

▼ FALL 2025

# YMCA CAMP CONISTON CHRONICLE

A PUBLICATION FOR ALUMNI AND THE CAMP COMMUNITY

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## CAMP'S NEW LOGO!



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# Director's Two Cents



I want to share a story that's been unfolding since the early 1870's. This story is rooted not in tents or cabins but in community.

Recently, I've spent time digging through old local newspapers, magazines and the Dartmouth College Archives tracing the origins of our YMCA. What I found may surprise you: we didn't begin as a camp at all. We began as a group of neighbors who believed in building community through action. They launched youth sports leagues, town gatherings, public parks, play days, English as second language programs, and even partnered with Dartmouth College, Colby Sawyer College, and Kimball Union Academy. And yes, eventually, they came together to build a camp. But Camp was just one piece of a much larger vision.

These efforts began long before we were chartered or had a Camp facility. They called themselves "YMCA," and by 1909 they hired full-time staff dedicated to one mission: bringing people together.

A friend at the national YUSA Archives once said our founders didn't do 10,000 things—they did one thing, 10,000 different ways. Whether it was inventing basketball, volleyball, group fitness, or camping, every activity was designed not for its own sake, but to connect people.

Think about it, basketball wasn't invented to fill arenas, it was created so people would learn from one another. That same spirit lives on in Coniston's cabins. Here, we believe that individuals grow best by learning to live with others. In a world that often celebrates individualism, Camp Coniston reminds us that true growth comes from listening, sharing, and working toward what's good for many—not just one. It is what our founders called "Group Work" that creates resilient individuals capable of creating a strong world.

For 115 summers, we've stayed true to that founding purpose. And we hope you are proud to be part of it.

Welcome to YMCA Camp Coniston—where community comes first.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "John Tilley".

- John Tilley, Camp Director



# Highlights Summer 2025

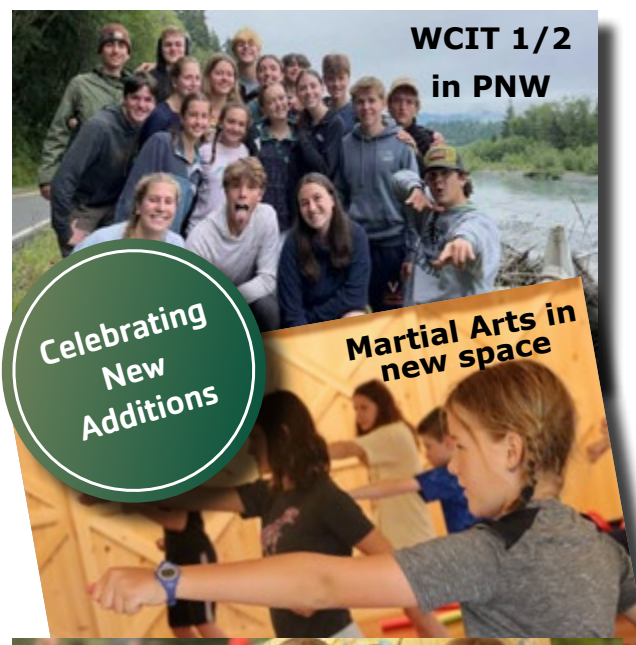
While the spirit of camp remains unchanged, every summer brings something new. This summer was no different. Our campers and staff traveled from 31 states and 15 countries, bringing an element of diversity to Camp that is difficult to imagine! Yet one out of every four campers lives within a 45-minute drive of Coniston, giving Camp another aspect of its unique feel. Here are a few of the highlights!

The 2025 West Coast CITs embarked on a brand-new adventure to the Pacific Northwest. The destination was fantastic as the CITs learned how to work together in a wilderness setting, engage in leadership and role model discussions, practice outdoor leadership skills, and develop what it means to be a responsible and independent staff member. In addition to spending two weeks working together and becoming certified in First Aid and Lifeguarding, the groups traveled to the lush Hoh Rainforest, hiked dramatic coastal trails like Hole-in-the-Wall and Lovers Lane Loop, and took in breathtaking views from Hurricane Ridge and Grand Ridge. The 2026 West Coast CITs will return to Washington State.

Dance and Martial Arts programs moved into their new home this summer! Campers and Staff alike were thrilled to use the brand-new multipurpose space. This project completed the first phase of the Lodge Renovation. It added two new single stall bathrooms to the center of Camp for all to use. Want to see how the renovation and expansion came together? Flip to page 13 for the full story.

This summer, Coniston had the honor of welcoming two incredible campers from Wildflower, a Lexington, MA based organization that supports children who have lost a parent. Wildflower offers healing through joyful experiences and lasting support. This beautifully aligns with what we believe at Coniston: that camp is a powerful source of confidence, connection, and hope.

Twelve lucky adventure campers set off for Rhode Island this summer on the inaugural Narragansett Navigator. This week-long program is packed with surfing, boating, ropes courses, and sun-soaked fun. Nestled along the scenic shores of Narragansett Bay, the trip offered the perfect backdrop for laughter, challenge, and unforgettable memories with camp friends.





Celebrating  
Long-Time  
Friends

This summer we celebrated a major milestone at Camp. John McNair marked his 30th summer at Coniston. John began as a camper and is Coniston's longest serving Boy's Camp Director with nine summers in that role!

