

A BULKHEAD FOR BULK WORKERS!

New Cabin on Honk Hill Will Be Permanent LTIP Quarters

By Miles Frank, Director of Operations

Since the foundation of Pine Island's illustrious Leadership Training Internship Program, its staff of rising high-school seniors, known as LTIPs, have been semi-nomadic, living in a variety of places around the island: North Hampton, Tent 1, Kopa Kababa, even a short-lived tent platform on the western slope of Honk Hill. But this unfortunate circumstance has, at long last, been rectified. Next summer, more than two decades after the first LTIPs donned their perch gloves, these essential workers will finally have comfortable, dedicated quarters all to themselves.

And it is well deserved, for the LTIPs are responsible for all things mainte-

nance. Along with their numerous daily duties, they typically engage in a few key work projects, which involve a great deal of digging, hauling, and hammering. It is bulk work. By summer's end, the LTIPs move about the island with trained eyes, noticing what needs repair and what can be improved. Above all, they develop an appreciation for hard work.

It is therefore especially apt that they will stay in a building honoring Tim Nagler. A tremendous amount of maintenance and improvement work was completed at PIC under Tim's guidance, a direct result of his unbridled enthusiasm and sheer force of personality. From "Island Buildup," a years-long campaign



The volunteer crew during construction, September 2022. (Left to right) Peter, Jim, and Tom Nagler, Tom Yoder, Miles Frank, and Rip Swan.



The newly completed Bulkhead beside its larger counterpart, Honk Hall. Note the diamond-shaped window above the door.

of lugging stones ashore from the Great Pond lakebed, to the custom installation of skylights in many buildings, to countless other projects, Tim's monumental efforts left their mark on Pine Island.

Designed by builder and engineer Rip Swan, the new LTIP cabin, known as the Bulkhead, honors Tim's legacy by elegantly balancing his aesthetic preferences within the confines of limited island space. Standing proudly beside Honk Hall, the Bulkhead has several design features that mirror its older, grander neighbor, the most notable of which is a small diamond-shaped window above

the front doorway. The diamond window in Honk Hall was one of Tim's favorite features, and one that he made sure was included in the design when Honk was rebuilt after the fire of 1995. Seven total windows, including three large ones on the western wall, provide the Bulkhead with ample natural light, cool breezes, and, of course, spectacular views of Oak Island and Great Pond's beautiful sunsets. In its prime spot at Pine Island's highest point, the Bulkhead may soon come to symbolize the apex of island living.

The first stage of construction began in early May of 2022, when Rip and Miles

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ANOTHER GREAT SUMMER – ALMOST BACK TO NORMAL

By Sumner Ford, Director

2022 marked our second summer operating in the Covid era. As the mysterious illness that greeted us in March and shut down Pine Island in 2020 has morphed and become something of a feature of everyday life, society's approach toward the pandemic has shifted.

The 2022 Pine Island season mirrored many of these societal changes. While planning for the 2022 season, we looked closely at what had been most effective at preventing Covid infections in 2021, what had affected the Pine Island experience the most, and what Covid restrictions could be whittled down to provide Pine Islanders with a great experience while keeping them safe.

We settled on a summer as close to normal as possible. The only changes

were regular testing, masks in vans, and the flexibility to move everything outside and shift people into quarantine and isolation spaces.

As week one passed into the rearview mirror, we thought that Pine Island had again avoided Covid infections. But during our last round of surveillance testing, we got some unwelcome news—four campers tested positive. While our non-Covid summer was no longer a reality, we stuck to our core goal: to deliver a meaningful, safe summer experience.

Assistant Directors Corinne Alsop, Natalie Burr, and Will Pomerantz immediately stepped up, caring for the infected campers, encouraging best practices, and ensuring that departing trips had numerous contingency plans

for potential infections. Meanwhile, our Summer Manager Lindsay Clarke dove into the tedious task of creating close contact testing plans and communicating with families at home.

Finally, our Medic Annie-Grace Weeden (in her first year on the job!) performed the tests, managed care for the folks with Covid, and performed numerous other tasks to keep the community safe.

These efforts were remarkably successful. Ultimately, only five more people contracted Covid, and a week and a half later, the island was Covid-free once again. The last three weeks of the summer were a wonderful return to near-normality, as everyone—campers especially—enjoyed themselves in a

community of people who cared for each other without having to worry about an invisible intruder spoiling it all.

A successful season at Pine Island always requires an incredible effort from so many people, and for the past few summers, the weight carried by Pine Island staff and volunteers was greater than ever.

As Pine Island's operations have become increasingly complex, our reliance on our alumni has grown. You provided advice for campers and staff, and our Covid plan would not have been possible without your financial support. Thank you so much to every parent, camper, staff member, alum, and volunteer who made the 2022 season so wonderful—we would not have succeeded without you.

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Frank ventured out to the island on an unseasonably sweltering day to fell trees and dig post fittings, necessarily punctuated by frequent dips in the still-frigid lake. Stones were hauled, sono-tubes were set, and the post footings were poured later that week. Although they never displayed it, the 2022 LTIPs were undeniably (and understandably) a bit envious, gazing across the lawn from their canvas tent at the footprint of the new cabin-to-be. At the end of the summer, lumber was delivered and ferried across the lake. Rough-sawn and locally milled from high-quality white pine, this lumber contributes to the cabin's distinctly rustic feel. Many thanks are due to volunteer extraordinaire John Alsop, who is

very well connected in these matters and organized this key element of the build.

Principal construction took place in early September, when three of Tim's five sons, Tom, Peter and Jim, joined Miles to frame and raise the building under Rip's guidance, with Katie Swan and Corinne O'Connor providing delicious meals throughout the weekend. The crew was then joined by longtime Pine Islander and Nagler family friend Tom Yoder to help sheath the structure in fragrant cedar shingles. And just like that, Pine Island had a new cabin! A bit more work was still required: Ben Swan and John Alsop joined shortly thereafter to help install the windows, while Miles shingled the roof. Then came the slow task

of trimming, painting, and siding, accomplished over the course of the fall by Miles and fall crew all-star Natalie Burr.

In all, the Bulkhead is a fine new cabin: composed of quality materials, constructed with care, and built with purpose. Although brand new, it fits seamlessly into the island's skyline, along with the newly re-sited Honk Hall and Magoon. The three buildings will weather together. Now draped in a layer of snow, the Bulkhead rests buttoned up with the island's other buildings, ready to welcome its first LTIP occupants next summer.



The interior of the Bulkhead, waiting to receive its first occupants next summer.

VIEW FROM THE DOCTOR'S CABIN PORCH

By Sumner Ford

I find myself missing boredom. It used to be a common part of my life and often seems like a feature of childhood that necessarily recedes as gray hairs appear. Spending my summers at Pine Island has taught me otherwise. When we consider the camp experience and its history, boredom is not one of the values touted by Clarence Colby, Dr. Swan, Jun Swan, Monte Ball, or Ben and Emily Swan. Only recently has it come to be seen as a benefit of PIC.

Pine Island hasn't changed. For my younger self, it was a place to escape the boredom of a house in the boonies with elderly neighbors, no internet, and a rabbit-ear antenna that occasionally picked up the Saturday morning cartoons. As anyone over 20 knows full well, our world has changed a bit since then. So much is gained with each technological improvement; the generalized drive to consume information during every waking moment seems to be quickly approaching 100% efficiency. While Pine Island changes little from year to year, our world turns on a dime every month.

Not a moment of our lives is wasted, or at least it feels that way. Podcasts on crime, history, news, and sports replace the silence or static of rural car rides—and some people listen at double speed to fit in more! The agitation of waiting in line melts away as those in the queue disappear into the pocket portal that is their smartphone.

When I return home from camp these days, I find that my readjustment time has doubled. The transition used to be easier. At camp, I'm attuned to the quiet moments when there's nothing to do but let my mind wander.

Those "dull" moments, in which the only activities are daydreaming and observing, are vital to my happiness at Pine Island, largely because the boredom only lasts for a minute before my mind turns inwards. Without the temptation of a phone, the transition from boredom to contemplation is seamless. Out in the

world, it fascinates me to watch people join a line and immediately pull out their phones. What would Pine Island's activity line be like with phones? Less chaotic, perhaps, but gone too would be the organic interaction, the chance to stare off into space, the time to examine and analyze thoughts.

In the weeks following camp, I'm acutely aware of the benefits of letting person-to-person interaction replace screen time. Still, the temptation to pick up my phone during a dull moment often overcomes this sort of macro-level understanding. It's an ongoing project, building structures into my life that force me to leave the phone at home, or simply in my pocket.

Pine Island doesn't teach this; we don't have a "limiting technology" activity, and that's probably for the best. But in its own subtle way, Pine Island still teaches us all a powerful lesson. Every year I watch campers, previously terrified of a summer without the latest and greatest game, realize the benefit of boredom, the gift of space, and the joy of relying on others.

Back home this fall, lost in thought on a hike, I wondered how many anxieties were addressed and great ideas cultivated while kayaking across Great Pond, sitting in a hammock, or waiting in line to enter the dining hall. How many of those moments would have been lost had a phone, computer, or Bluetooth speaker been available nearby?

Our understanding of boredom is changing as people listen to music while they hike, check scores while in line, and facetime rather than write. As a society, we've dismissed so many previously valued activities as inefficient. At Pine Island, we believe giving our minds the space to breathe and contemplate is a perfectly efficient approach, and that boredom—while only a small part of the PIC experience—is most definitely beneficial.

A QUICK, SUPERSONIC VISIT

By Ben Swan



Rob Leahy lets Rip Swan check out his F-18 Superhornet.

I was in the garage when I heard the extra-loud roar of a jet landing at the former Brunswick Naval Air Station. My phone pinged and the text from Emily, who was in the house, read, "There's Robbie!" Pine Island camper, LTIP, and counselor Rob Leahy had just landed his F-18 Superhornet fighter jet after the three-minute flight from Pine Island to Brunswick (an hour-long trip by car), and we were expecting him. Rob had emailed me a couple of weeks before to say he and a fellow pilot would be dropping in to the former BNAS for a couple of nights and could we get together. Their commanding officer told them they needed some flying time and that they could pick a place to go. Rob's buddy spent part of his childhood in Brunswick when his father was stationed at BNAS for several years, and much of his family still live in the area. Rob was very eager to spend a bit of time in Maine and to "visit" PIC, so their destination was Brunswick.

They definitely got some flight time since they started from their base in the California desert, stopping once on the way to refuel. Rob's fighter wing is attached to the aircraft carrier *George H.W. Bush*, on which he is deployed for six months at a time. Rob invited Emily and me and Rip Swan to come to the base to check out the plane. On a drizzly, raw day we walked out on the tarmac and viewed the impressive, enor-

mous, lethal aircraft. The four of us then headed to our house for lunch and a long visit on a rainy March afternoon in front of the fire in our library. It was a lot of fun to hear about how Rob ended up as a fighter pilot (along with PIC buddy Jason Schachner – see 2021 *Needle*, p.12) and what the life of a naval pilot is like. While that is one sweet ride, Rob's life is not a glamorous one and of course is dangerous even if combat is not in the cards. The pay is not great, and he lives either a fairly solitary life out in the desert or a very regimented life on board the carrier, but Rob recently signed on for two more years in the cockpit. He loves to fly and always has.

The last time Rob flew over Pine Island was on a day off as a 17-year-old LTIP in a rented single-engine plane. This time he was moving a bit faster, but circled around and took some great pictures of the island waiting out the winter in the ice. Rob reported that the lone snowmobiler near the island was "a bit surprised" (Rob could see his face) when the F-18 roared past. When I asked him whether he had to file a flight plan to avoid close encounters with other small aircraft in the area, he smiled and simply said, "We have really good radar..." Rob is now on board the *Bush* somewhere in the vicinity of the Mediterranean. Jason is stationed in Japan. Akka Lakka to PIC's hardworking pilots!

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS REPORT

By Miles Frank

2022 LTIP Summer

In the early days of Staff Week, when counselors prepare the island for the campers' arrival, Ned Bishop habitually reminds us: "Once an LTIP, always an LTIP." This usually comes just before he assigns a particularly difficult or repellent task that former LTIPs are well equipped to handle. In accordance with Ned's affectionate (if mildly prejudicial) treatment, there is a definite sense of pride one feels in having that distinction: once an LTIP, always an LTIP, indeed. Those selected to participate in the Leadership Training Internship Program are, in essence, responsible for the smooth operation of the island. There is always a great deal of work involved; completing the program is, in itself, an accomplishment. This summer was no exception. Balancing their time between maintenance, kitchen duties, and work projects, this summer's LTIPs Eliza Cabot, Connor Carrington-House, Will Hartley, Madron Joyce, and Ian Wofford, sure did get a lot done. This past summer included significant changes to the program, namely the incorporation of the Kitchen Crew, a marked departure from previous iterations of the program. Nonetheless, the LTIPs accomplished a great deal. Eliza in particular, being Pine Island's first female LTIP, tore through the canvas ceiling, as it were, setting a very high bar for all future candidates. Noted here are just a few of the more significant projects that the LTIPs completed this summer:

Erosion Control - PIC's erosion reduction projects don't just help to preserve our own small island; they are also part of a lake-wide and region-wide effort to maintain the water quality of Great Pond. With inadequate erosion control measures, heavy rainfall pulls sediment into the lake, and with it, nitrogen (both naturally occurring and human-introduced). Elevated levels of nitrogen in the lake can lead to problems like algae blooms and dangerous proliferations of microorganisms. This spontaneous growth rapidly depletes the water's oxygen supply, choking out other lake life. This results in a disrupted and damaged ecosystem, recovery from which can be a long and arduous process. With guidance from Belgrade Lakes' 7-Lake Alliance, Pine Island has implemented key erosion control practices. This summer, the LTIPs continued a long-running project to buttress the island's western shore with cedar log cribbing and bulwark supports. Beginning early in the season, this job proved to be a good primer project. In many ways a quintessential task, it combines three archetypal LTIP skills: hauling logs, swinging a sledgehammer, and digging through duff. Each year, more logs are laid, old logs are replaced, and a new class of LTIPs contribute to Operation Island Buildup.

