The Chewonki we know in 2020 is very different from the early days of Clarence Allen’s “Saltwater Camp for Boys,” which, in 1918, consisted of open fields and canvas tents sprawled across a newly purchased sheep farm.

In those early days, some campers arrived by boat, and then later, when the bridge over the Kennebec River was completed in 1927, by train, to experience eight weeks of simple living in nature, far away from the industrial bustle of America’s growing cities.

Since that time, Chewonki has grown and changed with intention, adding cabins, campsites, aviaries, solar arrays, forest trails, green spaces, staff housing, and education spaces as our programs have expanded to serve more young people, year-round.

This summer will mark the most dramatic improvement to Chewonki Neck in a generation: the grand opening of new camp facilities on the east side of the peninsula (see page 2). The new additions include five new camper cabins, staff housing, and a washhouse, all carefully designed to make the best use of the landscape in an environmentally aware and sustainable fashion.

Camp Chewonki for Girls will occupy these cabins in the summer of 2020, marking a new chapter in our history. For the first time, Girls Camp and Boys Camp programs will operate on both sides of the peninsula, with largely separate programming, but taking turns with favorite activity spaces such as the farm, Packout, Challenge Course, and campsites on the points. We will continue to use Debsconeag Lake as a treasured trip destination for campers and students of all ages and genders.

Our staff has also used this opportunity to think holistically about the best way to serve young people in a camp environment. This work is important, necessary, and inspiring. It requires that we examine and integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion principles, acknowledge our past and present relationship with the land, and incorporate the latest understanding about child and brain development. We are fiercely committed to providing child-centered experiences immersed in nature, sustainability, and community.

None of this exciting new work would have been possible without the time, advice, and generosity of so many passionate Chewonki supporters. I invite you to learn more about many of them in the following pages.

Warm regards,

Willard Morgan
President
Chewonki Neck has been a bustling hive of activity since last fall and as we launched a major set of upgrades and additions to the Wiscasset campus.

“We are expanding with new buildings and facilities on the east side of the peninsula,” explains Nancy Kennedy, vice president for Camp Chewonki. “And this June will mark the first season of Girls Camp on the Neck. It’s an incredibly exciting moment.”

Five new cabins accommodating 40 campers, plus a support staff cabin, a washhouse, and a field for activities will give Camp Chewonki for Girls a place of their own. Girls will also enjoy a new waterfront area, updated kitchen and dining facilities in Chapin Hall, and their own health center.

The Camp Chewonki program team (Girls Camp Director Emily Bell-Hoerth, Boys Camp Director Charlie Fear, and Wilderness Trips Manager Jen Adams) is busy working with Kennedy to plan every aspect of the camp programs. They are aligning Girls Camp and Boys Camp around a common curriculum.

“We want to make sure that every camper who arrives here will experience Chewonki’s fundamental strengths,” Kennedy says, “natural history and connection to place; overnight camping trips; community-building; farm, food, and sustainability; outdoor living skills; excellent educators; and a chance to become one’s best self.”

While campers will share a similar curriculum, most camp experiences—living, dining, activities, and overnight trips—will still take place in separate Boys Camp and Girls Camp spheres. The two programs will take turns sharing core facilities including Salt Marsh Farm, the Challenge Course, campsites, and Packout.

“It’s only the first step,” says Kennedy. “The long-term goal is to add additional cabins in phases to achieve balanced programs, with up to 160 girls and 160 boys in residence at any one time.”

Support from generous donors in 2019 moved the project from planning into action early last fall. “We are building on our mission and vision,” says President Willard Morgan. “This is not just about camp. These new facilities support all of Chewonki.”

“We are very carefully planning how we protect and use this beloved peninsula, with far more understanding of environmental science than when Clarence Allen founded Camp Chewonki over 100 years ago,” says Morgan. “Modern building codes, environmental standards, and our own commitment to stewarding the property have shaped every aspect of the design and construction.”

“For example,” says Morgan, “in the construction process, we built around a specific wetland areas to avoid any damage, and decided to call attention to a vernal pool as a feature, making it a special place to enjoy and learn about nature.”

It helps that Chewonki is working with excellent partners (see stories on the following pages). “They have given us perspective and skills that we haven’t had before on staff,” says Morgan, “helping us think holistically about what the land is capable of, what the environment can do for us if we tend it with care. We are especially focused on minimizing visual and ecological impact, so we have taken more than five years to develop the plans we are implementing now.”

Looking ahead to opening day of Camp Chewonki in June 2020, Nancy Kennedy says, “I feel grateful. The beautiful winding path to the Girls Camp will be an invitation to continue this journey with renewed energy and inspiration. I can’t wait to welcome the campers on opening day.”
The opportunity to design the quintessential camp cabin for today is a rarity. Many summer camps came to life in the heyday of the early 1900s, an anything-goes era of camp development when everything from log cabins to chicken shacks were repurposed into summer cabins. With the launch of our new campus expansion, the time was right to re-imagine the camp cabin with a blend of modern and timeless design elements.

Susie Rodriguez (Chewonki advisor ’08–’10; trustee ’10–present; camp parent) stepped forward, offering her skill and experience to conceive a cabin design that honors the past and innovates for the future. “It’s more important today than ever for girls to have a permanent residential space on Chewonki Neck, and I’m thrilled to have been asked to design the new cabins,” she says. “Coming ‘home’ to the Neck will secure that experience for girls, and the cabins need to be a memorable part of their journey. To inform the design process, I thought a lot about the unique traditions and culture that define Chewonki to this day and are important to cherish and protect.”

Rodriguez founded her namesake firm, Susan T Rodriguez | Architecture • Design, in 2016, after more than 30 years of high-profile work for distinguished group practices. She lives with her husband, Charlie Lowrey, in New York City and on a Maine island. They are parents of alumnus Jamie Lowrey (Boys Camp ’06–’09; Wilderness Trips ’10,’11,’13).

“At the heart and soul of the experience are a child’s first independent engagement with the natural world and how that appreciation grows over time with greater confidence and skills. The place—the land and the buildings—are what frame the experiences. Creating a new space that reinforces a connection to the natural world was essential in the design of the new cabins.”

A particular challenge for Rodriguez was to establish a form that complements existing structures, blends with the forest, and provides a durable, sustainable, comfortable home for campers. “Leading into Chewonki’s second century, how does the organization’s history factor into creating a new model for future cabins?” asks Rodriguez. “Looking carefully at the wide range of cabins that have evolved over the decades, particularly on the Lower Field, I felt it was essential to build upon tradition to develop a design that resonates with the simplicity of the original structures. Gordy Hall, my co-chairperson on the Land and Buildings Committee, shared an idea from a summer cabin in the Maine woods that he visited often as he was growing up. He remembers how important it was to have a view out to nature from his bunk through a small window and asked me how I could capture that in the new cabin design.”

“What emerged is something that will provide just that. These cabins are simple, uplifting, full of light, built from locally harvested timbers, and there will be a view to the outside from each bunk, as well as a shared space in the cabin center. It’s really exciting to see the eastern side of Chewonki Neck emerging as a vibrant new home. I am honored to be part of a great team working together to make it happen.”

A New View of Cabin Life

Above: A row of five cabins will provide housing for Camp Chewonki for Girls on the east side of Chewonki Neck. High ceilings and wraparound windows provide excellent ventilation and illumination inside. On the lower level, each bed has an operable shuttered window to let in the light—or keep out the commotion—as the occupant prefers. The post-and-beam cabins are sheathed in spruce with a natural finish that will blend into the forest backdrop over time.

Right: Rodriguez reviews a detail of the cabin design with a member of the construction crew during a site visit in January.
The assembly team from Shelter Institute anchors hand-hewn hackmatack beams to the cabin platform. Above: Nancy Kennedy, vice president for Camp Chewonki, and Emily Bell-Hoerth, director of Camp Chewonki for Girls, visit the first full-sided cabin on a frosty January morning. Below: The post-and-beam design requires meticulous planning, cutting, and assembly.
Join Us on Opening Day!

Don’t miss out! Be a part of our inaugural group of girl campers on Chewonki Neck for Summer 2020. Visit our website to view the available 10-day and 3-week program opportunities: https://girls.chewonki.org

Building on Tradition

Campers will spend their days immersed in classic summer camp activities, exploring local waters by canoe, discovering animals in Chewonki’s wildlife center, or learning about vegetables and livestock on the farm. Each camp experience culminates in an overnight wilderness trip, tailored to the age and ability of the group. We emphasize engaging children’s heads, hearts, and hands as they develop connections with the natural world, participate in a joyful community, and deepen their understanding of themselves.

Innovative Campus Design

With the help of expert designers, our new Girls Camp cabins create a new standard for Maine summer camps. These fresh, friendly spaces give special attention to program and sustainability goals. Celebrating morning light and unique natural features, the new eastside facilities will provide the next generation of girls and young women the chance to call Chewonki home.

