

Fall 2021



YMCA CAMP  
CONISTON CHRONICLE  
FOR YMCA CAMP CONISTON ALUMNI AND THE CAMP COMMUNITY

*the* **SUMMER**  
*we all* **NEEDED!**



AN INTERACTIVE VERSION IS AVAILABLE  
WITH LIVE LINKS TO BLOGS AND VIDEOS  
[CONISTON.ORG/2021-CHRONICLE.PDF](https://coniston.org/2021-chronicle.pdf)

A PUBLICATION OF YMCA CAMP CONISTON • PO BOX 185, GRANTHAM NH 03753 • [WWW.CONISTON.ORG](https://www.coniston.org)



Present



1994–1999



1970–1993



1969–1970



1964–1968



1936–1963



1911–1935

## INSIDE *this issue*

Creating Lifelong Memories Through The Dick & Nell Leach Campership.....	2
189 Camperships Provided In 2021 .....	3
Summer Highlights: 'Of Course' The Summer We All Needed.....	4–5
Alumni And Volunteers Helping To Make The Magic Happen.....	6
How We Adapted To The Pandemic .....	7
Service Trips Help The Local Community .....	8
25 Years Of Camp Winning Spirit .....	9
Summer Staff Extend Employment To Afterschool Programs.....	10
Coniston Alumni Tutor Middle & High School Children .....	11
Staff Complete Summer Fellowships At Camp: With A Focus On Mental Health.....	12
Career Development Program Offered Higher Education Assistance From Colby–Sawyer College .....	13
Summer Testimonials .....	14
Camp News .....	15–18
Alumni News.....	19–25
Giving Tuesday .....	Back Cover

### Camp Coniston Mission Statement

As a nonprofit service organization with a focus on youth, YMCA Camp Coniston creates experiences that build spirit, mind and body for all.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Mary Helen Morris**, Chair  
Riverside, CT

**Lynne Schiffman Delise**,  
Vice Chair, New London, NH

**Neil Abramson**  
New Orleans, LA

**Richard Altman**  
Grantham, NH

**John Calcutt**  
Oro Valley, AZ

**Chris Eldredge**  
Sunapee, NH

**Rolf Gesen**  
Concord, NH

**Gen Izutsu**  
Atlanta, GA

**Catherine Johnson**  
West Lebanon, NH

**Jon Marvin**  
Bow, NH

**Stefan Timbrell**  
New London, NH

**Katie Smidt**  
Woburn, MA

**Michael J. Work**  
New London, NH

**John Zimmerman**  
Hopkinton, NH

**Tricia Brooks, Emerita**

**Greg Bryant, Emeritus**

**Katie Gardner, Emerita**

**Brian Grip, Emeritus**

**STAFF**

**John Tilley**  
Executive Director

**Lorraine Newcomb**  
Registrar

**John McNair**  
Summer Camp Director

**Nicole Berthiaume**  
Summer Camp Director

**Lindsey Tompkins**  
Director of Mission Advancement

**Jesse Ladd**  
Alumni Relations & Development

**Emily Judkins**  
Administrative Assistant

**Emily Hewes**  
Director of School-based Programs

**Jill Reynolds**  
Camp & Non-Profit Associate

**Aaron Turner**  
Maintenance Director

**Dave Savio & James Newcomb**  
Maintenance



## DIRECTOR'S 2<sup>d</sup>



*If you want to go fast, go alone.*

*If you want to go far, go together.*

– AFRICAN PROVERB

**T**his summer, we were together again. We played together, worked together, ate together, and laughed together. The smiles we saw on children's faces every day made a difference and this was because of the hard work, sacrifice, and dedication of so many. There are countless memories from the summer of 2021, but the one that will never disappear is the feeling of connection and togetherness. We returned to where we flourish and become our best selves and created the extraordinary community where we are all valued and supported.

On the walls of the Sander's Leadership Center hang four banners—Community, Leadership, Civics, and Service—concepts which embody the Coniston Experience. On the following pages, you will find inspiring stories highlighted by these concepts, moments of celebration from summer, days of adventure, and lessons in resilience. You'll read about the relief which was felt by being surrounded by a supportive community, the joy of being utterly silly, and the pride that comes from accomplishing new things.

We hope these stories bring a smile and give you the feeling of hope. As we look to the future, remember Camp is not just a place you go for a weekend, a week, or a month, but an idea we carry with us as we all try to leave the world—and each other—a little stronger than before.

A handwritten signature in blue ink.

JOHN TILLEY, CAMP DIRECTOR



# CREATING LIFELONG MEMORIES THROUGH THE DICK & NELL LEACH CAMBERSHIP

It's with heavy hearts that we say goodbye to our long-time friend, Dick Leach. He and his wife Nell have been among Coniston's biggest advocates over the past two decades, sending twelve grandchildren to Camp, hosting many campers/staff at their home during days off, and throwing an annual community gathering—**The Sunshine Christmas Luncheon**—to send numerous children to Camp each summer! What a difference Dick made.

Before Dick passed away he wanted to give even more back and made a second \$35,000 Campership in Perpetuity gift. Dick's legacy will live on through the two children his camperships will send to Camp, every year, forever. What a gesture of love.

