



## BYM Camps Have Another Record Breaking Year!

Jane Megginson, Camp Program Manger

We had another great season at BYM Camps this summer! Counting campers and work granters, we had 711 participants, eclipsing last year's record-high 709! In addition, our camper weeks edged out last year's total by two, with 1388 camper weeks in 2014. Our directors who took over Shiloh and Catoctin three seasons ago, Hope Swank, Kathrin Gilbert and Dyresha Harris, have shown a lot of growth in their programs and in their skills and knowledge about directing camps. Opequon welcomed a new Co-Director, Sara Brigham, who directed with her sister, Elaine Brigham for the first time this summer. Sara is no stranger to leading at Opequon as she has been a senior staff member there for many years. Our Co-Directors at Teen Adventure, Jesse Austell and Jenn Schneider, continue to tweak our most popular and logistically complex program, drawing graduates from each of our residential camps to further their personal, spiritual, and leadership growth. Our Work Grant program continues to be an important and unique aspect of our camps. Many of our Work Grant participants return year after year not only to help pay a camper's fees, but also to enjoy the community and experience of BYM Camps themselves. I know of no other camp that has such an extensive program trading work and participation at camp for tuition remission.

Diversity at all of our camps continues to improve as we work on various grants, projects, and undertakings to recruit underrepresented children to attend camp. In 2008, when we began systematically keeping track, 16% of our campers were non-white. This year, 25% of our campers were non-white. The Catoctin Diversity Group has been developing an approach that serves and really includes campers of non-white ethnic/racial backgrounds. For example, a volunteer translated the camper materials into Spanish this year. Other volunteers hosted potlucks with camper recruits and their families, teaching camp songs, explaining camp activities, and going on practice hikes. Funds were raised and grants sought to help pay for

campers. This project has been resoundingly successful. We received another grant from the Bama Works Fund of Charlottesville this year and we have brought campers from that area to Shiloh for the second time this summer. We have patterned our recruitment and preparation of those campers after the work that has been done with the Catoctin group. The Camping Program Committee has even incorporated the idea of extra preparation for incoming campers into our routine for all new campers. Although we have not hosted a potluck with all of them, Committee members did call all of the new camper families (117 of them) to welcome them to camp and to answer any questions they might have about our camps, equipment, homesickness, and any other concerns.

Another milestone to celebrate – at Catoctin this year, more than one-third of the staff were people of color. Although we do not have accurate data to compare to other years, I can tell you anecdotally that we have never before had a staff anywhere near as diverse as this at any of our camps. The real victory here is that we are recruiting counselor/mentors who are as diverse as the campers who are attending our camps. In this way we are providing a more meaningful, fuller, richer experience for

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## 2015 Camp Dates

**Catoctin, Shiloh, and  
Opequon Quaker Camps**

**Camp Opens June 27  
Camp Closes August 9**

**Teen Adventure  
Camp Opens June 27  
Camp Closes July 19**

**Remember that spaces frequently fill  
within an hour of registration opening!**

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

Gary Gillespie and Harry Scott  
co-clerks

Allegra Churchill	Charlottesville
Brooke Davis	Richmond
Kimberly Doll-DeSha	Baltimore, Stony Run
Natalie Finegar	Sandy Spring
Linda Garrettson	Sandy Spring
Gary Gillespie	Homewood
Nathan Harrington	Sandy Spring
Mark Haskell	Washington
Ann Honn	Sandy Spring
Alex Jadin	Washington
Roni Kingsley	Richmond
Elizabeth Krome	Williamsburg
Joshua Riley	Hopewell Centre
Katy Schutz	Charlottesville
Harry Scott	York
Sarah Williamson	Annapolis
<b>Ex Officio:</b> Jane Megginson	Camp Program Manager
Dyresha Harris	Co-Director, CQC
Kathrin Gilbert	Co-Director, CQC
Elaine Brigham	Co-Director, OQC
Sara Brigham	Co-Director, OQC
Hope Swank	Director, SQC
Jesse Austell	Co-Director, TA
Jen Schneider	Co-Director, TA

### Camp Property Management

Alene Carteret, clerk

Alene Carteret	Homewood
Lois Crawford	Valley
David Diller	Adelphi
Kathy Funkhouser	Frederick
Nick Funkhouser	Frederick
Steve Hendrix-Jenkins	Washington
Kate Meaker	Sandy Spring
Frannie Taylor	Goose Creek
Gloria Victor Dorr	Sandy Spring

#### Ex Officio:

David Hunter	Camp Property Manager
Greg Tobin	Trustees
Jim Lynn	Stewardship & Finance
Linda Garrettson	Camping Program

## Diversity and Alumni Grow Stronger

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all our campers as they participate in a community that more accurately reflects the world we all live in. Thus we will develop a more diverse group of future leaders -- staff, counselors, directors, and possibly General Secretaries of Yearly Meetings. I want to thank all of the people who have worked hard and continue to work toward making our camps a community that reflects who we want to be. This is not just a project but a calling and part of our spiritual practice for our camps. Our efforts are making a difference.

