which encourages folks to get out for a hike instead of Black Friday shopping on the day after Thanksgiving. You likely won't see any four-legged goats on our hikes—rather, it's an acronym for Get Outside All Together!



We celebrated our first ever GOAT hike on the day after Thanksgiving in 2023, and got together to hit the trails again on February 18 this year. Now, we are looking forward to reveling in the springtime weather all across the nation with upcoming GOAT hikes on May 11.

Farm & Wilderness community have gathered for GOAT hikes in Alaska, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Texas, Oregon, North Carolina, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, and more! We connected with other alumni, brought our own families and new friends, and opened our circle to new Farm & Wilderness families too. One group saw moose tracks, another welcomed a new baby to her first F&W experience, and several dogs had great adventure days with their people!

GOAT Hikes usually begin with a classic F&W circle-up time. Then, we take a casual walk through a local nature spot for an hour or two. Please be sure to come prepared with walking shoes, appropriate layers, rain gear, water and snacks. We'll share an



unplugged and interconnected experience!

Check out the GOAT Hikes landing page on our website by scanning the QR code below. There you'll see upcoming hikes and their hosts' details. If you don't see a hike near you, get in touch with us to host a hike yourself this May! We are so excited about this new tradition and hope you'll join us for a day of fun and connection.



Follow me to the GOAT Hike landing page for more information!

IMMERSIONS AT TAMARACK FARM

By Adair Arbor

A conversation with Thad Gibson, Assistant Director at Tamarack Farm, brought exciting updates to TF's immersion program! Immersions are intended to give our oldest campers a chance to dive deep on a learning experience of their choosing, preparing them to think about what they want as they move through high school and make decisions on what comes next. The overall goal for TF's leadership team is to hire excellent immersion leads and help them develop experiential curricula where they have knowledge, skill and passion and are ready to share with campers.

Read on to learn more about each immersion opportunity at TF this summer!



Carpentry and Construction: Sam Vale is coming back as carpentry immersion lead! Sam was first exposed to carpentry as a camper at TF many years ago. Now, he's pursuing carpentry as a career, and, in addition to working professionally as a carpenter, he is focusing his studies on how to teach carpentry to children. Under his direction last year, TF campers built an amazing cabin in just three weeks!

"He's incredibly enthusiastic and passionate about getting kids ready to build things and make tangible, lasting contributions to the community," says Thad, who himself helped build the beautiful stone steps in front of the Tamarack Farmhouse when he was a teen camper.

With a year of experience under his belt, Sam is excited to have a little more input on project design,



reconnect with returning campers, and welcome new ones to the program.

Art immersion:

There is so much space for creative freedom based on whoever steps in to lead this year! Last year, TF saw incredible outcomes from a puppet-themed art immersion. The campers crafted their own original production, complete with an original score. Everyone was so impressed by the depth of topics they explored in their storytelling. This immersion also led us to our field trip to Bread and Puppet Theater, and we're hoping to include more field trips this summer to get campers excited about their learning beyond the camp environment.

Counselor Apprentice Program (CAP):

Campers will earn their lifeguard certifications and have the opportunity to spend time in other camps assisting counselors with activities in a structured, supported way. We hope that our campers many of whom have been engaged with F&W for years and years will continue to be part of our community as young adults, and this is a great way to prepare to be a counselor!





(Article continued from previous page)

Conservation and Agriculture:

Our Conservation and Agriculture immersions are still under construction as we search for the perfect leaders for these exciting programs. Partnering with our farm director, Colene Reed, we know it will feature livestock, gardening, and possibly a fiber art component using wool from our sheep and other animals.

“I think it’s so important that we get kids excited about their education right now, because for so many of them, the pandemic really changed how they did school and what their day to day life was like for a couple of years. A lot of campers and families don’t realize that camp is an educational experience until after they’re done!

Especially for our older campers, having the agency to do these things themselves can be really eye-opening and inspiring,” says Thad. We can’t wait to see what our oldest campers will achieve this summer!



