

## Nonprofit Circle Camp Professionals Meet at Camp Mechuwana

"It's great to see everyone come together and support each other."

Camp Mechuwana Executive Director and Nonprofit Circle Co-facilitator Norm Thombs welcomed about 20 camp professionals to Winthrop on April 9 for the annual gathering of the Nonprofit Circle (NPC). The group, which meets monthly via Zoom during the off-season, comes together in person each April for in-person coffee, conversation, discussion and lunch prepared by Camp Mechuwana staff members.

Thombs says that because nonprofit camps tend to have very small year-round staff, directors can feel isolated. "Knowing you have a group of professional friends that you can always count on is a wonderful and powerful feeling. I am so proud of this amazing community we have formed."

The group that gathered on April 9 represented 14 different nonprofit camps. They spent the first half of the morning in pairs discussing a broad range of open-ended questions. The questions, crafted by Thombs, covered a full spectrum of camp subjects, including how participants' camp careers have changed; the most important part of their jobs; what



*Nonprofit Circle members enjoying lunch at Camp Mechuwana.*

world problems can be addressed by camp; what incredible accomplishments in the world have staff members achieved; what policy changes may have negatively impacted campers; and how some campers have made the greatest impact on camp.

*Nonprofit Circle Camp continues on page 4*

## Camp Pro's Learn About Supporting Neurodivergent Campers and Staff

In-person DEI workshop held April 30 at Wolfe's Neck Farm



*DEI Neurodiversity Workshop presenters Emily Chaleff and Haley Pogachefsky with DEI Co-Chair Peter Kassen.*

Neurodivergence is not an excuse not to participate in a job or community – it's a lens to collaboratively understand what participation looks like for each individual counselor."

Haley Pogachefsky, OTD/OTR/L, owner of Hummingbird OT and longtime staff member at Hidden Valley Camp, shared this statement Thursday, April 30 at an MSC DEI program held at the Smith Center at Wolfe's Neck Farm in Freeport. Pogachefsky and Emily Chaleff, of Chaleff Consulting and founding director of Camp Alsing, co-presented the three-hour workshop, which focused on supporting neurodivergent staff and campers. It included their presentations, Q & A time, breakout discussions, and opportunities to share.

*Camp Pro's Learn continues on page 5*

## Maine Summer Camps (MSC)

Board of Directors 2025-2026

**President:** Terri Mulks, Camp Susan Curtis  
**Immediate Past President:** Matt Pines  
**Vice President:** Karen Malm  
**Treasurer/Finance Chair:** Fritz Seving, Camp Wildwood  
**Secretary:** Matt Cornish, Camp Beech Cliff  
Garth Altenburg  
Steven Bernstein, Camp North Star of Maine  
Laura Jo Cunningham, Kingsley Pines  
Richard B. Deering, Birch Rock Camp  
Mike Douglass, Camp Bishopswood  
Jessica Decke, UMaine 4-H Camp at Tanglewood  
Beigette Gill, Fernwood Cove  
Josh Holland, Camp Winnebago  
Alex Martone-Jackson, Camp Runoia  
Kathy Jonas, Camp Walden  
Peter Kassen  
Mark Lipof, Camp Micah  
Laura Ordway, Winona Camps  
Catriona Sangster, Camp Wawenock  
Dave Schiff, Camp Manitou  
Arleen Shepherd, Camp Sheplemar  
Lisa Tripler, Kamp Kohut

### Appointed & Ex-Officio Members

#### Business Representatives:

Jim Chalmers, Chalmers Insurance Group  
Josh Cohen, Tavezio  
Jack Day, Norway Savings Bank  
**Counsel:** Nancy Savage Marcus, Curtis Thaxter, LLC  
**Counsel:** Newell Augur, Pierce Atwood, LLP  
**Clerk:** Tyler Costello, Curtis Thaxter, LLC  
**Emeritus:** Jack Erler, Curtis Thaxter, LLC  
**Executive Director:** Lucy J. Norvell, Maine Summer Camps (MYCF/MYCA)

## Maine Youth Camp Association (MYCA)

Board of Directors 2026-2027

**President:** Maja Tonic, Camp Pinecliffe  
**Vice President/Past President:** Laura Ordway, Winona Camps  
**Treasurer:** Steve Sudduth, Wyonegonic Camps  
**Secretary:** Mark Standen  
Pam Cobb, Camp Runoia  
Josh Hahn, Camp Somerset  
Peter Hirsch, Camp Androscoggin  
Scott Merrow, Susan Curtis Foundation  
Fritz Seving, Camp Wildwood  
Norm Thombs, Camp Mechuwana  
Dawn Willard-Robinson, Pine Tree Camp

### Appointed & Ex-Officio Members

Mary Ellen Deschenes, Emeritus  
Jack Erler, Emeritus  
**Government Relations & Lobbying:** Newell Augur, Pierce Atwood, LLP  
**Counsel:** Nancy Savage Marcus, Curtis Thaxter, LLC  
**Clerk:** Tyler Costello, Curtis Thaxter, LLC  
**Executive Director:** Lucy J. Norvell, Maine Summer Camps (MYCF/MYCA)  
**Non-Voting Members:** Stevie Falk, IENA



www.maineamps.org

Published by **Maine Summer Camps**  
A membership association for Maine youth camps  
Lucy J. Norvell, Executive Director  
207.518.9557  
PO Box 1861, Portland, Maine 04104

## MESSAGE FROM THE MSC PRESIDENT

MAY 2026

*It's finally here...CAMP SEASON. **WE MADE IT!***



*And I know you are thinking, "Wait, we made it?!" Because there are a million things left to do, 15-30 Post-It Notes stuck to your desk, voicemails blinking away, an overflow of emails, contractors to herd, and long days dodging black flies while hoping for some sunshine and a stiff breeze. But we got this! We are Camp Professionals. And not just any Camp Professionals – MAINE Camp Professionals.*

*This whole year of hard work, travel, conferences, recruitment, Zoom calls, and Teams meetings culminates in kids and staff who put down their technology and focus on one another – sharing joys, working through challenges, and accepting and celebrating each day. All of us can take a moment, breathe, feel the sun on our faces, and appreciate each other, our locations, and our programs. Our time is here!*

*And we are going to use that time wisely. The impact we make is for a lifetime. And while the moments may seem fleeting, they build an unforgettable long-term connection – with friends, with nature, with mentors. It's about sitting down and eating meals together, rejoicing at a stunning sunset, laughing over a camp song, snuggling into a sleeping bag, pausing to listen to a loon.*

*Camp is joyous and magical and everlasting. I recently took a trip to the Southwest with friends I met at Camp 32 years ago. We are no longer lost, wandering college students with a beat-up Ford and a salary of \$800 for the entire summer. As established professionals with families, homes, and reliable cars, we are exhilarated by our longstanding tradition of having an adventure every year. We still sing, share memories, and appreciate nature. We have an unbreakable bond that never would have developed in the way it has without camp.*

*That's what we give to kids. Powerful experiences that grow into something far bigger than a single summer. We help shape adults who carry with them a deep appreciation for people, for nature, and for the moments that matter most.*

*Remember to enjoy your own moments, take care of yourself, and reach out if you need anything at all.*

*Happy Camping my friends!*

Terri Mulks  
Director, Camp Susan Curtis  
President, Maine Summer Camps

# MYCA UPDATE

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear MSC Community,

On April 8th, the MYCA board hosted the Casual Conversation hour, reviewing important reminders for our upcoming season, including immunization policies, UAP (unlicensed assistive personnel) medication management training, Maine Trip Leader permits, Reportable Conditions form and much more. Be sure to request the recording link from Lucy if you were not able to attend.



