

A  
QUARTERLY  
NEWSLETTER

## Message from the CEO

Recently, our Chief Operating Officer, Jim Brown received two e-mails that are wonderful examples of how a child's experience at Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA can have a positive ripple effect.

The first e-mail came from a parent whose child participated in REACH, spending the summer volunteering at a Native American Indian reservation in South Dakota. This mom was so moved by her daughter's experience that she wanted to organize a collection of mittens, scarves and hats for the families her daughter was inspired by. Another camper who spent the summer in ICEP Costa Rica returned to school on a mission to establish mandatory community service for all graduating high school seniors. She arranged a meeting with her principal and reported to him that she was the only ICEP Camper whose high school did not require community service. She is now partnering with her principal to establish 50 hours of community service to be completed by every senior class member.

The ripple effect — one drop of an experience, whether it is a trip out for an international experience or four weeks in the Berkshires — spirals into new perspectives on how a child can change a life for good. These children grow into adults who continue to carry with them the caring, respect, responsibility and honesty characteristics that are reinforced during their summer days with us.

As you read this newly designed Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA Newsletter, you will meet alumni like David Hart and his "I can and I will" determination to finish

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## A New Logo and Web Site for Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA

Sustaining our traditions and values for future generations is a priority for Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA. The challenge lies in how we do that for parents who use the Internet to research summer camps, campers who are intrepid "texters" and young adults who maintain friendships through Facebook.

A Branding and Marketing Task Force of staff and volunteers (see below) has been working together for some time to develop a stronger communications program for Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA. And we're pleased to announce some of the results:

- Go online to [bccymca.org](http://bccymca.org), and you'll find a re-designed Web site with easier navigation, beautiful photographs and more information on our camps and programs as well as our organization. Staff developed the Web site and directed the Donaldson Group of Simsbury, Connecticut, in the design.
- On this newsletter you see a new logo for Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA. It is based on the much-loved symbols of Camp Becket and Chimney Corners Camp with a description of all that we do — "Camps and Berkshire Outdoor Center" — right below our name.



- You may have already noticed that we're using the tagline, "Changing lives for good," to describe in shorthand all that we do. We're a place where campers, staff and volunteers themselves grow and change and make a positive impact on the lives through friendship and service.

- We've also produced a new program guide that provides prospective new campers and visitors with a comprehensive view of all that we offer to people of almost every age. Watch for it soon in the mail.

Of course, campers and families will continue to receive their camp yearbooks and the Seen 'n Heard from Camp Becket and the Firefly from Chimney Corners.

As friends of Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA, we all care deeply about its traditions and values as well as its future. We want to keep you connected to a place that is so important to all of us. So, you can expect to hear from us more frequently next year, through quarterly newsletters that keep you up to date about all the ways that we are changing lives for good at Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA.

### About the Branding and Marketing Task Force

The Board of Trustees several years ago created the task force to address the branding, marketing and communications challenges of Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA. Members include senior staff and volunteers from the ranks of parents, trustees and alumni.

Embracing our history and traditions while keeping an eye on the future, the task force continues to explore how we keep our organization vibrant for a second century.

With the Web site launched, the task force will turn toward building on our communications calendar to meet the needs of campers, parents, staff, volunteers and alumni.

Staff members of the task force are: Jim Brown, Chris Burke, Phil Connor, Shannon Donovan-Monti, Steve Hamill and Brenda Marsian. Volunteer members are: Larry Andries, Anne Condon, Malcolm Crystal, Eileen Neville, Robert Orr and Jack Sharry.

Our News is  
getting Greener!

(see details on back cover)

We welcome your suggestions and comments. Please send them to Shannon Donovan-Monti at [sdonovan-monti@bccymca.org](mailto:sdonovan-monti@bccymca.org).

Message from the CEO (cont'd from cover)

the Ironman, and Justin Hillenbrand and his passion to give back what he gained as a camper. In our "Time Capsule Keepsake" article you will discover that despite the years since being a camper, the child of yesteryear is still within all of us.

It has been an exciting year of new beginnings and advances for Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA. I hope you join me in the excitement of our new look, new website and renewed commitment to sharing with you the latest happenings on our 1300 acres and international sites. Our reaccreditation with the American Camp Association, progress with a new master plan, successful summer season with full camps and outstanding evaluations from our campers and parents are just a few of our 2009 successes.

But we cannot rest on our laurels. There are many challenges including the 2011 deadline to repair the dam that preserves one of our greatest natural assets, Rudd Pond. More and more requests for financial aid from deserving families place greater demands on our small operating budget and endowment. Over \$4 million in pressing capital needs and repairs cannot be addressed from our operating budget.

