



# The Clocktower Times

## Alumni Newsletter

*Echoes of the chimes of our time.*  
*Spring 2025*

Hello CB Family,

Whether as a camper, or as a staff member, Evening Program was always our favorite part of the camp day. The excitement would start building at dinner, often kicked off by a counselor-led spectacle. Afterward came the anticipation and the preparation, whether it was the gathering of odd items for Grab Bag, rehearsing a final act for Battle of the Bands, or lacing up sneakers for Capture the Flag. The rush and the energy-fueled excitement from the evening carried back to the cabins, where we'd wind down by sharing stories and laughs from the night.

Truthfully, though, Amy's favorite evening program as a camper, hands down, was Grab Bag. If you have never experienced the joy and creativity of Grab Bag, let us explain its chaotic amazingness.

Campers would sprint back to their cabin from the dining hall where the goal was clear, but the path was pure bedlam; shove everything into your trash bag. No time to think. No logic. Only fast hands and ZERO judgment.

- Is that a purple stuffed animal? Toss it in.
- A broom from cabin clean-up? Could be useful.
- A retainer? Uhh...yeah!
- A collection of freshly made gimp bracelets, a can of hairspray, last session's CTT? ALL OF IT.

Next, everyone would gather on the Clocktower Lawn (or inside if raining) and only then, trash bags bursting at the seams and campers buzzing with excitement, did the REAL madness begin. Judges (usually three counselors with a megaphone and far too

much power) would shout out something completely random to the campers:

*"A purple shoe on a teddy bear!"*  
*"An orange roll of toilet paper!"*  
*"A pinecone wearing a hat!"*

Instantly, the frenzy would erupt! Campers and staff would go insane, flinging wet socks, swimsuits, and hairbrushes into the air in search of the called item. Someone from each cabin would sprint to the front, waving the object above their head like it was the Holy Grail. It didn't matter who had the most precise items, really. What mattered was how hard you tried (and kissing up was VERY welcome!), how loud you cheered and if you made it in before the megaphone went off. No one ever knew how the judges scored it. There were no official rules, just in-the-moment vibes. And that made it even more desirable for EVERYONE to hold onto hope and fight their way to be the most creative.

Looking back, it's clear that every evening at Camp was a small part of a larger journey. Whether we were plotting our Capture the Flag route (or gossiping -let's be real), or frantically waving a plunger (so gross!) in hopes of earning a judge's nod in Grab Bag, it was all creating something much bigger: a sense of community, of shared experiences, of knowing we were part of something wildly fun and deeply meaningful. In this edition, we are excited to share memories and highlights from past Evening Programs.

With love,  
Amy Cone Glidden & Meredith Cone  
CTT Co-Editors

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# Greetings from the Board...

## By Andy Schneider, Board President

Dear Camp Billings Family,

After seven incredible years as Directors and a combined 57 summers at Camp Billings, Anne and Sean Collins have informed the Board of Directors that they have made the difficult decision to step down from their leadership roles after the summer of 2026 in order to spend more time with their family. While we are saddened to see them go, we are also deeply grateful for their dedication, leadership, and the countless memories they have helped create for our campers, staff, alumni, and entire Camp Billings community.

Anne and Sean truly embody what makes Camp Billings unique. After growing up as campers and joining the staff in the early 2000s, they always ensured that every camper who passed through the white gates was sure to experience the magic of Camp Billings. Certainly, there were the frequent moments of laughter, wacky events, and lasting, meaningful friendships. But as lifelong educators, Anne and Sean are deeply committed to the development of young people – through camp duties, trying new activities, taking risks, and the individual growth that occurs for so many of us when we leave home for the first time and come to camp. Their commitment to our mission, their passion for creating an inclusive environment, and their tireless efforts to uphold the traditions of Camp Billings have left an indelible mark on our community.

