



## Shiloh Pond Opens to Begin a Great Camp Season

Jane Megginson, Camp Program Manager

This year saw the completion of an enormous project that has been a long time coming and has made a huge impact on our program, the Shiloh Pond. Thanks to everyone who made the pond happen with financial donations, and contributions of much time and effort. I would particularly like to thank Allen Fetter and David Hunter for working so hard to finish the construction in time for camp this past summer! The pond was immediately a big hit at Shiloh and the hot summer pinpointed the need for a place in camp where everyone could go to cool off and enjoy a good swim. Camp enrollment was up, and I think everyone there was and will be happier and healthier for having the pond.

In other news at Shiloh, Hope Swank capably directed Shiloh on her own for the first time this past summer. I am grateful for the work Hope has put in, hiring and directing her staff for a successful and fun-filled summer, serving 156 campers (averaging 53 campers per session). The combination of an energetic staff, lots of great activities, the beautiful backdrop of the Shenandoah Mountains, and now a great place to swim combine for a fantastic camp experience at Shiloh.

We welcomed two great Co-Directors at Catoctin this summer, Kathrin Gilbert and Dyresha Harris. They did a fine job in their new roles. Both Kathrin and Dyresha have worked in the Camping Program for many years. It was exciting for me to work closely with them, getting to know both of them better, and get charged up by all of the energy, skills and experience that they are bringing to the job. The transition to new leadership at any of our camps is a great opportunity for us, both to recognize the great gifts and skills that our outgoing leader possessed and developed, and to welcome in and nurture new leaders who bring different strengths, ideas, and energy. I found that working with new directors at several of our camps has kept me on my toes, and created new challenges and joys in my own job. Catoctin has had a Diversity Project for the past several years aimed at bringing in campers who are racially and class diverse. Over the past 5 summers, this has resulted in an increase in racial diversity from 15% of Catoctin campers to the current 27%. Our work is not done. We need to prepare, recruit and welcome campers from all types of backgrounds, and perhaps more challenging, make sure that we meet their needs and provide a welcoming, comfortable, and exciting place for all of our campers to experience community.

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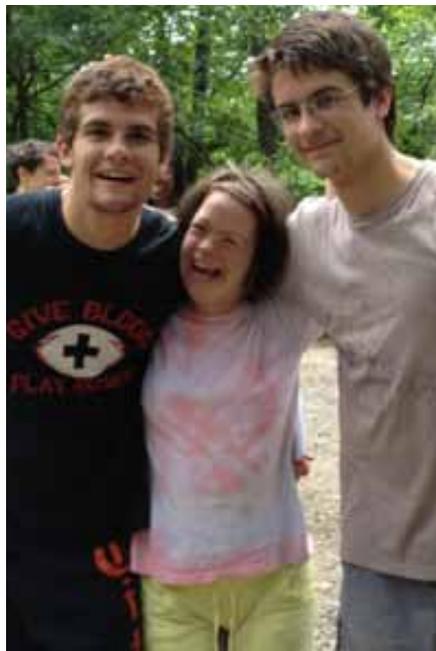
## Everybody likes me!

Carol Beck, OQC Parent

"Everybody likes me!" This the first thing Anne said in the car as we pulled away from Camp Opequon, after her 2 week stay in this little piece of heaven. She was waving to counselors and campers as they cheered on each departing vehicle at the end of session.

Music to a parents' ears, right? An exuberant child, tired and happy, knowing with certainty she is accepted and loved.

When we arrived for pick up, campers, counselors, staff, and families milled around, sharing stories and goodbyes. Anne is so often in the middle of any



Andy, Anne, and John Beck at Opequon

group of kids that it was unusual not to see her immediately. Reassured that she had been seen traipsing around, we took in the scene until Anne and two counselors appeared. Anne had been waiting in the fire circle, waiting for Meeting for Worship. She had absorbed the Opequon rituals and wanted this one to continue on departure day.

Like other camp families, we appreciate the community that is created at Camp. Our family's experience of this ran deep this year. Anne, our happy camper, is 15 years old. She has Down Syndrome. Anne thrives, fully included, in public charter school in Baltimore. She loves her brothers, friends, especially Abby, Taylor Swift, and pizza on Fridays. Anne

Anne continued on page 2

## Happy 20th Birthday to Shiloh Quaker Camp!

Listed are the members of the Camping Program and Camp Property Management Committees. Feel free to contact them if you have any thoughts or concerns. Call the Yearly Meeting office for contact information, or consult the 2012 Yearbook.

