

Fall 2015



The **Cachalot**

News, Information, and Memories by and for the Members of the Camp Cachalot Alumni Association

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The Cachalletter

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Camp Cachalot Alumni Association

The Cachalletter is the newsletter of the Camp Cachalot Alumni Association. It is published twice annually: once in the spring and once in the fall, by the Communications Committee.

Questions or other feedback related to *The Cachalletter* can be sent via email to cachaletter@cachalotalumni.org.

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Dennis J. Wilkinson, II

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On the cover: A Northern red-bellied cooter (*Pseudemys rubriventris*) found at Cachalot. Photo courtesy Brian Bastarache.

The Camp Cachalot Alumni Association

The Camp Cachalot Alumni Association was founded in 2004 with the express purpose of supporting Camp Cachalot and being a social organization for the extended family of the Camp. Anyone who has ever had any involvement with Camp Cachalot, the former Moby Dick Council, or any of the predecessor camps or Councils is eligible for membership. It is a not-for-profit organization operated under the auspices of the Narragansett Council, Boy Scouts of America.

Our membership year runs from July 1st through June 30th, and all membership fees contribute directly to our endowment fund, the proceeds of which go directly towards the support of Camp Cachalot.

More information about the Alumni Association, including membership forms, back issues of *The Cachalletter*, Camp history, and online discussion forums, can be found online at our web site:

<http://www.cachalotalumni.org/>

We can also be reached via US Mail at the following address:

Camp Cachalot Alumni Association
c/o Narragansett Council, BSA
P.O. Box 14777
Providence, RI 02914



Giving Thanks

Brian Bastarache, Association Chairman

November is the Thanksgiving Season - as long as you stay out of the malls. They jump right to Christmas. Those who love Cachalot have much to be thankful for this season. "Camp" is doing very well and there are plans being developed for further improvements. In the spirit of the season, I would like to reflect on our blessings.

Many of you know that the Cachalot water supply system had a catastrophic failure in the middle of our Memorial Day alumni family weekend. Heroic effort and creative thinking by Ranger Karrie and some alumni helpers patched the system back together to a serviceable state so that it could limp through our weekend and beyond. A utility failure such as this could potentially close a facility and repairing (or rebuilding) such a large (and regulated) component of the infrastructure is not inexpensive.

The council set to task. Assessing the problem, contacting plumbing companies, collecting quotes and doing their best to secure donations of equipment and labor. All of this takes time - a lot of time. (We all have had unexpected tasks thrown on top of the duties in our job descriptions.) During this entire time camp services continued uninterrupted because of the efforts of our ranger and skilled volunteer helpers. I am very thankful to report that the Cachalot water system has been robustly rebuilt and should easily service the needs of our campers for decades.

You might imagine that this was not cheap. You're right! In a stroke of creative inspiration, the council leadership prepared a retroactive Magee Fund proposal to fund the cost of the new water system. Not satisfied with "just" the reimbursement, the council included a fire suppression system for the Dining Hall. I am very happy to report to you that the 2015 Magee Fund proposal was successful.

Water and fire suppression systems are neither fun, exciting, nor even visible to most who will visit camp. They will not be mentioned in camp promotions. However, they are vital to the health and safety of campers and the continued operation of Cachalot. I am very thankful to our council staff and dedicated volunteers who did not let this issue interrupt the experience of a single Cachalot camper and have found a solution that has addressed the problem for years to come. I am very thankful for the effort of all those, professional and volunteer, that made all of this possible.

I am thankful for the success and support Cachalot has experienced in recent years. While still humble, the Cachalot Summer Camp attendance has increased every year for the past three years. That's an honest to goodness statistical trend! I am thankful for the white sand and the rolling dark green piney hills and the lakes - the beautiful lakes - of Cachalot. (Take a moment and picture your favorite Cachalot vista now. OK. That's enough! Back to reading.) But, these are not the most important factors driving the increased attendance. It is the staff. The performance of the camp staff will make or break a unit's summer camp experience and will be remembered by a camper for the rest of his life. It is the dedication to the customer service attitude of the Cachalot staff that has driven the much of this success. I am extremely thankful for the years of experience of our camp staff members, from the Camp Directors to the CITs.

I am thankful for your continued support of Cachalot and our Association. The Camp Cachalot Alumni Association has been breaking its own membership and fund-raising records. Your membership is a formal declaration of support for Cachalot. Your donations of time, money or effort are the physical manifestation of your love of camp. It is how we attempt to give back; to show thanks for all that we were given by our association with Cachalot. Thank you.