Dick has left an imprint on many lives through the Camp Experiences he has provided. We are all grateful that Dick found Coniston and as we enjoy the beauty of Camp we will remember our dear friend.



## DICK LEACH SUNSHINE LUNCH

*join us as we continue this annual tradition*

**DECEMBER 10TH**

*Lake Sunapee Country Club | 12pm*

\$50 PER PERSON INCLUDES LUNCH, DRINK, & TIP



## THE CONISTON ENDOWMENT FUND PROVIDES **22 FULL CAMBERSHIPS** FROM THE QUARTERLY DISTRIBUTION



***A HUGE Class-A-Clap to the following families and individuals who have funded a Campership in Perpetuity—creating a legacy for loved ones through the gift of the Coniston Experience.***

Anonymous (1), Grip Family, Helen Gurley Brown BridgeUp Summer Camp Fund, Forrest M. Leach, Nell & Dick Leach, Nelson McLean, Jocelyn B. Tetel, In Memory of Anna Raeburn, In Memory of Catherine Malatesta, Newport Community Trust, NH Department of Corrections, Sunshine Fund, Carl Witherell Foundation, and Josh Young



# 189 CAMPSHIPS *provided in 2021*

**B**ecause we know the difference that summer camp makes to our campers, YMCA Camp Coniston's Board of Directors has made it a top priority to provide more financial assistance and suppress prices, allowing more children to attend Camp who may otherwise not be able to attend. This year, the Coniston community came together to raise \$308,000 to send children to Camp. Over the past four summers, financial assistance has grown by 125%. This year, even more organizations stepped forward to broaden our camperships into different and diverse under-served communities.



**NEW AMERICANS  
FROM CONCORD, NH AND  
BRONX, NY CAMPERS**  
PAID FOR BY




**VETERANS & SERVICE  
MEMBER FAMILIES**  
PAID FOR THROUGH  
gifts to the YMCA Camp  
Coniston Annual Fund



**UNDER-SERVED  
COMMUNITIES OF  
SULLIVAN COUNTY**  
PAID FOR BY  
Newport Community Trust

**CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS**  
PAID FOR BY NH Department of Corrections and Private Funding



# SUMMER HIGHLIGHTS: 'OF COURSE' THE SUMMER WE ALL NEEDED

The gratitude we feel for 2021 is an **of course** sense of gratitude. When we asked our families to participate in new protocols they said, **of course**. When we were met with challenges that required us to lean into different areas of work, members of our team said, **of course**. Was this summer the most challenging summer in recent memory? **Of course**. Was it full of fun, adventure, and laughs? **Of course**. Was it the best summer ever? **Of course**.



This summer, the Coniston Community stepped up more than ever before. Check-in days included testing, social distancing, and staggered check-in times. Thank you parents. Our first check-in day was hard...long and hot. The struggles of the day helped us to grow and learn —enabling us to make improvements for the following check-ins. This was only the beginning of what ended up being our most magical summer yet. The summer we all needed.



A highlight from this summer were the stunning drama shows. In particular, our session 3 drama show, Coco—a story inspired by The Day of the Dead. We had a large number of staff from Mexico this summer who chose the show as a way to share their culture with the rest of Camp. The drama staff also made sure to incorporate authentic Mexican culture into the show, including traditional sugar skull makeup and costumes.

READ MORE  
ON OUR  
*Blog*



*...staff cried, touched by the show. Some were homesick and the show made them feel closer to everybody. For Mexican staff, sharing this tradition was significant and they were proud to be able to share their culture with the Coniston Community.*

—Alma, Drama Director





Coniston campers weren't just having fun at Camp, they were also having fun outside of Camp! This summer there were seven adventure trips, where campers went climbing, hiking, whitewater rafting, ziplining, and biking all over New Hampshire, Maine, Vermont, and Massachusetts in stunning surroundings! Some of our older campers also helped the local community on our

service trips where they helped with meal preparation, gardening, and trail maintenance. Our CIT Program looked slightly different this year, as both trips stayed on the East Coast, thus creating a new program: North Coast CITs. Both our N-CITs and E-CITs had life changing experiences hiking either Katahdin or Mount Washington.

Our forty LITs who missed their CIT summer in 2020 were pleasantly surprised with the opportunity to bond as a group on an abbreviated CIT experience up Mount Washington during staff training. Additionally, once they summited, each LIT received an inspirational letter from fellow staff members—a tradition for all CITs.



READ MORE  
ON OUR  
*Blog*

*...COVID took a little bit from all of us this past year in so many obvious and some subliminal ways, but if this day showed us anything, the strength and perseverance of the community of Coniston is not going anywhere.*

—Fran, Girls Camp Director

There may have been a few changes this summer to Coniston because of the pandemic, but Camp was Camp. The traditions were still alive. We still danced at meal times. We still had beautiful Vespers stories shared everyday. We still slept under the stars. We still stepped out of our comfort zones and tried new things. We still saw campers build friendships that will last a lifetime. We still had Camp. And it was truly special. It was what we all needed.