### Camping Program

Joshua Riley and Natalie Finegar  
co-clerks

JoAnn Dalley	Charlottesville
Brooke Davis	Richmond
Frosty Davis	Baltimore, Stony Run
David Diller	Adelphi
Kimberly Doll-DeSha	Baltimore, Stony Run
Natalie Finegar	Sandy Spring
Gary Gillespie	Homewood
Nathan Harrington	Sandy Spring
Mark Haskell	Washington
Thomas Horne	Takoma Park
Carol Hurst	Charlottesville
Alex Jadin	Washington
Elizabeth Krome	Williamsburg
Joshua Riley	Hopewell Centre
Rex Riley	Frederick

#### Ex Officio:

Jane Megginson	Camp Program Manager
Dyresha Harris	Co-Director, CQC
Kathrin Gilbert	Co-Director, CQC
Elaine Brigham	Director, OQC
Hope Swank	Director, SQC
Jesse Austell	Co-Director, TA
Jen Schneider	Co-Director, TA
Tasha Walsh	Director, TA Bike

### Camp Property Management

Ronald Lord - clerk

Alene Carteret	Homewood
Don Crawford	Valley
Thomas Gibian	Sandy Spring
Steve Hendrix-Jenkins	Washington
Stephen Keach	Sandy Spring
Ronald Lord	Sandy Spring
Kate Meaker	Sandy Spring
Frannie Taylor	Goose Creek

#### Ex Officio:

David Hunter	Camp Property Manager
Dave Diller	Camp Program
Richard Liversidge	Trustee

## Anne's Adventure at Opequon

Anne continued from page 1 is loving and stubborn. She also takes a good while to learn things and struggles with complexity.

She is a typical little sister in this way though. She has watched her two brothers over the last eight years attend Catoctin Quaker Camp and Teen Adventure. She has seen them take off for the Young Friends conferences with the many friends they have through these programs. And this summer her two brothers joined the Opequon staff, as did her dear friends Olivia and Daniel. She wanted to follow her brothers.

Her wish was fulfilled by Elaine [Brigham, the Opequon Director] and her staff, simply and gracefully. Frankly, as a parent of a child with special needs, one becomes wary and protective. Don't ask me how many conversations I have started that end with awkward comments about whether there is a good "fit". Anne's interest in attending Opequon was received as a gift by Elaine, as it is with every child. Because in a community everyone brings something - light, in fact!

Anne loved her cabin mates and counselors. She hiked over three days during her Cabin Intensive or CI. I asked what she learned. She learned that she was afraid of heights.

"Oh really? How did you learn that?" I asked, a bit worried about where a child might have to be to learn this.

"Rock climbing" she said, not sounding afraid at all.

"Who helped you?"

"Peter!"

"And what did you do?"

"Be brave!"

This is one of those moments when a parent realizes that there are some growth experiences



that only come when parents are far away. Anne had many of those and I am grateful for the camp community that supported her through all of the adventures of those two weeks.

Anne's welcome to Opequon this summer was a testimony—that is, a lived witness—of Love. There was a willingness to stretch to ensure her full participation. This love and acceptance opened the way for it to also be a testimony of Equality. Loving Anne (as with every camper) means full acceptance in the community and full, loving expectation that every camper, counselor and staff member will be a gift to the community. And that is real Equality.

Thank you Baltimore Yearly Meeting, for the Camping Program; and for the Young Friends programs which are themselves testimonies of community, love and equality.

Thank you Opequon counselors for welcoming Anne and stretching. Thank you to the families of counselors who helped you become terrific young people engaged in the growth of your camp charges.

Thank you, Elaine, for your leadership and example.

Thanks you to all who make this program possible for all of the children who attend.

# BYM Camps need your help to increase enrollment!

## Why?

- We know from your feedback that our camps provide a valuable experience that campers and families cherish
- Camp is much more fun if the cabins are full – more friends to make, more fun playing games, more boisterous feeling
- We have much more competition from day camps now, particularly at Quaker and private schools
- If our camps are full we will be able to keep the fees reasonable and pay our staff more
- Every empty bunk at camp is a missed opportunity to affect a child's life

## What can YOU do?

- Identify friends of your family who are camp age or have kids who are camper age (9-14) and talk to them about coming to camp!
- Talk about your own experience with BYM Camps with people in your church, neighborhood, schools, hairdresser, etc – get the word out!
- If people you are talking with are interested in camps, refer them to Jane, or to the BYM Camps website – [www.bymcamps.org](http://www.bymcamps.org)
- If you want to do more or would like some more info to give out, contact Jane, [jane@bymcamps.org](mailto:jane@bymcamps.org), 717-481-4870 to get brochures, posters to put up around your community, etc.

