



# Camp Linden

A Program of the Philadelphia Ethical Society

## Summer Views

June 2025

### Message from Dr. Dubb

The primary mission of Camp Linden is to introduce inner-city children to the wonders of nature. Our environmental education program features a series of fun learning activities culminating with a celebration of the Earth. But you do not have to be a child to share in the Camp Linden Experience.

The Philadelphia Ethical Society is inviting sibling Ethical Societies to participate in our annual picnic and optional weekend camping event. We are calling it a Jamboree because we have so many exciting activities planned. In addition to grilling, eating, socializing, swimming and folk singing, we are introducing several of the engaging learning activities from our environmental education curriculum. Overnight campers and other weekend guests will have the opportunity to wade in the Brandywine Creek and collect macroinvertebrates to view in a digital microscope. The picnic entertainment will include the Native American tale of the Lacrosse game between the birds and the land animals, and a Lacrosse-toss competition. The picnic will conclude with a parade and bouncing an inflated globe on a colored parachute as a celebration of the Earth.

Come to the jamboree if you can make it. Whether you join us in person or not, please make a financial contribution. Camp Linden depends upon your support.

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

### All-Society Weekend Camp Linden Jamboree

**July 11-13 (Rain-date July 18-20)**

**Picnic Sunday Noon to 5PM  
Optional Tent Camping and  
activities from 3 PM Friday**

**1521 Camp Linden Road, West Chester PA 19382**

*See p. 2 for schedule of events and reservation*



# Jamboree Schedule

## Friday

Tent campers arrive and set up after 3 PM  
Potluck dinner and campfire

## Saturday

Tent campers arrive and set up any time

### Daytime:

Pool open with lifeguard 1-5 PM  
Tour the property, garden and hiking trails,  
Collect macroinvertebrates in the Brandywine,  
Kayak or tube  
Visit local museums and/or public gardens,  
Relax and commune with nature.

### Evening:

Potluck dinner, campfire and Fireworks!!!

## Sunday

### Morning

Blueberry pancake breakfast  
Campers help set up lawn games and cook-out  
Car-pool from Rittenhouse Square 11AM

### Afternoon

Camp Linden Picnic noon to 5PM  
Pool open with lifeguard 1-5PM  
Grilling, eating and socializing  
lawn games, folk singing  
story telling, Lacrosse-toss  
Celebration of the Earth 4:30-5PM  
(parade and parachute exercises with globe)

### RSVP to [camplinden@phillyethics.org](mailto:camplinden@phillyethics.org)

Please tell us how many adults and children will be in your party, when you plan to arrive, whether you are tent camping, and if so, whether you need to borrow a tent and/or camping mattress(s).



Members of Brooklyn Ethical Society with immigrant families they brought to the event last year

# Looking Forward to Summer, 2025

We expect to serve approximately two hundred children from low income neighborhoods in Philadelphia and West Chester.

**Mondays** the Melton Center will be bringing children from West Chester. **Tuesdays** we will welcome campers from Dixon Learning Academy and Western Learning Center, child care centers operated by the Greater Philadelphia Community Alliance, a multi-service organization serving South Philadelphia. **Wednesdays** we will host youth from North 10 Philadelphia, a community focused foundation headquartered at the Lenfest Center, which works to improve the life outcomes in the Hunting Park and East Tioga sections of North Philadelphia. **Thursdays** campers will come from Community Concern 13, a day care program in North Philadelphia, which has been bringing children to Camp Linden since 2002. On **Fridays** the Cambodian Association of Greater Philadelphia, which provides services for the Cambodian, refugee and immigrant communities, will bring campers.

## Our New Partners

Although Chester County is the wealthiest county in Pennsylvania, it includes pockets of poverty. Both of our two new partners serve low income communities located within a few miles of Camp Linden. School-age children from the Melton Center will attend Camp Linden on Mondays for six weeks. The Coatesville Youth Initiative will provide three high school students to serve as counselors-in-training Monday through Thursday for eight weeks this summer.