The occasion was marked with a McNair themed evening program, major dining hall celebrations, and a clock featuring Lake Coniston. John is only the second Conistonian to ever spend 30 summers on the lake!

Thank you, John for all you do to make Camp magic.



In another rare occurrence, Nicole Berthiaume and Lorraine Newcomb both rang in 25 summers at Camp Coniston. Nicole began as a camper and later ran Coniston's After school program. She has been a Summer Camp Director focusing on staffing and training since 2018. Lorraine has spent all of her years working in the office where she served as Coniston's long-term registrar. Nicole and Lorraine are joined by only four other Conistonians to spend 25 summers at camp!

Since 2012, Camp has begun each summer with a community-focused initiative that sets a tone of caring and responsibility. This summer, the Coniston Cares food drive filled the Camp store with non-perishable donations to support local food pantries each session. We believe this tradition not only benefits our surrounding community but serves as a reminder that service and empathy are central to the Coniston experience.

Huge thank you to the families who gave generously during check-in and check-out. Be on the lookout for next summer's donation drive!

Two Coniston Service Trips traveled to Camden, Maine to volunteer with Mid-Coast Habitat for Humanity.

build site, helping construct affordable housing and

supporting families in need.

With housing being central in the news it is easy to see that campers learn compassion, civic responsibility and the value of contributing to something larger than oneself when on these trips. After a week of hard work, the groups traveled to West Forks, ME for a well-earned adventure. They enjoyed white water rafting, rock climbing, and hiking!





# Campership Spotlight

## Turning Grief into Hope at Coniston

**T**his summer, we saw something beautiful happen, grief transformed into hope. Over the past few years, loved ones and community came together to create two memorial camperships in memory of two members of the Coniston family: Jesse Barden and Colin MacQuarrie. These gifts open the door for future campers to experience the same joy and friendship that Jesse and Colin found here.



**Jesse Barden**

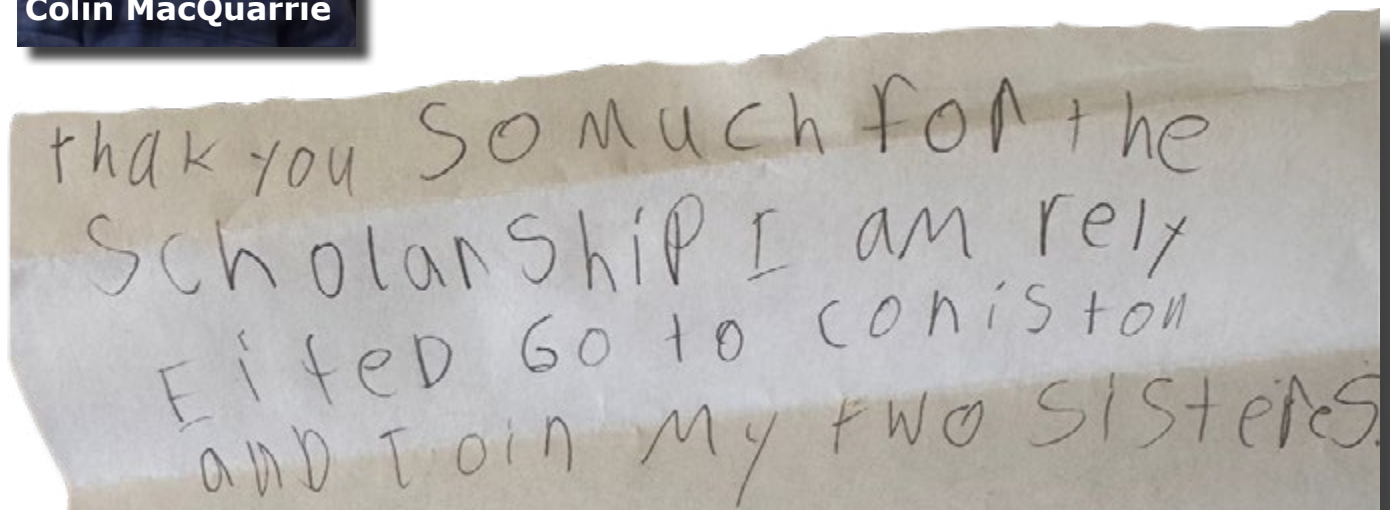
This summer, two campers received that gift. One was just eight years old, the youngest of three who had always hoped to join their older siblings at Camp. With a recent cancer diagnosis in the family and financial hardship, this dream felt out of reach. But thanks to the campership, that dream came true.

Coniston has always been more than just a summer destination. It's a place where kids build resilience, make lifelong friends, and discover who they are. The camperships in Jesse's and Colin's names are a powerful reminder that even in loss, something good can grow.



**Colin MacQuarrie**

With deep gratitude, we thank Eileen and Joe Barden, and Debbie and Scott MacQuarrie. Their generosity, and support from many other family members, friends, and loved ones will ensure that Jesse and Colin's legacies will continue to bring joy, connection, and opportunity to generations of campers.



*Thank you note from first year camper who received one of the camperships*

# Past Meets Present

# White & Blue

After 25 years of sporting the iconic red and black, Coniston is embracing its heritage and stepping into the future with a fresh twist, bringing back the classic white and blue! Our refreshed logo features the stylized loon from the 2000 redesign, now with the original Camp color palette blended with the curves and fonts inspired by the Y.