We know that the community that we create at camp has impacted generations of BYM Quakers. Catoctin Quaker camp has been in session for over 50 years, and now Shiloh and Opequon are maturing and have devoted

alumni.  
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Shiloh we hosted alumni events for former campers and staff at those camps. It was the first time we have held an alumni event at Shiloh, and it was a big success with over forty people in attendance, including folks from every era of Shiloh's existence, and some who worked and attended camp at Old Opequon (which became Shiloh). We are excited about continuing to host alumni events in 2015, at Shiloh, September 25-27<sup>th</sup> and at Catoctin September 11-13<sup>th</sup>, so save the dates and show up next fall! Invite your friends from camp that you have not seen in years. Tell your family members who may not have heard. It is a lot of fun to see old familiar faces, meet some new folks, and renew our connections to the sites, the songs, the food, and the community that is CAMP!

As I think over themes of this past year, and the flow of my work, I keep coming back to one of the recurring themes of our work in the BYM Camping Program, and that is developing Quaker leaders. I find myself remembering that when Linda Garrettson, Director of Catoctin Quaker Camp for 17 years, announced that she would retire from directing camp, several people commented to me, "What are you going to do now? What will you do without Linda?" and I thought to myself, "Well, now that is a funny question. Of course, I will hire a new director for Catoctin." The question of what will we do now without someone we love who has served us so well for so long really gets at people's discomfort with the unknown, the future, transitioning and change. I get that. But what I also understand is

*George Fox's spiritual breakthrough was a gift he longed for before he understood what he longed for. In a blazing act of grace he finally received it. And though he explained his discoveries to us and though we teach them to each other, they were not his gift to us. His gift was constant encouragement that we discover for ourselves the source from which spiritual discoveries come. ~ Barry Morley, Fire at the Center: A New Look at Quaker Religious Education*

a great  
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to Lin-  
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to Barry  
Morley  
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all of the Directors who have served our camps and led this program: By doing their job well, they are training young people to take on responsibility and to become leaders. They have trained the people who will become the next leaders in our camping program, in our Yearly Meeting, at our colleges, and in our schools. What better tribute to Barry Morley is there than that he helped young people grow enough to become new leaders in our camping program -- JoAnn Coates Hunter, Linda Garrettson, Michael DeHart, Sue deVeer, and Elaine Brigham, to name a few. And what more fitting tribute to Linda Garrettson, or Dana Foster who served 17 years as the Shiloh Director, than that former campers and staff are now following in their footsteps and directing Catoctin and Shiloh? But they are not mimicking Linda (or Bar-

ry, or Dana) or trying to recreate exactly what Linda did at camp. When a leader moves on, it creates an opening for new leadership, new styles, methods, and ideas. Each new leader brings a unique set of skills, gifts, and a vision which will take the camp forward and perhaps in a slightly different direction for the next round. It is both simple and profound, and a small act of faith, to believe that this has always worked before and will continue to work into the future of our program. So the next time a beloved Director of one of our camps announces it is time to move on, feel free to come to me and say, "Wow, I wonder what great new opportunity for leadership and growth we will get to experience now!"

In fact, that is how I experience an important part of my job, making sure the Camp Directors have everything they need to do their jobs effectively. I love working closely with such a talented group of people, and I love the challenge and renewal of getting

to know new Directors, learning their communication styles, seeing where we are similar and different, learning the ways I can complement them in their work, and supporting them in growing into their position as camp director at a BYM Camp. Directing camp is a daunting job, but what a joy to work so closely with them and see the genius at work, and grow through the hard challenges. Oh, how I envy their ability and desire to work with young people and shepherd them through these difficult times, giving them a spiritual home and core – an emotional safe space, a place of radical inclusiveness, a community where all participants belong.