## TOP TOWNS ENROLLMENT

- ▶ NEEDHAM, MA
- ▶ ARLINGTON, MA
- ▶ NEW LONDON, NH
- ▶ WINCHESTER, MA
- ▶ NEWPORT, NH
- ▶ HANOVER, NH
- ▶ NEWTON, MA
- ▶ CONCORD, NH
- ▶ BELMONT, MA
- ▶ WELLESLEY, MA
- ▶ GRANTHAM, NH
- ▶ BROOKLYN, NY

# ALUMNI AND VOLUNTEERS HELPING TO MAKE THE MAGIC HAPPEN

Countless alumni and volunteers from around the United States jumped in to lend a hand as the challenges of the pandemic forced us to pivot to ensure a safe and fun summer. Without the passion and creativity of these generous individuals summer wouldn't have been as successful.

**THANK YOU** to the **CONISTON NURSES** who went above and beyond with numerous pre-camp meetings to prepare new protocols to ensure campers and staff stayed safe and healthy this summer.

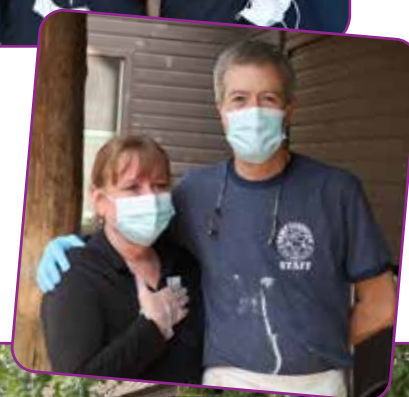
**THANK YOU** to **DR. LESTER** and **NEW LONDON PEDIATRICS** for being on call more than ever to help us through our COVID testing and decision making on protocols.

**THANK YOU** to alumnae, **SARA NOBLE** and **LIZ MORRIS**, along with Board Chair, **MARY HELEN MORRIS** for spending countless hours preparing PCR testing kits so check-in could run smoothly.

**THANK YOU** to **CHEF MIKE & JAN LAMBRECHT**, along with the entire **KITCHEN STAFF** working hard with the challenges of the food shortages to keep everyone fed and **CHEF MIKE** for only taking two days off all summer to make it happen.

**THANK YOU** to alumni **KELLY CONDON**, **JENNIFER HAMEL**, and **NICK NEWBERRY** who worked in our kitchen to help us through the kitchen staffing shortage.

And **THANK YOU** to all the alumni that made check-in days possible—**EMMA TILLEY**, **BETH WORTHINGTON**, and **IZZY GLENNON** who greeted families as they arrived at Camp, **PATRICK NOBLE** who helped parking run smoothly on the A-field, **SHANNON RUSH** and **KATHLEEN MOORE** for running the Camp store, **BETH & BRIAN DOUCET**, **JACK BERTHIAUME**, and **CAITLIN ELGERT** who assisted with the camper health screening/COVID testing, and **JEN DEASY** and **CARTER BASCOM** who welcomed new campers as they unpacked into cabins.







# *How we* **ADAPTED** *to the* **PANDEMIC**



SPACE FOR THE WHOLE CAMP TO BE TOGETHER FOR THE TALENT SHOW



OUTDOOR DINING



PCR TESTING



SUPERMARKET TRIPS TO ENSURE CAMPER'S HAD SUNDAY BRUNCH



CHECK-IN POINT



# SERVICE TRIPS HELP THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

**T**wo service trips with twenty-three young teens and their staff members worked with a group of organizations that give back to the local community instead of our traditional trips in Virginia volunteering with Habitat for Humanity and Feeding America.



They supported Upper Valley Haven—an organization that offers food, shelter, housing, and child support—with meal preparation, as well as with general tidying. Additionally, our service trip team spent a day harvesting green beans with Willing Hands, and organizing for the Listen Thrift Stores Halloween sale. They also volunteered with Upper Valley Land Trust, Upper Valley Trails Alliance, and Cardigan Highlander Trail Crew, helping with trail maintenance and gardening. Not having to travel this summer allowed our service trip members to have a few extra days of fun exploring various attractions throughout New Hampshire.

The service trips were amazing—staying local was special and the people these non-profits served were so appreciative. We were able to tackle projects that would have taken some of these organizations months to finish. While we don't know how staying local will impact Coniston in the future, we are proud to be able to support our local community in so many ways.





## 25 YEARS OF CAMP WINNING SPIRIT

**“** **CAMP WAS AMAZING!** *I watched this kid just dive right in and just be a kid doing camp activities with so many new friends. I had a hard time keeping track of him because he was so comfortable being with kids his age he forgot to check in.*

*Let me tell you, watching your little boy paddle away to kayak with his friends is a weird feeling. On one hand I was so happy he was trying something he had never done, but on the other hand I was so nervous because, well hello, he's floating in a lake with 1.5 legs! No fear.*



Aiden, Camp Winning Spirit Camper

*He stayed up late, played games, did gymnastics, and even figured out with the other kids how to play gaga ball together. To see other kids hop around on one leg to even the playing field seriously made me want to cry. The compassion hit me hard.*

*Aiden is already looking forward to next year at Camp Winning Spirit! The counselors, parents, and kids were just so welcoming to us and we can't wait to see them again.*

—AIDEN'S MOM SAM, A NEW WINNING SPIRIT FAMILY

**”**

**F**or 25 summers, we've invited families who have a child with pediatric cancer to come to Camp, free of charge, in collaboration with NH Childhood Cancer Lifeline. This program allowing families to sit around the campfire together is invaluable, but no one can say it better than a parent. We are so grateful to impact someone's life like this.