Our effort to reconnect with alumni and families is essential so that we inform you of our accomplishments, plans and needs. Without your support, we cannot advance and ensure that the ripple effect of our good work reaches communities all over the world. Help us ensure the financial stability of our 106 year old mission of changing lives for good. If you have not yet made your gift to the Annual Fund, please take advantage of the enclosed envelope and make your gift by December 31st.

I look forward to 2010 and another successful year, new groups and programs with the Berkshire Outdoor Center, reconnected friends and alumni and more progress to be made.

Sincerely,

Phil Connor  
CEO

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## Two Parents Join Board of Trustees

Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA is pleased to announce two new members to the Board of Trustees: Barbara A. DeBuono, M.D., M.P.H. and Judith Kassel, Esq.

### Barbara DeBuono

DeBuono is Chief Medical Officer, Partner and Global Director of Public Health and Social Marketing at global public relations leader Porter Novelli. She also serves as adjunct professor at The George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services in the Department of Health Policy. Dr. DeBuono and her sister, Lauren, co-founded The MAIA Foundation, a 501c3 public charity that is dedicated to improving the health and health literacy of women in sub-Saharan Africa.

Previously, Dr. DeBuono served as Executive Director, Public Health and Government at Pfizer Inc. and was responsible for creating and managing public-private partnership programs in public health innovation, education and research.

Dr. DeBuono received her B.A. from the University of Rochester (Rochester, N.Y.) and her medical degree from the University of Rochester School of Medicine. She received her Masters in Public Health (M.P.H.) from the Harvard University School of Public Health (Boston, Mass.). She completed her medical residency at New England Deaconess Hospital and was a Fellow in Infectious Diseases at the Brown University Affiliated Hospitals Program (Providence, R.I.).



### Judith Kassel

Judith Kassel is counsel based in the New York office of Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP. Kassel's practice focuses on income and transfer tax planning for U. S. residents, nonresident aliens, closely held businesses and charitable organizations. Kassel also has extensive experience in estate and trust administration. She is recognized as one of the leading trusts and estate lawyers in the country by The Best Lawyers in America.

She received an L. L. M. degree in taxation in 1990, and a J. D. degree in 1985 from New York University School of Law, where she was an editor of the Law Review. Kassel received her undergraduate degree from the State University of New York at Oneonta.

She is a member of the Bar in New York and the Bar Association of the City of New York. She has served on both the Surrogates Court Committee and the Estate and Gift Tax Committee of the Bar Association of the City of New York.

Judith lives in Brooklyn, NY and is married to Steven Brown. She has two daughters Allison, a current Chimney Corners camper and Rebecca. Rebecca attended Chimney Corners, ICEP Japan and was a Chimney Corners Aide in 2008.

## WINTER CAMP 2010

Winter Camp will be celebrating its 5th season this coming February. This is a fairly new program to the Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA which allows our current campers to reconnect between summers and is a great opportunity for new campers to get to know us. Campers currently in 2nd - 9th grades are welcome to participate. Winter Camp 2010 will run from February 14th - 20th when camp will be covered with snow, the tubing hill will be ready for campers to zip down and the skating rink will be frozen smooth. If you have never seen Becket-Chimney Corners in the winter, you should visit this winter!

Winter Camp has become a touching mix of new winter programming and special traditions from Camp Becket and Chimney Corners Camp. Campers from both camps come together as friends and learn to work together, play together and respect one another. We sing traditional songs from both camps in the dining hall and participate in afternoon activities together. Do you remember campfires, talent shows and cabin chat? All of these things are camper favorites at Winter Camp too.

Campers can be seen sliding down our tubing hill, walking on frozen Rudd and Smith Ponds and snowshoeing through our beautiful wooded trails. Cabin groups plan exciting and



over the top activities as a group and spend the mornings playing with all of their hearts. There is also an optional off-site ski trip to Ski Butternut for \$98.

Since the start of Winter Camp, the enrollment has grown consistently each year. A Leaders-In-Training program was added two years ago to train our older campers (currently in 10th grade) to become future Winter Camp Staff. This has been a great tool for expanding Winter Camp and keeping our campers involved. Enrollment is in line with last year and we are hoping to grow Winter Camp to 80 campers in 2010. You can register for Winter Camp online and get a whole week of fun at camp for \$509.

Please join us for some winter fun this February!



## Challenge Course a Good Investment for Justin Hillenbrand

Justin Hillenbrand is in private equity, spending his days buying tired businesses, retooling them and reintroducing them into the economy. A consummate entrepreneur, Justin saw an opportunity to jump start the revenue of the Berkshire Outdoor Center.