The Kababa Pavilion - The ten-day forecast for Norridgewock, Maine is never more attentively observed (by anyone) than in the days preceding the King's Game. Weather shapes the very



LTIPs at work on the Kababa Pavilion.

nature of the game; spirit, energy, and even strategy are affected by Maine's variable August climate. When rain falls at York's Crossing during play, defenders are at a disadvantage: visibility is limited, communication is hampered, and morale declines. Meanwhile, attackers running the muddy trails along the town line find their movements slowed, while slippery conditions increase the risk of a dreaded misstep into the road. Even back in the

campground, when campers and counselors set their army allegiances aside and commune as Pine Islanders, poor weather remains the enemy of all. (All who participated will always remember the Game of 2008, played in three straight days of torrential rain.) Shelter can be found under tarps and tents, bonfires keep everyone warm, and a bowl of steaming chili with cornbread is deeply comforting. Rainy conditions out at Nor-

ridgewock bring the community together in a way that few other things can.

One key improvement was still needed, however. Introduce the Kababa Pavilion, a timber-framed structure built entirely from on-site materials. The LTIPs felled, peeled, and framed several white pine trees under the careful supervision of Miles and PIC volunteer extraordinaire John Alsop. The crew joined John for the project over several days in mid-July and would generally return to camp covered in sap, very deserving of a restful sleep. It was bulk work, but the project went very smoothly. John even had his tractor trucked out to help with the transportation and raising of the logs. The structure is heavily inspired by John's mill shed up in Cornville, ME. With two gable ends supported by five sturdy purlins, it's very much in the style of Kababa: funky log architecture. It looks great and serves a critical purpose: keeping the Kitchen staff dry (or shaded from the summer sun) while preparing and serving meals during the King's Game. Upon completion, many excitedly remarked, "Why didn't we do this earlier?!" In a move that would have been unthinkable in any other year, we found ourselves hoping for at least a bit of rain during the Game, and the King was happy to oblige.

New Park at Needlepoint - "Needlepoint," the northern tip of Pine Island, is where most of the camp's female staff live. This prime location offers an escape from the hubbub of island life, with views of Great Pond on three sides and a secluded dock extending out towards Oak Island. And now it has its own pocket park! Beyond the cabin, the furthest tip of the island was little more than dense brush and a few trees. Many years ago, a small enclosure there was home to a few ducks; some evidence of that remained, but the space was still mostly unused.

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The newly refurbished Magoon.

And so an exciting new landscaping project was undertaken this summer. Miles and the LTIPs cut a path through the brambles, pulling roots, laying cedar logs, and spreading mulch. At the end of the path, they cleared a circular seating area and enclosed it with stones. Here they built a small fire pit with cedar benches and as a finishing touch, installed a flagpole. Immediately upon completion, the pocket-park had a distinctly comfortable feel. It is already a beloved feature of the island, although one of some envy for those who don't live at Needlepoint!

Magoon's New Grooves - Magoon is a long three-room cabin at the northern end of the island, adjacent to the Boat-house. It is one of the Pine Island's oldest buildings, believed to have been built in the 1920s, and in the last century, it has had several different functions. Initially, Magoon served as the camp library, a role indicated today by some quirky architectural elements, such as outward-swinging windows. It was the camp infirmary for a time, and then housed the Swan family for many years, during which a small but prominent addition was built over the western shore. In the past few years, it has been occupied by summer office manager Lindsay Clarke and her two

children, Sagan and Silas. This summer, it was time to take a fresh look at the building. In the past several months, the building has been jacked and re-leveled, and received several renovations, including a new (metal) roof, fresh cedar siding shingles and trim, a new screen door, and a paint job. In short, Magoon has received a lot of well-deserved attention, and is ready to keep on keeping on for another century or two.

Docks! - This summer saw the introduction of two more brand new docks: one for Needlepoint, and one for the Aristocracy. Built with spruce frames and cedar deck boards, their crisp orange hue will eventually fade to the customary flat gray. But this year, at least, the docks spent their first summer contrasting beautifully with the blue of the lake.

Fall work

Moving the Kitchen - The food at Pine Island is hearty and homey, cooked from fresh ingredients delivered twice a week. Much of our produce even comes from a local farm! In the world of "supply chain issues," delivering quality food with such reliability is doubly impressive. Ultimately, this is due to the diligence and hard work of the kitchen staff. But it is

also enabled by the space they work in: the kitchen. Rebuilt in 1995, the kitchen boasts an eight-burner gas range, two full griddles, three XL refrigerators, two full chest freezers, four industrial sinks, and the beloved Hobart AM-14C dishwasher (a.k.a. "Hobie"), among other appliances. It's genuinely industrial, which prompted a moment of trepidation when it became clear that the time had come to redo the

kitchen floor. This fall, a dedicated volunteer crew managed to move all that hardware out of the kitchen and into the dining hall. They then tore up the vinyl-tiled floor in preparation for the laying of a new floor this spring. Many thanks to Justin, Byron, Andrea, Cole, Peter, Ruby, Hannah, and Natalie for their immense amount of help in kicking off this project!

JUST ANOTHER LTIP

By Eliza Cabot

The job of an LTIP, as anyone who knows will tell you, is work. Long, arduous, sometimes pouring-rain work, which tends to focus everyone on the task at hand. Any apprehension I might have had about being on the marquee as "The FIRST Female LTIP at Pine Island Camp for BOYS" disappeared once the work began. As was the case for all the LTIPs, much was expected of me, and I was taught what I did not know by our wrangler Miles Frank, who deftly guided us through the summer of 2022. Peeling

back the curtain on the labor required to keep camp running gives you a newfound appreciation for the notion that "someone has to do it..." because that someone is you. I learned a lot about my own ability to take on tasks, but there is, of course, nothing unusual about that; the LTIP tradition has forged many young people into more capable versions of themselves, and I was no exception. I was neither a fish out of water nor one of the boys; I was myself, in a community, getting things done like any other LTIP.

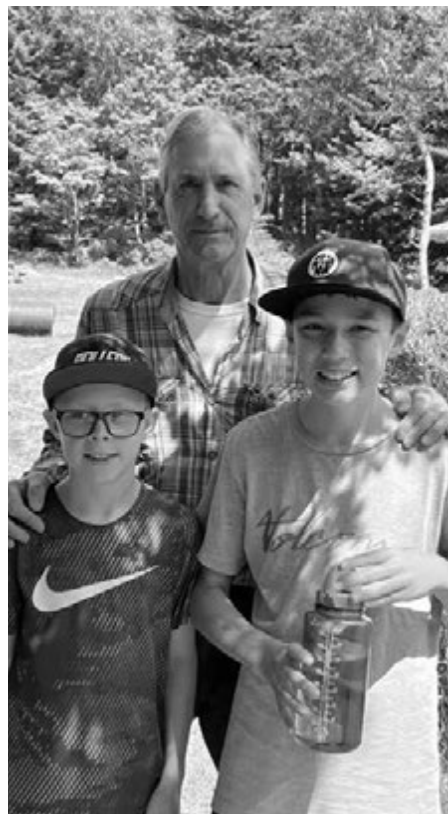
TIME AND TIDE

The Summer of "Grandcampers" at Whitehead Island

By Ben Swan

The adage "time and tide wait for no man" was much in evidence for me this summer—my third on Whitehead Island since Sumner graciously took over as PIC Director on Great Pond, where it is always high tide. I have found that I can plan around the tides, which are predictable years in advance and easy to look up on a tide chart (or app), but keeping up with the march of time is a different matter. That a good deal of it had passed without my noticing was made sharply clear when many of my former campers' children began showing up on PIC trips to Whitehead.

While it is a bit jarring to feel that one is being dragged behind time's winged chariot, it was always a great pleasure to meet what I call my "grandcampers" and to see how far (not far!) the apples have fallen from the trees. My grandcampers included Ben Ohly (son of Jack), Hudson Eklund (son of Jonathan), Miller Elston (son of Chris), Thomas Heenan (son of Peter), Tim and Ben Comer (son of Chris), Thomas and Victor Rioux (sons of Yann and Charles), Henry Nichols (son of Eliza Bartner), and Charles Hale (son of Charlie). Thomas Heenan won the time warp award, looking and sounding *exactly* like his father, Peter, did the last time I saw him, giv-



Ben Swan at Whitehead with grandcampers Thomas and Victor.

ing the impression that Peter had been frozen in time and had returned to PIC.

It is always wonderful to see the sons of alumni among the names on a camper list, and I hope to meet more of my grandcampers next summer at Whitehead!

A WARM WELCOME AND DEEPEST THANKS TO NEW AND RETIRING PIC BOARD MEMBERS

Pine Island is pleased to announce the recent addition of Kate Skogen to its Board of Directors. Kate has been a PIC parent since 2018; her children Arlo and Ford are current campers. Kate has worked as a professional photographer in the Bay Area for the past 20 years, and has focused much of her professional and free time to her local community, including donating substantial time and 25% of her gross sales to local nonprofits with a focus on social justice and education. In addition to sharing her perspectives and wisdom with the Board as a current PIC parent, Kate has joined the Board's Diversity and Inclusion Committee. We are very excited and fortunate to have Kate join the camp's leadership!

Over the past year, three long-serving Board members – Chris Brunet, Roe Baldwin and Henry Clauson – have stepped down from the Board after distinguished tenures. Among their many contributions to the camp, Chris ably headed up PIC's Finance Committee, Henry chaired the Governance Committee, and Roe focused his creative thinking on alumni engagement and



Kate Skogen

development. Henry continues to dedicate substantial time and energy to serving on the camp's Whitehead Light Station Committee. We cannot thank these three enough for their years of dedication and service to Pine Island Camp!



KCI DREAMS REALIZED

By Rich Boulet

In the summer of 1994, I found myself implausibly employed as the cook at PIC. Ben must've been desperate, because although nothing in my past experience suggested that I could cook for 120 campers, counselors and staff, I was hired after a very brief interview, setting my course for my next five summers.

Pine Island was perfect for those college years. My living quarters were on the mainland in the KCI (formerly the Kababa Classical Institute, now the Ex-Camp staff quarters). I had a dual-sport motorcycle for evening getaways and, to get to work, my own boat from our family's camp across the lake. It was the perfect setup.

I loved that job. I'd get up early, fire up the Johnson 6 and putt-putt across the lake to make the camp's breakfast. After lunch, with dinner well underway, I'd head back to the mainland, throw a leg over the bike, and spend the evening at the movies or a bookstore. On days off, I might ride some local trails and get muddy. Life was simple and I savored it.

I read a lot in those days and enjoyed learning about my Franco-American heritage. Those were the summers of F. Scott Fitzgerald, Carolyn Chute, J.D. Salinger, Helen Nearing, Robert M. Pirsig, and above all others, Jack Kerouac. I devoured *The Town and The City*, *Maggie Cassidy*, and *The Dharma Bums*, but like countless others, it was *On the Road* that gave me a serious case of low-budget wanderlust.

Jack and Neal's adventures had me under a spell. From then on, I was just as likely to spend my evenings with a Coleman Lantern, reading road maps or a Lonely Planet Canada omnibus that I practically wore out. I'd pick a destination for no particular reason other than its aesthetic appeal on the map, and trace likely routes to get there, research campgrounds and attractions, and daydream about being out in that landscape. I'd often plan on taking a big trip at the end of the summer. I yearned to ride my motorcycle from one side of the USA to the other, two wheels across the continent. Of course, lack of time, other financial priorities, and wholly unrealistic ambitions, usually conspired to scale back or fully derail my plans.

Summers at PIC were eventually replaced by real life. Funny how that works. I found myself in the unlikely position of being a husband and father, and, after grad school, the director of a small library here in coastal Maine. The bike was ridden less and less, gathering dust in the garage, and was eventually sold—safety and parenting priorities won out over fading dreams of two-wheeled adventures.

Fast forward to 2018. I'd been bikeless for more than a decade and the kids were nearly grown. I decided it was time to get back into riding and bought another dual-sport bike. From May through November, I spent weekend days exploring Maine's vast network of ATV trails and took numerous camping trips on the

bike. It was a biking renaissance not unusual for former riders of a certain age.

Around that time, I learned about the TransAmerica Trail (TAT), a sometimes rugged off-road route across the country, designed for dual-sport bikes like mine. The wanderlust that had fueled my KCI dreams was now fully rekindled. The idea that I could cross the entire USA primarily on trails and gravel roads was a revelation that I could not get out of my head. But just as in my twenties, reality (this time in the form of work responsibilities) prevented me from pursuing the dream.

A couple of years later the library's Board of Directors encouraged me to consider applying for a sabbatical. I'd been on the job almost 20 years, things had gone very well, and I suppose they wanted me to remain inspired. They probably assumed that I would travel to some far-off library and do library things there, but I knew exactly what I wanted to do: the TAT was calling my name. To my complete delight, the board supported the idea and gave me the ten weeks that I requested for what I called my Mid-life Criss-cross.

That was the end of 2019. We all know what happened next. Covid put my dreams back on the burner until the situation calmed down, which thankfully happened this year. In August I finally was able to dip my rear wheel in the Atlantic with hopes/dreams/intentions of eventually making it to the Pacific. Leaving home on a Saturday morning, my first stop en route to the TAT was at fellow Pine Islander Joel Taplin's house in Vermont. He and his lovely family took me in for the night and made me want to stay even longer, but the road was calling.

I soon reached the New York - Pennsylvania border, where I joined a dirt route known as the Mid-Atlantic Backcountry Discovery Route (MABDR), riding through Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, and Virginia, weaving through state and national forests in the Appalachians.

