

THE WALDEN POND

CAMP WALDEN

Nearly Summer!

SPRING 2026

SPECIAL ISSUE

It's the annual

New Staff Survey!

This summer's Walden crew hail from around the globe, including staff from Australia, Scotland, Ireland, England, Mexico, Spain, Finland and Poland.

With thanks for their answers: Sonia, Rogan, Tom, Yosahandy, Charlie, Fiona, Dhevan, Yuliza, Jenna, Zuzanna, Taylor, Lydia, Jordan, Clara, Ethien, Isabella, Paulina, Ellie. *And some returners, too... Jay, John, Mario, Kyle, Maddie, Jove and John!*



YOSHI

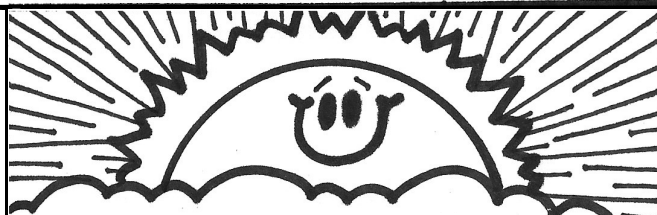
What's your nickname and how did you get it? Rogan: Bocchi, because my friends thought I looked like that character... Jay: Aquaman, as I was the best swimmer in school... Yosahandy: Yoshi. In [school] there was a boy named Mario. I guess it was funny having another character in the class... Jenna: Jenspa... Jove: El Jovè, as I made my friends burritos once and it just stuck... Paulina: Paupau, because there's a

juice called 'Paupau'... Zuzzana: Zuzameduza... Charlie: Chaz... Clara: Claire-bear.

What's Your Secret Talent: Fiona: Tetris... Sonia: I play the accordion!... Rogan: I can memorize every Pokémon and a fact about each... Yoshi: I can finish a book in one night... Maddie: I can whistle and hum at the same time... Ellie: I am a great pickleball player! Taylor: I can name all 50 states and their capitals, Jove: I can do the worm! Ethien: I'm good at any sport.

What woodland creature are you most excited (or worried about) seeing? Sonia: I hope I see a bear... Zuzzana: I hope I don't run into a bear... Ronan: I do love owls. Jenna: I haven't seen chipmunks ever so I would love to see one... Isabella: I am excited to see beavers and otters. Yuliza: It's always beautiful see a deer... Charlie: Mosquitoes! I sadly must have the perfect blood type... Tom: Racoons. They have very cute faces... Ethien: I would love to see a moose. Dhevan: Different birds. Taylor: The loon. There's nothing more 'Northern Michigan summer' than their crazy laugh echoing across the lake at sunset.

Continued inside...



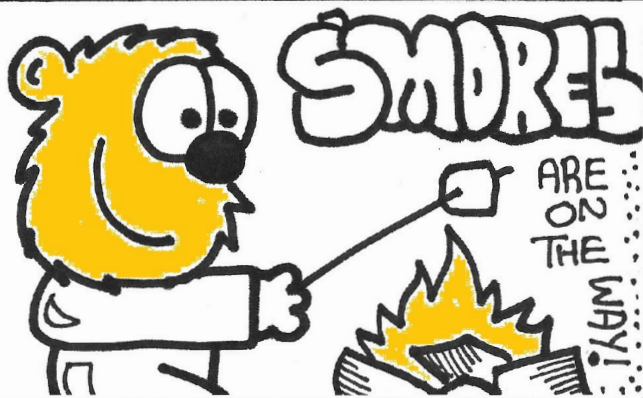
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO AT CAMP?

Billy Daum: Sailing * Jonah Berke: Tennis
Drew Kohen: Skiing and tubing * Audrey Schippits: Navah and Brooke * Alexa Feinstein: Seeing my friends again * Anika Pearlstein: Being a Big Sis in Big Sis/Little Sis day. * Santiago Ruiz: Trying new activities & making new friends * Jillian Lazarus: Horseback riding
Malcolm Cusick: To be in Unit III 'cause I can do more stuff * Alexa MacIntosh: Waterskiing
Luke Paradise: Capture the Camp * Cyrus Alberts: Tetherball * Alec Feinstein: Meeting new friends * Parker Brandt: Making new friends * Julia Pearlman: Going to Mackinac Island earlier * Brinkley Janis and Marie Stanton: Seeing all my friends * Bree Swedler: Friends * Richie Berg: Finding the Rock * Bethany Thomas: Being able to run through the woods again
Marlowe Spector: Tubing and being in the most beautiful place on Earth * Matty Rasansky: Everything!