I am thankful for the future of Cachalot. There are some very exciting ideas being discussed about improvements to camp. I will discuss none of these now as they are barely foggy visions, but I am thankful that people are thinking and talking about Cachalot. I look forward to welcoming our Annawon Council neighbors (many of whom are already Cachalot regulars.) Many of us know the feelings associated with losing our council. It will be important for us to offer a warm and sympathetic hand shake and offer our home, Cachalot, as a home to them if they so choose. (Narragansett Council was also successful with a Magee Foundation proposal for Camp Norse as well.) I am thankful for the opportunity to create a partnership between the Camp Norse and Cachalot families that will result in a strong, united Scouting program and opportunities for learn and growth of Scouts and Scouters.

Happy Thanksgiving. 🍂

What Cachalot Means to Me

BY CAROLINE CONNICK

As a Camp Cachalot "Alumni Kid," I've had the amazing privilege of calling this beautiful place my home away from home since I was an infant. I've been a scout since I became eligible for Venturing when I turned fourteen, but Scouting has influenced me my entire life. You all most likely know my dad, Tim Connick, who spent years camping, working, and annoying people at Cachalot since his days as a scout. During those years, he fell in love with this place and developed friendships that have stood the test of time. As he and his friends grew up and started families, they gave their children the gift of this camp and the lifelong friends that we would continue to make here. Camp has created a bond not only between me and my Venture Crew, but also between me and my fellow "Alumni Kids." These people are all family to me, and I even call most of my dad's friends from Scouting my "Uncles" to this day.

My dad and I have camped out with other Camp alumni on Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends for many years, and those are the two weekends that I look forward to the most. The incredible thing about Camp is that childhood friends from as close to camp as New Bedford or as far away from camp as Natick all bring their families together to see each other and have fun. I rarely see my friends from Camp outside of Camp, but even though we don't see each other for long periods of time, whenever we're at Camp we always pick up right where we left off as if we were never apart. With every Alumni Family Camping Weekend comes lots of new stories to tell...and lots of crazy things to laugh about.

Over the years, I've made very precious friendships with my "Uncles" children such as Christie, Julia, and Mason, Ash, Ashley, Madison and Nick, Lilah and Fiona, Pierrette and Sebastian, and

We all have a very special connection to this place

many others. We all have a very special connection to this place where we enjoy the incredible sights, sounds, and smells not just of nature but specifically of Camp, taking out our phones only for the purpose of capturing pictures and videos documenting our amazing memories and the unique beauty of this place to look back on when we venture back into the dullness of society. Small children calling out to each other as they play in Tom Cullen Field, Camp alumni sitting in Pine Grove and Magee Village catching up and recalling childhood memories of Camp, canoes gliding through Five Mile Pond while the inhab-

itants of Camp young and old swim and fish by the waterfront, teenagers teaching little kids how to make friendship bracelets in Pine Grove, boys trying to make magic wands and bows and arrows out of fallen branches in Magee Village, girls braiding each other's hair in the shade of the evergreen pitch pine forest, the smell of campfires and Uncle Dennis' legendary treats, model rockets shooting through the air, sparks from campfires floating into the star-filled night sky, Five Mile Pond sparkling under what is perhaps the most beautiful sunset on Planet Earth. I could honestly write about Camp Cachalot forever as I'm sure much of my family there could too, and I hope that everyone who ever camped at Cachalot will want to join me in sharing their memories of this place and what Camp Cachalot means to them. 🍂

Caroline Connick is the daughter of Association Vice-Chairman Timothy Connick, and has been visiting Cachalot with her family and as a Venturer all her life. She is currently a freshman at Salve Regina University in Newport, Rhode Island pursuing a degree in English and Communications with a minor in dance.

Interested in sharing your own memories of camp? Contact the editor with story ideas at cachaletter@cachalotalumni.org.

Upcoming Events and Important Dates

January 30th, 2016
Klondike Derby
Cachalot Scout Reservation
Plymouth, MA

February 27th, 2016, 11:00AM - 3:00PM
2016 Winter Gathering
Fairhaven Council on Aging
229 Huttleston Avenue
Fairhaven, MA

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Wild Cachalot

The Ponds

BY DAVID PAULSON

Camp Cachalot is a place we all love and cherish. Besides the memories and life skills that are ingrained in each camper, camp also has a special natural history. From the scrub oak to its sandy topography, the Ice Age has certainly left its mark. The same is true for the clear and tranquil waters of Cachalot.