**PAST STAFF AND FAMILIES PLEASE  
JOIN US TO CELEBRATE 25 YEARS  
OF CAMP WINNING SPIRIT!  
SEPT 5TH, 2022**

Registration information to come.

Please send pictures or fun memories from Camp Winning Spirit to [nicole@coniston.org](mailto:nicole@coniston.org).



# SUMMER STAFF EXTEND EMPLOYMENT TO AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

**E**very summer Coniston hires a group of outstanding individuals from around the world to work in different areas of Camp. This summer our international staff program faced many difficulties due to the travel restrictions, however, we were lucky enough to have a group of twenty-six individuals from Mexico, Columbia, and Sweden able to join us.

After an incredible summer, seven of our staff from Mexico were able to stay for an extra month and work in our afterschool programs.

Well-documented in the media, YMCA Camp Coniston was not exempt from the effect of the employment crisis this fall. Thanks to this amazing group of people, we were able to keep all five sites open; without them this wouldn't have been possible.

*Working at afterschool gave me the opportunity to practice my pedagogical skills. The kids are amazing and being able to spend time with them was the best. Staying an extra month at Camp made me feel more independent.*

—Alma, New London Afterschool



*Working at Coniston has made me learn so much about myself, how I deal with everything, to be more patient, to be louder and to be more cheerful. I think I became a great counselor. I'm so grateful for this opportunity to meet and work with so many amazing people.*

—Stephany, Lebanon Afterschool

*They have no limits to love everything and everyone, and I think that is something we should really appreciate about children.*

—Andrea, Sunapee Afterschool



## WE ARE **STILL** HIRING!

**CONISTON'S AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS** are looking for responsible, knowledgeable, and enthusiastic staff to join our programs—M-F from 2:30-6pm. If interested contact our Director of School Based Programs [emily.hewes@coniston.org](mailto:emily.hewes@coniston.org)

*Through the success and growth of the tutoring program, Coniston has demonstrated how its commitment to helping children and young adults grow extends beyond Lake Coniston and into the surrounding communities.*

—GRAY KAEGLI, CONISTON ALUMNUS AND TUTOR



## CONISTON ALUMNI TUTOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL CHILDREN

Last winter, through a grant from NH Empower Youth Program, we launched an alumni based virtual tutoring program. The mission of the new program is to give students the additional support that they need to succeed. The program utilized Coniston summer staff members who are recent college students, and Coniston alumni who are teachers, to engage students with their studies and help them in areas where they struggle. Tutors meet 1:1 with a student virtually once a week to provide help with one or more academic subjects and/or test preparation in an effort to support academic success.

The program began with New American students from Concord, NH and we quickly expanded the program into Newport, NH. Our goal will be to offer this program to all Conistonians in the near future.

If interested in becoming a tutor or receiving services, feel free to reach out to our Director of School Based Programs, Emily at [emily.hewes@coniston.org](mailto:emily.hewes@coniston.org)



### CONISTON TUTORS

an alumni based  
program helped  
**32 STUDENTS**  
have academic success

#### FUNDED THROUGH

NH Charitable Foundation  
Newport Community Trust  
NH Empower Youth Program

# STAFF COMPLETE SUMMER FELLOWSHIPS AT CAMP: WITH A FOCUS ON MENTAL HEALTH

For the past three summers Coniston has offered two paid fellowship positions to engage staff's academic knowledge and leadership ability for the betterment of the Camp Community. These programs allow us to give current undergraduates internships recognized by their colleges. **Megan Davis** was the recipient of the **Ernest Baynes Academic Fellowship** and **Katie Bosco** was selected to serve as the **George Dorr, Jr. Leadership Fellow**.



Both fellowships focused on the mental, emotional, and social health of our campers and staff with a mission to promote healthy habits, education, and to provide support. The Coniston Community has faced the challenges of the last 18 months head on and as we emerge the work the fellows' provided this summer was extremely important.

In addition to supporting individuals, Megan and Katie also shared mental health tips during Vespers, provided campers with activity booklets as a calming exercise to deal with stress, organized evening programs for staff to promote well-being, and created handouts for counselors to educate them on how to better mentor a struggling camper. The reading nook located inside the lodge was re-purposed into a mindfulness corner with posters promoting well-being.

Summers to come will be critical as we work together to counteract the persistent emotional consequences of the pandemic and other adverse childhood experiences, in addition to social-emotional and academic learning losses.