This design is more than just a visual update; it's a celebration of identity. In response to feedback from the Y Camping community, YUSA formed a Camp Branding Committee to help camps across the country honor their unique heritage while aligning with the Y's master brand. We're proud to share that Coniston's own, John Tilley, served as Chair of this national effort, guiding a team of eight camp leaders to shape a strategy that balances tradition with the evolution of YUSA's overall branding.

In the coming months, we'll be rolling out a redesigned website and refreshed signage around Camp—each element crafted to reflect the heart of Coniston and the joy of belonging.

Stay tuned. Big things are coming, and they're beautifully white and blue.

***“..Let's all give three rousing cheers  
for the dear old white and blue,  
RAH! RAH! RAH!”***

## STAY UP TO DATE WITH CAMP NEWS

Be sure to follow @YMCACampConiston on all social media channels for the latest updates



## The Evolution of Logos

# From Ancient Symbols to the Coniston Loon

From ancient tombs to TikTok, symbols have always spoken louder than words. Across millennia, they've served as powerful tools of communication, identity, and belonging. Ancient Egyptians and Chinese civilizations used pictographs to record knowledge and tell stories. In medieval Europe, coats of arms and shop signs helped communities recognize families and trades at a glance. The invention of the printing press amplified the reach of visual language, and by the Industrial Revolution, symbols had become essential to commerce and branding.



In 1876, the first trademark was registered in England. Just five years later, the international YMCA approved its first emblem. By 1891, YMCAs had adopted the now-iconic triangle inscribed with "Spirit, Mind, and Body" to represent the holistic development of individuals. That same triangle can be found throughout our grounds and those same words remain in Coniston's mission today.



As logos have evolved to mark ownership, express identity, and adapt to cultural change, so too has Coniston's visual story. From its earliest days as YMCA Camp Soangetaha, campers proudly earned blue triangles with a white "CS" at the center—symbols of growth, skill, and belonging. These emblems, visible in our oldest photographs, were worn on coats and shirts and are still awarded at the end of each summer, a tradition that continues to unite generations.



We know our logo journey was already underway by 1914, as evidenced by its appearance in early Camp brochures. Interestingly, the word "logo" itself didn't enter common usage until the 1930s.



In 1936, Camp adopted a new design: a triangle featuring a Native American figure embodying "Soangetaha," inspired by Longfellow's The Song of Hiawatha. This symbol reflected a belief in youth maturing into responsible adulthood.



When Camp moved to its current location in 1964, the logo evolved again. A State outline and the words "New Hampshire" were added, highlighting the Camp's organizational charter change from the Sullivan County YMCA to the New Hampshire State YMCA.



In the 1970s, a separate design incorporated both the Old Man of the Mountain and the official YMCA logo, blending New Hampshire state pride with national affiliation.

Beyond Camp, the environmental movement was gaining momentum. Symbols like eagles, whales, and panda bears emerged as icons of wilderness and conservation. Around this time, loons entered Coniston's visual culture—partly inspired by the film *On Golden Pond*. With approximately six loon pairs remaining in New Hampshire, one pair kept its home on Lake Coniston, returning each year. Directors Bob and Erma Sanders embraced the loon as an unofficial emblem, and it quickly became a beloved part of Camp's identity.



In 1994, Director Nancy LaRue formally introduced the loon into the logo. Rendered in teal and purple, the bird glided across the design, evoking the serenity of Lake Coniston and Camp's deep connection to nature. Fittingly, this update coincided with another milestone: in 1997, YMCA Camp Coniston once again faced an organizational change as it became an independent Y following the dissolution of the New Hampshire State YMCA.



In 2000, a national marketing study ranked the national YMCA logo as the third most recognizable in the United States—behind only Xerox and Coca-Cola. Again,

Coniston refreshed its logo, blending a stylized loon with the bold black-and-red YMCA mark. The design incorporated the YMCA's colors, triangle, and font aligning Coniston with the global brand while preserving its unique identity through the cherished loon.



Yet even as the logo evolved, tradition endured. Each summer, campers continued to receive their blue-and-white triangles on closing night—a treasured ritual that echoes Camp's legacy and the spirit of its campfire song.



Today, we proudly unveil our newest logo: a design that honors our past while embracing the future. It pairs with the 2010 national branding changes made by YUSA. Featuring the original white and blue of Camp Soangetaha blended with the curved shapes and fonts of the Y, it pays tribute to the beloved camp song still sung at Girls Camp - In The Hills of Old New Hampshire.

***Thank you to our Summer 2025 storytelling and marketing intern, current Dartmouth College senior Madeleine Saraisky, for her research and contributions to this article!***

# A Community in Motion

# Camp News

Connection was at the heart of everything we did since before Coniston was formally made a camp. As John Tilley mentioned in the Director's Two Cents, our YMCA began as a group of neighbors who believed in building community through action. Those relationships that were intentionally fostered are what we sometimes now call Camp Magic. The magic isn't just the woods and water—it's the growth an individual gains from learning to live with others. This is why we bring together school groups, community organizations, and families to make their own connections from a shared Camp experience. Here is a selection of the groups that came to Coniston to grow since the last Chronicle!