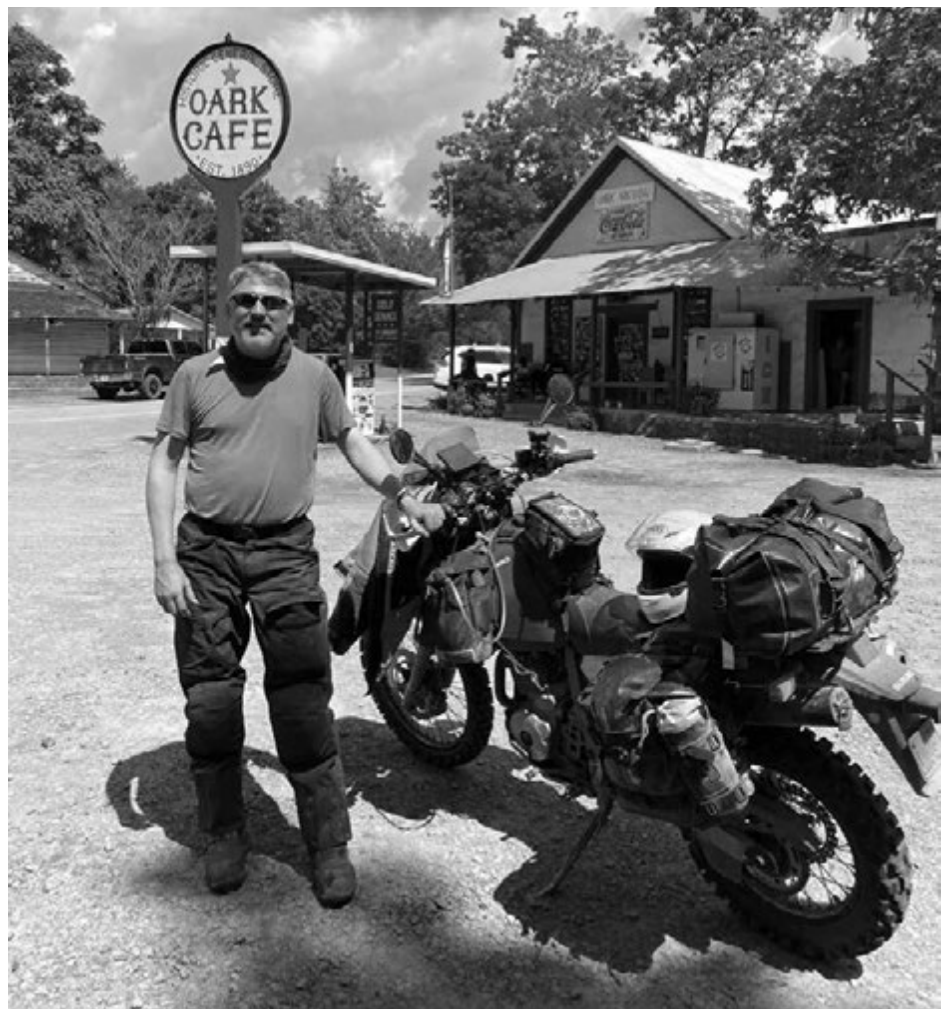
Next came the TAT, which I followed through the rest of Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, Idaho, and, finally, Oregon to the Pacific.

People often asked me how the trip went, and the answer is it was...everything. It was hard and easy, cold and hot, miserable and fun. The views were mind-blowing and "meh." The bike ran well, except when it didn't. Sometimes I got stuck in places for longer than I'd intended and other times I got lucky and avoided setbacks. The food was utter garbage or the best tasting dishes I'd ever had. Just everything, experienced firsthand with a spirit of adventure.

Thirty days after leaving Maine, I arrived at the Oregon coast, got my bike stuck on the beach sand, and was suddenly goalless. I decided it was time to make tracks and get home via a much more direct route, opting for the "Blue



Rich with a rear wheel in the Atlantic, ready to set out.



Rich and his bike at a lunch stop in Arkansas.



Rich on the move in Utah.

Highways" heading east.

This was still a time of pandemic, though, and my long days in the saddle were briefly interrupted in South Dakota when I got laid up with you-know-what. Four days later I finally felt well enough to ride again, which lasted until North Bay, Ontario, where worn tires (my third set on the trip), iffy wheel bearings, and increasingly cold temperatures forced

my hand. I rode the last 650 miles in a UHaul van, arriving home as one day turned to the next, my wife Cheryl staying up to greet me (from a distance—I was still potentially contagious). After 11,000-plus miles, six weeks of camping and staying in fleabag motels, and a change of season, it was indeed nice to be home...to plan the next trip.

PINE ISLANDERS REPORT IN FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Monte Ball Chang Mai, Thailand

This is my twelfth year in Chiang Mai in the far north of Thailand. Once capital of the independent Lanna Kingdom, it is now Thailand's second largest city in population and land area—though dwarfed by the Big Mango (Bangkok).

Founded in 1296, Chiang Mai means “New City” in English, and my adopted home is probably best known for its more than 300 beautiful, ancient Buddhist temples. Close to the borders of Burma and Laos, the province has been much influenced by those near neighbors. Most northern Thais understand spoken Lao; Burmese food is popular; and hill tribe folk move back and forth across borders depending on political and economic circumstances.

I love living here for the city's mountain scenery, manageable size, relaxed pace, and charming, hospitable people. Safe, convenient, and inexpensive, Chiang Mai is bargain-priced for a retired schoolteacher who, during his working life, preferred spending money to saving it! Boasting an international airport, my hometown has provided me with easy access to the rest of Southeast Asia. Even during the worst of Covid, I was able to travel extensively.

By the same token, Chiang Mai is easily reached from abroad. Pine Islanders are most especially and enthusiastically welcome. Do pay a visit; this operator is standing by.

Akka Lakka!

Walker McDonald Kasempa District, Zambia

Pine Island Camp has instilled a reverence for simple outdoor living in the minds of its campers and staff since 1902. That's more than twice as many years as Zambia has been an independent country. The story would perhaps be different if the British had set their eyes on idyllic Maine islands back in the 19th century, but alas they did not. Though Zambia's borders are relatively young, life here still has a bygone feel to it. Zambians have ways of living that have been passed down through the generations just like team allegiances for the King's Game; and just as in the game, I'm still learning the rules.

I've been in Zambia for eight of my 27 months here with the Peace Corps, and in many ways I'm still adjusting to life in this part of Africa. For instance, I'm nowhere near as skilled as the village women at carrying heavy objects on my head. I still get lost navigating some of the larger markets and bartering in just one of Zambia's 72 local languages. I'm absolutely clueless when it comes to remembering which tribes have ancestral beefs with each other, or the proper ceremonies that come with greeting their chiefs. As alien as a lot of this is to me, I wouldn't consider myself a complete fish out of water.

I'm grateful that PIC prepared me for village life in more than a few ways.

The rainy season just started this month, which would have made cooking meals much harder had Pine Island not taught me to make a wet wood fire. I would have struggled to collect rainwater from my roof had Pine Island not taught me how to manipulate drainage with a well-set-up tarp. My time in the wood shop came in handy right away, when I moved into a house without a bed frame or shelves. I could fill pages with little examples like these of Pine Island knowledge making my life in Zambia easier, but one clearly stands out as the most important: communal living.

Chances are I could get by in my village without a rainwater tarp or a bed frame, but I wouldn't have lasted a week out here without the help of my community. I took cold baths for the first several days, until my neighbor taught me how to start a brazier. When I was still struggling with the language and could only remember that “meema” meant “water,” some neighborhood kids were able to decipher my intended question and showed me where the village wells were. People coming over to my house just to greet me, or to exchange tidbits of cultural information, have really made me feel welcomed. For reasons easy to understand, this all reminds me of my first weeks at Pine Island.

I know there will be situations in my next 19 months that won't resemble anything from back home. I also know I'll be able to handle and learn from them. If I can grow to love a little island in Maine filled with over a century's worth of strange traditions and culture, then I can grow to love Zambia for the things that make it different.

Akka Lakka!

Colin Gilbert North Slope Borough, Alaska

Early this August, while those on the island were wrapping up another fantastic summer, I was headed north on the Dalton Highway, bound for Arctic Alaska. Over the course of the next month, I would traverse miles of tundra through the rain, sun, and snow to record key measurements about changes in the Arctic permafrost. Alongside a team of experienced researchers, I crisscrossed the North Slope of Alaska, traveling from small villages to oil fields to a remote



Colin Gilbert repping PIC at the Arctic Circle, Alaska.

airstrip in the mountains. Along the way, we collected data on temperature, soil moisture, ice thaw, and snowfall. Though the work was not particularly glamorous, the information we gathered out in the field will be the basis for our key climate change models.

There aren't too many similarities between Arctic Alaska and Central Maine, but I couldn't help but be reminded of the many summers I had spent at camp. It wasn't just that every day was spent outside, though I certainly thought of Great Pond often as I was wading through frigid thermokarst ponds. At the end of every summer, we like to remind each other to take Pine Island with us. I took plenty of pieces from Pine Island with me, some tangible, some intangible. Much of the equipment I wore had been with me on hiking trips; a few items even originated in the camp store. There are now some pieces of Woodcraft p-cord scattered around field sites in the Kuparuk Basin, holding down ancient data recorders. More important, I think, are the lessons I carried up there with me. One day early in the season, as I was standing in the rain preparing for my fourteenth hour of work, I thought back to all the times I had pushed through on a PIC trip. Most trips have that one hard day when you almost want to throw in the towel, and this research season had a couple. Nevertheless, I was able to keep going, thanks in no small part to all those tough days I'd had on the Allagash, in the White Mountains, or crossing the Chip Lakes. If there ever was a question of whether PIC prepares campers for Arctic exploration, I would argue it certainly does so in the ways that matter.

For my part, the work is far from over. My personal research focuses on a small, abandoned oil platform about 200 miles from the nearest road or village. We flew there one morning, crossing much of the Slope to land on a tiny gravel strip, overgrown with fireweed. This stop, along with those at small villages and remote study sites, became my summer quarters. I instinctively completed some of the classic rituals, like taking a dip in the Arctic Ocean (about the same temperature as Whitehead water) or wearing my old PIC shirt on a Sunday. Most importantly, though, I got the chance to build another small summer community centered around working and learning together outdoors, proving to myself, at least, that you never really do leave camp behind. I'll be back up in the Arctic in the coming years, and I may even see you at some point if you're not afraid of a little cold. Till then...

Akka Lakka!

Phillipe de Beistegui Paris, France

Time tends to freeze when we're on Pine Island—the world stops spinning, and with it all the existential questions in our minds tend to vanish.

Unfortunately, I am not currently in Belgrade Lakes, but rather living the head-on life of an international affairs

student in Paris, caught up in heated discussions and compelling questionings. The World Cup has started in Doha; with the allegations of human rights violations and high environmental costs, should we boycott it? Will we have enough energy to heat our homes through the winter? What can and should be done about the war in Ukraine? Is Prêt à Manger an offense to French cuisine?

At Pine Island, all these questions can seem rather wonderfully trivial. Environmental issues? On Pine Island, the dustball court is carbon neutral and water consumption for 100% is 0. Working conditions? As a former immigrant worker employed as an LTIP, I can assure you they are ideal. Religious and political strife? Everybody believes in King Kababa, and unlike the Supreme Court, our Kababologists are entirely non-partisan—they just have to agree to wearing fur coats in 80-degree weather.

Whatever the debate, Pine Island always wins, by creating a favorable environment in which every camper and staff focuses on the essentials. The ability to spend six weeks away from the clamor that defines our world is a luxury which I have only recently come to appreciate, but that I hope to come back to and experience every so often.

Robert Moor Halfmoon Bay, British Columbia Trip Report: Going Ape

This summer my husband Remi and I flew from British Columbia, where we live, to East Africa, to research a book I am writing about trees and tree-dwellers. First, we traveled to Rwanda to spend a few days on a gorilla trek in the Virunga Mountains. (“Trekking” is a generous term; these were three-hour hikes, and in order to support the local economy, the government requires you to hire porters to carry your tiny daypack, so it was about as easy on the feet as hik-



Robert Moor attempts to get comfortable in a chimpanzee nest, Tanzania.

ing can be.) The gorillas were every bit as impressive as I'd hoped—huge, hulking beings with mechanics' hands and sensitive, inquisitive, black-brown eyes. Overall they were docile and somewhat shy, although at one point a young male charged at us, knocking us back into the undergrowth. On the second day of trek-

king, I spent a long time staring at a cuddly two-year-old gorilla, who lay on her back, peering back at me with evident curiosity. While munching on a handful of nettle vines, she emitted a soft, high-pitched sound, something between a coo and a whistle. Apparently, when gorillas are well-fed, they sometimes “sing” to themselves in this way; when they are especially happy, according to the science writer Sy Montgomery, “they throw their arms around each other while they are singing and chomping.”

After Rwanda, we traveled to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia—a big, chaotic, somewhat gloomy city. (It did not help that we had arrived at the height of the rainy season and in the midst of a civil war.) I was there to see the fossilized remains of Lucy, the famous *Australopithecus afarensis* known as the “grandmother of humanity,” who lived some three million years ago. A curator at the National Museum had to pull her bones out of a bomb-proof safe in order for me to see them. The shape of her skeleton suggests that she would have stood about three feet tall; she would have walked upright but also would have been able to climb a tree easily; and, judging from her teeth, she was not overly fond of using a toothbrush. In those respects, she was not all that different from your average resident of Tent 9.

Finally, we made our way to western Tanzania, where we traveled along dusty roads to a research station where primatologists study wild chimpanzees. I spent two long days with the primatologists, tracking the chimp families as they climbed trees, gathered figs, groomed one another, fought, napped, and used twigs to “fish” for ants. The highlight (and, in some ways, the lowlight) of the trip was the night I spent in a chimpanzee nest. It was about 35 feet up off the ground. In order to reach it, I anchored a rope high in the branches, climbed up using jumars, then lowered myself down into the nest. Chimpanzees build a new nest every night (since the branches dry out and grow brittle over time, they prefer to sleep in a fresh nest), so fortunately there was no concern about a chimp coming back to claim its bed. But I had been warned that, once they’re finished sleeping in the nest, chimps will often relieve themselves in it—perched, as it were, atop an arboreal perch. Fortunately, this nest was clean. It resembled a green cloud made of living branches, woven into a nest about three feet across and then lined with a mattress of fresh leaves. As I lowered my weight into it, I was afraid I would fall through the bottom, but as the branches compressed, they formed a taut net, which held me quite securely. The only problem was that humans, unlike chimps, have evolved long legs to help us walk long distances, so whereas a chimp’s legs would have folded comfortably in the nest, mine dangled uncomfortably over the edge. After about five hours of lying sleeplessly in this awkward position, it became too excruciating to bear any longer, so I rappelled to the ground and jogged over to the tent where Remi was sleeping, careful to keep an eye out for lions and leopards, which prowl the area at night. I kept expecting to see two eyes—or rather: “TWO

EYES!”—glinting back at me out of the darkness.

We made it home alive, having acquired a suntan, some sore muscles, a pile of profoundly dirty laundry, a few new memories, a smidgen of wisdom, and a couple of far-off friends (both human and non-human)—the mark of any successful summer.

