



# Camp Linden Winter Views

December, 2016-17

## Thank You for Your Support

The mission of the Camp Linden Summer Children's Program is to introduce inner-city children to the wonders of nature. It is owned and operated by the Philadelphia Ethical Society. Our 50 acre property is located along the Brandywine in the rolling hills of Chester County. We offer a six week summer program, free of cost, to day camps serving school age children from low income urban families. Our partners bring the same group of children to Camp Linden on the same day each week for a program which includes swimming and environmental education.

During the summer of 2016 we served over 200 children, one day each week for the six weeks. Your generosity made this possible. Camp Linden depends on contributions from individual friends like you who provide over forty percent of our budget. Every cent you contribute goes directly to program services because Camp Linden volunteers do all the organization and cover the fundraising costs themselves.

We are constantly striving to improve the quality of our program, and were encouraged by our success in attracting six new organizations to bring their children to camp. However, the most important measure of our success is the impact of the camp experience in the lives of the children we serve. Check out our brief video "EW at Camp Linden" on youtube.com, to see and hear our campers express what they gained from the experience.

Your continued support will make it possible to provide this valuable experience again in the coming summer.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Dubb, M.D.  
Chair of Friends of  
Camp Linden



## New in 2016

### New Partners

We established new partnerships with six community based organizations which operate summer camps in low income neighborhoods of Philadelphia and Wilmington. Our new partners from Philadelphia were: The Cambodian Association of Greater Philadelphia; Spring Garden School; The Center for Returning Citizens; and United Communities of Southeast Philadelphia. Our new partners from Wilmington were: Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center and the William "Hicks" Anderson Community Center. These new partnerships permitted us to serve an even more diverse population of inner-city children than we have in the past. We continued to serve children from Community Concern 13, a day care program in North Philadelphia which has been attending Camp Linden for the last twenty-five years.

### New Animals

Our caretaker, Ed Seniuk, adopted two young female goats, Susanna and Clementine. Campers delighted in visiting and feeding the goats. We also had chickens once again last summer.

### Improvements to Swimming Area

Volunteers from Longwood Gardens and Chanticleer Gardens landscaped our pool area with tropical plants. We purchased new umbrellas and a second changing tent.

### Program Enhancements

A talking honey bee and model flower livened up our insect/plant propagation lessons during the second week of camp. See "Being a Bee" page 2.

# Being a Bee at Camp Linden



Sylvia Metzler is a member of the Philadelphia Ethical Society who volunteered to live up the second week of our environmental program, which focuses on insects and plant propagation, by dressing up as a bee. This is her account of the experience:

"Can you really fly?"

"I know you are a real person in there!"

"Now that's a

really old bee!"

At Camp Linden the children had many questions and lots of opinions about honey bees, butterflies and pollination. I was spending a week there in my bee costume and teaching two to four classes a day about the importance of pollination and the dangers to our pollinators.

Each morning the staff and I eagerly awaited the arrival of a group of children from day camps in Philadelphia or Wilmington. I greeted them in my bee costume, complete with wings, antennae and a sign reading "Please Save Me". The children ranged in age from six to thirteen and for the most part were interested and engaged. In fact, a few of them knew more about bees than I did. Do you know what nurse bees feed the baby larva in the hive?

I met each class in the Nature Center after they finished harvesting in the garden. A counselor showed them a diagram of a flower and explained that bees and butterflies are attracted by the nectar and they pollinate in the process of drinking it. Then the campers tasted samples of the beets, carrots and tomatoes they had just harvested.

Now it was my turn to fly in and explain why my sign read: "Please Save Me". First I wanted them to appreciate what we would be missing without the pollinators. I had color pictures and actual samples of some of their favorite foods: apples, pears, blueberries, watermelon, almonds and strawberries. We imagined a picnic without them – no fun. Then I explained that many bees and butterflies were disappearing and dying and I asked if they knew why? Almost always one of the children called out "Chemicals!" Then I told them about the damage that chemicals like Round-Up are doing. I suggested that they plant milk weed and the kinds of flowers that the pollinators love. I brought butterfly-bush cuttings from my backyard, which we planted in the "Butterfly Garden" in front of the Nature Center.

I also showed them some honey in a little bear jar and some children's books about bees. Many of them knew about Winnie the Pooh and his love of honey. We saw pictures of the worker bees protecting their hives from bears, wasps and humans but learned not to be afraid of bees and certainly not to kill them.

After my presentation concluded, each child got to pick a bee or a butterfly glove and reach into a big model flower. Like the pollinators, they went after the sweet nectar (Skittles) and in the process, collected the pollen (flaked coconut). With hands full of Skittles, they left happily and, I hope, with less fear and more appreciation for the honey bees and butterflies.





# Our Staff

Leonard Weeks continues to serve as Chair of the Camp Linden Committee and Manager of the Camp. Sharon Wallis continues to serve as Program Director. These are both unpaid positions. Ed Seniuk has replaced his father, Ny, as resident caretaker. Ny relocated to a nearby property in October 2015, but continues to provide his expertise as needed. Our three experts from Summer 2015 returned. They are Andrew Phillips, Garden Specialist; Jessica Capista, Nature Specialist; and Taylor Abernathy, Nature Educator. Liana Samartino, who served as a group leader ("Guide") last summer, returned as a Lifeguard/Swimming Instructor and Waterfront Director. We hired two new Lifeguards, Jacob Williams and Christopher O'Keefe, and three new "Guides" Kate Baker, Marie Davis and Devin Esch.



# Our Program

As in previous summers, the campers were divided into two groups. One went to the pool in the morning while the other rotated through the Environmental Program. They switched after lunch. The swimming program included instruction and free swim each day, as well as water safety.

The Environmental Program included gardening, nature exploration and follow-up instruction in the Nature Center. Each week had a different major activity or theme, as follows:

**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. This lesson covered photosynthesis.

**Week 2:** Campers learned about plant propagation, flowers, seeds and pollination. See "Being a Bee" page 2. They also caught bugs, and examined their catch, before releasing them.

**Week 3:** Campers waded in the Brandywine Creek and examined the fish, insects and plants that live in and around its waters.

**Week 4:** 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.





**Week 5:** Campers learned about organic gardening from our Three Sisters Garden, which grows corn with beans and squash in the Native American manner. They followed our trail 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. In the Nature Center they learned about the many uses of corn, rolled out tortillas, and popped corn.

**Weeks 6:** Campers harvested from the garden. We honored the planet with a parade and parachute exercises with an inflatable globe. The ceremonies concluded with a harvest feast and farewell.



*Newsletter layout and editing  
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