“Steve Hamill explained to me that one of the biggest challenges for the Berkshire Outdoor Center was having to turn away groups because the existing ropes course didn’t have a large user capacity.”

So Justin made a strategic philanthropic investment in Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA that made possible the largest, most comprehensive challenge course facility in the northeast, with over 60 combined low and high elements. Located at the Chimney Corners Camp site, this double-storey “stacked” course built by John Lazarus at Northeast Adventure (Winsted, CT) is unique in design with many of the elements newly conceived ideas not seen before in challenge courses.

Now that the challenge course is constructed and in use Justin says, “It feels great. It’s a huge compliment to the camps. Knowing that we have the best of anything in the northeast makes me proud to be a part of that. It also is very satisfying that it benefits Chimney Corners Camp as well.”

Being philanthropic was something that was engrained in Justin by his parents, Roch and Carol Hillenbrand. As a partner with Monomoy Capital Partners in New York City, Justin is eager to make his own meaningful gifts to organizations that helped him get to where he is in life.

When Justin and his wife Merilou married a year ago they encouraged guests to make gifts to Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA in lieu of presents and his family followed Justin’s lead in a

“big way” by matching the wedding gifts with a six figure donation to Becket-Chimney Corners to construct new staff housing. Their gift reinforced the values they instilled in Justin.

“Whether you give \$50 or \$50,000 you can be a part of making a difference. That’s the power of Becket-Chimney Corners. Camp is a level playing field with everyone sharing the same experience regardless of their socio-economic background. Giving ensures that this powerful experience is there for the next generation, whether it’s a campership or a capital gift to help maintain the camp experience.”

Financial support isn’t the only way Justin gives back to the camps. He is a dedicated member of the Board of Trustees and chairs the Development Committee.

**“I want to leave my tenure on the board knowing that I helped position the camps to be in sound financial footing...”**

Justin’s leadership and philanthropy truly began in 1986 when at ten years old he attended Camp Becket as an Iroquois camper, eventually making the gradual progression to Aide, then staff and Wall Street executive.

“My first real job on Wall Street was because of Becket. To this day I have my Camp Becket staff position on my resume because you never know.”

A Chimney Corners father at Merrill Lynch saw Camp Becket on Justin’s resume and hired him because he was aware of the caliber of people who attended the camps.

“It is amazing how many times I come across Becket or Chimney alumni in the business world. Just three months ago I was out raising money for my fund and one of my fellow staff members from 1993 was on the other side of the table.”

Justin says the common thread in every conversation with these alumni is that they all loved their time at camp.

“Camp was a place where you could really be yourself and the staff really invested their time with us,” explained Justin who recalled his first counselor John Reilly as one of those caretakers, “John really spent the time to get to know us and made sure we were having a good time.”

And Justin wants to ensure that more ten year olds are cared for and considered through his time and treasure at Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA.

And has Justin had a chance to try out the twin trapeze on the new challenge course he funded?

“This spring for sure!”

### American Camp Association accredits Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA

Once again, the American Camp Association reaccredited Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA following extensive review and peer site visits throughout the summer. The American Camp Association (formerly known as the American Camping Association) is a community of camp professionals who, for nearly 100 years, have joined together to share their knowledge and experience and to ensure the quality of camp programs.

“We are delighted to receive this designation and proudly display it on our marketing materials including our website. It is really an honor to be recognized by the ACA and validates the good work we do every year,” commented CEO Phil Connor.

As a leading authority in youth development, ACA works to preserve, promote, and improve the camp experience. They are committed to helping camps provide:

- Camp communities committed to a safe, nurturing environment
- Caring, competent adult role models
- Healthy, developmentally-appropriate experiences
- Service to the community and the natural world
- Opportunities for leadership and personal growth
- Discovery, experiential education, and learning opportunities
- Excellence and continuous self-improvement

ACA accredits over 2,400 camps. ACA-Accredited® camps meet up to 300 standards for health, safety, and program quality.

# Time Capsule Keepsake

It was the summer of 1991 and Chimney Corners Counselor Jennifer Feldman was spending her first summer in the Berkshires advising a group of nine-year-old girls. A Hamilton College undergraduate, Jennifer had an idea for an activity for her girls.

"I wanted the girls to remember what they were like at that age and thought it would be neat for them to look back at their life in that moment."

So Jennifer had her campers write a letter to themselves in the future to share what they would want to know about themselves as a nine-year-old.

Flash forward eighteen years later and Dr. Jennifer Feldman Brunworth, a pediatric anesthesiologist in Florida was rummaging through her old camp trunk searching for some photographs of her dad in preparation for his surprise 70th birthday party. Among the nostalgia and artifacts, Jennifer came across a bundle of eight envelopes with chicken-scratched writing. She realized she had unearthed the little time capsule assignment she had given to her Chimney Corners campers in 1991. Write to yourself in the future.