## What do kids get out of attending our camps?

- Experience of living in an intentional community that stresses teamwork, inclusiveness, and participation
- Fun and games
- Stimulation of creativity
- Enhanced social skills and friendships made
- A place to be yourself and be celebrated for who you are
- Singing
- Physical, spiritual and emotional challenges that foster growth, self-esteem, and independence
- An extended time living unplugged and finding out how much fun that can be!
- A very high ratio of staff to campers – 1 to 3
- Time spent in the wilderness learning and enhancing outdoor skills
- Participation in chores - more teamwork

## Campers Love the New Pond at Shiloh Quaker Camp!

Robert, Thomas, and William Finegar,  
SQC Campers

The campers at Shiloh are extremely grateful to everyone who supported the new pond. Although the name for the new pond is still being tossed around, it has become important part of camp life at Shiloh. While we suffered yet another record-breaking heat wave during camp this summer, everyone was able to cool off in a natural and beautiful setting.

Campers report that the pond is "relaxing," "cool," "wet", and "really well built." Hours were spent swimming, floating in inner tubes, and just hanging out. Jumping (and being thrown) off the dock is

a great way to feel instantly cool.

It is now possible for the entire camp to swim at the same time. This is a huge improvement over swimming in the stream since the pond is deeper and only a handful of campers could swim at the same time. In short, the pond is now one of the campers' favorite part of Shiloh Quaker Camp.

While we all expected the pond to be great for campers to swim in, who would've predicted that the counselors would enjoy holding staff meetings while floating? Or that Unit One would spend their unit time canoeing?

Undoubtedly the pond will become a sacred Shiloh tradition for generations to come. When David Hunter,

the Camp Property Manager, visited Shiloh this summer, he was greeted with many hugs from staff, counselors, and campers who were grateful for all of his work in building the pond. We wish we could reach out and hug everyone who made the pond possible!



# BYM Camps: Fostering Inclusion and Diversity

Riley Robinson, BYM General Secretary The new Camp Catoctin Co-directors, Dyresha Harris and Kathrin Gilbert, spoke eloquently at BYM Annual Session's Meeting for Business this summer. They had developed a very thoughtful query for the Catoctin program: "How do we continue to create a community of different people rather than a community that lets different people in?"

The same question is being asked in Meeting after Meeting in the Religious Society of Friends, although not always so simply or clearly. It's being asked elsewhere, too, and that's a good for everybody.

A core experience of camping has always been to meet new people and to create a community that everyone could enjoy. Given that, there are many creative choices that we can make about diversity and many great ways to achieve a truly inclusive community.

Last November's Firecircle carried an article about a newly-strengthened diversity program at Catoctin. It highlighted recruiting and preparing campers from Philadelphia. While Catoctin's program is growing and pro-

viding opportunities for a number of kids with great results, it is not the first or only plan for bringing a variety of kids together. Similar work has been going on at all three camps. A summer in the woods can be beautiful and freeing, but it is not an escape from reality. Preparing kids for a diverse world, the quite real world in which we all live and work together, is an opportunity to develop in them skills and awareness that can grow and flourish in BYM Camps. Then these can be lived out day by day.

What kinds of diversity are we talking about? Well, the BYM camps have tended to be about 40/60 Quaker/non-Quaker for some time. This has given many new campers a taste of Quakerism and a chance to explore their own spirituality that they might have missed otherwise. It has given Quaker kids a chance to articulate their experience and to go even deeper. Geographic diversity has come from kids choosing to attend BYM camps who live as far away as the west coast and occasionally even further, sharing their experience. Racial diversity has been supported all along, offering the chance to realize that some distinctions are real and valuable, while others don't re-

ally matter so much. Nontraditional families – LGBTQ, mixed race or ethnicity, and, yes, mixed religious backgrounds – are all welcome here. Greater economic diversity is present now, including among Friends, as the economy struggles and becomes more stratified. There is even age diversity, thanks to the robust work grant/volunteer program, as adults cook in the kitchens, make repairs to the property and attend worship and fire circles. So the camps make room for many, and many gifts are shared.

How is inclusive community supported at the camps? First by the programs themselves, designed to constantly bring campers together in different contexts for many different activities, encouraging the development of a wide circle of friends. Plus, the types of activities – hiking together in groups, in-camp group activities in visual arts, movement, music or work projects – draw out personal skills and encourage mutual reliance on each other. Next, our camp directors each have background experience in inclusion and diversity and share skills together. Staff members come from diverse backgrounds as well, which helps to provide a "whole community" experience. Too, some of the Quaker distinctions like worship and sharing in the fire circle invite sharing and listening from the heart, calling everyone to look beyond superficial appearances to the humanity within.