***Mental health was a big focus this summer and received the attention it needed for the Coniston Community.***

—Ernest Baynes Academic Fellow,  
Megan Davis



***We normalized mental health for both campers and staff—began to put an end to stigmas surrounding the term.***

—George Dorr, Jr. Leadership Fellow,  
Katie Bosco



Follow us on  
**Instagram**  
@ymcacampconiston

AND OUR NATURE PAGE: @ConistonFloraAndFauna





# CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

## OFFERED HIGHER EDUCATION ASSISTANCE FROM COLBY-SAWYER COLLEGE



As part of our college and career development counseling initiative, current staff members received special opportunities during the summer to meet with our alumni and parent communities all while learning about the process of college applications.

This summer, high school aged LITs (Leaders in Training) had the opportunity to attend a **Common Application / College Admissions workshop** and older staff members were provided with a **Resume Writing workshop**, all offered by **Jennifer Tockman** of **Colby-Sawyer College**.

If you are are willing to speak to younger staff about the college search process, please reach out to [jesse@coniston.org](mailto:jesse@coniston.org).

facebook

DONATE

@YMCACampConiston



*No associated fees  
with donation.*

# SUMMER TESTIMONIALS

Coniston truly is a **HOME AWAY FROM HOME** for my children, something they carry within their souls throughout the school year until summer rolls back around.

—CAMPER PARENT

I had to pick up my first year camper at fifteen a day early to attend a family reunion. She begged me to drive her back to Camp for check-out so she could say one last goodbye to her friends. Since Camp she has reached out to ask how to apply for CIT! It is hard to come to Camp for the first time as a last year camper as many friendships have been formed years ago and it can be hard to find your way in! She was **ACCEPTED READILY** and felt a **STRONG CONNECTION** to her cabinmates!

—CAMPER PARENT

*While at Camp I tried so many new things.  
For starters, I learned how to swim!!!*

—CAMPER FROM BRONX, NY

A core focus of Coniston's since 1916 has been to teach the life skill of swimming and water safety. As a result, we hope to have helped prevent accidental drownings. Every camper, regardless of swimming ability takes swim lessons at Camp every summer.

For children ages 1–14, drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional injury death after motor vehicle crashes. 3,960\* fatal unintentional drownings, including boating-related drowning—that is an average of 11 drowning deaths per day.

—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control

**WOW!** All I can do is say **THANK YOU** to you and your team at Camp Coniston! I have heard from a couple kids already who shared that they had such an incredible time up North and feel that they grew in ways they did not know was possible! Thank you for creating an atmosphere that felt so welcoming and trusting for our kids. **CAMP IS MAGICAL** and these kids got to feel it - due to the culture you have built and the experiences that you and your staff provide every year. Incredible!

—SHELBY J. SEMINO, PH.D., CO-FOUNDER  
& PROGRAM DIRECTOR, BRIDGEUP

All twenty-two of the New American campers had a **FABULOUS TIME**. My friend was chosen as **HONOR CAMPER**! When I told his school counselor about this, she and I both commented that we were surprised. He is a nice kid, but does not “shine” in our school environment. **AT CAMP, HOWEVER, HE THRIVED**. I had the opportunity to watch him tell his mom about honor camper. I have never seen a child prouder!

—STUART GESEN, CONISTON AND SCHOOL NURSE



## CONISTON HAS A NEW JOB ROLE: ALUMNI RELATIONS & DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

**Jesse Ladd** has taken on this new role at Coniston. The job involves managing the Annual Fund, as well as developing our alumni community. Jesse has worked with us for five summers, including a year in 2019 as an Associate. Jesse will carry out her work remotely from London for half of the year and then will join us here at the Lake for the other half. We are very excited to have Jesse back on our team!

[jesse@coniston.org](mailto:jesse@coniston.org)



## OUR NEW ASSOCIATE

We are very excited to have **Jill Reynolds** on our team this year as a Camp and Non-profit Management Associate. Jill worked at Coniston this past summer leading our service trips and one adventure trip. This year, Jill's role will focus on the planning of our new South Africa Exchange Program and running one of our local afterschool programs.

[jill@coniston.org](mailto:jill@coniston.org)



## WELCOME TO OUR NEW DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL BASED PROGRAMS: EMILY HEWES

Emily is the newest member of the Coniston Team and although this is her first year with us, this will be her 13th year with the Y. From Camp Counselor to Afterschool Site Director she has worked in all departments! In the last few years, she served as the Assistant Director for both afterschool and Camp Lincoln. She will serve as the Director of School Based Programs, where we serve five afterschool programs with over 200 students and our virtual tutoring program. She can be reached at [emily.hewes@coniston.org](mailto:emily.hewes@coniston.org).



## CONISTON FEATURED ON NH CHRONICLE



Sean McDonald and Audrey Cox with the **New Hampshire Chronicle** visited Coniston this summer to try out some of our Camp activities!



## PARENTS SPEAK ABOUT CONISTON NATIONALLY

**yahoo!life**

READ THE  
FULL ARTICLE  
*Here*

Coniston parents, **Abigail Chau** and **Anna Caccavaro**, along with **John Tilley**, spoke with **Yahoo!Life** about camp this summer in an article: *Camp is back! Here's how it'll work and why families can't wait: 'This is a summer of healing for our kids'*

## JOHN TILLEY LIVE ON NH PUBLIC RADIO

nhpr

Before summer began, **John Tilley** was live on **NHPR NH Roundup with Laura Knoy** talking about overnight camp and camping.

