



the LANTERN'S LIGHT



ON AIR

the Many Point Staff Alumni Association's newsletter

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Reflecting on 40 Years: The Spirit of Many Point Shines Bright

As the lantern's glow flickers across the lake and the pines whisper old stories, we find ourselves celebrating a milestone: 40 years of the Many Point Staff Alumni Association. In the latest episode of *Lantern's Light on Air*, co-hosts Chad Brandkamp and Michael Kuklok gathered a full crew—Jay Belchner, Drew Dutton, Sven Larsen, Peter Larsen, Jack Hoyer, Brianna Eggers, and Scott Hollermann—to reflect on where we've been and what's next.

Many Point remains timeless because of its people. Every session brings new faces, new memories, and new stories. As Jay Belchner reminded us, "It's the people—the kids, the staff, the alumni—who keep Many Point's magic alive." Whether reconnecting at camp after decades or seeing fresh staff forge their first life-long friendships, the legacy of Many Point is stronger than ever.

Spring Fling Turns 40: A Gala Celebration in Stillwater

This year's Spring Fling promises to be a special one. We're marking four decades of the Alumni Association in style at a brand-new venue, the Laura Hotel and Event Center in historic downtown Stillwater, MN.

Event Details:

April 26th, 2025

5:31 PM start time

Lora Hotel & Event Center, Stillwater, MN

\$10 entry at the door (Current Sub-Camp Staff attend free!)

Expect great conversation, appetizers made from scratch, non-alcoholic beverages, and a *Music Bingo* game that's sure to stir up laughter and friendly competition.

There's also plenty to explore around Stillwater—breweries, restaurants, and charming riverfront spots. Lodging options are available for out-of-towners, with easy, free parking nearby.

RSVP & Info → mpalumni.org/fling

Work Party: The Tradition of Giving Back, May 30 – June 1

For alumni who like their volunteering with a side of sweat, sawdust, and camaraderie, the Many Point Work Party is calling!

Scott Hollermann outlined this year's key projects:

- Family Camp Shower House Re-roofing, Buckskin Sauna Re-roofing, New Latrine Construction
- Painting & Cleaning (all skill levels welcome!), Tree Removal
- Voyager ODS improvements

Volunteers receive food, tools, housing, and the chance to reconnect while making a tangible impact on the campgrounds.

Join us May 30 – June 1, 2025.

Sign up at <https://www.manypoint.org/Article/work-party-and-volunteering>

The Hootenanny Goes Big: New Venue, New Date, Same Magic

Grab your guitars, tambourines, or just your voice—this year's Hootenanny has a fresh twist! We're moving it to a Saturday, **July 12th, 6 PM**, at the beautiful **Hoot Owl Resort**, just north of camp.

Hosts **Sven and Peter Larsen** shared their excitement about the new venue, which offers an outdoor campfire setting under the stars, plus a spacious indoor lodge if the weather turns. Burgers, beverages, and the chance to sing songs and tell stories—what's not to love?

Bring an instrument, a camp chair, and your best campfire spirit! Stay tuned for more details at the Fling and leading up to summer!

Passing the Music On: Introducing the Many Point Instrument Library

Music has always been at the heart of Many Point. Inspired by staff campfires and sing-alongs, **Peter Larsen** is launching an Instrument Library to keep that tradition alive.

Have an old guitar gathering dust? Tambourines? Hand drums? We're looking for gently used instruments to lend to current staff, so they too can learn, play, and share songs lakeside.

Donations can be brought to Spring Fling, or contact Peter or Sven Larsen to coordinate. We're also seeking volunteers to offer basic music lessons this summer—help the next generation strum their first chords!

Sustaining Many Point: Heritage Fund Nears New Milestones

Our camp's future is built today, thanks to the Heritage Fund. **Drew Dutton and Jay Belchner** shared the inspiring progress:

- \$230,000+ in cash gifts
- \$2 million+ in estate commitments
- Long-term goal: \$10 million

The Fund ensures the principle remains untouched, using interest to fund staff housing upgrades, new programs, sustainability efforts, and even visionary projects like a night sky observatory or expanded water sports fleet.

Every donor has a story—and the upcoming "What's Your Heritage Story?" project will highlight why alumni give and their dreams for the future of Many Point.

Interested in contributing? Connect with Jay or Drew. Contribute here: <https://mpalumni.org/heritagefund/>

Mentoring the Next Generation: Career Connections Program Launches

The Many Point family extends far beyond camp, and now there's a new way to keep that connection strong.

Jack Hoyer, Megan Boudreaux, and Chuck Fisher introduced the Career Mentoring Program. Alumni in various fields—from law and medicine to trades and education—are stepping up to mentor current staff or alumni considering career moves. Whether you're fresh out of camp or looking to pivot, this program helps you find guidance and opportunity through trusted alumni. Interested in mentoring—or being mentored? Contact Jack, Megan, or Chuck to join.