Felicien Dillard
Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Thirty years on, my memories of summers at Pine Island are a mix of images and experiences so vivid, they could have happened just a few weeks ago—from dustball to campfire, Whitehead to the War Game, LTIPs to Kababology, and every camper and counselor on the island making summers at PIC unforgettable.



Felicien Dillard and his sons at the World Cup, Qatar.

In 1994, the World Cup was hosted in the US, and I was completely oblivious to its very existence. Growing up in a house without a TV, we did not follow or watch live sports in any form. About halfway through that PIC summer, as I was going on my first camping trips, learning to shoot a rifle, and being taught how to feather an oar, Italy made it to the World Cup Final. One camper was allowed to leave the island with his Italian family to watch them play (and ultimately lose to Brazil in the final). This whole sequence of events left me scratching my head—what was this event that carried such significance?! At that point, sports, and football specifically (or “soccer” as most of you may know it), were thrust into my life.

Fast forward to 2022 and the World Cup is taking place in Doha, a 30-minute flight from home in Dubai, where we lived for three years and where my son Vincent was born. The importance of sports in people’s lives has since become evident to me, as has the prevalence of football and the World Cup on the global stage. It felt natural to make a short trip over to Qatar to experience this unique event.

The brand-new and very effective metro, the quite stunning stadiums, and the atmosphere created by fans coming from so many countries are what struck me the most during our day trip to attend the Japan v. Costa Rica qualifier. The fervor and passion of the fans was palpable everywhere. As we left the stadium, a bit stunned by 90 minutes of chanting and screaming, I thought of Pine Island Camp and that summer so many years ago. The long trip home was

spent discussing what camp life was like at PIC, and whether my fast-growing boys would prefer hiking or canoeing trips.

As the US prepares to host the 2026 World Cup with Mexico and Canada, I hear an echo of my summers on Great Pond and wonder what my sons’ experiences at PIC will be, and what memories they will form.

Akka Lakka!

Krista Wiberg
Hong Kong SAR, China

Hello from Hong Kong! I recently made the (small) move from mainland China to this vibrant island, taking on a position teaching fifth grade at an international school. Life in Hong Kong is slowly creeping towards “normal,” with masks still required in most spaces and self-quarantining very much a thing if you get the virus. I happened to get Covid for the first time recently, and to be honest, rather enjoyed having to stay in my apartment for seven days to rest and recover!

Before moving here, I was able to spend my first summer at home in two years. Lockdowns and tough restrictions in mainland China kept me from visiting home during that time, which made being back in Massachusetts downright surreal.

Returning to the US during summertime, PIC was at the forefront of my thoughts because of all the wonderful years spent working in that kitchen. I found myself dreaming that I was back in that buzzing space, prepping for dinner and singing along to whatever high-energy music was keeping the Kitchen Crew moving. Although I didn’t get the chance to visit the island this past summer, the memories and deep love I have for PIC are still as prominent as they were when I was 17.

I’m grateful to be lucky enough to live on the other side of the world and still be able to return to New England. I hope that next summer, I’ll make that trip to Belgrade to visit one of the best places on earth once again!

Madison Olds
Martinborough, New Zealand

Greetings from New Zealand! I’m living in the small town of Martinborough in the Wairarapa region of the North Island. The landscape here is filled with beautiful farmland and vineyards, giving the town its quiet charm. Growing up in the heart of San Francisco and going to college near Seattle, I’m used to living in a busy atmosphere surrounded by people—mostly strangers. Martinborough, on the other hand, has a population of 1,600, so I’m constantly running into people I know.

I’ve been working as a chef at a small restaurant in a winery here. I went into the job feeling a bit overwhelmed because the only experience I had working in a kitchen was at PIC, in addition to cooking for friends and family at home. After the first few days I started feeling much more confident, and I’m really starting to get the hang of working in a restaurant kitchen.

When I’m not working, I spend my time with the new friends I’ve made here. New Zealand is famous for its natural beauty: mountains, rivers, lakes, forests, and beaches. I’ve been trying to take advantage of this, going on many adventures in my free time. So far, I’ve hiked Mt. Holdsworth and jumped in the freezing cold Waingawa river at the base, jumped off cliffs into the Ruamahanga river, and gone on many long walks through the hilly farmland that surrounds the wineries. I’m excited to do more of this and have started planning some camping trips for my next break from work.

Many of my experiences here are reminding me a lot of my time at Pine Island. Constantly bumping into so many people I know around town makes it feel like a small community just like PIC. I felt overwhelmed when I first started working at PIC, just like I did at my new job here. And the way it felt when I started gaining confidence reminded me of my transition from Kitchen Crew to Head Cook. Lastly, going on adventures, and swimming in rivers and lakes (almost as beautiful as Great Pond) provides the same sort of thrill as jumping into the lake every morning at camp. It’s great to know that you can find such a special feeling anywhere in the world!

Victor Dillard
London, England
Trip Report: The Citroen Loop

In eighth grade, I loved *Of Mice and Men* so much that I asked my teacher what other books John Steinbeck had written. *Travels with Charley* recounts Steinbeck’s road trip to discover America with his faithful companion, Charley the standard poodle. I found the book a bit dull at the time, but last summer it inspired me to hit the road.

I set out with Whisky, my faithful sighthound (called a lurcher in England), from the island of Yeu off the Atlantic coast of France. Like Pine Island, Yeu is a hidden gem, where gracious living is the goal. Whisky and I take a short boat ride to the mainland and jump into my 1974 Citroen DS—a wondrous feat of French automotive engineering from the Sixties.

In this Lund-esque car, we cruise through the marshes of Vendée, where the finest salt in France is harvested from the Atlantic Ocean. We drive south towards the Poitou-Charentes region and stop in the town of Niort, with its beautiful twin church spires standing tall over the river. The poverty and homelessness in the town leave Whisky and me thankful for our good health and the roof over our heads.

Venturing further south, we enter Auvergne, famous for its mountainous beauty. The roads wind through sleepy stone villages, and at dusk, we arrive at the Barrage de l’Aigle (Eagle Dam), a Soviet-looking concrete wall harnessing the powerful flow of the Dordogne River. Stepping out of the car to stretch our six combined legs, I’m immediately transported back to Maine: the towering pines, oaks and birches, the mountains,

(Continued on page 8)

CAMPERS WRITE...

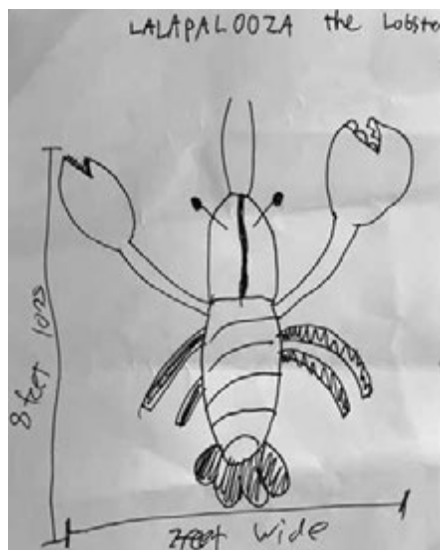
The following contributions first appeared in the 2022 Mid-Summer Pine Needle: A collection of articles, poetry, and artwork that seeks to provide a glimpse into the creative, imaginative, and active lives campers lead at Pine Island.

The Legendary Crawfish by Austin Kimball

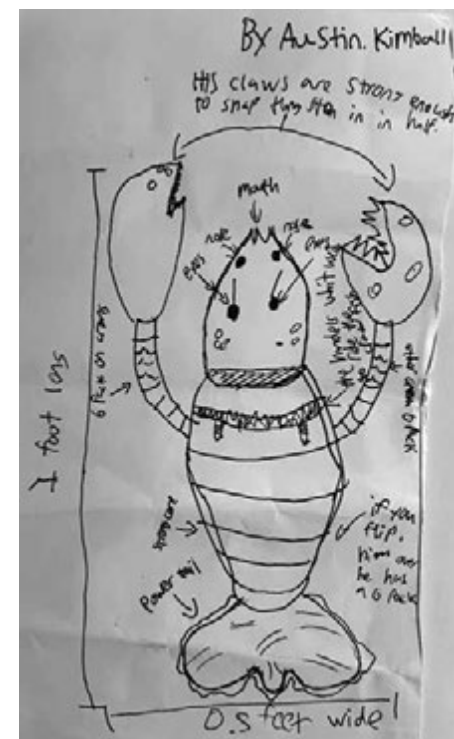
I woke up one morning and it was a normal day. During rest hour, I was in the library and one book caught my eye: a book on Pine Island's "Secret Legendary Crawfish" written by Sumner Ford himself. I was intrigued. I picked it up and soon learned that this creature was one foot long and 0.5 foot wide and it would eat ducks. If you ever see a duck or loon disappear, it is the Secret Legendary Crawfish. Many have even seen him eating ducks on the dock at night. The creature was originally a science experiment but when it was getting transported to a museum, it fell into the lake and escaped. It showed up at Pine Island and even participated in crawfish races;

one flap of its tail and it would win! Sometimes it will crawl into the kitchen sink and pinch the hands of the kitchen crew.

Today during afternoon General Swim you should try to look for him. Places you can find the Secret Legendary Crawfish are: under the swim float or anywhere in the lake. It was last seen by the LTIPs in the kitchen when it tried to pinch Madron's hand. It is over 100 years old. Whit Fisher claims he has ridden on it but no one believes him besides his cousin. They say that Ben Cabot, the fishing instructor, is actually trying to catch the Secret Legendary Crawfish instead of catching fish. Some Pine Island campers say that Sumner made it up but everyone knows that it exists.



Fun fact: Some people believe that the Secret Legendary Crawfish is actually Potwarp the Lalapalalalalooza Lobster. However, in Sumner's book he says that they do not connect at all. And as you can see from the drawings, they are clearly different.



Favorite Sacred Animal by Ethan Ethridge

The tradition of Sacred Animals dates back to Pine Island's earliest days. These mythical creatures are bestowed to camp at the end of each season as a way to celebrate the success of the unique community that flourished that summer. In this piece, Ethan interviews several campers and staff to determine their favorites.

Name: Austin Kimball

Favorite Animal: Potwarp the Lalapalalalooza Lobster

Why: Because he likes lobster

Given to Pine Island: 1964

Location: Dining Hall (left and returned after fire)

Chant of Animal: Lalapa-lalapa-lalapa-loooooza

Description: Five feet wide, large red lobster, huge pincers



Name: Kai Harashima

Favorite Animal: Fin-against-wake, the Great Northern Methampikosis

Why: Cool animal, really cool chant, glasses

Given to Pine Island: 1992

Location: Dining Hall

Chant of Animal: Fin-against-wake, Fin-against-wake, swims in circles, guards the lake

Description: Large grayish-blue pike



(Continued from page 7)

the smell of pine and fern. Whisky barks along as I chant an Akka Lakka to power us through the last few miles, in the dark and rain, to our cabin for the night.

The next day is a beautiful straight shot from Auvergne to Les Cévennes National Park, to see my dear cousin and fellow Pine Islander Xavier-Ferdinand Guyard—or as we know him, Xafi (pronounced Za-fee). Les Cévennes is a magical forest in the hills full of chestnut trees. It reminds me of the White Mountain National Forest, thankfully with smaller peaks. There, hidden away at the end of a narrow road, is Le Lou Rey, a haven of peace and quiet run by Xafi and his team. All the food is organic, locally grown or sourced. The house, rebuilt by Xafi's hard work and dedication, is a monument to gracious living. It so perfectly embodies PIC values that as I gaze across the valley before dinner, I turn towards Mount Philip and spare a thought for King Kababa and his sacred animals. Should they ever find themselves in France, this is surely the place for them.

Xafi talks to me about his projects, the challenges of setting up a hostel, his vision and ambition for Le Lou Rey, and I'm filled with pride. Whisky and I head

to bed in a yurt, the roar of the DS's engine now very far away, silenced by the vast expanse of space and serenity that reigns over Les Cévennes.

This national park abounds with the scenery of Maine, but when we come out the other side, we're firmly back in the south of France. Large plains and vineyards, sunshine. We make a pit stop to buy some of the finest Côtes du Rhône bug juice. Clearly approving of my purchase, Whisky leaves his mark on a barrel in the store. His hop into the back seat is easier this time, as the car is definitely riding a few inches lower—no trouble for a 1970s hydraulic suspension, though.

A few hours later, we bear east into Provence, the smell in the car a sweet and unique blend of lavender and petrol. Cutting across the flat plains, it's a smooth ride to the foothills of the Alps. Along the way, Whisky and I met a few Frenchmen, and every encounter is an avalanche of cherished memories from their childhood, riding in the backseat of a DS. It's an icon, a piece of French history, and it gets people talking, smiling, laughing, reminiscing. It cements in my mind the importance of repairing and preserving our heritage, a value upheld

by the Pine Islanders who come each year to repair and maintain our boats in honor of Sloan Critchfield.

Upon reaching the Alps of Haute Provence, we veer off the motorway to start our long climb to Valavoire. It's a village lost in the mountains where my grandfather lives, 20 minutes from the nearest bakery, pumping his water from a nearby stream and caring for retired racehorses. The car bravely climbs, stalling only as I pull into the driveway. We've arrived at our final destination! While

Whisky explores the garden, I catch up with my grandfather, recounting the journey, what I saw and felt. Two days go by in a flash and before I know it, I'm on my way back to London. It's a one-shot, 16-hour drive across France, reminiscent of those long van rides to the Canadian border, the edge of Moose River, or the depths of the White Mountains. Content with the French countryside, the bits of cheese and bread, Whisky sleeps, always with one eye open, glinting in the rear-view mirror.



Victor Dillard's dog Whisky takes a look at the French countryside.