Girls Camp Leadership

Emily Bell-Hoerth (Director, Camp Chewonki for Girls) holds a B.A. from Earlham College, where she majored in environmental science with a focus on outdoor education. She is an accomplished musician, a creative and inspiring educator. Emily has been a teacher in our place-based elementary school for the past four years.

Jen Adams (Wilderness Trips Manager) is an avid canoeist and explorer of Maine’s woods and waters. A native Floridian, she holds a B.A. in outdoor education and anthropology from the Florida Gulf Coast University, where she concentrated on how to create a sense of place through outdoor education. Jen has been leading wilderness trips for Chewonki since 2013.

Nancy Kennedy (Vice President for Camp Chewonki) holds a master’s of divinity from Bangor Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. in natural resources and environmental studies from the University of New Hampshire. She is passionate about mentoring youth, always encouraging them to seek and find their best selves.
Build It the Wright Way

Dale Wright leans back in his chair as he has all the time in the world. He sports a trim mustache. His eyes twinkle under the brim of a camouflage cap from a local lumber company, with a “Chewonki” button pinned to it. On his right arm, a marlin leaps from an aquamarine water. It reminds him that he hopes to be fishing in Mexico come dead winter in Maine.

“I’m a dirt digger,” he says merrily. “We’re a family business. My kids understand it. That’s who we are.”

Wright leads the excavation company established by his late father, Chester, and his grandfather. Now, Wright’s son Kyle is the fifth generation to do this work, upholding his family’s reputation.

“Dale is an artist with an excavator,” says Chewonki Facilities Manager Carob Arnold. Wright has cleared, dug, and sculpted earth and stone all over Chewonki Neck. He has been working on this peninsula for more than 40 years. His father worked here for 20 years before that and passed on all he knew to his son, who is now passing it on to his son.

“One of Dale’s greatest assets is how much he loves Chewonki,” says Arnold. “That translates, in a professional and personal sense, into him looking out for our best interests.”

“I love this place,” says Wright, gesturing across the scene before him as he stands on the Center for Environmental Education porch. “It’s my heart. It’s my soul. It’s home. Every building, every field.”

Dale has worked on the Wallace Center, the Allen Center, the farm, the tennis courts, and the Center for Environmental Education (CEE). “I shoveled all the crushed stone under here by hand,” he says, gesturing toward the floor in Chapin Hall. “My father put it through the crusher and I shoveled it.”

More recently, he restored the Nature Trail, landscaped the area behind the CEE, and did the site work for new faculty housing. He has laid septic lines, water lines, and electrical lines; shaped slopes, patios, and mounds; moved rock, created parking lots; and graded roads.

“What I’m doing now, it’s historic,” Wright says, beaming. “I was out there today and I said, ‘This is historic! When is the groundbreaking? We need a celebration!’

Wright has five granddaughters and two grandsons, and he is excited that the girls as well as the boys will now be able to go to Camp Chewonki. “We’re getting Chewonki ready for them,” he says. “I am so excited. I can see it. I am an artist, I just work on a huge scale. It’s vision. That’s why I think so far ahead.”

Wright is admired at Chewonki for his work ethic, his expertise, his belief in Chewonki ideals, and his refusal to betray them. “I sit on the board of advisors here at Chewonki,” he says. “This is the crown I wear. It’s an honor. Chewonki does things the way everybody should.”

Solid Beams, Strong Friendship

The timber frames and joist that support the new campbans on Chewonki Neck are being made at Shelter Institute, a longtime Chewonki associate in the neighboring town of Woolwich. Shelter Institute was founded in the early 1970s by husband and wife Pat and Patsy Hennin and Charlie Wing, a Bowdoin College physics instructor and friend of their father, offering specialized building classes, design build services, high-quality tools, and their own realty company.

Back in the 1970s, a gaggle of Chewonki’s Maine Reach and Environmental Education staff took an early Shelter Institute course together “to get inspired about building their own houses,” former Chewonki President Don Hudson recalls. The two organizations are continuing to build on that foundation.

The new Chewonki cabins will have timber frames provided by Shelter Institute, explains Shelter Institute President Blueberry Hennin Beeton. “Our team has worked closely with Chewonki and architect Susan Rodriguez to produce a timber frame design that is structurally sound, beautiful, fits the ethos of Chewonki, and meets the needs of the new camp,” says Beeton. “Our goal is to design buildings that are durable, sustainable, and adaptable.”

Land and Buildings Committee

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Dale Wright
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A special thank you to the Trustees and Advisors who volunteer their time to participate on the Land and Buildings Committee, and oversee planning, design, and project implementation.

BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES

* Master Planning:
  - Murphy Burnham & Buttrick Architects
  - New York, New York
  - Nelson Byrd Woltz Landscape Architects
  - New York, New York

* Site Work:
  - Two Trees Forestry
  - Windthrop, Maine
  - Harold Burnett

* Environmental Engineering:
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  - Jan Wiegman, P.E.

* Construction:
  - OPAL Global, LLC
  - Architecture | Research | Design
  - Belfast, Maine
  - Matthew O’Malia, Timothy Lock, and Riley Pratt

* Timber Frame Design and Joinery:
  - Shelter Institute
  - Woolwich, Maine
  - Wolfram, Maine
  - Cameron Creamer

* Staff Housing and Washhouse Architecture:
  - Medomak Construction
  - Damariscotta, Maine

* Site Planning and Master Planning:
  - Nelson Byrd Woltz Landscape Architects
  - New York, New York
“May you never forget that you are loved.” That refrain from “Willy’s Song” rose from Camp Chewonki for Boys as we wrapped up our final service on the Point, overlooking Montsweag Bay, in August 2019.

After the song, campers and counselors meandered down to the water’s edge and searched the borders of the glade for a keepsake from the natural world by which to remember their summer.

During the gathering, first-timers as well as seasoned campers offered gratitude for the people who had enriched their camp experience. Among them, young Puffins thanked their bunkmates and counselors for being there when homesickness set in; and Chewonki Ironman competitors commended their fellow participants for sportsmanship and encouragement throughout the challenging race on Waterfront Day.

The night before, we celebrated Master Farmers, Junior Woodsmen, and our sixth Camp Chewonki Master Naturalist, Ollie Scott-Hansen (Boys Camp ‘15–’19). We honored the community we had developed over the course of a collective 164 nights in the field.

Camp Chewonki boys: Think back on the summer we shared. I hope your memories give you greater confidence in yourselves and determination to get to know and take care of the world around you. Remember, there are Chewonki friends around the country and the world who love you and will support you when times get tough.

I am already looking forward to welcoming you back to Chewonki for summer 2020. See you then!

Charlie Fear
Director, Camp Chewonki for Boys

K
armic calm and a buoyant sense of humor are valuable assets for Osprey counselors, who spend the summer with 14- and 15-year-old boys. Alex Chasse (Boys Camp staff ’18, ’19; Outdoor Classroom staff ’19, ’20; Wilderness Trips staff ’18) possesses both. Last summer, Chasse and Evan Landon (Boys Camp staff ’16, ’17, ’19) were co-counselors in Gordy Hall cabin, leading 10 stout-hearted Ospreys on countless big and small adventures.

Chasse grew up in Fort Kent, Maine, a town of about 4,000 on the northernmost section of the Canadian border. He discovered his enthusiasm for the outdoors as a middle schooler, when his father took him on a canoe trip. “I got hooked on expeditioning,” he recalls with a grin.

A big part of what led Chasse to camp counseling is his love for his home state. He learned about Chewonki when he participated in the Maine Youth Wilderness Leadership Program run by Friends of Baxter State Park. The program accepts ten outstanding Maine high school sophomores and juniors each year through a competitive process, and aims to cultivate emerging young wilderness proponents. Chewonki provides leaders and logistical support for the hiking trip that anchors the program, and Keith Crowley, now director of Education Partnerships, was one of Chasse’s leaders. He noticed how much Chasse enjoyed being outdoors and his positive attitude toward people and learning.

“Alex is a thoughtful team player in his work with campers and staff alike,” says Boys Camp Director Charlie Fear. “He is passionate about sharing his knowledge and love for Maine’s wilderness with the boys, and he supports his peers with good communication and mentorship.”

Chasse sees camp counseling as leadership and teacher training as well as a great adventure. Anyone who thinks being a counselor means a summer off misses the value of the experience, he says. “I’ve learned a lot here about how to engage professionally and personally...The growth is difficult sometimes, but as you move past those moments, you feel Chewonki’s great camaraderie.”

A graduate of the University of Maine, Orono, Chasse completed a dual major in secondary education and history. He finds inspiration in the work of Joseph Campbell, the scholar who revived interest in mythology. Studying Campbell’s analysis of archetypal heroes’ journeys...
I Made This Paddle
Upholding a Hands-on Tradition

As they have done every summer for more than a century, Camp Chewonki boys are hard at work in the Wood Shop. A group of Ospreys (the oldest campers) bend over their paddles, using spoke-noe expedition featuring salt and vinegar to sculpt the wood.