"I thought I had mailed the letters to the girls years ago. I remember I came across them about 5 years after that summer, but decided to hold off sending until they were older."

"They were a fun group of girls at a perfect age to be at camp because they wanted to try new things and have fun and they didn't worry about boys and serious things."

Lauren Chetel received her eighteen-year-old note in the midst of a major life change. Having finished her PhD in geology, Lauren was moving into her new Houston, Texas home ready to start her new position as a geologist with BP.

"The letter almost got lost among all my moving. I have to admit I laughed when I saw it. The brevity of my note reminded me of what I was like as a kid."

Short and to the point, Lauren's note was three simple lines outlining her goals for the summer including passing the swim test and making new friends.

"Back then the only thing I was interested in was what was happening that summer and maybe the next school year."

That was Lauren's first summer at camp and she knew from that initial experience she wanted to come back year after year.

"Chimney Corners felt so comfortable and I had a strong sense that I fit in," and fit in she did, eventually becoming an Aide and staff member.

Caroline Sun, a Senior Publicist for Macmillan Children's Publishing Group in New York City, had a similar reaction as Lauren when she received her blast from the past; she laughed.

"It was totally surprising to receive this letter. I think what was so interesting was to see how neat my handwriting was at nine and the randomness of what I thought about then."

Caroline's note talked about all the girls in the infirmary, the international camper whose English was gradually improving and the excitement of finally riding the "big" horse named "Fawn". Her letter ended with "that's all I have to say so bye. Sincerely, Caroline."

The letters were written during one of Victory Chimes' nightly cabin chats.

"I actually remember writing the letter," said Caroline, adding, "It is really fun to have it now. I consider myself to be a pretty sentimental person. In fact this note motivated me to pull out my yearbooks. Last night I was amazed that I could remember the lyrics to so many Goodnight Circle songs. I wish I could return to my nine-year-old self and tell her, as she writes this letter, 'Remember. Remember this always. It is something that you will



Jennifer Feldman Brunworth shared this snapshot of her second session campers in 1991. Included in the photograph is Caroline Sun, third camper standing in the back. Other campers are: back row (left to right): Melissa Woodruff, Kate Staff, Caroline Sun, Adrienne Cooper; and front row (left to right): Melissa McDonald and Sarah Taylor.

miss when it's gone.' And I do. I remember, and I long for it, everyday."

1991 was Caroline's third year at camp and the allure and passion for Chimney Corners took its hold for over the next five years as a camper, eventually attending ICEP China '96, then becoming a Milky Waide of '97, an A.C., and finally a counselor.

Lauren summed up her brief reminder of yesteryear by recognizing Jennifer, her counselor for one year.

"I think it is really cool that Jennifer actually sent these letters to us. She took good care of us as campers."

## Travel Service Program Welcomes ICEP Sydney, Australia

ICEP is going down under! The Travel Service Program at Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA is finalizing a new partnership with the YMCA of Sydney in Sydney, Australia for a four week trip set to embark on July 13, 2010.

According to Travel Service Program Coordinator Jai Marchinton, Australia is a popular destination because of its faraway proximity and exciting native creatures.

"What is also nice about this particular location is that participants will be staying at a campsite that is an hour from the city of Sydney and an hour from the Blue Mountains," explained Jai, highlighting that the Blue Mountains is one of the largest mountain ranges in the country and perfect for hiking, camping, and rock climbing.

Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA is partnering with the YMCA of Sydney under the leadership of their CEO Phillip Hare. Thirteen participants will have an

opportunity to travel across the world to be active sightseers experiencing teen cultural learning such as community service and exposure to the indigenous population, home stays to experience real life in Australia and opportunities to explore the coastal region and other fascinating terrain.

Sydney, Australia joins seven other ICEP destinations include Peru, Chile, China, Sweden/Russia, Vietnam, Japan, and New Zealand. In addition to these popular ICEP programs, teens may want to explore REACH (Reaching, Educating And Caring for Humanity), YAS (Yellowstone Adventure and Service) and TLS (Teen Leadership and Service).

Applications for all international tripping programs are currently being reviewed and trip assignments are in process. For more information on our Travel Service Program you may go on-line [www.bccymca.org](http://www.bccymca.org) or call Jai at (413) 623 8991 ext. 178.

# Repair of Rudd Pond Dam in Process

Eighty acres of water make up Rudd Pond and for over 120 years this spring-fed and pristine treasure has provided beauty and tranquility, camping functionality, and been an ecological resource for wildlife. But this integral part of our community of campers and families is at risk.