What are some of the initiatives that bring diversity to the camps? These are projects that have been developed by a person or a small group who have made a real commitment to the work. Each project has the benefits of its experience to share with the others, and we'd like to do more with that. In Northern Virginia, Friends at Langley Hill Meeting have for a number of years arranged for 1-3 kids from a homeless shelter to go to camp each summer. Its Social Concerns Committee is responsible for the project, which raises its mon-



photo by Jenifer Morris

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## 2012 Camp Season a Great Success

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Opequon had a great summer, with more campers enrolled there than we have had in many years. 164 campers (averaging 52 campers per session) had a fantastic experience at Opequon, ably led by Elaine Brigham in her 13th year as Director. The continuity of the Director and much of the staff made for a smooth summer. Opequon's arts and creative focus, with hands-on workshops every week, generates a very vibrant feeling with unique energy. The campers share their creative projects with each other and as a result share a very intimate bond, spurring each other on. Elaine has created the curriculum and recruited over the years with an eye toward creating an inclusive community from the start of her leadership there. As a result, Opequon has the most diverse staff, which helps foster a dynamic community in which everyone feels welcome and included.

Teen Adventure Foot keeps stepping forward, led by Jen Schneider and Jesse Austell, with a great program for our teens who have graduated from our three residential camps. Jen and Jesse are logistical geniuses, managing 6 or 7 trips simultaneously along with a great support staff. The hiking, service projects, water components, solo days, and gender days are all key components to this program that make a memorable and life-changing coming of age program. The self-reliance and accomplishments built into Teen Adventure are a great foundation for these campers to come away feeling real closeness to their peers and a marked sense of self-esteem. The Teen Adventure Program is limited in the number of campers we can serve because of logistical support issues and due to the number of people permitted on the site. This year we had 67 campers at TA Foot.

Teen Adventure Bike has now completed two summers. We created TA Bike to offer another option for our teen-aged kids to try a different activity and to

serve greater numbers. Tasha Walsh is directing this program and has done a great job of incorporating the curriculum of TA. The campers who attended TA Bike have been very enthusiastic about the experience and very vocal with memorable stories and jokes at the end-of-camp fire-circle. They noted that the bike trip is great in that they can cover more ground, seeing more of the beautiful Virginia countryside. They have more control over where their trip goes as well. Some of the campers have found a new love of two-wheeled travel and even gone on to participate in century rides of 100 miles.

Enrollment at the residential camps was good. Catoclin averaged 70 campers per session, Shiloh averaged 53 campers per session, and Opequon greeted an average of 52 campers per session. Both Opequon and Shiloh's attendance increased over past years, but Catoclin was down this year. We will add Catoclin to our outreach events next year and reinvigorate our word of mouth campaign, letting Catoclin families know we can take a few more campers.

In addition to serving 560 campers at our camps all summer, we also are very grateful for the 117 adult volunteers who worked in exchange for some camp fees. These adult volunteers, or work granters, get to have the experience of camp while having



TA Bike photo by Gray Horwitz

their own adult community. Many experienced work granters come back year after year to hang out with friends they have made and to enjoy camp as an adult. We also hired 128 counselors and staff people, mostly youth in their late teens to mid-twenties. We give them meaningful work with a loving caring community to partake in, and create for others, and loads of responsibility.

It is a joy to be associated with this program. We touch many peoples' lives in a very positive way. This year I recruited a new friend from Lancaster to send her boys to camp and work in the kitchen. I was quite pleased and relieved that her family had a fantastic time. Here is what she had to say about their experience:

"We came back from Opequon and Shiloh Quaker Camps today! It was life-changing. I drove home with the boys in the car for about 4.5 hours and they talked the entire time about all the cool experiences they had. It was one of the most lovely days I have ever had with them. Thank you, Jane Megginson, and everyone at camp for making this experience so wonderful."

Feedback like this is what continues to make this job rewarding for me, and for all of the staff.

## Lessons Pondered at Camp

Devan Malore, Volunteer at Shiloh  
In 1988, Robert Fulghum published, **All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten.** Fulghum suggested lessons we experience in early life and should remember with age. Getting along with real, in-the-flesh, humans is one lesson lots of us still work on.

Most summers for the past seven years I've been volunteering for a week at Shiloh Quaker Camp. Shiloh is a reminder what it can be like searching for a tribe to belong to. Sharing meals with strangers, sleeping together in moldy cabins, or moving into new roles of leadership or mentoring are often not easy lessons. It's easy to read, write, or sing that we are "all brothers and sisters, under the skin," until we bump against skin that sweats, gets bug bitten, poison ivy infected, and is all shades, from lily white to dark brown. This skin produces unique odors after hours of hiking, working in the kitchen, or a week without laundry.

My first years at camp, I was surprised by tribes that formed, especially among counselors. Even more unusual was when parents came to get kids. Judging by cars and well dressed adults, there's lots of race, class, and ethnic mixing at camp that

doesn't happen as easily in "the real world."

