

CHIPS N' SPLINTERS



News from YMCA Camp Hi-Rock,
a branch of the Central Connecticut Coast YMCA

WINTER 2013/14

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ALUMNI IN THE SPOTLIGHT:

Catherine Price



Do you ever wonder what happens to counsellors who teach creative writing at Hi-Rock? Catherine Price went from teaching creative writing at Hi-Rock in the mid-nineties, to completing her undergraduate studies at Yale and her graduate studies at UC Berkley, to a distinguished career as a freelance journalist.

Catherine's work has appeared in many publications including *The Best American Science Writing*, *The New York Times*, *Popular Science*, *O, The Oprah Magazine*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *The Washington Post Magazine*, *Salon*, *Slate*, *Men's Journal*, *Mother Jones*, *Health Magazine*, and *Outside*. She has also written two books, a parody travel guide called *101 Places Not to See Before You Die* and *The Big Sur Bakery Cookbook*. Catherine is currently working on a book about the history and psychology of vitamins and nutrition, which will be published by the Penguin Press in early 2015. Since being diagnosed with type I diabetes, Catherine has also been working as a patient advocate, speaker, writer, workshop leader and consultant "for all things diabetes."

Catherine describes teaching creative writing as one

of the things she especially loved about her time at Hi-Rock. When asked if anything about her time at Hi-Rock as a camper and a counsellor influences her in her life or work today, she responded, "You mean, besides my professional career as a water skier and maker of friendship bracelets? I think that my experiences at Hi-Rock gave me a sense of self-confidence that has definitely influenced my subsequent life. I had a very awkward middle school existence, and didn't run with the popular crowd at school. So it was really liberating to come to camp and realize that there were people out there who thought I was cool -- or at least who appreciated my dorkiness." We definitely appreciated her then, as we do now!

We talked with Catherine about the importance of Hi-Rock for today's kids. Catherine explained that having grown up in New York City, she "appreciated the chance to spend the summer outdoors in such a beautiful setting and to interact with such a diverse group of people," fondly recalling the international counsellors, a perennial highlight of the Hi-Rock experience. Reflecting on how the world has changed since the nineties, Catherine suggests, "camp is probably even more important to kids now than it was when I was there. Now that we've become addicted to smartphones and email, I think camp offers a much needed respite from the technology that threatens to take over our lives. I would love to experience another summer without screens." That can be arranged if you'd like to come back and teach creative writing for us, Catherine!

Jenna Abriola



Former camper and staff member Jenna Abriola is spreading the Hi-Rock spirit in South America! She is in her second year as a kindergarten teacher at the American International school, Colegio Albania, located in La Guajira in Northern Colombia. She teaches her Colombian students all of the basic subject areas in English.

Jenna was a Hi-Rock camper from 1997 to 2002 and worked as counselor, Wigwam Unit Director, Program Director and office staff between the years of 2005 and 2012.

She credits Hi-Rock as an important stepping-stone on her career path as a teacher. "Being a counselor helped me to gain perspective on the best ways to work with youth, particularly how to make learning fun."

"I would love to see some of the older students from my current school attend Hi-Rock," she explains. As an educator, Jenna sees the difference that summer camp can make in a child. "Kids need to play outside! Camp allows them to enjoy the outdoors all day and make meaningful friendships apart from any social media. Camp also pushes kids out of their comfort zone and teaches them to be responsible for their own decisions and actions." Jenna can relate to this firsthand, as she attended the resident camp program from the age of 11. "As a camper, I loved activities on the waterfront. It was really special learning how to sail."

Any advice for little Hi-Rockers who hope to be teachers someday? "I think that the best teachers remember what it is like to be a child. If you are a little Hi-Rocker who wants to be a teacher someday, my advice would be to enjoy being a kid as long as you can and keep journals or scrapbooks to help you remember all the best parts of being a kid."

Andrew Bartram



For the past two years, Hi-Rock alumnus Andrew Bartram has traveled to the Nubra Valley in India as a volunteer in dental medicine through the Amchi program. Andy, as he was known at camp, is an oral surgeon who helps to train Amchi (Buddhist

Nuns who provide healthcare in this remote region) in basic dental care. While training the Amchi, Andy and a team of dentists also deliver preventative treatment and direct care to the people of Ladakh. We asked Andy a few questions about his experience at Hi-Rock and how his summers on Mount Washington relate to his current volunteer efforts.

Does anything you learned at Hi-Rock stick with you or influence you today?

One of the most important things I learned at Hi-Rock that I use in my day-to-day practice is how to communicate effectively with children and put them at ease. Most of the children I work with are very unwell, anxious and nervous. At Hi-Rock I learned how to relate to the kids and get on with them at their level. Many of my young patients are disarmed by how well we get on. For the kids, having a laugh and chatting about something they're interested in with their doctor makes a huge difference to their experience of treatment... laughter is great medicine.

