



Camp Linden Winter Views

December, 2019



This is one of many hand-made cards we received from children who attended Camp Linden last summer. The cards included messages

such as: "Thank you for a fun time on every Tuesday. We have the best day! Thank you for everything"; "Thank you for a wonderful time and learning about things I did not know"; "I love to swim in the pool"; "I like the creek because we skipped rocks"; "I love walking like Indians in the forest"; "I love the garden"; "I liked catching bugs and toads using our hands"; " I love feeding the goats".

Last summer Camp Linden provided an opportunity for over two hundred children from low income inner-city neighborhoods to learn to swim and experience the natural world at our property in rural Chester County. We are sharing their messages with you because your financial support made it possible.

Contributions from Friends of Camp Linden covered 65% of our operating budget. This newsletter is our report to you on how we used your contributions to benefit the children we serve. Our entire operating expense for the year was \$25,830. We also completed major repairs to our swimming pool, which were supported by a special fund-raising campaign in 2018. We keep our expenses low because so much of the work required to operate the camp, as well as our fund raising, is done by volunteers.

We wish you and your loved ones a joyful holiday season and a very happy New Year. Please think of Camp Linden when you make your end of the year charitable contributions.

Jeffrey Dubb, MD
Chair of Friends of Camp Linden

Our Mission

To provide a camp experience for inner-city children that

- promotes appreciation of the natural world,
- acknowledges the intrinsic worth of all human beings, and
- encourages campers to develop self-reliance, integrity and ethical relationships.

Our Values

1. Value yourself - Keep yourself safe and open to experience and learning.
2. Value other people (especially fellow campers). Keep them safe and help them learn.
3. Value the Earth and all living things (especially those encountered at camp). Learn from observing nature, and leave things as you found them.

Our Program



We partner with organizations which operate summer day camps serving low income

inner-city families. Our partners bring the same group of children to Camp Linden on the same weekday for five or six weeks during the summer. We serve two groups of up to 30 children each weekday. One goes to the swimming pool in the morning and the other goes to the environmental education program, and they switch after lunch. Some of our partners bring a large group, which is divided in half. Some days we serve two groups from different partners.

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Each day our program includes a discussion of Camp Linden values (see Our Values, p.1), and behaviors to live our values; swimming instruction and recreational swimming; and a lesson or major activity as part of the environmental education curriculum.

Our Partners

Philadelphia partners:

- The Cambodian Association of Greater Philadelphia - a multi-service organization addressing the needs of the Cambodian community;
- Community Concern 13, a day-care and after-school program serving North Philadelphia;
- Netter Center, the community outreach program of the University of Pennsylvania, which brought groups from two of the summer camps it operates at West Philadelphia public schools.

Wilmington partners:

- Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center, a multi-service non-profit serving a low income neighborhood in Wilmington;
- William "Hicks" Anderson Community Center, a neighborhood center operated by the City of Wilmington in a low income area

Our 2019 Environmental Education Curriculum

Week 1: Gardening and Nature Walk

While half of the group harvested and planted the garden the other half went on a nature walk and then they switched. Campers learned about photosynthesis, and why plants are important to us.

Week 2: Pollination and Bugs

Campers pollinated a model flower and learned about plant propagation and insect pollinators. After a lesson covering the anatomy of insects and spiders, they caught bugs and toads and examined them before releasing them back to nature.

Week 3: Brandywine

Campers waded, floated, and skipped rocks in the Brandywine. They examined aquatic life in the creek as well as insect and plant life along the bank.



Week 4: Trail

Campers hiked a trail through the woods on Camp Linden Road, where they observed crops growing in a neighbor's field.

They walked along the road to a marker identifying where the British crossed the creek to attack George Washington's army at the Battle of Brandywine.

Week 5: Three Sisters

Campers observed the bed in our garden where corn, beans and squash are grown together as "Three Sisters" in the Native American manner. They learned about the many uses of corn, shucked and tasted fresh corn, popped corn and rolled out tortillas.

Week 6: Closing Celebration

Campers harvested in the garden and prepared kale chips and popcorn. They celebrated Planet Earth with a parade and parachute exercises, sang the camp song and played games. Then they enjoyed a feast featuring produce from the garden and other healthy treats, before saying farewell to Camp Linden for the last time this season.

What's New

Leonard led a nature walk the first week of camp. See Leonard's Nature Walk, p. 4

Joe Bonus joined us as a volunteer counselor and aquatic instructor. See Meet Joe Bonus, p. 3.

A different trail. In past years campers have hiked the northeast trail to the edge of a corn field on a neighboring property. That property has been sold and is no longer planted in corn. Last summer we hiked on the southern trail which leads to Camp Linden Road. (See Week 4 above.)

Our Staff



Leonard Weeks (Camp Manager), and his wife Sharon Wallis (Program Director), have volunteered at Camp Linden since 2011. Joe Bonus joined the volunteer camp staff this summer. Ed Seniuk continued as our year-round resident caretaker.