We're naturally curious, and in ancient times took considerable risks finding out who lived on the other side of the mountains. Discovering other tribes can be exciting and challenging. Are these allies or enemies, trading partners, or reasons for castle life and military drones? It may not be a great idea segregating ourselves into suburbs, same-income neighborhoods, or retirement homes where we don't get these questions brought up enough. It's good to bump up against those mysterious others, reminders what a diverse, lively, unusual planet we inhabit.

This year I thought of more Shiloh lessons to remember. First, a realization, for some of us there will always be a "push-away, pull-toward" reaction to finding, creating, or leaving our tribe. Should we strike out on our own or recruit others into our tribe or group activity? Every group from churches, political advocates, kayakers, homeless shelters, and wounded bird sanctuaries are looking for members. Sometimes we intuit and social psychology reminds of us how, "group think," generated when too many of us think alike, can create a spell where we act as a group in

ways the rational solitary self is wary of. Only later, watching men on TV march in a military parade, it becomes clear how the love to keep in step to a familiar inspiring tune, can also be marching into a hopeless or destructive illusion. Marching, or dancing, to the sound of a different harmonium, can make lots of sense when groups get too large and fixed on their specialness.

There is a performer in all of us. It's fun watching kids at camp be on stage. Camp songs, skits, games, spontaneous goofiness, sleeping together, and communal meal rituals create an environment well suited for the extrovert to shine and the introvert to feel a little left out. Modern research suggests there is no fixed nature to be labeled introvert or extrovert depending on relationship to others in work or social situations. No doubt we're born with innate personality and abilities but learning and social conditions are in a constant state of flux. Varied factors like environment, age, good and bad days and advances in human understanding of who and what we are, excite our unique introvert and extrovert qualities.

Camp can also be a reminder that rational self interest is not the only force that moves us. Love, belonging, and a chance to participate in activities offering possibilities for learning, personal achievement, peak experience and transcendence of separate self are also powerful motivational forces. In a world overwhelmed with rational economic language and theory it's good to be reminded that falling in love with another person's uniqueness is another reason to want them fed and cared for. Falling in love with nature at an early age can help us become better earth stewards, less afraid of everything out in the wild trying to eat us.

Camp can't teach everything needed for a successful rewarding life, but it can generate some good learning experiences, at any age.



photograph by Jenifer Morris

## Camps Continue Building Diversity

Diversity continued from page 4  
ey. Friends work to equip the kids and familiarize them with what camp life is like. In the Washington area, Nathan Harrington, who teaches in public schools and works with local helping organizations, is able to identify disadvantaged kids who might do well at camp and raise money to help them go. Over the years, a group in Baltimore, My Sister's Circle, has identified potential campers, whom BYM funds have supported (in addition to campers from elsewhere). Currently, there is activity and hope in Charlottesville to send area kids to Shiloh. Recently, BYM's Camping Program Committee has started holding quite successful "in town" open house events—one at a Baltimore hair salon and one at a Takoma Park Community Center—where families can come to see what BYM camps are all about.

What is the result of this effort? Currently, each camp welcomes the 20-25% of its campers attending as people of color. These percentages have been rising slightly of recent years. We have yet to reach the numbers that would be equivalent to the regional population makeup—Virginia, Maryland and the District are all substantially higher. What if BYM Meetings came closer to this balance, too?

How can the Yearly Meeting support this inclusion and diversity initiative, and therefore the camps as a whole? The examples above shed some light. Support by individual Friends, camp alumni and grants are all pos-



sible as well. Supporting the Barry Morley endowment fund or the Camp Scholarship Fund helps these and other campers who want to attend. The BYM Development Committee and Development Director Robinne Gray are working on these. You can help, too, by responding the recent camp appeal letter, or donating at the BYM website, or calling Robinne if you have new ideas!

So what does a Quaker camp mean when it says that it wants to "create a community of different people?" On an organizational level, it means, "Be intentional. Be thoughtful. Build vibrant community, build caring relationships, build justice and equality." On a personal level, it means, "Value what you care about in others, and hear what others value in you. Discover your own inner resources. Invite transformation in yourself and others. Do these things and you will put yourself in peace's pathway."

**The BYM Camps Cookbook makes a great gift!**  
**At just \$20 per book, you can get one for every camper you know!**  
**To order, see the BYM Camps website**  
**(bymcamps.org)**

## Camper Aid Grant Awarded by Local Bank in Maryland

Sandy Spring Bank, founded in 1868 by Quakers and others in the small Maryland town, has awarded a grant of \$1,500 to the BYM Quaker Camps in support of financial aid for campers. The Baltimore Yearly Meeting office is located in Sandy Spring, and the bank makes a special effort to support local causes and initiatives in its service area, which includes Maryland and Northern Virginia. BYM Development Director Robinne Gray worked with Eileen Porras, the bank's community relations officer, to craft a proposal to fund a single camper for a two-week session or two campers for one week each. We are grateful to Sandy Spring Bank for recognizing the value of keeping the extraordinary Quaker Camp experience within the means of all families.

