



Camp Linden Winter Views

December, 2015

**Visit us at
camplinden.org**

**Thank You for
Your Support**

We now have our own website. You can still find us on the Philadelphia Ethical Society website, phillyethics.org, which links to our new website. You can also go directly to camplinden.org. Our new website is easier to navigate and it will enable us to provide more information and communicate more effectively.

**Watch our latest video:
"EW at Camp Linden"**

Last summer Daniel Domanski, an employee of our partner Education Works, with the help of campers in the Tuesday group from Education Works, made a delightful short video documenting the camper's perspective of the Camp Linden experience. You can view this video through our new website or search for "EW at Camp Linden" on Youtube.com.

Your generosity made it possible for over 250 low income urban children to experience the wonders of nature at Camp Linden one day a week for six weeks during the summer of 2015.

Camp Linden depends upon contributions from individuals, which account for almost half of our budget. Every cent you contribute goes directly to program services. Management and fundraising is done by volunteers, and our active volunteers also cover of the direct costs involved in printing and mailing our communications.

We are constantly striving to improve the quality of our program. We feel that we made a major breakthrough last summer thanks to the extremely talented and committed counselors we were able to employ. However, the most important measure of our success is the impact of the Camp Linden experience upon the children we serve. We hope you will view our latest video "EW at Camp Linden" and hear about that from our campers in their own words.

Please consider Camp Linden if you are making end of the year charitable contributions. A return envelope is enclosed for your convenience. You may also make your contribution through Paypal on our website.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Dubb, MD
Chair, Friends of Camp Linden



Report on Summer 2015

Our Program:

During the summer of 2015 we served over 250 inner city children, most of whom were enrolled in Philadelphia day camps operated by Education Works. Each weekday a different group of up to 52 campers attended Camp Linden, and returned the same weekday for six weeks. Campers were divided into four groups, named after the Lenape words for North, South, East and West. Two groups had swimming in the morning, and the other two groups rotated through the Activities Program. They switched after lunch. The Activities Program included gardening, follow-up instruction in the Nature Center, and nature walks. Each week had a major activity or theme.

Week 1: Campers harvested and planted in the garden and learned about plants and trees, what they need in order to grow, and why they are important to us.

Week 2: *Flowers and Seeds* Campers picked wild berries, planted flowers, pollinated corn, and learned about plant propagation.

Week 3: Native American Culture Chief Shelley DePaul of the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania introduced campers to Native American culture through narrative, drumming, dancing, examining artifacts, and engaging in Lenape crafts and games. Her program stressed the Lenape values of respect for all of nature, including every person, animal, plant and natural object.



Weeks 4: *The Brandywine* Campers waded in the Brandywine Creek and examined the fish, insects and plants that live in and around its waters.

Weeks 5: Campers learned about organic gardening from our Three Sisters Garden, which follows the Native American method of growing corn, beans and squash together. They hiked to a local corn field and compared the modern method of growing a single crop in an area, which depends upon chemical fertilizers and insecticides.

Weeks 6: *Celebration* Campers harvested from the garden and helped prepare a salad garnished with Nasturtium edible flowers. We honored the planet with a parade and parachute exercises with an inflatable globe. The ceremonies concluded with a harvest feast and farewell. Campers departed with the Nasturtiums they planted during week 2, and a nutritional pamphlet entitled "Cooking with Beans".

What is New:

The summer of 2015 was our best summer yet because we had the best counselors. That was no accident.

Over the last four years we have developed a curriculum which emphasizes learning about nature through experiencing the natural world. In a self-evaluation at the end of the summer of 2014 we concluded that our program would be more effective if it were led by counselors with a higher level of expertise. Consequently, we reorganized our staffing structure to include a "Garden Specialist"; a "Nature Specialist", and a Nature Educator. We established positions for four "Guides", counselors assigned to lead a group of campers through the program for the entire day. This staffing pattern replaced our former practice of employing a head counselor and four "activities counselors". We continued to employ a Lifeguard/Swim Instructor and Assistant Swim Instructor at the pool. However, we doubled the staffing of the swimming program because our Guides accompany their group at the pool as well as the Activities Program.

We also made a special effort to recruit counselors who had a demonstrated commitment to the environment as well as a sincere interest in working with inner-city children. Our employment notices stressed these criteria and we disseminated information about our job openings through West Chester University environmental organizations. As a result of these efforts, we were able to assemble a staff of counselors who exemplified all of the qualities we were seeking.

Our Staff

Counselors:

Andrew Phillips, Garden Specialist Andrew is a Junior at West Chester University, where he serves as a Garden Intern, coordinating volunteers in planning, planting and cultivating the WCU student vegetable garden. He has years of experience in gardening and beekeeping and has comprehensive knowledge of native plants. He is proficient in Spanish and has an interest in Lenape language and culture. Andrew also has previous experience as a camp counselor and volunteers in a vast array of community service programs.