They’ve put in about six hours to get to this point,” says Orville Mooney, facilities team member, carpenter, Maine Guide, and the summer’s undisputed boss of the Wood Shop. “They’re doing great. After today, all they’ll have to do is sand and put on a layer of polyurethane.”

The Wood Shop feels a world away from the camp’s boisterous center, although it’s just down the dirt road. There is a lot going on here but there is also the underlying peace of people wholly, happily engaged in their work. The boys have everything they need: materials, tools, camaraderie, and a teacher who loves what he and they are doing.

Hanging in the Pattern Closet are hundreds of flat wooden templates: paddle designs; spoon patterns; shapes for making birdhouses, toy boats, bat boxes, cabin plaques. Summer after summer, these patterns help campers make things.

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Flashback
A Dapper Young Man
on a Grand Adventure

“Thought I would share this picture of Clarence E. Allen (my grandfather) circa 1915,” wrote Melissa Allen Heath on Facebook last February 8, his birth date. “He was an ornithologist, naturalist, science teacher, headmaster, and founder of Camp Chewonki in Wiscasset, Maine—one of the most wonderful places on earth.”

The photograph shows Allen sitting in a field with his dog in the very year he established a camp on New York’s Lake Champlain. After two summers, he moved the enterprise to an old sheep farm in Wiscasset and opened Camp Chewonki in 1918.

Allen retired from Chewonki in 1965 and died in 1974. His granddaughter Melissa Allen Heath, former associate regional counsel for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, now directs GreenEdge Georgia, which, according to its website, “advises individuals and companies in greening the things that matter.” Her grandfather would be proud.

If you unearth old Chewonki photos or papers in your attic or archives, we would love to see them. Please contact Anne Schlitt at aschlitt@chewonki.org.

Noticing Nature
Attack of the Fly-Zombie Fungus

By Fred Cichocki, Ph.D.

Scattered here and there, they were stuck (more like plastered) to the underside of tree leaves, mostly those of maples and yellow birches. Every one was a dead snipe fly (Rhagio mystaceus), still sporting its delicate yellow-black patterned wings. All were the unwitting victims of the gruesome zombie fungus, Faria thomensis.

While many people have heard about (even seen on TV) the sensational, if macabre, ant-zombifying fungi Ophiocordyceps of the tropics, few realize that similar body-snatching, entomopathogenic fungi occur in their own backyards. The 700-odd species of such fungi and bacteria, others, perhaps antibiotics similar to our own dopamine, hijack the fly’s nervous system, literally turning the still-living insect into a zombie and forcing it to do Faria’s bidding!

What happens next is amazing. Under the thrall of the fungus, the hapless snipe fly makes its way up to an elevated position on the underside of a tree leaf. This adaptive, so-called “summiting behavior” occurs commonly among the hosts of many zombifying parasites. Both humid and cool conditions are necessary for Faria to carry out its life cycle. Since the tiny “pores,” or stomates, that facilitate transpiration lie mainly on a leaf’s lower surface, that’s exactly where you, if you’re Faria, want your little zombie host to take you.

Once the zombie fly is well situated, the fungus sends out specialized hyphae called rhizoids to stick it tight to the leaf. Next, spore-bearing hyphae, or conidio- phores, sprout from the fly cadaver, covering it with a fine, gauzy fuzz. And here we find another benefit of being stuck to the underside, rather than the top, of a leaf: the infectious spores can rain down, unchecked, on new victims below.

Now for the really juicy part. There’s more to Faria’s reproductive strategy than mere passive spore dispersal. For reasons unknown, healthy male snipe flies seeking mates are more strongly attracted to those grotesque fungus-bloated and spine-ridden snipe fly corpses than to healthy female flies. In a cruel twist, when the male flies copulate with the zombies (fruitlessly, of course), they succeed only in infecting themselves—and afterward, any unfortunate females with which they happen to mate.

Although this may not be the zombie apocalypse of lurid movies and TV, puppet-master parasites like Faria are in their own way horrifying enough. They show just how far evolution can go to achieve its ultimate end: reproductive success. One can only marvel at the creativity.

Fred Cichocki, aka Doc Fred, is a retired professor with a doctorate in ecology and evolutionary biology. He has led the nature program at Camp Chewonki since 2007.
Summer Notes

Camp Chewonki for Girls last summer was full of deep belly laughs, life-changing learning, and discovery of self, nature, and community. All of this is possible when people connect with others and the world around them in authentic ways.

From our opening campfire to our closing celebration, campers boldly accepted the invitation to embody joy, be courageous, and create friendships with other girls, counselors, and trip leaders. Every day, they stepped into new challenges with gusto, developing the skill to carve a spoon, sleeping in a tent for the first time, navigating with a map and a compass, and baking blueberry delights over a campfire.

Together we hiked mountains and paddled lakes and streams, learned the names of birds and trees, shared our hopes and dreams. We took Polar Bear Dips, created campfire skits, and participated in after-dinner sing-alongs. We heard the wind in the trees, stared into the vast, starry night sky, breathed in the smell of pines, heard loons calling, and enjoyed time on the farm. And we came to understand that the time we spend at camp can be the foundation for living as our best selves in a community that cares about us and this beautiful world.

One of many things that made us proud last summer was the renaissance of the Girls Camp birding program. A record number of girls woke in the wee hours of the morning to learn to identify a wide variety of birds. Given Chewonki’s rich heritage of birding and roots in the Audubon Society, we were pleased that the girls embraced this activity and grateful for the opportunity to inspire another generation of birders and nature stewards.

Reese Partlow (Girls Camp staff 18’/19’; Outdoor Classroom staff ’17-present; Wilderness Trips staff ’17/18’) floats into the Wallace Dining Hall in a brightly colored silk dress with a full skirt. It’s not typical garb for the Camp Chewonki for Girls counselor she was last summer, but Partlow is an Outdoor Classroom instructor for the fall and Friday Flair is de rigueur for OC staff. “I love silk,” she says, rubbing the sleeves.

This is Partlow, equally at ease leading girls through the wilderness and wearing a dress from a costume box when everyone else is in jeans. Her apparent peace with herself is part of what makes her an outstanding counselor for girls.

“I love how they teach me about compassion,” she says of the 10- to 13-year-olds she led on two Explorers expeditions over the summer with co-leaders CC Clapp and Morgan Blyberg. “These girls interact so kindly with one another. They see the benefit of getting along.” Together they backpacked; paddled and portaged canoes; cooked over campfires; sang; told stories; and did a lot of goofing around.

“Reesey has a very open, positive way of communicating with the girls,” says Nancy Kennedy, vice president for Camp Chewonki. “Her genuine enjoyment of working with young people in the outdoors shines through in every group she leads.”

Partlow describes Chewonki as “a great place for an educator to be...And I keep learning.”

Chebeague’s population swells in the summer but hovers around 340 during the rest of the year.

“You know everyone,” says Partlow. “The ferry dictates your schedule. It makes you think carefully about everything you need—and what you can get along without.” Like a wilderness trip, island life teaches you to be prepared or live with the consequences.

Island neighbors depend on each other for companionship, learning, support, and entertainment—just as outdoor adventurers do. Just as in camp, the attitude you show up with affects everyone.

She describes her Chewonki girls as “very adventurous. And they still like to be silly, but they can also reflect deeply.” Sometimes they need comforting and support; other times, they are “all about being out there,” no holds barred. She rolls with her campers because she truly enjoys them.

Partlow describes Chewonki as “a great place for an educator to be...And I keep learning.”

Emily Bell-Hoeth
Director,
Camp Chewonki for Girls

Snapshot: Reese Partlow
Hello, all Wilderness Trippers! What a fun and exciting summer we had together in 2019. I’ve been reflecting on the many memories made on Chewonki trips in Maine and Quebec, whether out on the sea, in the mountains, or on rivers and lakes.

One particular story that has stuck with me comes all the way from our most northern trip, the five-week George River Expedition. This group experienced many cold, rainy days during their trip, but what got them through was singing. Sometimes all you need to endure a torrential downpour soaking everyone to their base layers is someone to take the lead, stand up in the boat, assume the role of conductor, and conduct the group through a rousing rendition of “River” by Bill Staines.

Another great 2019 story comes from one of our Maine Appalachian Trail backpacking trips. When the group got to the summit of White Cap Mountain (elevation 3,644 feet), they encountered volunteers from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy replacing the sign marking the summit and showing mileage to other campsites and stream crossings. The Chewonki backpackers jumped at the opportunity to help. (Their biggest contribution might have been carrying the old sign down the mountain.)