On April 16th, MYCA presented a webinar on Eating and Lodging licenses – when does a youth camp need to have this license and some helpful hints for completing the application the first time. Although Eating and Lodging licensing has been around for many decades, DHHS has recently become aware of the increasing number of weddings, private parties and rental group events (such as school sports teams) taking place at youth camp facilities and is expecting youth camps to be current with additional licensing, if applicable. You can contact Lucy for the recording link to this webinar and the additional resource PDF.

This will be my final newsletter column as I step down as MYCA board president in May. I'm grateful for the members of the MYCA board, as well as the MSC presidents (Beigette, Matt & Terri) and MSC staff (Ron, Jack, Lucy) I've worked with over these past 5 ½ years, since my term began in January 2021. It has been a busy and exciting time for the MYCA board and we all have worked hard to provide members with up-to-date information with everything from reopening guidance for camps in summer 2021 to navigating the applications for PPP and Thrive Maine grants; boating etiquette guidance, reminders for Federal Motorcoach Safety Act compliance, Paid Family Medical Leave and Abuse & Neglect Prevention policy requirements; public support on behalf of Maine Summer Camps for indigenous sovereignty, gun safety and preserving lake water quality. And much more, including of course, the Youth Camps licensing Chapter 208 update, completed by the state in 2025 (the first update in 17 years).

It has been a privilege to represent MYCA and MSC camps whether it was at membership meetings, the State House speaking with legislators, (numerous) emails with state regulators or New England camps' president meetings. Thank you to everyone who let MYCA know how important our work has been. As is tradition, I will remain on the MYCA board as vice president.

I'm very pleased to introduce the next MYCA board president, Maja Tonic, associate director at Camp Pinecliffe. Maja has been involved with camping since being a young camper herself (third generation) and continuing as a counselor and camp administrator at Pinecliffe. She has been a member of the MYCA board since 2024, with a keen interest in policy, having received her JD from Vermont Law. She also works for Fenway Park security part-time (cool!) which must be an interesting confluence of her camp director and legal skills. Welcome, Maja!

Laura Ordway, Winona Camps  
President MYCA Board  
laura@winonacamps.com

## AMSKIER IS HONORED TO CONTINUE DEDICATED SUPPORT OF MAINE SUMMER CAMPS



Henry, Jeff, Aimee  
and the AMSkier Family



570-226-4571 · [amskier@amskier.com](mailto:amskier@amskier.com) · [amskier.com](http://amskier.com)

## Get in touch with quality nurses through CampNurseJobs.com!

Post your jobs today to connect with skilled nurses and healthcare professionals who are eager to join your summer camp for the 2026 season

To register and purchase a subscription  
<https://www.campnursejobs.com/employment/pricing.aspx>

Use code MSC2026 for 10% off any package



Maine Youth Camp Association (MYCA) is an affiliated organization to Maine Summer Camps (MSC). MYCA's mission is to monitor, publicly comment and interpret state and federal legislation on behalf of MSC, with the purpose of furthering the welfare of camps in Maine. We maintain relationships with agencies and policy officials for camp advocacy. Additionally, our 501(c)(4) non-profit status allows for limited activities supporting political campaigns. As a member of MSC, your camp is also a member of MYCA. If applicable, any LDs and laws in rulemaking outlined above have been more thoroughly explained in a Legislative Report which is sent to MSC members prior to the annual and semi-annual membership meetings, or in the MYCA Moment section of The Hall Monitor. See p. 3 for the MYCA President's Letter.

### Nonprofit Circle Camp continued from page 1

While one member of each pair remained in place, the other participants rotated around the room.

### HAT TOPICS

The second half of the morning was dedicated to "Hat Topics," designed by Terri Mulks, Camp Susan Curtis director, MSC president, and NPC co-facilitator. Participants chose questions from a winter hat circulated by Mulks. They addressed issues ranging from low birth rates' impact on camps to types of emergency response training, favorite behavior management best practices to parent partnerships, and staff recruitment to offering campers choices during their stays.

One camp director suggested a podcast entitled "Sacred Playgrounds," which addresses "the enrollment cliff." The issue is a national one and Maine camps professionals who host only Maine children expressed particular concern.

Emergency response drills can be traumatizing to campers and staff, camp directors agreed, necessitating appropriate advance warning and other strategies. One camp professional said his camp incorporates scavenger hunts into missing camper or other drills to mitigate potential trauma impact. Another camp director touted the benefit of close communication with local emergency service providers, allowing camp personnel to know the role of different departments and the approximate timeframes of their responses. Camp directors also agreed that camp-wide emergency announcements should be clear and not use codes.

The group's discussion of behavior management best practices addressed the distinction between discipline and punishment, the role of campers in determining consequences for their actions, and the difference between natural and logical consequences for behavior. Participants also discussed the importance of parent/camp partnerships as well as the challenges presented in communicating with day camp parents about a child's particular behavior.

Another topic was how to offer campers activity choices. They included ranking preferences pre-camp, with an opportunity to change the schedule a few days into camp, as well as daily choice signups or a "day of signups" several days a week.

Finally, the group discussed staff recruitment, with directors

recommending various hiring services, including Wild Packs, IENA, and CoolWorks.

"It's so much fun to get everyone in the same room together after we spent the year meeting on screen," said Mulks. "The energy, the smiles, and the excitement around the day felt really good and was a great way to kick off this summer season."

## 2026 Jack Erler Award Presented to Bette Bussel



Jack Erler Award winner Bette Bussel with Steve Sudduth and MSC Executive Director Lucy Norvell.

Bette Bussel, who served as Executive Director of ACA, New England for 30 years, was recently honored with the Maine Summer Camps 2026 Jack Erler Award. The award was presented on behalf of Jack Erler by Steve Sudduth of Wyonegonic Camps at the MSC Maine state meeting in Manchester, NH on March 27.

The award recognizes outstanding contributions to organized camping, as exemplified by Jack Erler's own long-time service to Maine Summer Camps. It is presented to individuals, groups or organizations that may or may not be members of Maine Summer Camps to recognize exceptional support of Maine Summer Camps.

The award citation described Bette as a "visionary" whose single goal was "to help New England camps be their best – the best in the nation." A colleague stated that Bette "had an uncanny ability to hire the best staff, support the staff and advocate for New England states with the ACA National about relevant topics and issues." Maine's youth camping industry "was a primary beneficiary of this talent," the citation reads.

