

BROWN LEDGE

MAGAZINE | SUMMER 2020



Survive, then thrive

Never in a million years did I think camp would not be able to operate for a summer, let alone my second summer in charge. Camp has never not had an income. Camp has never not had a program. We have never not gathered on the shores of Malletts Bay to sing and sway and play. This year has been a roller coaster for all of us, and we're only half way through it.

However, my focus and goals for camp have never been clearer. Like I said in my recent E-News video, we must survive and then thrive. I plan to do everything in my power to ensure we do just that, but I can't do it alone. Camp needs the support of our community to get us to next year and beyond. The support we have received so far this year has been overwhelming—thank you.

We don't yet know what next year will bring. Camp operations might not be entirely back to "normal," but we will have campers, we will have staff, we will have a program. I intend to spend every minute of this year finding that path forward to summer 2021.

In the meantime, please continue to keep the spirit of BLC alive this summer. Reach out to your bunkies and friends, and talk about camp. Remember your favorite things, laugh, joke and cry. I recently reconnected with my second-year JC group. This summer marks 20 years since we gave out roses and recited "This is the Last." Many of us hadn't spoken since we said goodbye that summer. (Technology was not great 20 years ago—no one had cell phones!) Reconnecting with them was one of the joys of my spring, and now we can keep our connection strong.

Make no mistake—this is one of the toughest challenges Brown Ledge has ever faced. But we will get through it, and perhaps be stronger and more prepared on the other side. Just remember: the goal is survive, then thrive! Brown Ledge spirit never dies!



Abby, Dottie, Lulu, and Mitchell post camp 2019.

Abby Lovshin-Smith
Director, Brown Ledge Camp



2020 at Brown Ledge Camp, no other year the same. I sure hope that these words remain true. This spring has been extraordinary, with school and summer programs cancelled, working from home, isolated from friends and family. The effects on all of us have been profound. I find myself wondering if we will ever go back to normal. As the Board works with Abby to create a path to reopening camp in 2021, I know we must find a new normal that ensures the health and safety of our campers, staff, parents and alumni while maintaining the integrity of our unique program. Camp was important to me before COVID-19, but now it seems vital.

I am 100 percent committed to ensuring that Brown Ledge provides a safe environment for young girls to freely learn, grow and develop their capabilities. Our future depends on strong leadership and Brown Ledge is implicitly designed to cultivate that skill set.

I didn't go to camp to learn how to be a leader; I went because it was fun and I could spend time with my closest friends. Learning valuable leadership skills was just a positive outcome. By allowing me to take risks and face challenges, BLC helped me build independence, resilience and self-esteem in a safe, supervised and supportive environment. I firmly believe that it is more important than ever for Brown Ledge to continue to grow future leaders while ensuring that the summer is safe and filled with pure joy and good clean fun.

I am so grateful to our Brown Ledge community. So many of you have offered words of support, made a monetary gift, volunteered your time or just simply connected with each other. We need you to keep the spirit alive and help us protect our mission. Together, we will foster a new generation of leaders who are thoughtful, inclusive and brave in any circumstance. Global pandemic or not, Brown Ledgers stick together!

Katy Robbins Ritz
President, Brown Ledge
Board of Directors

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Thanks to these folks for contributing time and history to the issue
Lori Angstadt, Lyda Blank, Jeff Buckman, John Collins, Richard Currie, Melissa Fishel Mauer, Di Glossman, Judy Hallberg, Randy Neale, Bill Neilsen, Kathy Neilsen, and Bonnie Royster.

The editor would like to thank Kathy Neilsen for passing down this magazine with grace and enthusiasm.

A Statement on the Black Lives Matter Movement and Our Work Ahead

Our mission statement and philosophy inspire Brown Ledgers to develop their own sense of community and responsibility at camp so that we may carry that forward with us into the world.

Brown Ledge believes it is critical for organizations with a voice to speak out against racial injustice and systemic oppression. We stand with the Black Lives Matter movement, and with those pursuing justice for George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, and countless other people of color who have been killed as a direct result of systemic and individual acts of racism.

We know there is work ahead of us, as a predominantly white and

privileged community, to ensure that Brown Ledge improves upon providing an inclusive experience to all campers, staff and families. To this end, we are reviewing camp policies and training, and critically examining the accessibility of our program. As our action plan develops, we will keep our community informed.

At Brown Ledge, we encourage our campers to face problems head on and look for solutions. We hope you will take time to

talk with your loved ones and learn about what you can do to move toward equity and justice for everyone. There are no quick fixes to systemic racism.

Board member Marjorie Isaacs is spearheading a committee dedicated to looking at issues of race and racism in our community. The committee seeks to listen to our community, reflect on our practices and norms, and develop actionable steps to strengthen our programming in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion. We are dedicated to co-creating lasting and meaningful change. We welcome your input in that work, and encourage you to reach out to us with your feedback, insight and ideas at board@brownledge.org.



In solidarity,

Brown Ledge Board of Directors
Abby Lovshin-Smith, Director
Kim McManus, Assistant Director

The COVID-19 Pandemic has Reinforced What We Already Know: Brown Ledge Spirit Never Dies!

We've been a part of Bunkie reunions and Zoom play readings, and we've delighted in Virtual Ledgers and Brown Ledge Connections classes. Although we're spread across the globe, we continue to be united by the place we love.

Stay connected,
keep smiling, and
we'll see you soon!



Meeting this Challenge: An Update

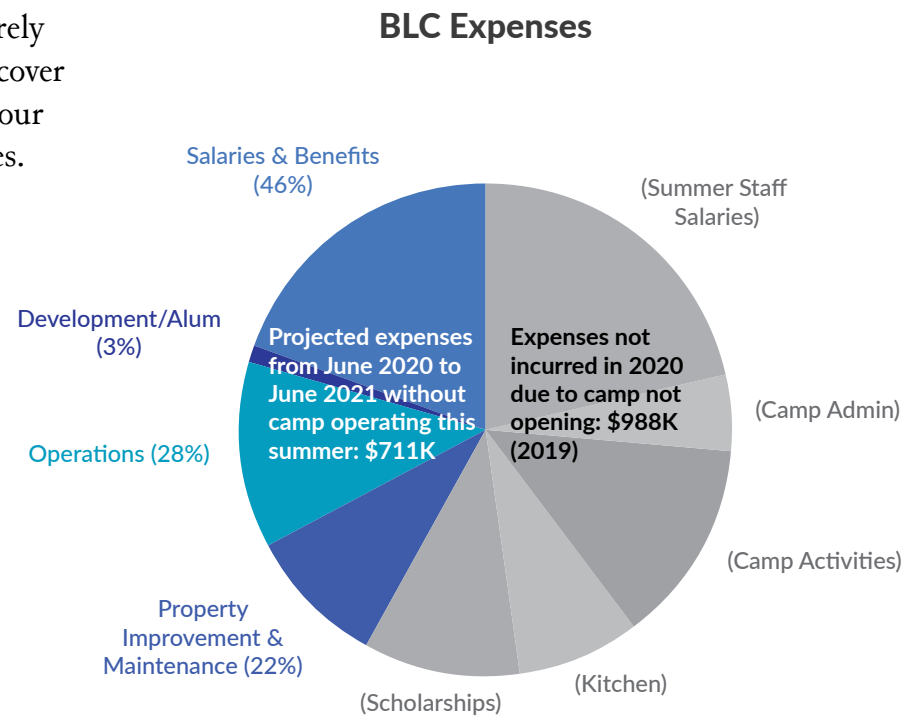
In June we shared this message about our financial needs without camp. We're incredibly grateful for the support we've received.

Although we aren't incurring programmatic expenses this summer, Brown Ledge has fixed and year-round costs that are critical, including salaries, maintenance of the property, and operational expenses consisting of property and payroll taxes, insurance, utilities and rentals. We continue to work diligently to reduce expenses wherever possible. We also anticipate additional costs associated with updating our facility so we can prepare for a safe and healthy summer in 2021.



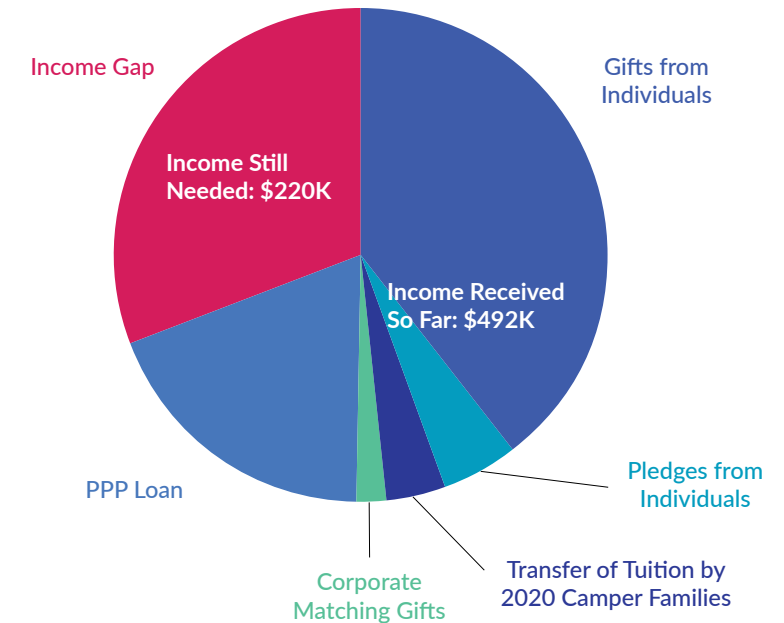
In order to meet this challenge and not incur further debt, we need your philanthropic support more than ever. We're incredibly grateful to the many 2020 camper families, alumni and parents who have already made a donation or transferred tuition this year. Your financial contributions and encouraging messages are sustaining us! Very simply, our income as of August 4th without tuition currently covers 40 percent of our adjusted annual expenses.

Normally we rely on tuition to cover 85 percent of our yearly expenses.



BLC Income

Total Expense/Income Needs Through June 2021: \$711K
Income as of 8/4/20



Mission Statement

The Brown Ledge Foundation oversees the operation, perpetuation and educational mission of Brown Ledge Camp. The Foundation exists to support camp's current and future programs and preserve its natural setting on Lake Champlain.

We know that many people in the Brown Ledge community have been directly and indirectly impacted by worldwide events over the past several months. We recognize that it is a difficult time to be asking for your support.

At this moment our top priority is to ensure BLC's financial health.

With the mission of the Brown Ledge Foundation at the forefront of our minds, we hope you can consider helping us to continue this unique experience of freedom, community, and personal growth for girls and young women.

Give in the way that works for you:

- Online:** with a one-time or recurring monthly gift through the Brown Ledge website.
- Venmo:** @BrownLedgeCamp
- PayPal Giving Fund:** Search Brown Ledge
- PayPal:** with "foundation@brownledge.org"
- Via check:** Brown Ledge Foundation, 1 Mill Street, Suite 216, Burlington, VT 05401
- Visit:** brownledge.org/give/ways-give/ to learn more.

Thank you!





