



# CAMP THUNDERBIRD NEWSLETTER

❄️ **Winter 2025** ❄️

**Return to the Sunny Shores to  
Celebrate 90 Years of Camp Magic!**



## **90th Anniversary Alumni Reunion Weekend**

We are thrilled to celebrate 90 years of Thunderbird, honoring the legends who have helped shape who we are today, the impact

camp has had on countless lives, and the endless opportunities that lie ahead.

You and your family are invited to join us for the **90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Alumni Reunion Weekend, August 28–30, 2026!** The weekend will be an unforgettable time to create new memories with old friends while reminiscing about some of the best days of our lives on the sunny shores that mean so much to us all.

Priority registration, *open exclusively to Campfire Circle members*, will open February 1. Priority registration grants you exclusive early access to select your cabin, plus a special store credit for alumni merchandise! General registration will open February 15, 2026. Stay tuned for registration details in January!

## Campfire Circle






**JOIN THE  
CAMPFIRE CIRCLE**

The Campfire Circle is Camp Thunderbird's new monthly giving club, paving the way for continued impact on the sunny shores. As a member, your sustaining gift honors your own Thunderbird legacy while ensuring future campers can discover their own

adventures, build lifelong friendships, and experience the magic of joining the Thunderbird family. When you join other alumni in this meaningful new tradition by making a monthly gift, you can enjoy the benefits below as a gesture of our thanks in addition to priority registration to the 90th Anniversary Alumni Reunion Weekend.



SUSTAINING DONOR BENEFITS  
**CAMPFIRE CIRCLE**

		Welcome Packet	Sticker/ Magnet	Apparel Item	Holiday Ornament	Exclusive Camp Event
 ALL DONORS		✓				
 \$10/MONTH		✓	✓			
 \$25/MONTH		✓	✓	✓		
 \$50/MONTH		✓	✓	✓	✓	
 \$100+/ MONTH		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

**Alumni Spotlight**







## **Elizabeth Sinclair Castle**

From meeting her best friend as a Younger Girl on the hill all the way to her children working at camp, Camp Thunderbird has been with Elizabeth every step of her life. Elizabeth spent many summers at Camp Thunderbird as both camper and staff, from Younger Girls to Older Girls, sail staff to the pool. She is the oldest of three siblings—her sister Catherine served as Sail Chief and one of the camp doctors, and her brother, Jeff, was Tennis Chief.

At 10 years old, Elizabeth went to resident camp for the first time, where she met Trish Croom Halsey. After growing up together as campers, then joining staff, they were attached at the hip and to this day not much has changed. They were each other's maids of honor and are their kids' godmothers. Elizabeth has three children—Mary Evans, Caroline, and Charlie—and Trish has a son, Jackson. He earned his blue bandana a couple of years ago, tied by Caroline, and this past summer Charlie tied Jackson's gold bandana.

Trish was from Chapel Hill, which is why Elizabeth ultimately made the decision to go to college at UNC Chapel Hill, however,

being from Charleston, WV, she didn't know anyone else going. On freshman move-in day, Elizabeth and her mom were in the elevator when they heard "SINKER?!" only to turn around and see Elizabeth Climer Taylor standing behind her! They quickly reconnected and became closer than ever, spending all four years of college together, and even joining the same sorority.

Elizabeth and her camp friends have continued to meet up every year at Bald Head Island for what has become a time-honored tradition for over 20 years. She shared that these are truly her people – they've laughed together, cried together, celebrated the milestones, and been each other's rocks through the hard times.

When you think of someone who embraces the spirit of Camp Thunderbird in everything they do, it's Elizabeth. All the way down to her dog's name, Wylie, and her children's lullaby being "Carolina", Camp Thunderbird is an integral part of Elizabeth's life that hopefully will continue for generations to come.

## Get involved

### Volunteer

Are you interested in getting more involved as Camp Thunderbird alumni? Email our Alumni Engagement Director at [Lexie.Ratliff@YMCACharlotte.org](mailto:Lexie.Ratliff@YMCACharlotte.org) for information on volunteering, joining a committee, or to learn more about our Board of Advisors!

### Careers at camp

We have full time jobs posted as well as seasonal positions for summer camp and the school year – check them out!

**READ MORE**



# ThunderNews





## ThunderBabies

- Owen & **Kendall Boothe Murphy** - Theodore "Teddy" Scott (boy) | March 2025
- Colton Cecil & **Madison Hansen** - Willow James (girl) | April 2025
- Trevor & **Megan Holmes Barefoot** - Addyson Marie (girl) | September 2025



- Cindy & **Peter McArthur** – Oliver “Ollie” Francis (boy) | October 2025

Have you had your own ThunderBaby in the past year?  
Submit your ThunderNews [here](#) to receive an exclusive t-shirt for your future camper!

## Weddings

Mikel started as camper in 2005, continued as a CIT in 2009, then worked on staff for three summers! Tara & **Mikel Jones** were married August 23, 2025 in Crozet, VA surrounded by their loved ones, including many lifelong camp friends. “All of them have gotten to meet Tara over the years and she adores them and the bond we all share. From being campers to CITs to counselors, it was so special to be able to celebrate with friends from Camp Thunderbird.”





# Calendar Updates



## Summer 2026

Registration is open now! Don't miss out.

**REGISTER**



## Atlanta Alumni

Saturday, February 21

3-6 p.m.

**RSVP**



## 90th Anniversary Weekend

August 28-30, 2026

**Save the Date!**

# CONNECT WITH US!



YMCA of Greater Charlotte, 400 E. Morehead Street, Charlotte, NC  
28202

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