

# THE CHIRRUP

February 2024 \* 102 Years of the Pioneer Spirit \* edited by Darcey Wijsenbeek

## Director's Notebook

I've never found a deer antler in the woods, and I wondered why.

Antlers have one major purpose—to help increase the deer population. They help male deer (bucks) establish territory by rubbing a thin covering (velvet) against saplings. This leaves scent to mark boundaries.

Bucks use them to shove other bucks around to establish “top buck”. Antlers also help attract females (does).

Antlers are bones which grow and then die and fall off every year. They can grow a half inch per day, starting in April or May. The size of the antlers are determined mostly by nutrition, not age. The antler bone dies and falls off in mid-December.

Vermont has thousands of deer, so where are the piles of antlers? *Somebody eats them!*

The antler is full of calcium and phosphorus and they get eaten by rodents. Mice, squirrels, rabbits and porcupines all have teeth strong enough to chew bone, and they eat almost all of them.

Humans have been using antler bone for tools, needles, and decoration as long ago as the Paleolithic times to the present.

Today, they are also studied for various medicines.

Source: *Naturally Curious* by Mary Holland—a wonderful nature book

---- Mike

## February Camp News

By Jed Byrom

Happy February from a greener-than-normal Sangamon hill. It's been an interesting winter here in Vermont. Camp itself, and the surrounding mountains, remain frosted white, but a drive through Pittsford could easily leave one thinking it is April. It has meant that access to camp itself is a little easier- no need to plow the Lane when there isn't really much snow!

The staffing process started towards the end of last year, with new internationals the first to sign on as the process of getting a visa to be a camp counselor takes a good bit of time these days. We have a sailor coming from New Zealand bringing along a ton of experience, a new woodworker from Australia, and a horseback riding staff with lots of teaching skills from the United Kingdom. It'll be a good year to build any of those skills. We'll have a good list of returning staff for the next chirrup- it already seems like an excellent crew!

This is animal time at camp- when we all move out, they move in. In the last couple months there have been moose, a range of birds, an ermine sighting, and a porcupine lolling about. A lot of the winter animal activity takes place under the ice or snow, but with less of it around there's been a bit more to see. Our own animals continue to do well down in Brandon. We're planning on some laying hens as well as some young chicks and we're hoping for a few goslings hatched to our own beloved geese. Spring should be an exciting time!

I hope this finds all of you well and happy. While winter has its charms, it feels like we all spend a lot of time waiting for camp to come and I am looking forward to seeing you again soon!





# Who's Already at Camp?

By Mike Byrom

Darcey likes to publish "who's coming to camp." I thought it would be fun to write about who is already here. The following have all been seen by one of the winter staff at either camp. Except - of course, the hibernators.

Probably the most populous are the rodents - mice, shrews, voles, rabbits, gray squirrels, red squirrels, and at least one porcupine. Mice, shrews, and voles, who all live in the subnivean layer under the snow had a tough time until we finally got snow. They were still here but had no place to hide from their predators. Some of them made it through, certainly, because their tunnels showed up as soon as there was snow cover. The predator group was also easier to identify once there was snow; they left tracks everywhere. We've *seen* some of the actual animals, which is always exciting: we saw a Brown Weasel, an Ermine (not yet all white) and probably a Fisher. There are lots of red or gray fox tracks, White-tail Deer, and rabbits, (a couple have learned to eat birdseed!) We also see tracks of gray and red squirrels. I think I saw bobcat tracks but am not sure. I keep hoping to hear coyotes sing, but so far not this winter.

There are hibernators hidden away in nests and dens all through the woods and in Burr Pond. Salamanders, newts, several kinds of turtles are snuggled in the pond mud. Somewhere on the Hilltop is a woodchuck den (too close to the garden!) and surely some chipmunks. And, although they are solitary in the summer, garter snakes like to hibernate in a snake ball to stay a little warmer. Finally, I count at least 15 kinds of birds at the Farmhouse feeder, and out in the woods I see and hear hawks, crows, ravens, owls, turkeys. and at least one big pileated woodpecker. All of us await your arrival in June.

## SPOTTED!

Alex Cooper reached out to share that he noticed a Sangamon sweatshirt in the pilot episode of the Sopranos.



Marmalade, formerly known as Leroy Jenkins, lives with Max and Oliver.

## Farm Kittens Grow Up!

Mercury & Neptune live with Boui and Fausto.