ALUMNI NEWS & MEMORIES

Jeremy Arnold (TL ‘81-’84; TF ‘85-’86) published an expanded edition of his book “Christmas in the Movies” and on December 22, 2023 Jeremy appeared on The Lead with Jake Tapper on CNN to discuss holiday movies, especially whether Die Hard IS one. Last summer, Jeremy programmed an co-hosted a series of 20 classic B films on Turner Classic Movies.

Jan (Janette Broughton) Reynolds (FS ‘67-’71; TF ‘74) has this memory to share: “My last summer was 1974 at the Farm. My favorite part of camp was the weekly square dance. Benjie Seaver was my faithful dance partner from my humble beginning in the Six Pines cabin at Indian Brooke until I aged out and went on to the Farm. Sadly Benjie was not at the Farm with me. We wrote letters to each other between summers. I still have them and enjoy going back and reading them every so often. I will say we were experts at the Virginia Reel and if I could have one wish it would be to go back in time to the Square Dance hall at the Farm and dance the night away just like we used to one more time.

I hope you're well Benjie. I am enjoying life with my high school sweetheart. We had two magnificent boys, both married with babies of their own. Which makes me a ‘Mimi’ of 6.”

*Do you have news or a special memory to share?
Let us know at:*

farmandwilderness.org/stay-connected



WELCOMING MARGO LINDAUER TO THE F&W BOARD

By Adair Arbor

Margo Lindauer, a recent addition to the F&W Board of Trustees, brings a wealth of valuable experience to our organization. In addition to her experience and perspective as a camp parent, her professional background is one of advocacy, education, and a deep-rooted commitment to social justice. Trained as a lawyer, Margo's career has been dedicated to serving individuals impacted by domestic violence and sexual assault, while also mentoring the next generation of legal professionals.

Through several years in legal services and clinical teaching, Margo found her calling in addressing the intersecting challenges faced by



survivors of violence within various system. Her work not only involved legal representation but also focused on guiding individuals through complex and daunting systems that often fail to adequately support them. Margo's connection with F&W began when her oldest daughter, Ella, attended Barn Day Camp in 2015.

"She had such a magical experience that year, you know, traipsing around the woods, giving pigs baths, goat birthday parties," she remembers. "I really fell in love that summer with a lot of the kind of social justice underpinnings of the Quakers and of F&W. Quakerism has infiltrated a lot of our lives now, even though we're Jewish, which is interesting. Now our kids go to Cambridge Friends School and it felt like a very natural step from the BDC."

Recognizing the diversity of experiences among her children, where one thrived at F&W and one didn't, Margo embraces the notion that not every place is a perfect fit for everyone. Instead, she wants to focus on what makes F&W unique and important, and how we can continue to build on that well.

"I think what Farm and Wilderness has to offer is so special, and how to keep that alive and current is a

challenge. It takes great leadership from people with a lot of different perspectives to keep us on that track, for sure. Thinking about the next phase of F&W's life, we know there will be climate issues. We know there are increased needs for both campers and staff, both physical and mental health needs. We're in unprecedented times."

Margo recently made a career transition by starting her own consulting business and podcast, JustUs. When approached to join the F&W Board of Trustees, she saw an opportunity to leverage her experience in counseling and mentoring, the law, and strategic thinking to contribute to the organization's growth.

At F&W, Margo sees a unique blend of tradition and innovation. Margo is a skilled facilitator of community dialogue and navigating difficult conversations. Drawing on Quaker principles, she emphasizes the importance of embracing diverse perspectives and fostering a culture of respectful disagreement within the F&W community.

"My work as a professor crosses over, because my students are basically Farm & Wilderness staff. How do you disagree, and how do you feel seen, and how are you able to disagree with care and love as opposed to divisiveness and cancellation? I think that creating intentional community norms around these things





establishes that we don't want to be in a monolithic environment. That would be boring. We all bring our own unique experiences and therefore we are not going to agree about everything. And us not agreeing doesn't mean that we can't be in community with one another."

As Margo moves forward with her commitment to serve the Farm & Wilderness community over the coming years, she is eager to learn how she can best contribute to the organization's continued growth and success. Thank you, Margo, for your hard work and dedication to Farm & Wilderness!