I want to thank the Committee members who put in much time and effort to make the Camps run well and continue to be a place we want to



send our children. I want to thank the Directors and staff at our camps who work so hard and care so passionately about the children we entrust to their care. We place so much into their hands, so many precious children, and charge them with the spiritual, mental, physical well-being and growth of our kids. It is truly an astonishing gift that each summer this group of young and passionate staff carries out all that we hope for and more.

## From East DC to Shiloh: Campers Speak

by Nathan Harrington

My first job after graduating from college in 2005 was as a middle school math teacher at the now-defunct Merritt Education Center. The school sits at a site once occupied by Suburban Gardens, an amusement park for African-Americans, who were excluded from the white-only Glen Echo Park.

The fact that I was born and raised in the DC area but had never been anywhere east of the Anacostia River was no coincidence. In this profoundly segregated city, most white people are completely unfamiliar with—and often frightened of—the overwhelmingly black, working class neighborhoods that make up the eastern part of Washington.

That first year of teaching was way more than I was ready for, and I quit at Christmas break. But that spring I decided to try to bring a few of my

former students to Shiloh. I reached out to six parents. Not surprisingly, only one would let me take their child away for two weeks.

Ruth Smith, mother of five, agreed to send her oldest two, Octavia

and Donice. "I was scared at first, but I had to let her go and experience something different. She enjoyed herself and met new friends, a couple of whom she's kept in touch with. I felt good vibes when I was

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# Camp Scholarships at Work

by Scotty Scott

The USA continues to be a country of immigrants. Many of us work to welcome folks from all over the world into our communities. The Religious Society of Friends has a long history of aid and support to refugees. It was out of this background that I invited three refugee children from Burma (Myanmar) to attend Opequon Quaker Camp this summer with my grandson, Qade. These children are "cousins" to my grandson and live near him in Clarksville, Arkansas. Their parents work at the Tyson Meat Packing plant there.



Before moving to the USA four years ago under the auspices of Catholic Charities, this family of 6 children and 2 adults had been living in a refugee camp in Thailand. It is interesting to note that the family are Karen people, an ethnic group from the southern and southeastern area of Burma. Many Karen people are Christians, unlike the majority of the citizens of Burma who are Buddhists. Only the oldest children were born in Burma, as the family left their homeland and went to Thailand to escape the difficult life under military rule.

Needless to say, we needed scholarship help for Paw Htoo, age 13, Lu Htoo, age 11, and Paw Say, age 9, to attend camp. I sent out an appeal to my family, friends, and some BYM Friends, asking them to contribute to the camping program scholarships. About 30 people responded to my

appeal, raising over \$4,000 cash. In addition, several of us volunteered to fill work grant positions at the camps to help cover their expenses. Some Friends, plus the parents of these children, bought the necessary supplies and equipment children need to bring to camp.

And what an experience these children had! In my report to donors I described the scene on their return home after camp: "Everyone was so excited and so full of stories. Paw Say tried to teach us all of the songs she learned at camp. Between

arguments over the words, they managed to share several songs and rounds that are frequently sung. Lu described his back packing and rock climbing trip, with a lot of input from Qade, who was in the same unit. Qade shared how they dug clay from the creek and created an imaginary landscape. And Paw Htoo gave an hysterical account of flipping over his canoe,

and then dramatically helping his friends maneuver their canoes off some rocks in the river. All four campers spoke of the friendships they made with other campers and the counselors who guided them in all their activities."

Aside from these highlights, campers also participated in workshops. A group dug clay out of the creek and built a group landscape. Later they added individual clay figures to the landscape. Paw Say and Lu Htoo both sewed together "monsters" they created with fabric. Many chose to go swimming all afternoon on the hottest day of their session. The last



day of camp it is a tradition for everyone to dip candles for use at the closing or "graduation" circle. However, these are not just traditional dipped candles, as many campers become extremely creative in creating their candle with different shapes and colors.

On the drive back to Arkansas from Virginia, all four campers asked to return next summer. I promised them we would make that possible. The BYM Camping Program is as committed to our campers, as our campers are committed to us. Once children come to camp, we do everything possible to make sure they can return as often as they like.

BYM Camps are wonderful communities for children, helping them grow through challenging and fun experiences. Sponsoring children like Paw Htoo, Lu Htoo and Paw Say to attend is just part of what we do, the commitment we make to build strong, grounded youth who will one day say "Quaker Camp Changed My Life."



