



# The Clocktower Times

## Alumni Newsletter

*Echoes of the chimes of our time.*

*Fall 2023*

Hello CB Family,

Sunday mornings at camp were special. We slept in and milled around on the Clocktower Lawn after breakfast, eager to make our way down to the Chapel. We wondered, what song would Kate Freitas sing? What poem would a new camper read? What story would Jay Lance tell that would inspire us? Tucked behind the archery range, in this special reflective space, campers and staff gather to share poems, songs, and hugs.

While creating this edition of the Clocktower Times, we were reminded of the sense of mystery to 'Chapel' before one braved their inaugural attendance and, also, how much effort counselors put into creating that comforting and meaningful space. You'll learn that the sense of belonging felt by campers and staff after a few peaceful hours in the camp Chapel has, undoubtedly, withstood the test of time.

With love,

Amy Cone Glidden & Meredith Cone  
CTT Co-Editors



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# Greetings from the Board...

**By Andy Schneider, Board President**

When I first attended camp in the mid-90's, I never wanted to attend chapel. That space on campus always carried some mystery and trepidation, like I would catch something if I got too close. Growing up as a Jewish kid on Long Island, anything that was remotely associated with religious services was a non-starter, and chapel sounded a lot like temple to me; I wanted no part of it.

But as each year passed, I looked at those quiet woods behind the archery range with more intrigue. I wondered what happened there and whether or not it was for me. When I became a CIT, with a newfound responsibility to model good behavior for campers, I finally chose to attend chapel for the first time. I was greeted not with spiritual or religious prayers, but instead with a hug. Hmmm... that wasn't what I expected.

I've written to you all many times about camp's evolution. It's a topic I've become more and more fascinated with over my five years serving on the Board of Directors. When I visit camp today, I'm always perplexed how things feel both new and familiar at the same time. Traditions that existed decades ago still exist today, but with a twist. We still take attendance at colors, but a simple "all here" is rarely how each cabin announces its presence to the community (instead attendance is more like a 3-5 second campfire performance). We still sing grace before each meal, but it's more of a camp song now than a religious blessing. Traditions remain, yet they have evolved. Our wonderful little chapel is mostly a relic of camp's history as a YMCA camp, but what it has evolved into is emblematic of camp's broader evolution; while we always remain connected to our traditions, we never let them hold us back. We look inwards to who we are, what is part of our camp DNA, and we tweak it ever-so-slightly to become something new.

This evolution feels, in many ways, similar to the work we are doing with the Board of Directors every year. Together, we represent past generations of camp, from the 1950's all the way through the 2010's. We're tasked not with keeping camp exactly as it is, but instead partnering with Anne and Sean to push Billings forward for future generations, to be something familiar but new. In July, we voted to approve a new strategic plan that includes three key pillars that we believe will do just that: 1.) Professionalizing and modernizing camp's business operations; 2.) Prioritizing long-range planning, financial sustainability, and facilities upgrades; and 3.) Supporting our Directors in evolving programming rooted in both Camp Billings tradition and the current wants of today's families. We thank everyone who supported the creation of this plan through surveys and volunteering. There will be many more opportunities for alumni and friends to get involved as we shift from drafting our strategic plan to implementing it. It's time to get to work!

Your friend and fellow alumni,

Andy



# A Note from CB's Directors, Anne and Sean Collins!

Imagine it's a beautiful Sunday morning. You've just finished making your bed for morning cabin cleanup after an extra ½ hour of sleep and you hear the bugle sound and make your way down to the woodsy nook where hugs and cathartic tears abound. Chapel is a pillar of Camp's culture of love and family. A place to solidify future lifelong friendships, solace for those who miss home, and bravery for those who want to take a chance. While sappy to some and too silly for others, it's the thing many people look forward to most, even if only once per session. Wherever you're reading this, we hope the thought of chapel fills you with the same source of comfort and warmth it's always provided us.

We have been coming to camp since 1997 and have so much to say about chapel; but instead of a story, we thought we'd distill our nostalgia down into some easily recognizable concepts. Maybe you can make your own and see how they compare.