Jack Hoyer: jackhoye4@gmail.com, Meghan Boudreaux: meggiekbou@gmail.com, Chuck Fisher: chufishe@gmail.com,

Smooth Sailing Ahead: Help Us Refurbish the Fleet

Did you know Many Point hosts one of the largest sailing fleets in Scout camps nationwide? But after decades of use, our beloved boats need replacements. Each sailboat costs around \$5,000—a big undertaking, but a worthy one. Sailing teaches teamwork, leadership, and confidence.

This year, alumni contributions will go toward new sailboats, ensuring future Scouts continue to experience the magic of catching the wind.

Bonus: Donors of \$40 or more will receive a limited edition **40th Anniversary Alumni Pocket Patch!**

Go to <https://mpalumni.org/give/>

Can't Make Work Party? Volunteer This Summer

Many Point thrives thanks to volunteers. Even if you can't attend Work Party, there's always room for alumni support during the summer—whether that's filling in for staff, helping with maintenance, supporting program areas, or pitching in behind the scenes.

Last year, more than **50 alumni** came up to lend a hand. Want to join them? Contact Mike McCuller for opportunities.

MMcCollor@northernstar.org

Where Are They Now? 1974-75 Pioneer Staff Reunion

Chuck Fisher's "Where Are They Now?" segment spotlighted an incredible reunion of the 1974-75 Pioneer Camp staff. The group reunited in 2023, reminiscing about days around the campfire and sharing how their time at Many Point shaped their lives. Full article at the end of this newsletter.

Congratulations to Dr. Brent Martin!

A special shoutout to one of the founders of the Many Point Staff Alumni Association—**Dr. Brent Martin**, who is retiring this year. Thank you, Brent, for planting the seeds that grew into 40 years of service, storytelling, and lifelong connection.

Stay Involved & Stay Connected

Spring Fling, Work Party, Hootenanny, Campouts... and beyond.

There are so many ways to stay connected and make a difference.

Have questions? Want to volunteer? Donate an instrument? Reach out via news@mpalumni.org, join the Facebook group, or email us anytime.

Until then, keep your wicks trimmed and lantern's bright. See you on the shores!

Where are They Now—Spring Fling 2022

Written by Chuck Fisher.

At the Spring Fling in 2022 Gary Gernbacher, Gary Johnson and I were elated to see each other! We talked nonstop all night. During that discussion we all agreed that we should try to organize a reunion of the 1974-1975 Pioneer camp staff. It was almost the same staff for two consecutive years! The trick was – could we find everyone?!?

Certainly, the computer world helps in locating people but do you how many John Kennedy's there in the digital world? Or try a Randy King to see what emerges! So while we rounded up quite a few we failed to locate Jeff Peterson, Dave Prchl, John Kennedy, Randy King and Mike Bigley. We even advertised on the Many Point Alumni website which made for an interesting connection with Dan Gerdts who was a CIT in Pioneer during that time and Doug Knutson (Dutch) who was a Scout! We set a date for April of 2023 and it was delightful. Gary Gernbacher observed that when we first saw each it was a little difficult to recognize some but after being together – it was like we were never apart! The gathering included the following:

Brad Schneider	Gary Johnson	Sean Dooley	Al Thomas
Gary Gernbacher	Tim Looby	Chris Turner	Daniel Gerdts
Doug Knutson	Chuck Fisher		

Each and everyone in attendance spoke to how Many Point help to guide us in our lives, our careers and our outlook on life. The update of Where are They Now gives the paths of those in attendance.

Brad Schneider was an instrumental music instructor, and I still remember him practicing his French horn on a tent platform. Brad even brought a picture album from his time at Many Point! What a treat to see what we use to look like! Brad loved being an instrumental music teacher and taught more than music – he taught about life. Brad was recognized as Music Teacher of the Year, a Crystal Apple recipient and as a present at Wisconsin State Music Conferences. Brad was President of the Wisconsin School Music Association and did much to lobby legislators to support music education. Brad and his wife have two children, and he enjoys an adventurous life

Gary Johnson is now Dr. Gary Johnson dealing with a litany of medical needs but is listed as Pain Care and Spine. In the middle of a very busy practice Gary took a year off and traveled to Sierra Leone to establish a Rural Health Care Initiative. He practiced medicine from his home in a rural area of Sierra Leone and worked to establish a women's health care clinic – which he did! In addition, Gary help to build a farm to produce need healthy food and from the one grew two more. Truly, it was a work of passion. Gary returned to his practice in the Twin Cities but continues to speak warmly of his time in Sierra Leone. Gary enjoys wilderness travel and does amateur photography.