"The consummate communicator, Bette was an exemplary conduit for expressing the needs and concerns of Maine's camp professionals to ACA National," the citation continued. "Bette really was able to pivot into areas that were of utmost concern to camps."

All of her qualities came with a "twinkle in her eye," the citation concluded. "Not overpowering or dominating, Bette was able to listen and then filter information and circle back with a strategy and solution for addressing a particular situation."



Rory O'Connor, Kara Kohut, and Cara Bergantino (DEI co-chair), Camp Encore Coda, at the April 30 DEI workshop.

Peter Kassen, formerly of Hidden Valley Camp and current co-chair of the MSC DEI Committee, welcomed participants. “If you care for someone, you care for everyone around them,” he said. And if you pay attention to the challenges presented by neurodiversity, he said, “everyone can benefit.”

Pogachefsky, whose doctoral research addressed managing stress experienced by camp staff, covered a broad range of material in her talk. After discussing shared vocabulary related to neurodivergence, she introduced the concept of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). UDL addresses “multiple means of engagement, multiple means of representation and multiple means of expression.” Engagement is the “why” and connects the training to staff’s own lives and to their specific jobs. Representation is the “what,” Pogachefsky said, and can include pairing verbal instructions with written/visual ones, setting mini goals for long sessions, and building in movement breaks. Expression is the “how,” she said. There are many ways to show learning, such as discussion, demonstration, written reflection and observation.

With respect to staff training, Pogachefsky suggested that camp directors be mindful of issues such as the structure of training sessions, the sensory environment and how content is delivered. In her presentation notes, which she shared with workshop participants, she described “UDL wins for staff training.” They include stating the agenda at the outset of the session, paying attention to lighting and sound (dimming lights, providing earplugs for loud activities), allowing activities that support focus (such as doodling, movement and using fidgets), using sans-serif fonts, and providing a “heads-up” prior to transitions or loud activities.

Pogachefsky also described the “Sensory Strategy Buffet,” acknowledging that different strategies work for different people. There are “movement seekers, input seekers, sensory avoiders,

and routine lovers,” she said.

Teaching “real self-care” is also essential, she reminded participants. For example, self-care can include offering “co-regulation with a trusted colleague,” offering “nervous system resets between interactions” as well as personalized sensory strategies and permission to “use your own tools” without shame.

At the conclusion of her talk, Pogachefsky offered several “Director Takeaways,” including the importance of shared vocabulary, applying UDL principles, promoting a sensory-friendly environment, modeling real self-care, and offering support while also holding expectations.

## EMILY CHALEFF, CHALEFF CONSULTING

Emily Chaleff, whose broad experience includes having owned and operated a camp for neurodivergent youth, told workshop participants that she comes to this work from the standpoint of a camp director rather than a clinician. Her presentation focused on “strategies for getting ahead of and managing camper anxiety and dysregulation.”

One question to consider is “what does the brain make easy and what does it not?” In discussing executive functioning and anxiety, Chaleff addressed the relationship between managing anxiety, executive functioning and social cognition.

A key point to remember when working with an anxious and/or dysregulated camper is that “this camper isn’t giving me a hard time; this child is having a hard time.” That is a universal truth, she said, “regardless of [a camper’s] diagnosis.”

In addressing inclusion at camp, Chaleff laid out four points for consideration. First, she asked, what can a camp do and what can it not? Second, are there alternative means of participation for a camper, i.e., options for camper choice when they do not want to participate in a particular activity? Third, what one-to-one support does a camp have for campers? How much time does a camp have for providing that kind of support? Chaleff asked. Finally, safety considerations are paramount, she said.

Goals for camper support are for everyone, Chaleff said, and are intended “to mitigate, not eliminate” challenges, Chaleff said. That can come from building connections characterized by “rapport, trust and understanding.”

One key for promoting camper success is one-to-one communication with families prior to the camp session, Chaleff said. Learning a camper’s coping strategies, what challenges are anticipated, and what tools are helpful can all contribute to a positive camp experience, she said. Equally important is helping to build camper confidence and leadership skills once they are at camp. Chaleff also suggested holding group Zoom meetings with campers and families. Those meetings could include visuals of key places at camp, offer time to ask questions, share staff faces and names, and address drop-off and good-bye routines.

Camp Pro's Learn continues on page 6

First-day supports are also important, she said. That can include skits for demonstrating particular routines (e.g. dining hall) and time management and behavior expectations (transitions and field trips). Building confidence and leadership are also key, she said. Giving campers “meaningful roles,” letting them teach others, normalizing contributions by everyone, and role modeling (“show campers and staff how awesome you think this kid is”) are all useful strategies.

Chaleff also addressed bullying and exclusion. She defined bullying as targeting a single person, ganging up on a camper or campers, hassling/making fun of campers, and excluding campers. There are ways to avoid being a bully, she said. Letting people join in, using kind language, being helpful and cooperative, and taking time away when needed are all effective tools, she said.

After a Q & A session, workshop participants met in breakout discussion groups and then gathered for a closing share-out. As one camp professional said, “It is possible to help people and set limits at the same time.”

See the MSC Resource Page for links to program resources.

## Save the Date! Migis Meetup, Wednesday, September 23, 2026

*Where:* Migis Lodge, Casco, Maine. Registration opens in August. Similar timeframe to 2025 program.

- 8:15am - 9:00am - Meetup with coffee, tea, and muffins
- 9:00am - 9:45am - Introductions, Awards, and Recognitions
- 10:00am - 12:10pm - Roundtables facilitated by MSC Education Committee Members
- 12:15pm - 1:15pm - Renowned Migis Lodge Cookout.



*John Suitor, Camp Timanous, and Marnie Cerrato, Camp Walden, at the 2025 Migis Lodge gathering.*

## Peter and Meg Kassen Receive ACA, New England Meritorious Service Award



*Left to right, Meg and Peter Kassen, ACA, New England Meritorious Service Award recipients, with Betsy Kelder, former ACA, New England president and 17-year Hidden Valley Camp veteran.*

Peter and Meg Kassen, who for more than three decades were at the helm of Hidden Valley Camp in Freedom, Maine, are the recipients of the 2026 ACA, New England Meritorious Service Award. The award, presented on March 26 at the annual ACA, New England conference in Manchester, NH, recognizes meritorious service to ACA, New England, and the organized camp community. Recipients are acknowledged for “outstanding contributions to ACA, New England in a multitude of areas.”

Criteria include: making contributions of “exceptional benefit” to ACA, New England’s efforts that may go beyond the local area; “bringing benefit and honor through good, faithful and efficient service”; establishment of a “pattern of excellence”; providing “unusual” leadership initiative and skill.

“It was wonderful to have the opportunity to reflect on our 45 years of service to children and their families,” said Meg Kassen. “I loved the work; I loved my job,” she said. “I always felt really current with the world and the work gave me hope.”