# Discovering Friends Wilderness Center: a BYM Wilderness Experience for the Young at Heart

by Kimberly Benson

When our nine-year-old daughter Kallan registered for Catoctin Quaker Camp, the only availability was a two-week session at the beginning of August. The timeframe coincided with an important anniversary: our first son was born on August 7 and died seven days later. Each year during that week, we retreated to nature as a family to relax, reflect, and celebrate his life. We usually sailed to some isolated anchorage on the Chesapeake Bay, but our daughter's camp adventure would preclude such an excursion. We had to head for the hills and forge an alternative tradition.

We eased Kallan into camp with a family overnight at Catoctin Mountain National Park. The park was lovely but crowded. Cars jockeyed for parking and trails streamed with hikers. The atmosphere of our wooded campsite was dominated by music from other campers, and the headlights of cruising cars blazed our tent walls throughout the night.

For the anniversary period during Kallan's second week of camp, we would need respite, not urban hubbub in a natural setting. Desperate for an alternative, I searched "wilderness Harper's Ferry," and Google led us to Friends Wilderness Center (FWC).

FWC enjoys a central position on the 1400-acre Rolling Ridge wilderness preserve, land acquired and

conserved for "spiritual use" by a visionary Quaker couple, Henry and Mary Cushing Niles. Nestled between the Appalachian Trail (AT) and the Shenandoah River south of Harper's Ferry, Rolling Ridge is the largest privately-owned, wilderness preserve accessible to DC and along the entire length of the AT. FWC

offers full access to the preserve's extensive trail system and provides various levels of accommodations: wilderness and platform camping, yurt and geodesic dome cabins, and homey bed & breakfast rooms at the Niles cabin.

Everything was arranged through a few warm emails with caretaker Sheila Bach: home-cooked breakfasts at the Niles cabin and reservations for the Treehouse: a roofed, tent platform elevated into the forest canopy.

Our arrival to FWC was like a gentle massage, smoothing away muscle tension and stress. As our car slowed to the comfortable walking pace appropriate for the gravel roads, we found ourselves noticing mushrooms and wildflowers. Every breath seemed to lengthen in the cool forest air.

Memories of traffic and competitive commuters disappeared when our surprise was reciprocated by gracious smiles as a vehicle going the opposite direction "reminded" us that the path we traveled was inconceivably, but inevitably, 2-way. Our minivan crawled up the ridge, forded a shallow, mountain stream, and eased into a sunlit meadow embracing a frog pond and the colorful Niles cabin: the heart and soul of FWC.



During our stay, we slept among whispering, treetop branches; delighted in the midnight greetings of owls; hiked in solitude to the AT and down to wade in the Shenandoah river; explored natural springs; caught crawfish and salamanders in the rocky rubble of mountain streams; and meditated on sun-warmed boulders to the resonant rush of waterfalls. Each morning, Sheila nourished us with fresh coffee, delicious wholesome breakfasts, and compassionate conversation. Our family was physically apart: missing our daughter, as well as our first son, but the peace and beauty of this incredible, natural place reminded us of our universal connection. We always would be together in love and spirit.

Kallan continues to enjoy BYM summer camp, and we are drawn to FWC throughout year for monthly education programs and family excursions. We have hiked, snowshoed, and mountain biked; marveled at meteor showers; examined geology and forest ecology; composed and savored poetry; painted natural wonders; and crafted ephemeral sculpture with forest materials. We encourage you to discover FWC (<http://www.friendswilderness.org>) for multi-generational wilderness experiences infused with Quaker heritage and values. The light and spiritual grace of this amazing BYM resource will continue to invite you back.



# Campers Speak about Shiloh

Speaking continued from page 3 there," she says. Four of her children have graduated from Shiloh, and Johnette, the youngest, will be in Unit 1 next year.

That first teaching job changed my life in other ways. I've continued to teach in public schools on this side of town, and in 2009 fellow Shiloh counselor George Oakley and I established (with several other F(f)riends), a group house dedicated to peace and service in Congress Heights. We seek to bridge our city's racial and class divide in our daily lives. We've become close with many of our neighbors, two of whom have been to Shiloh for the past two years.

These and many other campers are able to attend thanks to the generous contributions from the BYM Camper Financial Aid pool and Sandy Spring Monthly Meeting's scholarship fund.