## Camp Animals in Winter!





## WHO'S COMING TO CAMP?

Simon A, Washington DC, 1  
Theo A-W, El Cerrito CA, 2  
Ezra B, Montpelier VT, 2  
Eli B, Portland ME, 3A  
Oliver B, Charlotte VT, 2  
Willem B, Stratford CT, 2  
Carson C, Shelburne VT, 1  
Thatcher C, Salisbury VT, 2  
Henry C, Montreal CA, 1  
Charlie C, Chittenden VT, 2  
Max C, Mendon VT, 3B  
Henry D, Brooklyn NY, 3A  
Oliver D, Brooklyn NY, 3A  
Charlie D, Brooklyn NY, 3B  
Lucas E, Weston FL, 2  
Boui E, Granville VT, 2  
Fausto E, Granville VT, 2  
John F, Brooklyn NY, 2&3A  
Sebastian F, Cambridge MA, 3A  
Ben G, Westport CT, 3A  
Sam G, Maplewood NJ, 1&2

Ezra G-P, Charlotte VT, 1  
Sawyer G, Proctor VT, 2  
Oliver G, Cambridge MA, 3A  
Harrison H, Chappaqua NY, 2  
Nash H, Chappaqua NY, 2  
Logan H, Centennial CO, 2  
Lucas H, Centennial CO, 2  
Milo I, Jamaica Plain MA, 3A  
Phineas J, Arlington MA, 3B  
Alex K, Shrewsbury MA, 3A  
Finn K, Jamaica Plain MA, 3A  
Ewan K, Rutland VT, 1  
Charles K, Brooklyn NY, 1  
Gus K, St Simmons Isl GA, 2  
Nate K, St Simmons Isl GA, 2  
Jasper K, Brooklyn NY, 3B  
Luke K, Austin TX, 1&2  
Max L, Brandon VT, 1-3A  
Aaron M, New York NY, 3A  
Bohdi M, Brooklyn NY, 1&2

Zaid M, Brooklyn NY, 1  
Connor M, Mendon VT, 1  
Cameron M, Proctor VT, 1&2  
Larkin M, Proctor VT, 1&2  
Owen Morrow, New York NY, 2  
Pravir M, Shrewsbury MA, 3B  
Carlo M, Brooklyn NY, 3A  
Damian M, Brooklyn NY, 3A  
Ronan M, Jamaica Plain NY, 3B  
Leif N, Brandon VT, 2  
Evan N, Weybridge VT, 2  
David O, Montclair NJ, 1  
Jackson P, Doylestown PA, 2  
Isaac P, Jamaica Plain MA, 3A  
Silas P, Paris France, 2  
Raymond P, Somerville MA, 3A  
Richard P, Somerville MA, 3A  
Callum R, Truckee CA, 3A  
Rowan R, Salisbury VT, 1  
Adrian R, Middlebury VT, 1&2

Asher S, Concord MA, 1  
Zephyr S, Concord MA, 1  
Leo S, Newton MA, 3A  
Ansel S, Charlotte VT, 1  
Andrew S, H on H NY, 2  
Jude S, Lexington MA, 3B  
Simran S, Pleasantville NY, 2&3A  
Nico S, Davie FL, 2  
Yarlan S, Shrewsbury MA, 3A  
Henry T, San Francisco CA, 1&2  
Bene T, S Nyack NY, 3A  
Cavan T, New York NY, 2&3B  
Jacob V, Bernardston MA, 3A  
Andrew V, Pennington NJ, 3A  
Thomas V, Pennington NJ, 3A  
Tait W, Democratic Republic  
of Congo, 2  
Reuben W-P, Boston MA, 3A  
Jasper Z, Dallas TX, 1  
Soren Z, Topsham VT, 2

### **Why isn't my name on this list? I told Darcey I am coming to camp!**

I have a long list of you in italics on the books because I haven't received your application. Your spot isn't official until I have the application in hand. Email me or head to the website if you need a copy!

### **You love camp, so why not share it with your friends and get a bonus from us for spreading the word?**

Introduce someone new to Sangamon! You'll have another friend to sing camp songs with and your family earns 150 Sangabucks for bringing a new family to camp. Sangabucks work like real money and can be used toward your tuition, the new family's tuition, or even split between the two.

Look around your neighborhood, school, even amongst your cousins. Tell them about us and show them the website. Your stories are our best recommendation! If they have more questions or are ready to sign up, have them get in touch with Darcey to get the process started. (802) 665-7505 or [darcey@campsangamon.com](mailto:darcey@campsangamon.com).



# THE CHIRRP

Sangamon!

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## ***THIS IS NOT A DRILL!***

February Break is around the corner which has historically been when the applications come pouring in and this year will be no exception.

**I fully expect to close several age groups in our most popular sessions by March 1st.**

If you haven't been in touch, **DON'T WAIT!**

**Sangamon merchandise is now available on our website! Check out all that is on offer by visiting [www.campsangamon.com/shop](http://www.campsangamon.com/shop). T-shirts, sweatshirts, hats, and mugs. Items will be shipped out 6-9 days after purchase.**