Congratulations to Peter and Meg for a well deserved honor!

## Arleen Shepherd: Sharing her passion for camp in her community



*Arleen Shepherd, Camp Skylemar, was elected to the Town of Naples Selectboard a year ago.*

I want to show up.”

Arleen Shepherd has been “showing up” – and far more – at Camp Skylemar in Naples for more than 40 years. Now, as an elected official in the town of Naples, she is applying the same work ethic. The community is as fortunate as her campers and staff.

Shepherd, who moved to Naples full-time in 2020, says she always wanted to live in Maine year-round. When the Covid-19 pandemic struck, Camp Skylemar was suddenly without a caretaker and maintenance staff. While Shepherd’s husband, Shep, stayed in their home city of Baltimore for his teaching career, Arleen and a few other family members packed up and moved to camp. Arleen Shepherd has lived in Naples ever since.

And she has thrown herself into the community, a shift from how she previously operated. “It was my first introduction to anything about the town,” she said. “I didn’t know what a selectboard was.”

Fast forward to May 2025, when Shepherd was elected to that Naples Selectboard, one of five Naples residents who serve as the town’s governing body.

She says she started “paying attention” in 2020, when the town started hosting municipal meetings via Zoom.

“Two things have frustrated me,” she said. First, “people who have something to say about how something should be done but aren’t part of the process.”

“I didn’t want to be one of those people.”

Shepherd started attending town government meetings. “I only had Baltimore as a frame of reference,” she said. “There are so many people you don’t think of the possibility of being part of it.”

Not so in Naples.

“I want to make it happen as opposed to watching it happen,” she said.

Her second reason for becoming involved had to do with the

community’s perception of camp. “I saw more and more the negative connotation that camps had in the community.”

In reality, “summer camps are the greatest thing that a town has going,” she said.

“There’s no other business that will never do anything to hurt the lakes,” Shepherd said. Camps don’t build “something that doesn’t look good.” Moreover, “they never not follow the rules, and never not pay taxes,” she said. And camps like Skylemar “bring a lot of people to town” who frequent restaurants, hotels and other businesses. Camps also have minimal impact, she says, particularly because they do not use the schools. And they “are the best thing that could happen to any body of water.”

“I became a resident in order to participate in how the town is run,” she said. “I realized that the summer camp industry needs to be represented in town government.”

Naple’s major project right now is the construction of a \$3.5 million gym for use by community members. And while Naple’s three youth camps – Camp Mataponi, Camp Skylemar, and Camp Takajo – will not use the gym, together they pledged \$25,000 toward its construction, Shepherd said. “We believe it’s the right thing for the community.”

The facility, large enough to house two full-size basketball courts, is controversial, Shepherd said. “We know the importance of physical activity – people not only thrive physically but mentally,” adding that she is “confident” the town will be glad to have it in the years to come.

Shepherd says she appreciates being fully immersed in the community. “Knowing exactly what is going on in the little world around me beyond my camp world is rewarding to me,” she said. And her camp director skill set is put to full use. Those skills, “putting out fires, making the machine work effectively, doing whatever I can for people to feel positive about themselves, that’s what I try to do with the town as well.”

“I love it as much as directing camp,” she said. And while in both contexts it is impossible “to make everybody happy all the time, I do what I can for the greater good.”

From a Camp Skylemar perspective, that includes hosting the Lake Region High School tennis teams’ daily practices, having potluck suppers, and opening the camp up for youth field days. “If I weren’t a full-time camp director we wouldn’t have somebody to do this,” she said

Shepherd’s contributions also extend to helping feed hungry residents. Consider her Tuesdays. At 8 a.m. she starts by buying donuts at the local donut shop, then heads to Hannaford “to fill up our Suburban with food.” Another volunteer picks up food at the Good Shepherd Food Bank.

“We set up this whole system of tables,” Shepherd said. About 35 cars come to receive food each Tuesday, she said.

Like her role with town government, Shepherd says her food

*Arleen Shepherd continues on page 8*

pantry work "is very similar to running camp."

"Volunteers at the food pantry come from all walks of life," she said. And "getting my hands dirty volunteering with the group here is another way to demonstrate the value of camp."

She says her role in the Naples community is similar to what Camp Skylemar asks its counselors to do. "We want them to show up. Show up for the kids, pass on knowledge, talk to them, show up in the world."

"I want to project that forward," she said.

### Save the Date! Winter Workshop & Business Networking Extravaganza, Wednesday, February 3, 2027

Where: DoubleTree by Hilton, Portland, Maine.  
Workshop 9am - 12pm, Extravaganza 12:15pm - 2:45pm.



Andy Sangster, Camp Wawenock, chats with representatives from Pine State Asphalt at the 2026 Business Networking Extravaganza.

## Spelling Bee Slated for July 8 at Camp Wigwam in Waterford



Two campers from Camp Micah study their dictionaries at the 2025 Spelling Bee.

The MSC Spelling Bee is Back and Buzzing! Hosted at Camp Wigwam, Waterford, ME, the beloved tradition of the Maine Summer Camps Spelling Bee returns for its 19th year, and we are buzzing with excitement to welcome spellers from across the state back to Bear Pond," says Camp Wigwam director Neal Goldberg. Historically this event attracted 100+ spellers and raised over \$1,000 for MSC.

"Join us for a morning of friendly competition in two age groups, in both team and individual formats," said Goldberg. "Trophies will be awarded to the top spellers in each age group and best overall camp teams." Goldberg added that drinks and snacks will be provided and "goofy spelling attire is strongly encouraged!"



[Click here to register for the Spelling Bee.](#)



**VEHICLES**  
www.C2VEHICLES.com  
Erik Murray 207-468-3066  
emurray@c2vehicles.com



**CERTIFIED PREOWNED GOLF CARTS STARTING AT \$3,995**

# The Power of Level Ground

Keza Bahunde and Camp Bishopswood



Keza Bahunde, back row, second from left, as a Level Ground camper at Camp Bishopswood

When Keza Bahunde moved to Maine from Rwanda with her sisters and mother in 2016, little did she know that a camp in Hope, Maine would impact her life's path. Then again, Keza – now a first-year student at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA – didn't know about the Level Ground Initiative, nor about the transformative power of attending Camp Bishopswood.

The Level Ground Initiative was started in 2018 by a small group of Maine camp directors seeking to create tuition-free summer camp opportunities for immigrant and refugee children living in Maine. Today its mission has expanded: the initiative seeks to provide summer camp experiences, free of charge, to all underserved populations of school-aged children in Maine for whom such experiences would otherwise be unavailable, guided by a commitment to racial and economic diversity.

Since 2018 (with a Covid-19 pandemic break in 2020) nearly 500 Maine children have attended summer camps at no charge under the auspices of the initiative. For Keza and her sisters, an essential part of the opportunity came from the efforts of Portland Community Squash (PCS), a Level Ground community partner that has worked with Maine Summer Camps and Camp Bishopswood to send dozens of deserving students to summer camp.

