

# THE CHIRRUP

August 2020 \* 98 Years of the Pioneer Spirit \* edited by Darcey Wijsenbeek

## Director's Notebook

For years, I marked the different sessions by camp events: Frank Buck day, July 4 Bonfire, Maple Sugar Run, Gold Rush, Camper Softball and cook-out lunch. In this "gap" year, I've come to realize that the campers who come in different sessions hear camp in very different ways.

First session is full of noise - birds finding mates, building nests, defending territory. Frogs songs fill the night, hoping to find mates. Insects buzz around to feed all the baby birds. Bees pollinating every flower in sight.

Third session is totally different. Much of the first session noises are gone. In their places, crickets and grasshoppers are singing all day long. As the sun sets, a cacophony of crickets begin. There are underlying long-term notes, and staccato crickets are chirping according to the temperature. Baby Turkey chicks have grown to half-size, and can fly. I recently counted 3 hens and nineteen halfings in one big flock. Coyotes are back and singing at night, accompanied by various Owls. Crows come caawwing home for their nightly roosts.  
— Mike

Camp without campers fills with butterflies. We decided, early on, that we would heed the Vermont Fish and Wildlife request that those who were able should defer mowing until August. This meant more of, well, just about every plant. Goldenrod, milkweed, grasses, weeds, ferns, and flowers. Without our usual mowing, there are also birds everywhere. The wilderness moves in quickly—its quite lovely and it's been amazing to watch camp grow. We too have been inundated with chipmunks. They're everywhere. I can't believe I used to love the little guys. I'm still protective of their right to share our space, but I'm pretty tired of losing meals after heading to the walk-in or dish room for thirty seconds. We need you back to help drive them away!

We're just starting into our end of season fall brush cutting in order to make sure we're ready for next year. This work will see many more small saplings cut down as we preserve our pastures. It turns out that the many camper journeys really help keep things back. Most of us feel like we share camp with the wilderness anyway, but without all of you, the sharing is very, very, tangible.

There is also a sound to the emptiness right now. The sound of a Vermont meadow in July is different than the sound of it in September, and to my knowledge nobody has heard the sounds of our particular property so lightly inhabited for so long in 98 years. Perhaps longer, as the property was a set of working farms before we came along. Regardless, there is a song to our land that I have never heard before: insects normally drowned out by our presence, birds who come closer as people create distance, sounds of rustling brush and summer breezes. The sound signature of a day of mid-camp summer is imprinted in my mind. Now, though, I also have an imprint of what it sounds like in a mostly empty summer. I prefer the tempo and tone of camp humming along, but this, too, was beautiful.

— Jed



**Darcey and Emily spotted some of the caterpillars that become the butterflies Jed is noticing more of. Check out what these transform into after the emerge from their chrysalis on page 3!**



## From the Attic: Frank Buck

By Mike Byrom

Who was Frank Buck, and why does Sangamon have a day named after him? Frank Buck was a legendary man – and I’m guessing that Sangamon’s Frank Buck Day was once more about the man and his exploits than what has evolved into our present game. His first book was written in 1933, just 10 years after camp started. He likely would have been a camper hero.



Buck was Texas-born and a failure in school who quit after 7<sup>th</sup> grade. He worked on cattle ranches and at one point, he followed his cows on the train to Chicago Stockyards. While in Chicago, he managed to win \$3500 in a poker game. Using that money as a grub-stake, he embarked on his real passion and career. He took ship to Brazil and South America. to collect wild animals for zoos and circuses. Like many collectors in those days, he wanted to introduce Americans to the animals of the world.

Frank Buck was a true adventurer; he eventually specialized in animals from Southeast Asia, crossing the Pacific forty times, and circumnavigating the earth five times. He lost all his money in the 1929 stock market crash, but made it all back and more by writing eight books and making eight movies about his exploits. His first book, movie, and personal motto was “Bring ‘em Back Alive”

## Camp Projects!

By Jed Byrom

It’s been a strange summer up here at Sangamon, with our would-have-been summer in the rearview mirror but the projects of 2020 really just starting in many ways. Without campers, those of us who run camp spent our summer at camp doing an awful lot more relaxing than we’ve ever done before, as well as a lot of brainstorming and planning for a return to Camp for all of us in 2021.

There are some big projects coming up. When you return to us in June 2021, there will be renovated bathrooms on The Hill and on the Cabin One side of The Row. These are big projects, and will make quite a difference in all of our lives as well as increase our hygiene capabilities going forward. We’re working on more projects this fall and winter, and you’ll hear about them here first. We’ll share some of the changes over the airwaves in this off-season. We’re excited for what comes next, and this relatively idle period has left us eager to return to camp again in 2021!



## Make your own pickles!

It’s the end of summer in Vermont which means its canning season! Everyone’s gardens are overflowing with cucumbers and tomatoes and we are all working to preserve them in so we can bring them out to enjoy during the cold winter months that are right around the corner. Oliver, Max and I have been working hard putting our own recipes together and this one is a favorite. No actual canning involved and you can experiment and tweak this base recipe countless ways to create your own special blend. And feel free to expand beyond cucumbers—we’ve had great success with green beans and carrots as well!

This recipe comes from a blog called Self Proclaimed Foodie: <https://selfproclaimedfoodie.com/>

— Darcey

- 10-12 pickling cucumbers
  - 4 cups water
  - 2 cups white vinegar
  - 2 tablespoons kosher salt
  - 1 teaspoon sugar
  - Fresh dill
  - Several garlic cloves
  - Peppercorn kernels
- Makes approx. 2 quarts



Prep your cucumbers. You can slice them, cut them into spears, halve them—whatever appeals the most. Make the brine by combining the water, vinegar, salt and sugar. Bring to a boil and stir until the salt and sugar dissolve. Let this cool to room temperature. Fill your containers with dill, garlic, and peppercorns. The amounts you use should be based on what final taste you hoping to achieve—more or less of any will effect the final outcome. Experiment! Add the cucumbers and then fill with brine until everything is covered. Close the jars and stick them in the back of the fridge. Your pickles will be ready in about a week and will last for about a month!

# SAVE THE DATE!

*Leadership Candidates - you'll be receiving a separate email letter explaining what the plan is for CITs, Apprenti, and Interns in 2021!*

**We'll be sending you applications and information later in October,  
but mark your calendars for Summer 2021 now!**

<b>Session 1</b>	<b>3 weeks</b>	<b>June 27—July 17</b>
<b>Session 2</b>	<b>2 weeks</b>	<b>July 18—July 31</b>
<b>Session 3A</b>	<b>2 weeks</b>	<b>August 1—August 15</b>
<b>Session 3B</b>	<b>3 weeks</b>	<b>August 1—August 21</b>



**Monarch**

Here's what the caterpillars on page 1 will look like when they emerge from their chrysalis!



**Swallowtail**

*"Hey Everybody! Guess what? We have a birthday!"*

**Happiest of birthdays to the following Sangamen who have celebrated a birthday in August. Since we're all social distancing, sing loudly!**

**William Anderson, Javier Benson, Joshua Cunningham, Dular Das, Logan Desforges, Zane Elinson, Noll Flynn, Malcolm Galpern-Levin, Ethan Hill, Nathaniel Jenkins, Amos Jones, Gideon Katz, Zach Koenig, Ben McGuigan, Yankee Rheume, Matt Siegel, Lyle Super, and Morgan Wright!**