# Staff Report of the Camp Properties Manager to Baltimore Yearly Meeting

David Hunter, Camp Property Manager  
Unbidden thoughts often come to us, and this summer I often found myself ruminating on one. As a child growing up at a Quaker camp in New England I was instructed in the common "downhill and downstream" rule-of-thumb. This rule states that if one ever becomes lost in a wild area and does not know which way to go, one should simply walk downhill until reaching running water and then walk downstream until civilization is found.

When I first came to the Baltimore Yearly Meeting Camping Programs I was surprised to learn that campers were told that if they ever became separated from their groups on a trip they should sit down and be still and quiet until way opens. I was surprised and a little concerned with this departure from conventional wisdom until I began hearing the stories that campers told about what happened when they were separated from their groups:

"...After we had been sitting still on the rock for a few minutes we heard something moving through the woods. We followed it and it turned out to be a hiker on the trail that we had been on with our group before we got lost. We didn't know which way to go so we waited a little longer and soon our counselor came running back to find us!"

"After the rain stopped I could still hear water running. I remembered that the counselors told us that we were going to eat lunch at a waterfall, so I followed the sound of the water until I came to the top of a waterfall. There were my friends, down at the bottom of the falls eating lunch."

"After I was quiet for a minute I thought that I heard faint singing in the distance. I walked in the direction that I thought it was coming from, but I kept having to stop and listen. Sometimes I couldn't hear it and I thought I was going crazy. I was afraid that I was getting more lost but I kept listening and following and eventually I knew it was my unit and I ran to them!"

These may or may not be stories of divine intervention, but it is clear that we are at our best when we take a moment to sit down and be still and quiet before we act. This is true, not because being still and being quiet are always an end in themselves, but because when we rise up to move after pausing to be still and be quiet we have been prepared to move in the right direction and make right decisions. Sometimes the right thing to do is to move "downhill and downstream." We know when we have taken a moment for quiet and stillness.

As I went from task to task over the course of this last year I often felt that we, as a Yearly Meeting and as a

camping program, were getting up to move forward after taking a moment to be still and be quiet. One example is the building of the pond at Shiloh. In the late 1990s our community moved forward to build two beautiful bathhouses. Understanding the importance of water activities at camp, the bathhouses were designed with a swimming pool in mind, but we were not able to raise enough capital. It would have to wait until way opened.

After being still and quiet on the subject of swimming at Shiloh for nearly two decades, the Yearly Meeting found that it was ready to get up and go forward, and the results were spectacular. We were able to construct a beautiful pond at Shiloh this winter and the campers and counselors were overjoyed to be able to make use of it this summer. The experience has helped me to recognize the rhythm of sitting down, being still and quiet and movement and action. The rhythm is part of many of the things we do at the camps and it is a joy to see what wonderful things can happen when a community of individuals takes up this rhythm.

## Catoctin Quaker Camp

After working on a site plan since 2007, we are happy to report that Frederick County finally signed the letter of final approval in August. The



photograph by Jenifer Morris

site plan was required by the County to ensure that the camp is in compliance with zoning regulations and building codes, and it will ensure that emergency services can respond effectively, streamline the permitting of new buildings, and help the county to plan for the future. I have learned a great deal through the process and am grateful for the patience and hard work of everyone. It is wonderful to be able to turn our attention to planning for the future, assisting Friends in enjoying the site and setting some of the existing plans into motion.

### **Camper Cabins**

The site plan allows us to take up our plans for replacing the aging cabins at Catoctin, and we have wasted no time. We have cleared a site, poured footers, built floor framing and decking and are looking forward to raising another cabin. We have laid out three new cabin sites on the boys' upper trail (on the other side of Mink Farm Road from the camp) and the new cabin is already started. We are grateful to have Peter Bugler coordinating the building of another timber frame cabin this year. This will be the sixth cabin that we have replaced, and it will be the fifth timber frame we have constructed.

### **Alternative Energy at Catoctin**

Last December, a 30-meter tower was erected on the top of the ridge above Catoctin and an anemometer was installed. Since then, hourly wind speed readings have been recorded. The data will help us determine the viability of the site for a turbine to generate electricity which will offset the energy use at Catoctin. Preliminary analysis of suggests that it is a good site for small scale wind to energy systems.

We continue to look at other green initiatives at all of the camps, including gray water treatment systems, composting toilets, conservation strategies, solar projects, low carbon building materials and construction methods. As we make improvements that the camps we strive to "be



Opequon campers photo by Sloane Lewis

green" in the ways we treat waste, building materials we use, and equipment we choose. We feel that camp is a great place to showcase new technologies and to model practices that reduce the negative impact that our presence has on the world in which we live. Hundreds of campers, staff and other visitors pass through the camps each year offering us an opportunity to model these strategies and introduce new technologies to many.