Name: Max Klivans
Favorite Animal: Buzz the Husky Varnished Beaver
Why: Good chant
Given to Pine Island: 2010
Location: Library
Chant of Animal: Vroom vroom logging fever, Buzz the Husky Varnished Beaver
Description: Small beaver with chain-saw teeth



Name: Sumner Ford
Favorite Animal: Sez Who the Delivery Owl
Why: Because it arrived Sumner's first year
Given to Pine Island: 2000
Location: Dining Hall
Chant of Animal: Ahoo, Ahaa, Ahoo-ahaa-ahoo-ahaa
Description: Small brown owl with yellow eyes

Name: Rowan Reeves
Favorite Animal: Gar the Misdirected Goyle
Why: The chant; hiding in plain sight, only Sacred Animal that survived the fire
Given to Pine Island: 1982
Location: Sign pole
Chant of Animal: They say the pot will never boil aye-aye, aye-aye / They say the gar will never goyle aye-aye, aye-aye
Description: Looks like a skinny monkey with 3-fingered backward hands and a horse-like snout



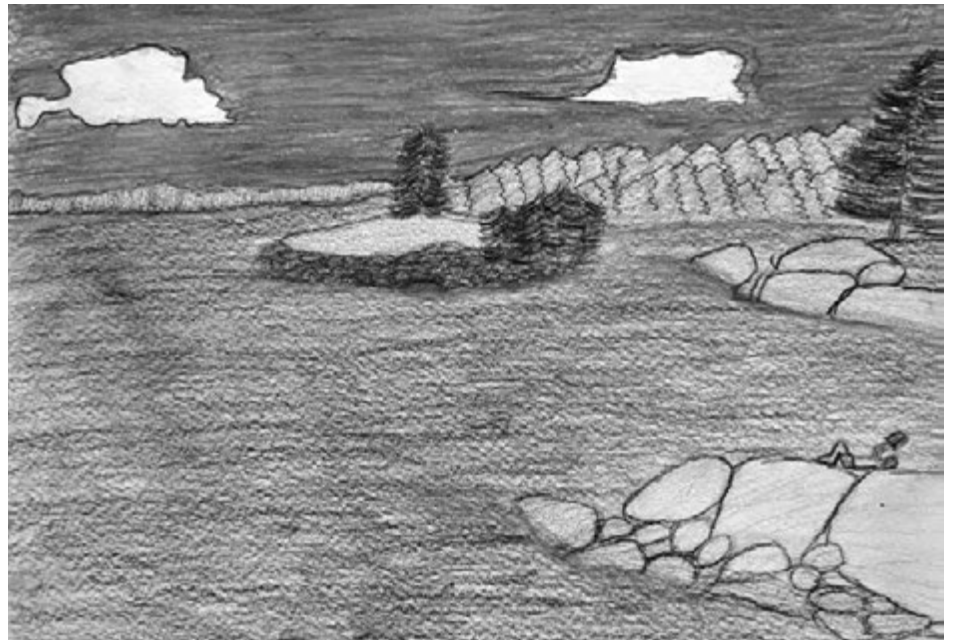
Everyone loves Centissimo the High-Strung Steinwhale!

Whitehead
 by Kai Harashima

The crashing of waves, a rhythmic toll,
 A Great Northern wind, the sailor's goal,
 The granite beaches and skies of gold,
 The ancient buildings, their stories untold,
 Mysterious lights under misty skies,
 Antiquated wights, far away cries,
 Mossy stones and sky-bound pines,
 Forest floors and draping vines.
 These ancient forests and structures of old
 Make Whitehead Island feel like gold.



Artwork credits: Nico Yadigaroglu



Artwork credits: Charlie Gibbons



A few photos from the trip.



Trip Report: Moosilauke
 by Hudson Eklund

One day I signed up for the Moosilauke Mountain trip, AKA Moose Trail, along with six other people: Alvaro, Oliver, Finley, Desmond, Sam P, and Ethan. The leaders were Lily, Nick, and Connor.

It was a four-hour drive to the base of the mountain. Once we got there we started our 1.5-mile hike uphill with bags weighing about 20-40 pounds. The views along the way were amazing. When we got to our first campsite we were all drenched in sweat. We took off our heavy bags and set up our tents.

We woke up the next morning at about 6 a.m., had a good breakfast, gathered up our camp, and started our 2.3-mile hike up to the summit. When we got there, we all touched the sign that says 4,807 feet. This is one of the highest peaks in the White Mountains! From the summit, we had a four-mile hike down to our next campsite. We were happy to unpack, set up our tents, and eat.

The last day was the easiest day. It was only a one-mile hike to the road. We were excited to get picked up! We got sandwiches at the store stop, and then returned to PIC. We had a great time!



PINE ISLAND CAMP 2022—ANOTHER GREAT SUMMER!



(Closest to farthest) Cam, Wells, Bram, and Pablo return from a Regatta canoe race.



(Closest to farthest) Ford, Sam, Ben, and Victor line up for a Regatta kayak race.



(Closest to farthest) George, Sebastian, and Thomas hang out in hammocks.



(Left to right) Expedition Camp director Will Stack with Gabriel, Adlai, P.V., Ben, Ben, and Arthur.



(Left to right) Frank, Otto, Heath, and Cameron sing at campfire.



(Left to right) Oliver, Jack, and Wyatt bask in the glory of a successful Mainland Swim.



(Left to right) Natalie Burr, Isaac Frank, Matthew Hawkins, David Efron, and George Baldwin (a.k.a. the Hippie Cowboys) perform at Club Honk.



Simon and Miles enjoy homemade treats.



Ex campers completing an epic show.



Calm northern Maine waters.



Campers on Sr. Katahdin enjoying one of the trip's beautiful campsites.



Ford writes letters home.



Daniel (center), Zaid (left), and Whitehead Director Sam Hecklau enjoy s'mores after the lobster feast.



Kai pauses on a tough section of Expedition Camp's hiking trip on the Long Trail.



Hudson cleans off after a day of trail clearing on ATC HAWG.



Maxx Murray delivers another legendary Password.



Miles and Kai prepare to sing at outdoor Password.



Otis hanging out with his mom, Assistant Director Corinne Alsop.



Preparing for Club Honk.



Rudy, William, and Ryker fishing off the kitchen dock.



The poster for the summer's best Wednesday Night Show, "Lune."



Expedition Camp prepares for an early morning paddle.



Singing "Sweet Pine Island" at the final campfire.

WHOA! ADVANCED STATS AHEAD!

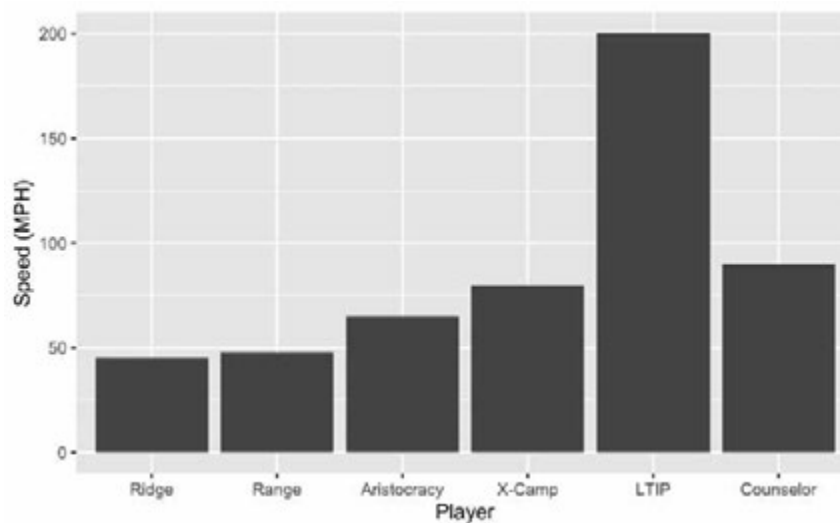
New program poised to revolutionize PIC performance analytics

Pine Island's position at the pinnacle of summer camp excellence is well-established and in no danger of diminishing, but several months ago, my associates and I became aware of a potentially disturbing development. The details are hopelessly technical and need not be repeated here, but the overall trend was worryingly clear: quantification of the camp experience (never particularly robust even in the pre-internet age) had been neglected for years and become woefully inadequate—not even remotely next-gen in comparison to the competition.

The situation was so dire that there was no time to consult (or indeed, even inform) the Board of Directors or anyone else in the PIC leadership. Instead, recognizing the need for immediate action, my colleagues and I promptly formed our new organization; wrote, debated and ratified a number of impressively detailed founding documents; and got straight to work.

Since that momentous day, our team at PINE SAP (Pine Island's Newly Exhaustive Statistical Analytics Program) has been laboring diligently; collecting advanced data under the watchful eyes of Zommule of Zim, the Omnicocular Wiggly Ziggler; running Spamson the Somnolent Sloth's painfully slow, yet highly advanced models; and crunching advanced numbers with Glubb the Gourmandizing Grouper day in and day out. A dizzying array of projects remain in the works, but thankfully (and just in time for this year's *Pine Needle*) PINE SAP has managed to complete its first report on an activity central to the camp experience: Dustball.

The question has lingered in the minds of dustball players for years: "Do



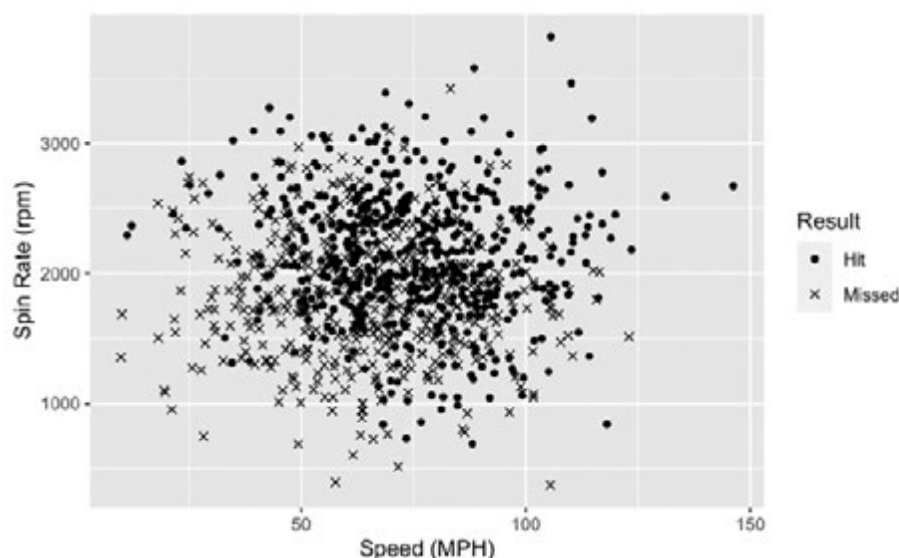
LTIPs really throw as hard as it feels like they do?" Well, analysis of over two decades of relevant data has found the answer to be a resounding: YES!

As the above figure shows, the average LTIP beams the ball across the Dust Court at more than twice the speed of even the average counselor, and faster than the average Ridge, Range, and Aristocracy camper *combined*. Our analysts recommend taking shelter behind

a larger camper whenever an LTIP gains possession of the ball.

But as any experienced dustballer knows, velocity is not the only relevant factor. Movement of the ball in flight is just as important, and this past summer, we finally acquired the technology to measure this with adequate precision.

As the below figure shows, a higher spin rate on the ball led to a markedly increased chance of successfully hitting



an opposing player. The reasons for this cannot yet be definitively stated, but our analysts believe that the added unpredictability of the ball's flight path causes the targeted player to lose precious milliseconds as they try to decide which dodge to employ. In any case, as these insights are put into practice on the Dust Court next summer, we expect to see a dramatic increase in average spin rate—along with a corresponding spike in instances of the ball ending up in the lake as overzealous young campers attempt to achieve maximum RPM.

That's all for now, but stay tuned! PINE SAP's mission has just begun, and it will not be complete until we have provided next-gen statistical analysis of all aspects of camp life. The digital revolution is here, and we will not rest until PIC is at the absolute cutting edge of summer camp performance analytics.

Till next time, Akka Lakka!

Xander Schwartz, K.D.
PINE SAP Founder and COO
(Communications Optimization Officer)

THE KING'S GAME

Mercers' Scoring Strategy Prevails Again in 195-185 Victory

By Nick Isles, Head Umpire

The armies of Starks and Mercer once again found themselves divided at the end of the 2022 summer. War was declared by the Starks Army, and when they arrived at York's Crossing, they wasted no time in executing a strategy focused on jumping and mixing parties. Starks General George Baldwin enacted a bold policy of reaping all possible challenge points, even opting at one point to forgo 14 possible scoring points and claim four challenge points instead.

Feeling the pressure of the 75 scoring points churned out by the Starks in Period 1, the Mercers entered their first attack period eager to weaponize their tried-and-true scoring strategies. Their systematic and aggressive attack showed

slow results at first, with just 62 Mercers players scored in Period 2, but they bounced back with a whopping 82 additional scoring points in Period 3.

The Mercers, too, were alert to challenge opportunities and parried the Starks' challenge efforts, leaving the armies in a virtual tie in challenge points. The Game was ultimately decided by the scoring point margin, as the Starks' scoring efforts couldn't quite overcome the burden of Mercer's relentless attack, resulting in a 195-185 Mercer victory. It was an exciting, hard-fought Game, and we in the Umpire Corps expect more of the same, should the armies of Starks and Mercer meet again at York's Crossing next summer.



Mercer defenders face down Starks attackers at East Gate.

REFLECTIONS ON PINE ISLAND'S WHITEHEAD SUMMER FROM AN UNLIKELY SOURCE

By Sam Hecklau, Whitehead Program Director

Ahhh... another summer day. The night was cool, and the stars were outstanding. If routine holds Hawk and Jimmy should be heading off to the Swan Dock for a morning dip. Sam is up next, off to the beach. Ben is already inspecting the day's work ahead. Oh, the joys of predictability.

Clear skies again today. Should dry up this dew nicely, but I'm worried about that grass. Rain would do us all some good. It would certainly give me a rest! But then again, a Pine Island summer is so brief out here at Whitehead. In the doldrums of winter, I'll certainly look back fondly on these sunny, energetic days.

Looks like the staff have their coffees. I can hear counselors rousing campers in the Barracks; 100% is right around the corner. These kids don't need much coaxing; they all have that same unwavering enthusiasm for what might come next. We hope they never let that wonder wane.

As I imagined, the whole lot is already outside and ready to go. Some jovial, others a tad haggard from playing in the woods yesterday—I saw one of them make a remarkable 100-meter dash to score 150 points in the Whitehead Game. At once they're off to the Swan Dock. I'll see them again shortly.

I hear them before I see them. If only they knew how much their voices carry

activity shed. Noopletucker is as popular as ever, but I wasn't expecting the improvised golf setup to be such a hit. A few folks come my way, but they just want to lounge and chat. Maybe they'll want to play some games later this afternoon.