As our camps grow more racially and socioeconomically diverse, I wanted to share the voices of campers for whom coming to camp meant crossing that racial and class divide. In September I asked four of Ruth's children—plus Tyra and Shadanae from Congress Heights—to talk about their experiences at Shiloh.

## Before you come to camp for the first time, what were you expecting it to be like?

**Donice:** I thought there were going to be whole bunch of people I don't know, doing things I don't do. Then I

heard that we couldn't use electronics. I don't even like being outside, so I was apprehensive. **Tyra:** I was expecting marshmallows and new friends. I wanted to make s'mores and actually put it in the fire.

## What is your favorite thing about Shiloh?

**Johnette:** the pond.

**John:** Chocolate cake, getting mail, girls. **Donice:** The first year, my favorite thing was rock-climbing. My second year, I was selected to be in a singing group. I liked canoeing for the first time, although my eye got swollen. The last year, when we had to solos hike, it was really hard, but I enjoyed myself. **Tyra:** Afternoon activities, knockout. I like unit activities because you get to interact with your peers. **Shadanae:** The hiking trip was fun. I'm not gonna lie. I didn't care that everyone's feet were hurting. We were going up mountains. When I realized that's what we were doing, it was cool. Time goes by fast if you are talking.

## What is hard about being at Shiloh?

**John:** When they put food in our backs they can be heavy and I get out of breath quickly. **Donice:** I'm picky about eating. They put onions and green peppers in everything, which I don't like. **Tyra:** Hiking is the hardest part. I was not ready for mountains. Four days straight and three nights—that was crazy...I've never been rock climbing and you can't make me.

## How is life at Shiloh different from home?

**Johnette:** The food is different. I'm used to eating fried food, but at Shiloh everything is healthy. **Donice:** Shiloh is open to the wild. People are very friendly and have a good spirit. You see life without



technology. Instead of watching TV, you interact with people.

## What have you learned from being at camp?

**Ruth:** Octavia became an expert on washing dishes and cleaning the bathroom. **Sheila:** I'm learned to be more independent, to not always depend on my mother. I'm less shy, because at camp you have to get out of your comfort zone and connect with people, or you're just not going to have a good time. **Donice:** I'm learned that you don't always need technology to have a good time. You can go camping once in a while instead of going to the movies. **Tyra:** I learned to never sit close to a fire, because I got burnt up. I learned how to hide food from bears.

## Do you have a favorite camp song?

**Johnette:** the Alligator Song. **John:** Hey Look, There's A Chicken, Sweet Potato Biscuit. **Sheila:** Oh Light Abide with us. **Donice:** Sweet Potato Biscuit, Abide with us, Santa Catalina

## Has your life outside of camp changed because of your experience at Shiloh?

**Johnette:** Since going to camp, I am more active and play outside more." **John:** I've been telling kids at school about camp and how great it is. I've learned that there's another side to me, which is the nice side. So every day I pray and I think about trees. **Tyra:** I don't want TV as much anymore. After being at camp and getting used to not watching it, I when





like to travel around and see new places. It made me more adventurous.

**Do you have a favorite camp story?**

**John:** There were 19 people on my unit canoeing trip. I bought a Kit Kat bar and had to split it 19 ways. **Donice:** When I was in Unit 2, there was a flying squirrel in our cabin. Brandy tried to hit it with a broom. Emily threw her shoe at it. In the end it wouldn't leave, so we left.

**Would you ever want to be a counselor?**

**John:** Yes. When I was a camper, counselors used to say there weren't any more cookies, and then they'd go back to their tarp and eat all of them. I want my turn. I also want to get away from home and experience a different world of nature. I want to get a tattoo of a bay leaf on my ankle. **Shadanae:** I would like to be a counselor, but then I don't. Actually, I do, because I want to see what's in that Bat Cave. I love Shiloh. A shout out to everyone who's going to be there next year.

I get back I don't feel like watching. **Shadanae:** I used to just sit in the house and not do anything. Now I

## American Chestnuts Lead Growth at Camp Properties

David Hunter, Camp Property Manger  
This year we were able to undertake several projects and to prepare for other, even more exciting, projects. Building projects, forestry, and the energy of enthusiastic volunteers were all part of the recipe. Safer, more attractive, and more sustainable properties for the camps and others within the Yearly Meeting were the result.