During the last Ice Age, large chunks of ice breaking off the retreating glaciers caused depressions in the ground for the waters of camp. These uniquely formed water bodies are called Coastal Plain Ponds. Their global distribution is extremely limited, and as a result so are the plants which grow abundantly on their shores. Some examples include Plymouth gentian (*Sabatia kennedyana*) and slender arrowhead (*Sagittaria teres*), and Acadian quillwort (*Isoetes acadensis*) which are mostly confined to Plymouth and Barnstable Counties.

The first thing you might notice about a Coastal Plain Pond is that there are no streams flowing in and none flowing out. They are directly linked to the underground aquifer. The water level fluctuates dramatically because there is no natural inlet or outlet. Every 5 years or so there is an exceptionally dry year, which leaves a lot of pond shore exposed. Plants that may not have been seen for years will now germinate and grow.

The waters of coastal plain ponds tend to be nutrient poor and acidic, as is typical of eastern Massachusetts. The plants of the Pondshore community are particularly adapted to the nutrient poor conditions, and although often



Plymouth Gentian

restricted to that environment, are able to compete with more widespread plants that require more nutrients. The periodic inundations of the shore also help to keep out shrubs and upland plants, and the periodic drying keeps out the obligate aquatic plants.

As a result of this unique wetland type and its hydrology, a globally rare natural community occurs called the Coastal Plain Pondshore. The community develops best in small ponds or bays of larger ponds with little space for

Precious Underwing



wind sweep that causes wave and ice damage to shorelines on large ponds. In most cases the substrates are sand or sandy glacial till through which the water moves easily.

Cachalot is home to several rare and unique species of flora and fauna. Specifically: Terete Arrowhead (*Sagittaria teres*) is a perennial emergent aquatic plant of the water-plantain family (*Alismataceae*), which grows in shallow water along the margins of coastal plain ponds. It has linear basal leaves and white flowers, which bloom from July to September. Plymouth Gentian (*Sabatia kennedyana*) is a globally rare, showy perennial herb of the gentian family (*Gentianaceae*), with striking pink and yellow flowers and opposite lance-shaped leaves. It inhabits the sandy and peaty shorelines of coastal plain ponds. Acadian Quillwort (*Isoetes acadensis*) is a globally rare, perennial aquatic non flowering plant; a relative of ferns.

Unique species of fauna that occupy the ponds include the Northern Red-Bellied Cooter (*Pseudemys rubriventris*), a federally threatened large freshwater turtle that grows to a carapace (upper shell) length of 15.7 inches. The head is dark brown with light stripes; a prominent stripe on the top of the head joins the thin lines above the eyes at the snout to form the prefrontal arrow, characteristic of this turtle. The tip of the upper jaw is notched with a tooth-like cusp on either side. The Precious Underwing Moth (*Catocala pretiosa pretiosa*) is an erebid moth with a wingspan of 37-42mm and the Water Willow Borer Moth (*Papaipema sulphurata*) is a noctuid moth with a wingspan of 32-28mm.

So why do I tell you this? For a future round of Jeopardy or to impress your significant other?

Perhaps. The next time you are enjoying the waters of camp, think about what it took to create the ponds and the globally rare plants and animals that call it home. Let it serve as



Water Willow Borer Moth

a reminder to leave camp better than you found it and implement the principles of Leave No Trace. In the meantime, Brian and I will be roaming the woodlands and wetlands of camp searching for the next big natural history discovery. The real question is, will you join us? 🐍



David Paulson is an Eagle Scout, Vigil Honor Member, and Silver Beaver Recipient from the Annawon Council. Professionally, he is an endangered species biologist for the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife.

He resides in Wrentham with his wife Lisa, enjoys exploring the natural history of the Commonwealth, and is an avid outdoorsman. David currently serves as the Area 1 conservation advocate and associate section adviser for Section NE-1 of the Order of the Arrow.