Keza's older sister, Auxane Iriza, was enrolled in programming at PCS when PCS Executive Director Barrett Takesian suggested the girls attend Camp Bishopswood, Keza says. That began an experience where "camp just became home over the years." Auxane Iriza and Keza's younger sister Elsie also attended Camp Bishopswood. Following in Keza's footsteps, Elsie will be a Bishopswood CIT this summer.

"Everything they say about it is true. It really is a place that you grow," Keza said in a telephone interview from her Holy Cross dorm. "I feel like due to the person I became at camp I came to college and was set for a different trajectory."

*The Power of Level Ground continues on page 10*



**While your child is at camp**  
*We're here if you need us!*

10 Hospital Dr.  
Bridgton, ME  
(207) 647-6000



**FUELING SUMMER FUN**  
**ONE MEAL AT A TIME**

**Dennis**  
FOOD SERVICE  
100% EMPLOYEE OWNED

From breakfast to campfire snacks, we've got your meals covered!

DISCOVER THE DENNIS DIFFERENCE

www.DennisFoodService.com  
1-800-439-2727

There were adjustments, of course. For starters, English was Keza's third language after French and Kinyarwanda (Rwanda's native tongue). **"Camp really is the place I learned how to communicate with peers different from us," she said. And if there was something she didn't understand, there were "always" counselors there to help.**

Keza experienced different cultural elements at camp as well. Learning how to set a table and "how to politely ask for something instead of reaching" were both unfamiliar, she said. Roasting marshmallows was novel as well!

Camp Bishopswood Director Mike Douglass, who also chairs the Maine Summer Camps Level Ground Initiative committee, calls camp a "level playing field" for all participants. For Level Ground campers, he said, "I think they realize 'I can do anything. Other people around me are doing awesome things; that could be me, too.'"

In addition, he said, Level Ground campers bring wonderful contributions to the camp community. "As much as I see Level Ground campers grow in some of those deep-rooted traditions that we have at camp, I also see the surrounding campers and staff learning new traditions from the Level Ground folks."

As a camper, Keza says her favorite activities included sports, arts and crafts and performing arts. "PA was just fun being

with everyone. It was such a chill environment, with no one judging you," she said. "You could be as goofy as you wanted."

After Keza and her family moved to Maryland during the pandemic she continued to return to Camp Bishopswood. After five summers as a camper, she became a CIT and last summer she was a staff member.

Being a counselor changed her perspective, she says. "As a camper, I thought [counselors] were always there. I never realized how much work it was." She did realize how closely connected she would become to her campers.

"I went into it knowing I'd get attached to kids. In my dorm I see the little letters they sent and the messages they write," she said. "It's nice to know [counselors] leave an impact on kids and it's long-lasting."

Keza says that one CIT experience was profoundly transformative. A challenging hike up Mt. Katahdin "taught me a lot about tenacity and perseverance," she said. "Katahdin was a turning point for me," she said. "I wrote my college essay about it."

Now, a biology major at Holy Cross, Keza says she is continuing to set her sights high, with her Camp Bishopswood as a foundation. "[Camp] built a lot of character." And her goal of becoming an orthopedic surgeon connects back to the camp experience. "My passion for healthcare comes from helping

*The Power of Level Ground* continues on page 11

## Great Camps Don't Just Train Staff *They Prepare Them.*

Staff training is about preparing for real decisions, not just best-case scenarios. Chalmers helps camps strengthen training conversations around risk, accountability, and culture – so staff are supported before issues arise.

Partner with Chalmers today to build staff training that holds up all season long.



people, helping kids.” And without that camp experience, she said, “a lot of parts of my identity would be missing.”

“It’s sad to think about because a lot of kids don’t have that chance to go to camp,” she said.

As the Level Ground Initiative embarks on another summer season, MSC Level Ground Initiative Coordinator Raine Kerhin and the Level Ground committee continue to seek camp opportunities for Maine children.

“We are so fortunate to have such a dedicated crew at MSC,” Douglass said, adding that it’s “reassuring when we get continuous support from folks like LL Bean and community partners.”

That support, and the extraordinary generosity of MSC partner camps, who offer camp opportunities free of charge, have allowed the Level Ground Initiative to continue to grow. And that means Maine children who otherwise would be unable to attend camp can flourish as Keza has.

“It was a compass in a sense,” she said. “It helped me contemplate who I want to become in life.”



*Former Camp Bishopswood Level Ground camper and staff member Keza Buhunde is finishing her first year at the College of the Holy Cross.*



*Peter Hirsch, Camp Androscoggin, and Andy Lilienthal, Camp Winnebago, share a laugh at the Maine State Meeting and Social in March.*

## Maine’s Youth Camp Trip Leader Permit: What to Know, Experts’ Insights

**L**ongtime Maine Camp Trip Leader committee member Spencer Ordway of Winona Camps has a reminder for Maine camp directors signing Maine Trip Leader Permit applications: know what you are signing off on.

The youth camp trip leader permit requirement is found in [Title 12, Sec. 12860](#) of Maine’s Revised Statues. It applies to youth camps licensed under DHHS that conduct trip camping and requires that permit applicants either “show successful completion of an approved youth camp trip leader safety course or complete an application . . . outlining in detail the applicant’s experience and training as a youth camp trip leader.”

For purposes of the permit requirement, trip camping is defined in [Chapter 23](#) of the Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife regulations as “a youth camp program with a duration of 2 or more consecutive nights in which groups of individuals who are mobile, moving under their own power or by transportation which permits individual guidance of the vehicle or animal (e.g. bicycle, canoe, horse, sailboat) travel from one site to another. The requirements for a Trip Leader Permit are also outlined in [this chapter](#).

The Chapter 208 rules governing Maine licensed youth camps discuss Trip Camping as well. They can be found at 10-144 CMR Ch. 208 pp 36-38.

Ordway, a Maine Guide who trains trip leaders at Winona, says the trip leader permit is “good to have” even for camps that run short trips for which a trip leader permit is not required. “It goes over the safety rules and regulations” in Maine, he said.

The Maine Trip Leader committee is currently addressing the challenge of training individuals to be instructors for staff seeking Trip Leader Permits. “There’s no Red Cross class,” or other formal training course designed to qualify instructors, Ordway said. The Trip Leader committee is working to help Maine camp staff attain that instructor certification, he said.

Like Winona Camps, many camps have a senior trip person who has attained the instructor level, Ordway says. They then train trip leaders, who in turn earn their trip leader permits. Those permits are good from January 1 to December 31 and must be applied for yearly. There is no re-testing requirement.

Ordway suggests that camps use the [fill-in PDF application form](#), and that they submit their applications early. “June is a really busy month for them,” he said. Nearly 800 new or renewal applications are submitted each year, he said.