### Catoctin Quaker Camp Camper Cabins

We are working towards replacing all of the camper cabins at the camps. A seventh camper cabin was constructed at Catoctin in the spring of 2014. We are looking forward to building the eighth in the spring of 2015. That will leave us with four more to replace in the future. Peter Bugler continues to help us with replacing

camper cabin and we are in his debt. Other volunteers who helped include Harry "Scotty" Scott, Louis Bugler, Sasha Bugler, and Peter McMahon as well as loads of Friends and other volunteers who helped remove the old cabins and move the permitting process along. These cabins continue to serve as functional and attractive buildings that are a testimony to simplicity, beauty and craftsmanship.

### Logging

In December of 2013 Glatfelter Paper and Pulp Company began building logging landings at the roadsides and moving equipment to Catoctin. For several years we have been working towards timber stand improvement. Over the course of the winter and spring Glatfelter removed dead, diseased overcrowded and stunted timber from about 40% of the area. This "thinning from below" allows rigorous forest growth and improved species and age diversity in the forest. All of these improve the overall health of the forest and reduce



Near the north logging landing at Catoctin vulnerability to disease, wild fire, and other threats. Most of the new young trees that will be added to the forest as part of this project will grow from seeds, nuts or root stock that is already in the forest, but this has also provided us with the opportunities to plant some trees in the area.

### A little forest history...

Until about 1900 the hills and forests of the eastern United States contained American Chestnuts. During the late 1800s, Chestnut blight began to spread throughout the United States. By the early 1900s the American Chestnut was no longer a presence the forest canopy. This remarkable giant of a tree once towered 50 to 75 feet higher than any other tree in the forest and produced three to four times as much food for wildlife





American Chestnut

(and humans) than any other tree we have in our forest today.

Blight continues to persist in soils everywhere in the eastern United States and whenever an American Chestnut begins to grow it eventually succumbs to the blight before reaching maturity. Signs are everywhere on the mountain that the American Chestnut once thrived there. Chestnut stump sprouts can still be found, Chinese Chestnuts thrive wherever they are planted and old chestnut logs can still occasionally be found in forest. Most of the wood that the kitchen and lodge at Catoctin are made of is American Chestnut.

After decades of careful and selective breeding the American Chestnut Foundation (ACF) believes that it has finally created a new American Chestnut that is blight resistant. The hope of seeing the Chestnut towering above the forest again is beginning to sound more and more like a real possibility. The new species is called the Restoration American Chestnut 1.0.

The new blight resistant American



Catoctin Campers among the chestnuts circa 1860

Chestnuts are not commonly available yet because the trees are just now old enough to begin producing quantities of nuts. We are hopeful that we will be able to receive some of these new chestnuts at Catoctin this fall or in the spring. This will be the first time that Restoration Chestnuts would be introduced into Maryland forests. It's exciting

to think that the naturalization of the American Chestnut in the region will begin at Catoctin Quaker Camp!

### Bathhouses

Plans to replace the bathhouses at Catoctin are developing well. The building is being designed so that it can be constructed in two phases if necessary. The design includes eight composting toilets and sinks in the first structure. An attached structure will house the showers. The composting toilets will reduce the load on our aging septic system, reduce water use, and provide useful compost and fertilizer. The building will provide an excellent teaching opportunity those who visit or attend camp at Catoctin.

### Commercial and Residential Wind Energy Purchase Programs

This year all of the electricity used at Catoctin was 100% Green e-certified local wind energy. It continues to be purchased under the contract that was negotiated by Groundswell, a non-profit community organization

engaged in helping individuals and other non-profits pool their consumer buying power to facilitate social change. Purchasing our electricity in this way also enables individuals associate with the Yearly Meeting or the camping programs who live in

Maryland, the District of Columbia and Pennsylvania to purchase 100% wind energy through a similar contract. Opportunities to sign up for 100% wind energy become available in the spring and in the fall. Please contact the Yearly Meeting office if you are interested in participating in one of these purchase programs.

### Opequon Quaker Camp The Boathouse

We are not sure why the new structure at Opequon has been dubbed the Boathouse. It is not on the water and it has never housed a boat, but it seems to have been named, and that name is "The Boathouse." This building has replaced what was the oldest remaining structure on "the hill." It was constructed over the well so we have access to water all year long. The new building is home to the washer and dryer, plumbing and electrical controls, and provides some much needed office space and storage. The building is a one and a half stories high, with a long shed roof pitched and oriented to accommodate enough solar voltaic panels to offset the energy needs of the camp.



### Bathhouses

We continue to make plans for a separate shower house and to remodel the existing bathhouses. Moving the showers out of the existing structures will provide room for sinks and toilets that can extend the useful life of the existing structures.

