New "Climbaround Course" and August "Bonus" Week Are Huge Hits

Camp activities took off to new heights during Session 3 when, in the search to find new and exciting things to engage our campers, Starfish added a "Climbaround Course." The course consists of several sections of slackline interspersed with tree climbing elements, and separately, a small zipline-style "Tree Ride." The course was built entirely by staff with assistance from the teens in our I.e.a.d.e.r.s. program (along with several volunteer campers who were eager to get the area open for use!). They helped to spread mulch under the course sections, as well as clear brush and dead leaves from the area. The course is entirely removable and does no environmental damage.

Slacklining consists of traversing across flat nylon webbing between two fixed points while suspended about a foot off the ground. It has extensive health benefits, including developing balance and posture, improving core strength, sharpening mental acuity, and enhancing focus. Our course can provide varying levels of challenge depending on how one chooses to travel across it. Climbing holds called "Monkey Straps" offer a way to navigate around trees in between the lines, with extra holds on the last tree providing an option for campers to climb a few feet higher and ring a bell. Once the course opened, it was full each day at both morning and evening Freeplay. Many campers also requested its use as a reward.

Over thirty campers who attended our first August Respite Week got a chance to do just that on a field trip to Canobie Lake Amusement Park. In addition to all the fun rides and games, each camper budgeted spending money for a snack and souvenir, practiced their social skills by taking turns and having conversations with others in line, and tried new things.

In addition to the field trip, campers at Respite Week had a Goldrush, went swimming and boating, canoed to Blueberry Island, and enjoyed an extra week of camp. This new addition to our summer line-up of programs is here to stay!

Starfish Welcomes Camp Director Doug Sutherland

Starfish is thrilled to welcome our new Camp Director, Doug Sutherland. Only the fourth person in Starfish history to hold the role, Doug says: "I am very excited to be a part of the Camp Starfish family. My goal is to continue the tradition of excellence that campers, staff, and everyone involved have brought to Starfish." Doug is a veteran face in the New England camp community with over two decades of camp and youth development program leadership under his belt.

"I believe camp gives campers and staff the opportunity to experience growth and learn in a supportive, fun environment," Doug says. "Many Starfish campers, families, lake neighbors and friends met Doug this fall, whether while trick-or-treating at the Halloween Hurrah, dropping off campers at a respite weekend, or in the case of one group getting married at camp. "Doug is a stand-up guy, and it's obvious he's going to do great things here," one staff member said after meeting him. "You have big shoes to fill," one mom told Doug at Weekenders drop-off, and Doug assured her that he agreed and was up for the challenge.

Since then, he has jumped full-time into learning the ins-and-outs of Starfish, starting with hiring season, as he recruits back many of our amazing 2015 staff and begins to interview new applicants. "Putting together a team of 100+ young adults is no easy task – and our campers deserve the absolute best staff," Doug says, adding: "I can tell already from working and talking with many of the returners that our new summer applicants also have big shoes to fill!" Doug can be reached at the camp office or by email to doug@campstarfish.org.
Happenings

Belmont Hill School Preps Camp for Summer

The young men of Form VI visited in June, just a few weeks before their graduation, to spend the day helping staff get camp ready for the new summer season. They cleared trails, refurbished picnic tables, dug a new volleyball court, and much more. The class also presented Starfish with a PIN Grant to cover the cost of supplies for the day.

TMA-NE Raises Funds to Buy Camp a Gator!

Using funds raised during a charity Golf Tournament, the Turnaround Management Association Northeast Chapter purchased Starfish a much needed John Deere Gator. Not only was the Gator used for everyday things like bringing water to the hydration stations, it also provided our Healthy House staff a fast way to get anywhere on site. The Gator was a fantastic addition to camp in 2015, and the gift was extremely timely, since our beloved and very ancient Golf Cart ran its last leg of camp in 2014.

