Pine Island Camp

Est. 1902

BELGRADE LAKES, MAINE 04918

November 2026

Dear Pine Islanders,

I can't recall how many attempts it took before I learned to roll a kayak, to dock and moor a dory, or to finally get that boat I built in Shop to float properly, but I know for sure that those small failures made eventual success much more meaningful. These are some of the gifts Pine Island gave me that I most appreciate—the space to struggle, the chance to fail, the opportunity to try again.

Pine Island creates the conditions where uncertainty and struggle lead to self-confidence, personal growth, and a profound sense of accomplishment. I can vividly remember my nerves before Oak Island, my first overnight camping trip. It was just a quick War Yacht paddle across Great Pond, but I was afraid of the unknown, of sleeping in a tent, and of living in the wild, even for a single night. I survived, and just a few short summers later, I was navigating the rapids of the St. Croix River, knowing that the intimidating challenge in front of me was just another Oak Island.

One of the most valuable gifts we can give our kids is the opportunity to learn to fail well. Pine Island offers children the chance to practice failure in an environment that is free from the pressure of grades, the distractions of technology, and the stresses of everyday life.

I hope you will join me in contributing to Pine Island's Annual Fund this year, so that future generations of Pine Islanders can learn not only how to fail, but also how to keep persisting until they succeed.

Akka Lakka!

Xander Schwartz



K.D.
Camper (2012-15)
Counselor (2019, 2021)