



THE BIRCH BARK

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 Rich Deering '73, Alumni & Community Director • Michael Mattson '83, Camp Director

THE ALUMNI NEWSLETTER OF BIRCH ROCK CAMP

TEAM WHICHARD

In early September an email circulated to Birch Rock's entire board of trustees. The subject line, "Sad News on Lake McWain," made many a heart (including mine) do a flip-flop. Oh no! Did a camp luminary suddenly pass away? Phew — it was just fellow trustee Bruce Whichard reporting that the last of the docks had been hauled out of the lake, bringing the summer of '21 to a poignant close.

A different guy might rejoice when the heavy lifting is finished and another exhausting camp season is finito. Especially when he, his wife and his son are perpetual members of the work crew. Not Bruce and the ever-dedicated *Team Whichard*, including Arlene (also a trustee) and their son Jared (BRC camper and counselor) who live right next door on the lake. The Whichards not only run their long-time family camp — The Cottages at McWain Point — they also safeguard Birch Rock. As Rich Deering enthuses: "Time and time again, Bruce, Arlene and 'Jwhich' Jared bring their helping hands and enthusiasm to BRC. Cleaning up debris in the spring, pulling out the dock system with Charlie, and keeping an eagle eye on the campus in the off season — we rely on the Whichards to be watching out!"

The Whichards and Birch Rock go together like campfires and S'mores. This relationship was predestined, decades before Bruce was

born. It all started when his grandfather Emile Muzik started summering on Lake McWain in the 1930s. This was the heyday for all sorts of camps in Maine, including Camp McWain for Delicate Girls (started by David Sanderson's Great Aunt Helen) next door to Birch Rock Camp for Boys. Lake McWain alone boasted five camps back in the day.



Arlene, Jared and Bruce

The delicate girls' camp soon segued into a family camp. The rustic cottages filled up with vacationing moms, dads and kids for a blissful week or two (perhaps not much of a holiday for moms who cooked their families meals in the cabin kitchens). Grandfather Emile was crazy about the place and purchased Camp McWain in 1963. Young Bruce came up from New Jersey each summer and got to know neighboring camps Birch Rock and Waganaki. He explained the *One for All* spirit in Waterford this way: "My grandfather

raised us to help everyone on the lake. We helped out at the other camps and at Springer's dairy farm, wherever anyone needed a hand." Camping was a real family affair — both Bruce's mother and father were longtime youth camp directors in New Jersey.

To no one's surprise, Bruce met his future bride at camp. Arlene, a lifelong Jersey girl, visited Camp McWain in the early 90s and fell for Bruce and Maine. The Whichards brought son Jared up in Clark, New Jersey, Arlene's hometown and where she worked as a school nurse. Meantime, Bruce enjoyed a 30-year career as a merchant marine and was frequently at sea for four-month stints, prompting Arlene to give up nursing to focus on home and homeschooling Jared.

As the years went by, the family found themselves spending more time in Maine than New Jersey. With Bruce retiring in 2015, they

finally sold their Clark house and moved up to Waterford full-time last year. The adjustment was harder for Arlene, but she's just as gung-ho about camp life as her men. There are five rental cottages at McWain Point, dotted across seven acres (Bruce's cousin owns five other cottages at Camp McWain — they divided the camp in two about a decade ago). Many of their clients are 4th generation renters and old friends. They return each summer for canoeing, swimming,

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*TEAM WHICHARD...
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lobster roasts, star-gazing and campfires. Bruce, Arlene and Jared are right in the mix, facilitating the fun.

Jared is just as keen as his parents about all things camping. He was a Birch Rock camper, CIT and staff member, teaching sailing and canoeing. Jared famously appears in a Birch Rock Sunfish instruction video, shot while standing in a semi-frozen Lake McWain in a snowstorm. "It's never too early to start..." deadpans Jared. Birch Rock relies on him to help with just about everything. Erik Joelsson reports that this summer he and co-MWA leader Thomas Joyce brought the group to the wrong pick-up spot at the wrong time at Rangeley Lakes. They spotted the BRC van and couldn't make out who was driving, but Erik said admiringly, "Of course it was Jared, and of course he found us." Jared has learned to tackle myriad construction and maintenance jobs with his dad and Charlie McDonald, along with keeping the Birch Rock fleet in tip top shape. He's a new graduate of Champlain College in Burlington, Vermont, with a cyber security and computer networking degree. Jared will soon be making his way in the tech world, but we'll be glad to see him back on McWain Hill where he and his parents will forever be cherished Birch Rockers.

Writer Francie Campbell, P '00s, T '00s, hasn't seen the Whichards' legendary Lake McWain July 4th fireworks display but it's on her bucket list!