## Six cabins down and two cabins to go...

In 2003 we began replacing and improving the Opequon cabins. So far, six of them have been replaced. We look forward to replacing one of the remaining two in 2015. We hope to be able to replace the last one in 2016. Then we will turn our attention to replacing cabins at Shiloh.

## Shiloh Quaker Camp

During the last few years at Shiloh we have accomplished a great deal. This year we focused on several maintenance and improvement projects. Nearly 200 trees were planted around the pond, water bars were installed to prevent erosion, and the patio was resurfaced outside the kitchen to eliminate tripping hazards.

## Cabins at Shiloh

Three of the cabins at Shiloh have been replaced since 2003 but there are still seven that need to be rebuilt. The small, dark, and dank structures will be replaced with a 16 by 24 foot cabin that allow lots of light and air and are similar to the cabins that we have been building at Opequon.

## Solar Energy at Shiloh

We are looking at a solar installation that would offset some of the energy used at Shiloh. One of the concepts would create open pavilions under which activities could be held and solar panels could be housed on the roof. One location might replace the current Art Pavilion.

## Fundraising, Development and The Tiny Cabin

In February of 2014, BYM received a genuine blessing when Ann Venable came as the Development Director.



Ann Venable at the Opequon Fire Circle February 2014

It has been a joy to work, visit the camps, and make plans for the future with Ann. This summer she encouraged us to take on a fun and exciting project; building a model of a cabin to assist in raising funds to replace camper cabins at the camps.



We decided to get campers involved in this project by offering a Workshop at Opequon and build the model as part of the activity. The Staff at Opequon decided to call the workshop the "Tiny Cabin Workshop" and work began on the playhouse-sized structure. It was a joy to see the campers embrace this project. They were eager to learn some of the principals of construction. The campers and staff involved were positive and enthusiastic at every turn. I thought that there might be some resistance to wearing eye protection, gloves, or hard hats, but the campers gleefully donned the safety wear (as well as high visibility vests, earmuffs, and anything else they could find). The difficulty came when it was time to put these items away for the day! When it was time to try something new (hammering, sawing, using the level and square) all participants were grabbing tools and trying them out before we able to discuss what we would be using them for. When it was time for the "Art Walk" at the end of the week the campers shared what they had done and why and the terms and concepts that they had learned during the week. They also shared a sophisticated understanding of how the cabin would be used as an aid to fundraising for new cabins and the importance of safe and attractive facilities at camp.

I was deeply moved as I listened to these campers talk about the importance of insuring that camp would be there for more young people in the future. I was inspired by these young people joyfully playing their part

and giving of themselves to encourage others to give. It pointed out how the welfare and future of the camps depend on the generosity of all of us – giving of the resources we have – whether it is money, our time or the joyful enthusiasm we have for the camping programs and the properties that are home to them. The campers took great pleasure in undertaking a project that they knew would have a long-term impact on the place that they have come to love.

## Friends Service Weekends

I continue to take a great deal of pleasure in being a part of Friends Service Weekends. Camp Families and Friends gather at each of the camps in the spring and fall, for a total of six times each year. We always have a great time getting to know each other, working to make improvements, and making a difference in the places that are so important to us. These weekends also provide a great opportunity for people to visit the properties and experience some of the gifts the camps have to give. This work is a critical part of maintaining these beautiful places.

## 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. Helping to create a vision of how we want to make the necessary improvements at the camps has been challenging and exciting work. I look forward to seeing these projects move forward as way opens.

# Work Grants are Wonderful Work

by Sarah Williamson

The BYM camping program is a huge touchstone for my family. For my brother and me, because we were campers and counselors and both met our spouses through camp, but also for my Mom, who talks about Catoctin with the same reverence that we do. Some of her feelings about camp are undoubtedly because the experience was so formative for her children, but I think they are equally based on her own experiences each summer as a cook in Catoctin's kitchen. When my Mom talks about camp, it is as a member of the community, not a parent only hearing about camp through her child's experience. She talks wistfully of the comradery, practical jokes, and deep supportive conversations with other cooks and staff, as well as the joy of surreptitiously watching my brother and I enjoy camp.