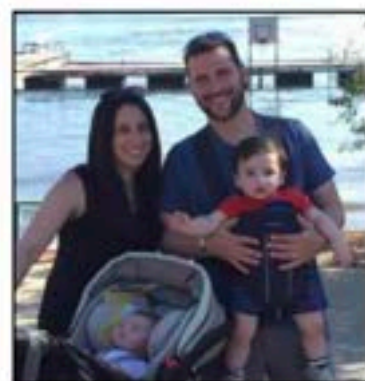
In the coming weeks, the Camp Billings Board of Directors will launch a search for our first full-time Executive Director. This new position will be an evolution of the role that Anne and Sean, Bob Green, John and Anne Freitas, and Ralph Lawrence have thrived in for nearly three-quarters of a century. We deeply value our roots as a camp but also acknowledge that the needs of the Billings community in 2025 are different from those in 2005 or 1985. As the needs of our community evolve, so too must our camp operations. As we look back at the last 120 years of exceptional camp leadership, we believe that this important change will help us to thrive for the next 120. We look forward to sharing further updates with you on this search process as it progresses in the weeks and months ahead.

As Anne and Sean will continue to serve as Directors through 2026, there will be no impact on camp program or operations; campers and staff will continue to have a fun, safe, and exceptional experience while celebrating Anne and Sean and welcoming a new Executive Director into our Billings family. Camp Billings will continue to operate as the same Camp Billings we all know and love.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the entire Camp Billings family, thank you, Anne and Sean, for your years of service, your boundless energy, and above all else, your love for our dear old camp. And while we know you are looking forward to traveling and spending time with your daughter, Teddy, we know we will see you again soon. In other words – it's goodnight, but not goodbye.

With gratitude,

Andy Schneider  
President of the Board of Directors





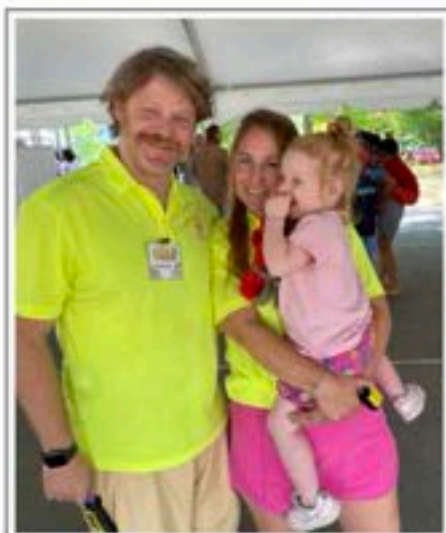
# A Note from CB's Directors, Anne and Sean Collins!



Dear Camp Billings Family,

It's hard to find the right words to express what Camp Billings means to us – and even harder to share the news that the summer of 2026 will be our last as Directors. After a lot of reflection, and some tears, we've made the decision to step down, knowing it's the right time for our family to prioritize being with our daughter, Teddy, our families, and each other.

Since 1997, Camp Billings has been our second home – and since 2018, it's been the greatest honor of our lives to serve as Directors. We are deeply grateful to all of you – campers, families, alumni, and staff – for your trust, your support, and your endless love for this magical place. Every song in the dining hall, every skip around the room, every campfire, every day, and every memory has left a lasting imprint on our hearts.



Please know this: we are as excited and energized as ever for our final two summers! We've put together an absolutely incredible staff – full of familiar faces and fresh energy – and have been hard at work dreaming up new special events that we can't wait to share with you. At the same time, we're fiercely committed to preserving the beloved traditions that make Billings feel like home, year after year. It's going to be an amazing blend of the classic and the new, and we feel so lucky to be able to lead Camp through these next two unforgettable summers.

Over these next two years, we'll be working closely with the Camp Billings Board to ensure a smooth and thoughtful transition to new leadership – setting the stage for Camp's next incredible chapter as it moves into its thirteenth decade.



While it's hard to imagine stepping away, we know that Camp Billings doesn't belong to any one person – it belongs to all of us, and it will continue to thrive with the same spirit, heart, and tradition that makes it so special.

We can't thank you enough for allowing us to be part of your families and your memories. We're already looking forward to celebrating with you all next summer at the reunion!