REFLECTIONS FROM THE ROCK

*By Rich Deering
Alumni & Community Director '73*

Never have I been more grateful to our Birch Rock families than this past summer. Camp Director Mike and I continue to marvel over how graciously you all handled the pandemic situation. We know it's emotionally charged leaving your children at camp in a normal year. COVID restrictions put us in the tough position of sending you immediately back up the hill in your cars, family visits verboten. No camp tours, meeting your son's cabin buddies, leisurely lunch and staff introductions in the Grove. How frustrating and disappointing for everyone. Thank you for your extraordinary cooperation and forbearance. It takes a leap of faith to choose a camp for your child, and you demonstrated great faith in Birch Rock in these nerve-racking times.

What a successful, healthy and joyful 95th season we had! We welcomed 126 campers, including a record sixty-six new Birch Rockers from all across the USA, the United Arab Emirates and Israel. We were tremendously proud of our all-veteran staff (with just one newcomer to the ranks). Yes, we coped with challenges and restrictions that changed our daily operation, but we finished strong with lots of camp spirit and no COVID infections.

Mike, the senior staff and I were determined to pull out all the stops to keep the community safe and healthy. In preparation for Opening Day, we made plans and revised them again and again in consultation with the State of Maine, the CDC, Maine Summer Camps, the American Camp Association, our board of trustees, and staff members who are seasoned educators. Together we succeeded in giving boys what they badly needed — freedom to play and relax and recharge in the Maine woods!

As we continue to navigate our altered world, dealing with the seemingly endless social distancing, hybrid learning and remote working, the power of Birch Rock comes into sharp focus. We are members of a compassionate, dedicated community; campers, staff, alumni, families, donors, vendors, and friends alike benefit from our bonds of friendship and shared purpose. We'll do our best to keep Birch Rockers connected through phone calls, Zoom programs and (healthy) social media, until we meet again on the Hillside in 2022!

**2022 EARLY REGISTRATION
ENDS NOVEMBER 1ST!**

www.birchrock.org

FABULOUS FIVE CELEBRATE TEN YEARS AT THE ROCK

In five separate ceremonies, Director Rich Deering bestowed coveted BRC DECADE VESTS upon **Jon Allberry, Bob “Dancing Owl” Dow, Seth Brewster, Samuel Rotman** and **Sebastian Tringale**.

Chef Jon keeps our hungry community happy and well-nourished with his passion for cooking. He takes pride in making just about everything from scratch. When campers are asked what they love about BRC, they invariably praise the delicious food! Jon enjoys the balmy Florida life each winter, but eagerly returns to Waterford from May to September. He can be heard strumming his guitar on the Hillside after his hectic day of cooking is done.

“Dancing Owl” delights and enlightens campers with his wealth of knowledge about the Maine woods and lakes. This summer he took charge of our Junior Maine Guide Program, and helped a whopping four BRC candidates pass the arduous JMG exam. Bob lives in Waterford year-round and enjoys jamming with his band in local venues.

He may be called “Little Seth” by his family, but at BRC we call him the Jolly Green Giant. Seth Seward Brewster is the

youngest of four Birch Rock brothers, with a commanding presence like his greatgrandfather Chief Brewster. Seth is a woodworker extraordinaire. Birch Rock counts on him to keep campers safe with tools in our historic woodshop. We’re deeply grateful to Seth for the spectacular 2021 plaques in the main lodge.

Sam Rotman. He can swim. He can windsurf. He can dribble the soccer ball down Plate Field. He can deftly organize a trip. He climbs mountains. He is a true Renaissance man. Sam is in his second year at Saint Joseph’s College in Standish, Maine, where he can keep a close watch on his beloved camp year-round.

SeaBass is what he is affectionately called at BRC. Like a skilled angler, Sebastian catches campers and gets them hooked on Birch Rock. His fishing tackle includes kindness, love of camp traditions and lore, and affection for everyone in the community. SeaBass has the ultimate “can do” spirit. In his final year at Tufts University in Medford, MA, Sebastian is majoring in International relations and political science.

BIRCH ROCK CAMP TRIATHLON 2021 DRAWS 8 COMPETITORS

Hooray to the tenacious and talented Birch Rockers who participated in this year’s BRC Triathlon. The course kicked off from the main dock with a half-mile swim across the lake, followed by a five-mile bike leg to Hidden Meadow Farm, culminating in a road race up steep McWain Hill Road to our

driveway. The whole camp turned out to cheer the competitors across the finish-line. Congratulations to **Cole Cummings, Ben Angel, Trent Glimp, Fritts Johnson, Quinn Castelli, Sam King, Josh Rubin, and Aidan Singer**. Kudos to Sam King, our 2021 gold medal winner!