It was because of my Mom's positive experience, as well as the need to offset some of the cost of camp, that made me immediately ask for a

work grant to cook at Catoctin when my oldest child reached camper age. I was thrilled to get the chance to make camp affordable and sneak peeks at my child as she began the journey that was so important to me, all while getting to be part of the camp community again....oh, yeah, and I was also going to be doing a little work cooking. So, I asked for vacation time from my very demanding job to have a little holiday on the mountain.

While all my expectations of camp and being part of it again were met in spades during my week at camp, I was also very surprised to find that it was not "vacation-like" at all having to get three homemade, delicious meals for close to 100 very hungry people on the table every day. In that first year, my preschool-aged son had come along with me and I struggled to meet my commitments in the kitchen while also keeping him safe and occupied. He spent a lot of time that week with his face pressed against the screen door calling my name while I tried to get one more thing chopped before answer-



Sarah Williamson (left) and Brooke Carroll at work in the Catoctin Kitchen

ing him. The "work" part of the work grant was real, and it required that every one of the cooks and kitchen manager pulled their weight to get the meals served on time so that all the other camp activities could occur as planned. Since my Mom had never really mentioned the "work" part of her camp experience, and the cooks made it all look so effortless when I

## What is a Work Grant?

A BYM Camping Program work grant is a great way to offset some of the costs of camp and be part of an amazing Quaker community where everyone is pitching in to make Camp its most wonderful. Work grants are a week-long commitment and can be served as a cook, or maintenance person. Parents or community members with the requisite medical training can also serve as camp nurse or doctor, but most work grants are fulfilled in the two positions described below.

**Cooks** – Cooks are generally required to cook two to three meals each day while campers are in camp. At Catoctin and Shiloh, this means from arrival on Saturday or Sunday (depending on which session) through Tuesday breakfast and then again from Thursday night until Saturday or Sunday lunch (also depending on the session). At Opequon, the campers are in camp more, so the job is more often doing two meals a day and doing the cleaning simultaneously with fewer days of campers out on the trail. While campers are out of camp, cooks are expected to participate in cleaning tasks that are critical to maintaining cleanliness from week to week, but that are too difficult to accomplish when cooking for camp. No specific skills are required, just a willingness to work at whatever is needed.

**Maintenance** – People requesting a maintenance work grant should have some level of proven DIY carpentry, plumbing, or electrical skills. Maintenance work during the week is typically based on a list provided by the director or other staff of things around camp that need to be fixed, and tasks are often important to maintaining a safe environment for campers and staff. Tasks are not consistent from year to year, but examples could include, replacing the flushing mechanism in a toilet or fixing a dripping faucet, replacing a broken cabin step, or replacing a light fixture.

### What a Work Grant Isn't

A work grant is not a way to send your child to camp and still actively parent them. All campers should get to experience the personal growth in meeting new challenges and learning how to get their needs met with the loving support of their counselors and staff.

was a camper and counselor, I had not fully prepared myself to work that hard.

Despite my surprise over how tired I was at the end of each day, I adjusted quickly, absolutely loved the experience, and returned as a cook, eventually taking on the more challenging job of Kitchen Manager for the last seven years. While cooking at camp is not the vacation I thought it might be nine years ago, the simplicity and daily satisfaction of the work is an enjoyable respite from the complications of life juggling kids,

work, and caring for my now disabled Mom. The comradery, deep conversations, wonderful co-cooks, and unique window into the camp community are all still there thirty years after my Mom experienced them. My youngest will be in Unit 1 this coming summer and I am trying not to think about the end of his camp career possibly ending my own time at camp, as



Parents give of their time to make camp possible!

being at Catoctin continues to be a major grounding influence in my life.



## LITTLE CABIN PLAYHOUSE

**Great News!** We have almost completed the construction of the "Little Cabin" because of **YOU**.

Your generosity, your interest in maintaining and growing our Quaker Camps is appreciated. Today, we are **\$5,462.83** from our goal of \$25,000.

Once complete our playhouse will be auctioned off on eBay.

To learn more about the Little Cabin project, Quaker Camp cabin replacement, or how you might help please call (301-774-7663),

email ([development@bym-rsf.org](mailto:development@bym-rsf.org)) or go online at [bymcamps.org/](http://bymcamps.org/).

Thank you for your support of BYM Quaker Camps. They are life changing!

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## The BYM Camps Cookbook makes a great gift!

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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.

# 2015 Camp Season Enrollment Begins January 15

Camp registration will open Thursday, January 15th at 7:00 pm for returning campers. Starting Sunday, February 1st at 10:00 am, 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!