Immediate repairs to the dike and dam of Rudd Pond must be completed by 2011 or this jewel may be lost and we risk harming the town of Becket with significant flooding as well as the draining of Rudd Pond, the site for major camping activities such as swimming, boating, fishing, exploring and reflection.

Loss of Rudd Pond will have significant ramifications on whether we can continue our mission of changing lives for good in spirit, mind, and body at Camp Becket. No lake for waterfront activities will cut a substantial number of popular summer camp programs and deter young boys from wanting to attend Camp Becket and ultimately threaten to end our century long tenure of being a top rated residential camp in the United States.

Awareness of addressing the need to repair Rudd Pond Dam first presented itself in 2000 during a routine ten year dam inspection with the Massachusetts Dam Safety Commission. The dam was determined to be in poor condition, yet still functional. At that time the Massachusetts Dam Safety Commission recommended that repairs take place with no specific deadline.

In 2006 research was completed on the extent of the repairs and drawings prepared to rebuild the spillway which catches the overflow of water.

Between 2005 and 2007, Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA incurred the expense for two large capital projects: the replacement of the Chimney Corners Dining Hall, which was lost to a fire in January of 2005; and the construction of a Wastewater Treatment Facility to meet Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) mandates for water and septic management. These two projects cost more than \$10 million and were funded through sizeable long-term loans. These emergency projects tabled plans to address dam repairs.

**ALUMNI WEEKEND 2009:** 1982 Aides Dede Elser LaRock, Becca Stevens Fasciano, Lori Bienstock Waxman, and Rachel Stoler reunite at Alumni Weekend held September 26 and 27. Alumni Council President Scott Taylor and Alumni Weekend Chair Kirsten Slusar-Bossin, were pleased with the 175 alumni turnout, one of the largest attendance records in recent years. Alumni enjoyed traditional Camp Becket and Chimney Corners activities including cider making, square dancing, boating, and camp fires. Next year's Alumni Weekend is set for September 25 and 26.



In 2008 The Massachusetts Department of Dam Safety, MA DEP, and local Conservation Committees inspected the site and required Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA to submit a "Notice of Intent" for repairs that will meet regulatory requirements in three phases by the fall of 2011:

**Phase One: Permanent access to Rudd Pond Dam by building an access road**

**Phase Two: Repair the dike**

**Phase Three: Repair the dam**

The first phase of the project was completed in July 2009 with the construction of an access road to allow heavy machinery to reach the dam site. We have also added a vehicle turnaround and additional parking to improve traffic flow at the entrance to the Becket Day Camp, which leads to the access road to the dam. In addition to the access road, reinforcement of the spillway and the gatehouse foundation were completed. Due to the urgency of the project we were forced to budget out of operations the initial funds for road access, spillway and gatehouse reinforcement at a cost of \$215,936.28. This added a significant financial burden on the Camps.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Dam Safety it is expected that the Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA have the dike repaired by the Fall of 2010.

Failure to meet the deadlines as outlined in the Massachusetts Department of Dam Safety's Administrative Consent Order with Penalty and Notice of

Non-compliance could result in a catastrophic failure of the dam, including significant environmental and property damage to the area downstream of the dam and heavy fines imposed by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

If the dam fails, Rudd Pond will drain into the Town of Becket causing severe flooding while permanently eliminating Rudd Pond — a beautiful focal point for Camp Becket and a major location for camp activities such as boating and swimming. This will be devastating to our community, will destroy the positive relationship we value with the Town of Becket and hinder young boys from wanting to attend Camp Becket if we cannot provide waterfront activities. In addition, Rudd Pond's drainage will have a negative influence on the programs our Berkshire Outdoor Center can offer when camp is not in session, causing fewer number of groups to enroll.

The remaining total estimated construction cost for the dam and dike is \$330,000. Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA's Office of Development is approaching several private foundations to address the remaining costs of the repairs. This private support will relieve the financial burden of the repair costs of Rudd Pond Dam and help to accelerate the final phases of repair work on the dam.

We look forward to reporting in a future issue of the Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA News special philanthropic funding that will ensure our historic YMCA continues to build strong kids, strong families and strong communities.

## Black River Architects Enlisted to Update YMCA's Master Plan

When you think back to your time as a camper certain images of physical spaces come to mind: perhaps the birch trunk columns of Gibson Hall, the idyllic barn at Chimney Corners or the tree canopied foot paths that lead you to campfires and cabin chats. You likely were unaware that each facility and every step was carefully planned and designed with you, the camper in mind.

Facilities help to facilitate programs and at Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA we continue to consider the four week camper as well as the Berkshire Outdoor Center participant when determining changes and updates to our buildings and grounds.