Our Remarkable Woman



L to R: Bobbi riding at a young age with HEB at the reins; with campers in the 70s; Barbara in all her glamour.



A biography and tribute to Brown Ledge Camp's second director and primary perpetuator, on the occasion of her 100th birthday.

by Julia Proctor

Barbara Brown Winslow was many things—a loyal daughter, an actor, a writer and a business woman—but most notably (at least to us), she was the legendary leader of our camp from 1957 to 1983.

Born in Wellesley, Mass., on December 28, 1919, Barbara was the only child of Harry and Marjorie Brown. The Browns founded Brown Ledge Camp on Malletts Bay in 1927 when Bobbi, as she was known in her youth, was seven. Little did she know that she would live and work amongst those pine trees by the lake for most of her next 64 years.

As a camper, Bobbi is most often remembered on a horse or on the stage, passions she retained her entire life. She received her Vanguards in Aquaplaning and Horsemanship. She attended Arlington Junior College in Virginia, then trained as an actor at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York City.

As a young actress, Barbara worked on Broadway and with regional theatres, and toured nationally with professional

productions. She spent two years with the Broadway road show of “Harvey,” starring Joe E. Brown, and performed in New York with Jimmy Stewart before he made the film version (she would later admit she preferred working with Jimmy to Joe). As is common practice, Bobbi adopted a stage name: Barbara Winslow, after the popular play, “The Winslow Boy.” To her friends, however, she remained Bobbi Brown.

In 1942, she married William J. Bryan, known as Bill, who shared her passion for horses and the theatre. After World War II, the Bryans joined many of their generation in flocking to Europe to help with the rebuilding effort. Barbara was stationed in Wiesbaden, Germany, as secretary to the Commander of the 7970th Counter Intelligence Corps Detachment, for which she received a commendation for her service. Many Brown Ledges who knew Barbara say that she was working as a spy to protect American interests in U.S.-occupied Germany, although this remains largely speculative. We can imagine.

While in Europe, Bill recognized Seadler, a famous Olympic horse that had completed his war duties in the infantry and been abandoned on a German farm. In a testament to their love of horses, the couple raised funds to rescue the horse and successfully transported him on a ship across the Atlantic, where he eventually made his way to the Brown Ledge stables.

Bobbi and Bill returned to New York City and worked at camp in the summers—she in the theatre, he in the stable. But the mid-50s proved to be a challenging time for Barbara. In 1956, her marriage ended, and the following year her beloved father, Harry Brown, passed away. Barbara dutifully stepped up to run Brown Ledge Camp with her mother, Marjorie. The two made a powerful team: Barbara the face of Brown Ledge, Marjorie a stable and firm backbone. In 1965, Marjorie suffered a stroke, and Barbara became the sole leader of camp.

Barbara is remembered as a larger-than-life personality.

Former counselor and founding board member Randy Neale sums it up: “I thought she was magnificent.” John Collins, camp’s lawyer for 33 years, likens her to the Queen of England. “She was in charge, she was in control, and one of the most dynamic, exciting people that I knew,” he says.

Melissa Fishel Mauer, who grew up at camp and knew Barbara from a very young age, sums up “The Look”: Barbara could “bring everyone to silence with one stern look.” She was “cool and sophisticated,” walking around camp with her clipboard. She didn’t micromanage, but trusted you to do your job, and do it well—true to the Brown Ledge philosophy. Her trust allowed you to achieve things beyond what you thought possible.

Barbara was also a fabulous host. Her cabin was a scene from *Mad Men*, full of laughter, cocktails, and a good game of poker. It was always open to counselors as a place to relax, have fun, and build community. Some of the fondest memories shared about Barbara are of the dinners in her cabin post-camp. Former theatre counselor and founding board member Judy Hallberg remembers the magnificent meals Barbara cooked in that little kitchen, using skills she acquired at a culinary school in France. But not every meal was a winner: Head of theatre emeritus Richard Currie recalls an escargot adventure gone wrong—“the most horrendous thing we ever did,” he said. No matter what, you were guaranteed a good time. It was in that cabin that she would let her hair down, metaphorically.



Clockwise from top: at the helm of a card game in the 70s; you could often find Barbara in the front office of Headquarters; Bobbi Brown down by the docks; with her parents, Harry and Marjorie; performing in the Club House.



“She was in charge, she was in control, and one of the most dynamic, exciting people that I knew.”

a great presence and she used it.” As former camp director Kathy Neilsen remembers, “Barbara had great style and flair and a jumpsuit in her closet in every color of the rainbow.” If you saw last summer’s production of *Pippin*, you probably saw a few of those jumpsuits. “She loved to be outrageous,” adds Kathy.

Camp had the pleasure of Barbara’s performances on stage, especially with the Brown Ledge Stock Company, which she helped found in 1951. However, Sunday evening Ledger was her weekly show. Every Sunday afternoon she would sit on the Vista with her notebook, writing articles to share with camp. She had several recurring characters (see page 12-13 for examples), but the most beloved was the young southern camper who would call home with, “Dear Mama, Mama is that you?” often excited by all the handsome men at this all-girls camp. More recent generations of Brown Ledgers will recognize this in the form of the annual “First Phone Call Home,” when female counselors warmly imitate the current male counselors.

Barbara knew how to find the right people to make camp special. She hired dedicated, passionate, hardworking, fun folks who loved camp. And they loved camp because they loved Barbara. She helped raise generations of dynamic, independent women (and men). However, she didn’t consider herself a feminist. As Kathy Neilsen reflects, “The idea that women could do anything was just too obvious to put into politics. After all, she’d been doing that and encouraging that in us for a very long time.”

And sometimes, indeed, the actual hair would come down. Everyone remembers that Barbara would leave camp once a week to get her hair done, generally on Saturdays before theatre. Melissa Fishel Mauer remembers staring in fascination at Barbara’s fabulous updo from every angle, trying to figure out how she kept that beautiful hair up. However, if the JCs in Beehive got a little too rowdy late at night, Barbara would take her hair down to make a dramatic—and lasting—impression. “If you saw Barbara with her hair down,” Melissa laughs, “you knew you were in trouble.”

Judy Hallberg likens it to a performance. Barbara “liked to play, and shaking her hair out to be scary was playing. She had



L to R: Laughing with Fred Fishel, Barbara's indispensable partner in crime; co-directors Barbara and Marjorie; Barbara in her cabin with Judy Hallberg and Richard Currie; Opposite page: Barbara as The Jester in the Stock Company's 1988 production of *Revenge of the Space Pandas* or *Binky Rudich and the Two-Speed Clock*.



Barbara knew how to find the right people to make camp special.

The Transition by Kathy Neilsen:

One of the things I came to realize about Barbara was that she remembered what it was like, what it felt like, to be young. I do think that's a common trait shared by a lot of the best teachers and others who work with children. She also remembered what it was like to take the director's reins after her father died. Those who knew him spoke of HEB's charisma and he was widely loved, even adored. Many people saw him as the embodiment of Brown Ledge and it was difficult for them to imagine camp without him. Some did not hide the fact that they thought Barbara would fail and that Brown Ledge would close. Though she never made the connection to us explicitly, we always knew that Barbara did not want our transition to be marred in that way. She said to us and to many others that it would take three years of doing everything ("And I mean "EVERYTHING") wrong to cause camp to fold. That statement was a round-about way of saying that some mistakes were inevitable and that BLC would survive them. Barbara Winslow was not the hand-wringing type. She always had great faith in the BLC philosophy and program ("have faith" was one of her favorite aphorisms, along with "figure it out" and "cope and fend") and during the transition, she practiced what she preached.

By the mid-70s, after thirty years of running camp, Barbara's thoughts turned to retirement. Many family summer camps like Brown Ledge were closing, easier to shut down than pass on. With no heirs and few resources, what was Barbara to do? This large parcel of land on a highly desirable bay of Lake Champlain could have been sold to developers, but Barbara had no interest in selling off our beloved property. She set about perpetuating Brown Ledge Camp, and ensuring the legacy of her beloved father.

In 1976, Barbara hosted the first alumni camp to celebrate Brown Ledge's 50th anniversary and to start recruiting the next generation of leadership. Barbara knew she didn't want one individual to own camp, so over the next few years, with the help of many but spearheaded by Randy Neale, Barbara managed to successfully transfer the ownership of camp to a group of shareholders. As Randy says, Brown Ledge exists because "she chose it to be so."

1983 marked the second major transition for Brown Ledge Camp. Camp was to be run by a board of directors, recruited by Barbara, who then hired new directors, also recruited by Barbara, to manage the running of camp. Barbara was simply too large a personality to be replaced by one person.

Barbara remained involved as a board member, but also had the strength of will to give Bill and Kathy Neilsen the space they needed to develop as leaders. "She always had great faith in the BLC philosophy and program," says Kathy, "and during the transition, she practiced what she preached." The summer of 1984, Barbara stayed away from Malletts Bay. She would eventually return for visits, especially on Saturday nights (once even in a limousine,



as Richard tells), but she had successfully passed on the camp she loved.

Barbara passed away on March 3, 1999, in Shelburne, Vt., at 79 years old. As Bill recounted in his eulogy for Barbara, "Even at the end of her life when her health was failing, a new nurse would enter her room at Wake Robin and emerge a few minutes later, smiling and

shaking her head saying, 'What a remarkable woman.'" Barbara was our remarkable woman.

We have entered a new era of Brown Ledge Camp, under the leadership of Abby Lovshin-Smith. Barbara made the space for others to thrive. As Bill and Kathy put it: "She was so uniquely herself and so successful at encouraging us to be

uniquely ourselves at every age." She empowered all of us to achieve beyond our doubts and worries, to accomplish incredible tasks, and move through the world knowing we are loved and supported. And thankfully, because of Barbara's foresight in perpetuating camp, Brown Ledge continues to do the same. Thank you, Barbara, and happy birthday.

Select Writing by Barbara Winslow

We hope you enjoy the following samples of Barbara's characters, insights and messages to Brown Ledgers.

In Her Own Words

The Remarkable You

from 1961

This is by way of being a toast to you from Mrs. Brown and me. When things move as fast as they do here it is all too easy to slip from one day to another without taking time out for expressed appreciation.

I cannot think of a better moment than right now to say what is on our minds and in our hearts. You are remarkable, both as a group and as individuals. Remarkable in your daily eagerness and enthusiasm for and

enjoyment of this place and for each other. Remarkable for your sticktoitiveness, whether you are going through the difficult business of learning to post on a horse with a bumpy trot, finding the trick to staying up on the skis once you've risen precariously from those fathoms of water, placing a tennis ball in the left hand three inches of the back court while your opponent is standing down right—to mix the terminology—or simply trying to come about in a circular wind.

Our interest in watching you accept and use the gift of freedom in your various ways is deep and wide, like a fountain. We do not pretend that you are perfect or that you

always use your freedom wisely. You have moments of foolishness, of pure selfishness. This is the normal need for release, for letting off steam that everyone of us—even adults—has.