6th Halloween Hurrah Powered by Volunteers

Over 30 local sorority sisters from Alpha Omega @ UMASS Lowell, Alpha Sigma Tau @ FSU, Sigma Sigma Sigma @ FSU and the Central MA Alumnae Chapter of Sigma Sigma Sigma put on an event to remember! Despite the chilly weather, the ladies decorated cabins and other camp locations for trick or treating, ran activities like cookie decorating, mask making and crafts, hosted a pumpkin decorating station, and painted faces. Hot chocolate, a yummy buffet dinner, and great conversations amongst campers, families, volunteers and staff finished the evening. Thank you to everyone who helped and attended!

Milestones

Ten Year Awards Presented to Emily & Adam

Executive Director Emily Golinsky and Camp Director Adam Sparks were both recognized for 10 years of service to Starfish during the Duck Derby event this summer. Co-Presidents of the Board of Directors, Alisha and Cara spoke eloquently and presented each with an award. Emily joined the year-round team in 2006 as Camp Director and Chief Program Officer, the same year Adam joined the summer staff. Emily became the Executive Director and Adam moved up through several leadership positions, including Program Director, before joining the year-round team as Camp Director in 2012. This fall, after recently completing his Masters in Education, Adam became Director at the Lowell Collaborative Preschool Academy. Emily remains in her year-round role at Starfish, getting ready to teach Music & Drama. Following that, Emily became the Executive Director.

Chris Neumann, Neil Peacock Receive 5-Year Award!

Camp Starfish applauds Chris Neumann and Ne Peacock, who recently finished their 5th years on staff. After completing both the S.T.A.R. Corp and CREW leadership programs, Chris joined the staff team in 2011. He was Day Camp Counselor, then a Day Camp Administrator, Fish Village Director, and this past summer, Director of Village Life.

In addition to leading weekend groups a camp, Chris is an EMT and a Nashoba Valley Ski Area supervisor. He recently graduated from UMass Lowell with a degree in Criminal Justice and is applying to the Police Academy.

In 2011, Neil came to camp from the UK to teach Athletics and be a Bunk Counselor. He has been a Fish Village Lead Counselor and Administrator, Day Camp Director and most recently in 2015, Director of Camp Success. Neil graduated with a degree in Physical Education & Youth Sport from Sheffield Hallam University. He currently works as a Pastoral Officer in a school for children with special needs where he implements behavior plans, manages the school points/reward system, and ensures that students can participate successfully in class.

2nd Annual Duck Ranger Derby Raises Over $13,000

The 2015 Duck Ranger Derby was a quacking success! On Duck Day in June, over 100 staff set up at sponsored locations in the towns surrounding camp to paint faces, spread the word about Starfish and help ducks get adopted. Meanwhile at home in the months leading up to the day of the Derby, many campers were Wrangling adoptions from friends and family members. On Derby day, over 200 campers, staff, families, neighbors, friends and adopters gathered at camp on the shore of Lake Mononomon to enjoy the 2nd Annual Flodded Corral Carnival and Cookout, followed by plenty of cheering for the duckies as they started the race. Several campers participated as Duck Rovers alongside their swim instructors and lifeguards, ushering the duckies along the length of the course to the finish line. Winners Diane & Dennis DeLaney were on site to watch their duck win, while others were notified after the wonderful summer and, in her spare time, trying to decide on the quote and color for the 11th Year t-shirts.

...and the winners are...

1st Place: #2749
Julie Jacobs

2nd Place: #3338
Michael & Stefanie Tamuliss

3rd Place: #1435
Diane & Dennis DeLaney

16th (Anniversary): #173
Calista Hollyer

Daffy (Last Duck): #37
Elizabeth Stark

4,289 ducks adopted!
Thank You to our Shining Stars!

Camp Starfish is tremendously grateful to our many friends for their generous sponsorship between Oct. 31, 2014 & 2015.