Camp trip staff may be asked for their credentials when out in Maine’s woods and waterways, Ordway says, adding that because some wardens may not know about the Trip Leader program, camp personnel can educate them. Such interactions

*Maine’s Youth Camp Trip Leader Permit* continues on page 13

# Welcome New BUSINESS Members



Our Business Members provide vital support for Maine Summer Camps. We encourage Camp Members to consider using camp-specific products and services found listed on our website and in the 2026 directory.

## CAMP KITCHEN PRO

Camp Kitchen Pro is built to simplify camp kitchens and future-proof your food service program. Camps save an average of 20 hours per week and \$15,000 per season while streamlining menu planning, inventory, and purchasing. Easily manage special diets with confidence and accuracy, generate predictive orders, and access 600+ ready-to-use recipes and menus. Spend less time on spreadsheets and more time delivering a safe, efficient, exceptional dining experience for your campers and staff.

[campkitchenpro.com](http://campkitchenpro.com)  
[alex@campkitchenpro.com](mailto:alex@campkitchenpro.com)  
(954) 607-4484

## GOUDREAU AND SONS GOLF CARTS LLC

The leader for golf car rentals at summer camps throughout the northeast. As a Yamaha, E-Z-GO and Cushman dealer we provide sales, service and parts, plus other makes, both gas and electric. Family owned and operated since 1988. Maines premier golf car dealer in superior service.

[www.goudreauandsonsgolfcars.com](http://www.goudreauandsonsgolfcars.com)  
[goudreausgolfcars@fairpoint.net](mailto:goudreausgolfcars@fairpoint.net)  
(207) 377-5756

## DOOR-VA-DOOR TRUCKING

Camp luggage delivery service. Trusted, easy and reliable service from anywhere in the United States. Unlike many others, we exclusively service overnight camps.

[www.doorvadoor.com](http://www.doorvadoor.com)  
[josh@doorvadoor.com](mailto:josh@doorvadoor.com)  
(856) 864-4435

## EVERSAFE FIRE PROTECTION

Fire extinguisher & kitchen fire suppression system inspections sales and service.

[eversafefp.com](http://eversafefp.com)  
[eversafefp@gmail.com](mailto:eversafefp@gmail.com)  
(207) 461-5856

## THE CENTER FOR ARTS AND ECOLOGY AT DESERT OF MAINE

Come "Wander in Wonder" with us at The Center for Arts and Ecology at the Desert of Maine. At The Center for Arts and Ecology we offer immersive, hands-on field trips that invite campers and students to explore one of Maine's most unusual landscapes. It's a chance for campers to get their hands dirty, ask big questions, and uncover the mysteries of this remarkable Maine landscape.

[www.centerforartsandecology.org](http://www.centerforartsandecology.org)  
[jacob@centerforartsandecology.org](mailto:jacob@centerforartsandecology.org)  
(203) 687-5737

## Save the Date for the Thurber Workshop! July 14, 2026



*Chris Thurber guides young camp leaders at his 2025 workshop.*

**D**on't miss the chance for your first- and second-year staff to learn from Dr. Christopher Thurber this summer! This is a great professional development opportunity for your staff and will benefit your camp and campers in real time! **Tuesday, July 14, 2026, 10am-1pm at Camp Wawenock in Raymond. Registration now open.**

### EARLY SKILLS FOR PEAK PERFORMANCE

Tailored to first- and second-year counselors and CITs, this workshop is the ideal opportunity for your staff to fortify their pre-season training by taking a deeper dive into managing homesickness, sensitive topics, challenging behaviors, and personal well-being. This three-hour program is a fantastic opportunity to laugh and learn with a diverse cohort of enthusiastic peers who work at other Maine camps. Come with questions and depart with joyful confidence in your performance as a youth development professional.



[Click here to register for the Thurber Workshop.](#)

demand "mutual respect," he said.

Ben King, director of Camp Chewonki, and Treasa Wheeler, Girl Scouts of Maine Vice-President of Camp Program and Property, recently joined the Maine Camp Trip Leader committee.

King, who has directed camps in California, Ohio, and New Hampshire, says he hopes his perspective and experience will help the committee. "I'm glad to serve as a camp representative," he said. All the committee members, who represent several different entities, share the same goal, he said.

"We want to get youth outdoors into beautiful spaces across Maine, preserve its natural beauty, maintain the highest quality of safety for participants and staff, and open the lines of communication" among camps and public service agencies, King said.

The Trip Leader Permit, he said, "sets more of an across-the-board baseline of what all Maine summer camp leaders should know."

Like Ordway, King emphasized that it is each individual camp's responsibility to ensure they run safe trips. "If a camp does something that is risky or negligent it impacts all of us," he said.

Camp Chewonki also trains its own trip leaders. "We have Maine Guides on staff as well as folks who are trained to be instructors," King said. As part of the training, the camp conducts three training trips each spring, allowing aspiring trip leaders to practice required skills as well as to develop a rapport with instructors.

Those foundations of communication and trust between leadership and trip staff enhance the success of trips, King said.

King said training instructors is of paramount importance. "That's probably my first goal," he said. Offering his experience to the committee will include helping to organize resources and enhance accessibility of information to camps.

Treasa Wheeler of the Girl Scouts of Maine says she also looks forward to sharing her experience as a member of the Trip Leader committee.

Like Ordway, Wheeler says it is vital that camps have "checked all the boxes" in ensuring that their staff are properly trained. That training prepares the staff but also helps emphasize that "they know they are responsible for those children," she said.

Wheeler likened the trip leader training to lifeguard training. "Lifeguards know the protocols they are required to follow," she said. "I feel like it's my lifeguard equivalent going into the woods.



Judy Webel and Diehl Estes, Camp Agawam, and Steven and Alexis Dascoulias, Camp CenterStage, at the Maine State Meeting and Social of the ACA, New England Conference in March

## Welcome New Camp Members

### CAMP KITA

Camp Kita, the flagship program of The Kita Center, is a tuition-free camp for youth ages 8-17 bereaved by suicide. Other programs include family and young adult retreats.

[www.thekitacenter.org](http://www.thekitacenter.org)

[info@campkita.com](mailto:info@campkita.com)

(207) 710-0989

**BLAST**  
PARTY-RENTALS.COM  
We Bring the FUN!

- \*Inflatable Games\*
- \*Portable Mini Golf\*
- \*Obstacle Courses
- \*Water Slides\*

**10,000+  
EVENTS  
SERVED**

[www.BlastPartyRentals.com](http://www.BlastPartyRentals.com)  
Text/Call 603-300-8604  
[info@blastpartyrentals.com](mailto:info@blastpartyrentals.com)



Mark your calendar!