Acts of courage, selflessness, and imagination happen on every Chewonki wilderness trip. Singing in the rain truly embodies what we aim to do here. I hope you will join us for an adventure in the summer to come. Till then, if you come upon a challenge, try singing.

Jen Adams
Wilderness Trips Manager, Camp Chewonki

Decade ago, Conor Burke (Boys Camp ’07, ’08; Wilderness Trips ’09, ’10, ’12; Boys Camp staff ’13-’16; Wilderness Trips staff ’17-’19, Outdoor Classroom staff ’18-present), then 14 years old, arrived at Chewonki from Maryland to join three other boys for the Thoreau-Wabanaki Canoe Trail trip, known as TWT. Burke had spent the two previous summers at Camp Chewonki for Boys, but this was different, a challenging three-week canoe expedition that crisscrossed vast forest lands by way of Moosehead Lake, the West Branch of the Penobscot River, the Allagash River, Webster Brook as it travels through Baxter State Park, and the East Branch of the Penobscot (in what recently became the new Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument).

Burke was eager and ready to go—he had heard lots about this epic Chewonki wilderness trip from his camp counselor John Parker (Boys Camp ’01-’04; Wilderness Trips ’05; Boys Camp Guide ’06; Boys Camp staff ’07, ’08, ’18, ’19), but Megan Phillips, who co-led with Aaron LaFlamme and is now manager of Chewonki’s Salt Marsh Farm, took note: Burke was “a full head or more shorter than the three other trippers,” she recalls.

The pace did not quell Burke. “Conor took everything in stride,” says Phillips. “He was unflappable.”

Burke laughs as he remembers Phillips asking him if he could handle portaging his canoe. “I said, ‘Yeah, I can do that!’ Megan helped flip the canoe up over me,” he says, “and as I took the weight of it, it just kept sinking lower and lower over my head while I kept saying, ‘I can do it. I can do it.’ After that, Megan always made sure she was my portage partner.”

Burke says Phillips was “a dream” as a leader. She read aloud to the group each night—Thoreau’s In the Maine Woods, Lew Dietz’s The Allagash, and Helen Hamlin’s Nine Mile Bridge, an account of Hamlin’s experiences in far northern Maine. Hamlin’s book makes references to her French-Canadian heritage, which puzzled young Burke as he listened to
Above: Trip Leader Burke in 2019.

Above: canoe Trail leaders last summer, including Conor Burke (orange) and Megan Phillips (blue) and friends in 2009.

Above: Connor Burke (orange) and Megan Phillips (blue) reading in her Virginia drawl.
Step through the double doors of Chewonki’s Center for Environmental Education and follow the trail markers to Katahdin. Katahdin: Maine’s highest mountain! It is the subject of legends among generations of native people and Chewonki folk.

Thanks to Gordon Hall III (Boys Camp staff ’51-’53; Chewonki trustee ’72-present; alumnus of more than 20 Chewonki wilderness expeditions) and Paul Crowell (Boys Camp ’77, ’78; Thoreau Wilderness Trip ’80; Boys Camp staff ’81-’84, ’86; advisor 2000-present), we have our own little Katahdin right here at Chewonki.

At a fundraising auction for Friends of Baxter State Park in fall 2018, Crowell and Hall bought a three-dimensional, painted fiberglass model of the mountain showing all the peaks, cirques, and trails. It had stood at the park’s Roaring Brook ranger station for decades; people tracing the trails with their fingers wore the paint off the most popular routes.

Crowell and Hall then gave the model to Chewonki in honor of James Whittlesey Crowell (b. 1925-d. 2014; Boys Camp staff ’71; Chewonki wilderness expeditioner ’92), an adventurous teacher and outdoorsman who loved Katahdin and was Hall’s close friend (they climbed the mountain together) and Paul Crowell’s beloved uncle.

Penobscot Nation historian James Francis shared his people’s perspective on “the greatest mountain” with us for a small exhibition accompanying the model. Also included are photographs and writings that reveal Katahdin’s important place in Chewonki culture.

If you come by Chewonki, be sure to make your way to the entrance hall of the Center of Environmental Education to see this venerable model for yourself. Our thanks to Gordy and Paul for bringing the mountain to us.
A sense of self is critical so that the social-emotional realm is being tended to, Cassidy explains. “This needs to happen before any academics can occur. We are intentionally setting up a culture of care and understanding.”

Last fall, Chewonki Elementary and Middle School students explored many ways to explain who they are:

Grades 1/2/3 students created “identity bowls” with papier-mâché and collaged fabric, incorporating a word they chose to represent their sense of self.

Grades 5/6 students painted and decorated their own silhouettes with mixed-media materials and wrote an identity poem modeled after writer George Ella Lyon’s poem, “Where I’m From.”

Grades 7/8 students created a work of art inspired by a photograph of their eyes, and they also wrote an essay about a place important to them and a narrative about their class wilderness trip to the Bigelow Range, including reflection on Chewonki’s mission statement, group values, learning zones, and goals for the trip and the school year.

“A school name should accurately represent its student body, just as the school’s mission and vision should describe what we do here,” Cassidy said. The seventh and eighth-graders are particularly pleased that the new name reflects Chewonki’s mission, Cassidy said. “Usually I am completely at ease speaking in front of people,” said Cassidy, “but because this school is so important to me, the children, and their parents, I was really nervous! I felt very supported when I looked around.”

After a round of snacks and singing, it was time for classes to begin again. Congratulations Chewonki Elementary and Middle School!”
Lorna Fake grew up in rural England and spent lots of time playing outdoors. Her first job was at the American School in London and working there inspired her to become a teacher. She graduated from the University of Sussex with a bachelor’s degree in education and taught for several years before then getting “itchy feet” and deciding to work for a ski company in the Swiss Alps. She went on to sail on Mediterranean, Caribbean, and U.S. waters and eventually landed in Maine.

Lorna and her family moved to Newcastle 20 years ago and have raised their children there, enjoying many family adventures outdoors. She taught at Great Salt Bay Community School in Damariscotta for 17 years.

She loves seven-year-olds’ enthusiasm for all aspects of school life. She is passionate about taking children outside and volunteering for the Midcoast Conservancy.

Greta Righter grew up exploring the valleys and creeks of central Pennsylvania and attended Pennsylvania State University, studying community, environment, and development. She recently completed her master’s of education in curriculum and instruction at the University of Washington, where she focused on environmental and place-based education.

For the past two years, Righter has been teaching at IslandWood, a residential environmental education program for fifth-graders on Bainbridge Island in Puget Sound. She is committed to creating equitable and inclusive learning environments that celebrate diversity in its many forms.

When she isn’t in the woods with a group of students, Righter might be taking a run with her dog, Molly, reading, biking with friends, practicing or teaching yoga, or exploring by sailboat or kayak.

Rachel Bouttenot grew up in Lewiston, Maine, and attended Saint Dominic Regional High School, where she was an outstanding athlete, president of the student senate, and a member of the state champion mock trial team. She graduated from Georgetown University, where she majored in biology and pursued pre-medical studies.

Bouttenot worked at the National Institutes of Health before starting a Ph.D. program in molecular cell biology at Washington University in St. Louis. Over the course of four years, she found that teaching and mentoring other students were what she loved most. She decided to leave graduate school after earning a master’s degree in order to pursue a teaching career.

She then moved to Berkeley, California, to teach high school math and science courses at Tilden Preparatory School and Oakland Charter High School. There she also met her wife, Katherine. They recently moved to Berkeley to raise their daughter, Sylvie, who was born in early 2018.

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Barnes received her B.A. in anthropol- ogy from Bowdoin College and earned a master of divinity from the San Francisco Theological Seminary and a master of spirituality from the Graduate Theological Union.

Rachel Bouttenot
Math Teacher

Rachel grew up in Lewiston, Maine, and graduated from Saint Dominic Regional High School. She was deeply in- volved in sports, the Student Senate, and the Mock Trial Team. She studied biology and worked in a research laboratory while attending Georgetown University, and after college spent a year working at the National Institutes of Health. She then began a Ph.D. program in molecular cell biology at Washington University. Though the research aspect of gradu- ate school was compelling, Rachel quickly found that time spent teaching and mentor- ing other students was what she loved most. She left with a master’s degree and moved to California to begin her teaching career. Rachel taught math and science courses at TikTok Preparatory School and Oakland Charter High School. While in California, she also met her now-wife, Katherine, and they decided to move back to Maine to raise their daughter, Sylvie, who was born in early 2018.

Misha Klimov
French Teacher

Misha has taught French, Russian, and English to stu- dents of different nationali- ties, backgrounds, and ages in various educa- tional institutions, from public secondary schools and schools of higher education to private schools and colleges, in Ukraine, Thailand, Turkey, and the United States. Misha writes, “I have traveled exten- sively. Nature has always played a huge part in my life and I have always tried to spend as much time as possible outdoors. I am very much into hiking, meditation, and yoga. I am a certified Sierra Club Outings Leader. I enjoy spending time with my five-year-old grandson, Felix, and three- year-old twin granddaughters, Athena and Amelia, learning from them how to be spontaneous and live in the moment.”