## RECORD BREAKING SNOW AT CAMP!



On December 18th, Camp's home town was featured on **Good Morning America** for having gotten one of the largest snow totals in New Hampshire!

## CONISTON PODCAST!



Look out for future announcements on our social media about our upcoming **PODCAST!!** Our Summer Camp Director, **Nicole Berthiaume**, has created this podcast and has been recording sessions with our wonderful summer

staff about how life on Lake Coniston echoes through all of our lives. If you are interested in being a guest on our podcast please contact [nicole@coniston.org](mailto:nicole@coniston.org).

# THE BUDDY BENCH



YMCA Camp Coniston has a new **Buddy Bench**. Thanks to John Tilley for the idea, James and Aaron in maintenance for building the bench, and Session 5 campers for painting!

Our Arts & Crafts Director, Barb Hawley took it to the next level—as we like to say at Camp she **Barb'd it up** a bit with some friendship quotes. Barb's true mission is always to share the joy experienced while creating art and that is just what she did with us. We can't wait for the bench to see many new friendships formed on its comfort!

*Sit here and be a friend, make a friend, love a friend... give your time and your ears."*



## YOUTH & GOVERNMENT GOES VIRTUAL

This year, YMCA Camp Coniston staff, along with dedicated teachers, worked virtually with **Stevens, Newport and Kearsage High Schools** to deliver Youth and Government sessions to serve 300 teens from 30 schools throughout New Hampshire. Coniston's main role was assisting the press corps—a body of a dozen students from different districts that write, edit, and publish newspapers during the sessions. Sessions were held virtually, which allowed students to communicate differently and perhaps change the process for planning in the coming years. We look forward to the 2022 sessions this March!

YMCA Youth & Government is a national program of the Y that involves thousands of teens nationwide in state-organized, model-government programs. Students from every corner of the U.S. have the opportunity to immerse themselves in experiential civic engagement and to, quite literally, practice democracy.





# K-9 SEARCH & RESCUE TRAINING



We were glad to see **Northern New England K-9 Search and Rescue** return this past winter and spring to use Coniston's facilities and grounds, free of charge, for training purposes. The group is the main search and rescue group for VT, NH, & ME and is called into duty when hikers and skiers are lost in the outdoors. With Camp's record breaking forty-four inches of snow the conditions were perfect for training. We thank this group for their wonderful service in keeping the New England outdoor community safe!



**Hypertherm volunteers** worked for six full days at Camp to help us get ready for the summer! Several of the volunteers were Coniston alumni and we had a wonderful time welcoming them back to Camp. We can't thank all of the volunteers enough for all of your hard work. We could not get camp ready without you!



Thank you **New London NH Rotary** for helping us get ready for the summer! They provided us with 2,000 masks and what a difference that made! They also visited Coniston for their annual meeting at Camp the Friday before Labor Day!



# COMMUNITY

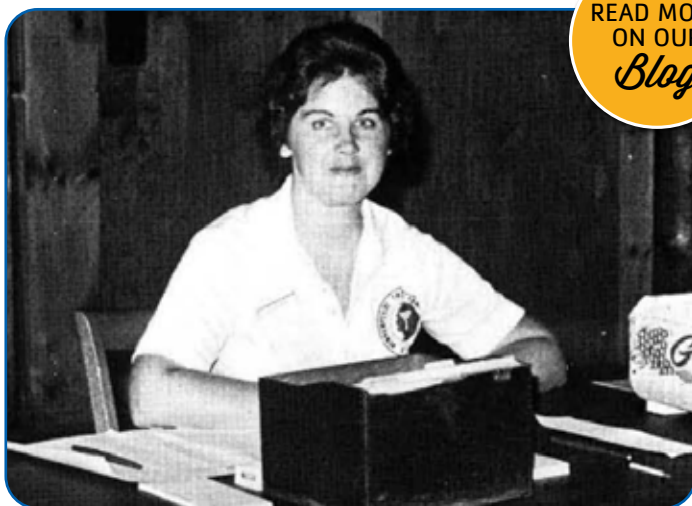
1960s - 1990s

READ MORE  
ON OUR  
*Blog*



**WHAT CAMP GAVE TO ME**—alumnus, **Chris** from the Sanders' Era, shares a powerful blog on how Coniston changed his life—*"I would have always been a city kid...a little afraid of the dark woods, of the unknown, of the animals and sounds of the forest..."*

READ MORE  
ON OUR  
*Blog*



It is with heavy hearts we announce the passing of **Patricia Ford (Reny)** on Wednesday, December 11, 2019. Pat was Camp Nurse from 1972 – 1978 and was joined each summer by her son Michael Reny and husband D. Reny. After the passing of his mother, Michael recalls the joy he experienced at Camp with her.

READ MORE  
ON OUR  
*Blog*



**RETURNING A PIECE OF CONISTON HISTORY THIRTY YEARS LATER!** Jared Reid shares a wonderful story about YMCA Camp Coniston and how a piece of history got returned to the rightful owner, **Kitter Spader**.



