



## Hi Friends!

Katie McCarthy here, your new Alumni Relations Coordinator for North Woods, Pleasant Valley, and Sandy Island! For those of you that know me - I can't wait to see you again, for those of you that don't - I can't wait to meet you! Perhaps you know my dad, Michael McCarthy. Whatever mischief he's told you about me I swear it only might be true! I'm so excited to work with you all and make our alumni community even stronger than it is now. I foresee a lot of fun events and get-togethers in our future and a STELLAR 100th and 60th anniversary weekend.



I'll be reaching out at various points to survey you all on what you'd like to see happen in the alumni space at camp and how you'd like to participate, but please always feel free to reach out to me with any thoughts, feedback, or ideas you have! Email me at [kamccarthy@ymcaboston.org](mailto:kamccarthy@ymcaboston.org) or call/text me at (603) 916-0782. I'll also be connecting with folks on Instagram & Facebook.

Most importantly though, we're asking folks to please sign up for an Alumni Account if you haven't already via CampInTouch. CampInTouch is the program we

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Open House Tours + Time Together

April 27th

May 4th

12-4pm for Volunteers

3pm for Alumni Visitors

4:30pm Socializing & Dinner

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE + SIGN UP](#)

### Memorial Day Work Weekend

May 23rd 5pm - 25th 1pm

[SIGN UP HERE](#)

### Summer Alumni Visiting Days

July 5th 1-4pm

July 19th 1-4pm

August 2nd 1-4pm

We'll take a walk around camp, stop at the camp store for some fresh NW swag, and then hang out at the waterfront to enjoy the lake, take a swim, have a little snack, and chat with current directors Jago & Beth.

[SIGN UP HERE](#)

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

use to keep track of all the folks in our community. It allows us to manage a large number of contacts and sort information in ways that will help us communicate better. Even though we already have your email we're asking folks to create a proper account to help us in our attempts to improve our systems moving forward. So thank you in advance for helping me as I tackle the beast that is camp's alumni data!

The link to sign up is here and should only take you about 3 minutes.

**SIGN UP NOW!**

I'm also excited to announce that we'll be offering 3 camp visiting days for alumni this summer! I've been working with Beth and Jago, our PVC + NW Directors, to create an opportunity for us to spend some time in our favorite place during the months we miss it most, without interfering with camp program or adding on to the duties of our staff who already have their hands full making magic for the new generation of campers.

The visiting days will take place on Holdover Saturdays July 5th, July 19th, and August 2nd from 1-4pm. We'll take a walk around camp, stop at the camp store for some fresh NW/PVC swag, and then hang out at the waterfront to enjoy the lake, take a swim, have a little snack, and chat with Beth & Jago. I think it's going to be a really good time and I can't wait to see those of you who can attend there!

Camp has always been a big part of my life (I'm not exaggerating, I was bathed in a salad bowl in Junior House as a baby) and I feel incredibly lucky that even after my 7 summers as a camper and 9 as a staff member are over, I get to be an active part of the place I love best. I look forward to the ways we will get to grow as a community while I'm in this position, and for those of you coming to Open Houses and Memorial Day Work Weekend, I can't wait to see you!

Lots of Camp Love,

Katie ☺ PVC ♥ NW ♥ SI

## PASS THE TORCH OF CAMP



**Come one, come all, both old and new—  
Alums, it's time to rally your crew!**

If camp lit up your summers past,  
Help us make new magic that lasts.  
Tell your friends, "Come join the fun!"  
There's still space for Summer '25 sun!

Share your story, spread the word—  
Let your campfire voice be heard.  
Bring a buddy to Open House cheer—  
April 27th and May 4th are near!

Some camp sessions are tight, but don't dismay,  
Most still have room—sign up today!

**With pride and love, we make this stand—  
Camp magic thrives in hearts and hands.**

**SHARE CAMP'S WEBSITE**

**2025 DATES AND RATES**

Give back this year by supporting the  
next generation—alumni donations  
help more kids experience the magic  
of camp and ensure that our camp is  
here for generations to come!