WILDERNESS ADVENTURERS at SAM

By Adair Arbor

Saltash Mountain has always been a place for adventures. SAM campers test their mettle every summer with epic wilderness trips, whether they're out backpacking on Farm & Wilderness trails, canoeing beautiful shorelines in Maine, or rock climbing in the Adirondacks. But how do we deepen those wilderness skills in camp to help campers feel prepared and competent as they venture out in the field? Enter the Wilderness Adventurers program!

Wilderness Adventurers (WA) is an optional in-camp activity series at SAM that challenges campers to learn and demonstrate a variety of outdoor skills. Structured levels guide the campers' experience, building on what they've already mastered and helping them reach for what's next to become responsible and respectful outdoor explorers.

The levels system mirrors opportunities available to campers at Timberlake and Firefly Song, giving campers something to strive for and the satisfaction of achieving set goals. However, campers who are not pursuing levels are also welcome to participate in any WA workshops if they are interested in learning a particular skill. In summer of 2023, about half of all SAM campers participated in WA in some capacity, and about a third achieved at least one level. Each session, 8 campers achieved the highest achievement level and were celebrated by the community for their accomplishments. Whenever a batch of campers achieves a level, we hold an "initiation" ceremony for them to honor their hard work and award them a special pin for their backpack.



Level 1, “The Explorer”, is all about the basics. Campers learn and demonstrate their ability to build a fire in dry conditions and safely put it out. They also memorize and recite all 7 Leave No Trace principles, preparing them to be respectful participants in outdoor adventures. They try their hand at three basic knots and learn how they are each used in the field.

Level 2, “The Navigator”, requires the mastery of three more complex knots, as well as an extensive workshop on map and compass skills. This level includes a SAM Camp classic capstone challenge, the “Get Lost” Hike!

Prepped with day packs, whistles, and an explanation of safety procedures, campers are then blindfolded, driven to a remote location, and carefully led into the woods by two counselors. Then, their blindfolds are removed, they are given maps and compasses, and are given the whole day to find their way back to camp. Counselors remain silent for the duration of the activity, letting the campers solve the puzzle all by themselves. As much as it is an opportunity to practice orienteering skills, it is just as much an exercise in healthy group dynamics, and their facilitated debrief over dinner upon return to camp is always rich with learning.



Level 3, “The Voyager”, mostly focuses on preparing to take on the most exciting challenge of all—the 24-Hour Solo! They learn 3 more challenging knots and learn to build tarp shelters and brush shelters. They also must demonstrate their ability to start a fire in wet conditions. Finally, Voyagers-in-training attend a planning meeting to review safety considerations, choose what food they’ll bring, and create a packing list. One thing not present on their packing list is a tent! Instead, they must rely on their newly-acquired shelter-building skills. Instructors review their packing choices and ask them questions about what might be missing or extraneous, helping them to think through their plan in a supported way. They head out together, disperse to camping spots out of view from each other, and set up camp—then hunker down for a night alone in the woods. While counselors are nearby and do frequent check-ins for safety, the campers spend most of their time truly solo, testing their technical skills and quieting their minds in the beautiful Vermont woods. Their return to camp is greeted by cheers and congratulations from the rest of SAM!

Looking to this summer, SAM Camp Director, Adair Arbor, and staff are excited about returning campers coming back to reach their next levels, or deciding to jump in for the first time. We’ll also have a brand new fire pit by the waterfront and can’t wait for campers to practice fire tending for all-camp cookouts! Wilderness Adventurers is an awesome opportunity to build confidence through competence and stretch campers’ beliefs about what they can achieve in the world of outdoor adventure. We’re so excited to see what our kids can do!



MEMORIES AND GRATITUDE

By: Alice Longobardi Givan, *F&W Camper & Staff (1952-1959)*

It was 1951. I was 9 years old, living in Brooklyn. My parents thought that I was old enough to go to “sleep-away” summer camp. My mother told me that she knew F&W was the right place for me when she saw photos of kids running around barefoot. My parents put me on the “camp train” in New York City. I and the other girls were delivered to Indian Brook; the boys were delivered to Timberlake. At my cabin (Sakawanee), I immediately took off my shoes and socks and used them hardly at all for the whole summer.