Sam comes out of Port looking ready for a trek, clam basket and guidebooks at the ready. They must be headed for Brown's Island. The Starboard boys have returned and the whole group begins to muster at the picnic tables. After a briefing about the morning adventure, they're off!

The day always seems to fly by after the morning activity. Before I know it, the campers have finished a game of Crow Spirit and they're enjoying some well-deserved free time. A lot of folks head out for independent exploration. Although it means less time with me, I always love to see the joy and excitement that this free exploration brings them. It's certainly what I would do if I could roll freely around the island.

Time for dinner and clean-up. As usual the boys are tuckered out after a day full of activity. Hopefully all that exercise has given them a little creative spark. One perk of being parked at the center of the compound is that I never miss campfire. The campers start to congregate as Jimmy starts lighting the fire.



Campers eat lunch while the famous "Barrel" looks on.

down the dock road. No new secrets today: the water was cold, Port is on dishes, Noopletucker rematch this afternoon.

What do we have here...?

10, 11, 12 wet heads... well I'll be! Perfect attendance at 100%. I can see it has helped shake off any lingering drowsiness.

Breakfast goes off without a hitch. As announcements wrap up, a couple of campers on Starboard start heading my way. Their counselor calls them back, reminding them that they have a community project to prepare for. Soon enough, a crew ventures off with Matt, tools in hand. Probably to manicure the trails I keep hearing so much about.

The Port boys look tired from the water hauling, walking back with just one bucket between them. They must be wrapping up. Looks like there might be a little free time before the morning activity!

They're out of the kitchen with plenty of time to spare. Some boys head for the

They really do love Jimmy, but to be honest, who doesn't? More and more campers find a seat at the benches. I see Hawk with a guitar and some campers with cards. Music and magic tricks start off the line-up tonight. A couple of games bring some good laughter. Four acts in and it looks like things are starting to wind down...

But what's this I hear from Matt: "Next up, Bear Attorney... correction, BARREL TOURNEY!!!"

Well, well! My time to shine has arrived. The boys file out towards me, then hop on two at a time. We roll up and down the compound. There are jumps, dives, and slips. And only laughter as a result. It's always a pleasure to share such happiness in this incredible place.

Yes, once the summer has passed, I'll look back fondly on those warm summer days, rolling around Whitehead Island to the sound of chirping birds and campers' laughter.



The PIC Whitehead Program crew: Matt Hawkins, Matt Miller, Jimmy Leuchten, and Director Sam Hecklau.



Campers explore the shoreline near the former Whitehead Life Saving Station.

110%!

Pine Islanders James and Hudson Eklund Take a Thanksgiving Dip!

By Ben Swan

Many campers really miss starting their days with the popular 100% Dip at Pine Island. Some have gone to great lengths to keep the morning ritual going. Swimming pools, ponds, even bathtubs have been employed, but this Thanksgiving weekend, camper Hudson Eklund took it to a new level and somehow convinced his grandfather, Pine Islander James Eklund, to join him. They responded to the Turkey Challenge on Shelter Island, NY, immersing them-

selves 100% in the frigid November waters of Long Island Sound.

James reports that it was "a quick event" but both survived. And it also raises the question: where were Hudson's dad and uncle, Pine Islanders Jonathan and Andy Eklund? Perhaps next year Hudson will convince them and other Shelter Island Pine Islanders to join him. Well done, Hudson and James. 100% at Whitehead will feel like the Caribbean next summer!

NOTES FROM THE TRIP LOCKER

By Natalie Burr



I had the privilege of sweating out much of this past summer in the Trip Locker, a space that is often overlooked on a tour of the island but essential to the operation of Pine Island's trips program. The Trip Locker is located above the kitchen, accessed via a staircase tacked on to the side of the dining hall. Its pitched ceiling and many crawl spaces are papered over with maps of obscure peaks and waterways, sticker labels from countless ten-pound blocks of Cabot cheddar cheese, packing lists and itineraries annotated with the handwriting of generations of Pine Island staff,

ers might go on so many off-island excursions. Indeed, this summer, campers and counselors collectively hiked and paddled far enough to travel the entire distance of the Appalachian Trail many times over. Some campers went on as many as six or seven trips this season, hiking and paddling over one hundred miles in the course of a single summer while also earning lofty ranks in activities such as canoeing and woodcraft.

This trip season, we returned to the iconic White Mountains of New Hampshire for the first time since 2019. Also for the first time in two summers, camp-

pond to link up with the AT. Moxie Bald Lean-to, located where the trail meets the pond, had a great view out over the water, but the trippers were not ready to make camp. They took their boats out of the water, got their boots and packs on, and continued further south on the trail, summiting Bald Mountain, and staying at the Bald Mountain Brook Lean-to. Given the hiking prowess of the group, the second day of the trip amounted to 25 miles—a significantly larger area covered than was initially expected. All in one day, the hikers explored the peaks of Bald Mountain and Pleasant Pond Mountain and their many side trails, identified water sources and campsites along the Appalachian Trail, and walked along the shores of Pleasant Pond, Moxie Pond, and finally Bald Mountain Pond, where they spent their last night at the lean-to on the water. In the morning, they canoed back to the same point where they had been dropped off, and returned to camp to report back on the exploratory venture. The consensus is that the trip was well worth running, though maybe as a mid-level difficulty trip (with shortened mileage).

2022 TRIPS BY THE NUMBERS

- 40 Trips
- 40 4,000-foot peaks
- 22 Hiking trips
- 11 Canoeing trips
- 8 Whitehead Island trips
- 4 Exploratory trips
- 3 War yacht trips
- 2 Fishing trips
- 1 Roving dory trip
- 1 Trail maintenance work trip
- 1 Maine Woodsman skills trip



The Moxie Bald trippers pose for a photo opp.

recipes for the most delectable trail meals, and other esoteric memorabilia that has piled up in the space since the 1990s.

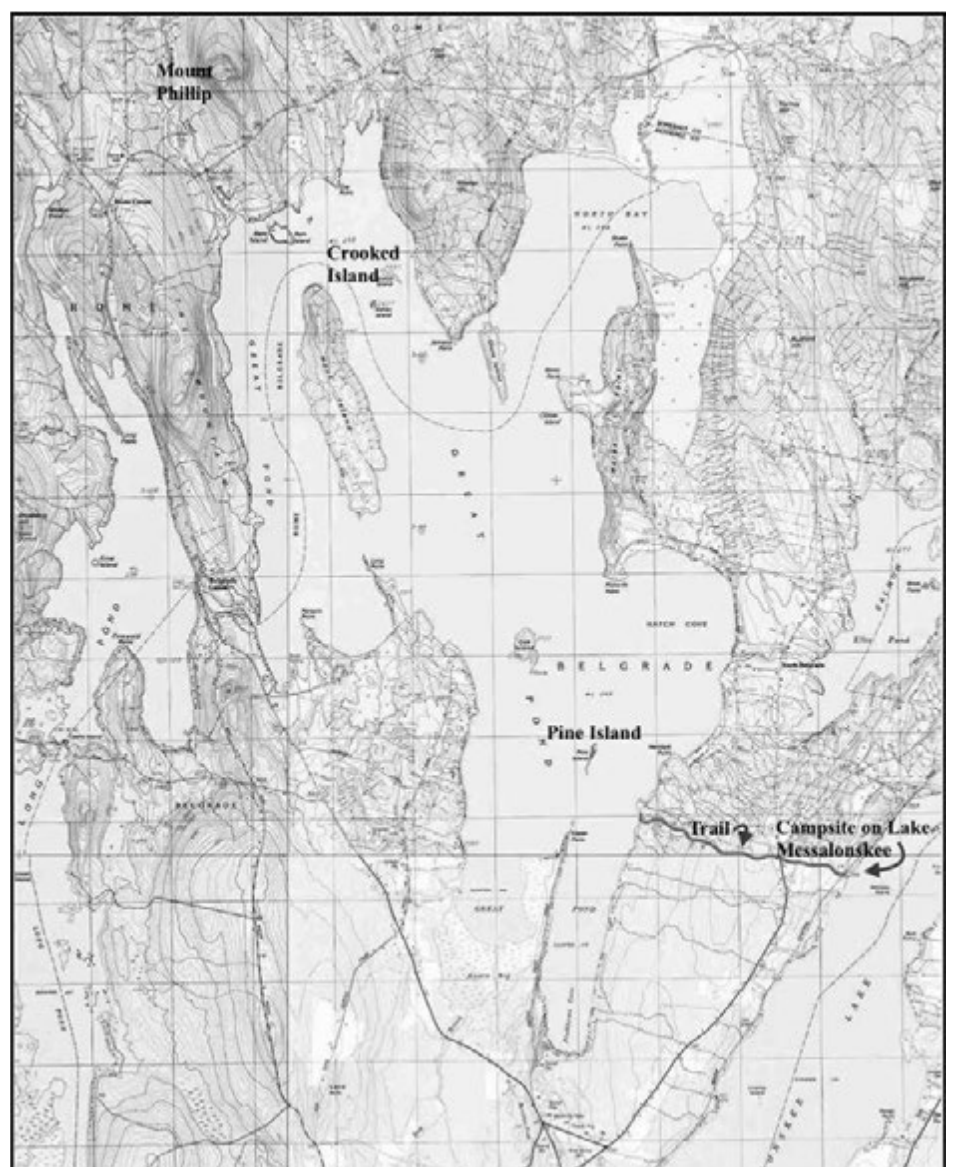
Counselors spend many hours in the Trip Locker poring over maps and assessing the shelves of nonperishable foods to plan meals for their upcoming ventures. In the afternoon, when the heat from the kitchen downstairs rises, counselors hunched over their maps and meal plans are cooled only by a feeble floor fan that oscillates in the corner. It may not sound hospitable, but the Trip Locker is a favorite place for many counselors and campers. One is aware of the thousands of boots that have walked out the door under the burden of a heavy pack, only to return muddy, with light packs and tales of trails and rivers to share.

This year, trips went off without a hitch, in large part due to the incredible dedication and preparedness of counselors. This was no small feat: a typical Pine Island trips program had not run since the 2019 season, so preparing for many trips required additional research. It may seem impossible that over the course of six short weeks (in addition to the myriad ranks achieved and activities undertaken on the island) Pine Island-

ers did multiday hiking trips to Mount Katahdin, sleeping in lean-tos in the glacial basin of the mountain at Chimney Pond, waking up in the dark to sunrise hike Maine's tallest mountain. In total, the hiking trips sent out this summer put Pine Islanders on 40 (out of 62 total) 4,000-foot peaks in New Hampshire and Maine.

The trips program saw four exploratory trips go out this year, all of which were a success. One was Moxie Bald, a three-day hybrid canoeing and hiking trip for older boys, in which the group covered a stunning amount of trail, hiking 25 miles in a single day. The trip was led by counselors Alex Sidorsky and Silas Hunter, whose objectives were to determine whether the section of trail would make a good trip in the future, and if so, what were the best campsites and what was the difficulty of the trip.

This section of the Appalachian Trail crosses few roads in the 35-mile span between the towns of Caratunk and Monson. Pine Islander John Alsop advised on the route, identifying the easiest trail access point at the end of a dusty logging road on the south shore of Bald Mountain Pond. The ten campers and two counselors put in their canoes and paddled up the west side of the



Belgrade Adventure's trails and campsites.

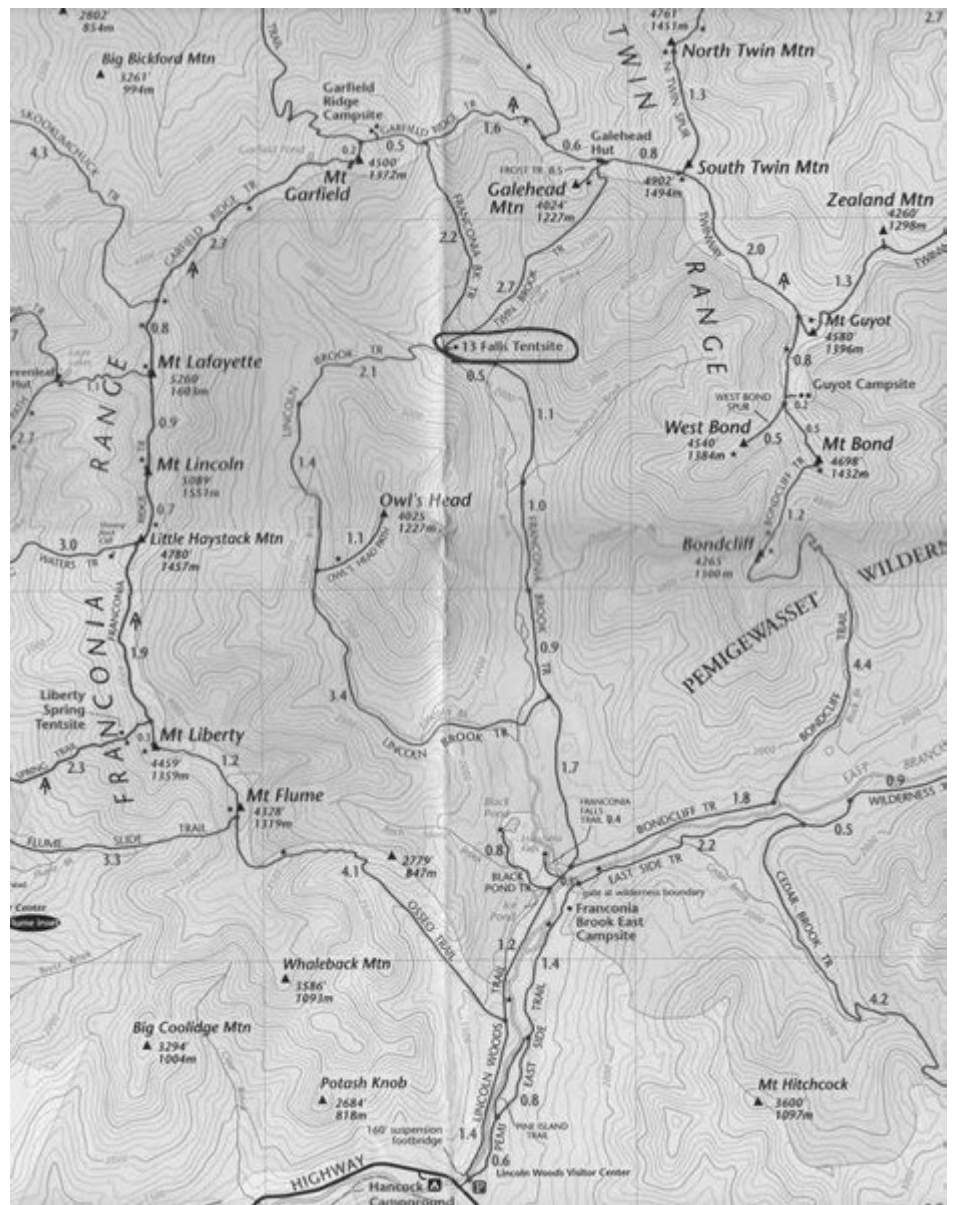
For the first time in some years, a trip ran to Mount Moosilauke at the southwestern corner of the White Mountains. This trip was for younger boys, and they also reported back that the views at the top of the 4,802-foot tall mountain were well worth the steep climb they faced on the first day.