BCCYMCA has undergone several master plans as recently as 1993 and 2001 which proved to be excellent frameworks for future master planning. Past recommendations from these plans have been realized. However, as is so often the case, the vagaries of daily life — in BCCYMCA's case a dining hall fire, dam repair and a new septic system — and an evolving business model make it necessary to update the 2001 plan and align it with the current institutional vision.

This summer, the BCCYMCA Facilities Task Force made up of Steve Hart, Ian Winchester, Syd Hayden, Christina Simanca-Proctor, Joe Goldsmith, George Knight and senior leadership staff set off to select the architect to coordinate the planning.

"We were fortunate to have some quality bidders on this project. Black River Architect happened to be the stand out. They didn't try to enforce a cookie cutter design, and really understood how our mission of changing lives for good along with the rustic four week experience is at the core of how our facilities function," explained Chief Operating Officer, Jim Brown.

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## Women's Wellness Weekend 2010

By the third weekend in January the dust from the holidays will have settled. The kids will be back in school. The decorations will be packed away and your new years' resolutions will seem slightly less sparkly.

But you don't have to give in to that glum feeling. You can escape! Join us for the 2010 Berkshire Women's Wellness Weekend and experience the same fun, playfulness, learning, community, rest and rejuvenation the summer brings to beautiful Becket, MA.

Women's Wellness Weekend is an event dedicated to refreshing, educating, empowering and supporting women of all ages, in all walks of life.

We offer a variety of active winter adventures for ladies of all skill levels – snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, tubing and ice skating will put the pink back in your cheeks while ice fishing and winter survival will teach you unique new skills to put to use during the cold months.

When you're ready to warm up, we'll have cooking, knitting, woodworking, jewelry-making and a tea-tasting as options as well as a quiet room with a blazing fire for some quiet reflection, reading time or a gentle snooze.

We also have big plans to feed your mind while you're here, and are lining up workshops right now. They'll include sessions on staying young (not just physically), nutrition, hormonal health, local/organic foods, meditation, choosing flattering colors and finding nourishment in different areas of your life.

We'll also be offering yoga, vigorous and gentle morning hikes, a boot-camp circuit workout, a special line-dancing extravaganza on Saturday night and other entertaining, inviting large-group activities.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to interact with new friends and to reconnect with old ones, away from the clutter of everyday life, in a place that you already know and love. The winter is beautiful here, our plans are coming together perfectly and we hope to see many of your faces at this quickly-filling weekend event.

Register online at our web site or call us at 413 623-8991. We can't wait to see you in January!

## Berkshire Outdoor Center Prepares Loomis Chaffee Students to be Leaders

**Ruthanne Marchetti is the Dean of Students at Loomis Chaffee School, a renowned New England boarding school located in Windsor, Connecticut.**

She has been running leadership programs for students since 1992 and brought her students to the Berkshire Outdoor Center for the first time in 2007.

They have returned every year to run a unique program in which current Loomis seniors learn the basics around facilitating and running the sophomore orientation program, which takes place a few weeks later, back in Becket.

**BOC:** Ruthanne, in your own words, describe the program your students run here.

**RM:** It's called the "Sophomore Retreat" and the intention is for the sophomore class to become whole during that year, starting with this experience, which is lead by the senior class.

The seniors come out early to do leadership training [through a day-long workshop where they're paired with a current Berkshire Outdoor Center facilitator.] They learn to lead by showing caring and being involved. Their boundaries are stretched socially, intellectually and physically and they're shown a leadership model that's different from [what they see] everyday.

We want to teach the kids the value of getting to know one another, learning to work together, and to acknowledge the gifts of the people around them. They also learn about taking healthy risks which gives them the courage to tackle things back at school and in life.

**BOC:** What aspects of the Berkshire Outdoor Center experience appeal the most to you?

**RM:** This is the only place that really teaches the students to lead. We have gone to other places, but this place gets it done. The leaders at Berkshire Outdoor Center have a lovely sense of

fun and playfulness on the one hand, but also know how to bring the group together in a very real way.

There's a great reciprocity with the staff and our kids. When a challenge isn't handled well, you can get into a bad zone and it can be hard to get positive again. The Berkshire Outdoor Center staff is really able to bring the group along and the sophomores and seniors both learn, first hand, that if a thing isn't good, you can change it. And you can change it by being yourself.

**BOC:** What would you say to your peers about our programs?

**RM:** The facilities are great. The leadership and staff are top-notch. The more you work with Berkshire Outdoor Center the more they work with you.