It is a constant source of comfort and pride to us to know that we can count on you—not only when deep trouble comes as it has done recently—but in matters of all sorts, big or small, joyous or irksome. You give us so much—so many things that some people spend a lifetime searching for and never find.

So to you—campers, JCs and counselors all—we would say thank you for being what you are.

Phone call home from a Southern Belle

from 1961

Hello Momma...is that you? Yes, this is me, Momma—at least I think it's me—after being in this place for four whole days I'm not real sure tho'—I'm sort of confused—well, I mean, this doesn't seem like a northern camp at all—everyone's so polite and nice to you—my face is just about worn out smilin' back so much—if I have to keep this up for eight whole weeks I'm going to have me a million wrinkles, Momma—all right, I'll try to smile only part of the time but it's going to be hard, Momma, especially with all these men around. Oh Momma, there's an awful lot of them—and they all teach some activity—I expect I'll learn heaps about golf and tennis and sailing and diving and riflery and riding. And there's that Bob Hollinger who's the bookkeeper here. Oh Momma, he can balance my

books any time. The other day in the riding ring when Ian said "Lean forward"—I went right over Cavalier's head just to make an impression—I did but not on Ian.

I believe everyone here is a little bit crazy, Momma. Maybe that's why they seem so nice. It's not just the counselors, it's the campers too. Today they made poor Ellen Keane run around the dining room so they could hide her birthday cake and when she couldn't find it all they did was laugh and laugh—she did too. Ann Bodenweiser fell off her horse on purpose just to get to be President of the Prince of Wales Club. And Emily Morse thoughtfully sawed her leg off on the diagonal to make a corner shelf for the theatre prop room. Honest, Momma, everyone is so dedicated around here.

Like that show last night—you can't tell me, Momma, that every single soul in it hadn't just been released from the booby hatch in time to make the curtain. Kathy Roesing ran around like a puzzled hen and never did get in the right spot at the right time. Larry Lang just stood there and let that pretty Judy Hallberg pour chocolate sauce on his hand like he was an M&M almond. And Topher's tongue got stuck—no matter what was going on, all she ever said was "Say, what is this?"

That's what I'd like to know. They advertise this place as the different camp but oh, Momma, they never said how different. They expect you to be in eight places at once, to try everything and to do all your own thinking. Mercy, Momma, I'm even going to have muscles on my brain—no, Momma, I'll try not to let them show when I get home—I've got to run now or I'll miss my chance to fall off the water skis and then Brady'll hate me—bye, Momma, bye now.

J. Farthington Squirrel

from 1950

The scene is Central Park and high up in the penthouse branch of one of the larger oak trees lives J. Farthington Squirrel, late of London, and known to his friends as 'Twaddles.' His is one of the most fashionable apartments on Central Park East; overlooking the mansions of the wealthy and the monkey cage at the Zoo. At the moment he is reclining in his favorite leaf-stuffed chair, trying vainly to gather his scattered wits. It is late afternoon.

The doorbell rings and McHenry, the butler squirrel, neatly clad in a green tailcoat and stripped vest, opens the door to admit several of J. Farthington's New York and London acquaintances. Because they are very up-town squirrels they all speak with extremely British accents.

"Twaddles; old chap," they chatter, "How in the devil are you? It's been ages, y' know, simply ages. I mean simply."

"Haven't seen you about the club in ever so," added Twillingham, president of the Nuts Deposit and Trust Co. "Must keep in touch, y' know, old man. Simply must. Where've you been keeping yourself?"

Twaddles sighed and hauled himself to a sitting position.

"My dear fellows," he said, "I've just been through the most terrifying experience. Don't even know if I can bring myself to tell you about it. You'd better draw up some chairs and we'll have an acorn cup to give us strength. The whole thing was too shattering for words."

"Whatever has happened?" chattered Updike the composer of the Nutcracker Sweet. "Do tell us."

"Well, as you know, I have a cousin in this country. He lives in Vermont and for months he has been insisting that I come for a weekend in the country. I kept putting him off and putting it off until finally I could avoid it no longer. So last weekend I threw a few things in a bag (gray flannels, a

sport coat or two) and flew up there. You can imagine the shock I felt when the old boy met me in an old pair of dungarees and red bandana around his neck. We jumped into his disgraceful looking old model A and tore out to his place, which was millions of miles from nothing.

"Ah. I thought, at least there will be bags of peace and quiet so that I can rest up for the remainder of the social season in town. Well, that simply couldn't have been farther from the truth. Ten minutes after morning tea there was the most ghastly commotion on the ground below. Tremendous omnibuses roared into the grove and positively erupted hordes of screaming children. Campers, I believe they're called. They all dashed about, flinging their arms about each other's necks, and squealing like



Portrait of J. Farthington by Pamela Park Proctor (66-74).

a packet of banshees. Then someone blew a horn type of thing and as one man they fled to a large building—to feed their silly faces, I was told—but I found that hard to believe. Seemed to me it must have been some kind of choral group for immediately there was an ear-shattering din.... something about Junior birdmen and boxtops. It upset me so I took to my bed."

"I should just think so," murmured his attentive audience. "Then what happened?"

"Later on my cousin insisted we travel about the property. Actually it all belongs to my cousin even though there is this man, Mr. Brown, who thinks it belongs to him. Well, we went down to take a peek at a round circle sort of thing where there were huge great beasts with tails and a leg on each corner. Those campers were attempting to climb aboard and when they did get up on top all they did was go round and round in a circle.

It made me quite dizzy, really. On the other side of this field there were odd red squares with a net in the middle and children prancing little white pellets back and forth at each other. Looked terribly dangerous to me.

"On our way back from there we narrowly escaped death. There was some sort of place, hidden away beneath the trees we were running on and I looked down just in time to see one of those ghastly little people point a gun at me and pull the trigger. It gave me such a fright I didn't stop running until I was on the very edge of a roof that hung out over the water. And there, you will believe it or not, were some more of those fiends doing nothing but hurling themselves into the water, squealing, going in head first, feet first, and some of them wore sort of belts with a string attached. They must have been the lazy ones because they got pulled along by someone else. "

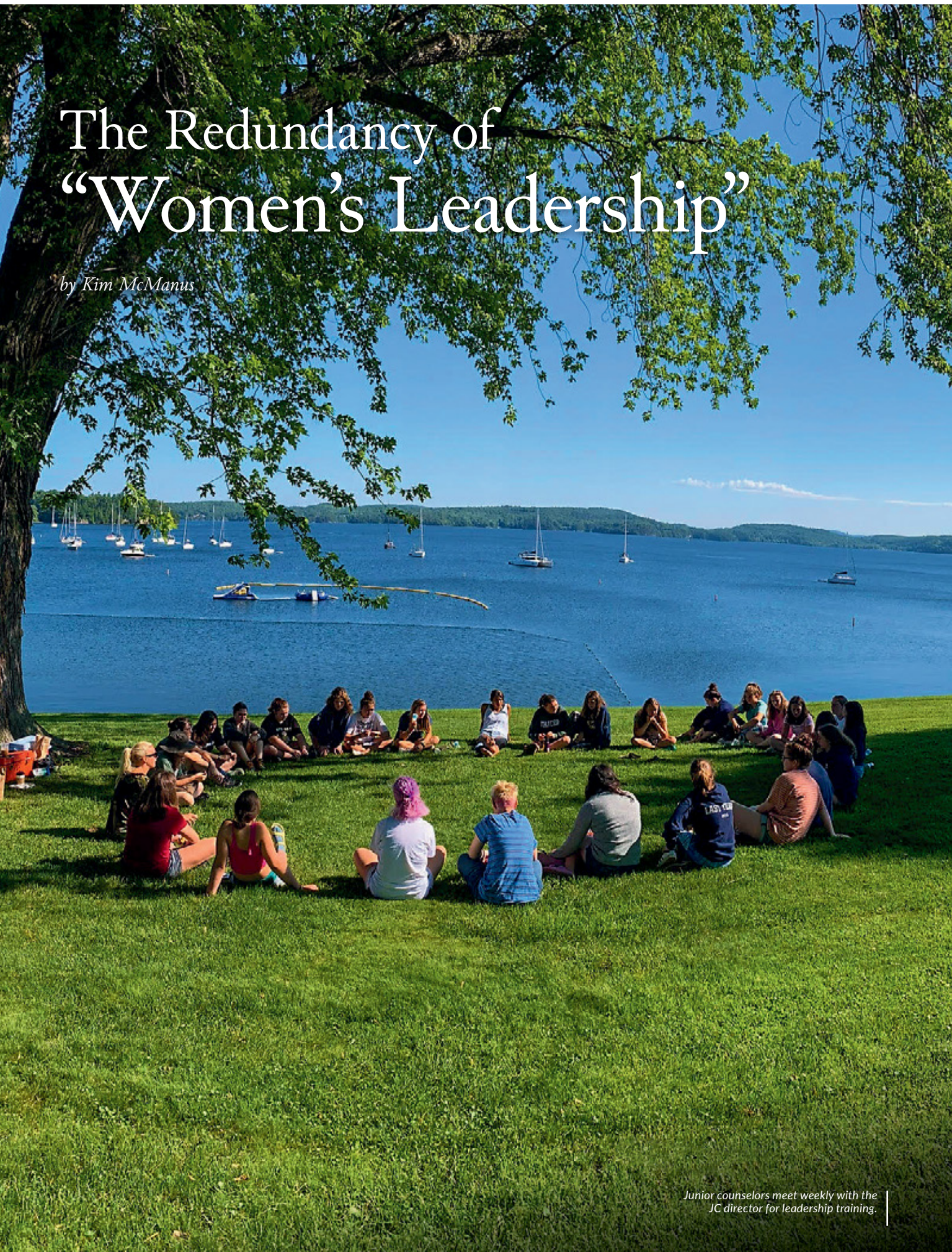
"A couple of days later they brought out a water-going tram with a string attached to that. A couple of the girls put on great long wooden feet, grabbed the strings, and off they went riding on top of the water. Most extraordinary thing I've ever seen.

"On Saturday night my cousin insisted that I go along with him for a spot of entertainment. Seems these girls, in the midst of everything else run a kind of Music Hall. Must say, though, their chorus line wasn't too bad, even if I do like my squirrels less leggy. One thing I couldn't understand. Obviously the whole show was supposed to be funny but every time the audience started to laugh, someone would say shush. Should think the shushing person would have known, that actors being what they are, the show wouldn't go on till the laughter died down. Very odd, that shushing.

"In fact the whole bloomin' thing was odd. Everyone dashing about, doing peculiar things with weird looking bits of equipment from morning till night. And all the time laughing,—laughing, or squealing or singing. It was enough to unseat your reason. I came rushing back to town the very first chance I got. I'm completely exhausted from watching those fantastic creatures, being potted at by some wild young female with a gun has reduced me to the fluttering crumbles. Quiet weekend in the country, indeed. I shan't be my old squirrely self again for weeks. Let's all have another acorn cup to help me forget." And so they did. 🐿

The Redundancy of “Women’s Leadership”

by Kim McManus



Junior counselors meet weekly with the JC director for leadership training.