Anne & Sean (and Teddy)



## Anne and Sean's Top Ten Things About Chapel:

10. The freshly showered and well rested attendees.
9. Knowing cabin clean-up is already done.
8. The huge tree blocking everyone's view.
7. People trying to pronounce "Non-Denominational."
6. The distant sound of tetherball thwaps and Gaga cheers
5. Planned and impromptu poems, songs, nostalgic/sappy stories.
4. The tears.
3. Walking across the bridge under the latticed arbor.
2. Being in an encouraging and safe space to express yourself.
1. The hug line.

## Top 5 Recent Chapel Moments:

5. Will Pasley's dining hall chapel announcements..
4. Ghost walkers being terrified to ever return after dark.
3. That time Bob hid 'the axe' in a chapel bench.
2. Henry Lang jumping out of a box to surprise a jet lagged Gaz.
1. Aidan and David's beautiful Post-Camp wedding.



# CHAPEL CHAT!

WE ♥ OUR CHILDREN

## *When I think of Chapel, I think of...*

Those cheesy stories from 'Chicken Soup for the Soul'.

The counselors I admired most, singing renditions of various Indigo Girls songs in (what sounded to me like) perfect harmonies.

Looking up lyrics from 'Rise up and Sing,' copying them, and arranging them with doodles for our program.

Spotting my crush sitting on a log across the way and hoping I may snag a hug because there is a hug minimum before we can leave the service.

But most of all...

The vulnerability of a 13 year old boy to stand in front of a group of people he has known for no more than 6 days, and weep, because he has never felt as at home as when he first entered those "white gates."

-Anne Vachon

## CTT FLASHBACK

### OPENING CHAPEL

Camp Billings Chapel, Vermont-- Do you feel fulfilled? That was the question for the opening chapel ceremony this summer. The focus was on beginnings and the importance of camp. Chapel fell upon the first day of summer, June 21st, a significant date indeed.

The new chapel staff seemed to gel quickly. Derek, Jay, Wendy, Scott Reeder, Jasen, and Jeff Matteson each shared a part of the service. Songs were sung:

"Rocky Top," "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing," "Lord of the Dance," and the all-time camp favorite: "Annie's Song." An executive decision was made to sing "Annie's Song" every week. Hurray! Wendy and Scott read a poem and Derek read a passage from Robert Fulgrum's book, Everything I Ever Wanted to Know I Learned in Kindergarten. Jeff and Wendy led prayers, and Jay, Jasen, Noah, and Paul Behar gave inspirational talks about their love for camp.



### Noah Cole: Camper & Staff - '80's - 90's

**Favorite Chapel Memory:** The summer I was the archery counselor, I got to spend lots of time in the chapel — between morning periods to escape the heat or to retrieve arrows destined for nearby targets. It became my favorite escape at camp, and knew it could always provide a moment of zen and quiet respite. But my favorite memory of chapel is the connection to the people and that small corner of camp I always feel at the end of a service.

**One word that describes chapel:** Community

**Favorite Chapel Song:** "Rise and Shine"

**Age you first went to Chapel:** 11 years old

### Eben Cole: Camper - '10-'20's

**Favorite Chapel Memory:** I remember during summer 2021 when the first chapel in nearly two years was held. The sense of community that morning felt especially strong, the barrier of COVID no longer present. There was a profound amount of emotion that day, and it served as a reminder of how important camp is to me and every other person who has attended Billings. Chapel always brings people closer together, but that first chapel of 2021 felt all the more special.

**One word that describes chapel:** Powerful

**Favorite Chapel Song:** "Hallelujah"

**Age you first went to Chapel:** 9 years old

## *Like Father, Like Son*



# May I Have A Word with the Board?

## A quick Q&A with members of the Board of Directors

### Andy Schneider

**What decades were you at camp?**

The 90's and 2000's.

**Do you have multiple generations in your family that attend or have attended Camp Billings?**

Just me and my sister Erica, who attended in 2002 and 2003.

**Were you a camper, staff or both?**

Both! Camper 1995-1997, CIT 1998-1999, and Staff from 2000-2009.