It's not just "welcome to Becket-Chimney Corners, this is what we do." Instead, they learned and embraced the program we wanted to run. We did the schedule together. We made it work for everyone. We sat down and came up with the best of what both sides had to offer to create the best program possible for our kids.

**BOC:** I think it's a two-way street. Our instructors gain a lot through the work and training they do with your students. At the leadership level, we've enjoyed seeing this program blossom and the positive outcomes on both sides of the equation. We're very grateful to be a part of the process.

At the Berkshire Outdoor Center, we enjoy partnering with all of our groups. Designing programs and tailoring schedules to help each group move toward its goals during their visit is the heart of what we do.

The process for new groups begins with a call from one of our Program Coordinators, about two months before their visit. During this initial exchange, we get to know the group, determine the purpose of their visit and match that with our facility, our staff and our programs so that they have the best possible experience.

Other first-time groups arrange a visit to see the property and get a feel for how their program might unfold at our site. During this visit we also spend time talking about the group's purpose and goals for their time here and how we can best facilitate those things.

Based on those interactions, we put together a draft schedule and send it to them for approval. After a few iterations on both sides, we check-in two weeks before their arrival, to confirm details like arrival times, numbers of guests, food allergies and other program needs. Finally, two days before their arrival, we do one last check-in to make sure that all the details are correct on both sides and that everyone is ready for the visit.

This year, Berkshire Outdoor Center has successfully hosted 24 Outdoor Education school programs, 30 Leadership Development school programs, 21 programs for Colleges and Universities, 45 group retreats, 5 family camps, 14 YMCA/Scout programs and 34 visiting Nature's Classroom schools.

So join in the fun, we're open year-round! Bring a group during 2010 by visiting [bccymca.org](http://bccymca.org) and following the links for Berkshire Outdoor Center or call our registrar at 413 623-8991. We'd love to share year-round magic in beautiful Becket, MA with you.



Roger Christian, Phil Connor, Lloyd Griffith, Bob Forsberg, and Board of Trustee Chair Amy Gutschenritter gathered at camp in November for a tour and update on the YMCA. Roger and Bob are past trustees of Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA while Lloyd was the former Camp Becket Director in the 1980s.

# Becket Alumnus Credits Becket Motto for Triathlon Success

**David Hart turned fifty in January. A milestone birthday for many, this Camp Becket alumnus and parent to two Chimney Corners girls and a Camp Becket boy had a Becket motto, "I can and I will," that he was determined to live by.**

Twenty-one years earlier, Dave was unable to complete an Ironman competition and was forced to drop out at mile 20 during the marathon. In September, at 50 years-old, Dave completed the 2009 Iron Distance Triathlon: a 2.4 mile swim across Plymouth Harbor in 3 foot waves, a 112 mile bike ride on a "mean, nasty, hilly" course and a full marathon.

"I admit, it was a total midlife crisis I was experiencing, but the Becket Motto was part of why I wanted to compete. The mottos mean as much to me now as they did when I was fifteen," explained Dave, while volunteering at this year's Becket-Chimney Fall Work Weekend.

And compete he did, coming in second in his age category at a time of 12:57:52.

"I can and I will' was this on-going mantra in my head throughout the race, plus my wife Sarah surprised me by arranging to have twenty-nine people, most of which were Becket-Chimney Corners family and friends cheering me on," smiled Dave, who recalled his rallying fans wearing yellow t-shirts that read 'I can and I will'.

"These people entertained all the competitors and spectators," smiled Dave, who first came to Camp Becket in 1967 as an eight-year old camper, and fondly remembers his favorite counselor Jim Finkelstein, who Dave believes would really appreciate how he tries to live the Becket way every day.

While his fellow camp enthusiasts cheered him on, Dave's bicycle adorned a specially made disc wheel with the Becket "B" and the "I can and I will' motto.

With another birthday around the corner, Dave is already training for four half-irons scheduled throughout the summer of 2010. Everyday Dave trains under the guidance of his coach Karen Mackin, who tracks his progress with the latest technology, including a GPS style gadget that monitors his pace and distance. Dave's commitment to his training is as deep as his commitment to Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA.

"My Mom went to Chimney Corners from 1944 to 1951. We did the math once and counted all the friends, friends of friends, nieces and nephews and our own children and found we knew 163 people who have gone to either Becket or Chimney. We just spread the word of this place and it's viral."



"I love being around Becket people, I think it's because they are just wonderful, good people," continued Dave who even has a dog named Becket.

"The Becket Mottos are with you in business and in your personal life. There is so much negative stuff when it comes to business ethics these days that it is great to know there is a place that instills quality, life-long values in young people."

Dave, a Sales Director for AT&T, is a member of the Dads' Association Executive Committee, and brother to Becket alumnus Stephen Hart and cousin to Jon and Chip Hart.