Photo Credits

Plymouth Gentian photo used under a CC-BY-NC-2.0 license from David McAdoo. Original may be viewed at:

<https://flic.kr/p/caMtRj>

Precious Underwing and Water Willow Borer photos by M. W. Nelson, via Massachusetts Department of Fisheries and Wildlife. Originals (respectively) at:

<http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dfg/nhsp/species-and-conservation/nhfacts/catocala-pretiosa-pretiosa.pdf>

<http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dfg/nhsp/species-and-conservation/nhfacts/papaipema-sulphurata.pdf>

Summer Scenery

Photos from the Association's Summer Activities



Homecoming 2015 Attendees at the Bill Joyce Memorial Flag Field



Snake caught by an Alumni kid over Labor Day



Mike Joseph and son at Homecoming



Wall of Fame Honoree Brenda Pomfret at Homecoming



Around the campfire in the pine grove during Labor Day Weekend

A Brief History Of...

The Camp Cachalot Conservation Restriction

BY ERIC A. JAIKES, ESQ.

As many of you are aware, Camp Cachalot approximates 800 acres located in the Towns of Plymouth and Wareham. The Camp was obtained from the Steinway family in 1946 by what was then known as the Cachalot Council whose territory included greater New Bedford. (Cachalot later merged with Massasoit, the Fall River Council, and then in 2001 merged with the Narragansett Council based in Rhode Island).

The 1990s was a period of declining membership for the Boy Scouts nationally as well as in Massachusetts. Smaller councils such as Moby Dick were experiencing both a decrease in membership and revenues. In 1995 the Southeastern Massachusetts Camping Association (SEMCA) was created. This informal aggregate of Southeastern Massachusetts Boy Scout Councils worked collaboratively with Camp Cachalot functioning as a joint summer camp for the councils and Camp Norse in Annawon functioning as the Cub Scout Camp for the member councils. As revenues continued to decline in the 1990s merger discussions occurred between and amongst Moby Dick Council, Annawon

Council and the Cape Cod Council. None of these merger discussions came to fruition.

At the same time, in the late 1990s the Moby Dick Council Executive Board was continuing to look for additional sources of revenue to fund its programs. It considered various options regarding additional uses of the resources available at Camp Cachalot.

Specifically, the Executive Board considered the sale of sand to cranberry growers, the rehabilitation and operation of two existing dormant cranberry bogs by the Council or an outside vendor, the creation of additional cranberry bogs at Camp Cachalot or long time leases of portions of Camp Cachalot for cell towers. The sale of Cachalot sand was ultimately rejected in part because of heavy trucks traveling through camp and changes it would make to the topography of camp. It was also determined that the Council was not capable, "in house," of rehabbing the two existing dormant cranberry bogs let alone funding the capital costs of creating and maintaining new cranberry bogs. The alternative which appeared to be most advantageous to the Council and for which there was the greatest amount of discussion with a

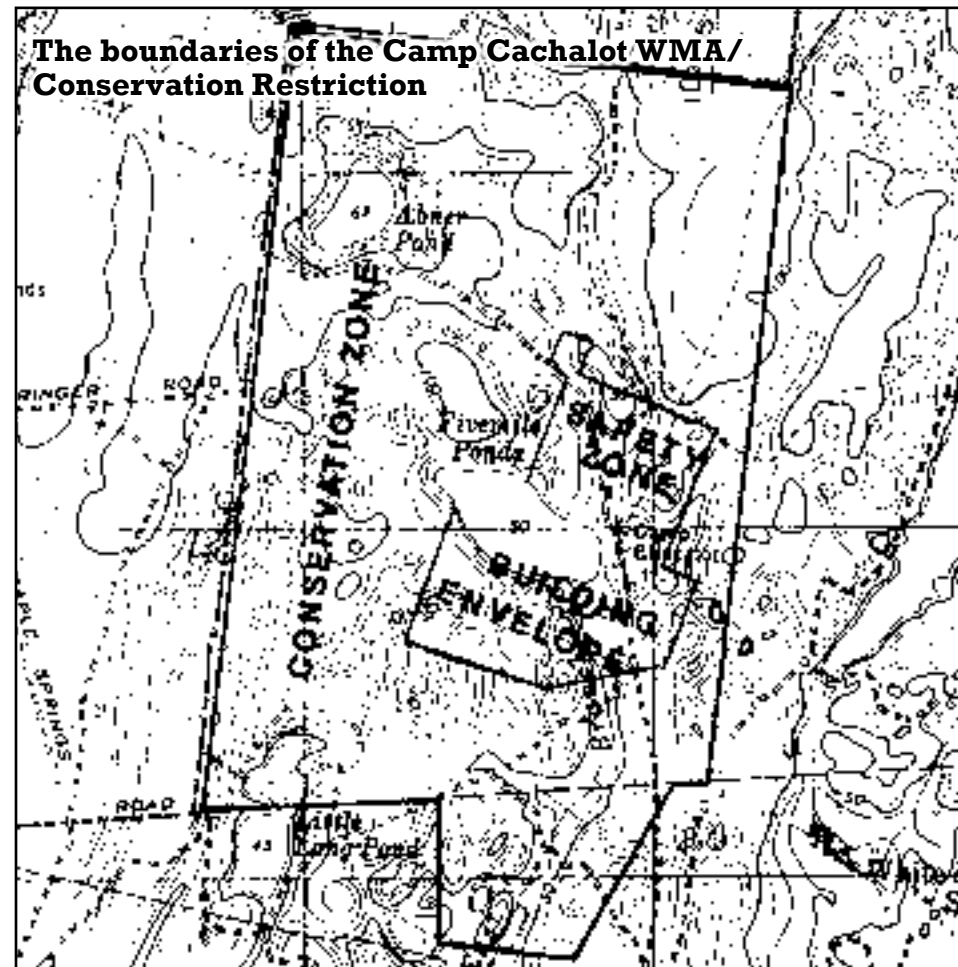
single vendor was the rehabilitation of at least one of the existing cranberry bogs and the leasing of land for additional cranberry bog development. Despite intensive negotiations, an agreement was never reached with a third party cranberry grower.