### **Bathhouses**

In the coming months we look forward to developing plans for improving the bathhouses at Catoctin. The present bathhouses have served us well for more than 30 years, but they have developed structural problems and it has become increasingly difficult to keep them clean and inviting. Much of the energy that is used at camp goes to heat water, provide light, and to provide water in the bathhouses. As our plans develop, we will keep the goal of reducing our negative impact on the earth at the front of our mind. We are looking forward to continuing to replace water heaters with energy efficient tankless hot water heaters and are considering replacing conventional toilets with waterless alternatives. This would help the camps conserve precious ground water and prolong the life of our septic fields.

### **Opequon Quaker Camp**

Despite difficulties with building permits and a series of rainy and snowy Friends Service Weekends, we are happy to report that the cabin that was started in the spring of 2011 was finally completed in time for the 2012 camping season. This summer it received a nice coat of primer and was adorned with several beautiful murals. Six of the eight cabins at Opequon are now less than 10 years old.

### **Bathhouses**

For several years we have been receiving negative feedback about Opequon's bathhouses. They are small, difficult to clean, and clogged drains have often been a problem. This year we made improvements to the septic system, painted the interior and floors, improved on the old shower mats, and purchased floor dryers so that the floors could get dry after cleaning, before a new layer of mud was tracked in. We are deeply indebted to Lois Capon from Bethesda Friends Meeting for a set of new, custom sewn and infinitely superior, shower curtains that made a huge difference for your campers this summer. Thanks Lois! Several camp families reported that they appreciated the improvements.

We are also considering the possibility of constructing a separate shower house with room for males on one side and females on the other. Moving the showers out of the current

bathhouses would create more space and less traffic. Providing septic service for the new structure might prove challenging so we are considering a grey water treatment system instead. This would make it possible to recycle water used in the showers for landscaping or vegetables and reduce our demands on precious ground water.

## Shiloh Quaker Camp

On June 9, we celebrated the 20th year of Shiloh Quaker Camp with the opening of the new pond. Shiloh campers and staff were particularly grateful to have the pond at they faced the record breaking temperatures in early July!

This was a wonderful project, and being able to participate in the process has been a great honor. We were fortunate to have the support of so many Friends, friends of the camping program, and others who provided funds and other support throughout this process. We were also blessed to have great people to work with on every aspect of the project. Hydro-geologist, camp parent and former camper Allen Fetter volunteered countless hours and offered us his valuable expertise and experience in this area, and we had a great contractor to work with in Oliver Campbell. We were also fortunate to have the help of former caretaker

Ralph Reed and current caretaker Jake Butler. Without the extensive day-to-day efforts of our caretakers, the work could not have progressed as steadily as it did.

### A New Cabin at Shiloh

The cabins at Shiloh are aging and gradually will need to be replaced. One of them has now reached the end of its useful life and we are planning on replacing it in the spring. We will use the same simple, easy-to-construct and cost-effective design that we have been using at Opequon.

### York Timber Frame

Last winter we were offered a generous, if somewhat unconventional, gift by York Friends Meeting. The Meeting found itself in possession of timbers for a 28 ft. by 36 ft. timber-frame building, which they kindly offered to the Yearly Meeting for use at one of the camp properties. The Camp Property Management Committee gratefully accepted the gift and has moved the timbers to Catoctin for storage. We have begun the process of discerning how best to use the structure and are looking forward to putting it to use at one of the camps. Thank you York Friends!

### Rentals

The camp properties are available for groups to rent from the end of camp until October 31 and from

April 1 until the beginning of camp. There are also winterized spaces at Catoctin and Shiloh that are available for small groups or families (6 to 8 people) to use whenever the camps are not in session. Our properties are beautiful places and we are gratified to know that so many groups enjoy these special, restorative places. If you, your family, or group would like to use the camp properties you can find more information at [bymcamps.org/wp/camp-rentals/general-information](http://bymcamps.org/wp/camp-rentals/general-information).

### Friends Service Weekends

We are grateful to everyone that comes to enjoy the camp properties during Friends Service Weekends. These weekends provide an additional opportunity for people to enjoy time with friends, help us maintain the camp properties, or to get to know the camps for the first time. There are always plenty of work projects, but many enjoy activities at camp as well.

### Finally

It is a joy and an honor to be a part of Baltimore Yearly Meeting and to have the opportunity to help care for these special places that serve such special programs. I look forward to enjoying the rhythm of pausing to sit, be still, be quiet and rising to move forward as we continue on our journey together.