I had the honor and privilege of serving as the JC Director for fourteen years, from 2004–2017. Following in the footsteps of JC Director giants Toddy Hagans, Kathy Neilsen, Lyda Blank, and Sally DeOliva Mandeville, I organized and oversaw the operation of Brown Ledge’s Junior Counselor Leadership Program. My primary duty was to teach, coach and support our enthusiastic junior counselors. The two-year program has always emphasized personal development in a JC’s chosen department. It teaches her how to teach, and nurtures her ability to lead others.



Current JCs learn to work together on the annual summer retreat.

First-year JCs focus on how to be teachers and explore their new status as role models. Second-year JCs deepen their teaching abilities and begin to learn about themselves as leaders. A well-meaning non-Brown Ledger friend once asked, “So you must teach a lot about ‘women’s leadership?’” To which I responded with a quick and somewhat dismissive “Ah... no,” earning me a baffled look from my friend who knows me as an unequivocal advocate for girls and women. I had to explain to her that when you live and work in a predominantly female society such as Brown Ledge, teaching a segment on “strategic leadership for women” would be ridiculous.

I once learned that in the Zulu language, to say that a body part hurts, you simply state that you have that particular body part—the idea being that a person having a head is so obvious that if you say, “I have a head,” something must be wrong. Similarly, within our JC leadership program, highlighting that women can, and do, lead... well, would be odd.

We have always had dynamic female leadership at camp. H.E.B. had the dashing pictures and the wonderful essays, but let’s get real, Marjorie kept the lights on. Barbara ran camp singlehandedly for more than 20 years. Of course, she created a support system to assist her, but at the end of the day, she hired, fired and managed her staff, and ran camp the way she wanted it run. She then strategically planned her retirement and the perpetuation of camp—pretty boss leadership there.

Kathy was an equal partner in the 36-year tenure of Team B & K. Bill and Kathy crafted over the years a divide-and-conquer strategy to many aspects of running camp, but all big decisions were done as a team. Who ran the swim dock for almost 50 years? Twylla Fishel! Who runs the waterfront these days? Eva Nilsson. Two very different individuals and two very different leadership styles but would anyone be brave enough (or dumb enough?) to question Eva’s or Twylla’s ability to lead? Or suggest that either could have used some “female leadership” pointers? Not this writer. The riding department—arguably our most difficult department to run—has had only female leadership since 1975. Our campers have learned from and experienced the powerful and varied leadership styles of the likes of Sondra Russman, Judy Dannemann, Macy Wesson, Liz Bell, Robyn Sonis, Ann Marie Walker and so many more.

And continuing our grand tradition of powerful female leaders, we have our new BLC director, Abby Lovshin-Smith, who wields her competence and decisive decision-making with a broad, genuine smile on her face. Abby is curating and building her leadership team to include BLC stalwarts Lori Angstadt, Melissa Fishel Mauer, and Eva Nilsson, and is nurturing our next generation of leaders, such as Julia Proctor, Emmie Nilsson, and Kylie Mullins.

Our junior counselors have the luxury of not questioning the ability and capacity of women to lead, lead well and lead in

their own way—subject to their personality and background, not their gender. This environment allows our JCs to focus on the important facets of leadership: becoming competent in their field, learning and appreciating who they are, crafting their leadership style to fit their personality and learning how to adjust their leadership style depending on the situation at hand. This all takes years to master but our JCs get an intensive overview and a lot of practice at the basic tenets of leadership training.

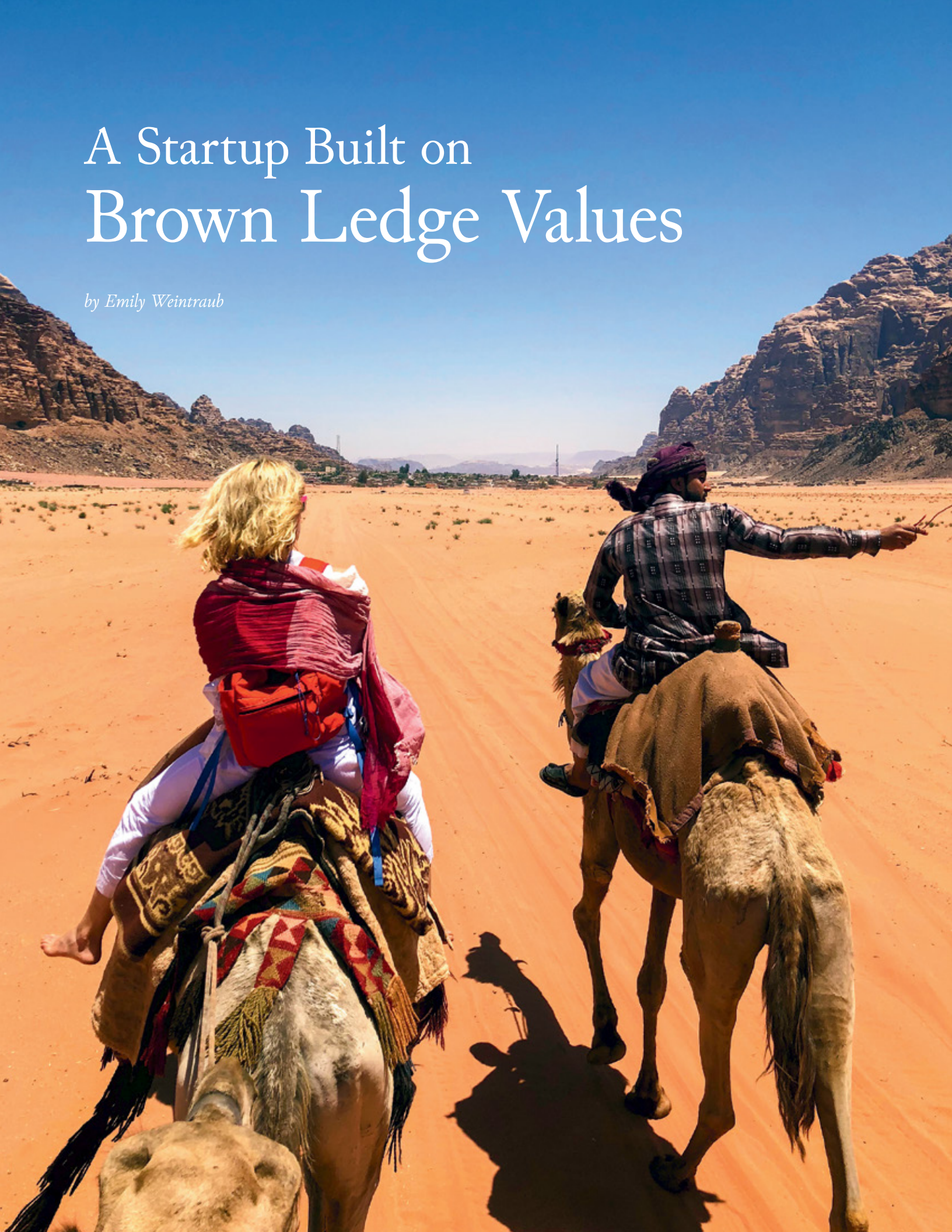
Why would we delve into the question of women in leadership roles when the JCs have the great fortune of living within a world that has a broad array of leaders, with very different personalities and leadership styles, who happen to be women? When they have lived in a world where they themselves are inherently trusted and encouraged to lead others? Female leaders are as obvious to us at Brown Ledge as a head on a body.

When you live and work in a predominantly female society such as Brown Ledge, teaching a segment on “strategic leadership for women” would be ridiculous.



A Startup Built on Brown Ledge Values

by Emily Weintraub



As a young child, Katharine Wolf craved independence and a sense of identity.

Growing up with four brothers, she enjoyed the freedom Brown Ledge gave her. Her first experience away from her large family, camp allowed her to explore the values of a predominantly female environment.

Katharine attended Brown Ledge for four summers, in the late '80s/early '90s, starting at age 9. Coming from a high-achieving family, she appreciated the safe environment to try any activity she wanted without worrying about whether she would excel. She loved that campers were treated like little-adults, encouraged to chart their own paths. She became close with several counselors and one of them, recognizing that Katharine liked to run, began taking her on runs multiple times a week. This, as well as the ability to chart her own path, instilled a sense of agency and confidence in her—something she values to this day.

Today Katharine is the founder of Odetta, a platform that allows companies such as Google to outsource tasks like data analysis to a community of women in the Middle East. Founded in 2018, the company now boasts more than 100 data analysts from 13 different countries. Odetta helps these highly educated, talented women contribute to the workforce on their own terms, allowing them to work from home and on their own schedules—breaking down the boundaries that keep these women from joining the workforce outright.

After graduating from college, Katharine had been on a traditional path as a banker. It wasn't until she took the opportunity to be a bit daring and start her own micro-credit bank that she



Opposite: Katharine in Amman, Jordan, on a guided camel tour. Left: With two of her freelance team members in Amman.

began to find her calling. “That was the first time that I actually felt like I was myself, like I was actually contributing on my own terms,” says Katharine.

She had been looking for a way to replicate the feeling that came from starting a passion project from the ground up when a friend mentioned some statistics about the disproportionate amount of women in the Middle East who gained technical degrees, but then declined to enter the workforce. Having grown up in a male-dominated household, Katharine empathized with these women and was immediately inspired to start Odetta.

Growing up, Katharine often felt like she was fighting a sense of inadequacy. Reflecting on her childhood, she explains: “I grew up in a great family with great parents, but there was something about being a female and being told in 90 percent of the world there are limits to what you can achieve.” This feeling of inadequacy inspired some of her core values and led her to start Odetta to help other women achieve their ambitions. The community she has created among Odetta's team is reminiscent of her time at Brown Ledge and the sense of sisterhood she felt while attending.

Emily Weintraub is a junior at Northwestern University studying computer science and communications. She attended Brown Ledge from 2010–2016 and was on staff from 2018–2019. As a computer science student, Emily was inspired by Katharine's success as a woman in tech and wanted to learn more about how Brown Ledge played a role in her ambitions.

Looking back, Katharine recognizes the importance of being encouraged and taken seriously, even as a young girl, something she found at Brown Ledge. Thinking back to her time at camp, she notes,

“There are certain periods of your life where you feel like the world is limitless, like everything is open, but with that comes a sense of responsibility, too.”

While Katharine loved Brown Ledge, she is also deeply aware of how fortunate she was to attend. Odetta is Katharine's dream company, but even so it took her almost ten years of thinking about it to gain the confidence and means to draw on the independence and feeling of possibility she found at camp to make it happen. Through her company, she hopes to develop this confidence in other women, not only by understanding why there are so many negative statistics around women and work, but also by fostering communities for them to succeed.

How Brown Ledge Camp Made Me a Feminist

by Lisa Greenwald



The setting sun over Malletts Bay, as seen from *The Leap*.

It's 1976, or maybe 1977, at Brown Ledge Camp and I am standing at the top of a cliff, sure I am going to die. Actually. It started out as a typical rugged kind of BLC adventure—taking a trip to do a special activity—like when we beat all the boys' camps in riflery or archery, or when we had to swim in all of our clothes in frigid Lake Champlain for pre-breakfast junior lifesaving classes. But now I am leaning over an 80-foot drop not far from camp called “The Leap” in my t-shirt, jeans and velvet riding helmet with its little elastic strap.