## Volunteers Clean up Camp



Longtime community partners at Hypertherm joined us for seven seasonal clean-up days this spring and fall with dozens of volunteers preparing the grounds and buildings in preparation for the summer. Camp wouldn't be ready for campers and staff without the great employees from Lebanon, NH coming in to assist with cleanup!

**Hypertherm**

support local organizations.

Thank you to Hypertherm for working with us for over a decade!

There was no drought in sight during Coniston's very own Volunteer Work Day held on June 7, 2025! A spring of heavy rains left Camp with a lot of work to complete in spite of Hypertherm's efforts.

Over 40 camper families, alumni, staff, and community volunteers braved damp conditions to help get Camp ready for the summer just as staff moved in.

Thank you to everyone who helped get Camp ready!





## 30 Years of ATA at Camp

Every May, since the mid-1990s, Coniston has transformed into a dojo for one special weekend. This year was no different as more than 70 students from across New England gathered for immersive learning and meditation with Chief Master Roy of ATA Martial Arts of Merrimack. This retreat allows youth from schools across New England to get to know each other as they share in the lessons of concentration, perseverance and respect that the Chief Master provides.



## NH Civics Education

John McNair continues to serve as an advisor for the YMCA Youth & Government program available to the high schools of New Hampshire. The program allows students to learn and experience State government procedures and includes Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branch components. Each year hundreds of students from across the state gather together in Concord to learn how to work together by sponsoring bills, debating them on the house floor, and determining constitutionality at the state Supreme Court. We are especially proud of Abree Herzog of Stevens High School in Claremont, one of Coniston's assigned schools, being the 2025 Youth Governor.

## Lebanon Unity Day

Over 50 Lebanon Middle School students came to Camp for their school's Unity Day in September where they participated in hands-on activities that connect classroom learning with nature and community.



## Coordinating Community Work at Camp

Staff from all the programs and locations served by The LISTEN Community Services came together at Coniston for a day of planning and socializing in September. Camp is especially proud to provide space for LISTEN to coordinate their substantial thrift store operations which funds food initiatives, heating assistance, and other community work in the Upper Valley!

## Supporting New Hampshire's Citizens

This fall, the Executive Team from every department in New Hampshire DHHS used Coniston's facility for a day of planning and connection. NH DHHS is the largest department in state government and providing these key personnel a space to come together is the perfect example of our YMCA affecting lives beyond our program.

The role we play may sometimes be simple, but Coniston is pleased to provide them with an inspiring location to consider the future health and welfare of all New Hampshire's citizens.



Department of  
**HEALTH &  
HUMAN SERVICES**



## Cougars Spotted in Camp!

In the spring, 177 fifth grade students and teachers from across all four elementary schools of the Kearsarge School District attended Camp for two days.

Kearsarge is one of Camp's local districts and consists of Springfield, New London, Wilmot, Sutton, Newbury, Bradford, and Warner! This is the largest geographical school district in the state of New Hampshire and this trip represents the first time in their school career all these students come together face to face. In sixth grade, students all attend middle school together at a unified facility. This collaboration serves as a wonderful introduction to each other and to Coniston for numerous local youth!

## Campus Culture at Coniston

Coniston was proud to host Colby-Sawyer College for on-site training of 50 residence assistants ahead of the students' arrival. These dedicated staff members will play a vital role in bridging students and faculty, fostering a campus culture where everyone feels seen, supported, and valued.



Colby·Sawyer  
College



## Grantham Connections

In September, 380 Grantham Village School students, teachers, and parents came to Camp for the day to get to know each other. The air rang with the sound of laughter and excitement as our neighbors connected while on the lake.

We are happy to announce that in 2025, Grantham was the summer program's number one ZIP Code!



## Search and Rescue Training at Camp

Northern New England K-9 Search and Rescue will return to Camp to use Coniston's facilities and grounds for training purposes this fall. Over the years, training has utilized buildings, forests, and deep water to keep dogs and their handlers working in sync with each other and other dog/handler pairs. This volunteer agency functions as the main search and rescue group for VT, NH, & ME and are regularly seen on regional news broadcasts performing their important work.

Recently, the group was credited for quickly rescuing a two-year-old girl who got lost in the woods of Dorchester, NH.



## Connecting for Community

The Coniston Ambassadors recently met to recap the summer, align on upcoming priorities, and begin planning for the year ahead. This passionate group of Coniston Community members from across the country and around the world plays a vital role in representing Camp in their local communities and helping others stay connected to the impact of Camp.



In the coming months, the group will organize an in-person gathering at Camp, featuring ice skating on the lake and presentations from industry experts. They will also bring back Virtual Vespers, a cherished time for reflection and connection, and explore forming sub-committees to support key Camp initiatives. If you are passionate about Camp Coniston and interested in becoming a Coniston Ambassador, we would love to hear from you. **Scan the QR code above to sign-up and we'll be in touch!**

DECEMBER 2, 2025  
GIVING TUESDAY

DECEMBER 5, 2025  
BOTANICAL LIGHTS, NYC

FEBRUARY 2026  
SAN DIEGO, CA

FEBRUARY 2026  
DENVER, CO

MARCH 1, 2026  
SUNAPEE SKI DAY

## 2025/26 Events for Alumni, Parents, & Friends

Find a Coniston event near you!

MARCH 26, 2026  
MANCHESTER, NH

MARCH 28, 2026  
CHERRY BLOSSOMS, D.C.