How does this volunteer opportunity relate to what you learned or were exposed to while at Hi-Rock?

At Hi-Rock I learned to relax my British 'stiff upper lip' and I was inspired by the enthusiasm, warmth and acceptance of both the campers and staff - this was something we tried to instill

in the project group. I believe this is an important tool to turn a group of individuals into a unit or a team and I hope it will continue as our work progresses.

For a large part of the project we were in very remote areas at extreme altitude, I actually used fire-building and star navigation skills I learned from Chuck Hirsch on Abnaki overnights!

Our programme is run from Europe and India with collaborators and team members from all over the world: 15 countries on 4 continents!

I am passionate about equality of opportunity to healthcare, health promotion and education. I strongly believe in the ethos of the programme: empowering local healthcare providers to make a self sustainable, positive change in healthcare in their region.

Is there anything in particular you remember fondly or value about your experience at Hi-Rock?

I have great memories of my summers at Hi-Rock, especially the yellow swim lessons and time spent in the Abnaki unit. I was fortunate to make lifelong, valued friends I still keep in touch with to this day.

Amchi program info: www.edsaweb.org



AMCHI program team with His Holiness The Dali Lama



ALUMNI REUNION 2013

YMCA Camp Hi-Rock alumni from around the world gathered at camp this past Labor Day Weekend for a reunion celebrating Hi-Rock's 65th anniversary. Two hundred and thirty-five Hi-Rockers including former campers and counselors and their families came together to revel in one of Hi-Rock's greatest gifts – lifelong friendships!

In true Hi-Rock spirit, the reunion brought together a diverse group of campers from all around the world, sharing very different backgrounds. Alumni Steve and Caroline Gill, Vicki Giggins, Justin Caplicki and Luke Emslie won the prize for flying the longest distance – all the way from Australia! Vicki won extra points for bringing along baby boy Fraser. Klaus and Millie Grah brought good cheer from Germany along with cherished stories to share of Klaus's experience as one of Hi-Rock's first international counselors in 1955.

Campers now grown into adults reconnected with their former

counselors and expressed their gratitude for the ways in which they had cared for and inspired them. Former campers and counselors alike flocked to retired camp director, Tom Moore, who spent twenty years at Hi-Rock's helm and continues to dole out wit and wisdom to admiring alumni. Old friends basked in the comfort of each other's company, picking right up where they'd left off years ago, while new friendships were forged easily among those who had never shared a summer. Conversations all around camp shared a common theme with alumni talking about how grateful they were for the life changing experience of Hi-Rock. In one way or another, everyone's words echoed the chorus of a favorite camp cheer, "We love it here!"



We saw many future campers at the reunion. Welcome to the family!

A CAMPER HITS A HIGH NOTE!

You never know exactly what to expect when you arrive at Hi-Rock for a couple of weeks in the woods. This summer, campers enjoyed a surprise visit from Boston Symphony Orchestra cellist Mickey Katz. Mickey and his family were invited to Hi-Rock by his long-time student, Gabriel Rainey, who has been a camper at Hi-Rock for five years, along with his sister Alannah. Gabriel introduced his fellow campers to his renowned teacher and to the classical cello which he has been studying seriously for several years.

Mickey and Gabriel treated the camp to a private concert at the Hi-Rock chapel overlooking Plantain Pond with leafy trees framing the view and surrounding the stage. Staff commented that the enchanting setting rivalled that of Tanglewood, the summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra! In addition to offering a few solo performances and some inspiring duets with Gabriel, Mickey shared stories of his experience as a cello player with the campers, entertained a spirited assortment of questions and played songs by request

to the delight of the audience. It was a very memorable day with extraordinary music making its way across camp. Many thanks to the Rainey Family and to Mickey Katz for this very special gift!



HEARD IT FROM THE CHIPMUNKS

Nikki Wolfe graduated from Buffalo State College with a degree in art education in 2009 & is currently living in Denver, CO working as an interior designer. She is engaged! • **Tom Davies** left his year round post at Hi-Rock & has begun work as a teaching assistant working with autistic children while studying towards his teaching degree. • **Megan (Milbrandt) & Dave Savage** have been living in Australia for 10 years & now have two beautiful boys! • **Quintin Ewels** is studying for his degree in history & archaeology at the University of Pretoria (SA). As head archaeologist he discovered a rare site of a Southern African tribe that lived near Pretoria in the early 1800s. • **Heather Nibur** is currently teaching while completing her masters degree in early childhood education. • **Tim Byers** has been married to his wife Lisa for 17 years! He teaches technology at an intermediate school in Santa Ana, CA & coaches the girls wrestling team at Santa Ana High. Tim also runs ½ & full marathons. • **Allison Hill** moved to CT with her husband, Tony & two kids, Liam (6) & Iris (4). She says "I am slowly indoctrinating them all into Camp Hi-Rock." They plan on attending family camp in 2014! • **Gabrielle (Provençal) McVicker** & her husband