SEVEN COMPLETE COUNSELOR-IN-TRAINING PROGRAM

Under the collective leadership of Head Counselor Nick Musciano, Program Director Brian Farley and Lifeguard Instructor Erik Joesson, seven outstanding Birch Rock gentlemen completed our Leadership Program and American

Red Cross Lifeguard and Water Safety Training. Hats off to **Jed Kenerson, Theo Tringale, Jonah Keates, Owen Ebert, Alex Prasens, Joaquim Bila and Noah Protas.**



JUNIOR MAINE GUIDE PROGRAM IN 2021

Quinn Castelli, Isaac Fenster, Evan Ward, Sam King and Aidan Singer swung for the fences in the prestigious Junior Maine Guide program this summer. Our BRC candidates dedicated five weeks to preparing for a week-long testing camp at the Stephens Phillips Preserve in Oquossoc, Maine. Their competence in axemanship, canoeing skills, shelter building and encampment skills, cooking and fire building skills (among many other tasks) were thoroughly tested. With these proficiencies under their belts, campers are well on the way to becoming Maine Trip Leaders or future Maine Guides – coveted certifications for adults trained to lead others in wilderness adventures.



Bob “Dancing Owl” Dow received the highest compliments from testers for their hard work, determination and representation of BRC – with the majority receiving their Junior Maine Guide certification. Well done, Gentlemen!



The JMG Program was created in 1937 in an effort to promote the use of the Maine wilderness for recreation, as well as to train new generations to adopt practices that conserve the environment. These outstanding Birch Rock candidates led by

BIRCH ROCK CHEERS TO OUR NEWEST WHALES!

Let's hold all ten fingers up high for our newest WHALES! The Whale is Birch Rock's ultimate natatorial challenge — swimming the nearly six-mile perimeter of Lake McWain. Birch Rock cheers to **Quinn Castelli, Isaac Fenster, John Flannery, Trent Glimp, Sam King, Josh Rubin,**

Alex Saville, Aidan Singer and Evan Ward. And hearty congratulations to our newest record holder, **Campbell Hall,** who conquered the circumnavigation in a mere 1 hour and 50 minutes!



MAINE WILDERNESS ADVENTURE 2021

This summer's Maine Wilderness Adventure cadre — **Braedon Pincher, Lev Tolkoff, Finn Oldenberg, Lucas Kopp, Ben Kehoe and Gus Litowitz** — summited Kathadin and explored some of the most spectacular wild regions of Maine. Under the seasoned leadership of **Erik Joelsson and Thomas Joyce,** these outstanding Birch Rock gentlemen scouted the mountains, rivers and seashore of the Pine Tree state for three life-changing weeks.

Each year a group of full-session 15-year-old boys emerge from the Birch Rock community to take part in our MWA Program. The program, which runs during the second session of camp, requires boys to backpack through some of the most difficult miles of the Appalachian Trail, canoe class III rapids on the



secluded Allagash Wilderness Waterway, scale cliffs in Acadia National Park, raft down class V rapids in the Penobscot River, and explore the Downeast coast of Maine via sailboat.

This trip requires boys to push themselves outside of their comfort zone, test their limits, and work together as a team. During these strenuous weeks participants live out of their backpacks, carrying and cooking all their own food, and sleeping in tents, lean-tos and hammocks along the way. MWA is the most challenging adventure

offered at Birch Rock and it has been a rite of passage for many of our future leaders.

JON'S BRC FUDGY CHOCOLATE CRINKLE COOKIES

BIRCH ROCKERS' FAVORITE LUNCH DESSERT!

Prep Time 10 mins
Cook Time 12 mins
Total Time 22 mins

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup (2.2 oz/60 g) unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 cup (7 oz/205 g) white granulated sugar
- ¼ cup (60ml) vegetable oil
- 2 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup (3.5oz/130g) all purpose or plain flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup confectioners sugar or icing sugar (for coating)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a medium-sized bowl, mix together the cocoa powder, white sugar and vegetable oil. Beat in eggs one at a time, until fully incorporated. Mix in the vanilla.
2. In another bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, and salt. Stir the dry ingredients into the wet mixture just until a dough forms

(do not over beat). Cover bowl with wrap and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight.

3. When ready to bake, preheat oven to 350°F | 175°C. Line 2 cookie sheets or baking trays with parchment paper (baking paper). Roll 1 tablespoonful of dough into balls for smaller cookies, or 2 tablespoonfuls for larger cookies.
4. Add the confectioners (icing) sugar to a smaller bowl. Generously and evenly coat each ball of dough in confectioners sugar and place onto prepared cookie sheets.
5. Bake in preheated oven for 10 minutes (for small cookies) or 12 minutes (for larger cookies). The cookies will come out soft from the oven but will harden up as they cool.
6. Allow to cool on the cookie sheet for 5 minutes before transferring to wire racks to cool.