**DONATE**

Want to see what we've been able  
to accomplish thanks to charitable  
donations to camp?

**CHECK OUT OUR 2024 IMPACT HERE**





## A Note from the Director

Matt Jago

Spring is in the air, and you know what that means, summer is just around the corner! As I get ready for my 22nd summer at North Woods Camp, the excitement is building, and I can't wait to be back in the place that feels like home.

Right now, we're deep in the hiring and planning stages, and I'm thrilled about the fantastic staff team we've put together. Of course, this time of year also means tracking down paperwork, nothing says "camp season is coming" quite like a flood of forms to sort through.

The best part of spring, though, is that camp starts to come alive again. Open Houses on April 27th and May 4th always feel like the official kick-off to the season, I get to meet new campers and families, catch up with returning ones, and start imagining all the fun ahead. Then before we know it, it's Memorial Day Work Weekend, one of my absolute favorite weekends of the year. There's something special about seeing camp come back to life with people pitching in, sharing stories, and getting camp ready for the summer ahead.

After that, we dive straight into staff training weeks, which I absolutely love. This is when we start shaping the summer, building the schedule, setting the tone, and making sure our team is ready for an incredible season. This year, we've got some fantastic guest speakers from the world of summer camping, and I can't wait to see how they inspire our staff. Every year, training is a reminder of why we do what we do—it's the moment everything starts to click into place.

With enrollment looking strong and an amazing group of campers and staff coming together, this summer is shaping up to be something special. We're putting an even bigger focus on our four core values, Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility, to continue building a culture where everyone feels a sense of belonging.

The countdown is on, see you soon!

Matt Jago  
North Woods Camp Director

## Photos from the New England ACA Conference



Sarah Huckman (PVC Program Director), Anna Kuklinski (PVC Assistant Director), Katie McCarthy, Beth Dales, Matt Jago, Caleb Gilbert (NW Program Director), Brad Stocklin (Alumni), Jack McGaraghan (NW Assistant Director)



Jack McGaraghan, Anna Kuklinski, Sarah Huckman, Caleb Gilbert, Matt Jago, Beth Dales, Katie McCarthy, Liz Young

**Please enjoy this collaged group picture from our mini alumni get together at Thirsty Moose Taphouse in Manchester – I looked bad and Beth wasn't in the photo so this was the OBVIOUS solution!**



Matt Jago, Will Robb, Jenny Tamkin, Brad Stocklin, Adam Robb, Katie McCarthy, Beth Dales, Sarah Huckman





## Maintenance Updates

From Scott Campbell

During the winter months, our facilities team has been hard at work, updating and restoring some of our buildings and structures that are overdue for some love. We've tackled the staff bathroom at the Big House in the Senior Section, expanding, refurbishing and updating the plumbing, walls and floors. We've updated the deck on the senior lodge, adding extra safety measures and structural integrity. We've restored several doors from the Junior and Trail sections, replacing damaged and worn pieces, along with new doors for almost every senior section cabin. We are also working on the long-term goal of replacing screens that have become rather holey after many years. As the seasons turn our winter work on Sandy has ended as we wait for the lake to open back up, and before we know it, it'll be time to open camp for Summer 2025. We are looking forward to warm weather and Memorial Day as this camp season approaches.



Big House Bathroom Renovations



New Door on Fir/Trail 3!



Don Dome, Sandy Island Staff

## Recognize anyone in this photo?



FROM THE ARCHIVES The Senior Lodge deck before



Renovated Senior Lodge deck in progress

## FROM THE ARCHIVES



Andre Benson, Zach Benson, Mike Otlin, Myles Lynch, Donny Thatcher, Andrew Taisylin, Kevin Serafino. 2005, Saco River.

**Have old camp photos?**  
**Send them to us!!**  
**Please, we'd love to see them and share them with others!**



## Walter Parkinson – North Woods Overnight Camp Alumni and Legend

According to Walter, his family started spending summers at the Hotel Wawbeek back in 1947. The Wawbeek is gone now except for one building still owned by the Fernald family. It was situated about 6 miles north of camp on the lake. His parents were looking for a summer camp for his brother Roger. They took a boat ride down the lake and loved North Woods, so his brother started in 1950 and Walter started in 1952.