With all our love and gratitude,

Anne and Sean





# Evening Program: Anne Collins

Ahh, Evening Program, the culminating event of every day at camp. In my nearly thirty year tenure, Evening Program has consisted of activities from capture the flag (classic to kick off the session), to movie night (how many times did I see Muppets' Treasure Island?), to the square dance (swing your partner), to, under Tyler Gardner's reign, competitive camp duties night...(unsurprisingly ridiculous). Everyone looks forward to those precious ninety minutes from 7:30-9:00 where all campers and staff come together to play, celebrate, and enjoy something as a whole Billings family. I thought I'd rank my top 7 favorite Evening Programs, with a few anecdotes thrown in.

## Anne's Top 7

1. Capture the Flag- Capture the Flag was always my number one as both a camper and a staff member. There was something intoxicating about being thrown into a game in the evening after only being at camp for a few hours. You can run around with a bunch of strangers of every age and gender and try to outrun eight-year-olds and twenty-five-year-olds. While I fancy myself an athlete, I had a hard time capturing flags, but not for lack of trying. My most shameful CtF memory was a successful captured flag because my chaser slipped on the gravel by the middle tennis courts. This resulted in a lot of blood for them, and a captured flag with an asterisk for me.



2. Biffers and Medics

3. Battle of the Bands - One of my most exciting Battle of the Bands experiences was taking home the trophy for girls' senior row as a camper, aged 14, in Tent 1A. There were only six of us in the tent, and it was our first year with a new cook. I distinctly remember my first day of camp in 1997 lunch being canned pineapple chicken, so in 2003 when we were having meals like tacos with all the fixings, and ziti and salad, you can imagine our excitement. We wrote a song to honor the new cook and performed it A cappella with a base of "boneless chicken and cake." That still gets stuck in my head sometimes.

4. Square Dance

5. International Night - As a camper, international night often consisted of French bread, Italian pasta and Chinese fortune cookies. After dinner we would sign up for different stations like, "How to talk like an Australian" or "Understand the rules of cricket." One summer with a particularly low international staff count, there were offers like, "How to act like you're from New Jersey" and "Come play knockout at athletics"—not so international it seems. Casey Huling and Bob Green took International Night to an unbelievable level when Casey ran the kitchen. The entire Evening Program became the dinner itself. It was an immersive experience with rented china, tablecloths, and a beautifully decorated Dining Hall. We stuffed our faces in a German beer hall, were delighted in a bedouin tent, and consumed fresh fruit at the Pineapple Lounge beneath Casey's impressive sign. Now International Night is one of the most anticipated evening programs of the summer and we have so much fun pulling it off.

6. Olympics/Land Games

7. Evening Program Evening Program- Exactly what it sounds like. Every station was a different evening program. I ran the "movie night" station and showed seven minutes of She's the Man, before campers went off to play wiffle ball for the next seven.



# Evening Program: Sean Collins

In my years at camp some of my favorites have been opening night Capture the Flag, Rock Drop, Jack's Alive, Staff Hunt, and of course, the all time greatest evening program - Grab Bag. Beyond the classics, my favorite memories of Evening Program was the time I spent running it with Alexi Ernstoff. We felt such a strong sense of responsibility in being the ones who scheduled, organized, invented, and implemented the events each night. Every detail mattered from the exact start/ending time, making sure stations had all their supplies, to making sure every kid was on a team with different people than they were the previous night. Our biggest challenge seemed to be finding the perfect cork and skewer for Jack's Alive... everyone had opinions on the exact materials needed and Foggs even ran out of corks one session(!).

Our proudest achievement and favorite EP memory, however, was coming up with the (in)famous CHAOS night. Alexi and I couldn't stop cackling as we came up with messier and messier stations from syrup shampoo, oatmeal bath, to my personal favorite the human birdfeeder in which a campers covered a counselor in peanut butter and bird feed before making them stand on one leg on a rock. For a decade after the first Chaos, you could hear campers and staff referring to how much they loved it or hated it.