Santiago is a 2nd-generation camper from Mexico!





AUTOGRAPH OF THE ISSUE
 Walden Speaks

HAPPY GRAMS

- ☒ **TEDDI, CHARLIE, AND ADDY:** Can't wait for our first summer! Love, Grey
- ☒ **G-8 (S1):** I miss y'all so much! I hope to see you guys this year! Samantha Falk
- ☒ **ALEXA:** I can't wait to see you at camp **this year.**
From Jillian
- ☒ **HARRIET AND SADIE:** Thank you for being great cousins, and I can't wait to see you guys! Joey Caplan
- ☒ **MADDIE DAN:** I miss you! Reese Leff
- ☒ **LAUREN AND TAYLOR:** I hope you are having a great time in school! Catherine Shedivy
- ☒ **G-11 (S1):** Looking forward to camp! Miss you all so much!!! Not N.
- ☒ **NAVAH LEVINE:** Good! Ohio? Audrey Schippits
- ☒ **G-12:** Just for the record, SNL nights were THE BEST nights of camp. Luv y'all baddies! Harper Fantich
- ☒ **ELLIE FULLER:** Hiiii! I love when you babysit! Julia Pearlman
- ☒ **BROOKE MOROSS:** Miss you too. Audrey Schippits
- ☒ **G-11 (S1):** Heyyy, I'm so excited to see everyone! Maya
- ☒ **G-14 (S1):** Can't wait to see you! Julia Zendel
- ☒ **LENI WOLF:** Bunkmates?? Julia Zendel
- ☒ **FROZEN CAST:** I miss you guys and I miss excited to see what this summer has in store for us in theatre! Maddie Dan
- ☒ **TO MY FUTURE CAMP FRIENDS:** I look forward to meeting you! Chloe Emmer

What's a Unit Head??

We're introducing a new role at camp this summer. If you've already been to Walden, you know that your Unit Programmer (UP, for short) is one of the people you might go to if you are homesick, or if you get into an argument with someone, or something just isn't right in your cabin.

This year, we allowing the UP team to focus on *Evening Programs* and those gigantic all-camp programs like *Capture the Camp* and *Walden Idol*. They are still cabin counselors and always someone you can ask for help!

However... Your Unit Head's primary job will be to help campers who are feeling sad, frustrated, or stressed. They will work with the B-Side and G-Side heads and the social workers, if need be, to help campers tackle normal camp issues.

If you were at camp last summer, you'll already know their names: JP, Freya, Riley and Luke. JP and Freya are Unit Heads for Units I and II (campers entering 2nd-6th grades). Riley and Luke are the UHs for Units III and IV.



Your 2026 Unit Heads are
 (clockwise from top left): **Freya Sharp, JP Moussier, Riley Baker, and Luke Gruenhagen.**

A Message from the Directors

As soon as camp ended last summer, Scott, James, Liz, and Annie immediately began planning for Summer 2026 ~ and we are so excited that it's almost here!

In just a few weeks, we'll be back together under the maple trees, enjoying views of Long Lake, singing *Pepe*, and making lifelong memories.

This spring we've been meeting with Robyn, the UPs, Unit Heads, Area Heads and CA advisors—among others!—creating new activities and programs, and new ways to help you thrive at camp. This includes some exciting surprises we can't wait to share!

Whether you're returning to your camp home- away-from-home or getting ready for your very first summer, Walden welcomes you to be yourself, find your happy, and have a BLAST! Summer 2026 is almost here!

