



Camp Linden Winter Views

December, 2017

Thank You for Your Support

Our last newsletter, Camp Linden Summer Views, July 2017, focused on the swimming program, and the need to fund ten thousand dollars in pool repairs. We announced that philanthropist Chase Lenfest had offered to match every contribution to the Swimming Pool Restoration Fund on a dollar for dollar basis, up to five thousand dollars. We are happy to report that this appeal raised more than five thousand dollars, and we have succeeded in drawing down the full amount of the Lenfest challenge grant.

We expended \$4,405 to repaint the pool last spring. The balance of the fund will be used to replace two pool skimmers (\$4,000 estimate) and purchase a new pool cover (\$2,000 estimate).

We are grateful to Chase Lenfest for his generous contribution and his leadership in stimulating additional contributions. We are also grateful to the many contributors who helped us meet our goal.

In addition to contributions restricted to the Swimming Pool Restoration Fund, the Friends of Camp Linden contributed \$21,380 for the general operating support for the Summer Children's Program, 58% of our operating budget of \$36,570.

Our goal for the coming year is to raise a similar amount from then Friends of Camp Linden. We rely upon your generosity to meet this goal.

Jeffrey Dubb, MD
Chair of the Camp Linden Committee and Chair of Friends of Camp Linden

Newsletter layout and editing by Ruth Dubb



Report on the 2017 Summer Program

In 2017 the Camp Linden Summer Children's Program served two hundred and eighteen children from seven low income neighborhood in Philadelphia and Wilmington, Delaware. Each group attended Camp Linden one day a week, returning on the same day for six weeks.

On Mondays we served 44 children from the Cambodian Association of Greater Philadelphia. Our Tuesday group consisted of 30 children from United Communities of Southeast Philadelphia and 30 from the Netter Center a program sponsored by the University of Pennsylvania providing educational enhancement services to children at the Lea School in West Philadelphia. Wednesdays we served 30 children from William (Hicks) Anderson Recreation Center in Wilmington. Our Thursday group consisted of 30 children from Hilltop Neighborhood Center in Wilmington and 24 from Community Concern 13, a child care program in North Philadelphia. On Fridays we serve 30 children from Spring Garden Academy in North Philadelphia. (continued on page 2)

Summer Program

(continued from 1st page) Every day except Friday, when we had only one group, the campers were divided into two groups, one of which went to the pool in the morning while the other attended our environmental education program, and they would switch after lunch. The swimming program, conducted in our recently repainted pool, included instruction and free swim each day, as well as water safety.

The Environmental Education Program had a different theme or major activity each week, 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. 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: Campers hiked our wooded trails to the edge of our property, where they encountered a corn field and a breathtaking view of rolling hills and horse pastures.



Week 5: Campers observed our Three Sisters Garden, the Native American method of growing corn, beans and squash together as contrasted with the modern method of planting corn as a unitary crop, which depends upon chemical fertilizers and insecticides. They learned about the many uses of corn, shucked, cooked and tasted fresh corn, popped corn and rolled out tortillas.



Week 6: Campers harvested in the garden, and prepared kale chips. They celebrated Planet Earth with musical instruments, singing, parachute exercises and a feast featuring produce from the garden and other healthy treats such as watermelon and popcorn.

During the week following the conclusion of our six-week program we held a special one day program for 60 children from the Lenfest Center, which serves the Huntington Park area of North Philadelphia. The Lenfest group spent the day wading in the Brandywine, swimming in the Camp Linden pool, and eating lunch in our picnic grove.

Putting the Garden to Bed for the Winter

The Camp Linden hands-on gardening program depends upon volunteers to prepare and maintain the garden, which consists of twelve 4 foot by 12 foot raised beds. An important aspect of garden maintenance takes place in the fall, after the garden has stopped producing and the ground is covered with fallen leaves.

First we clear a bed of dead plants and weeds. We set up the leaf mulcher and feed leaves into the mulcher as leaf mulch accumulates at its base. We spread out the leaf mulch and top it with a layer of mushroom compost, a nutrient rich medium which is left over after mushrooms are produced. We then cover the bed with a layer of leaves, and proceed to repeat the process on another bed.

Over the winter the top layer of leaves is compressed into a thick blanket, which shuts out the sun and inhibits weeds from growing. When we are ready to plant in the Spring we remove the blanket of leaves, mulch it and return it to the garden. We use a cultivator to turn the soil, incorporating the mulch and mushroom compost to produce rich, soft soil which is ideal for gardening.

Join Camp Linden Volunteers

Camp Linden depends upon volunteers to perform much of the work necessary to make the Camp Linden experience available to deserving inner-city children. Our volunteers also benefit from the experience. They enjoy the beauty of the rural environment, as well as the satisfaction of working



the soil and the pleasure of spending a productive day working and eating together.

Camp Linden volunteer days are held on Saturdays in May, June and November or early December. They are announced in advance by email, subject to the weather. We provide transportation from the Ethical Society building on Rittenhouse Square, leaving at 9 AM., or volunteers can meet us at Camp Linden. We also provide lunch. Volunteers generally depart at around 3 PM, and return to Philadelphia at 4 PM or soon thereafter.

In addition to gardening, volunteers help maintain the camp property and prepare for the Children's Summer Program, including tick prevention, clearing paths, and cleaning and organizing the camp facilities.

If you are interested in joining our volunteer email list contact Henry Pashkow at hpashkow@gmail.com. There is no obligation involved in being included on this list. However, it is important that you let us know when you plan to attend a volunteer day, and whether you need a ride or can take a passenger, so that we can plan transportation and lunch.

Is This Camp Linden?

Almost every summer a car will drive up the winding, bumpy camp road to the end and stop. A middle-age driver will emerge from the car and ask, "Is this Camp Linden?" After being assured that this is indeed Camp Linden, the individual will explain

Last summer there were two visitors. One I could only speak with briefly as I was taking the children for their wading experience in the Brandywine. The other, Ronn Gerra and his wife Connie from Darlington, Pennsylvania, were gracious enough to jot down their names and address.



I think that all of us, at one time or other, have had this intense desire to return to some treasured site of our earlier life that had been filled with so much adventure and meaning. I know I have, and I know my grandfather had, because he wrote of it tenderly in his memoir. Of course if we return, much, or most, of what we remember, has now changed or no longer exists, and we have to be prepared for that. But it seems that it does not matter that past memory does not exactly match up with present reality. It is enough that we can "just walk around" and relive the deeply felt moments and

they had lived at camp for a week or two for x-number of summers, generally as a camper, many years ago and were compelled to visit again the site that had given them so many fond memories. A few happened to be in the neighborhood, but most had driven some distance and gone through some significant difficulty to even find the camp.

During the past five years I have had the privilege to meet and talk with these individuals and sometimes guide them around the now changed camp facilities and environment. If I am too intrusive they explain, "I just want to walk around and see it again for myself." And I leave them to themselves.

events of the past.

I like to think that this past summer children who attended camp also created these special memories as they waded in the Brandywine, or planted in the garden, or walked in the woods, or perhaps just as they sat quietly in the shade of a tree on a hot summer day. And that at some time in the distant future, one or two of their number will also come up the camp road asking, "Is this Camp Linden?"

--- Leonard Weeks