## 2026-27 Upcoming Events

Tuesday, May 19, 2026 — MSC Night at the Sea Dogs

Wednesday, July 8, 2026 — 19th Annual Spelling Bee, Wigwam

Tuesday, July 14, 2026 — Thurber Workshop for CITs, Wawenock

Monday-Friday, July 27-31, 2026 — Junior Maine Guide Testing Encampment, Oguossoc

Wednesday, September 2, 2026 — Virtual MYCA Board Meeting

Wednesday, September 23, 2026 — Migis Meetup, Migis Lodge, Casco

Wednesday, September 23, 2026 — MSC In-Person Board Meeting, Migis Lodge

Wednesday, November 4, 2026 — Virtual MYCA Board Meeting

Wednesday, January 6, 2027 — Virtual MYCA Board Meeting

Wednesday, February 3, 2027 — Winter Workshop & Business Networking Extravaganza, DoubleTree, So. Portland

Thursday, February 4, 2027 — MSC In-Person Board Meeting, DoubleTree, So. Portland

Tuesday-Friday, February 16-19, 2027 — ACA National Conference

Wednesday, March 3, 2027 — Virtual MYCA Board Meeting

Tuesday-Thursday, March 9-11, 2027 — Tri-State Conference, Atlantic City

Thursday, Friday, March 18-20, 2026 — New England Camp Conference

Wednesday, April 14, 2027 — Virtual MYCA/MSA Annual Meeting

Wednesday, May 5, 2027 — Virtual MYCA Board Meeting

Wednesday, May 12, 2027 — Virtual MSC Board Meeting



[Click here to access the MSC Calendar.](#)

## For Fifth Straight Summer, L.L. Bean Will Help Make Camp Possible

Funding Supports MSC's Level Ground Initiative and individual ME camps



*West End House Boys Camp hosted a number of campers in 2025 supported by L.L.Bean funding.*

**M**SC recently received the exciting news that L.L.Bean will provide \$80,000 in funding for summer 2026. Of that total, \$15,000 will support administration of the Level Ground Initiative, while \$65,000 will fund camp experiences for Maine children who face barriers to attending MSC day and resident camps. MSC camps are already identifying prospective campers in need and submitting applications to MSC on their behalf for L.L.Bean funding. MSC camps may apply for 2026 L.L.Bean funding through Friday, May 15, 2026.

**Between 2022 and 2025, L.L.Bean contributed a remarkable \$475,000 to support Maine campers at MSC camps. With this latest gift, the five-year total rises to an extraordinary \$555,000.**

MSC Executive Director Lucy Norvell anticipates a record number of requests this year given ongoing economic pressures facing Maine families. “Family budgets are increasingly stretched,” said Norvell. “L.L.Bean’s generous support will give more children access to the unique, device-free experiences Maine camps provide—filled with joy, wonder, a sense of belonging, life lessons, and essential skill development.”

Over each of the past four summers, roughly three dozen MSC camps received funding supporting up to 140 campers annually. Many returning campers benefited from L.L.Bean support across multiple summers, building on the growth and connections camp provides year after year, while new campers from Maine experienced camp for the first time. Funding in summer 2026 will again benefit returning and new campers! MSC is tremendously appreciative of L.L.Bean’s commitment to some of Maine’s most vulnerable children, for whom the gift of camp is truly priceless.

## Maine Camp History

# Pine Island Camp: A Study in Maine Summer Camp History

By Henry Paul Johnson, Maine Summer Camp Historian

According to all historical accounts, Pine Island Camp, along with Camp Cobbossee and Camp Wyonegonic, is one of the three oldest overnight summer camps in Maine for children. Pine Island Camp has remained in nearly continuous operation since 1902 and according to at least one account, exists in “the most picturesque spot in the whole Belgrade Lakes region admirably adopted for a camp, cool in the summer, and free of mosquitoes.”

The Camp was founded by Clarence Colby in 1902. The camp erected its first buildings which included a mess hall, a boathouse, and a main building divided into a dormitory and an assembly room overlooking its island lake location at that time.

It is noteworthy that Pine Island Camp in its first summer had just one camper who was a young boy from Boston who was sent to Mr. Colby’s camp because “he was doing poorly in school”. According to a narrative titled “Pine Island Camp: A Short History” by Tim Nagler, when one Sydney Levitz

spoke at Pine Island’s 75th reunion, Sydney recalls watching carpenters build the very first buildings. “Shipwrights from the coast framed those huge timbers of Honk Hall using traditional shipknees to butcher the joints.” Sydney Levitz, it is noteworthy, became a distinguished and much loved chaplain of Yale University and was known by his Pine Island nickname, “Uncle Sid”.

In 1907, Colby, who had always believed that Pine Island would be a place that “a boy with good intentions” would spend his vacation time to his best advantage, “free from all undesirable influences”, put the camp up for sale.

Ultimately, prior to the summer of 1908, Pine Island Camp was purchased from Clarence Colby’s Estate for \$6,000.00 by, according to all accounts, Eugene Swan, Jr. and Raymond Kaign. Eager to see Pine Island Camp succeed after being closed during 1908, Clarence Colby introduced the new owners to Colby’s counselors including Levitz. During that summer, 28 boys, mostly from Boston, attended the camp.

Pine Island Camp, to this Historian, even from its early formations, recognized the interconnections between a Maine summer camp experience and intellectual pursuits, particularly in the northeast region of the United States. By way of example,

*Pine Island Camp continues on page 16*

to do list:

- order uniforms
- design new tee
- research new items
- decide on staff gift
- ecommerce?!
- call Brio
- Relax

207-596-6989

**BRIO**  
CUSTOM

WE LIVE HERE!

[BRIOCUSTOM.COM/CAMP](http://BRIOCUSTOM.COM/CAMP)

the initial funds to purchase the camp by Caign and Swan, were borrowed from George Pratt, who founded Pratt Institute. Pine Island Camp has embraced from its beginnings, "vigorous outdoor life".

Enrollment increased from 1909-1920 which funded many improvements for the camp including boats, a 40-foot canoe, trucks, new buildings, and tents that gradually expanded as the Camp numbers grew. Over the decades, Pine Island Camp, like other Maine summer camps, had some struggles. It did its best to survive during the depression and then WWII came. In 1946, with only 25 boys enrolled, Pine Island "was in danger of folding". At this juncture, Dr. Swan's oldest son, known to generations of Pine Island campers as "Jun", came to the forefront. He was well educated and served as Headmaster of the Collegiate School in New York City, having graduated from Columbia University.

Jun and his two brothers purchased Pine Island Camp in 1946 for \$10,000.00. The 28 campers in its 1947 season doubled to 68 campers by 1958. In 1963, Tim Holbrook, an independent school teacher, became the assistant director of Pine Island Camp. In turn, in 1967, James C. Breeden, who by all accounts was a popular longtime counselor, and who had completed his first year of law school, took charge of summer programming.

In 1969, Montegue C. Ball, Jr. became the assistant director and for the next 21 years, he was the lead Pine Island director. Montegue was a teacher and assistant headmaster at independent schools and "managed to balance his school duties with the multiple demands of recruiting Pine Island Staff and campers and running a fast-paced program even though he moved from a school on Long Island to another in Greenville, South Carolina."