**James,
Liz,
Scott &
Annie**



QUOTE OF THE ISSUE

"THE PRICE OF GREATNESS IS RESPONSIBILITY."
 ~ WINSTON CHURCHILL



DEAR ED

Dear Ed, How are the famous Walden chipmunks lately? Harper Fantich

Dear Harper, The chipmunks are out of hibernation and eagerly awaiting human visitors and the opening of the Chipmunk Cafe. Ed

Dear Ed, Why do our eyes water when we yawn? Zoe Leber

Dear Zoe, You probably thought Ed wouldn't know, but it's because the muscles in your face squeeze your tear glands and temporarily block your tear-drainage system, causing tears to spill out. Ed

Dear Ed, When did Neal start doing Dear Ed? Julia Pearlman

Dear Julia, Dear Ed actually started as a special issue of the Walden Pond with a feature called "Walden For Dummies," based on a popular book series at the time. The Q&A format was so popular, it developed into regular feature. This all happened around 25 years ago. Ed

Dear Ed, Did you also go to Camp Walden when you were little? (If so, you know it rocks!) Audrey Edery

Dear Audrey, Ed (Neal) was already a counselor when he started Walden, but you're right, it rocks! Ed

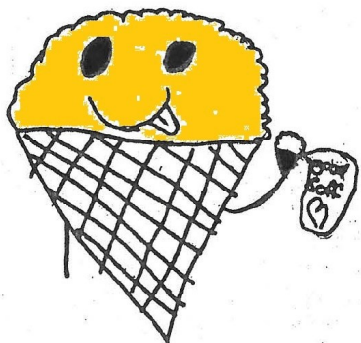
Dear Ed, What created a mermaid? Audrey Schippits

Dear Audrey, Mermaids are a blend of human imagination, ancient mythology, and sailors trying to explain strange things they saw in the ocean. A long time ago, sailors used to think they saw mermaids when they were really looking at manatees. Ed

Dear Ed, Will I like my first year at Walden? Grey Heitkamp

Dear Grey, Yes! Ed

Dear Ed is short for "Dear Editor." If you have a question about camp, send it to Ed and watch to see if your answer appears in future issues.

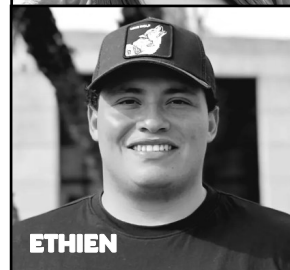


CARTOON BY
AVERY LILLY

What's one word that would describe you when you were between 8-12 years old? **Sonia:** Curious, I was always asking questions. **Lydia:** Talkative. I was always getting in trouble for talking in class... **Yuliza:** Passionate, I participated in everything, and I liked to do it well... **Fiona:** Whimsical. I loved trying new things. **Ronan:** Very quiet I didn't fit in, so I kept quiet though I was very smart. **Yosahandy:** Spontaneous. You definitely couldn't predict what I'd be doing in the next hour... **Kyle:** Rule-follower. I would always help the teacher at school whenever I could... **Mario:** Hyperactive, because I could never stop moving. **Taylor:** Imaginative. I spent most of elementary school completely absorbed in the world of Harry Potter. **Charlie:** Everywhere! I spent my elementary school days in both Australia (where I was born) and [in Great Britain]. **Clara:** Shy, I was one of the kids that would read at recess. **Jordan:** Energetic. I was always curious about something new. **Isabella:** Adventurous. I loved playing in nature.



LYDIA



ETHIEN

What actor would play you in a movie of your life? **Jay:** Robert Pattinson, as I've been told by my aunt that I look like him!... **Maddie:** I would have Florence Pugh play me because I've been told I look like her and she's also one of my favorite actresses. **Fiona:** I would definitely pick Hailee



Steinfeld to play me. I love superheroes, and she was my favorite in the Hawkeye show! **Dhevan:** Timothee

Chalamet, only because I really like Dune. **Tom:** Leonardo DiCaprio. His films often feature travelling, and I love to travel, too. **Zuzanna:** Someone once told me that I look a little like Blair Waldorf from Gossip Girl, so maybe

Leighton Meester? **Lydia:** Anna Kendrick because she's sarcastic like me. **Paulina:** Emma Roberts. She has a slightly emotionally chaotic vibe, but with a lot of charisma.