I recently published a book on the history of feminism in France and I am a high school history teacher. I devote

considerable time and ink to thinking and talking about women's empowerment. I work with high school students of varying backgrounds, and have lectured about my book and feminism on both sides of the Atlantic, and yet I continue to return to the lessons that BLC taught me about confidence and agency before I had ever heard of the term feminism.

I am on that cliff because I signed up to learn to rappel. However, I can't get a good grip on the 90 feet of rope wrapped around my back and cradled in my right hand that is meant to stop me from falling, and I want out. The counselor who organized this rappelling adventure is telling me not to be a wimp and to go.

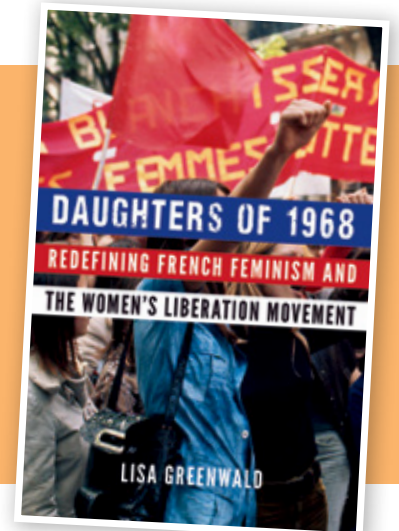
And there are girls on the ground who survived and others excitedly waiting their turn. “Lean back and don't look down!” I am told. “Push off!”

Shaking and crying, I decide that I am not going to be the girl who chickens out and that I am going to rely on what I've learned about grit and determination at BLC to make this work.

I lean back (frankly, as little as possible) and skitter down the side of the cliff, my heart full of fear. Then, after about 30 feet, I force myself to push and swing like I'm supposed to, and it works out. I was right to trust myself—I'm not going to die after all.

My BLC generation and I grew up at a very special time in America—in the wake of the civil rights, Black Power, and feminist movements of the mid-1960s and '70s. A time when many girls' rooms, like mine, were painted in primary colors—not pink. My public school in Manhattan was integrated. I played with Hot Wheels as well as dolls and sang along to the song “Free to Be You and Me” in school. But the middle-class mothers who raised me and my peers were more often than not stay-at-home moms who either never really had careers, or had given them up in order to have children. Their marriages—often of economic dependence and deference—gave girls of my generation a different message entirely. It was BLC's emphasis

Lisa Greenwald, PhD (BLC 1975–1979), teaches history at Stuyvesant High School in New York City. Her book, *Daughters of 1968: Redefining French Feminism and the Women's Liberation Movement*, was published by University of Nebraska Press in 2018.



on self-reliance, grit and cooperation that taught me as a girl I could do anything and be anything—that I had agency. Agency—the control one can exert in one's life to drive it in a positive direction—is at the heart of feminism.

This message was interwoven in the expectations for our behavior and participation in everything we did at BLC. Almost all of us rode in those days, creating a culture of toughness and resilience that has remained with me to this day. There is nothing like being a 12-year-old girl and having to command a half-ton horse with a mind of its own to give one a sense of power over her environment. Or being thrown from a horse and having to get back on again and force it to do what it was supposed to do in the first place because you will be its master. And you will not fail. You will be excellent. This lesson was seared into me and countless other girls of my BLC generation who experienced the same. Getting thrown and then getting back in the saddle is what my generation of women has been doing for the past decades. My two months a year riding were a precious experience of mastery and power—not just over an animal, but also over my fears of being too weak or not being “enough” to command attention.

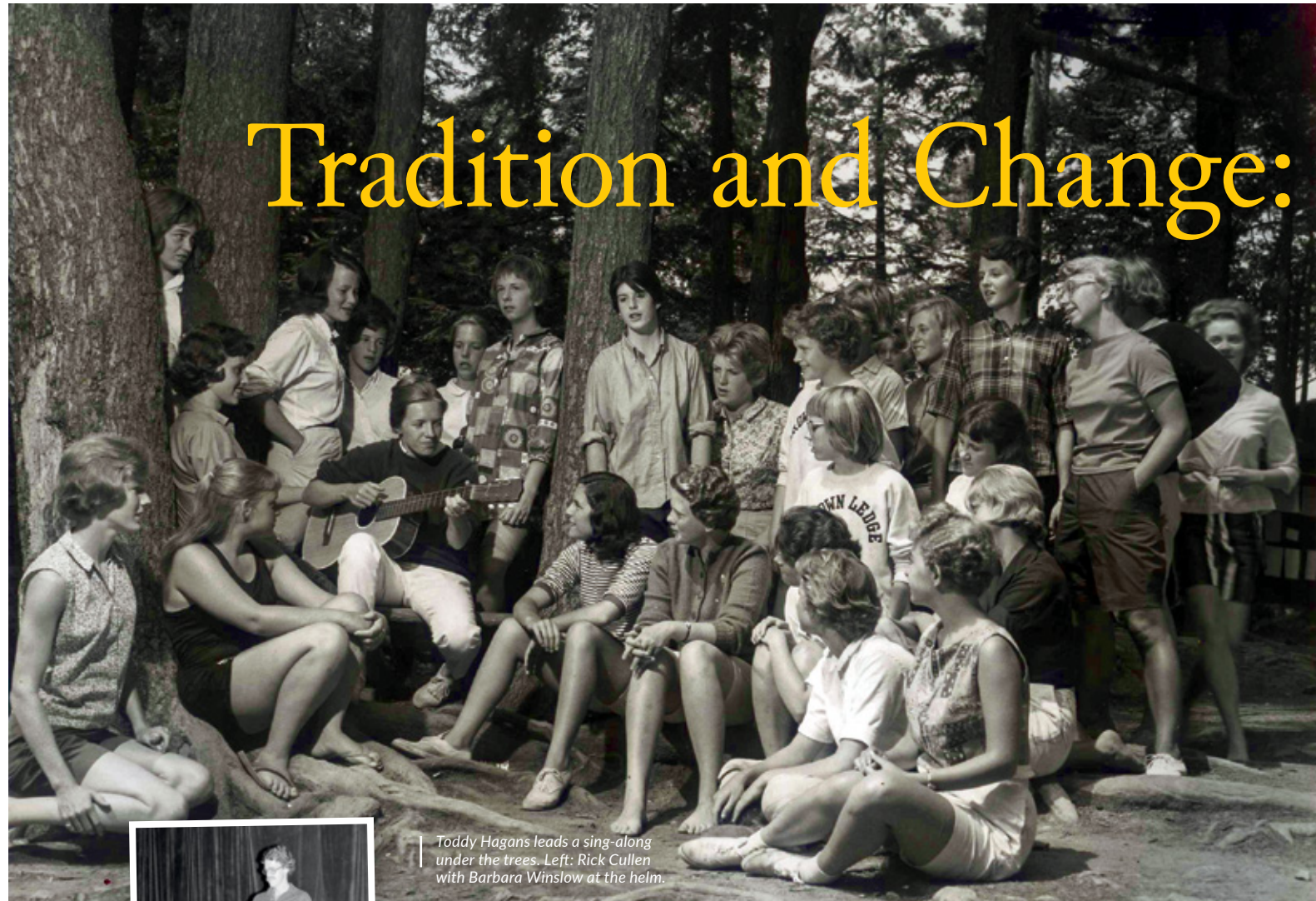
As feminist Elizabeth Cady Stanton said in 1892, the strongest reason for giving women many opportunities for “a complete emancipation from all forms of bondage... from all the crippling influences of fear—is the solitude and personal responsibility of her own individual life.” Shortly after my rappelling adventure, I received an unforgettable lesson about personal responsibility at BLC. As older campers living in Point, several of us were frustrated by the constraints of Taps and an early bedtime. After some debate over what to do, we decided to take the bull by the horns and talk to Fred and Twylla, whose cabin faced ours. Fred's response was classic BLC: If we could organize ourselves and monitor each other so that the Point remained quiet, then we could have our later bedtime. If we failed, the privilege would be taken away. So, we created a Point duty group with a rotating patrol schedule to make sure everyone followed the rules. We took it very seriously and it worked. It was another lesson in agency.

In these ways and many more, BLC expected much of us girls. In the 1970s, as social conventions were loosening around us, BLC still expected civility through our responsibility to self and to our community—values inculcated beginning with HEB's “Information for Campers” read at first Ledger. Undergirding all this, however, was an expectation of excellence and the self-possession we gained through self-discipline and striving to be the best. The term “feminism” was never mentioned, but BLC was at its cutting edge.



Tradition and Change: Ledger

The current (unofficial) motto:
 "Ledger! Where you can do anything (within reason)!"



Toddy Hagans leads a sing-along under the trees. Left: Rick Cullen with Barbara Winslow at the helm.



There are many "traditions" at Ledger, one is an annual dance by the last year campers and JC groups. Here, the last year campers of 2019 get in their groove.

by Julia Proctor

Sunday evening Ledger has been an integral part of Brown Ledge since our founding. On a bench between two trees, the community would gather outside on the Point to listen to Harry Brown read articles and original stories. Eventually Barbara Winslow, with her dramatic flair and inherited gift for storytelling, began to lead the event. Campers and counselors would grab a flashlight and blanket or towel and spill out across the hill to watch. Barbara would read the written work; others would share the occasional acoustic guitar performance or lead a sing along. Melissa Fishel Mauer remembers the mosquitos ("horrible!") and folks being a bit scared out in the dark, but mostly she recalls the sacred tranquility of those evenings.

Ledger moved indoors in 1964 when the theatre was built. That's also when it went electric! Nowadays, Ledger is a high-octane talent show full of—among many things—dancing, juggling, readings and standup, concluding with a performance by the Brown Ledge Choir. It's also chock-full of traditions you'll recognize, from "The First Phone Call Home" to the reading of test results, and at Last Ledger, the Rose Ceremony and Last Will and Testament.

Every camper looks forward to Lori Angstadt's "Letter from Simpleton." In the tradition of Barbara's myriad characters, this lovable spider recaps and adds commentary on weekly events.



L to R: The JC class of 2018 recites HEB's poem "This Is the Last" at Last Ledger. Full octane dance numbers are a Ledger staple. Lori Angstadt reads her weekly Letter from Simpleton.

"From my very first summer in 1982, I loved Ledger. Barbara and her written articles were the backbone of Sunday nights. I always thought it was important to continue a writing component to Ledger, so for the last half of the '80s, I wrote a poem every week called The Week in Review. I thought Barbara would like that. Simpleton arrived 30 years ago. I clearly remember writing the first letter from a spider as a fun way to review the week from the eyes of a possible observer who could be anywhere in camp. I created the name because writing the letter was simpler for me. Since the early '90s, Simpleton has not only reviewed weekly events but also has taught us to be sympathetic to spiders and other creatures. Simpleton has taught us some of the history of camp, how to handle homesickness, and other life lessons. He is spied all over camp and has become part of the BLC culture. I personally hope the letters encourage more writing at Ledger, and keep Barbara's plan of traditions at Ledger alive."