However, during the same period of time the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Fish and Wildlife and Environmental Management Divisions became aware of the discussions that the Council was having with outside vendors concerning alternative uses of the property. At the same time, a major developer, The Green Company, had begun construction of a large subdivision in Plymouth and the State was concerned about the possibility of the subdivision of part or all of Camp Cachalot for residential use. Furthermore, the State had identified various wildlife species and plants or trees present at Camp Cachalot which the State wished to protect. As a result, the Commonwealth invited the Moby Dick Council to discuss the granting of a Conservation easement over part of the Camp to the State.

After months of negotiation between the State and Council, the parties agreed upon a 23 page Conservation restriction. Pursuant to that restriction, the Council would retain ownership of the Camp lands but the State would pay the Council \$1,000,000 for the conservation restriction. In exchange for the payment, the State would be able to preserve much of the Camp in its natural state and open up use of certain exterior areas of the Camp to use by the public for recreational uses of hiking, fishing and hunting.

Pursuant to the agreement, a 200 acre "building envelope" was created at the core of the Camp property. Within this building envelope the Council would continue to operate its existing camp program as it had in the past. The existing buildings would continue to be used, maintained and at the Council's discretion, expanded. Additional structures could also be built within the building envelope provided they were set back at least 200' from the high water line of any stream, pond or other water body. Exceptions were granted to permit two rafts at Five Mile Pond, one or more boat houses, docks and a life guard tower which could continue to be located in the Camp's waterfront activity areas on the easterly side of Five Mile Pond.

The Council agreed not to develop the remaining 600 acres of the property outside of the building envelope with certain exceptions. The conservation restriction permits 6 outpost campsites (with or without running water and sanitary facilities), two additional outpost campsites without running water or sanitary facilities and 9 mountain bike



trails in the Conservation Zone. One of the outpost camps could be an open air shelter to be constructed on an existing cement slab near Abner Pond. Additionally, no more than 50 persons could camp outside the building envelope on any given overnight.

In exchange for the agreed upon restriction by the Moby Dick Council and the receipt of \$1,000,000 from the Commonwealth, the Council agreed to the following:

- the State could construct 8 parking spaces for the public at the main entrance to the camp off of Southeast Line Road;
- the State could construct 2 unpaved continuous recreational walking trails in the northwest quadrant of the camp including a trail leading to and around Abner Pond;
- the State was allowed to perform acts required to preserve, conserve or promote the natural habitat of wildlife fish and plants as well as managing forest resources; and
- the general public would be permitted to enter the Conservation Zone for passive daytime and recreational purposes including hunting, fishing, hiking and bird watching. Boating, swimming and use of motorized vehicles by the general public is prohibited and registration with the camp ranger was required for any activity other than hiking on the marked trails or fishing at Abner Pond. Finally, hunting was permitted during the two week shotgun season within the conservation zone.