**What are your roles on the board?**

I serve as President of the Board and am also a member of the Finance Committee.

**Favorite Evening Program?**

2009 3rd session Battle of the Bands was my Sistine Chapel. I believe we were also disqualified.

**Did you ever cry when you left camp (be honest)?**

I choose not to answer this question.

**What are three words that describe Billings?**

My Second Family.

**Do you have advice on how alumni can support Billings now and in the future?**

There are many ways to stay involved and support. Word of mouth, telling friends with camp-aged kids about Billings is the best way to keep camp's enrollment pipeline strong. For you, following camp on social media, keeping your contact information up to date for Alumni Clocktower Times and emails, and keeping camp on your shortlist if you choose to give to charitable causes each year are all very valuable ways to support!

### Sarah Halton

**What decades were you at camp?**

90's and 2000's.

**Do you have multiple generations in your family that attend or have attended Camp Billings?**

I was the first to attend in my family, followed by my sisters Julia and Mia and now my daughter Lia.

**Were you a camper, staff or both?**

Camper, CIT, Staff, CIT Director.

**What are your roles on the board?**

Member of the Board and member of the Executive Committee as the clerk/secretary.

**Favorite Evening Program?**

Battle of the bands. As a camper in Cabin 2, we did a song by The Jackson 5. It was awesome.

I still remember it! As a staff member, I always loved to watch the performances and was always so impressed by what campers are able to put together in such little time!

**Did you ever cry when you left camp (be honest)?**

EVERY.SINGLE.TIME.

**What are three words that describe Billings?**

Family, home, beautiful.

**Do you have advice on how alumni can support Billings now and in the future?**

Send your kids! Tell your friends about Billings, write to the CTT with updates, and keep Billings in mind when you want to make a meaningful donation.



# Country roads...take me home

*All roads eventually lead back to Billings. This summer, alumni returned to bring their next gen campers back to the most magical place on earth. Recognize any alumni here?*



Russell Booth & Sean Collins



Shannon Thompson Schlottmann &  
Elizabeth Thompson Holmes



Paul Behar & Luke Gebb



Cheryl Mote Chafos



Johnner Freitas



Willie Crocker & Annie Vallieres Novis



Marc Engle



Anne-Isabelle Gingras



Anne-Marie Delisle & Beth Freitas Crocker



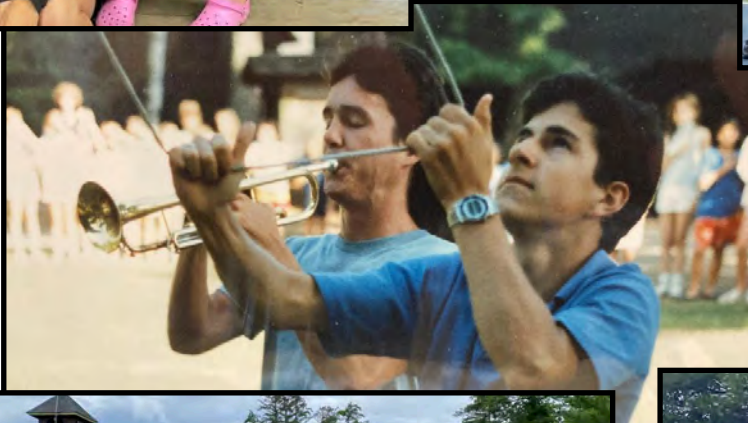
Perrin Cothran Chick & Nanette Van Vliet



Anne Hartman Collins & Catherine Harding

# Summer Snaps: Old & New

A special thank you to Perrin Cothran Chick for assisting with picture taking this summer!