# Quaker Camp Changed My Life

Catoctin • Shiloh • Opequon • Teen Adventure • [www.BYMcamp.org](http://www.BYMcamp.org)

**Purchase your new BYM Camps bumper stickers  
in time for the holidays!**

The proceeds will benefit the Camp Financial Aid Fund!

Send a check to the BYM Office (17100 Quaker Lane, Sandy Spring MD 20860) for \$5 per sticker or you can buy them online at [www.bym-rsf.org/publications/purchases.html](http://www.bym-rsf.org/publications/purchases.html)

## Community Service at Camp

Nathan Harrington, CPC Member

Ask a camper at Catoctin, Shiloh, Opequon, or Teen Adventure about their trip experiences at camp and you are sure to hear about their backpacking, canoeing and rock-climbing adventures. Often overlooked is another rich—and no less adventurous—aspect of the camping program: community service.

I'll never forget painting Ms. Connie's house in Glasgow, Virginia electric blue on my Teen Adventure trip. She wasn't coy in expressing her regrets for the color she chose, but still insisted on cooking us a sumptuous breakfast the next day. More recently, groups from Shiloh have ventured to the famed Twin Oaks commune, and Catoctin has



Teen Adventure campers help at Summer Enrichment camp

taken many service trips to the Red Wiggler Community Farm, which provides gainful employment for adults with developmental disabilities through a unique horticulture program that uses organic agricultural practices. Opequon campers do trail maintenance and other work at Friends Wilderness Center. Teen Adventure still does service projects in the community of Glasgow, including running activities for campers in a local day camp there.

In the winter of 2003, as I prepared to work at Shiloh for the first time, I had the opportunity to visit Haley House in Boston as part of an alternative vacation program organized by the chaplain of Bates College. The spirit and aesthetics of the place reminded me of camp, but with a political edge that spoke strongly to my condition. In 1933, devout laymen

Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin found a way to meet what they saw as a two-fold moral responsibility amid the poverty of their New York City neighborhood. They spent half their time providing food, clothing and shelter directly to the desperate and excluded. The rest went into a prophetic, rabble-rousing newspaper, "The Catholic Worker," and protests in the streets against what saw as a twisted and sinful economic system. Their mantra: "comfort the afflicted, and afflict the comfortable." Today, Catholic Workers continue to protest

injustice, war, racism, and violence of all forms. I think of them as the Quaker branch of Catholicism.

Six months later, while searching for new and exciting places to take my Unit 4 Shiloh campers for service, I was thrilled to discover a Catholic Worker farming community, Little Flower, 30 miles east of Shiloh. The three days that we spent there and the stories we brought back would be the beginning of a happy ecumenical relationship between our communities. I recently asked Little Flower founder Susan Frankel-Streit about the experience of hosting Shiloh groups for the last nine years.

What do you remember about that first Shiloh group that came to Little Flower in 2003?

It was a pretty young group of kids, I think maybe 10

year olds, which was great because my kids were around that age. Bill was in jail for an anti-war protest and we had so much work to do. We couldn't believe how much work the kids did. They taught us all kinds of songs and games. On the last night we had a big bonfire and they gave a great going away card to our summer intern.

Have volunteers from Shiloh made any lasting contributions to Little Flower?

Many. We still have a wood box painted to look like an elf house that we use all the time. The garden is happier every year, and most of all, all of us get to meet some great kids and their counselors. It's been especially nice

to get to know some of the counselors who were there several years, like Seth Gregory and Paco Ramos Meyer. My kids always felt like they got to go to camp without leaving home.

What are your thoughts on the similarities and differences between Quakers and Catholic workers?

We see you all as kindred spirits, who, like us, enjoy work, nature, deep conversations, good meals, homemade music and a good game of mafia. We are eternally grateful to Shiloh Quaker Camp for giving us the opportunity to spend time with so many GREAT young people over the years and for introducing us to squeaky cheese. Please keep coming!

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**The BYM Camps Cookbook makes a great gift!  
See page 6!**

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The Firecircle is published annually by the Baltimore Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. If you'd like to submit an article or have a comment, please direct it to BYM Camping Program 717-481-4870.

## **2013 Camp Season Enrollment Begins January 15**

Camp registration will open Tuesday, January 15th at 7:00 pm for returning campers. Starting Friday, February 1st at 7:00 pm, we will accept registrations from new campers. If you are a returning camper and want to make sure of your spot in a particular session, please register as soon as you can. Enrollment is first come, first served. This will include registration for Teen Adventure, so if you want to make sure you get in, please register as close to opening as possible.

Like last year, please sign up for Work Grants (working a week at camp as a cook, maintenance or medical person to offset camper fees) ONLINE at the same time you sign up for camp. If you are a returning work granter and your kids are NOT first-time attenders at camp, please sign up for a work grant the first week your child is attending camp if possible!