At the time the conservation restriction was entered into by the Council in July of 1998, a significant number of Scouters in the Moby Dick Council were concerned about the limitations being placed upon the Council's use of the property. To date, use of the conservation restriction by the public has been extremely limited. Neither the 8 parking spaces nor the creation of trails permitted by the agreement has occurred. Furthermore, in addition to funding the endowment of the Moby Dick Council, the conservation restriction, by preventing the sale of portions of the Camp property or a sale of the entire property for a use other than as a camp has essentially guaranteed that Camp Cachalot continues to be used as a camp after the merger with the Narragansett Council in 2001 and most likely will always be used as a Scout Camp and never sold for development.

A copy of the conservation restriction is available online at the Plymouth County Registry of Deeds website and is recorded in Book 16392 at Page 299.

Mr. Jaikes is an attorney and Assistant City Solicitor for the City of New Bedford. He served as the President of the Moby Dick Council from 1995 through 1997, and is currently a director of the Narragansett Council and serves as its Massachusetts legal counsel.

Winter Gathering 2016

February, Fairhaven, Fellowship.

Save the date: we'll be meeting at the Fairhaven Senior Center on Saturday, February 27th for this year's Winter Gathering. Doors will open at 11:00AM, and we'll start the event with a bit of time for you to socialize with other alumni, and have a look at some of the photos and videos that our History committee has been collecting over the years.

Lunch will be available, and as we did last year, if you'd like to bring a dish to share pot-luck style, that's always welcome.

After lunch, we'll hold a brief meeting to update you on what the Association has been up to over the last year, and give you some information on what's coming up for us in 2016, including:

- our 2016 project(s) for Cachalot
- upcoming Association events including family camping, our Beaver volunteer work day, and Homecoming
- nominations for the 2016 Wall of Fame ballot

Our History committee will have their photo and document scanners with them, to add any old camp records you might have to the Association's archives. In addition, we've had a collection of Cachalot and other related Scouting mugs donated to the Association. These mugs, along with photo prints of camp, Association polo shirts, and a large collection of troop Summer Camp photos, will be available for sale at the event, with all proceeds from those sales adding to our Project Fund.

We're still adding more program to this event, so keep an eye on your email and on our Facebook, Google+, and Twitter feeds in January for more information as it becomes available.

Admission is free, as always, and open to members and non-members alike, so please spread the word to other alums you're still in touch with who may not yet be members of our Association.

Gathering 2016 Information

Where & When

February 27th, 2016
11:00AM-3:00PM

Fairhaven Council on Aging
229 Huttleston Ave
Fairhaven, Massachusetts

More Info

Free admission for members and non-members

Send email to gathering2016@cachalotalumni.org
or visit www.cachalotalumni.org
for additional information
or to RSVP



Our 2016 Staff Scholarship Recipients

Our 2016 Summer Camp Staff scholarships were presented at the final closing ceremony of summer camp in August. This year, the \$500 Thomas P. Whelan Chairman's Scholarship was awarded to Camp Commissioner Kevin Thompson, and the \$250 Alumni Staff Scholarship was awarded to Assistant Waterfront Director Haakon Perkins.

Kevin, an Eagle Scout with Troop 48 in Carver, has served on staff in multiple roles starting as a Counselor-in-Training in the summer of 2009. He is a sophomore studying Environmental Science at Bristol Community College in Fall River.

Haakon, also an Eagle Scout, is a member of Troop 53 in Mattapoissett. Starting as a CIT

in 2010, he has since been a member of the waterfront staff and its Assistant Director for the last two years. He is a freshman pursuing a degree in Aviation at Bridgewater State University.

Congratulations and thank you to our scholarship winners! 🎉



Haakon Perkins (L) and Kevin Thompson (R), our 2016 Summer Camp Staff Scholarship Award Winners

Alumni at the Klondike Derby

As we've done for the last ten years or so, the Alumni Association will be running the warming station in Noquochoke Lodge at this year's Klondike Derby out at Cachalot on Saturday, January 30th, 2016. We'll be talking up the Association while we help folks take the chill off, and will have information on-hand about our Winter Gathering in February. We can always use a few extra sets of hands to put out food, brew coffee, and dole out hot cocoa to the Scouts and Scouters participating in the event—contact us at info@cachalotalumni.org if you're interesting in helping.

If you're going to be out at the Klondike with your unit, feel free to drop in, grab a cup of coffee or cocoa, warm up a bit, and say hello! 🎉

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