—Lori Angstadt



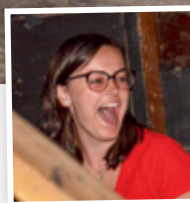
Sarah Weiner introducing the weekly Writer's Club.

JC Sarah Weiner (2014–2019) ran the Brown Ledge Writers' Club as her JC project. It was a tradition started by former head of archery Mark Gawronski around 2015. A weekly prompt was given, and participants would read their answers at Ledger. Sarah says: "I was always fond of the club's presence in Ledger, whether I participated or not, so I took it on as my JC project (after Mark left). I did not want the club to end when I left camp, so I passed it down to JC Zoe Landau. I hope it continues to be passed on and the tradition of writing at Ledger is kept alive!" Every Monday, Sarah would announce a prompt in the dining hall. "My favorite prompt was one Mark came up with: If you could have a lifetime

supply of anything, what would it be and why? I answered fairy lights. My favorite prompt I came up with was either a poem explaining a cabin name or Brown Ledge conspiracy theories." You can find the answers to these prompts, and all previous writing, in the annual printed Ledger. Sarah joined forces with theatre counselor Josh Inocalla to revive the Writers' Club. It was important to them to "create a community that promoted casual and recreational writing even if it wasn't going to be read at Ledger." They hosted meetings during the week to workshop material and encourage creative writing. Sarah adds, "Writers' Club is definitely a group act."

Counselors who have led Ledger since Barbara's retirement include Peggy Mathauer, Lori Angstadt, Franny Shuker-Haines, Natasha Knorr, and currently, Kylie Mullins. Our intrepid Ledger leader Kylie shares her thoughts on what makes Ledger so special:

"Ledger is always changing and evolving because every summer at BLC is so different. Overall, my goal is that Ledger continues to be a place where girls can feel open to expressing themselves, challenge themselves to grow, have fun, and feel supported by the camp community. My favorite memories of Ledger are from when I was a camper/JC and participating in it. Whether I was performing a cabin dance, singing in choir, watching other acts, or participating in the many 2nd year traditions at Last Ledger, Ledger was (and still is) always the highlight of my week.



Left: No matter how much she plans, Kylie is still surprised by the occasional act. Top: Kylie leads the Brown Ledge Choir, which learns a new song every week, and is the cherished final performance of each Ledger.

These memories are what have made me so passionate about running Ledger.

What I love most about Ledger is seeing girls grow through a performance lens. To see girls decide to sing a song alone for the first time, see them process the nerves and fear they have and channel it into hard work, watch them nail the performance, and finally to see their reaction when they hear the applause never fails to move me. Even though I teach music and theater full-time during the year, all of my most rewarding educational experiences to date are from Ledger."



Top: Campers leap with joy in a high-energy dance number.

Below: A solid Ledger act never goes out of style; middle: counselors present a new fan favorite: Weekend Update, where the previous week's events are satirized; bottom: who doesn't love a male counselor Ledger act? Here the 2019 "Caboy's" make us swoon.



Virtual Ledger!

In April, 280 campers and alumni spanning 9 decades gathered from around the world to cheer on Brown Ledgers in a charming and creative Virtual Ledger on Zoom.

In that spirit, over the summer we hosted Brown Ledge Connections, a seven-week series of online classes, rest hours, special events and Virtual Ledgers free to current campers and JCs. The Virtual Ledgers included beloved acts like Simpleton, the Brown Ledge Writers Club, juggling and beautiful singing. They also allowed new creativity. Each age group learned a dance to "Together" by Sia during virtual rest hour; recordings of these dances were edited together and presented at Virtual Ledger. One perk of holding Ledger via Zoom was the ability to incorporate pets into acts! We had two standout cat performances this year by the Goodwin sisters and Catherine Alston.

Although we sorely missed you at camp, our spirits were sustained by seeing so many old and new faces online this summer.



Giving Back to Brown Ledge

2019 Giving to the Brown Ledge Foundation:
\$325,403

With gratitude, we're happy to share our appreciation for the 525 people who were able to give back to Brown Ledge in 2019. It is this giving spirit that makes it possible for us to offer scholarships, maintain camp facilities and equipment, and work toward building our endowment for a more stable future for BLC. Every gift makes a difference.

Maria Moore

Maria Moore
Director of Development



2019/20 Board Members:
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Brown Ledge Foundation

Board of Directors

Brown Ledge has been governed by a board of directors for more than 40 years. First, in the late 1970s, the Brown Ledge Perpetuators, Inc., was formed when a group of alumni worked with Barbara Winslow to transfer ownership of BLC to preserve camp and its philosophy and spirit as she planned to retire. Then in 1997, that group determined that the best way forward to sustain and meet the needs of BLC was to convert it to a nonprofit, educational entity, and the Brown Ledge Foundation, Inc., was created.

Our Board of Directors is a dedicated group of volunteers who give time, energy, and resources all year in support of Brown Ledge. They are charged with the following mission: **The Brown Ledge Foundation oversees the operation, perpetuation, and educational mission of Brown Ledge Camp. The Foundation exists to support camp's current and future programs and preserve its natural setting on Lake Champlain.**

We are so grateful for the time, energy and support that all board members—current and past—have given this and past years. Thank you!

Board membership is a wonderful way to stay connected, help BLC thrive, and learn about what goes into running camp. If you have questions for the board or would like information about joining, please send an email to foundation@brownledge.org. Read each board member's bio on the Brown Ledge website, www.brownledge.org.

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M - IN MEMORY OF

H - IN HONOR OF

A Legacy for Future Generations of Brown Ledgers

We would like to recognize and thank the following Brown Ledgers of the Planned Giving Circle who are helping to ensure that we'll be a thriving, stable organization well into the future.

Because Brown Ledge has been an important part of each of their lives, they have included BLC in their will or long-term estate plans with a charitable bequest or other planned gift. The alums and parents listed here are providing a legacy for the future of Brown Ledge Camp. We're honored to have their support in such a wonderful and lasting way. Their enduring commitment to provide the incredible experiences of Brown Ledge to future generations is a testament to the impact that BLC has had on thousands of girls and young women.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP, GENEROSITY, AND THOUGHTFUL SUPPORT:

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Amelia Weir
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If Brown Ledge has been an important part of your life, you can extend your love and support of BLC beyond your own lifetime with a gift in your will or estate. If you have named BLC in your plans or would like more information, contact Maria Moore, Director of Development, Brown Ledge Foundation, Inc., at (802)862-2442, maria@brownledge.org or BLF, 1 Mill Street, Suite 216, Burlington, VT 05401. Thank you!

Stay Connected to the Brown Ledge Community



Work Weekend | June 5-6, 2021

Don't miss this opportunity to connect with Brown Ledge—not just the people, but also the place. This is when we rake, sweep, paint, clean, wash and fix our way through the buildings and grounds after they've endured another winter. It's a great opportunity to be here and help us get camp ready to welcome campers and counselors.

There are tasks for all ages and abilities; meals are provided from Saturday breakfast through Sunday lunch. You can sleep in a cabin (extra satisfying because you cleaned it yourself). We welcome any alumni, campers, family and friends who would like to help. If you'll be new to BLC in 2021, it's a chance to get to know camp and if you have a potential future camper, it's a great introduction.

Alumni Camp | August 20-23, 2021

Alumni Camp occurs over one August weekend every other year and lasts from Friday evening through Monday morning. We look forward to welcoming many alums back next summer! Bunkies will reunite and family members will finally have the chance to experience this place they've been hearing SO MUCH about. A surprising benefit: the connections you'll make with Brown Ledgers from other eras. You'll love the similarities in stories shared by an alumna who was at camp 20 years before or after you! There's nothing quite like having so much in common with people you've just met. Stay tuned for details about Alumni Camp 2021 on our website at <https://brownledge.org/alumnae/alumni-camp-2021/>.

Regional Reunions

We enjoyed connecting with Brown Ledgers in a variety of places in the past year, including New York City, Norfolk, Va., Washington D.C., and Boston. We look forward to more opportunities in the coming year! Please share your photos when you have a Brown Ledge reunion in your neck of the woods.

E-News & Mailings

Stay up on all the Brown Ledge news! You won't miss a thing as long as we can connect with you. We send occasional mailings, a monthly e-newsletter, and this annual publication, Brown Ledge Magazine. If you don't already receive them and would like to, please send your email and mailing address to foundation@brownledge.org.

- ❑ Caryn Flanagan
H Richard Currie
Kathryn Frank
Sheila Fenton French
James Friedel
M Patti Cassidy Kater
Camille Moisson Globerman
Martia Patrick Gordon
Sarah Gormley
Rachel Grindrod
Rob Gross
Layla Guest
Karen Haley
M Daniela Mottle
Helen Harper
H Richard Currie
Marilen Hartnett
Valerie & Brian Heun
H Bridget Heun
Ellie Levinson Hood
Ann Hunt
H Beehive 1973
Marjorie Isaacs
Louisa & Colin Ives
Rachel Canby Jackson
Joanne Jacobs
David and Holly Jacobstein
In appreciation of Peter Jaffe
H Tim Harkness
Vicky Janczyk
Donna Kalp
Elizabeth Kilbride
M My Mother
Bruce Knecht & Harry van Dyke
Erica Krappohl
Mark and Judy Kubeja
Janet Lacey
M Patti Cassidy Kater
Starr & Frank Lamson, III
Emily & Paul Landau
Terry T. Laurendine
M Barbara Winslow
Jennifer & Alex Leikikh

- Lori & Rob Leone
Sally Resnick Lex
Jenny Libien & Richard Goodwin
Gretchen Lipari
Lovshin-Smith Family
H Fish & Lori
Sally Suter Lowmsbery
Natalia Maffett
Sarah Maggs Riley
Pam, Rachel, Michaela, and Bryan Malboeuf
M Patti Cassidy Kater
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Charlotte McCorkel
Jean Dohahue McDonnell
Mary McHugh
M Patti Cassidy Kater
Rachel Merdinger-Kalafer
Garland Middleton
Sarah Middleton
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Kylie Mullins
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Christina Nacos
Austin Nalen
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T. Mark O'Reilly
H Barbara O'Reilly
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Jamie Ouellet & Marc Leclerc
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Kerry Stroud Peiser
M Marjorie Wood Dannis
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M Terry Tow
The Rezk Family
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M Fred & Twylla
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Jean Seeler-Gifford
Swampscott Senior Center
M Patti Cassidy Kater
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H Ship Ahoy '99
Timothy and Franny Shuker-Haines
Rylee Shull
Adrienne Skinner
Jo Ann & Butch Smith
M Barbara Winslow
Deborah Smith & Daniel Abbasi
Abs Smurzynski
Kathy Roberts Snedeker & Greg Snedeker
Lorette & Jack St. Hilaire
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Catherine Sword
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Blythe Taplin
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Hong Tieu & Ansgar Simon

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H Marilyn & Jack Williams
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Ali Gewirtzman
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H Julia Proctor
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Alexandra Kornman
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Beth & Matt Lavine
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Sue Lotz
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Karen C. Maddelein
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Grace Orben
Olivia Osburn
Sam Ostrow
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Phebe Parkin
Kate Pastore
Carolyn Andrews Patterson
H Sepp Meier (Canoeing)
Eliot & Will Patty
Fran Pearlman
M Patti Cassidy Kater
Rachel Percelay
Edith Plimpton Fleeman
Josh & Erin Podvin
Amanda Poole
M Sarah Lynn Brown
Pamela Proctor
Julia Proctor
Mary Purdy
Kelly Quinn

Toby and Michael Raybould
H Zoe's JC!
Jennifer Foltz Richmond
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M Patti Cassidy Kater
Valentina Rivero
H Brown Ledge Spirit
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Rachel Ropeik
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Grace Rumford
Patricia Rutins
Paula Schasberger
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Maggie Parker Selbert
Deborah & Neil Sherman
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Emily Silman
Marty Simonds
Meredith Grieff Smith
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Marie Stanley
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Susan Steinberg
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Francie Stella
H Annie McDermott
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Kari Stevermer
Judith Stover
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Volunteer Appreciation

The Epitome of Brown Ledge Spirit: Remembering Lisa Bennett Morse, 1951–2019

by Maria Moore



Lisa Bennett Morse (bottom right) with her camp friends Lori Angstadt, Melissa Fishel Mauer, Edie Plimpton Fleeman, and Rose Lovshin.

