



Friends Forever

The first time Bruce Baldwin arrived at Camp Wanake, he was late. Emily Curie—whose parents were Wanake Founders—had been at Wanake since the “dawn of creation.” A seemingly unlikely pair, they emerged the perfect team—more than 5 decades ago.

“Wanake needed more male summer staff counselors,” recalls Bruce, “and Gary Dickson, my pastor at the Wilmot United Methodist Church, knew that I needed a job. Before I knew it, I was at my first Sunday afternoon staff meeting after only a day or two of staff training. Looking out at Lake Arnold, overwhelmed by new surroundings and new ways of doing things, I stepped out on a plank of faith. Emily was my safety net.”

“Bruce was eager to learn,” Emily remembers, “and the campers loved him. Bruce had worked previous summers helping naturalist Bob Hawes at the Wilderness Center, Bruce shared his knowledge and appreciation of nature enthusiastically with the campers. We camped in Outpost and had a friendly group of campers.”

One challenge for Bruce and Emily was a boy, Frankie, who withdrew from the group. “But I witnessed a miracle,” Bruce adds. “On the second day, Frankie found an old fedora style cap left by church picnickers. Somehow wearing the cap changed his attitude. Calling himself ‘Frank Sinatra,’ he assumed the role of this legendary performer—to the joy of his group and everyone we met at camp.”

“So, Frankie became Frank.” Emily continued, “I have witnessed such transformations time and again as a summer staff counselor and director. Campers arrive unsure of themselves, and then leave with a new outlook about God, themselves, and others. Even small changes can make a big difference in their lives.” “Even I experienced unparalleled peace at camp,” Bruce recalled, “Outpost directors Cathy Wirth and Mary Ward continued to faithfully support me all summer.”

“Since our first time as co-counselors at Outpost, I have watched Bruce grow as director of Camp Wesley and Camp Wanake, and I always looked forward to being one of his faithful volunteers.” Smiling, Bruce says, “Emily is both my friend and a proven safety net!”

Your generosity provides the necessary training for counselors to feel confident about sharing the word of God with campers and aiding them in their transformations during their stay at camp. Thank you!

Wanake Camp and Retreat Center

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