I really enjoyed that summer. I enjoyed learning how to canoe and square dance. I enjoyed playing with a baby raccoon. I enjoyed everything. I spent 3 more summers at Indian Brook, then spent the summers of 1957 and 1958 at the “Senior Work Camp” – which was not yet called Tamarack Farm. I have lots of memories of those work camp summers.

My memories include an astonishingly well-organized prank that we campers played on our counselors: the girls and boys silently switched beds in the middle of the night, planning that our counselors would wake up in the morning to find themselves surrounded by the wrong campers. Somehow the counselors were one step ahead of us (as usual). When we woke up in the morning, there were no counselors anywhere – except for one who suggested that we wander on down to the fair grounds. At the fairgrounds, we found all the missing counselors who were cooking us a spectacular outdoor breakfast. I am still not sure whether the campers or the counselors got the last laugh on that one.



My memories include more than pranks. They include playing volleyball, where the two teams were organized as “insies” and “outsies.” Do I need to tell you that this referred to belly-button configuration?

Of course, my memories also include friendships. And they also include corn. More delicious than you imagined corn could possibly be. It matured late in the season, so toward the end of the summer we had as much delicious corn as we wanted.

At the end of the summer of 1958, I think I must have spent some time hanging around the Work Camp tool room. John Stevens was in charge of work projects for the camps. Out of the blue, he asked me if I would like to be the “tool room boy” the following summer. So, the summer of 1959, I was the tool room boy. More specifically, I was the first ever (and perhaps the last ever) female tool room “boy.” My job was to organize all the tools that were used for work projects, and also to maintain those tools in good condition.

I had to learn what the tools were (I never knew there were so many different types of saws). I learned how to use a hammer properly. I also learned how to sharpen axes and how to hang an ax head onto its handle. This was before “feminism” became a recognized ideology. But I will say that John Stevens must have been something of an early feminist.

While I was at F&W, I did not recognize how very much ahead of their time Ken and Susan were. I am thinking about organic gardening, conservation, forestry, simplicity, and (particularly) social and racial justice. Ken and Susan (via F&W) had an enormous (and long-lasting) influence on my life. You will understand the depth of this influence, when I tell you that I still aspire to walk barefoot (both metaphorically and literally) whenever I can.

A Message from Incoming Board Clerk, Alisha Carberry: F&W's Future Relies on All of Us Giving Back As We Can



Dear F&W Community,

By now, you have heard from me via email encouraging everyone from the F&W community to make a donation that feels significant to you during F&W's annual Spring Appeal. I've shared my story with you, why I am so committed to F&W, the transformative impact of Affordable for All, our Conservation work, and the F&W experience, and why it is critical that everyone give back to the place that has given them so much.

On May 5th, I became the F&W Board Clerk. Through my work as a Trustee, I have gained a new understanding of just how important donations are to sustain F&W and FWC. It may feel daunting to raise \$1 million in 2024. But not if we do it together.

F&W transformed my own life. As a shy 9-year-old girl from New York City, thanks to the 1199 program, I stepped off the bus at camp for the first time with no idea what to expect. Over the years, I discovered a confidence and sense of belonging I never knew I had. I learned I could do hard things and developed a connection with the natural world as a camper at SAM on Lake Ninevah, where the work of Farm & Wilderness Conservation (FWC) began. F&W made me who I am today. And I know my story is just one of thousands.

F&W's future relies on all of us giving back as we can. Whether you contribute \$10 or \$10,000, every gift sustains the magic - the camperships that make it accessible, the wild lands that renew our spirits, the programs that change the trajectories of young lives. If you haven't already, please make your gift to the Spring Appeal today and please consider giving as significantly as you can.

With deep gratitude and appreciation,

Alisha Carberry, Clerk of F&W Board of Trustees

P.S. Please consider "rounding up" your donation by \$10 to support FWC conservation work!



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