What are you most looking forward to this summer? **Jordan:** I love getting to know new people. **Yosahandy:** Meeting people from different countries will be amazing!... **Jay:** Meeting the new staff and seeing old friends! And also driving the Mastercrafts... **Charlie:** Experiencing and learning about American culture and fully immersing myself within it! **Maddie:** Working with the same theater team as last year plus some newcomers! **Kyle:** Moments around the campfire as well as all the special days, especially Color Clash!... **Tom:** Meeting the kids, making new friends and making the summer one to remember. **Jenna:** Campfires, because in Finland we also have campfires and I love them. **Taylor:** I am stoked to learn all of the camp's traditions and games... **Isabella:** Getting to know new people from all around world.



5 QUESTIONS WITH MARK GOODINE

Mark runs camp's Media & Tech area, teaching classes in digital and darkroom photography, as well as robotics and rockets. He recently sat for an interview with Ed.



1) What is the best TV show of all time? *The Big Bang Theory*. It was consistently funny and creative, and the characters worked well together. Over time, the characters maintain interest.

2) How often Do you visit Hungary? Twice a year. I go for Thanksgiving weekend, and I go just before camp starts.

3) Why do you go so often? I spent a year there teaching English to Hungarian children, so I go back to visit with my former students as they grow up and with my co-workers that I taught with.

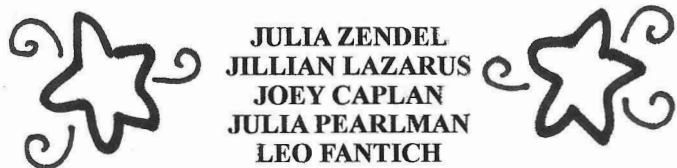
4) Is it true you are a Hungarian citizen? That is true. I carry two passports. I'm both an American citizen and a Hungarian citizen. It makes travel within Europe very easy.

5) Were you born in Hungary? No, I was born in the Detroit area. I had grandparents that came from Hungary, and because of that, I qualified for citizenship.

PHANTOM CONTEST

The Phantom in the last issue of the Pond was Karen Spreen. As promised in our last issue, we are choosing FIVE WINNERS THIS TIME, because we only had one winner for our last contest. We chose the winners at random from the correct answers.

Congratulations to our winners:



If you are one of the winners, see Liz or Scott at camp to claim your prize.

There is no new Phantom in this issue because it's the last Pond before camp, but watch for more Phantoms this summer.



GUESS WHO'S HAUNTING THE WALDEN STAGE FIRST SESSION?!

A pair of ghosts need help evicting the annoying new owners of their former home, so they call upon infamous apparition Betelgeuse (aka Beetlejuice).

"With fun costumes, lights and dance numbers," says Walden Performing Arts Director Robbie Mullin, "it's going to be the best show yet!"

More comfortable off-stage? Sign up for stage management, set design, or the tech and costume crews. Mini Session drama students get to participate too: They'll preview the show for camp before leaving on July 5.

So practice your creepiest voices, your skeptical glances, and your frightened-out-of-your-wits faces for the most fun night of harmless scares you'll have this summer!

Welcome to Our Newest New Campers!

Dashiell Bonabeau CA	Ezra Klar MI
Paige Brady KY	Liv Kranitz IL
Leah Brady KY	Edith Kravitz DC
Myann Brown MI	Duncan McAninch
George Cherney MI	Lochlan McAninch
Annette Eichenbaum MI	Chelsea Ojeiwa IL
Asher Epstein TX	Grace Ojeiwa IL
Anthony Fink MI	Ronan Parcells TX
Mariana Flores-Hoks IL	Cara Post TX
London Floyd MI	Maksim Rambus MI
Curran "CJ" Forman MI	Mia Rouse MI
Caleya Forman MI	Paige Sample UT
Devon Goodman MI	Charlotte Sandler OH
Lucas Goodman MI	Asher Sanmartin MI
Hayden Hochberger FL	Olive Singer FL
Henni Hoff MI	Mason Strumwasser TX
Annabelle Holmberg UT	Kaiden Taul MI
Paige Howard MT	Jose Toro SPAIN
Zoe Kaufman MI	Tyson Vaughan TX
Ben Kay FL	Lexington Williams MI
Skylar Kay FL	Journey Young MI
Emma Kay FL	Nya Young MI



Pablo Zubiria Hernandez SPAIN
Alvaro Zubiria Hernandez SPAIN

The CAs are Coming! The CAs are Coming!