Misha studied English and French at the Kyiv National Linguistic University in Ukraine. He took language and cul- ture courses through Alliance Française in Ukraine and Thailand and advanced French at the Institut Linguistique du Peyrou in Montpellier, France. He is a can- didate for a doctorate in modern languag- es (Russian and French) at Middlebury College.

Eric McIntyre
Science Teacher

Eric first came to Chewonki in 2017 to serve as a leader and instructor for the summer Boatbuilders Expedition. He then spent two years as a science teaching fellow for Maine Coast Semester 59, 60, 61, and 62. He has brought to each role a robust set of skills and understandings that bolster his affinity for the natural world and his lifelong-learner’s disposition. Last fall he became full faculty member.

Reflecting on Chewonki, he writes, “I believe in the value of our organization’s mission and know that one of the most tangible ways we achieve our high aim is by teaching students to be critical ob- servers of and engaged participants in the world around them.” He is constant- ly sharing his love of the natural world, passion for working with adolescent stu- dents in a residential setting, and capacity to work collaboratively with students and colleagues.

Eric received his B.S. in conservation biology from St. Lawrence University and participated in the university’s Adirondack Semester. He then taught environmental science courses through Alliance Française and the Institut Linguistique du Peyrou in Montpellier, France.

Megan McOsker
Math Teacher

Megan came to Maine to make a closer connection to the natu- ral world and to attend the College of the Atlantic. At college she focused on the whale and seabird world and spent time living at Mount Desert Rock to study foraging humpback whales, an ongoing passion. She received a B.A. in human ecology with a focus on marine science.

Megan has worked in a variety of settings as a field biologist and naturalist. After earning her master’s in teach- ing from the University of Maine, she first taught physical and life science at Cornet-Emserson School and then “gift- ed and talented” students at Mount Desert Island High School, where she also coordi- nated student internships.

Megan loves to learn. She writes, “The journey matters, as does the destination...the day-to-day of classes, field trips, and experiences are where the learning hap- pens. Sometimes things go according to plan, but I’m always ready for the unex- pected.”

Hannah Ryde
Teaching Fellow

Environmental Issues

An alumna of Maine Coast Semester 48, Hannah graduat- ed from Tufts University in 2017 with a B.A. in anthropology and completed a minor in child study and human development. While attending Tufts, Hannah was active in a variety of wilderness-based programs, including the university’s Wilderness Orientation and the Tufts Mountain Club. She has served as a counselor at Waukeela Camp for Girls and recently completed a one- year Wilderness Educator residency at the Outdoor Academy in North Carolina.

Hannah explains, “My motivation for teaching stems from my love of working with youth as well as my belief that dedi- cated teachers and engaging material pro- mote student curiosity and investment. I am enthusiastic about helping students find topics they are passionate about and empowering them to take ownership of their learning...I am excited to grow at a school that celebrates experiential learn- ing, curiosity, and responsibility. I am drawn to Maine Coast Semester because of its strong identity, which includes room for innovating and experimenting without compromising...academics and commu- nity values.”

Eric Winter
Teaching Fellow
U.S. History

Eric graduated from Bowdoin College with a B.A. in government and legal studies and a minor in mathe- matics. During all four years of college, he was a teaching assistant at a nearby el- ementary school, where he worked with approximately 80 students, writing lesson plans and adapting instruction methods to individuals.

Eric was an active member of the Bowdoin Outing Club and completed the club’s highly respect Leadership Training Course. The course teaches technical skills as well as the soft skills that ensure good working relationships among leaders and expedition participants.

As a high school junior, Ethan spent a semester at the Mountain School of Milton Academy, giving him a first-hand under- standing of semester school life. “I’ve ex- perienced the awkwardness of showing up on the first day, building community among individuals from all over the coun- try (if not the world), and the rhythm of life that the school falls into,” he says—all of which he has welcomed at Chewonki.
The Art & Science of the Field Journal

Maine Coast Semester alumni know why. In their science course, “Natural History of the Maine Coast,” students draw directly from nature every week, often twice a week. Each of them is both artist and scientist; the class cannot bifurcate into artsy kids and science nerds. They are carrying forward a legacy established by Roger Tory Peterson (1908-1996), who developed Camp Chewonki’s nature journals. Peterson explains, “We reassure them that we want them to begin wherever they cannot possibly draw. “We reassure them that we want them to begin wherever they cannot possibly draw.”

As to why they have their students hunting down in any weather to record what they see around them, “We do it for a couple of reasons,” says McIntyre. “First, drawing is a way to document in the field. It is an important kind of data. What is seen with your own eyes counts.”

Second, drawing “builds the muscle of observation,” he says. “The exact shape of a bird’s bill; every point of a crab carapace—those details are easy to gloss over until you have to draw them.”

“A good example is the branching of trees,” says McOsker. “Twigs can have opposite or alternating branching. You don’t notice or appreciate this until you have to look very closely. Observation can be an incredibly rich experience—strengthening your ability to see what is around you.”

Students record their observations in the yellow field journals they carry during weekly science field trips, and in the note-books they take to their phenology spot, a specific Chewonki Neck site assigned to them where they go repeatedly to study cyclic, seasonal changes in nature.

They do this in all kinds of weather—cold, hot, wet, windy, and this, say their teachers, is another benefit. “They learn to tolerate adversity,” says McIntyre, a skill they can use in many aspects of life.

While these students’ artistic endeavors help connect them deeply to the peninsula where they spend four months, they are learning to perceive and appreciate the natural world wherever they go. Whether or not they ever draw from nature again, they will be better at discerning the rich details of their environment, making life more interesting, regardless of your slicker, and draw a leaf?”

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Maine Coast Semester Class Agents

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Katie Yakubowski and Tanner Shepherd are the dynamic duo on the ground, in the field, and at their desks making the Chewonki Outdoor Classroom happen. As program co-coordinators, they handle relationships with school administrators and teachers, design curricula, oversee the Outdoor Classroom educators, and handle logistics.

Outdoor Classroom offers multi-day, encampments and wilderness expeditions for school groups from across Maine and New England. Compassion for others, building self-confidence, and learning about stewardship of the natural world are the core goals of this program.

Tanner Shepherd is originally from Maryland but travelled the world in search of new wilderness adventures before coming to Chewonki. He has served as an AmeriCorps team leader focused on sustainable trail building in the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park; taught 30+ classes in leadership and science-related topics in California; and facilitated canoeing, rock climbing, and group challenges in Australia. In California, Tanner was also a program coordinator for the Pali Institute, where school partner management was a primary focus. Most recently, he worked for The Outdoor Education Group in Eildon, Victoria, which runs a camp-based program with parallels to Chewonki’s encampment model. His favorite part of outdoor education is captivating young people with astronomy.

Katie Yakubowski, an Ohio native, started her career as an educator at zoos, nature centers, and museums. After serving on a trail crew with the Montana Conservation Corps, she moved to the White Mountain National Forest in 2014 to work with the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC). During that time, Katie held roles as an AMC outdoor educator, a guide, and a naturalist. In 2016, she moved to Greenville, Maine, and earned her Maine Guide license in recreation and fishing. Her experience in delivering curriculum to school groups, training staff, and facilitating outdoor adventures is a strong asset to the Outdoor Classroom and the foundation as a whole. If she’s not on a canoe trip or hiking a 4,000-footer, you can find her knitting, tying flies, or playing her ukulele.

Right: The Spring 2019 Outdoor Classroom educators give their best Osprey impressions.
April 5, 2019, marked the 45th anniversary of the Outdoor Classroom program at Chewonki. The original curriculum has remained remarkably popular with local and regional school groups.

President Emeritus Don Hudson, who served as a Maine beach instructor in the early 1970s, says Chewonki had previously offered short environmental workshops but 1974 marked the beginning of regularly scheduled spring and fall programming for schools.

“I remember our first group was a school from Boothbay, and it snowed the night before they arrived. The staff said ‘Don! What are we going to do? Play in the snow, I told them.’”

Forty-five years later, the Outdoor Classroom is going strong thanks to outdoor adventure program for young adults, and has worked as a substitute teacher and coach at the middle and high school levels in Portland. She served as a volunteer mentor with Waypoint for the past two school years and is enjoying having a formal role to play in this innovative adventure for local students.

Janzen loves playing board games, cooking, and hiking. She is a certified Wilderness First Responder.
Brad Johnson (BC staff ’99,’00,’02–’07; farm manager Semesters 17–40), his wife, Emily Levan (semester faculty ’97–00), and their daughter, Maddie, have been enjoying their new house in Northfield, VT., which includes woods and river frontage “to walk, ski, and enjoy during all seasons,” writes Brad.