Returning summer staff were Kateri Brehany, Senior Counselor, and Katherine and Chiara O'Keefe, life-guard/aquatic instructors. Giles Brehany, who was a Counselor-in-Training ("CIT") last summer, returned as a Junior Counselor. Dominic LaFrance and Matthew Kozak also served as Junior Counselors. We had two CITs, John Paul Kozak and Margaret O'Keefe.

Meet Joe Bonus

Joe Bonus has volunteered at Camp Linden for several years helping with the garden and other chores at our off-season work days. Last summer he joined us as a volunteer counselor and aquatic instructor.

Joe's interest in Camp Linden was inspired by his own "mind awaking" experience as a sixth grader at a wilderness camp for inner-city children, which offered an outdoor experience similar to the Camp Linden program. He reports: "My take away from last summer's Camp Linden experience is that the biology/chemistry of nature awakens awareness and confidence in most of the children. Faced with new experiences like spiders, dirt and jumping critters, the children are initially shocked at the raw element of nature. Then, in only six short days visiting Camp Linden, campers have overcome many obstacles they normally may never

experience. Along with the young staff, who are also enriched by the experience, they grow holistically before one's eyes."

Joe has operated his own business, Bonus Marketing, for thirty-three years. He has also participated in many community service organizations, including managerial duties at Indiana University of Pennsylvania and the Rotary Club of Springfield Township. He currently serves on the boards of Eastern Tech (trade school) and Montgomery County Community College and volunteers at Face to Face, a multi-service organization that offers free meals and human services in the Germantown section of Philadelphia.

Joe has coached many sports, and currently officiates swimming and diving and umpires softball at the age group and high school levels. He has also raised three children with patience and support, each of whom became a division one athlete. He is pictured here helping campers float in the Brandywine.



Our Leadership

Camp Linden is a program of the Philadelphia Ethical Society. The Society's Camp Linden Committee is responsible for this program. Henry Paskow was elected as Chair of the Committee in September. Henry has been serving as Volunteer Coordinator for the last few years, recruiting and scheduling Camp Linden work days. He is also Executive Editor of the Society's newsletter.



Jeffrey Dubb, M.D. continues to serve as Chair of Friends of Camp Linden, which raises individual contributions to support the camp program. Jeffrey served as Chair of the Camp Linden Committee for many years, and kept the camp going when the Executive Director unexpectedly resigned in 2010. He has also served as Board President of the Philadelphia Ethical Society.

Leonard's Nature Walk

The first week of camp we divide the campers in the environmental education program into two groups of ten to fifteen children. One group goes to the garden first. Last summer I took the other group on a nature walk.

My goal was to encourage the campers to focus on the natural world and experience it with all of their senses. I told the campers that this was an experiment, and we would evaluate it at the end of the walk. I asked them to imagine that they were Lenapi Indians, who once lived in this area.

Like Indians, we were going to walk through the woods in total silence. We would communicate with hand signs. I reviewed several familiar hand signs: pointing an index finger for "look here"; a hand behind the ear for "listen"; a single finger at the lips for "silence"; and two index fingers in the shape of the letter "T" for "time-out", which meant we were permitted to talk until the time-out concluded.

I asked the campers to look very carefully at the things I pointed to, and listen very carefully when I signaled them to listen; and to always stay behind me, and not run ahead. With this instruction we walked, first along the main driveway, and then along the path leading to the cabin where Sharon and I reside during the summer. As we walked I pointed out different things that attracted my attention, and stopped to listen from time to time.

As we approached the fence separating our property from the neighbor's field, I signaled "time-out". I told the campers: "there are kids who live next door who would like to meet you, but you have to call them in their own language." The campers started to guess what language the kids spoke. Then I told the campers to repeat after me, and I

called out: "nyaah, nyaah". As the campers called: "nyaah, nyaah", a big billy-goat, two nanny-goats, and two kids emerged from a lean-to in the neighbor's field, and headed towards us. The campers squealed with delight. When the goats reached us, I handed out leafy twigs for the campers to feed them through the fence.

After feeding the goats, we resumed our silence and headed back. We returned to the main driveway and, after walking through the parking area, followed a short path leading to the field. As we entered the field the open sky replaced the overhanging tree branches, and, with my hands held high, I signaled the campers to look at the sky. We proceeded to visit the roosters, and that was the end of the walk.

As an evaluation, I asked the campers to answer these questions in their own minds: (1) how well were you able to remain silent? (2) how well were you able to walk without noise? (3) how well were you able to look really carefully? and (4) how well were you able to listen carefully? I thanked them for going on the walk with me. The feedback I received in one of the cards from campers is presented above.

When we parted these campers met with Sharon for the introduction to the garden program. I met with the group that had just finished in the garden, to take them on the nature walk.