Lisa Bennett Morse, known in her camper years as Betty Bennett, was the epitome of Brown Ledge spirit. She was a camper and sailing JC in the late 1960s and returned as the camp nurse from 1992 to 1999. She also spent years as editor of the Alumni Ledger and was both a member and President of the Board of Directors of the Brown Ledge Foundation. Her love of camp extended to her husband, Dick Morse, who was on staff for several years, her daughters, Becky and Pam, who are alumni, and a granddaughter, Caroline, who will return next summer as a camper.

Lisa and Dick were off-season helpers well before work weekend was an official event, and they hosted one of the first regional reunions at their home near York, Pa., in the late '80s which was attended by Barbara Winslow.



Lisa was a staple at Alumni Camp and often dropped in during the summer to hug her many camp friends. Here she is with Krista Irmischer, daughter Pam Morse Cota and granddaughter Caroline.

When we asked her family to share what camp meant to Lisa, her daughter Pam wrote,

“It’s hard to put into words what camp meant to my Mom. It was her everything. Not to further the “cult” thing, but it’s almost like it was part of her religion. Her heart belonged to camp and she loved sharing her love of camp with anyone and everyone that she could. Perhaps one of the coolest things was watching her show camp to my daughter. Before she was old enough to go to camp, we all attended Alumni Camp together as she was growing up, so every two years, she got a taste of what Brown Ledge was all about. Watching my mom take Caroline (Carly) around camp as a toddler, then little girl, then lastly in 2019 after she was actually a camper was such a cool journey to watch. The smile on my mom’s face as she watched her granddaughter soak in all that camp is and has to offer was one of pure joy. Because of camp, we got to spend a few weekends living in a cabin with my Mom, which gave us invaluable time sharing 3 generations of Brown Ledge love in a tiny cabin by the lake. She was always her most authentic self at camp, more outgoing than I ever witnessed, and so incredibly happy connecting with her BLC family. She and my Dad actually got to celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary at Alumni Camp in 2011. It happened to be the same day as Ledger, and it was great for her and my Dad to celebrate that milestone at her favorite place on earth. I know that when I walk into camp the first time after her passing, I will feel her and know she is there. Camp is where she wants her ashes spread, that’s how much it means to her—she wants to be there forever. I am so glad we have this physical place to go to feel her spirit and her love.”

We are so grateful to Lisa for her dedication and service to the Brown Ledge community. She is greatly missed.





Lori Angstadt reunited with **Kate & Steve Bloomfield** when they came from the U.K. for a visit to NYC. "We met up and after 14 years it was like time stood still. Kate and I taught tennis together from 88-91. She and Steve taught tennis in 2002. We had a great day together."



On December 27, **Diana Kelly Holdtman** (94-01) and her husband Alex welcomed their son Benjamin Hodgson Holdtman. Ben joins big sister (and hopefully future Brown Ledger) Caroline who is 2.



Camp Director **Abby Lovshin-Smith** had a chance for a lovely visit with alumnae **Elena Barr Baum** and **Kedron Gierman Fix** at Kedron's home in the fall.



Hillary Amster (94-01) was married to Gabriel Pontones Inestrillas on May 23, 2020, on the side of a highway in rural Mexico. After postponing the wedding multiple times due to COVID-19, the couple decided to have a small ceremony with four witnesses and the rest of the family on Zoom. Because the courthouses and venues in their town were all closed, the judge agreed to marry them under a tree in the highway's divider. Cars honked and local onlookers applauded as the masked couple exchanged vows and popped champagne.



L to R: **Elizabeth DeOreo, Karine Nadeau Carter, Catherine Michaud, Sarah Schermerhorn, Gabby Lovshin Hedrick, Meghan Donoghue Bustamantes, Mills Knight Howland**. This celebration for Catherine Michaud in Quebec brought together Brown Ledgers who were at camp together in the 90s and 00s.



Annie Murawski (00-05, 08-10) and Otto Magdanz were married on July 6, 2019, on Lake Champlain at Basin Harbor. Brown Ledgers in the wedding party were Annie's sister **Eliza Murawski**, and dear friends **Emmie Nilsson** and **Kelcy Gears**.



Alums from the BLT shared some laughs together at the NYC gathering in November. L to R: **Stephen Randy, Bob Gilbo, Richard Currie, Steven Bednasz, Missy Badger** and **Tammy Shaw**.



Teves Brighton (97-99, 02-04) and Nick Bruel welcomed Nelle Powell Bruel on November 25, 2019. "We are so excited for her to become a Brown Ledger one day!" Pictured here with big sis Birdie.



Katie Frank (94-99, S 00s) shares "with our Brown Ledge family that Tommy and I had a baby in July. His name is Jones, he's super funny and sweet. His only short-coming is that he can't be a Brown Ledge camper."



Karine Nadeau (93-00, 02-06, 08) shares, "We are happy to announce the birth of Jack William Carter on February 9, 2020. Chloé loves her new baby brother. We are staying safe and enjoying our time at home as a new family of four."



Hilary Strimple (00-07, 09-12, 14) and Alex got married on March 21, 2020. Their original wedding celebration was canceled due to COVID-19, but they were able to still get married and celebrate with their immediate families in Salisbury, Md.

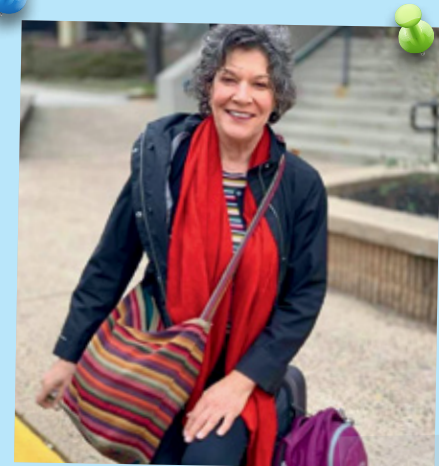


Sarah Title got engaged this past summer on the Georgetown Waterfront in Washington, D.C., to Gavin Hilburn. Their wedding is September 2020!





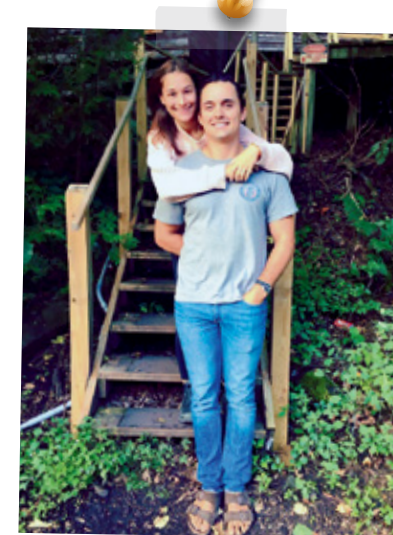
Kathy Ruby Petroni's (69-75) passion is training and competing in agility with her dogs. Three years ago, Kathy and her husband, Tom, purchased a 19-acre horse farm with an indoor arena, which serves as her agility training facility. She currently has three dogs, and competes locally, regionally and nationally. She looks forward to her semi-retirement this May from being an accounting professor at Michigan State University so she can devote more of her time to the sport. Here she is competing with Storm, one of her Flat-Coated Retrievers.



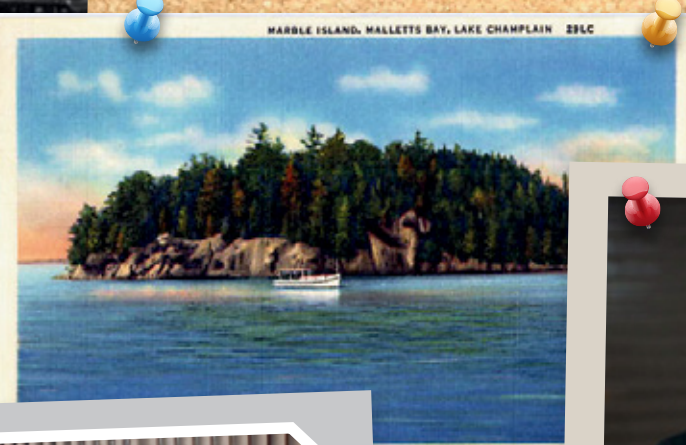
Jan Kline (67-72, 14-15) shares that "For the past 12 years, I've seen some of the forest-flung parts of our planet. Just recently I was in Cucuta, Colombia, on a medical mission working in a barrio at the Venezuelan border. We saw on average 500 people a day. Last summer, my work permitted me to go to Gaza with the first American team granted entry to see patients in hospitals there rather than in Israel. My goal for Gaza is to create and implement its one and only home health care program so that patients newly released from acute care can revive ongoing support at home among family. Of course these endeavors tie into my BLC experience. To this day, I can picture recently-coiffed Barbara standing in the old dining room telling us "Try it. Actually try everything twice." And I've been availing myself to opportunities way more than twice but always with that BLC spirit infused with my core."



Bravo to **Grant Neale** (81-83, 87-88 + 94) who performed as The Detective in The Metropolitan Opera's revival of Porgy and Bess. "It was a wonderful experience to act in perhaps the most amazing house in the world with some of the greatest singers on earth! I was absolutely thrilled every performance, and my first entrance was the most thrilling of my life so far because there were about 90 people on stage and a very full pit, and my entrance made all the music and movement stop still and silent. That is an awesome moment to experience in a 3800 seat theater. The HD Broadcast was an absolute thrill. It gave me such joy to be able to share my little part in this big production with friends and family around the country and abroad! HUGE thanks to all the lovely BLC friends who came to the Met or to the cinema!! Brown Ledgers stick together, thank goodness!"