The property also includes a large wood-lot, which they manage “for recreation, wildlife habitat, timber, and carbon sequestration. It feels great to live in a place that feels like home!” Maddie just started her sophomore year at Stoneleigh-Burnham School in Greenfield, MA, where she’s enjoying her studies and plenty of riding. Emily, a nurse practitioner, continues to work at a local hospital while also pursuing her doctor of nursing practice degree part-time at Duke Univ. She is still an avid runner. “This summer, we completed a year-long goal, hiking and running Vermont’s Long Trail in just under 10 days,” says Brad. He is logging full time with horses, as co-owner and operator of Third Branch Horse Logging.

Aaron Paul (BC ’97–99,’02; BC staff ’02–’06,’08), Bonnie Frye Hemphill, and their son, Gideon, live in Seattle. Aaron continues to work in conservation finance.

Matt Weeks (BC ’98–03; BC staff ’04, ’05, ’13–18) completed the Extended Teacher Education Program at the University of Southern Maine in spring 2019. He is now a second-grade teacher at Farwell Elementary School in Lewiston, ME.
Jason Chandler and Caitlin Thurrell: The Labor of Living with the Land

See Semester 20 for news of Malin Pinsky (WT ’94) and Semester 21 for news of Spencer Taylor (BC ’95–96).

2000s

Cory Cramer (Semester English Fellow ’07/08; BC staff ’08/11; WT staff ’10/12, ’15) and Kate Fox (BC staff ’03/05, ’09/11/12) welcomed their second child, a boy, Field Henry Cramer Fox, on 10-3-2019.

2010s

In September, Darren Wang (BC ’15, ’16) started his freshman year at Brewster Academy in NH. Frederik von Kilting (BC ’17/18) spent his junior year of high school at The Gunnery in Washington, CT, and is now back in Stuttgart, Germany, for his senior year.

See 1990s for news of Eleonora da Prato (GC ’17, ’18).

MAINE COAST SEMESTER

2 (Spring 1989)

Alex Limkin was recently selected to be one of the National Ski Patrol’s Subaru Ambassadors for the 2019/2020 season. He has spent the last five years working at his local mountain, Sipapu, in northern New Mexico. See Semester 43 for news of Kirsten Edelglass.

10 (Spring 1993)

In March, Adam Borden started a new job as marketing director at SAGE Dining, the largest independent school food service operator in the US, based in Baltimore. He enjoyed connecting with Clark Nelson recently in New York City. Adam’s children, Emma (GC ’17–19) and Ian (BC ’18/19), have been writing their own Chewonki story.

Hans Zhou
Conservation Scholar

Hans Zhou is a senior at Pomona College and an alumnus of Maine Coast Semester 54 and Chewonki’s 2015 George River Leadership Expedition. Zhou spent the summers of 2018 and 2019 as a fellow in the Dow’s Duke Conservation Scholar Program. He recently sent Chewonki President Willard Morgan some personal reflections.

“During the first summer, I participated in the program at the University of Washington, which has a strong emphasis on environmental justice, the intersection between cultural and environmental conservation, and story-telling.”

“How did it all come about for you?”

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When they are in the United States, Chandler and Thurrell continue building their timber-frame and-strawbale house in Franklin, Maine. Among their dreams: opening a place-based school on this side of the globe.

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Hans Zhou
Conservation Scholar

Hans Zhou is a senior at Pomona College and an alumnus of Maine Coast Semester 54 and Chewonki’s 2015 George River Leadership Expedition. Zhou spent the summers of 2018 and 2019 as a fellow in the Dow’s Duke Conservation Scholar Program. He recently sent Chewonki President Willard Morgan some personal reflections.

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**Charlie Quarcoo**  
**Trustee Spotlight**

Charlie Quarcoo is an alumna of Maine Coast Semester 25 and has been a Chewonki trustee since 2013 (she previously served as an ad-

visor for five years). She is currently chair-

person of the board’s Committee on Trustees. Quarcoo grew up in Brooklyn and now lives about a mile and a half from her childhood home. A graduate of Packer College Institute in Brooklyn, Quarcoo earned a B.S. in psychology and ed-
a-
cucational studies at Trinity College.

**What made you come to Maine Coast Semester when you were in high school?**

I wanted to go to Maine Coast Semester after visiting Chewonki Neck during my brother’s semester (Stephen Charkey Quarcoo, Sem 25). I saw the close friend-

ships that he had built with his semester-

mates. As someone who went to camp from the age of eight, I loved the out-
doors, and I was attracted to the chance to be away from my normal surroundings so that I could have the freedom to discover who I was independent of my friends and family from Brooklyn. I wanted to contin-

ue to learn about myself and who I want-
ed to be in the world.

**Any favorite Chewonki memories?**

One of my laughable and eye-opening experiences was my first week of morn-

ing chores. I was assigned compost duty.

Coming from NYC, I didn’t know what compost was and certainly didn’t know what compost duty meant for me.

The first morning, I woke up early to take a shower and I got all dressed up for compost duty—in white corduroy pants and black knee-high boots (trying to be farm-to-table). I had always loved camp and built amazing relationships with the rest of the campers, but I struggled in high school to fit the norms that I thought were so important. My cabin mates were from all over and had varying back-

grounds, experiences, opinions, etc. We were seven strangers who had to figure out living together. It wasn’t always perfect and we butted heads at times, but we also had the best laughs and some very honest and vulner-

able conversations from which I learned so much. I remember that we danced up a storm on many nights and had a morn-

ing ritual of blasting Celine Dion before morning chores. Those women taught me about myself and helped me broaden my knowledge of the country and world with their experiences.

Because of that, I approach everyone without judgment and with an open mind, making sure to as-

sume best intentions.

**Does your life and/or work today reso-

nate in any way with your Maine Coast Semester experience?**

My life and work are very much con-

nected to my Maine Coast Semester ex-
perience. I work for Gersonys Works, en-

hancing and developing the systems and processes that support the full lifecycle for employees... all through the lens of supporting a diverse and inclusive work environment.

I am very fortunate to have built strong, deep relationships with a select group of people who love me unconditionally but also hold me accountable to be the best version of myself. Maine Coast Semester helped me realize what true friendship looked and felt like, starting with trust, the ability to be vulnerable without judgment, and honest feedback. I owe Chewonki for the authentic and fulfilling connections I’ve made, which have led to some of the deepest friendships I’ve ever had.

Chevonki is working to become more diverse, equitable, and inclusive. Any suggestions?

My biggest suggestion is to embrace difficult and uncomfortable conversa-
tions/experiences as part of digging deep in the DEI space. Everyone has their own lived experiences and it’s really impor-
tant for people to be exposed to stories of other people’s challenges and struggles, based on different demographics.

People shouldn’t take it on the ownership of others’ experiences, but just lis-

ten and put themselves in the shoes of others. The more we do that, the more we will think about how we can have a diverse community that is both inclusive and equitable.

Chevonki has already done a great job of creating an inclusive community and has worked hard to increase diversity in different di-
mensions. I think Chewonki should continue to do the hard work and think about how the experience for all participants can be equally strong, which doesn’t mean it needs to be the same. Different experiences are okay as long as the differences are fair and just.

**Hannah Lafleur**  
**Wings on Her Heels**

Hannah Lafleur (Outdoor Education staff ’20,11) loves being in motion. She used that passion to power her way up Alaska’s cra-

zy-steep Mount Marathon (average steep-

ness: 34 degrees), down the mountainside of wretched slick, and across the finish line to be the first female finisher in the 2019 Mount Marathon Race, considered by runners aficionados to be the most difficult 5-kilo-

meter (3.1-mile) race in the world.

**Aside from running, what are you up to these days?**

I am living in Seward, Alaska, and loving it. I am the operations manager at Kayak Adventures Worldwide, a sea kayak tour company that my partner, Trent Gould, and I run. We take people paddling in Kenai Fjords National Park and in Seward’s beautiful bays, and also spend a lot of time in the mountains around Seward, which is the perfect playground.

**How did you get ready for the Mount Marathon Race?**

I run year-round just because I love it but the first time I made it up to Race Point [the halfway point of the race, at the treeline] on Mount Marathon this year was on April 2—it was still snowy but finally safe to climb. You could say I started training specif-
ically for the race then, but runners in Seward think about Mount Marathon all the time. It’s a pretty big event if you’re a runner in town and it’s a fun thing to rally around.

**How did you feel after your winning finish?**

Winning Mount Marathon felt incredible and a little surreal. It felt like such an honor to run alongside the women I was competing with, whom I really look up to as moun-
tain runners. I was also so happy to be able to share the win with my dad, who was visiting me from New Hampshire that same week. The trail-running community in Seward is strong, and winning was also a testament to all the support and motivation I’ve received from fellow runners. I was proud of all of us for really showing up this year.