Another exploratory trip which ran this summer was the Belgrade Adventure, led by Sophie Effron, Garrett Gellert, and Will Hartley. Instead of enduring a long van ride, this trip departed directly from the shores of Great Pond, where they hiked for several miles on trails adjacent to Pine Island's mainland area. These trails are maintained by Janetha Benson, a valued neighbor of the camp. While so much of Great Pond has become developed, Pine Island's mainland is insulated by a corridor of lush, wild forest, thanks to Janetha. The campers and staff traveled on these trails all the way from Great Pond to a campsite tucked away on one of the most scenic parts of Lake Mesalonskee. For day two of the trip, the group returned to Great Pond and paddled in canoes and kayaks across the water to hike Mount Philip, a wave-shaped mountain at the northern tip of the lake. From Mount Philip, they got back in their boats and camped on Crooked Island in Great Pond. The next day, they returned to the island and reported back on this comprehensive tour of the lakes and mountains of the area surrounding Pine Island.

Junior Whites, a trip similar to Senior Whites but four days long and for younger campers, ran as an explor-

atory trip this summer. This group, led by Akul Sethi and Lily Lakritz, hiked close to 30 miles of some of the most challenging terrain in just four days, exploring some of the less-visited peaks and campsites in the White Mountains. After climbing over the steep 4,000-foot North and South Twin Mountains, the trip descended past Galehead Hut to stay at 13 Falls Campsite in the heart of Pemigewasset Wilderness. The site is encircled by a perimeter of mountains often hiked as the Pemi Loop—Franconia Ridge on one side, and Mts. Garfield, South Twin, Guyot, and the Bondcliffs on the other—causing 13 Falls to feel deeply remote, far even from the sounds of highways and airplanes. It's named for the many waterfalls and ice-cold swimming holes that can be found at the site, which is at the junction of Twin Brook and Franconia Brook. Reports from the trip noted that this site was well worth the visit, even though the ascent back up to the ridgeline to stay at Mt. Garfield was steep and challenging.

It was a memorable season for trips, thanks to the intrepid spirit of campers and counselors alike. Where there was the option to hike a little further, wake up earlier and catch sunrise on top of a peak, or drop packs and check out a side trail, Pine Islanders chose the challenging and ultimately more rewarding option. These experiences will help counselors as they pore over plans in the trip locker next season, and these are the adventures we can dream of in the cold winter months.



The Pemigewasset Wilderness & 13 Falls Tentsite.



SLOAN CRITCHFIELD MEMORIAL BOAT MAINTENANCE WEEKEND RETURNS!

By Miles Frank

After a long, Covid-induced hiatus, Pine Island alumni, campers, parents, and friends finally gathered once again in late September for the annual Sloan Critchfield Memorial Boat Maintenance Weekend. Every fall, these volunteers spend a few days on the island to perform vital repairs and maintenance work on our beautiful wooden boats, including Bezumarangs, Catboats, Pine Island Skiffs, and the War Canoe—and in doing so, honor the memory of Pine Islander Sloan Critchfield.

This year's iteration was an outstanding work weekend! The crew was led by talented Rockland-based boat builder and Pine Islander Cody Smith, while last summer's assistant cook (and professional chef!) Kat Highley prepared beautiful gourmet meals. They were joined by Pine Island staff members and a particularly industrious crew of volunteers including Bryan Carey, Lizzie

Durkin, Byron and Justin Gaspard, Ian and Owen Gilbert, Henry Geyer, Doug Handy, Erin Heath, AJ Powers, Chris Ward, and Adam and Heath Wenchel.

Although the boats had seen far less action than usual, they had still gone two years without standard maintenance and were definitely in need of some attention. Fortunately, in addition to some patching and gunwale work, the crew managed to sand and repaint every wooden boat in the Pine Island fleet, putting us back on track to preserve their viability for years to come. Next summer's rowers and sailors will be delighted to find every one of Pine Island's skiffs and sailboats with a fresh coat of paint, sure to draw looks of envy from passers-by in bass boats and pontoon party barges. Many thanks to the 2022 Boat Maintenance crew; all Pine Islanders (especially the boats!) are grateful for your hard work.



Volunteers hard at work on the Pine Island Skiffs at this year's Boat Maintenance Weekend.

NO NEED FOR SPORTS CAMP!

Pine Islanders Find Athletic Success in the Real World

By Sumner Ford

Pine Island is far from a sports camp; indeed, our lack of competition is one of our major selling points. For campers and counselors who spent much of the year battling in various competitive endeavors, Pine Island provides a welcome respite, an environment where everyone, including those who would rather avoid competition, can excel. Still, as I have connected with staff, campers, and alumni over the years during the off-season, I've been struck by the number of Pine Islanders competing at a high level across many different sports.

As young campers, Lucas and Mateo Rodriguez Cortina revolutionized the dustball court. They introduced the Pine Island community to "World Cup," a soccer-based game that closely resembles dustball in its dynamic, free-for-all form. Lucas and Mateo have gone on to play soccer semi-professionally in their native Mexico, and this past summer for the Boston Bolts. They now play at the collegiate level for rival schools: Lucas for Colgate and Mateo for Cornell.

Sawyer Carson, who was widely believed to be part fish during his time as a camper and taught swimming this past summer, has racked up a long list of swimming accomplishments, including helping Maine Maritime Academy place third at the NEISDA championship this past year.

Caleb Hunter began Nordic ski racing in high school and eventually found his niche in Biathlon, the iconic skiing-and-target-shooting sport traditionally dominated by Scandinavian countries. Caleb has impressed many with his ability to ski wicked fast, then calm himself enough to shoot with pinpoint accuracy. The pandemic has prevented him from competing in some high-level competi-

tions, like the World University Games in Switzerland, but Caleb has remained persistent, even placing 15th at US Nationals last winter. Caleb is now training at the Fort Kent Outdoor Center and hopes to make the US National Team.

Pine Island has always had a strong presence in the world of rowing. Max Klivans and Sam Trombone, who helped campers hone their rowing form at Pine Island this summer, both row for Hamilton College during the school year. Will Siebert, who hopes to join them as a rowing instructor next summer, actually found himself rowing against Max at the Head of the Charles as a freshman on the Bates College Rowing Team. Nick Newbold may not teach rowing, but he has extensive experience as a coxswain, first at Northfield Mount Hermon and now at Skidmore College.

Sailing Instructor Thomas Clauson recently ventured down from Readfield, Maine to American University in Washington, DC, where he was quickly recruited to join the sailing team. We look forward to him sharing his new racing knowledge when he returns to PIC next summer.

A dirt basketball court riddled with rocks makes passing mandatory. Playing against counselors a foot taller than you necessitates some serious creativity. No, I'm not touting Pine Island as the ideal basketball camp, but this past year, we watched two former campers compete in March Madness: Cormac Ryan garnered headlines as he scored 29 points for Notre Dame in an upset win against Alabama, while Keenan Worthington played as a walk-on at Duke in Coach K's final season.

Darian Squires-Siemer lives in Steamboat Springs and takes full ad-



Mateo (dark jersey, third from left) and Lucas Rodriguez Cortina (light jersey, right), playing soccer for Cornell and Colgate, respectively.



Lucas and Mateo Rodriguez Cortina with their parents after a soccer game between Colgate and Cornell.



Thomas Clauson ready to set out for the American University sailing team.

vantage of the spectacular setting. He competes in big mountain freeskiing, in which he is judged on his ability to navigate some of the most challenging terrain in North America. Last winter, Darian was ranked first out of more than 700 12-to-14-year-old skiers in the Rocky Mountain Division and ultimately placed tenth at Nationals in Big Sky, Montana.

When Kit Smith was a counselor at Pine Island, he competed in both hockey and lacrosse at Bowdoin College and played professional lacrosse for the Boston Cannons right after leading Expedition Camp. Kit no longer competes in lacrosse, but since the company's earliest days, he has been a partner at String King, one of the largest manufacturers of lacrosse equipment in the world.

Ned Bishop may be a Pine Island legend, but to many he's also a legend at Connecticut College, where he has coached Women's Track and Cross-Country for 36 years. Ned prides himself on coaching some of the most academi-

cally successful athletes in both sports, but his athletes have nevertheless found impressive results under his tutelage; he has coached National Champions, All-Americans, and countless Academic All-Americans.

If you attended camp in the 2010s, I hope you witnessed "Talkin' Spwahts with Xander Schwartz," a popular campfire act that displayed Xander's encyclopedic knowledge of sports, especially baseball. Xander spent last summer as an intern for the Cleveland Guardians front office and ended up with a full-time job offer after he graduates from Amherst College in May.

Even in this era of hyper-specialization, Pine Island alumni are proving that time spent at camp need not disqualify anyone from success in the world of sports. If anything, one could argue that PIC provides many advantages for aspiring athletes.



THE KEEPER'S LOG

Another Great Season at Whitehead Light Station!

Much like the campers and staff on Pine Island, we at Whitehead Light Station had a banner year this summer as the world began to return to normality. All of our adult enrichment programs, from writing to cooking to knitting, went off without a hitch, and every one of them had a waitlist. For the first time ever, we held a combined Mindfulness and Astronomy program, in which attendees learned about telescopes, the solar system, and the benefits of being mindful in everyday life. Fortunately, the weather cooperated every night, with clear skies perfect for viewing constellations, planets, meteors, and the occasional space station passing overhead.

Volunteer sessions in May, June, and

October were also a great success. Along with the usual upkeep and maintenance work, these dedicated friends of the Light Station helped complete a number of key improvement projects. They replaced the claw-foot tub in the first floor bathroom with a walk-in shower, allowing more mobility-challenged folks to stay there. They put up insulation and interior walls in the tractor shed and added bathroom facilities and storage space to the Whistle House. Most impressive of all, they repainted the entire east side of the Keeper's House—including the upper shingle siding, which required quite an array of scaffolding to reach! We are ever so grateful to our skilled volunteers who continue to

spend their time and energy helping to make Whitehead better and better each season.

Finally, we welcomed Captain Ryan Bennett to the WLS crew this summer. Born in Upstate New York, Ryan got his start on Seneca Lake, then spent two decades in Key West, Florida, where he honed his boating skills. Now resid-

ing in Panama, where he is building a retreat during the off-season, Ryan still spends most of his days on the water. He brought calm, confidence and over 20 years of experience as a 200-ton captain to WLS, ensuring that our guests had a fun and safe experience. We are thrilled to have Ryan on board and look forward to working with him in the future.



Yoga on the pier.



Volunteers painting the Keeper's House siding.

100-YEAR-OLD PENNANT JOINS VENERABLE PIC ARCHIVES

By Ben Swan

Each August at the Farewell Picnic closing ceremonies, all the boys and staff who have completed their second summer at Pine Island are presented with a lovely pennant with dark blue letters hand-sewn onto a gray background. It's interesting to contemplate where all those pennants end up. On my travels to introduce new families to PIC, I saw many of them proudly displayed on the walls of Pine Islanders' bedrooms. How many of them have survived the inevitable move away from home? Are they packed away with Pinewood Derby cars, soccer team photos, elementary school artwork and perhaps a well-worn stuffed animal, awaiting re-discovery many years hence? How many have accompanied campers into their adult lives?

Ralph Blank's did. Ralph, who died at the age of 86 in 2002, was a camper at Pine Island in the 1920s, and his grandson, the late Scott Danser, was a camper from 1989-1992. Ralph's daughter, Bar-

bara Danser, sent the almost perfectly preserved 100-year-old pennant to retired *Pine Needle* editor Ben Swan last spring and asked that it become part of PIC's permanent archives. We are debating whether to put it in an archival frame and hang it in the Pine Island library with proper identification or take it up to the "Pine Island Collection" at the University of Maine at Orono Special Collections facility. While a second Honk-Hall-destroying fire seems a remote possibility, it would be terrible if this survivor, obviously cherished for most of Ralph Blank's lifetime, were to be lost.

We are always happy to accept and protect wonderful Pine Island memorabilia such as Ralph Blank's pennant, adding it to what is probably the most complete archive of any summer camp in the world. In the meantime, hang onto that pennant you got after your second summer at PIC. Time flies...



Ralph Blank's pennant, looking great after over 100 years.

NEEDLENOTES FROM NEEDLENEWS THE NEEDLENOSED NEWSHOUND

Chris Newlin lives with his family in Wolcott, VT, and is the US Sales Director for Rocky Mountain Bikes. One of his customers is **Chris Gardner**, who runs CG Bike Shop in Belfast, ME.

Cody Smith is living nearby in Rockland, ME, working on wooden boats. He and Taylor Ackerman welcomed their daughter, Juniper Jane Ackerman-Smith, in September.



Cody Smith and Taylor Ackerman with their daughter Juniper.

Abe Stimson is also living in Rockland, working with a local contractor on a new project just a few blocks from his house, trying to get out every so often on the 30-foot sailboat he owns with his brother Nathaniel, and learning the ins and outs of being a member of the Good Tern Food Coop in Rockland. The Good Tern has been an important asset in the Rockland area for decades and is poised to expand. Abe's experience as a contractor, along with his computer savvy and his people skills, will be a boon to the coop. One Good Tern does indeed deserve another...

John Willey lives in Waterville, ME and stays in touch. He is no longer able to work in his boat shop, but is still writing poetry. **Stew Pierson** and his wife Julie Berger Pierson have moved from Vermont to the Parker Ridge retirement community, a short drive from their place on Deer Isle, which is just down the road from **Tom Yoder**, **Peter Bell**, and honorary Pine Islander **Bob Roth**. **Rich Bradley** and his wife Ellen divide their time between Washington, DC and Camden. They are regular volunteers at the Whitehead Light Station. Rich celebrated his 80th birthday with friends and family at WLS last summer.

