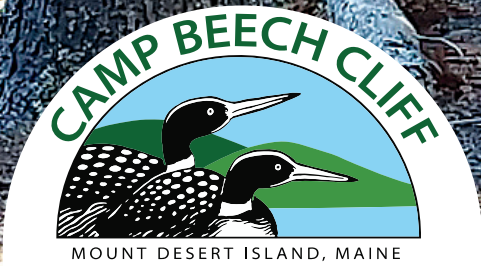


# CAMP BEECH CLIFF



ECHOES 2020  
2020 Annual Newsletter





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Camp Beech Cliff couldn't exist without the hard work of our volunteer boards. Board members give their time and resources in support of our mission. A heartfelt thank you to our outgoing board members for their years of volunteer service: Ron Greenberg, Strick Heilman, Elizabeth Salvi, and Mary Clark Webster.



**Camp Beech Cliff just hosted our first Halloween event. Many of MDI's non-profit organizations handed out candy at our cabins and through the forest to create a 'Trail of Treats', allowing children to have a trick or treating experience while maintaining a safe distance from others. We had so much fun that we hope to expand the experience next year... What would Mike Duffy do with a 'Haunted Forest'?**

**Acadia Community Theatre**  
**Bar Harbor Food Pantry**  
**Barn Arts Collective**  
**College of the Atlantic Work Study Tutors and Virtual Learning Assistants**  
**Downeast Adaptive Youth Recreation**  
**Great Harbor Maritime Museum**  
**Jessup Memorial Library**  
**MDI Biological Laboratory**  
**Mount Desert 365**  
**Seal Cove Auto Museum**  
**Summer Festival of the Arts**





## A message from our Executive Director, Debra Deal

Early registration opened in March with unprecedented interest in our largest

camp catalog ever. Only weeks later we were all wondering if camp could happen at all and then summer camp became yet another loss we all experienced in 2020.

It has been a tough year and the pandemic is forcing us to do things very differently. No camp, no campers, no summer staff, no pickleball or climbing nights, no school programming, and no weddings. We have made some serious budget cuts. Yet, through it all, we have had the support of our community to keep us strong.

For so long, I have been talking about the virtues of camp as a place to remind kids and staff that they can be outdoors all day and enjoy the company of each other without a phone. I still believe this. Social media is not my communication method of choice; yet here I am having group chats and zoom calls every day. It is not the same thing as hugging a friend or sitting around the table with family at Thanksgiving, but internet platforms have become our modern-day way to keep friendships alive and well.

There were important health and safety reasons for not opening CBC last summer, but we have learned enough over these past months that we think we can open next summer. For the sake of our children we need to open (and will do so unless the state forbids it)! We spent this summer and fall gathering the information needed for a successful 2021 summer camp season. We are talking to other day camps and childcare centers that opened last summer, we are watching what is happening at our schools, and we are listening to the health experts. We now know that having children and staff outdoors, wearing masks, and physically distancing is the safest way to have small groups gathering. We have 50 forested acres, a lake, Acadia National Park at our doorstep, and know how to have fun being outdoors. I cannot think of any other place that I would want to be during a continuing pandemic.

We are going to figure out how to do this well, no matter the obstacles. As for now, we will continue to think creatively about how to keep that connection among kids and adults in our community alive while staying safe. We will listen to the CDC and American Camp Association and be back with a spectacular year. Thank you for cheering us on from the sidelines.





## **A message from our Camp Director, Matt Cornish**

My experience, and that of many I know, tells a different story. In some ways we are more connected than ever. The mandated distance we

keep is measured physically, not socially. We have learned in this pandemic that we can place a great deal of physical space between individuals and not abandon our social nature. In my own life, I have

become more connected with my extended family since March as we gather for a weekly zoom call. For children, many schools, camps, and daycare programs have reported success with even their youngest participants being quite capable of maintaining physical distance while still having rich social interactions.

So much of camp is about the relationships – built, taught, nourished – and this is what I love about the work that I do. Relationships can still flourish during a global pandemic because they have never been rooted in physicality. It is the connections that are being built at a social and emotional level that lift us up and carry us on; we will keep working on making this possible for our camp community and will share those plans with you as we move into the new year.

# **Distancing Should Be Physical, Not Social**

On March 13th, Camp Beech Cliff held one of its normal Friday Family Climbing Nights. We doubled down on how we were sanitizing equipment and surfaces that evening because there was some concern regarding the spread of a virus that had been making headlines. Little did we all know that by the following Monday morning, our lives would come to a screeching halt, and “Social Distancing” would become the phrase of the year.

Before we knew it, schoolwork had gone online, adults began to work remotely, and toilet paper was scarce. I began to offer Virtual Morning Circles via Facebook while designing new online CBC programs to share with our campers and families. We kept busy while we waited this COVID thing out. We were maintaining our “Social Distance.”

Along the way, I realized our vocabulary was all wrong. I know that you may be thinking: ‘Matt, grammar is your takeaway from all of this?’ And my answer is ‘yes and no.’ Words have power over us and “social distancing” creates a very specific neurological pathway in our minds; it communicates the idea that we are disconnected from each other, we are cutoff from society, and we are alone.