And then of course, physically, I felt like my heels were on fire. I’d gotten huge blisters on the way down the mountain that covered the entire heel pads of both feet, and one ripped open. It was a chal-

lenge to walk for a few days, but totally worth it.

**Page McLean**  
**Semester faculty ’03-05**

is doing dissertation research in Chile/Semester 18 (Spring 1997)

Katie McAlaine moved to Portland, ME, in 2012. After being an educa-

tor for 12 years, she is now pursuing a master’s degree to become a school counselor. She and her husband have two sons: Quinn (2) and Riley (8 mos).

Katie McAlaine with Quinn and Riley 20 (Spring 1998)

Malin Pinsky (WT ’94, advisor ’16–19) and family have moved to Leipzig, Germany, for the year. Malin is sabbatical at the German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research, working on questions of climate change and its impacts on ecosystems around the world.

13 (Fall 1994)

Carrie (Judd) Miller lives with her husband and two sons in Park City, UT. She is “excited about her doctoral studies with John Hopkins Univ., ex-

ploiting the low Native American stu-
dent graduation rates with the School of Education.”

Hilary (Williams) Walrod has started a new position as dean for the School of Arts and Sciences at Colby-Sawyer College.

17 (Fall 1996)

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Katie McAlaine moved to Portland, ME, in 2012. After being an educ-
a-
Betsy Stubbsfield Loucks
“Time at Chewonki Is Still Feeding Me”

Betsy Stubbsfield Loucks (Maine Coast Semester 10; Boys Camp staff ‘94-‘96, ‘98) is an independent contractor working as the director of research partnerships at Brown University, as well as a senior consultant at Spartina Consulting, where she focuses on serving nonprofits, small businesses, social ventures, academia, and government agencies. She is married to Erik Loucks, founder and director of the Mindfulness Center at Brown. They have twin daughters, Stella and Monica, who are in fourth grade.

On the other end of the telephone line, Loucks’s voice conveys intense focus and refreshing openness. She loves her work but is honest about the challenge of balancing professional aspirations with motherhood. “I have been working primarily by contract ever since my girls were born nine years ago,” she says. “I have wanted to work at the top of my ability and skill set, but I also want to raise our children. It’s been difficult. I am constantly trying to make space in the world what it is I do.” In her consulting work, she prefers to stay behind the scenes to help organizations work, a style that serves her clients well but makes it harder to promote herself. “Titles matter when you’re competing for the most interesting work,” she says.

She has proved that she is up to the challenge. She specializes in leadership development and organizational development for mission-driven organizations. “For-profit, non-profit, social ventures, government initiatives,” she says. “The business structure is not as important, as what the market is.” Loucks earned a B.A. from Brown University. “My undergraduate major was something I cobbled together because what I wanted didn’t exist,” she says, “and Brown was willing to accept it: American Civilization and Women’s Health.”

When she heard that Camp Chewonki is establishing a girls’ campus on Chewonki Neck, Loucks was overjoyed. “That’s wonderful news!” she said. “There was a whole group of women and men at Chewonki when I worked there who wanted girls to be part of camp.”

Harvard School of Public Health and then a master’s of business with a focus on environmental sustainability from Concordia University in Montreal.

Does anything from Maine Coast Semester correspond with what she is doing today? She hesitates, laughs, and then says, “Oh, just everything.”

“I remember stacking firewood in the first few days of my semester—about 25 people standing in a line, working together. We were always taking care of the community. Our society has gotten too detached. It makes me think of the people working side-by-side for the good of the community. It also has vivid memories of working on the farm for Farm Manager Mark Albee. “I think about him all the time,” she says. “He was a mean basketball player.”

“River,” a song she learned at Chewonki, is one Loucks used to sing her young daughters to sleep. It is probably not surprising that the twins “love to camp and be outside,” she says. “They love talking about the planet.” Loucks is a trustee of the Gordon School, which the girls attend.

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The facility will receive food waste from households, restaurants, and wholesale produce markets from New York to Philadelphia and use anaerobic digestion to convert the food waste into methane. The methane will then be used to produce electricity in a typical combustion turbine. I like the fact that this project not only reduces waste heading to landfills but also produces valuable electricity and reduces the carbon emissions that would occur if these materials decomposed in a land-fill and were released as methane.

What’s the most important thing an everyday person can do to support the transition to renewable energy?

Vote, both at the ballot box and with your wallet. For your wallet, go to https://www.energyusage.com/community-so/ lar/projects-companies/ to find green energy priced in your area at rates lower than the cost of brown energy from your utility.

Are there resonances between your Chewonki experience and your life and work now?

Absolutely. For me, Chewonki illuminated so many areas of life where collective effort and a conscientious approach can make a difference. While the energy system may seem incredibly complex and immoveable, it is now changing rapidly thanks to the collective effort of legislators, regulators, technologists, and investors. There has not been a single champion, but instead millions of individuals acting in loose community to effect change.
In September, at the Association of Energy Engineers World Conference in Washington, D.C., Linnea Paton (Maine Coast Semester 35) stepped up to accept the International Young Energy Professional of the Year award. Later that day, she posted the news on social media: “Received the award at my work in energy management at JLL [where she works] and climate action on the 100th anniversary of the women’s right to vote in the U.S. It wasn’t until 50 years after women’s suffrage that most engineering colleges opened their doors to women. We still have a long way to go, but I wouldn’t have come this far without the actions of those who fought for equal rights. Now, we must all take up the next challenge and #ActOnClimate.”

What did you study to prepare for this work?

I received my B.S. from Worcester Polytechnic Institute with a double major in 1) civil and environmental engineering and 2) environmental policy and development. Later I earned my master’s degree in sustainability in the Urban Environment from the City College of New York. You are a portfolio energy manager. Tells us what that means.

My company, JLL in New York City, partners with large corporate clients to provide sustainability management services. As an energy manager, I’m responsible for identifying ways to save energy in our buildings, building the financial case for the projects, and working with our building managers and vendors to implement savings initiatives. For example, I’ve worked with our clients to develop lighting, solar, fuel cell, and building controls projects and received funding from state energy agencies and utilities to offset the costs of the projects. Many of our clients have set goals for achieving 100 percent renewable electricity or significant carbon emissions reduction goals. I get to work on national and global portfolios of buildings (usually 100-5,000 buildings).

What keeps you engaged in your work?

As Greta Thunberg [16-year-old Swedish climate activist] says, “There is no hope without action.” I get a lot of satisfaction from knowing my work is reducing carbon emissions. I also get involved in local and national climate policy to help shape effective laws around building energy efficiency. The building sector accounts for 40 percent of carbon emissions in the U.S. Oftentimes, we know what to do, but we need to solve the business challenges around funding improvements. There has been a lot of innovation in this area recently. That said, there are so many ways for people to be involved in reducing emission and the bigger, structural-change ones are most important.

Does what you do now ever make you think of Maine Coast Semester?

Yes, a lot. Though I was already on the path to doing environmental work when I went to Chewonki, Maine Coast Semester gave me the opportunity to feel more fully engaged and self-directed in my work, a feeling I enjoy to this day. I am lucky to have found a career where I feel that way every day.

Anything you want to share about your current life?

My three-year-old daughter, Adaline, just started a French immersion preschool. We’re excited about her being bilingual; we visit my husband’s family in Montreal often. I’d love to connect with other semester alumni in Quebec. I’m also really proud about getting my Certified Energy Manager designation. There are so few women in this field, I hope to help change that!
Making a Splash to Save Lives
Team Chewonki Raises Money for Lifeflight of Maine

If you think Farm Manager Megan Phillips is tethered to terra firma, think again. In fact, every summer, Phillips transforms into a harbor seal to swim 3.1 miles through West Penobscot Bay’s brisk waters during the Islesboro Crossing, a fundraiser for Lifeflight of Maine. Lifeflight is a non-profit service that provides critical care and medical transport via helicopter and plane across Maine, no matter how remote.

Phillips led a team of eight intrepid, Chewonki-connected participants making the swim from the mainland town of Northport to the island town of Islesboro on August 18. Nine other Chewonki friends, designated "safety-boaters," paddled within five feet of the swimmers to provide encouragement and a resting perch if needed.

“In my life, safety-boaters take the form of family and friends who listen hard, women who quilt for charitable purposes, colleagues who do the good work of Chewonki every day, and farmers who plant straight rows while integrating family and friends who listen hard,” wrote Phillips before this year’s swim.

“LifeFlight of Maine is a metaphorical safety-boater for the whole of the state where I live, ensuring that all Mainers can have access to advanced medical care should the unthinkable happen,” she says. (The unthinkable does, unfortunately, sometimes happen. Chewonki has friends who would have lost their lives in separate incidents, a plane crash and a snowmobile crash, had LifeFlight not been available.)