APRIL 2026  
NEW YORK CITY, NY

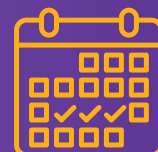
MAY 2026  
BOSTON, MA

MAY 2026  
NEW PARENT ORIENTATION

MAY 2026  
LOS ANGELES, CA

JUNE 6, 2026  
VOLUNTEER WORK DAY

RSVP AT [CONISTON.ORG/EVENTS](https://coniston.org/events)



SUMMER 2026  
'06 CIT 20 YEAR REUNION

SEPTEMBER 2026  
GRAND PARENTS DAY

## 29 Years of Camp Winning Spirit

As the summer of 2025 wrapped up, more than 120 family members and staff gathered at Camp Winning Spirit over Labor Day weekend. Each year, Coniston partners with Childhood Cancer Lifeline and welcomes families impacted by pediatric cancer for four days filled with fun, activities, and connection. This weekend has always served as a vital link between families as they share stories and experiences to gather strength as they continue on their journeys.



As children and their families enjoy time playing, they participate in laughter-filled activities like the always loved Pirate Night, mixed with quiet moments of reflection after campfires just the same as our summer program. Also like summer camp, Camp Winning Spirit offers more than just fun. It creates a time where parents connect, share their stories, and draw strength from one another as they navigate the challenges of their children's journeys. For many, this weekend becomes a beacon of hope and a reminder that they're not alone.



This transformative experience is offered completely free of charge, made possible by the generosity of donors to the Coniston Annual Fund. Your support ensures that every family can step into a community of compassion, courage, and celebration—where the spirit of Coniston shines brightest.





# A Century Re-imagined Lodge Update

Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our community, YMCA Camp Coniston successfully completed a \$3.5 million capital campaign in 2023, an achievement that not only paved the way for a transformative lodge renovation but also marked the culmination of a campaign that doubled our financial aid over the past seven summers. Even more remarkable? Camp will complete the restoration and expansion of the Lodge and NH Hall without incurring a single dollar of debt.

At the heart of this project stands the original lodge, built in 1923, which has weathered over a hundred New England winters. Now, it's been lovingly restored and fortified to stand strong for another century. From reconstructing the iconic porch to reinforcing the foundation and repairing decades-old rafters, every detail honors every alumni's memory and experience while preparing it for the future.

By summer 2025, the impact of the campaign was already felt throughout Camp. Campers and staff celebrated the opening of a beautiful new multipurpose room for dance and martial arts, enjoyed modernized bathrooms, and settled into upgraded staff housing upstairs. The spaces, while new and modern, recall the construction techniques from the old building, creating a more consistent feel throughout the building than was found before. But the journey doesn't end there.

Looking ahead to 2026, the lodge will complete its final transformation with the addition of a versatile stage—accessible from both inside and outside the building—and an expanded New Hampshire Hall, large enough to bring the entire camp together for rainy-day gatherings, performances, and shared moments of joy.

Your support is doing more than building walls, it's preserving history, deepening community, and creating lifelong memories for generations of campers to come. Thank you to every donor for being part of this incredible legacy.



## Two weeks, No Cell Phones

# Tech-free time to build connection, community, and resilience



**Written By**  
**Emily Kerrigan**

2025 Assistant Summer Camp Director  
'07 CIT

**T**wo weeks at summer camp can look ordinary from the outside: names to learn, cabins to sweep, and a small bell that gathers nearly 600 people at once. But for kids who live in a world of constant pings, those fourteen days are something rare – time to be fully present with the people in front of them.

In those two tech-free weeks, kids practice and strengthen soft skills in small ways. They practice in-person communication, learn to tolerate boredom, regulate big feelings, take age-appropriate risks, and discover who they are without an audience—the building blocks of resilience and belonging. And when nearly half of U.S. teens say they're online "almost constantly," even a brief, intentional pause matters.

The rhythm shows up every session. At first, there's a wobble—a cautious try in a new program area, overnight nerves, the quiet "I can't" that, almost before anyone notices, turns into "watch me." As the week unfolds, small acts stack into sturdy change. Courage takes specific shapes: a first jump from the high dive with an entire waterfront class counting down; the last stretch of the triathlon with someone

matching your pace; a step onto the talent-show stage with a group of new friends.

This growth doesn't happen by accident; it's modeled all day long. You hear it when a counselor says, "Let's try again," and you see it when someone offers help without being asked. Staff narrate their own do-overs, ask for help aloud, and name big feelings. We value patience over performance, repair over perfection, and kids can borrow that script and try it on themselves.

We also aren't scared of a little boredom. Boredom is a bridge: once kids cross it, creativity and initiative show up. Without an instant scroll filling every pause, a slow afternoon becomes something they make—a dance with the cabin, a new game on the A-Field, a song on Staff Lodge porch, a second try on the climbing tower. In that making, social muscles get real exercise: taking turns, noticing cues, offering help, disagreeing kindly, and inviting someone in.

In a world of same-day delivery and instant gratification, waiting becomes practice too: waiting for mail, for pizza day, for clouds to move so the stars show. Nature does quieter work: pine needles in the air, a loon call at night, the easy silence of walking back from campfire together. In the pause, identity has space to form without the pressure of comparison. Independence needs a little privacy.