Cecily Pulver and Nick Tapper finally managed to get married in October. They live in Marlborough, MA and welcomed their second daughter, Maren, in April.

Will Mason was recently named head of the music department at nearby Wheaton College. He and **Erin Lobb Mason** live in Tiverton, RI.

Akul Sethi and **Louis Efron** (Northeastern), and **David Efron** (Emerson) hang out in Boston from time to time. UMaine freshman **Silas Hunter** some-

times comes down to visit.

Emily Pressman is also in Boston, where she works at a small investment bank. She and her husband had their second child this year.

Rob Boutwell lives with his family in nearby Belmont, MA. He is a legal counsel for Sobi, a Swedish biotech company.

Ben Rausch and his wife Kate live in Ipswich, MA, and recently welcomed their fourth child.

Joe Kovaz, his wife **Susan Nelson**, and their daughter AK recently moved to Somerville, MA. Susan is a senior attorney for Mass General Hospital and Joe is working at the Kadampa Meditation Center.

Jason Fischer is a physician in nearby Cohasset, MA. He and his wife recently welcomed twins, both sons.

Toby Goldston is a junior at Wesleyan University, playing on the squash team.

Kevin Hubbard is doing mechanic stuff all over New England.

Chris Ward and **Levi Halliwell** recently met by chance in Barcelona, Spain, where both were traveling for different reasons.



Chris Ward and Levi Halliwell in Barcelona.

Jake Pressman is living in Hamburg, Germany. He has recently developed a contract management and analytics platform and started his own company, Contractuali, to launch it.

Miles Sedgwick called **Ben Swan** the other day to catch up. He and his wife and daughter returned to their Silver Spring, MD home a while back, after three years in Uganda. He is the founder of Rana Labs, a digital media agency operating all over the world. They have an eight-month-old son whom Miles hopes will be a camper in nine or ten years. Miles reports that he is still in touch with **Jim O'Connor**, his buddy from Andover, MA with whom he came to camp, and that Jim has "some big job and is living in London." Miles lives down the street from **Peter Nagler**, and they do a lot of car restoration stuff together. Miles is the proud owner of his grandfather's Citroen Deux Chevaux.

After a year doing political work in Iowa, **Josh Treat** moved back to Wash-

ington, DC, where he sometimes runs into **Sam Lanoff** in the tunnels beneath the Capitol. He recently had dinner with **David Kemp**, who is engaged to Sam Summers, and **Jack Faherty**, who was recently engaged to Bekka Miller, and is now the Executive Director of a bipartisan congressional caucus dealing with foreign policy and veterans' affairs.

Jacob and **Amber Ronson** had a son, Reece, in June. They are living in Richmond, VA, and recently visited Sicily with **Paul** and Mia Ronson.

Zander Abranowicz is also living in Richmond. His brother **Simon** is in Los Angeles. They recently launched their own creative agency, Abbreviated Projects, delivering brand strategy, design, language, and technology to a diverse set of clients, from Nike to The Graduate Hotels.

Sophie Efron is a freshman at Colorado College. She sometimes sees **Will Pomerantz** and **Sydney Vine**, who are both seniors.

David Hincks and Whitney Troyer were married in Denver in September. **Ben**, **Johnny**, **Danny**, **John**, **Teddy**, and **Leah Hincks** were in attendance.

Ned Pressman is engaged and living in Colorado Springs, CO, where he works in commercial real estate as a construction manager.

Coleman Hoyt is semi-retired from the automobile biz in Acton, MA. Soon he will be meeting up with Pine Islander **John Goodhue** and sons **Sam** and **Woody Hoyt** on their annual ski trip to Alta, UT. Sam lives in California and is a director at Treyarch Studio in Santa Monica. Woody lives in Tacoma, WA and is the Environmental Compliance Manager at Lehigh Hanson in Seattle.

Kit Smith is now VP of Product at StringKing, and living in Venice Beach, CA. He sometimes ventures down to Hermosa Beach to go surfing with **Oli- ver Lowe**.

Irving Baldwin is at Whitman College in Walla Walla, WA, and sometimes travels to Seattle to visit **Toby** and **Jame- son Bregar**. Toby is at the University of Washington.

Dawson Loewen and Abby Van Alen were married in Kalispell, MT in June. **Ryan Schlosser**, **Sam Bristol**, and **Will Stack** were groomsmen; **Lauren Brill** was also in attendance.

Ian Ford is enjoying life as a fly fishing guide in Jackson, WY. **Andrew Howe** is there as well, working as a manager at Hoback Sports. **Tom Dugan** recently moved from Jackson back to New England, and is now teaching at Gould Academy in Bethel, ME.

Ryan Gilbert is heading to St. Lawrence University, joining freshman **Ben Cabot** and following **Will Stack**, who will graduate in the spring. They will probably see quite a bit of **Garett Sopko**, who is the Assistant Director of the Outdoor Program.

Lucas and **Mateo Rodriguez Cortina** are also in Upstate New York, playing soccer for Colgate and Cornell, respec-

tively.

Will Durkin lives in Brooklyn, NY. He and his wife Taryn recently welcomed a son, Charlie.

Miles Frank and **Natalie Burr** recently moved to Brooklyn, where Natalie has a job helping to facilitate composting in the city. **Ben Lorber** is there as well, working for a marketing firm.

Forrest Brown is also in Brooklyn.

Max Huber is across the river in Manhattan, where he is a surgical resident at Mt. Sinai Hospital. He and Caroline Abernathy were married in Lake Oconee, GA in October. **Charlie Boutwell** is in Manhattan as well, working at Square Mile Capital.

Lucien Malle is also in New York City, where he is quickly ascending the ranks of cosmetics giant L'Oréal. His brother **Paul** is engaged and living in Mexico. Their father **Frédéric** is living in Hampton Bays, NY, continuing his innovative work in the world of scent.

Adam Schachner and Lili Baldwin were married in Obernburg, NY in September. Unsurprisingly, **Jason** and **Ben Schachner** were in attendance.

Eve Whitehouse and Billy Tom live in Millbrook, NY. They welcomed a daughter, Cora, in September.

Fritz and **Cyndi Farquhar** are now Maine residents at the Ocean View retirement community. They are enjoying an active retirement (Fritz from architecture and Cyndi from teaching) and connect with fellow residents **Jack** and **Diana Schultz** from time to time. In the 1960s, Cyndi helped run a day camp in the Third Cabin with **Lise Aubry** and **Peggy Standar**. Both Peggy (now Maggie Shannon) and Lise reside at Granite Hill, a retirement community in Hallowell, ME. **Chip Liversidge** is also a Granite Hill resident. Ben spoke recently with **Dr. Peter Zeman**. Peter and his wife live in West Hartford, CT on Asylum Avenue, a street name familiar to Pine Islanders of a certain age. Peter is still working three days a week as a psychiatrist.

Rob Gowen and his wife Seamane Flanagan visited Ben Swan on Whitehead Island in late summer, and Ben caught up with them in their hometown of Charlottesville, VA in the fall.

Greg Castell and his family spent a happy week this summer at Topside, Pine Island's cool rental property on the mainland near Whitehead Island. Greg, his wife and two daughters visited Whitehead during their stay on the coast.

Rob Chandler and his wife Rhonda Faloon visited Ben and Emily Swan at Whitehead Island last fall. Rob and Rhonda have both recently retired, Rob from his career as an architect in Boston and Rhonda from hers as director of the Cape Ann Museum in Gloucester, MA.

Matthew Hawkins is teaching music at the Ecology Learning Center, a public charter high school in Unity, ME focused on hands-on education.

Sarah Mason and Alex Brookings

were married last year and are living in Lisbon Falls, ME. They had a son, Teddy, in July.

Charlie Krause and Claire Schollaert were married on Westport Island, ME in October. **Will, Tim, and Ike Dana**, along with **Max McKendry** and **Ian Ford**, were in attendance.

Ben Herman and Libby Simpson recently bought a house in Brunswick, ME, and welcomed a baby boy in mid-January.

Rip Swan is living in Portland, ME, and has recently joined G.M. Wild, Inc., a small construction firm in Brunswick, as Lead Carpenter. **Katie Swan** is also in Portland, working as a digital marketing specialist at Helm Digital. She and **Tom**

Nagler have a new puppy named Jones.

Satchel Toole and Monica Manning are also in Portland, and were married at Jay Peak, VT in September. **Alex Toole, Nick Toole, Max McKendry, Ian Ford, and Sumner Ford** were in attendance. Alex and Emily Radziwon recently bought a house in Portland, and Nick is engaged to Zoe Malia. Max is in Portland as well, working as a first responder.

Harry Swan moved back to Maine in September, and hopes to join the Portland crew soon. He recently landed a side gig as the editor of this here publication.



The Pine Island contingent at Satchel Toole's wedding. (Left to right) Max McKendry, Ian Ford, Satchel Toole, Sumner Ford, Nick Toole, and Alex Toole.

A P.S.A. FROM PICHO

By Taylor Clyde

Hello Pine Islanders!

As PICHO (Pine Island Chief Hydration Officer), I have spent the past few months on the shores of Lake Seneca, sharing my vast compendium of aquatic expertise with my peers. But I have begun to worry that in my time away from the island, my fellow Pine Islanders may have become complacent in their hydration habits. Though I hope this is not the case, I am reaching out to you with my first annual WATER TIME (Wintertime Action To Ensure Reduction of Thirst-Induced Malaise and Exhaustion).

When the weather is cold, it may seem that hydration is no longer a pressing issue, but I can assure you this is not the case! Studies have shown that our chances of dehydration actually increase during the colder months, for many reasons: our bodies have to work harder when wearing heavier clothing, sweat evaporates faster in dry air, and people are less likely to carry water with them throughout the day.

As with many issues that PICHO confronts, there is one simple solution: drink more water! As I so often reminded you throughout the summer, make sure to bring your water bottle to all activities. In my own backpack, I keep a Camelbak in the laptop sleeve, two Nalgens double-holstered in the side pockets, and another Nalgene in case of emergencies. While I do not expect this level of performance from everyone, I do expect all Pine Islanders to keep one (preferably reusable) water bottle on them at all times. This will help ensure that your hydration needs are met, and you will be ready to kick off the 2023 summer with a splash. Can't wait to see you all in a few short months!

P.S. If you see that NOPEE (Nemesis Of Picho Excavating Evil) skulking around anywhere, give him some trouble.

PICHO out!



Essential equipment for all seasons!

LIBRARY REVITALIZATION EFFORT GOING STRONG



Newly purchased Middle Grade-level books, labeled and ready for the shelves.

As anyone who has spent a summer at Pine Island knows, part of the magic of the camp experience involves leaving behind the amenities of modern life for six weeks. Having powered down their devices for the summer, campers and staff spend rest hour and other down time writing letters, playing cards, and, of course, reading!

Recognizing that the time had come to revamp what PIC has to offer in this regard, Summer Manager Lindsay Clarke undertook an expansive effort this year to diversify, reorganize, and reinvigorate the E. L. Swan Memorial Library in Honk Hall. The first step was to remove books that were unread and falling apart, making sure to retain essential classics and those with special relevance to Pine Island's history and culture. Lindsay then worked with a librarian friend at Waynflete School (where she teaches in the off-season) to create a book list, aiming to bring new perspectives to the collection, make the library more appealing to middle- and high-school readers, and fill in gaps that had developed in classic series such as

Hatchet, Lord of the Rings, and Redwall.

With help from Emily Swan, Lindsay cleared out a lot of cobwebs and reorganized the library into Middle Grades, Young Adult, and Adult Fiction, as well as Narrative Non-Fiction and other categories, making it easier for campers and staff alike to find books appropriate to their age and reading level—and was pleased to discover that new titles flew off the shelves.

The Pine Island library has come a long way in the past year, but the work is still ongoing! Lindsay has collaborated with Print, a bookstore in Portland, ME, to set up an online "Wish List" where Pine Islanders can easily purchase books to help improve our collection even more; it can be found at www.printbookstore.com/wishlist/802. More than half of the titles on the list have already been purchased, including 63 from a fund set up by Kate and Christopher Skogen to add books with more diverse protagonists and perspectives. Huge thanks to Lindsay and all those who have contributed to the library; PIC readers of all ages appreciate your efforts!



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“TOPSIDE” BOATHOUSE APARTMENT FOR RENT NEAR WHITEHEAD

Pine Island Camp is offering for rent a charming two-bedroom apartment with a deck that hangs right out over the water. The late Rip Swan, a master builder from Vermont, Pine Islander, and brother of Jun Swan, built Topside as his personal vacation project over a period of years in the 1960s. The apartment is small but complete, with a kitchen/dining/sitting area with a propane “wood-stove,” a full bathroom, two bedrooms (one with twin beds, one with a queen), and a large deck. The building is perched on the edge of Emery’s Wharf, a granite pier built to handle freight traffic for the old quarry that sits on the property. Pine Island’s new ramp and float are available for launching kayaks or for tying up other boats. Great birding on the flats at low tide. Activity by lobstermen next door is fun to watch. Available early June–end of September.

Cost: \$1000 per week

Contact: 207-200-7957 or info@whiteheadstation.org



The deck at Topside early morning.



Eat here or out on the deck overlooking the water.



New bed, mattress and linens in the master bedroom.

NEW PIC SWAG TO DROP SOON??



Spotted on the streets of Brunswick! This photo, which has gone viral on The Internet in recent weeks, appears to show award-winning filmmaker Jasper Lowe out for a stroll on Maine Street in downtown Brunswick, just a few blocks from Pine Island’s off-season office. So, yeah, that’s pretty jaw-dropping in its own right, but incredibly, it’s not even the most intriguing thing about the photo! Take a look at what the blurry figure is wearing: a gray sweater with navy blue stripes on the sleeves, and is that the iconic PIC logo we see emblazoned on the front?

Is this just an old heirloom, pulled out of dusty retirement to complete a vintage look? Or perhaps a hint of an upcoming re-release of the long-venerated PIC Sweater? It’s impossible to say for sure, but keep a close eye on the runways this year; we may have just gotten a tantalizing first glimpse of something that, if true, would undoubtedly be the fashion event of the decade!



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