Sean Dooley won the award for traveling the furthest – from New Mexico!! Sean is the one who got over 40

railroad ties donated and to rebuild the Pioneer beach when he was the aquatics director. He also got Ale to come with the Cat to refurbish the beach. I list that achievement because that is who Sean is! He is visionary and worked to achieve his vision. After his year at Pioneer he left for his two years of mission and is still an active man of faith in his church. Just as Sean was successful in selling us on the need of new beach, he was successful in sales. Sean has worked a chief financial officer with an auto dealer, guiding the operation of a farm, worked with Snap on Tools to help franchise dealers. Sean has a way with people! He continues to follow his faith and give to others being noted as Donor Hero in giving blood – literally! Sean has four children. He retired in 2024 and married Deb!

Christ Turner has the same demeanor and speech style that he did at camp. It was heartwarming to hear his speech and watch eyes move as he described what was going on in his life or as he asked questions. He has worked as Director of Public Affairs for the Mississippi Department of Transportation. Most recently – this would be a challenging job – Chris is a Research and Fiscal Analyst for the Minnesota Senate!! I cannot imagine what that job must be like!! The personalities he must need to contend must run a full spectrum. And yet, in talking with Chris one gets the sense that he stays calm. He sticks to facts and lets the facts speak when another person’s personality gets out of control. I really admire what he does and would love to hear stories about “behind the scenes” but I am not sure he would tell them. He is too professional.

Tim Looby could not be with us because he and his family and some friends always go to New Orleans during the time frame – but get this!!! Tim did Face Time with ALL of us – individually!! He might get the Dedication Award. The computer was passed from one of us to another so we each some talking with Tim. I admire his determination! Tim was a lawyer – actually a “Super Lawyer” plus could practice before the Minnesota Supreme Court. He focused on family law and criminal law. In time he became a senior judge. He was a past president of the local Lion’s club, a judge for Mock Trial and a Golden Apple Award from the Waconia Chamber of Commerce. Tim and his wife Lynn Ayers have three daughter and Lynn, a former Many Point staff member, is part owner and manager of Diamond Farms.

Gary Gernbacher left Many Point and worked towards a business degree while being manager of the County Seat. Armed with a ton of business experience Gary taught business at the Hennepin Technical College. I cannot imagine a better person to teach business than Gary. He would make it fun and would be very pragmatic. His students must have loved him. During this time frame business was going digital and Quickbooks was hot! Gary started doing seminars on how to use Quickbooks traveling Canada and the United States. He was on the road – a lot. In time Gary became part owner of company that gained the certification to teach Quickbooks. Gary is retired now. But he has a new career as a grandfather and I bet he is outstanding with an undying love for those grand kids and quick wit that makes him very popular. Gary has three children.

Al Thomas had a busy life after Many Point! He was a Scouting professional before leaving for Merrill Lynch and then Dean Whittaker. Somehow, I bet Al was an aggressive and solid invest adviser! But Al was multifaceted and then left business to work at the Director of Wildlife Development for Minnesota and then the director of Turn in Poachers. He then returned to business with Wells Fargo to help businesses and then ---- Senor Health Care Advisor for Optum United Health! Al liked to help people and does so with a passion. He

also served as a volunteer police official and served on the Minnetonka City Council for twelve years! (I cannot imagine what elections must have been like in Minnetonka!). He was on a never-ending number of boards. Al has two children and yes Al has grandchildren, and he teaches them how to fish!

Dan Gerdts was great to. Have in attendance. The fact that he was a CIT in Pioneer with this staff and was interesting in joining us was heartwarming. It made all of us feel good that he was there! Dan is a lawyer working in solo practice for criminal defense and white-collar issues. He is deemed a Super Lawyer and is past president of the Minnesota Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers! But get this – Dan does the 35 mile cross country ski Birkebeiner races!!! And he continues to do this with a rebuilt knee!! I could not even do that on a Polaris snow ski! A Super lawyer and super skier!

Doug Knutson was a Scout in Pioneer with our staff, and it was heartwarming that he would want to join us! Doug “Dutch” is a famous photographer! He is known for his work with the Nobel Peace Portraits and the Westminster Town Hall Portraits! I remember when Dutch spent a winter at Moberg’s and seeing the photographs that he took and was amazed at what he produced. There was one with a drop coming out of water pump in the winter that spoke volumes about his life. He had to warm water to prime the pump to get more water! Dutch has a way of capturing the essence of whatever he photographs. He was recently honored with selection the Burnsville High School Hall of Fame and the Luther College Distinguished Service Award.

What struck me after visiting with everyone is the fact that each person was satisfied with his life. Each former staff had taken the lesson from Many Point and applied them on their life’s journey and they could look back and feel fulfilled! Now that is a testimony to lives well lived – thank you Many Point!