Camp isn't here to manufacture moments





for a feed. We're not hiking Mt. Washington for the likes or inventing dances for followers. We're building a community where our core values live in action: caring, honesty, respect, responsibility, inclusion, and diversity. In practice, this looks like listening fully, speaking honestly, being accountable to one another, and figuring things out—imperfectly, with effort. Camp trades hours of scrolling for hours of prosocial practice.

By week two, you can begin to feel the difference. Attention stretches a bit. Kids start to hear tone, look at each other longer, and learn when to jump in and when to give someone space. Confidence and resilience grow in the tried-and-true way: by doing

## Nearly Half of U.S. Teens

**Say they are online  
"almost constantly"**

Pew Research Center

something hard (with help), adjusting, and trying again.

If you have ever loved this place, you recognize the importance of this tech-free space. Life is larger when it is not confined to your palm. The lake sets the pace.

We work side by side. Jokes land because someone's there to catch them. The day belongs to the people in front of you.

Growth is quiet but real - steadier self-regulation, gentler conflict, and resilience built by trying, failing, and trying again.

Two weeks spent building connections and a sense of belonging. Best of all, they take it home with them - phone or no phone.

# Your Gift to the Annual Fund Changes Lives

Each year, we turn to you, the Coniston Community, to support the Annual Fund. Why? Because your gift makes Camp financially accessible for all, improves our facilities and programs, and ensures Coniston thrives for generations to come.

## WHAT IS THE ANNUAL FUND?

The Annual Fund is a yearly campaign that helps keep the cost of Camp affordable, so any person gets the chance to belong and grow, regardless of financial background. It also supports the upkeep of our facilities, the growth of our programs, and the long-term sustainability of Coniston. This is why you see us fundraising for **GivingTuesday** through the end of the year.

**But giving to Camp is more than a donation; it's a transformation.**

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## YOUR GIFT BUILDS MORE THAN BUILDINGS

Of course, we need to maintain the physical appearance of Camp. We replace roofs, build new cabins, and keep the lights on. We also need to invest in our program areas, like replacing canoes, sailboats, and tools. These things matter. The buildings keep us safe and dry, and our program areas help us stay connected. They're the tools that help kids learn, play, and grow together.

But ultimately, your gift is an investment in people. In the kids who come here to grow. In the staff who guide them. In the values they carry into the world and give back to our community.

***Sending kids to some place that's more remote...they get to be a kid, a true kid, be outside, have fun, run around, but they also learn valuable skills of independence and co-habiting... it teaches you the quality of learning to live in a society.***

- Camper Parent  
**On the value of camp**

When you invest in the Annual Fund, you're not just supporting Camp—you're helping to shape the future.



# WHERE DOES YOUR MONEY GO?

Your gift directly impacts lives. It helps kids build confidence, resilience, and empathy. It supports staff who mentor campers and inspires them to become leaders in business, education, and service. Many campers look up to their counselors and think, "I want to be like them."

**And while we can put a price tag on tuition, it's harder to measure the value of what kids truly gain:**

- ◆ **What's the cost of trying something new?**
- ◆ **How can you price the experience of living with people from different backgrounds?**
- ◆ **What's the value of discovering who you are?**

## How a Gift Impacts Campers

**\$70,000**

Replaces one camper cabin, including bunks & roof



**\$40,000**

Funds a Campership in Perpetuity, helping a child attend Camp until they age out



**\$5,570**

Covers the cost of tuition for a four-week East Coast CIT program

**\$2,560**

Sends one child to Camp for a full two-week session



**\$1,285**

Sends one child to Camp for a one-week session

**\$250**

Funds meals for one camper during a two-week session

**\$50**

Buys a life jacket to be used for water activities



# Help Send Kids to Camp

# GIVINGTUESDAY

**December 2, 2025**

**GivingTuesday** is a global celebration of generosity held each year on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving. It's a day when people around the world come together to give back, through donations, volunteering, and acts of kindness.

At Coniston, **GivingTuesday** is one of our major **Annual Fund** campaigns. It's a chance to raise funds that help more kids experience the magic of Camp.

## HOW YOU CAN DONATE

- ◆ Scan the QR code to donate on our website
- ◆ Donate on Venmo @YMCACampConiston
- ◆ Mail a check to: YMCA Camp Coniston  
P.O. Box 185  
Grantham, NH 03735

## GIVE A CHILD



THE GIFT OF CAMP

## WHY IT MATTERS THIS YEAR

This year, our goal is to raise **\$40,000, which will help send 15 kids to Camp next summer.** That's 15 lives changed, 15 new friendships formed, and 15 young people growing into confident, compassionate leaders.

Even better? **Bar Harbor Bank & Trust** is generously matching the first **\$5,000** raised, doubling your impact right from the start!



## GIVING LOOKS DIFFERENT FOR EVERYONE

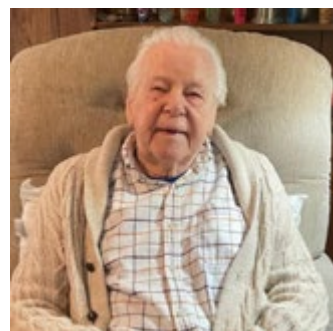
Giving to Camp looks different for everyone, and every act of generosity—big or small—makes a meaningful impact. If a monetary donation isn't possible, **you can still support Camp by sharing our GivingTuesday campaign on social media, joining us for Camp Clean-Up Day on June 6, 2026, donating goods during Check-In, or even hosting your own volunteer event.** Every contribution helps keep the spirit of Camp alive!