# Alumni Updates



**Mikey Popovich** and their mom and alumna, **Jennifer Ciarmoli**.

The **Crocker** family reunited at Rochester Institute of Technology's Parents Weekend, where CB staff and former camper, **CJ Crocker**, is enjoying his Freshman year. The Crockers didn't miss a chance to also reunite with camper **Lizzy Popovich**, CIT



*Crockers & Popovichs celebrating at RIT Parents Weekend*



**Anne Vachon** (camper and staff 1995-2007), **Elise Bragard** (staff 2008-2018), **Anna Pond** (camper and staff 2005-2015), **Corby Ferlesch** (camper and staff, 2001-2010, 2014, 2018-2021), **Carly Green** (camper and staff 1997-2010), **Aj Hart** (camper and staff 2004-2015), **Stephanie Ellicott** (camper and staff 2007-2015 and 2022).



Celebrating Laura and Charlie – **Mica von Turkovich**, **Steph Ellicott**, **Ellen Manby**, **Reeves Hart**, **Annaclare Smith**, **Laura Conroy**, **Brianna Raymes**, **Lexie Millikin**, **Nick Erly**, **Connor Wright**.

In Memoriam - Marilyn Romine, wife of **Edward Romine**, contacted Camp Billings to share the sad news that Ed passed away in March of this year. Ed was originally from Wilder, VT, and was a camper and staff member in the 60's. He was very involved in skits (writing, acting, and directing) that were part of the evenings' entertainment. Ed taught acting at Santa Barbara City College for 26 years, and performed in theater productions in Santa Barbara, CA, for many years. Marilyn shared that Ed had very fond memories of Camp Billings, and enjoyed reading the Clocktower Times.

# CAMP STORE

## Support Billings By Shopping at Our Online Camp Store



Gifts from the camp store are always a big hit. Scan the QR code or visit <https://campbillings.org/store>

### *CB Night-lights*



*As the days get darker, perhaps you need a little Billings energy to light your way or keep you company. These handcrafted, limited edition night-lights will make a wonderful holiday gift too.*

*There are only 16 available. Be sure to check out the website to see these night-lights, and similar suncatchers.*

**\$25**



Alumni Mat Turgeon, Marc-Andre LaFleur, Canac Marquis, Jeff Cantin, Olivier Turcot, Antoine Turgeon. (Jeff sporting HIS CB swag!)



Beth Freitas Crocker, Elissa Malcolm, Ceci Stashwick Fleming, Nina Bettinger Tallering, Kate Freitas & Amy Cone Glidden at Ceci's in Maine. (ALL ladies sporting their CB swag - c'mon boys!)

# Name That Chapel Song

When you're down and troubled	And soon I will be there	To see you again	And I went to the doctor, I went to the mountains	There's more than one answer to these questions	And the less I seek my source for some definitive
And you need a helping hand	To brighten up even your darkest nights	Winter, spring summer or fall	I looked to the children, I drank from the fountains	Pointing me in a crooked line	Closer I am to fine, yeah
And nothing, oh, nothing is going right	You just call out my name	All you've got to do is call			
Close your eyes and think of me	And you know wherever I am	And I'll be there, yeah, yeah, yeah			
	I'll come running, oh, yeah, baby	You've got a friend			

Yes, I'm bein' followed by a moonshadow	Leapin' and hoppin' on a moonshadow
Moonshadow, moonshadow	Moonshadow, moonshadow

And the seasons, they go round and round  
And the painted ponies go up and down  
We're captive on the carousel of time  
We can't return, we can only look  
Behind, from where we came  
And go round and round and round, in the circle game

## Members of the Board

President - **Andrew Schneider**, Morristown, NJ

Vice President - **Bob Green**, Pompano Beach, FL

Treasurer - **Ted Rossi**, Moscow, VT

Secretary - **Sarah Halton**, Montreal, QC

**Paul Behar**, Wilton, CT

**Eliza Browning**, New York, NY

**Ben Cheney**, Montpelier, VT

**Carolyn Sylvester Churchill**, Durham, NH

**Beth Freitas Crocker**, Framingham, MA

**Dr. Sally Elliot**, Little Compton, RI

**Jeff Fehrs**, Williston, VT

**John Freitas**, Newton, MA

**John Lisak**, Rochester, NY

**Dr. Jessica Pepitone**, Rumford, RI

**Vicki Smith**, Lyme, NH

**Jasmine St. Laurent**, Hudson, QC

**Josh Novis**, Montreal, QC

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