- Anonymous (2)  
  In Honor of John M. Endries II
- Paul & Ann-Kristin Achleitner
- Amanda Armstrong & Jeremy Sharrard
- Joe & Marion Armstrong
- Gwen Aquadro
- Grace Bell  
  In Honor of Chris Neumann
- Deb Bernman
- Elizabeth Bielarsky  
  In Honor of Drea Aaron-Schiavone
- Jody & Janet Bleier  
  In Honor of John Endries
- Mr. & Mrs. Robert Blucke
- James Bogiajes
- Anthony Borrelli/Center Café
- Brad & Angel Santos Burres
- Michael Carper
  In Honor of Effie Carver
- Michael & Mindy Celona
- Alex Chu
- Kimberly Cohn  
  In Honor of Mt. Sinai Middle Teachers
- Mary Crisafi
- Fran Cronin
- How, Sammy
- Marc & Jillian Cyr  
  In Honor of Michelle Cyr
- Ken Danila & Maggie Schmidt
- Irene Davis  
  In Honor of Helen Adrienne Spurr
- James & Kathleen Deady  
  In Memory of Kevin J. Sullivan, Sr.
- Beth Degen
- Betsi & Peter Dempsey
- Bruce & Kirsten Dillaire
- William & Lindsay Donovan
- Thomas Downey
  In Honor of Eli & Mateo Vernon
- Michael & Susan Duffy
- Bryn Dunn
- Michael & Suzanne Dunn
- David & Rae DuVernay
- Carrie Endries & Paul Morgan
- Emily Endries  
  In Honor of John M. Endries II
- John & Anne Endries  
  In Honor of John M. Endries II
- Laura "Liz" Enstad  
  In Honor of Vetta Peterson
- Cara & Jena Falconi  
  In Honor of Ian Falconi
- Bob & Connie Falconi  
  In Honor of Cara, Jena & Ian Falconi
- Ian Falconi  
  With proceeds from his Yard Sale
- Andrea Fox
- Linda & Joe Francis  
  In Memory of John L. Francis
- Anthony Galli
  In Honor of Reed Holden
- Richard & Shari Gelber
- Laurence & Yuika Geoff
  In Honor of Annalee Sadowski-Power
- Jason Gesing & Christina Gentile
- Emily Golinsky & Michelle Cyr  
  In Honor of Elle Tucker Donovan
- Herb & Doris Golinsky  
  In Memory of Jedd Golinsky
- Jay Gordon
- Ruth Grobe
- Paul & Mary Hayes
- Heather Jack
- Miles & Erin Janiecek
- Claire & Clarence Jackman
  In Memory of Bassie W. Ross
- Ted & Jennifer Kremer
- Mike Kunin
- Michele Launer
  In Memory of Steven Launer
- Emily Lord
- John & Mary Lord
- Alice Maynard
  In Honor of Adam Maynard
- Brian & Karen Mariscal
- Katie Marsh & Lauren Marsh
  In Honor of Grant Hooper-March
- Robert & Janet Martel
- Tom Martinson
- Chris Mawhiney
- Jacki Mayall
- John McCarthy & Andrea Brox
- John McNamara
  In Honor of Roni Watte
- Fred & Polly Mellin
- Beth Montlaisir
- Matt Malley & Huckleberry
- Jim & Ginny Neumann
  In Honor of all Starfish Staff
- Kenn & Marianne Novack
- Raul & Ann Nunez
- Maureen & Brian Oates
  In Honor of Deb Bernan
- Susan Okie Bush
- Matthew Pakos
- Sharrona Pearl
  In Honor of Zoe Endries Morgan
- Carolee & Wayne Parrish
- Charles & Anita Perkins
- Michael & Alisha Pollastrini
- Arlene & Ron Prater
- Matt & Nicole Pritchard
- John & Debra Queen
- Avery Rimer & Richard Weissbourd
- Nick & Katie Rimer
  In Honor of Starfish Staff
- Melody Rivera
- Alan & Elisabeth Kaye Rocklin
  In Honor of Ted & Barbara Fichtenholtz
- In Memory of Steven Launer
- Michael Ross & Brenda Stevens-Ross
- Anthony & Vera Sarantakis
- Lawrence & Pearl Schainker
- Kinsey Seibeka
- Bill Seidman & Harriet Robbins
  In Honor of Emily Golinsky
- Benjamin Smith & Judith Pinkser
- Adam & Aimee Sparks
- Eric & Iris Spungin
- Sonali Stanton
- Bill & Jan Stanwood
- Deana & Jeff Stephens
- Helen Adrienne-Spurr & Mark Spurr  
  In Honor of Shenna Bernan
- In Memory of Michael Geller's Mom
- In Memory of Susann Tuncik's Father
- Martha & Scott Stewart
  In Honor of John & Ryan
- Lori Stevens
- Fran & Ann Sullivan
- Kathleen Sullivan
  In Memory of Kevin J. Sullivan, Sr.
- Kevin & Adrienne Sullivan
- Mary Susensenber
- Neda Tabala
- Kent & Astair Thayer
  In Honor of all the Starfish kids
- Jerry Walls
- Leonard & Estella Walter  
  In Honor of Michelle Cyr
- Sally Winter