The Charles A. Melton Arts and Education Center (originally known as The West Chester Community Center) was founded in 1918 to address the needs of citizens who were excluded from mainstream social events and organizations on the basis of their economic status, gender, and/or race. Its alumni include artists Horace Pippen and Selma Burke, and civil rights icon Bayard Rustin. In 2004 the Center was renamed to honor Charles A. Melton, its executive director from 1966 to 1980. Mr. Melton was a teacher, coach, and counselor who organized protests against discrimination, and served as a spokesman for the African American community on critical issues involving race relations.

New Directions is a program at the Melton Center which provides after-school tutoring, mentoring, and enrichment for K-8 students (*cont. on page 5*)



# The Camp Linden Program

Our community partners bring the same group of children to Camp Linden on the same day each week. Campers are separated into two groups. One group goes to the pool and the other goes to environmental education in the morning, and they switch after lunch.

## Environmental Education Curriculum Week 1: Gardening and Nature Walk

Campers learn about the parts of a plant and their functions, photosynthesis, what plants need to grow, and why plants are important to us. They examine a leaf with a digital microscope. Campers harvest, taste and plant vegetables and flowers. They go for a nature walk, feed goats and observe chickens.



## Week 2: Pollination and Bugs

Campers dress up as insects. After a brief lesson covering plant propagation, and insects, campers imitate pollinators by reaching into a model flower to retrieve candy representing nectar. They catch bugs and toads and examine their catch before releasing them back to nature.



## Week 3: Earth and Energy

This lesson focuses on decomposers and the “cycle of life” (decomposed plants and animals return nutrients to the soil to support new life). Campers dig for worms to add to our worm farm. This lesson also covers climate change and alternative sources of energy. Campers examine fossils and coal and observe how sunlight energizes a solar-powered flying pig.



## Week 4: Water Quality and Watersheds

Campers view a model of the Camp Linden portion of the Brandywine Creek watershed and see how pollutants run into the Brandywine. They wade in the Brandywine and collect macroinvertebrates, fish, mollusks and plants in its waters and along its banks to view in a digital microscope.





### **Week 5: Native American Culture**

Campers learn about the Lenape who inhabited this area before Europeans arrived, and the place of corn in Native American culture. They compare our “Three Sisters” garden bed, planted in corn, beans and squash in the Native American manner with the modern method of monoculture, which relies upon chemicals. Campers learn about Native American traditions relating to their sacred game of Lacrosse, and compete in a Lacrosse-toss.



### **Week 6: Closing Celebration**

Campers help prepare for our closing celebration by harvesting in the garden, making kale chips, and observing popcorn popping. After lunch campers celebrate Planet Earth by donning animal hats or insect wings and following a leader carrying an inflatable globe in a parade to the field, where they bounce the globe on a colored parachute and play Native American games. They enjoy a feast featuring produce from the garden and other healthy treats.



### **Swimming**

We provide group swimming instruction consisting of goals and games. Campers receive colored wrist bands to document and reward their accomplishment of each goal in a series which leads up to performing a crawl stroke with alternate breathing. A free swim follows the lesson.



### **Values Education**

Each day includes a discussion of Camp Linden Values, which are:

- (1) Value Yourself - Keep yourself safe and open to learning.
- (2) Value Other People, especially your fellow campers - keep them safe and help them learn.
- (3) Value Planet Earth and All Living Things, especially the creatures you encounter at Camp Linden - learn from them and leave things as you found them.

### **Camp Linden Resources**

We provide our partners with a list of videos and other resources which are available for free on the internet to prepare their campers for each weekly lesson. Links to the resources associated with each weekly lesson are found at [phillyethics.org/camp-linden/camp-linden-curriculum](http://phillyethics.org/camp-linden/camp-linden-curriculum).



(Our New Partners continued from page 2) from low-income backgrounds in West Chester. It also operates a nine week summer camp which will bring children to Camp Linden for six weeks this summer.