WISH LIST

BRC appreciates any and all donations to camp!

- Framed Backpacks (\$100 each)
- 8 Pickleball Paddles (\$35 each)
- 2 PickleNets w/wheels (\$500 each)
- Outdoor Basketballs & Frisbees (\$25 each)
- 3 to 4 Man Tents (\$250 each)
- New or Used Mountain Bikes (\$500 each)
- New 2-Way Radios (\$300 each)
- Generator for Lodge (\$5000)
- Commercial Fan for Lodge (\$2000)
- Outdoor Theater Lighting (\$500)
- Used Pick-Up Truck w/6 foot bed
- Gator or Utility Vehicle
- 4 Pan Commercial Kitchen Steamer

*Birch Rock Camp is a 501c3 nonprofit corporation.
All donations received are tax-deductible.*

Please contact us at birchrock@birchrock.org if you might be able to accommodate any of those wishes.

VISA/MASTERCARD ACCEPTED

Thank you!



Chef Jon

MANY THANKS TO FORMER TRUSTEES NANCY DREYER AND DAVID GLUCK

At Birch Rock's annual meeting on September 18, 2021, Chair Seth Brewster recognize the contributions from retiring trustees Nancy Dreyer and David Gluck.

Nancy Dreyer, mother of Birch Rock luminary Gabe Dreyer, has been a trustee since 2006. She has served with distinction on our marketing, strategy and real estate committees. Nancy helped tremendously with camper recruitment in our Greater Boston area. She will continue to serve on the real estate committee. Nancy and Gabe love spending time at their lake house in Newfield, Maine. Nancy is a real estate attorney with Koffman & Dreyer in Belmont, MA.

David Gluck, a trustee for 3 years, has helped recruit campers and promote the BRC brand in the New York metro area. He works as a children's clinical psychologist in Brooklyn, NY. David has helped facilitate mental health workshops for our staff training and will continue to serve on the camp's wellness committee.



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WELCOME TO OUR NEW TRUSTEES

The Birch Rock Board unanimously elected **Robert Donahue**, **Benjamin Brewster**, and **Eli Brewster** as trustees to serve a three-year term effective September 18, 2021 at our annual meeting.

Bob Donahue started as a Birch Rock camper nearly 20 years ago. Over the years his love for The Rock deepened as a camper, CIT, counselor and Head Counselor for the summers between 2015-17. Bob is a mechanical engineer at Mermilab in Geneva, Illinois. He and his wife Maura welcomed their first child, daughter Reese, this past spring. Bob serves on the 100th Anniversary and facility committees.

Ben Brewster grew up at camp and mastered all the Field

activities, learned to dive properly into McWain Pond and was one of the first to complete the MWA trip. An all-star athlete and professional soccer player, Ben currently serves as the Associate Head Coach for the UMass Men's Soccer program, and is working on a master's degree in Sports Management. He and his fiancée Becky reside in Northhampton, MA. Ben serves on the development committee.

Eli Brewster is also a Birch Rock lifer, with eight summers as a camper, CIT and counselor. A graduate of Dartmouth College, Eli worked in New York City as a banking analyst and now in Boston as an associate for Abry Partners, a business services and private equity fund company. Eli will serve the community with his expertise on the investment committee.



Bob



Ben



Eli

BIRCH ROCK CAMP

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Mark Your Calendars for 2022!



Clean & Pick Up Saturday	May 21
BRC Summer Office Opens	June 1
BRC Staff Orientation	June 15
C.I.T. Orientation	June 19
Opening - First Session / Cubs I	June 26
Cubs Camp I - End	July 9
Cubs Camp II	July 10
First Session & Cubs II - End	July 23
Opening 2nd Session	July 24
Maine Wilderness Adventure	
Cubs Camp III	
Cubs Camp III - End	August 6
BRC for Boys & MWA - End	August 13
BRC Family Camp	August 18
BRC Family Camp - End	August 22

It's Easy to Help BRC

- Send a tax-deductible donation to BRC.
- Promote BRC among friends, neighbors, family and colleagues.
- Refer a prospective camper to BRC by phone or email.
- Host a gathering of BRC alumni/prospects with Directors Deering and Mattson.
- Send us news to include in The Birch Bark's Alumni News Column.
- Ask us about our 'Wish List' before you have your spring yard sales.
- Update your contact information via www.birchrock.org.