# “Children are adaptable and up for the challenge”

Thank you to all of our community partners that made our 2020 virtual programs possible:

*Morning Circles with Matt*

*Leadership Toolbox for Teens*

*Super Happy Awesome News - a virtual musical*

*Curriculum enrichment programs with MDI virtual academy*

Though CBC was not able to operate a camp this summer, we have been in close contact with ACA accredited day camp programs that did operate in Maine and beyond.

## Some Lessons Learned from 2020:

- **“Commit to the plan! Live the plan!”** Have a plan in place for any and all contingencies. Communicate the plans with your staff, families, and campers. Stick to the plan.
- **COVID cleaning and distancing measures resulted in healthier campers.** Camp Health centers saw fewer colds and tummy-aches all summer.
- **Children are adaptable and up for the challenge.** Kids can have fun in almost any setting and the masks, hand-washing and distancing are not a barrier they cannot overcome.
- **Adults need to model for the campers.** Campers stick to the plan as long as staff and the adults in their lives consistently model the expectations we have for one another within our community.



# The 2020 Circle of Donors

All gifts are gratefully received and recognized. Annual named levels are based on cumulative household giving totals, including in-kind donations since October 1, 2019

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 recognized in bold type.  
 Thank you!



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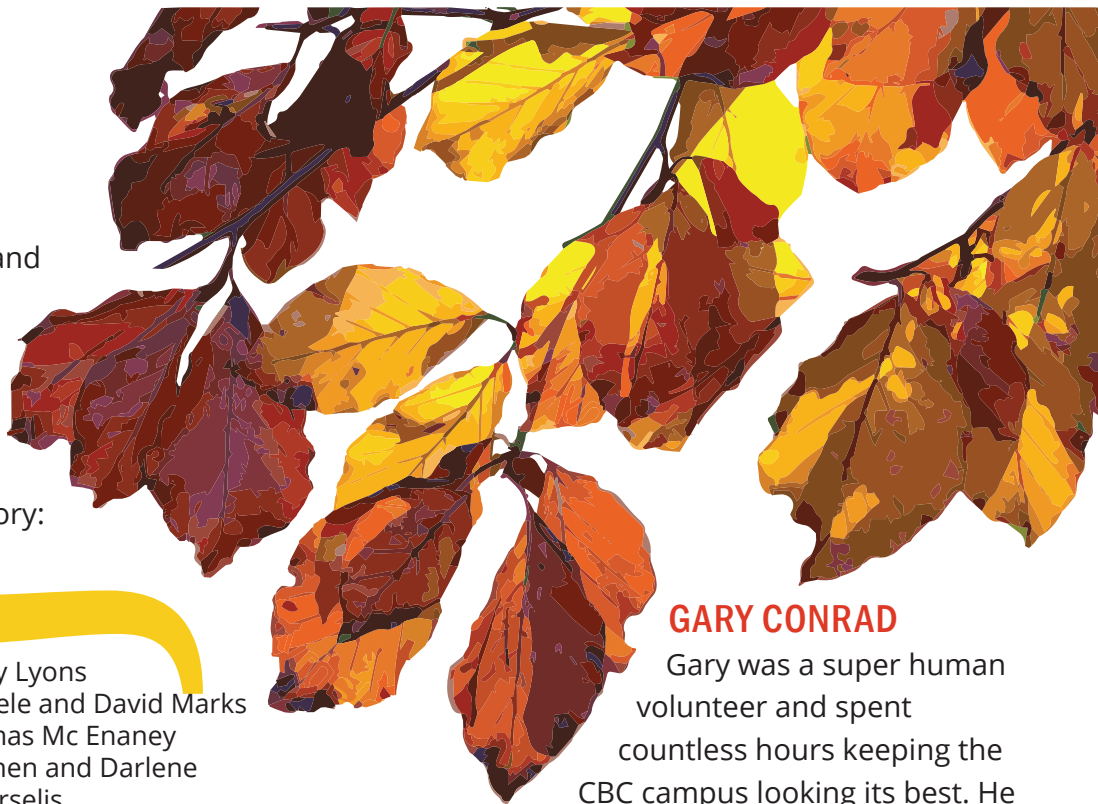
## In memoriam

### JAMES KELLOGG

Jim was a good neighbor and a supporter of CBC. If not for Jim and his wife Sally, CBC would never have been created. A perennial flower bed at the entrance to the campus will be constructed in Jim's honor. Thank you to all that have donated in Jim's memory:

Henry and Pamela Abernathy  
John and Liz Angelbeck  
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John and Judith Santorius  
Nancy Van Aken Marti



### GARY CONRAD

Gary was a super human volunteer and spent countless hours keeping the CBC campus looking its best. He loved any opportunity to show campers the natural wonders right under their noses.

### TOM SAVAGE

Tom was a pillar of the MDI community, a camper parent, and a committed supporter of CBC. Thanks to Tom, our 50 acres of forest were always well maintained and stewarded.