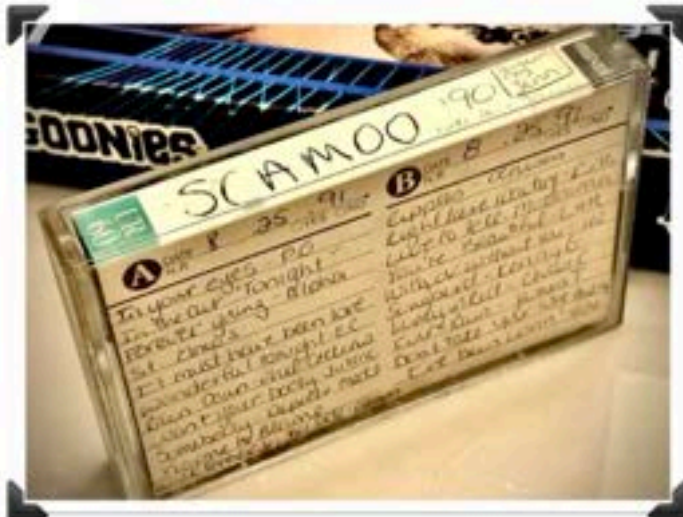
It was incredibly challenging but we got to see the results each night. Most nights were incredible, others were duds, meals went late and threw off our timing, we almost always said "maybe just give them another few minutes before taps," and no matter what the cork was made of someone always ended up smothering it to make sure Jeff Colt or Jack Redell ended up doing a forfeit. Success was measured by how much the campers and staff talked about it and how happy they were while they were doing it. I still look at my time running EP with Alexi as one of the best summers I've ever experienced.





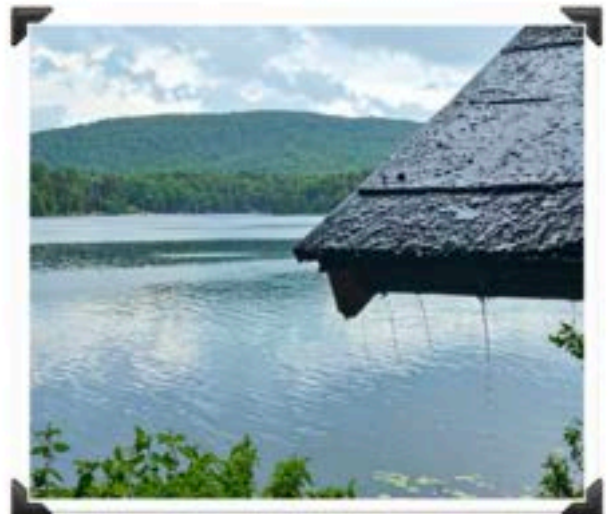
# The Sound of Summer at Camp Billings

- ✿ The sound of two hundred Camp Billings campers and staff banging on tables and belting out “Country Roads” and “Ship Titanic.”
- ✿ The sound of the Virginia Reel and Pat-a-Cake Polka being called out across the tennis courts.
- ✿ The sound of loons on Lake Fairlee at the start of summer, before the water gets too busy with boats.
- ✿ The sound of campers yelling, “I’ve got next game!” at any tetherball post in camp.



- ✿ The sound of the old phone ringing in the Clocktower or library, followed by a counselor shouting another counselor's name to come get their call.
- ✿ The sound of the dining room bell ringing, followed by an instant quieting down.
- ✿ The sound of the first few notes of "Ripples" by Genesis. To this day, your heart still skips a beat when you hear it.

- ✿ The sound of campers competing during Battle of the Bands— shout out to Daniella Alvarez Bradley and Jenn Bradley for our 1988 version of Parents Just Don't Understand.
- ✿ The sound of our LIVE bugle. I mean— COME ON!!!
- ✿ The sound of rain tapping on your tent or cabin roof while you're warm and snuggled in your sleeping bag.





# May I Have a Word with the Board?

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

## Josh Novis

**What decades were you at Camp?**

'90s - '92-'99

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

Yes - I attended with my sisters, Emily and Rebecca. I also met my wife, Annie Vallieres, at camp. Our daughters have been campers and are now staff.

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

Both.

**Favorite Evening Program?**

Capture the Flag and Biffers & Medics were always my favourite Evening Programs.

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

Of course I did!