# Catch-up with Former Camp Director **Bob Sanders**



**B**ob Sanders, Camper Director from 1969 to 1990, is now 93 and lives in Virginia with his daughter Lorie and her husband. His son Scott and his wife recently relocated to Virginia as well, so they can be close by. Bob enjoys spending time doing word search puzzles and reading anything by James Patterson.

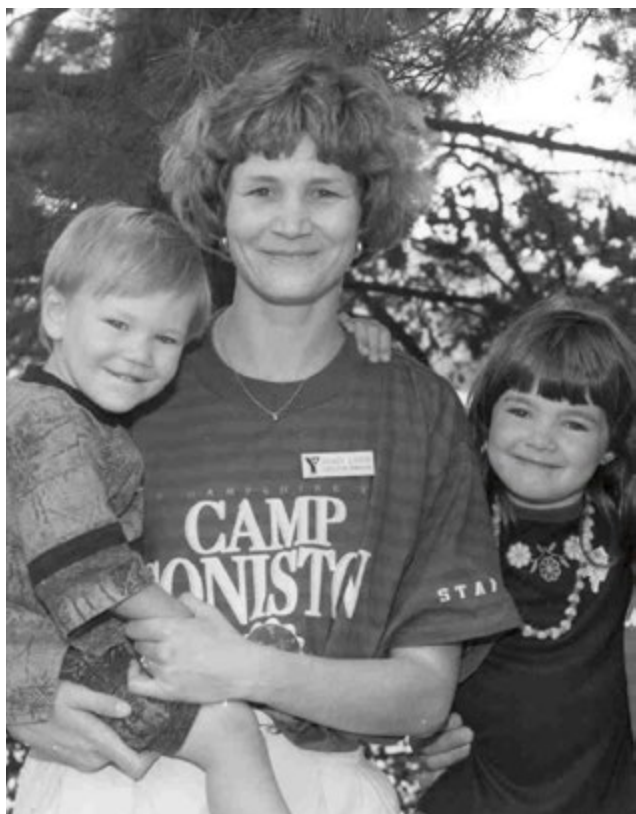


*A recent photo  
of Bob*

He remains deeply proud of the Sanders Leadership Center for its commitment to youth development and its recognition of his and Erma's years of service at Coniston.



# Catch-up with Former Camp Director Nancy LaRue



Nancy (LaRue) Bonell, Camp Director from 1990 to 1999, remains actively involved with YMCA organizations nationwide. She serves as Vice President of the New England YMCA Alumni chapter, planning events and connecting retirees, and sits on the board of the Wendell P. Clark Memorial YMCA.



*A recent photo of Nancy, Aimee, and Mike*

Each year, Nancy joins service trips to build homes—constructing tiny houses for the YMCA of the Seven Council Fires in South Dakota and leading Springfield College students in building concrete block homes in the Dominican Republic.



Outside of volunteering, she enjoys time with her daughter Aimee in New Hampshire and often visits her son, Mike, and grandson in upstate New York.





# Alumni News

Our camp community continues to thrive beyond the summer season, with alumni sharing exciting milestones and heartfelt updates.

Alumni are reconnecting at reunions, celebrating engagements, and welcoming future campers who will one day hear those same camp songs. Career triumphs, volunteer efforts, and creative projects remind us how the lessons learned under the pines continue to shape lives.

We love hearing from you, keep sharing your news so we can celebrate together!



*Top Row: Jodie Scozzafava, Tim Day, Mike Clemens, Brandon Laws, John Kersey  
Middle Row: Amanda King, Sarah Raeburn, Abby Kaufman, Sarah (Hughes) Kitchofer, Matt Edling  
Front Row: Briana Collier, & Caitlin (BF) Orintas  
Missing from photo: Katie Perry*



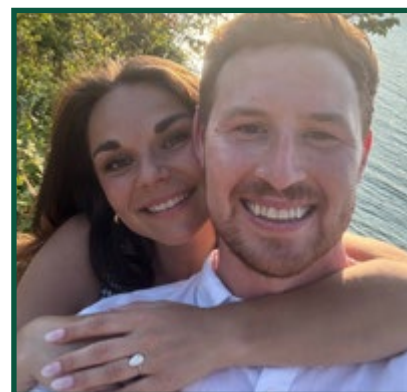
*Top Row: Rob Hooton, Hollis Gesen, Daniel Himmelstein,  
Front Row: Shane Goodrich, Olivia Goodrich, Tyler Bascom*

**'06 CIT? Be on the lookout for reunion info coming for Summer 2026!**



Congratulations to **Tyler Sherwin ( '07 CIT)** and his new wife, **Sarah Christensen!**

The happy couple tied the knot this past summer!



**Isabel (Izzy) Gesen a '13 CIT** announced her **engagement to Tommy Mayer** this summer! Congratulations to the happy couple, we're looking forward to the wedding pictures!



SCAN TO  
LEARN MORE  
ABOUT THE  
BOOK!