READ MORE  
ON OUR  
*Blog*

**ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT | Kitter & Gordie Spater** were both long-time campers and staff members. In 2013, the brothers started a pet products company and now sell their products to companies such as Petco!

STAY INFORMED ABOUT CONISTON HAPPENINGS—REGISTER AS AN ALUM  
[coniston.org/alumni](http://coniston.org/alumni)

# FOLLOW US ON

[www.linkedin.com/company/ymca-camp-coniston](http://www.linkedin.com/company/ymca-camp-coniston)

AND JOIN OUR NEW CAREER DEVELOPMENT GROUP: [www.linkedin.com/groups/13608842](http://www.linkedin.com/groups/13608842)



A group of alumni spent a changeover together— **Meaghan (White) Bonin** CIT '98, **Erin White** former camper and 90s staff, **Berta Sinclair** Coniston living legend, CIT '96, **Mary (Blaney) Hughes** CIT '96, **Kelly White** CIT '96, and **Tim White** - CIT '00. Mary and Kelly's daughters attended session 3, and Meg's daughter hopes to be joining them in 2022! It was also the 25th Anniversary of Berta, Mary and Kelly's CIT year!



**ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT | Howie Kalfus** was a long-term camper and staff member, and is currently the judge for the Vermont Judicial Bureau. Howie stated that learning the ability to show compassion has helped him a lot professionally as it can soften a blow or demonstrate that he has listened and that he cares.



That's right! **Katie Smidt**, '04 CIT, '10 & '11 Girls Camp Director and current member of our Board was on the docket for some virtual staff training this year. Katie taught our staff about how to care for campers and their own mental health this summer.

**amazon**smile  
You shop. Amazon gives.

This holiday season think of YMCA Camp Coniston when you shop. AmazonSmile donates when you shop and thanks to your purchases we have raised over \$2,000 from 204 participants!



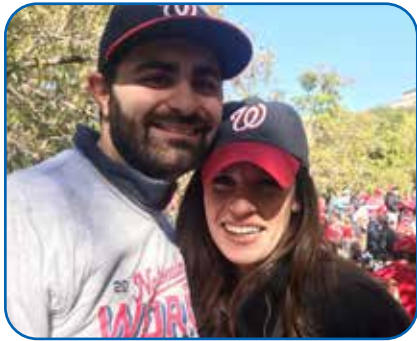
## LOVELY TO SEE SO MANY CONISTON FRIENDS COME TOGETHER TO CELEBRATE!



Congrats to **Andy Miller** and his new wife, Alex!



Congratulations **Rachel Adler** and husband, Alex!



**Ben Kamisar** got engaged!  
We hope you have a beautiful wedding day!



**Michelle** and **Gabe Faithfull** got married! Congratulations on your magical day!!



**Josh Bates** got engaged! We hope you have a wonderful wedding day!



**Meghan Salvias Ship**, 14-year alumna and current K-5 Math Instructional Coach has countless memories about Coniston, but dropping her daughter off for her first year at Camp feels the most impactful.



**Katie** and **Matt Comstock** are expecting their first child! Congratulations! We can't wait to meet the future camper!



**Kyle Leahy**, former CIT Director and camper, got married to Olivia. Congratulations!



**venmo**

**@YMCACampConiston**

*No associated fees with donation.*



**Cassie Short**, a 2008 CIT and a CIT Director in 2014/2015, recently got engaged to Bobby McLaughlin. They will be getting married in June 2022!



**Liz Dion** graduated from Ohio State University with a Doctorate in Occupational Therapy. Congrats Dr. Liz!



Coniston alumnus, **Dylan Lustig** and his wife Katie, welcomed their baby boy, Jack, in January! Congratulations Dylan and Katie. Jack is beautiful!



**Ken Sneider**, took 3rd place in the 5th annual San Francisco Sourdough eating contest, with a finish of 3.5 loaves!

READ MORE  
ON OUR  
*Blog*



**ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT**  
**Tyler Bascom**  
long-time camper and staff member claims he found success mentoring his team at work due to the leadership skills he gained at Camp.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**WE ACCEPT GIFTS OF STOCK**

*Gifts like these can be advantageous for donors and give a Camp Experience to many children.*

READ MORE  
ON OUR  
*Blog*

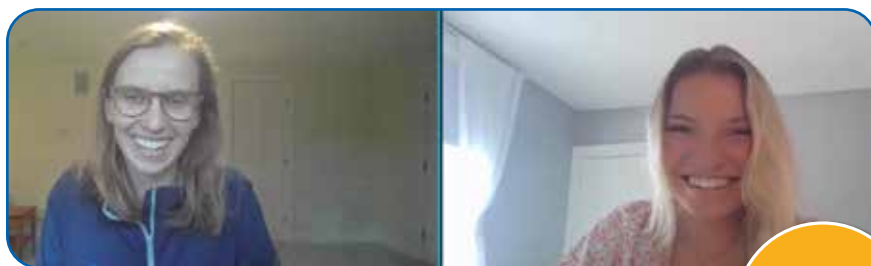


### ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

**Parker Olson** long-time camper and staff member founded his own granola company to support an active and healthy lifestyle. Parker attributes much of his creativity, drive, and out-of-the-box thinking to the development that happened at Camp!