Sean welcomed a baby boy into their family this fall. • **Merritt Hopper** & his wife Maureen welcomed another Hopper boy Becket • **Jill Benedict** retired last January, but is still working two days a week. • **Eric Benedict** is a Previs artist in Los Angeles, look for his name in the credits of The Hunger Games: Catching Fire! • **Michael Benedict** is back in the states from Rwanda, but will be traveling back to Tanzania in the next few months. • **Ariel Brodsky** lives in Brooklyn, NY and is the CEO and co-founder of B&D Social Media Lab. • **Emily Holzberg** was selected as an All-County player as a junior & helped lead her team to a 14-7 record & the first appearance by MHS in the volleyball playoffs in 10 years. She is also a team captain! • **Jason Holzberg** will be riding as a freshman for the Masters HS Mountain Bike team this spring in the second season of the newly formed NYHS Mountain Biking League. • **Nicholas Abriola** graduated in May from Corcoran College of Art + Design with a bachelor's in fine art photography & is currently employed at Milford Photo as a digital imaging specialist. • **Pat Quish** is living in New York City working with Diligence USA – a business intelligence firm.

STRONG KIDS CAMPAIGN & HI-ROCK FOREVER FUND:

Hi-Rock is truly a special place to grow up. It could not function without the support of our community. Every year, 1 in 5 campers attend Hi-Rock because of generous donations from people like you. The support from our community is what allows Hi-Rock to be such a special place, where children from all walks of life can grow, play and learn together. The Strong Kids Campaign is essential to Hi-Rock's program and also provides general subsidy for youth camp programs. Below is a list of 2013 donors. THANK YOU!

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Zoe

THANK YOU!

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For over 60 years, a group of community leaders have gathered for lunch over the holidays to raise money for capital improvements at YMCA Camp Hi-Rock. We thank them for their continued support.

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Gavin Cockfield	Richard Hoyt	Dorothy Nastasia	Ed and Nancy Siden	Jan Berrick
David & Sherry Cohen	Joe Huffman	Lars Godthaab Nielson	Jessica Speer-Holmes & Alistair Holmes	Max Ramirez
Erik J. Daubert & Andrea Miele	Alan Hurst	New Alliance Foundation	Richard & Marilyn Speer	Patrick Gable & Patricia Bull
	Don Hutchinson		Paul Starkman	

WAYS TO GIVE BACK

Make a Gift By Phone

You can make a gift, pledge or credit card payment by phone: Call camp at (413) 528-1227

Give By Email

You can make a pledge or request additional info by email: executive@camphirock.org.

Give By Mail

You can make your gift by mail, with checks payable to: YMCA Camp Hi-Rock
162 East Street
Mount Washington, MA 01258

HI-ROCK'S WISH LIST

You can give back to Hi-Rock, too! Below is a list of the top 5 donations that would be a great benefit to programming for campers and overall camp maintenance.

1. All-wheel drive SUV, station wagon or truck
2. Sunfish or Sailfish boats
3. Mugs or silverware
4. Sports equipment
5. Paddle board equipment

For more ideas & ways to give, please check out:
camphirock.org/make-a-difference/wish-list/

SAVE THE DATES



Winter Family Camp

Featuring the Ice Tee Open:
February 14-17, 2014

Spring Work Weekend:
April 25-27, 2014

Women's Wellness Weekend:
May 30 - June 1, 2014

Summer Family Camp:
August 18-24, 2014

Alumni Reunion
September 2-5, 2016

YMCA CAMP HI-ROCK

A Branch of the Central Connecticut Coast YMCA
162 East Street
Mt. Washington, MA 01258

PARKER SEELEY UPDATE

Thanks to the generosity of many members of the YMCA Camp Hi-Rock community and the hard work of our volunteers, we have begun construction of the new Parker Seeley Lodge! This step marks the beginning of one of the key projects being undertaken through the Campaign for YMCA Camp Hi-Rock which seeks to raise \$2.8 million to address critical needs at camp. Other goals of the campaign include rebuilding several camper cabins, resurfacing the ball fields, rebuilding shower houses, and repairing staff housing including the Wheel House.

Big thanks go to all who have made this possible. If you have not yet made a commitment to the Campaign for Hi-Rock, please consider doing so to help make it possible to complete the new lodge in 2014. We would love to talk with you about this exciting project and all of our capital development plans. Please call our executive director, Jessica Speer-Holmes, at [413-528-1227](tel:413-528-1227) or email her at executive@camphirock.org.



CAMP HI-ROCK ON TV!

In 2013 Hi-Rock's summer Family Camp was featured in a story by Don Dahler on *CBS This Morning Saturday*. Check out the picture of Jess in front of the camera. Here is the link to watch the clip:

<http://www.cbsnews.com/videos/cabin-fever-family-camps-become-a-popular-summer-getaway>