Jessica Capista, Nature Specialist Jessica is a Sophomore at West Chester University majoring in biology, with a marine science concentration. She studied marine biology at the Wallops Island, Virginia, field station. She has previous experience as a camp counselor, and a background in community service through the high school National Honors Society Community Service Corps.

Taylor Abernathy, Nature Center Instructor Taylor is a Senior at West Chester University, graduating in January, 2016 with a dual degree in middle grades education and special education. 2015 was Taylor's third summer as a counselor at Camp Linden. She received the WCU Outstanding Senior Student Teacher Candidate Award. In addition to leading the Nature Center program, Taylor served as staff coordinator.

Katelyn Reeder, Lifeguard and Swimming Instructor

Katelyn is a freshman at West Chester University. She is a certified lifeguard, and 2015 was her second summer serving as a Lifeguard/Swim Instructor at Camp Linden.

Tessa Jackson, Group Leader ("Guide") Tessa is a Junior at West Chester University, majoring in elementary education. For 6 summers she taught piano, voice, guitar and ukelele at an art camp run by her family. Tessa is a certified lifeguard and a certified yoga instructor. In addition to leading a group, Tessa served as substitute Lifeguard/Swim Instructor, and was reassigned to that position full time for the last 2 weeks of the summer.

Liana Samartino, Group Leader ("Guide") Liana is a Senior at West Chester University majoring in Social Work. She has previous experience as a summer camp counselor and previous certification as a lifeguard. She has volunteered rebuilding houses with Lower Nine, Habitat for Humanity, and participated in a cultural emersion trip to Israel.

Samantha Markey, Group Leader ("Guide") Samantha is a Senior at West Chester University in the Pre-Physical Therapy program. She is proficient in swimming and a member of the WCU tennis team. Samantha served as Captain of a Relay-for-Life Team to raise money for cancer research, and is a member of Phi Sigma Pi National Honor Fraternity, which focuses on leadership and volunteer service.

Stephanie Cifarelli, Group Leader ("Guide") Stephanie is a Junior at West Chester University majoring in environmental health. She is a member of the WCU tennis team and had five years experience teaching youth ages 6 through 12 at a tennis camp. She is also proficient in swimming.



Brandon McCardell, Junior Counselor Brandon is a Senior at Coatsville Area High School. He is a nature enthusiast, experienced swimmer and gymnast. He served as Assistant Swimming Instructor and substitute Group Leader. During the summer Brandon contributed to our nature program by capturing snakes on two separate occasions.



Volunteer Leadership:

Management

Camp Linden is operated by the Philadelphia Ethical Society through its Camp Linden Committee.

Leonard Weeks, Chair of the Committee, is retired after 27 years as Executive Director of a social service agency serving low income families in South Philadelphia. His experience includes operating two summer overnight children's camps. Leonard performs most management functions, including budgeting, subject to Committee approval. Leonard's wife, **Sharon Wallis**, a semi-retired lawyer, volunteers as Program Director for the Camp Linden Summer Children's Program. With guidance and support from the Camp Linden Committee, Leonard and Sharon recruited, hired and trained the Camp Linden counselors, and provided on-site supervision.

Fundraising

Jeffrey Dubb, MD, serves as Chair of Friends of Camp Linden, the entity which solicits, acknowledges and keeps track of individual contributions to the Children's Summer Program at Camp Linden. Jeffrey formerly served as Chair of the Camp Linden Committee and is also a former Board President of the Philadelphia Ethical Society. Jeffrey's daughter, **Ruth Dubb**, has produced our literature and fundraising appeals for many years, and now also serves as Web Master.

Maintenance:

Nyland Seniuk served as resident caretaker through October, 2015. Although his contracting business kept him busy, Ny always found time to maintain the camp property. Ny's creativity, generosity and personal connections enabled us to make the most of our limited financial resources when work was needed beyond the routine maintenance. Ny also served as our liaison to the local community and managed our relationships with the hunters, fishing club and others who made use of the property. When Ny purchased property in the neighborhood and relocated, his son **Ed** took up residence at Camp Linden and took over as caretaker, with Ny's support.

Our Budget

For the fiscal year ending August 31, 2015 our expenses totaled approximately \$37,000. Approximately \$20,000 went to compensation and payroll expenses for our counselors and Native American instructor. Another \$6,000 covered other direct expenses of the Summer Children's program. The remaining \$11,000 covered overhead not specifically allocated to the Summer Children's Program, including compensation of the caretaker, insurance and utilities.

During the same period we raised or received approximately the same amount. The Philadelphia Ethical Society contributed approximately \$6,500. We received \$11,000 from foundations, and raised approximately \$1,500 through events. Individual contributions totaled approximately \$18,000, almost 50% of our total budget.