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

Friends, Freedom, Home

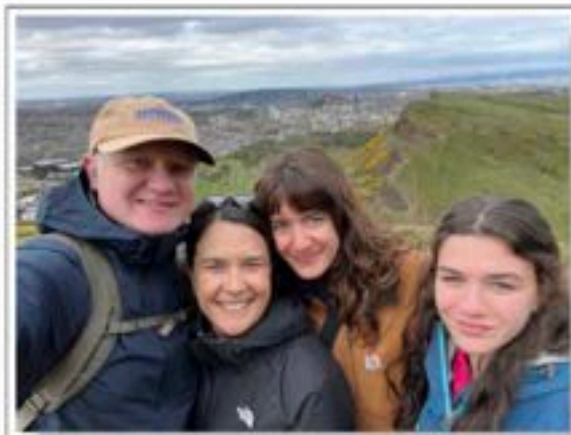
**What are your roles on the board?**

I'm chair of the Development Committee and sit on the Marketing and Enrollment Committee also.

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

The two most important things that all alumni can do for camp are to talk about camp with friends and neighbors and to donate regularly. Almost every camper at Billings has come from word of mouth from current campers and alumni. I, for one, owe my Billings experience to Caroline Churchill. We still have spaces for 1st and 4th Sessions, and with the new initiative to test out a week at camp, now is the best time to let new parents know what a wonderful experience they can offer their child so please tell everyone about Camp! Camp's tuition funds the summer activities but all other investment like improvements to the facilities, "camperships", new programs, equipment, and maintenance come from donations. We strive to maintain the safe, supportive, and free space that Camp Billings provides, and I believe that protecting these opportunities for our kids is incredibly important. We have some big initiatives on the table for the years to come so please consider Camp Billings in your giving plans. Alumni can give directly through the Camp Billings website, or if you would like to discuss specific initiatives we have planned, and how your donations can be used, please don't hesitate to contact me directly. I love talking about Camp Billings, and appreciate the opportunity to share our goals with all alumni.

joshnovis@hotmail.com



Josh, Annie (Vallieres), Juliette & Lillian Novis in Edinburgh 2025.







MONSIE, DON'T GO!

# YO! EVENING

SUNDAY'S OPENING CAMP-FEU

Dart Hall, VT -- The first evening program, The Justice League and Darts. But all these things together and you have a really exciting program. The most exciting part with these things that the campers brought for a joint appearance of Camp Billings campers. Due to rain it was moved inside but it didn't stop them from having a great show. They were some songs

and throughout the evening they performed various programs and songs. Eric Bogle the famed folk singer made an appearance along with an mystery women that attracted a huge crowd. They also presented an amazing lot of the top ten evening events. The evening was capped up by a most excellent rendition of "Johannes Brahms". What a way to start off this season!

# Talent Show

Dart Hall, VT -- Camp's second talent show for the summer was as good, if not better, than the first one. The CITs produced an excellent variety of singing, dancing, story telling and piano playing. With the help of a few campers, the CITs became comedians with each of them telling a chicken joke.

Kate x 5 opened the evening with The Rose, for

which they received a standing ovation. Prue, with the help of Debbie, sang her own song, as did Jay. Scott Reader teamed up with Gretchen, Christian, Ani and Kristy and did some synchronized dancing. Cabin 5 and their counselors weren't about to be left out and danced and sang "Shake that Body".

Cont'd → next Page

# SHOW OF the TALENT variety . . . . . cont'd

Jasen Boyd got the crowd singing but Mike got them yelling and dancing with Father Abrahams. Bug juice and peanuts went flying as everyone danced on 1 leg with their arms flailing.

For all of those talented people that weren't mentioned you were not forgotten. All of the acts were outstanding and participation, excellent. Thanks to the CITs, the evening was a huge success



# DANCE

B-ball court and ball court, VT -- Larry's favourite evening program seems to have started earlier this summer. Everett's traveling square dance has never been so popular, with just about every camper and counselor participating.

All of the old dances were included - The Heel n Toe Polka, BINGO and The Virginia Reel, to modern, upbeat songs like "Gloria". City boys Dan Figotin and Greg Kravchuk were seen enjoying themselves doing "hick" dances, along with Jennifer Dyer from cabin 4.