On Giving Tuesday (Dec. 2, 2014)

- Anonymous (3)
- Carrie Endries
- Barbara Fraser
- Terry & Liz Griffin
- Marilyn & Paul Hinkson
- Heather Jack
- Ted & Jennifer Kremer
- Chelsea Martel
- Shane McDougall
- Marie Nazzaro
- Bill & Robyn Spoud
- Kaeliee Tanner
- Linda Tanner
- Caryn Vernon
- William & Lisa Richards

Honoring the Arenal/Farrell Wedding

- Margaret Lennox
- Eleanor & Leo de Oetteldare
- Carmen Miranda
- Katherine Weisenborn

Special thanks to the foundations & corporations for the outstanding support they provide:

- Associated Grantmakers / SummerFund
- Autism Speaks, Baker Camp Scholarship Fund
- Arthur Vining Davis Foundation
- Bay State Federal Savings Charitable Fndn.
- Beacon Hill Circle For Charity
- Christensen-Dunn Early Foundations Fund
- C.J. Mawhiney Construction Co.
- Constant Contact Cares4Kids Program
- Dultle Tremblay Community Fund
- Father Wren Council—KofC #3963
- Anonymous (2)
  Belmont Hill School
  B.R. Alexander & Co.
- Clinton Savings Bank
- Concord Realty Advisors
- Harry Gregg Foundation
- Johnson Family Foundation
- J.E. & Z.B Butler Foundation
- Marigold Charitable Trust
- Mary W.B. Curtis Trust
- Novack Family Foundation
- Minnie Parker Charitable Trust
  In Honor of Emily's Leadership on Mortgage Transition
- NH USDA Summer Food Program
- Constance O. Putnam Foundation
- Sarah W. Rollins Charitable Trust
- Stanton & Company
- Turnaround Management Assoc., NE Chapter
- Unitarian Universalist Society of Wellesley Hills
- Google Matching Gift, Grants Programs

Thank You Duck Day Location Sponsors!

- FlipSide Grill, Fitzwilliam, NH
- Walmart, Rindge, NH
- Hometown Diner, Rindge, NH
- Buffalo Wild Wings, Leominster, MA
- Walmart, Gardner, MA
- Market Basket, Rindge, NH
- Bettelette's, Jaffrey, NH

...and the 550+ Individuals who Adopted!

While we wish we had space to list all who have, please know how thankful we are for each and every one of ya all together.