**Truffles Moves to Madrid** is the sweet collaboration between **Francesca Delgado Metz (Trufi)** and **Chloe Twadell ('15 CIT)**. Trufi, a current Coniston camper and daughter of Coniston Alum, **Marcia Metz**, wrote the children's book about her experience moving from the US to Spain while Chloe, brought the story to life through her amazing illustrations.



**Brett Bascom ('08 CIT)** was recently promoted to **District Manager of Central Vermont** at Baker Distributing.

Congrats, Brett!



**Thomas Stephenson ('12 CIT)** and his girlfriend Sarah met up with **Jaceyln Tetel, a Coniston alum** and Vice President of Advancement at the Skirball Cultural Center, to explore a new exhibition.



**Anna Feins ('13 CIT)** and **Ian Doherty ('12 CIT)** got **engaged** in Colombia and are tying the knot in the summer of 2026!

Their **wedding officiant** will also be a fellow Coniston Alumni, **Jacob Lenson ('13 CIT)!**



Since **Ziggy ('94 CIT)** can't take the summers off to work at Coniston, **he volunteers as big buddy with Comfort Zone Camp (CZC)**; a free 3-day camp for kids who have lost a parent or sibling.

**CZC is looking for big buddies for their three annual camps.** To learn more about CZC contact Ziggy at [NicholasZweig@gmail.com!](mailto:NicholasZweig@gmail.com)





On Saturday, September 20th, **Elisabeth (Beth) Cairns ('06 CIT)** got engaged to **Mike Hayes** on the summit of Mount Kearsarge.

Congrats, to the happy couple!



**Cassie McLaughlin ('08 CIT)** and her husband **Tommy**, welcomed **Paige** into the world on May 30, 2025!

Recently, the trio swung by to say hi and introduce their future camper to the magic of Camp.

This summer, **former eight-year Coniston camper, Will Carlin**, got engaged to **Sam Syska** in Newport, Rhode Island!

Their dog is happy about it, we promise.



**Sara Spielman ('07 CIT)**, her husband **Brandon**, and daughter **Margo** welcomed **baby Eliza** this year!

Sara also shared that the family of four recently moved to Rhode Island where she accepted a role at Rhode Island Hospital.



**Jordan Chappell**, current maintenance staff member, and **Parrish Abramson ('19 CIT)** have taken their talents to Dartmouth!

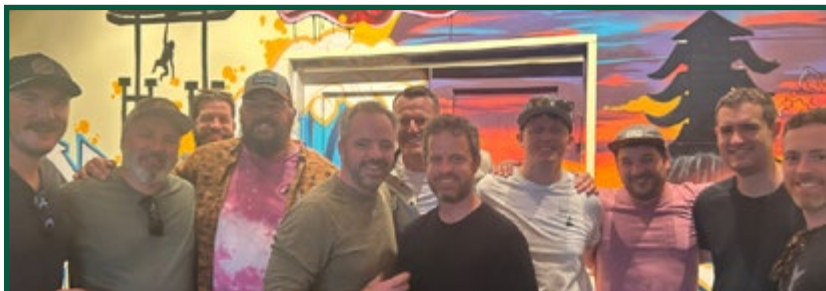
You can **catch both of them on the rugby pitch!**

Congratulations to **Hollis Gesen ('05 CIT)** who recently got engaged to **Joe Turano!**

We're wishing the two lovebirds many years of wedded bliss and happiness.



Recently, **Tommy Tessier ('04 CIT)** orchestrated an unofficial Camp get together on Cape Cod with plenty of other **Coniston Alumni**.



The attendee list included Matt Comstock, Brian Doucet, Eric Rightor, Eben Gannett, Nick Smith, Zach Zimmerman, Will Kavanagh, Max Winer, Robby Muller, Shane Goodrich, Joey Whelan, Kyle Olson, Gen Izutsu, and Mike Slafsky.



## Have a life update?

Scan the QR code to share your news with us!



Much loved tie dye extraordinaire, **Barb Hawley**, just released her first EP with band The LoveSways! Together, Barb and the band are on a mission to encourage love and connection.

After 20+ years, **Matthew Biron ('03 CIT)** made his way back to Camp from the West Coast!

Thanks for stopping by, Matt!



**Elizabeth (Beth) Worthington** of the '70s and '80s era, pictured here with Carter and Cait, swung by Camp in May!



Beth contributes her artwork to the Camp Store and is a Coniston Ambassador!



**Laura Harward (CIT '06)** welcomed baby **Cole** into the world.

We're already counting down the years until his first summer and hoping to see him at Camp someday soon!

**Paisley Andrews**, a Summer 2025 Middler, finished sixth grade in Houston, TX where she received the **Sportsmanship Award** for her Squash team and **Rising Star Award** for her guitar work in the Jazz Band.



**Board Member Catherine Johnson** stepped into a new role during Camp's early off-season, assisting with lifeguarding while community groups were on site.

**Thank you, Catherine, for your continued support!**



## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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**Nicole Berthiaume**  
Summer Camp & Staff  
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**Carter Bascom**  
Development Director

**Cait MacBrien**  
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Development Director

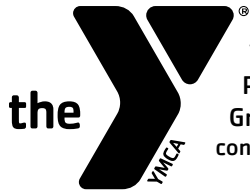
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**Adam Eaton**  
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**James Newcomb**  
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**Shannon Rush**  
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