Coatesville is a once thriving industrial center that fell on hard times with the decline of its major employer, Lukens Steel. Its population is 41.1% Afro-American, 27.8% Hispanic; and 25.1% White. The poverty rate is 24.33%. The Coatesville Youth Initiative (CYI) is a non-profit organization which provides a variety of youth focused programs to train leaders, enhance family relationships, encourage prevention education, and build community collaboration. The CYS ServiceCorps was created to provide a positive summer activity for Coatesville teens while also giving participants a dynamic experience in which they learn the importance of community engagement, develop leadership capabilities, grow as young adults, and gain work experience. CYS pays the students and transports them to and from the place of employment Monday through Thursday for eight weeks starting June 23. On Fridays CYS students participate in job readiness training.



## Our New Neighbors

Hello members of the Philadelphia Ethical Society! We are the Wiggins family, Brad, Courtney, Elle (7) and Teddy (5). We recently purchased the property next to Camp Linden, Tarad Hill farm. Bunny and Linda Meister continue to live on the property and we live right up the road. Brad grew up on his parent's Christmas tree farm and we have always dreamed of owning a similar property where we can continue the family tradition of growing Christmas trees as well as have space for our kids to explore the outdoors. We have been enjoying our time at the farm fishing, hiking, sledding, looking for animals (our son especially loves watching the deer), visiting the horses and tending our Christmas trees. We are lucky to have met many wonderful neighbors and have enjoyed attending events in the community such as the Brandywine Hills Point-to-Point at the Brandywine Red Clay Alliance. We are passionate about the conservation of open space and restoring the land with native plants and trees. We look forward to being your neighbors as we have heard wonderful things about the Philadelphia Ethical Society and Camp Linden from Bunny. Thank you for the opportunity to introduce ourselves.



Newsletter layout and design by Ruth Dubb

# Staff Outreach

Throughout the year our Co-Program Directors Amy Johnston and Sharon Wallis participated in events which increased their knowledge base and teaching skills, shared their expertise with others in the field of environmental education, and promoted the reputation of Camp Linden.

In October, 2024, Amy and Sharon attended the Indigenous People's Festival at Penn's Landing, and Sharon attended the Thriving Communities Symposium, Co-sponsored by the Overbrook Environmental Education Center and the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University. In March, 2025, Amy and Sharon attended the Annual Conference of the Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Educators.

Amy made a presentation on the Camp Linden environmental education curriculum to staff of the Brandywine Red Clay Environmental Education Center on March 17, 2025. She completed Tree Tenders Training through Philadelphia Horticultural Society in partnership with Penn State Extension in May 2025.

On May 5, 2025 Amy and Sharon addressed the Sunday Platform of the New York Society for Ethical Society about Camp Linden - its history, curriculum, and impact upon the children we serve. NYSEC made a generous contribution to Camp Linden. We expect to see a number of their members at the Camp Linden Picnic and Jamboree this summer.



# Support for Camp Linden

The Philadelphia Ethical Society Board of Trustees has set aside half of the proceeds of the Natural Land Easement on the Camp Linden property in a fund whose income will be directed to support Camp Linden. For the second year in a row Camp

Linden has been awarded a five thousand dollar environmental education grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. We also continue to receive generous financial support from the Schreiber Family Fund through Ellen McBride. These resources cover about half of our operating budget of approximately forty-five thousand dollars. We depend upon the individual contributions we receive from Friends of Camp Linden to make up the balance. Your financial support makes it possible for us to offer this life-changing

experience to children from low income urban neighborhoods, without cost to the families or the organizations that bring them to Camp Linden.

Please make your check out to "Camp Linden" and mail it to the Philadelphia Ethical Society, 1906 S. Rittenhouse Square, Phila. PA 19103. For your convenience we include a response form and self-addressed envelope with the mailing of this newsletter. You can also contribute online by using the Donate button at [phillyethics.org/camp-linden/](http://phillyethics.org/camp-linden/) or selecting Camp Linden from the donation options on the Ethical Society home page, [phillyethics.org](http://phillyethics.org). Contributions are tax exempt under IRS Sec. 501(c)(3). Your contribution will be restricted to support Camp Linden, but for tax purposes it should be identified as being made to the Philadelphia Ethical Society.

## Contact Us

If you are interested in visiting or volunteering at Camp Linden, want to receive this and/or future newsletters by email, or have any other comments or suggestions, you can reach us by email at [camplinden@philliethics.org](mailto:camplinden@philliethics.org).