- 225 Solos (1 Duck)
- 98 Quack Packs (4 Ducks)
- 81 Bunches (10 Ducks)
- 18 Flacks (22 Ducks)
- 55 Leader Of the Flacks (40 Ducks)
- 188 Assorted Combinations (Lotsa Ducks)

We are proud to collaborate with over 100 agencies, schools and programs, including the following:

- Advanced Behavioral Health
- Adoptive Families for Children Foundation
- Arbor Counseling
- Alpha Sigma Tau Sorority @FSU
- Alpha Omega Sorority @UMASS
- The Arc
- Aspen Elks Lodge #224
- Autism Care and Treatment Today
- Autism Resource Center of Central MA
- Bay State Community Services, Inc.
- Berkshire Children & Families
- Bethany Hampton & Stoddard School Districts
- Brandon Residential Treatment Center
- Central MA Alumnae Chapter, Sigma Sigma Sigma
- City of Northampton, MA
- CT Department of Children & Families
- Commonwealth
- Community Counseling of Bristol County
- Community Therapeutic Day School
- Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism
- MA Department of Mental Health
- MA Department of Child & Family Services
- Harry Alan Gregg Foundation
- The Home for Little Wanderers
- The Institute of Professional Practice, Inc.
- Jason Hayes Foundation
- Judge Baker Children's Center/Marvne School
- Justice Resource Institute
- Laconia Police Relief Association
- Lahay Health Shared Services
- Lakes Region Community Services Council
- Monadnock Developmental Services
- One Sky Community Services
- Only You Foundation
- Orleans Supervisory Western Union
- Rise Above Foundation
- Riverside Community Care
- Sigma Sigma Sigma Sorority @ FSU
- ServiceNet, Inc.
- State of New Hampshire
- Towns of Westford, Lincoln & Winchester, MA
- Walker School
- Waterford Country School
- Wayside Youth & Family Support Network

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of these lists. We sincerely apologize for any error or omission.
From our Board Co-Presidents: "Thank You!"

It's hard to believe another year is almost in the record books, but with the leaves bagged up and the ice melt on order, it's undeniable -- winter is coming! It's an unusual time of year for an organization whose main focus is summer camp -- and it provides an excellent opportunity to sit down, reflect, celebrate successes, plan for future successes, and be proud of a job well done. It's also a time to give thanks -- to share our appreciation for the gift of growth, learning, support and safety that all of you give our campers and families.

A lot has happened at Starfish in the past year! We've broken ground on our first year-round building, welcomed a new Camp Director, and hosted the largest number of campers per session in our 16-year history! And though each year brings changes, at our core we are the same place -- a safe, welcoming, nurturing place for children with significant challenges -- and a place supported by the love and generosity of friends like you. All of us here at Starfish are truly grateful for the essential and consistent support we receive from each and every member of our ever-growing Starfish family. Whether you stop in during the summer to visit and give the staff a high-five of encouragement, provide camp for a family in need by donating campership funds, or tell someone about this amazing camp you know for special kids...we owe you a huge "thank you." You make it possible for our campers to learn, grow and have fun.

To everyone who held a fundraiser, ran a marathon, painted a cabin, raked a trail, referred a camper, supported a family, collected clothes for our campers who arrive without, gave $10 online for Giving Tuesday, recruited a staff member, donated to camp in lieu of wedding favors, and every other way helped make it possible -- we thank you. Thank you for being such a critical part of our team, for helping us make the future better for our campers, one at a time, the way we always have and with your continued support, always will.

Carrie Endries & Alisha Pollastri, Ph.D.
Co-Presidents, Board of Directors

The Faces of Starfish

Your support helps these and all of our campers access the life-changing support of Starfish. Thank you!

In Our Mailbox

Dear camp STARFISH,

I love coming to camp because it's one of the few places I feel safe. Not only is it safe, it's been one of most fun places to stay. I also feel the best when I'm able to reconnect. Lately I have been learning to give back. So I had a pay, save to make money to pay for camp. I hope it helps. See you soon!

- Janie, camper since 2000

I just want to say thank you for this summer camp Starfish changed my life. I now think differently. I am a little bit different. Is boring. I am a little bit different. Is boring. I just did anything. I am strong.

- Theo, 15

I wanted to say thank you for all that you do. At my house there is not much food, so going to camp is what makes me happy and strong. Your food is the best I've ever had in my life. Thank you.

- Your friend

Alisha, 14 & Theo, 15

first time camper