Walter recalls coming to camp via train from Washington D.C. to South Station in Boston. Then, we took a Boston-Maine train from North Station to Sanbornville, NH. He recalls arriving a day earlier than the other campers and spending his first night in Woodside listening to the night sounds on the lake shore in the darkness of the night. One memory that stands out for him is of that first night at camp. “I walked down to the waterfront after dinner and watched the sunset. It is still something I like to do. No two sunsets are exactly the same.”

Walter came to camp in 1952 and was an eight-week camper, his last year as a camper was 1957. He shares that North Woods was a hiking camp for many years. “I liked hiking a great deal and became a good ‘campfire cook.’ That way, they would take me on the hikes — sign-ups for hikes were competitive! I also

**“Camp is one of the very few places that teaches teamwork and self reliance at the same time. North Woods still does that!”**

liked archery. I started as an archery counselor and still help with the PVC archery program. There are just too many memories for me to enumerate. Camp is a unique blend between the people and the site itself. I have always enjoyed that. I had to leave camp to do some summer school for a couple of years as I was a horrible student, particularly in algebra. I came back as a junior counselor in 1960 and was staff until 1963. Then, I started coming back to camp as a member of the Old Timers Group Bridge project in 1991. A bunch of us old goats built most of the footbridges on camp, as well as the framing for the bathroom pavilion at the upper ball field and a bunch



Photo of Walter age 11 or 12 from the 1978 yearbook (in Fred Morhart’s summary in the biographical section) sitting on the stoop of the old Trail Cabin 5

of other projects. The group disbanded a few years ago as a few members died off, and the rest of us got a little old. I am the youngest Old Timer at 81.”

“And why wouldn’t I stay involved? I have the time, and I love the camps.” Walter shared that he believes that along with teaching both self-reliance and teamwork at the same time, camp leaves you with respect and appreciation for others. Particularly with others who are different from you. All social strata, races, religions, and wealth are represented at camp, and you live, play, learn, and simply get along with everyone, and you learn respect.

In 2003, Walter started serving on the Overnight Camp Board of Advisors, and continued to do so for ten years. He started making regular visits to camp, volunteering with programming in 2005, and spent about three weeks at the camps at the beginning of each season. “Initially, I was the “dining hall supervisor,” but I have generally made a pest of myself in other areas of the camps as well. I say “camps” because I try to divide my time equally between NW and PVC. Camp is my main volunteer activity. It gives me something worthwhile to do and worthwhile to support. I’m retired now, and in general, you never take a haircut and post a letter on the same day. You try to spread things out! But not a day goes by where I don’t think of camp. Maybe I can’t remember the names all that well, but the faces are the same as the 1950’s.” Walter is also a longtime major donor of camp, and believes in the impact his gift has on our campers. “If my donations have made it possible for a few kids to have a summer at camp, then it is worth it. That’s about it.”

## Honoring Carole Todaro: A Legacy of Camp Spirit and Generosity

It is with deep sadness that we share the passing of Carole Todaro, a beloved member of our camp community whose spirit and dedication left an indelible mark on generations of campers and staff. Carole's life was one of compassion, creativity, and service—qualities she brought with her each summer she spent at camp.



Carole wasn't just part of camp; she was camp. Always offering a warm smile, Carole embodied the very heart of our camp values and her legacy lives on in the countless lives she touched and the traditions she helped shape. With husband Nate, she ran the summer office operations for over 30 years. Those were memorable summers for the entire family. Carole also followed her passion in violin and founded and directed an annual week-long summer Suzuki music camp at the Sandy Island Family Camp for over 35 years.