The waterfront staff completed the evening with dancing and lifeguard displays. After 2 weeks the docks have finally settled into place.







## The Movie Natural

### THE NATURAL

The Natural was another excellent movie choice and a great way to end the summer of movies. The audience was silent apart from the odd cheer when Roy Hobbs knocked out the lights, the camera and anything else that got in his way.

Do you think that Roy's son will follow in his footsteps - accidental stardom, hibernation, major fame and retirement?

If Hobbs had gone to the police none of this would have ever happened!

Mais, it's true!!



## BOAT TEST '92

Boat Dock, YT--The staff really enjoyed changing back to the old boat test. They commented that they never had enough free time to row back and forth across the lake a few times. We had approximately 90 children plus CITs pass the test including Robert Churchill from cabin 7 and Ashley Ferrell, Kristen Merrill, Ariel Rothstein and Audrey Simard, all from cabin 6. Well done to all of the campers who passed the test.

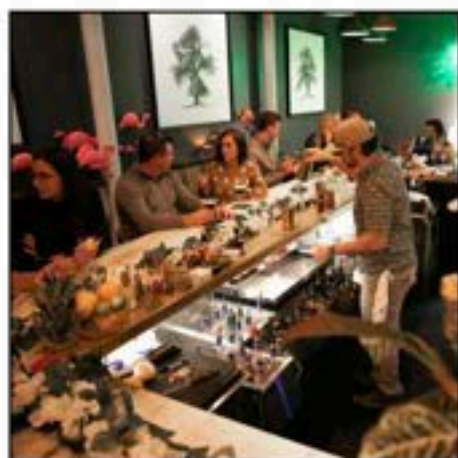




# Alumni Updates

Billings Baby on Board! Anne Vachon, Anna Pond, Corby Ferlesch, Stephanie Ellicott, AJ Hart, and Carly Green threw Elise Bragard a baby shower this March.

The shower was "board games" themed, which was strange since anyone who knows Elise knows she's the least competitive person who ever worked at Camp Billings.



Congratulations to our very own, **Max Overstrom-Coleman**, Camper 90's, whose bar in White River Junction, VT - *Wolf Tree* - is a James Beard FINALIST! The James Beard Award is an extremely prestigious award that recognizes chefs, restauranteurs, journalists and authors. Winners will be announced in Chicago at the Restaurant and Chef Awards ceremony on Monday, June 16, 2025. We were lucky to have Max as one of the caterers at our last reunion!

Max has called *Wolf Tree* his love letter to Vermont. We are cheering you on, *Wolf Tree*, and Max!

## CALLING ALL ALUMNI!

It's hard to believe we're less than TWO years away from the next Camp Billings Reunion.

What's an event without a great theme and volunteers? We're engaging alumni for input on our theme and to join our Reunion Planning Committee. Please submit your theme idea(s) via this form here:

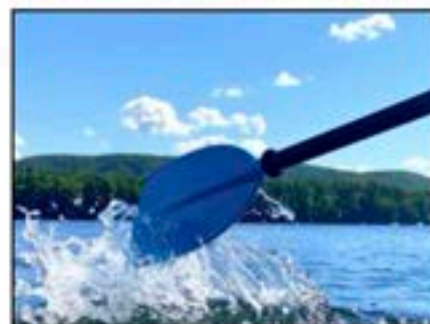
<https://forms.gle/3xvAgCJC55zfxMoB8>

And please send an email here to join the Reunion Planning Committee:

[alumni@campbillings.org](mailto:alumni@campbillings.org)

We appreciate your creative support! It takes a village to make events like this a success.

-Camp Billings Alumni Committee





# CAMP STORE



**Gifts from the Camp store are always  
a big hit!**

**Scan the QR code or visit:**

<https://campbillings.org/store>

## ANNOUNCEMENTS!!!

### GOING GREEN...ISH

Beginning in 2025, editions of The Clocktower Times will only be mailed within the United States. If you are a member of our international Camp family, please make sure to submit your email address to [alumni@campbillings.org](mailto:alumni@campbillings.org) to ensure receipt of future digital versions.

Remember, you can always view The Clocktower Times via our social media pages!

### Members of the Board

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

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