We fast forward to June 27, 1995, the third day of Pine Island's 93rd summer. According to Tim Neglar, two trips had left the island. Boys were getting acquainted with their tent-mates and "sorting through their trunks during rest hour." On the lake side of the Pine Island kitchen, one of the first three buildings that Colby had erected, Ben Swan wrestled propane tanks and began hooking them up to the bronze gas regulator. During that time, a small propane line broke, ultimately causing a fire. No one was hurt as a consequence of the fire but multiple camp structures were destroyed, including Honk Hall, the kitchen, dining hall, infirmary, pump house, every tent on the ridge and range, and everything campers had brought for the summer.

This fire did not stop Pine Island Camp from moving forward. Through pledges from generations of Pine Island campers, portions of the camp that were destroyed were rebuilt. In an interview in April 2026, which I had the pleasure to conduct with Pine Island Camp Director Alex Toole, campers and staff stepped up to the plate and made significant efforts to assist

in the rebuilding of the damaged portions of the Pine Island Camp. Based upon the history as examined herein, the Pine Island Camp is exemplary of the strength and fortitude of the Maine camping experience and the depth in which Maine campers and staff alike will go to make certain that their great experience stays intact.

At present, Pine Island Camp flourishes. It continues to occupy its picturesque site on Great Pond, along with certain mainland property. This provides campers with the opportunity for sport experiences such as canoeing, boating, tennis, archery, and riflery and a series of short-term and long-term out-of-camp trips including a seven-day extended canoe trip on the Allegash River.

Campers who attend Pine Island Camp not only are from the New England states but also from New York, the West Coast of the United States, the Washington D.C. area, and France, Mexico, and Canada.

Pine Island is unique because it provides campers the opportunity to explore their individuality within a group setting. Other than the main dining hall, there is no electricity and running water on the island. Campers have that special opportunity to bathe in Belgrade Lake utilizing eco-friendly products.

When I asked Director of Operations Sarah Hunter what she believed was special about Pine Island Camp, she indicated that "it was about the community where boys are valued and their participation adds to the community. It allows boys to explore what is important to them".

Director Alex Toole further emphasized that in a day and age when child independence is not preferred, Pine Island offers campers the opportunity to acquire adult skills in an environment that promotes "independence, agency, and making good choices."

Pine Island Camp, to this historian, both from a physical plant standpoint and interpersonal perspective, represents the very roots of Maine summer camps.



*This article is written by noted author and Maine Summer Camp Historian, Henry Johnson, who attended Camp Powhatan in Otisfield, Maine from 1966 through 1979 as a camper, counselor, and, ultimately, program director. Mr. Johnson is the author of numerous articles and publications relating to the history of Maine summer camps. If you wish to submit information to Mr.*

*Johnson relating to the history of any Maine summer camp, you may do so at the following email: [hjohnson@henryjohnsonlaw.com](mailto:hjohnson@henryjohnsonlaw.com).*

## Real Resources!

MSC has a long history of aggregating and sharing resources exclusively for Member Camps. As camps gear up for HIP inspections this coming summer using the Chapter 208 Rule that was brand new one year ago, we are going to continue to share more resources than we typically do. We will use two different formats to share information. The first is our website The second format is shared links to living documents. Once you bookmark these, you can access information being updated in real time, such as another lifeguard training.

On the website's homepage, hover over CAMPS until a menu drops down, including three primary resource pages: Indigenous Neighbors Resources, MSC Resources, and Maine Resources. If you discover broken links or resources that are outdated on any of the pages, or if you need additional resources, please [let Lucy know](#) right away. Please visit each of these pages of our website and check out the links.

**Indigenous Peoples: Understanding and Resources** grew out of MSC's priority to assist member camps in ending Indigenous appropriation. The one named [Resources](#) is filled with documents, memos, videos, and information that MSC has provided, developed, commissioned, or sourced. Many of these are password protected. [Email Lucy](#) for the password. Some are older, but still of interest. They are archived and still accessible. We are working hard to keep the most current resources at your fingertips. Resources that have been added recently are the Employment and Immunization Memos from Curtis Thaxter as well as recordings of MYCA's webinar on Eating & Lodging licensure for camps and their casual conversation on topics ranging from bats to how nurses can delegate medication administration to Unlicensed Assistive Personnel (UAP). Handouts from last month's in-person workshop on Supporting Neurodivergent Staff & Campers are also housed on this page.

The page named [Maine State Resources](#) is full of links to State of Maine resources including the new version of the Chapter 208 Rule. This page also includes information and links to the Eating and Lodging application and the 206 Rule it is based on as well as a link to the Abbreviated Application for camps that rent from licensed Youth Camps. Several links to HIP-related information can be discovered and accessed on this page of our website.

The second format for sharing resources includes using live Google Documents to share specific information. These don't require password protection. Rather, once you get the link to this type of document in the Hall Monitor, a newsletter, or via email, you can bookmark it and refer back to it as it is being updated. Good examples of this kind of document are our [Certification and Training document](#) that

is continually updated throughout the spring with details submitted by training organizers themselves. There is an additional document called [2026 Trainings for Strengthening Leaders and Teams](#).

We invite you to [reach out to Lucy](#) to share your ideas and thoughts on how MSC can better put the information you most need at your fingertips.

## MSC Members Leading the Way

**Dirigo:** Latin for "I lead" or "I direct," the state motto of Maine.

Maine Summer Camps benefits from the amazing work of its two boards, listed on p. 2, as well as from the leadership of many other members connected to MSC Camps and Businesses. We thank Laura Ordway for her consequential and action-packed presidency and thank her for her service. (Read more on p. 3.) [Here's a link to the MSC Committees](#). We are grateful to all the committee chairs and committee members!

A large cohort of Mainers also serves the New England region on the ACA NE Board and Conference Committee. As they term off the ACA New England Board, we acknowledge the contributions and long-time service of these four members:

**Catriona Sangster**, Camp Wawenock

**Garth Altenberg**, Vice President, former director of Camp Timanous

**Heather Plati**, Vice President, former director of Camp O-At-Ka

**Anna Hopkins Buller**, Secretary, Friends Camp

These talented Mainers serve on and help lead the current ACA New England Board:

**Jeff Gleason**, President, YMCA Camp of Maine

**Carly Vargas**, Vice President, Kamp Kohut

**Nick Teich**, Vice President, Fairwinds Consulting & Fairwinds Family Camp

**Page Rich**, Secretary, Alford Lake Camp

**JD Lichtman**, Camp Tapawingo

**Katie Johnson**, Chalmers Camp Insurance

And, we send congratulations on the recent NE Camp Conference to the Mainers on the ACA NE Conference Committee:

**Carly Vargas**, Kamp Kohut, Co-Chair

**Terri Mulks**, Camp Susan Curtis, Past Co-Chair

**Ajay Henry-Hill**, Maine Academy of Modern Music

**Mikele Block**, Camp CaPella

**Treasa Wheeler**, Girl Scouts of Maine, Camps Pondicherry and Natarawi

**Carissa Chipman**, Chalmers Camp Insurance

**Jessica Paquette**, West End Boys Camp