Daughter Linda Todaro shared, "Mom was definitely a fixture at North Woods - overseeing the operations of the office, doling out money to counselors for camp trips, tracking camper expenditures in the store, producing programs and brochures on an old mimeograph machine (her fingers were often stained blue from the ink) and handling all the camp accounting/banking for the folks back at the Boston Y. She always wore a lanyard around her neck with the key to the closet where the money was stored. Nothing got past her! At Sandy Island, she eventually had the benefit of more sophisticated equipment like a computer and a Xerox machine. She would balance her days in the office with attending to the needs of 5 active kids. I don't know how she did it all while keeping her cool and sense of humor."

In the days following her passing, as the Todaro family lovingly sorted through Carole's belongings,

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 7**



## From our Executive Director

Kate Lemay

Hello North Woods Alumni!

We are thrilled to introduce our newest staff member, Katie McCarthy, our new Alumni Relations Coordinator! You may recognize the last name, and you'd be right—Katie is the daughter of our longest-tenured staff member, Michael McCarthy. We are excited to have Katie's talent and love for camp and community here to strengthen our connection with all of you!

As we just celebrated Sandy Island's 125th summer and are gearing up for North Woods' 100th and Pleasant Valley's 60th seasons (Save the Date! Labor Day Weekend 2028), we desire to have even more clarity and focus on our alumni. The camp alumni are such an important part of our community, and with all our directors' responsibilities, we needed extra support to make this critical community even stronger. Please let us know what you want to know, see, or connect with as alumni; we are ready and listening!

As the directors have mentioned in their messages to you, spring is an exciting time here at camp! We can't wait for the staff and campers to arrive... we wait all year for SUMMER! As you know, the magic of camp is always here, but it's most alive when every bed is full, dining halls are alive with songs and chants, and trails and activity areas are bustling with activity.

Keep an eye out for upcoming events. Come visit camp this summer on one of the special alumni visiting days we're hosting, give us a call, or send us a note. We can't wait to hear all about what camp means to you and what you have gone on to do in this world with the skills and friends you created here!

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank our board members, especially Allen Veldwisch and Sara Clarkson, who have filled much of this role for the camp for many years. We are so excited to see where Katie's vision takes us and are grateful for our volunteers for getting us this far.

We hope to see you at camp soon!



Steve Mabee and Linda Todaro

they discovered cherished pieces of camp history tucked away in her home. Among the treasures was a handcrafted table made by Nate during their time at camp. The family knew immediately where it belonged and generously donated it back to camp, where it now sits as a beautiful reminder of Carole's and Nate's connection to our community and the creativity they both so deeply encouraged.

They also uncovered a collection of vintage camp dishware that likely served many laughter-filled meals under the pines. These too have been gifted back to camp, where they will be displayed with pride at the Todaro Center, carrying forward stories of summer's past.



We are incredibly grateful to the Todaro family for these meaningful gifts as well as the charitable support gifted in her memory. Her legacy will continue to inspire us. Carole Todaro may no longer walk our campgrounds, but her spirit will forever echo in the rustling leaves, the music played and songs sung around the fire, and lives forever changed by her love.

[Carole T. Todaro Obituary](#)

## JOYS

For those of you who don't know what joys are – it's something we do at staff meetings. We write down things we're grateful people did and ways we appreciate them or point out good things they did that week on scrap paper and then share them. There are also general ones that appreciate groups of people or events that have happened. I think it would be really neat if we shared alumni joys via this quarterly newsletter!

Submit appreciation for camp people and events, call out your camp friend's successes, and celebrate life's wins via this form:

[SUBMIT JOYS HERE](#)

## Join the 100th + 60th Anniversary Reunion Committee!

We want to make this our best reunion yet, and we need your help to do it!

Email [kamccarthy@ymcaboston.org](mailto:kamccarthy@ymcaboston.org) if you're interested!

**Labor Day Weekend 2028**

## Send us your news!

Let us know what you're up to, tell us about exciting life updates, send us photos of you and your camp friends! We want to celebrate the big (or small!) news of our fellow alumni – marriages, babies, new jobs, big birthdays and celebrations, camp connections, big life events etc. Share your updates with [this form](#) and we'll share them in our next issue!

