



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 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

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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](#)

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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,

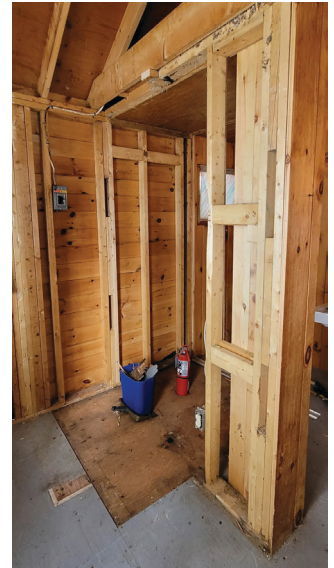
Katie ☺ PVC ♥ NW ♥ SI



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 Dockside, expanding, refurbishing and updating the plumbing, walls and floors. We've restored several doors from the Senior Village, replacing damaged and worn pieces to help ensure fewer drafts and critters. We also are beginning our deck expansion



Dockside Bathroom Renovations

of Arts and Crafts, demo begins early April and have completed our rewiring of Shang-Ri-La, with new interior and exterior lights, upgrades to our outlets and motion sensors for less waste of electricity. 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.



Updated electrical in Shang-Ri-La



Beginning stages of Arts + Crafts porch expansion!



A Note from the Director

Beth Dales

Dear Pleasant Valley Community,

I hope this newsletter finds you well and filled with fond memories of your time at camp. Pleasant Valley is built on incredible friendships, meaningful traditions, and the shared experiences that bring us all together. As we continue to reflect on what makes camp so special, I'm excited to connect with you and share some updates!

This summer will mark my 10th summer at Pleasant Valley—a milestone that still amazes me. What started as a one-summer experience has grown into a full-time career, shaping my life in ways I never imagined. Through camp, I found a passion for working with campers and staff, built lifelong friendships, and even met my husband, Jago, the Director of North Woods. In true camp fashion, he proposed in front of the entire Pleasant Valley dining hall during the North Woods tradition of singing *Ants Go Marching In*—a moment I will never forget! We tied the knot in September of 2022, and North Woods and Pleasant Valley will always be at the heart of our story. If you haven't seen the proposal video, check it out on our Instagram page: [Watch here!](#)

Last summer, we celebrated the grand opening of the Mac Hall dining hall expansion! The addition of 1/3 more space has made an incredible difference in our community. After spending 2021-2023 divided into two, sometimes three, separate dining locations, we deeply felt the loss of being together. We quickly realized that the magic of camp is built on the foundation of three meals together each day—not only for shared announcements but for the irreplaceable joy of camp songs. Whenever I talk to alumni, one of the first things they mention is their love for the singing we do at PVC. It was an immediate morale boost to be all together, singing once again. If you'd like to bring a little bit of that magic home, check out the PVC Songbook linked here: [Start singing at home!](#)

In addition to the dining hall expansion, we also built an incredible 800-square-foot porch! This has been

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Mac Hall pre-expansion



During construction



The new expanded Mac Hall!



Happy to all be together again!

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR ... CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

such a valuable addition, giving us the ability to use the space in so many ways. It serves as a spot for nurse meds, program sign-ups, and cabin activities, and it also provides a quiet space for campers who need a little extra room during meals. The flexibility of this space has made a huge impact, and we're excited to continue finding new ways to make the most of it.

Camper Enrollment Is Open! We are still enrolling campers for both North Woods and Pleasant Valley. If you know someone who would love camp as much as you do, please feel free to share [this info](#) with them!

Thank you for being part of the Pleasant Valley family. We can't wait to share more exciting updates, events, and opportunities to reconnect in the coming months. Stay tuned, and as always, keep the campfire burning!

With camp spirit,

Beth

FROM THE ARCHIVES



Pleasant Valley Waterfront 2004,
Film developed at the Wolfeboro Rite Aid

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

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



From our Executive Director

Kate Lemay

Hello Pleasant Valley 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!

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](#)

Helen Jenkins: Swimming the Channel, Defying the Odds

Pleasant Valley Camp Board Member Helen Jenkins is preparing to do something most of us would never dream of: swim 21 miles across the English Channel—the busiest shipping lane in the world.



Between July 19th and 23rd, during a Neap tide, Helen will take on this iconic and grueling open-water challenge. The swim, from England to France, is expected to take approximately 15.5 hours of non-stop swimming. That's right—no stopping, not even during meals. Helen will be fed from an accompanying boat, where her dedicated three-person crew will support her every stroke of the way. Why is this such a feat? The English Channel is as unpredictable as it is historic. With strong tides, cold waters, and constant maritime traffic, only 60% of swimmers successfully complete the crossing. The average age of swimmers is 36. Helen is 53—and she's not just participating, she's making a statement.

"This isn't just a swim," says Helen. "It's about showing what's possible when you commit to something big, train hard, and believe in yourself. I just have to keep swimming until my toes hit the sand!"



Helen's mission is a testament to resilience, courage, and determination—qualities we strive to inspire in every camper and community member. In doing so, she's also raising funds for several meaningful

charities—including Pleasant Valley Camp—to help ensure more young people can experience the life-changing power of camp. We'll be cheering her on every stroke of the way this July. Stay tuned for updates as Helen takes on the Channel—and shows us all what it means to go the distance.

Follow + support Helen's journey on Facebook and Instagram @hj.channel25

Jess Bickford: Named Next Superintendent

Jess Bickford, current Equestrian Consultant and previous Pleasant Valley Director (2014-2016), has recently been named the Pembroke and Deerfield School District's next superintendent! Widely appreciated



Jess's first year was 2007 as Horseback Director

as the director who made staff meetings memorable



Jess getting her hair dyed by Maia Raynor and Julia Auch at a 2014 staff meeting

via hair dye and learning how to whip + nae nae, her success is no surprise to those who know her. Jess's work ethic, approachable demeanor, and ability to lead with just the right balance of fun and structure make Jess a standout

leader. We're so excited for all you'll do in this role Jess, snaps to you and your success!

[READ MORE](#)

SNAPS

For those of you who don't know what snaps 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 snaps 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 SNAPS 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 if you're interested!

Labor Day Weekend 2028



Cutie sunset friendship photo for ya because I had an awkward space to fill !



An ode to the original mailbox

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!