Coniston parent, **Chris Winship**, represented Coniston during his backcountry camping trip in Yosemite NP!



READ MORE  
ON OUR  
*Blog*

When starting a new job, it's always nice to see a familiar face – even if it has been quite a while. During the start of her internship, **Liz Morris** noticed a name on the attendee list she recognized immediately: **Lindsey Bromm**! Lindsey was one of Liz' campers in G3 back in 2011. The two Conistonians caught up about that summer – including the cabin photo where everyone wore a towel on their head – and lots of summers since.



Coniston alumnae **Georgia Rivett Mills**, **Lily Himmelman** and **Jesse Ladd** have moved in together in London!



## BECOME AN ALUMNI AMBASSADOR!

Are there a bunch of Coniston alumni in your area and you want to host an event? Do you like to get free Coniston swag and take silly photos? Well then you need to become a Coniston Alumni Ambassador. Email Jesse at [jesse@coniston.org](mailto:jesse@coniston.org) to get started.

2000s - 2010s





**Helen Segil** started her own pottery business - Sludge House! Check out her business on instagram [@sludgehousestudio](https://www.instagram.com/sludgehousestudio)



NYC Coniston Crew sending **Austin Turner** off to Seattle where he moved in early October. **Kevin Dober, David Salvay, Emily Kohlberg, Corey Miller, Mia Kamisar, Sydney Croteau, Austin Turner, Griffin Melia, Kristen Wiewel, Austin Gardner, Caroline Hahn, Brittany O'Leary, & Chris Magnani.**



**Kate Powers** is making history in Portland! She is an ultimate frisbee player for Portland Rising, Portland's first women's professional ultimate frisbee team!



**Catherine Merkt** moved to London to work at a Family Law firm after graduating law school, and has now moved back to her hometown of Geneva, Switzerland to complete her legal training. Catherine has been working for a year and a half in a top

family law firm as a trainee lawyer, and will take her Geneva bar exam in October 2022! She hopes to further her interests in child protection and women's rights in the future. Good luck Catherine!



**Chris Lovejoy**, Coniston alumnus, has just released his first solo single 'On & On' on Apple and Spotify. Check out his music video on YouTube!



Yes! That is Conistonian and legendary drama director, **Allie Luecke** on the Guardian modeling her sleeping bag up-cycled into a puffer jacket. On Allie's instagram page [@allie](https://www.instagram.com/allie).

**upcycles** she shows people how to make their clothes fit better by letting out a seam, or creating a brand new piece from a garment that you love, but just isn't working for you any more.

## PLAN YOUR CIT REUNION

If you think it is time to plan your CIT reunion please be sure contact [jesse@coniston.org](mailto:jesse@coniston.org) to plan details for the event.





**Walker Horton** graduated from UVM with a degree in Computer Science and Information Systems!



**Chloe Parker**, former Drama Director, welcomed her baby boy, Harley, this past year!



**Talía Ungareli** graduated from UVM with a major in Animal Science. She is now at Gladys

Porter Zoo, Texas, working as an Animal Caregiver/Trainer for gorillas and large carnivores.



**Colin Grip** met up with his former camper **Eddie Scott**. They both just started grad school and undergrad at Duke University together!



**Izabelle Serrentino** just got accepted at the University of Arizona! Congratulations Izabelle!



**Bert Myer** shared this lovely photo with us. All of these children—sons and daughters of former Coniston campers and grandchildren of Coniston—connected friends—attended Camp this summer at the same time! (The photo is a few years old) **Ronan Carroll, Ryan Berger, Cameron Dunphy, Cal Donnelly, Otelia Donnelly, Owen Dunphy, Thomas Berger** and **Wesley Berger**.



11-year-old camper, **Quinn McCarthy**, volunteers with the Pascack Valley Navigators as a student mentor, helping children ages 5 - 18 with special needs learn the basic skills of various sports. Great work Quinn!



**YMCA Camp Coniston**  
PO Box 185  
Grantham, NH 03753-0185  
[www.coniston.org](http://www.coniston.org) | (603) 863-1160

# TIME SENSITIVE

## DOUBLE YOUR DONATION TO CAMP!

**NOVEMBER 30TH @ 8 AM EST**  
**TUESDAY AFTER THANKSGIVING**

# #GIVINGTUESDAY

On **#GIVINGTUESDAY**, join us once again in helping to bring the Coniston Experience to a cabin of campers. Starting **TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30<sup>TH</sup> @ 8AM EST** all **GIFTS WILL BE MATCHED** through the generosity of **FACEBOOK** and **BAR HARBOR BANK & TRUST**.

If your donation is made through **FACEBOOK** or **VENMO @YMCACAMPCONISTON**, Coniston will receive 100% of the donation with no associated fees. If you prefer, you can mail a check on November 30<sup>th</sup> with #GivingTuesday in the memo line to have your gift matched! If you have any questions or wish to learn more please e-mail [jesse@coniston.org](mailto:jesse@coniston.org).



[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/YMCACAMPCONISTON](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/YMCACAMPCONISTON)