What's a CA? A counselor assistant. CAs are a little too young to be full-fledged camp counselors, but they participate in staff-week training and lots of on-the-job practice, too.



SOPHIA

Who are they? Rising high-school seniors, who have been campers at Walden, some were Leaders-In-Training last summer, like Sophia (Remember the LIT Games?!) Others, like Ari, were last at camp in 2024.

How many are there? 23 will start the summer at Walden, and we add a few more on July 5.

What do they do? After an initial training while they live together, CAs move into camper cabins and help take care of kids. They also assist teaching activities.

Who are their fearless leaders? Sammy Kalniz and Rikki Aronoff, longtime campers and staffers are

the 2026 CA advisors. Bree (Spalding) McKerracher returns to Walden after a seven-year break to oversee the program.



ARI

WHAT'S NEW WITH OUR FRIENDS



- **AUDREY SCHIPPITS** made the Winter Park, Colorado, ski team.
- **CATHERINE SHEDIVY** started travel soccer called Junior Irish.
- **SAMANTHA FALK** went on her second cruise in December.
- **GREY HEITKAMP** went to Punta Cana and got to swim with a dolphin!
- **JILLIAN LAZARUS** has a horse show in April.
- **JOEY CAPLAN** is so excited to be going to camp for five weeks!
- **MYA CAPLAN** has braces.
- **LEO FANTICH** has been catching many fish.
- **NOA AND ASHER NATHAN** had their b'nai mitzvah in December.
- **JULIA PEARLMAN** had her bat mitzvah in January.
- **TOMMY ROLLOW** got accepted to his middle school.
- **MADDIE DAN** got into the advanced choir at the high school she's attending next year!
- **JULIA ZENDEL** was on the school basketball team.
- **CHLOE EMMER** got a chinchilla named **CHAI**.
- **REESE LEFF** learned her favorite counselor **FREYA** is coming back.
- **AUDREY EDERY** is so out of her head excited about camp! She thinks about it EVERY second and always finds herself referring to camp things!

WHAT SHOULD BE THE THEME FOR WALDEN UNDER

REESE LEFF: Musicals

CHLOE EMMER:

Cottagecore

JILLIAN LAZARUS:

Animals

SAMANTHA FALK:

Disney

GREY HEITKAMP:

KPop Demon Hunters

CATHERINE SHEDIVY:

Under the Sea

HARPER FANTICH: Shrek

JULIA PEARLMAN: Beauty and the Beast

JULIA ZENDEL: Trolls

WILD CHIPMUNKS: The Chipmunk Café

NOA AND ASHER NATHAN: Smurfs, Star Wars or Back to the Future

MAYA CAPLAN: Founding Fathers vs. Robots

JOEY CAPLAN: 80s or 90s or Home Alone

AUDREY EDERY: This is such an easy question! Obviously, our very own Walden deer.

The Walden Pond
Camp Walden
2335 Mistletoe Avenue
Fort Worth, TX 76110



Summer Sizzler!

Solve the word search! Words are hidden across or down. No diagonals!

FLOPPY HAT

BUG SPRAY

BOAT RIDE

SUNSCREEN

SPLASH

FLIP FLOPS

SMORE

CAMPFIRE

BATHING SUIT

SUNSET

MEADOW

SCORCHER

C	A	M	P	F	I	R	E	P	E	F	N	B	R	L	C	P	M
B	P	S	E	A	O	F	L	I	P	F	L	O	P	S	U	H	D
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W	S	B	C	H	E	D	I	R	T	A	O	B	S	U	L	A	A

NEAL'S BOOK REVIEW

Seventh-Grade Weirdo by Lee Wardlaw

Rob Robin (whose real name is Christopher Robin) has a mom who's obsessed with Winnie the Pooh. In fact, Rob's five-year-old sister is named Winnie, and she's about to become a millionaire after inventing a new board game. Rob's somewhat embarrassing father is about to speak in front of the school about his professional surfing career, and Rob is targeted by the class bully, known as The Shark. Think Rob has enough problems? He certainly thinks so. Although this book was written in 1992, it might still appeal to current elementary and middle school students. I rate this book 3 roses.

Neal's Book Reviews are based on books he's read recently and would recommend to children and teenagers. He rates them on a scale of 4 roses (the best) to 4 onions (the worst).