Phillips set a $4,000 personal fundraising goal and the team as a whole shot for $15,000. Both she and the team exceeded their goal, raising $20,000 in total.

Congratulations, Team Chewonki! Thank you.

Chewonki Welcomes Two New Trustees

Elizabeth Mygatt

Elizabeth Mygatt has moved from the Chewonki board of advisors to the board of trustees. She is an associate partner in McKinsey & Company’s Boston office and a leader in the organization practice. She has wide experience in healthcare and other sectors, on topics including organizational and performance transformations, organizational health and culture change, non-clinical functional excellence, leadership, and governance and decision rights.

Her recent work focuses on organizational effectiveness, organizational design, increased collaboration across functions, and leadership and capability-building. Liz was previously a consultant with an environmental strategy firm, focusing on energy and carbon management, water management, and communications.

She holds an M.B.A. from Cornell University and a B.A. from Williams College. She grew up frolicking in the New Hampshire mountains and coastal Rhode Island and Maine. She is an alumna of Maine Coast Semester 20 and says that during her semester, she learned a great deal about community, showing up as her authentic self, and squirrels. In a former lifetime she was an elite rower but has transitioned to competing in an occasional marathon or triathlon.

Danforth Townley

Danforth Townley is a new member of the Chewonki board of trustees. Dan lives in Boston, Massachusetts, and Rye, New York, and is the general counsel of Bracebridge Capital, an investment firm he joined in 2017. In this capacity, he leads the legal team at Bracebridge in its day-to-day responsibilities and provides strategic legal counsel regarding firm initiatives.

Dan was a partner for almost 20 years with Davis Polk & Wardwell in New York City, advising private fund sponsors regarding the structuring and offering of funds, ongoing operations and mergers and acquisitions, and regulatory compliance. He then served from 2013 to 2017 as an attorney fellow in the Securities and Exchange Commission’s Division of Investment Management, where he provided leadership on the commission’s rulemaking activities as well as policy advice on asset management initiatives. Dan graduated from Yale College with a B.A. in history and received his J.D. from Yale Law School.

Dan and his wife, Birgit, who just resigned from the board of trustees, have two sons and a daughter (ages 23, 21, and 18), each of whom has been a Chewonki camper and wilderness tripper. Dan enjoys hiking, gardening, singing, traveling, and a variety of sports (including golf and table tennis). He has been active in his community as a member of the board of the Rye Presbyterian Church and as a Rye Youth Soccer coach for his daughter’s team.
They came, they saw, they gardened! Chewonki staff, Elementary School students, and friends gathered on a cool May morning to plant, weed, and wake up the Chewonki gardens in honor of the late Margaret Ellis, who died in 2011. The energy and spirit of the day, not to mention the work that got done, would have delighted her. Executive Director emeritus Tim Ellis was there in her stead to cast a wise eye over all the activity.

Along with creating and directing Chewonki’s health center, Ellis, a nurse practitioner, established perennial beds around the central campus and led Chewonki headlong into organic gardening, planting vegetable beds and bringing livestock back to the farm. She always involved students in gardening and farming, believing in the benefits of a hands-on relationship with nature and hard work. As Tim Ellis’s wife, Margaret Ellis also wore just about every hat there was to wear at this place from 1966 to 1991, with confidence, competence, compassion, humor, and brisk English flair.

Margaret Ellis Day had an even greater impact this year because it took place on a weekday, so the whole staff could participate. They tackled a wide range of essential spring projects while gardening was in full swing. Painting? Check. Raking? Check. Stacking wood? Deep cleaning? Trail maintenance? Check, check, check.

Thank you, volunteers!
Sheep are grazing the east side of Chewonki Neck for the first time in more than 100 years. In fall 2017, Chewonki embarked on transitioning 11 acres of diversified forest to a pasture ecosystem. This land, hemmed in by stone walls and a wetland, was sheep pasture in the merino wool boom of the 1800s.

At the start of the Eastside Pasture Restoration Project, I laid out the steps on a color-coded timeline in a spreadsheet that featured all sorts of bells and whistles. I assumed that I could predict when and how every part of this transition would occur. Simply put, nothing has gone exactly according to plan, and yet—if I can get out of the way and let the land dictate the terms of this great transformation—it’s all been just right.

The Dirt on Chewonki Neck

By Megan Phillips

Given that my point of reference for efficiency is what a few farmers and a horse can do in a day, the pace of the initial clearing of the Eastside Pasture was dramatic, with heavy equipment removing trees and grinding stumps in a matter of weeks. Since then, the rate of progress has slowed to a more sustainable, ecosystems-centric pace. What is happening is nothing short of scientific, the transition of a primarily fungus-based (forest) soil community to a primarily bacteria-based (pasture) soil community. And it is nothing short of miraculous. That first cover crop of oats poked through the carbon-heavy mulch of freshly ground stumps with sheer temerity, and a range of seeded and volunteer plants have followed. Sowing equipment broke and broke again, 2018 summer temperatures soared to the high 90s at the most inopportune moments, our wet spring in 2019 left parts of the fields soggy until July, and still the grass came up—not everywhere, but in verdant patches that prove again that life wants to live.

All last summer, I walked and watched this land, bore witness to the deer grazing each evening (including one fawn with twins), and excavated an old farm dump in the middle of the pasture with the help of Boys Camp campers (favorite find: all the metal parts of an old horse harness). Finally, many months after I had assumed our farm animals would start grazing, we introduced three cows onto the land. Feeling triumphant and slightly smug back at the barn a few minutes later, I was chagrined to look up and see one of the steers we’d laboriously moved onto the Eastside Pasture calmly strolling back towards where the dairy cows were pastured on the “home farm.”

Our more recent introduction of the Chewonki sheep flock—all baa-ing and running down Chewonki Neck Road towards the pasture entrance with Chewonki Elementary and Middle school students and staff acting as shepherds and human fences—was much more successful. All our wooly friends are staying inside their electric fences, and we rotate the flock daily onto a new patch of grass, mimicking the natural movement and intensive grazing practices of bison on the prairies. Good rotational grazing practices will significantly increase, not deplete, soil fertility and biodiversity over decades and centuries.

There is still much to be done, including manure spreading, fertilizing, reseeding bare spots, and soil testing, not to mention building more permanent fences and water lines in future years. But where we are right now is right here, and that is fine.
All Hands for Haying

When the farmers at Salt Marsh Farm say the hay is ready to come into the barn, we know the grass is sweet and dry and the weather is right and there is not a moment to spare. The task is challenging. The sun is hot. But the rhythm of working together to accomplish something useful and the sight and smell of the golden-green pile in the loft are more than enough reward. Haying seems to celebrate nature and human beings in proper friendship.

A Song of the good green grass!
A song no more of the city streets;
A song of farms -- a song of the soil of fields.
A song with the smell of sun-dried hay, where the nimble pitchers handle the pitch-fork...

Walt Whitman, “A Carol of Harvest, for 1867”

A Year of Sunbeams

Over the past year, Chewonki has significantly reduced its CO2 emissions and increased production of solar electricity megawatts here on campus. In 2015, Chewonki produced 20 megawatt hours (MWh) of solar electricity. In 2019, we produced 116.37 MWh! Our carbon output last year has been likewise been reduced by 295.89 tons because of solar generation, and we’ve replaced the equivalent of 68.6 barrels of oil with good ole sunshine.

Facilities Manager Carob Arnold explains, "The greatest agents of change came from new landscaping behind the Center for Environmental Education and the removal of a few trees so the solar panels on that building were exposed to more sunlight, as well as expanding the solar arrays on the Wallace, the Allen Center, and the CEE."

Output has reflected a snowy winter, wet spring, and gorgeous, sunny summer. If you’d like to learn more about our solar generation system, you can find real-time data online: https://revisionenergy.solarlog-web.net/chewonki/

New CEE Lights Brighter, Smarter

When the Center for Environmental Education (CEE) opened back in 2001, it boasted state-of-the-art, energy-efficient interior wall lights. Times have changed and lighting technology has evolved. Last summer, we replaced 18 of the old, high-pressure sodium halide fixtures with light-emitting diode (LED) lights. "The new fixtures produce more light, a more attractive color of light, and are almost exactly half the wattage of the old ones," says Facilities Manager Carob Arnold.

The new lights also solved what had become an aggravation: the old lights took a long time to warm up, so if you did a good deed by turning them off and later needed them back on, you’d have to wait 10 minutes for them to get to full brightness. With the Elementary School in the building and going in and out all day, the delay was so frequent and annoying that people had started to leave the lights on to avoid it, using more electricity. "Now, because we can easily and quickly turn the lights off and on," says Arnold, "we can get students into the habit of turning off the lights whenever they leave a room," an excellent habit for grown-ups too.
Are your name and address up-to-date? If not, please email alumni@chewonki.org and set us straight. Thank you!