## New Senior Leadership Join BCCYMCA

Reporting to CEO Phil Connor, two new senior leadership members have joined the Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA staff.

New Chief Financial Officer, Christine Kalakay, joined Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA in December by way of the YMCA of Norwalk (CT) where she was their Chief Financial Officer for four years. A graduate of Fairfield University, Christine worked in Finance at IBM, Textron, and Lord & Taylor until segueing to the YMCA where she represented the Westport YMCA (CT) and the Greater Boston YMCA. Skiing and travel are her two favorite pastimes and generally anything involving water as her astrological sign is Pisces.

As Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA looks to new strategic approaches to fund-raising, it is turning to Brenda Marsian, Chief Development Officer for guidance. Prior to joining BCCYMCA in 2009, Brenda was Director of Development for eight years at Springfield College where she provided leadership to a successful \$40 million campaign. A Certified Fund-raising Executive, Brenda was a consultant with Ketchum, Inc. and managed major gifts for Western New England College, University of Connecticut and Northfield Mount Hermon School. She holds a master of arts in communications from the University of Hartford and a bachelor of arts in English from Western New England College.

*Black River Architects Enlisted to Update YMCA's Master Plan (cont'd from pg 5)*

"They have been really great to work with and have listened to our concerns and challenges while being well-versed in our history."

"I love going through this process. It's a lot of fun and ultimately the master plan will be the camps and outdoor center's road map to the future coupled with our strategic plans and goals."

Jim explained that the Master Plan process is in three phases with the final recommendations to be presented to the Board of Trustees at the January 2010 meeting.

### Phase One

The first phase of the process occurred over the summer where Black River Architects in collaboration with BCCYMCA Task Force established the goals for the planning while evaluating the current condition of the physical plant. Meetings discussed such areas as the camps' traditions, mission, program priorities, historic preservation and sustainable practices.

### Phase Two

We are in the final stages of Phase Two which has been discussing specific spaces for each camp to be addressed. Areas that have been priorities in this discussion include:

- The arrival experience at Chimney Corners Camp and Camp Becket
- Chimney Corners "Common" and dining room basement
- Reconfiguring camper cabin groups
- Maintaining the "Rustic" cabins
- Berkshire Outdoor Center
- Creating a pedestrian friendly camp

### Phase Three

The final phase of the Master Plan will be the actual Master Plan document to be presented to the board in January. The Plan will clearly establish what is to be done as well as why it is to be done. The ultimate outcome will be a physical master plan that realizes our mission for changing lives for good.

"We need to be good stewards of our facilities and take care of what we own. The master planning process will allow us to be successful about who we are."

We look forward to sharing with you the final recommendations and rendering in the spring edition of the BCCYMCA Newsletter.



## HERITAGE CLUB

The Heritage Club at Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA recognizes members of the Camp Becket and Chimney Corners community who have included the camps in their estate plans or have made a planned charitable gift such as a charitable gift annuity, gifts of life insurance, or inclusion in their will. Log onto "Become a Supporter" at [www.bccymca.org](http://www.bccymca.org) and learn how you can become a member.

### Questions? Contact the Editor

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, January 27 **Newton Reunion**

Newton Marriott, 6 - 7 PM - New Family Presentation; 7 - 9:30 PM - Camper Reunion

Wednesday, February 3 **New York Reunion**

East Side Marriott, 6 - 7 PM - New Family Presentation; 7 - 9:30 PM - Camper Reunion

Saturday, April 24 & Sunday, April 25 **Spring Work Weekend**

Sunday, June 27 **First Session Begins for Camp Becket and Chimney Corners Camp**

Friday, July 16 through Sunday, July 18 **Moms' and Dads' Weekend**

Sunday, July 25 **Second Session Begins for Camp Becket and Chimney Corners Camp**

Friday, August 13 & Sunday, August 15 **Moms' and Dads' Weekend**

Friday, September 24 through Sunday, September 26 **Alumni Weekend**

Save the Date for Alumni Weekend and reunite with life-long friends, reflect on your favorite summer memories while a camper and be guaranteed a weekend of rejuvenation and fun in the Berkshires.

Friday, November 5 through Sunday, November 7 **Fall Work Weekend**



[www.bccymca.org](http://www.bccymca.org) | [info@bccymca.org](mailto:info@bccymca.org)

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As stewards of our natural resources, we want to convert our entire community to email delivery of news and information. Our goal is to totally digitize the Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA Newsletter by 2011. Please log onto [www.bccymca.org](http://www.bccymca.org) and sign up for our e-newsletter today.

Our News is getting Greener!