Congratulations to **Charlie Smith** (15-17) for being accepted in the University of Washington's Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Residency Program. Upon graduation in a few months he will officially be a DDS, but after this residency he will also be a full MD. BLC sweetheart **Natasha Knorr-Smith** (99-07, 09, 11-12, 14-17) says "He worked SO hard and we are really excited."



MARBLE ISLAND, HALLETS BAY, LAKE CHAMPLAIN B9C

BL'ERS ACHIEVEMENTS

Send us your achievements to be featured in an e-newsletter or magazine to taran@brownledge.org



BARRETT TAVILUM, HALLETS BAY, VT.



Mallory Kotik (02-08, 10) "I recently went on an epic sailing trip with @OceanRacers and an all-female crew! 8 women sailed 550 nautical miles over 6 days and nights from Nassau, Bahamas, to Turks & Caicos aboard a 40-ft race boat. I can thank my sailing JCs and counselors at BLC for introducing me to my love of sailing!" Pictured third from the left.



The BLC contingent (from the 70-80s) at the retirement ceremony of **Colonel Paula Schasberger** at Ft. Belvoir included three Schasberger sisters (**Paula, Britta, and Samantha**), Britta's daughter **Kaya** (2020 second-year JC), **Elena Barr Baum** and **Jeannie Kramer-Smythe**. It was wonderful to see Paula lauded for her stellar Army career by her peers and colleagues, and hear her reflect on her path with typical Paula wit and wisdom, and impeccable comic timing. She did Brown Ledge proud! Mazel tov, Paula.



Christian Sullivan (17-19) moved across the country to take the reins as master carpenter/head rigger for the Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts at the University of California, Davis. After an extended national search, "I was welcomed with open arms and have been much beloved for existing."



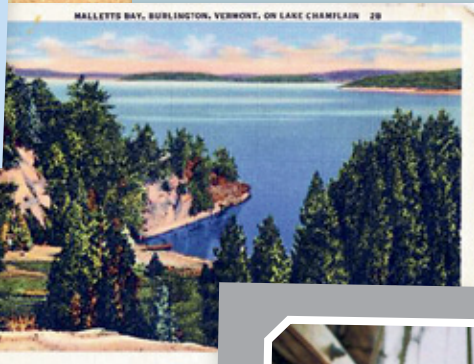
Congratulations to **Stephen Rouelle** (88-90, 92) on the success of his vegetarian/vegan restaurant, Under the Bodhi Tree, on Hawaii Island. "We're on the verge of opening several more restaurants in the next year, only delayed by our recent pandemic. Overall we've been blessed and well received and have plans to expand to other islands in the next few years starting in Kauai. All of the restaurants are looking to change existing food systems and ideas. We look to support local producers and growers, provide healthier options and find ways to support our local community with charity events and a running team."





Laura (Chamberlain) Gehl (88-93) is the author of more than twenty traditionally published children's books including One Big Pair of Underwear, the Peep and Egg series, and the Baby Scientist series. She has several new books out this year about strong girls, including Judge Juliette, about a girl who is the judge of her neighborhood, and May Saves the Day, about a girl who runs her own business. Buy her books at your local bookstore!

Mary Purdy (82-87) is continuing her work as an integrative and eco-conscious dietitian working to improve human and planetary health one meal at a time. She was in clinical practice for 12 years and is now adjunct professor at Bastyr University, speaks regularly at national conferences, hosts a podcast (Mary's Nutrition Show) and is working on a variety of projects helping to shed light on the connection between the food system and climate change. She was the commencement speaker for Bastyr's ceremony in 2019 and gave a recent short Ted-like Talk at Ignite Seattle on Saving the Planet with Your Fork. "Still grateful to BLC for helping to hone my performing chops!"



MALLETTS BAY, BURLINGTON, VERMONT, ON LAKE CHAMPLAIN 28



Send us your achievements to be featured in an e-newsletter or magazine to taran@brownledge.org



Hannah Livant (06-12, 15) is using her BLC sailing skills as onboard educator on Schooner Pioneer at South Street Seaport Museum, and as Education Coordinator on the brig Lady Washington at Grays Harbor Historical Seaport sailing from Washington state to California. She recently earned her Able Bodied Seaman certification. She applies her music degree teaching traditional seafaring music to the public as part of her positions. Hannah is a songwriter and incorporates everything she's seen in her adventures into her music! She's taken so much of the BLC spirit and incorporated it into her world as she meets and teaches adults and kids.



Jillian Little Dannemann (88-97, 00, 07) is proud to announce her new career as a Functional Medicine Certified Health Coach! "After spending the last two years getting trained, certified and building a business from scratch, I am now offering an online health coaching program specifically designed for women with autoimmune disease. Unfortunately, chronic illness is just one more feminist issue in our modern culture. My goal is to use my 25 years of experience as a patient in the medical system to empower women to reclaim their lives from the vicious cycle of autoimmunity. I have Brown Ledge and this community to thank for showing me what it looks like when capable and resilient women stick together. Thank you!"



Jenn (Ackerman) Heinrich (80-85) is applying her BLC values to the world of rugby. She was recently awarded the World Rugby Executive Leadership Scholarship, committed to driving inspirational leadership and the development of women in rugby. In 2018 she founded Girls Rugby, Inc., whose mission is to provide young girls the opportunity to become the leaders and change-makers of tomorrow using a leadership and values-based curriculum delivered through sport. Thanks for your amazing work. Jenn!

Alumni Obituaries



Nancy Frederick Shuker Weyr, who attended Brown Ledge in the late 1940s, died July 31, 2019, at the age of 85. She is described by

family as an extraordinary woman with specific and dearly missed gifts: a great sense of humor, a strong moral compass, an enduring love of the arts, a generous spirit and a mind of her own. Nancy was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, and spent most of her childhood in Nashville, Tenn. Her degree in journalism from Northwestern University helped prepare for a career in editing and publishing that included Time Life books division and Reader's Digest Books. At the very end of her life, Nancy was tutoring teenagers at Mount Vernon High School, and their passions became hers. Nancy was very active in her Bronxville, N.Y., community and loved the arts, theater in particular. She was always looking for ways to enrich the lives of young people through exposure to that art form. She is survived by her sister, Anne; her brother, Paul; her husband, Tom; her children, John, Allison, and Franny; her five grandchildren, Luke and Grace Devlin, Faith Manary, Rose Shuker-Haines and Swift Shuker; and two great-grandchildren.



Patricia "Patti" Cassidy Kater, 56 of Barboursville, Va., passed away June 21, 2019, after a short, but courageous battle with cancer. Patti was born

and raised in Swampscott, Mass., attended Colby-Sawyer College and graduated from Skidmore College. Following college, she went on to receive an MBA in marketing from the University of Notre Dame, where she met her beloved husband David C. Kater, with whom she shared 31 years of marriage. In addition to her husband, Patti is survived by her four children, Kelley, Jennifer, Hannah and Timothy, and three siblings, Nancy, Tara and Francis. She was the loving grandmother of Charlotte Anne Via and the late Riley Cassidy Via. Patti was

always known for her love of animals. From a young age, she was always the happiest at the barn with the horses at home or during the summer at Brown Ledge Camp. Patti was an accomplished equestrian and competed on the collegiate level at Colby-Sawyer and Skidmore. She was also gifted with incredible artistic abilities and her paintings for her family members will serve as wonderful remembrances.



Taiya Anjali Mathauer, 35, passed away unexpectedly on January 2, 2020. She was born in Calcutta, India, on July 13, 1987, and joined her Vermont family

when she was four months old. Taiya struggled with mental health and medical issues beginning in her early teenage years which impacted her well-being and care of herself. Taiya lived a quiet adult life where her love and care for animals continued to bring her joy and comfort, especially the family dog, Morgan. Taiya grew up riding horses, swimming in Lake Champlain, and creating lifelong friendships at Brown Ledge Camp in Malletts Bay. She will forever be remembered for her infectious laugh and smile that could light up a room. Taiya is survived by her loving mother, Peggy Mathauer, her sisters Monalika Watkins, Shanti Mathauer and Kirtani Mathauer, and her nephews Brennan, Dylan and Kayden. A memorial service to celebrate Taiya's life was held in January, where many of her Brown Ledge friends were able to come together.



Betsy Stookey Chase died on April 25, 2019, at the age of 86. She was born and raised in Dayton, Ohio. She married and lived in Midland, Mich.,

for 25 years and then spent another 30 years in Matthews, N.C. Betsy attended Brown Ledge from 1947-1950 and was a tennis JC the last two summers. She was thrilled that her daughter Laurie Chase (1974) and her granddaughter Catherine "Cate" Chase (2009-2013) were

her "camp legacy." She loved to reminisce about her Brown Ledge days and especially enjoyed visiting Cate at camp. Betsy is survived by three children and six grandchildren. Betsy was a member of the Junior League for many years. She adored all animals and loved to play bridge, socialize and travel. She went on two African safaris, walked on the Great Wall of China, and attended the Pushkar Camel Fair in India. Closer to home, Betsy looked forward to spending time with her family and friends at the Outer Banks, N.C., and in the French Quarter in New Orleans, La.



Lisa Bennett Morse (aka Betty), who has been a part of the BLC community since the 1960s, passed away on December 19, 2019, after a five-year

battle with multiple myeloma. For the past five years, she and her husband Dick Morse spent their summers in Vermont with daughter Pamela and her family, and winters in Southern California with daughter Becky and her family. She loved every moment of this arrangement—always able to be with her grandchildren, her daughters, their husbands Tom and Mark, and of course Dick and their dogs. Surrounded by so much of what she loved, she often remarked how perfect her life had been. She had a favorite motto: Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in an attractive and well-preserved body, but rather to skid in sideways, chocolate in one hand, champagne in the other, body thoroughly used up, totally worn out and screaming, "Woo hoo, what a ride!" She managed to do just that. With grace, style, a shining heart full of love and compassion, and a friend/husband that hung around with her for 50+ years (1969-2019). In addition to Dick, she is survived by her two sisters, Kathryn and Tricia, daughters Becky and Pamela, and grandchildren Michaela, Caroline and Leo. They had a wonderful life together and she is dearly missed.

An aerial photograph of Malletts Bay, a large body of water surrounded by dense green forests. In the center-right, a baseball field and other sports facilities are visible on a grassy area. A speedboat is moving across the water in the lower right, leaving a white wake. Several other boats, including a sailboat and a pontoon boat, are scattered throughout the bay. The water is a deep blue with shimmering reflections of sunlight.

“Survive, then thrive!”

We’ll see you next summer
on Malletts Bay.

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THE BROWN LEDGE FOUNDATION - 1 MILL STREET SUITE 216, BURLINGTON, VERMONT 05401



BROWN LEDGE CAMP

Mission Statement

Brown Ledge is a non-profit camp that exists to develop community, self-discipline, responsibility and achievement in girls and young women, through self-directed participation in varied activities in a high-quality summer program.

The printing of this magazine was generously supported by friends of Barbara Winslow.

Thank you!