

In Her Own Words



In June 1997, at age 79, Martha Fugett Wiglesworth collaborated with her daughter Beverly Johnson Farrell to record an oral history of her time with the AYF. In her own words, she described vividly the four-fold philosophy, the great teachers and leaders, and how she led other campers to discover their “Best Selves.”

START TAPE

“The Miniwanca experience, starting in 1932 at the age of 14, was the single-most formative influence in my life. It was my emancipation from home. I was scared I’d be homesick, but I never had a moment of homesickness. You were so busy and tired that you went right to sleep at night. It was a two-week camp. It was a wonderful growing-up experience.

The camp emphasized a well-rounded four-fold life—physical, mental, religious, and social. When you got there they gave you a personality test measuring not your degree of excellence, but your balance between these four factors. I scored high on mental and religious, but nothing in physical. I neither knew which end of the bat to hold, nor which way to run on a baseball diamond. I’d had no physical experience in school or home. They wrote you a prescription based on this test for what you were to work on over the year (and, of course, at camp) to bring up your low scores to achieve more balance. If you fulfilled that prescription, you would get the 4-fold emblem.

The camp taught that there were no stars, everyone participated, and everybody played. Campers were organized into six tribes, like teams. Tribes scored points for games, cleanliness, and notebook checks. Also, there was Council Circle, where campers could do stunts, perform on instruments, do drama, etc. The experience was so different from anything I had experienced before. I couldn’t wait to get back.

We were trained by outstanding leaders. Kodaya was a mystic, a poet. He took a liking to me and asked me to participate in worship services he led. He picked me out as his protégé. We took long walks on Sunday afternoons. I was very happy that such a wonderful religious spirit had taken an interest in me. Dad Waite taught using the Socratic Method. He would challenge you when you made a statement. ‘How do you know that’s true?’ he would say

instead of what I had been brought up with: it’s true because an authority says so. Wadjepi, he was the clown. He was full of energy. He was a model of leadership; not domineering, but instead making it fun. He infused the spirit of camaraderie.

Camp had good diversity. There were people from all over the US and some foreign students. Every evening we would have vespers on the dunes and watch the gorgeous sunset over the lake. And oh yes, the lake; Lake Michigan. We would do our aquatics, swimming, etc. on Stony Lake, but we would take our early morning (6:30 a.m.) dip in Lake Michigan. It was COLD!!”

My last year I was selected to be a chief. I was always good at developing relationships with adults, but here was a chance to develop relationships with peers. Even though I was low on the physical side, I was a good leader. I loved it so much...”

STOP TAPE

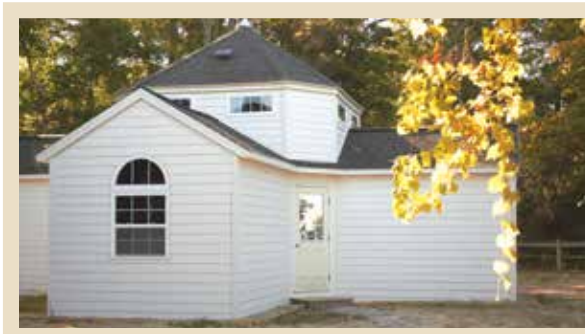
After a long and vibrant life, our mother passed away in the Spring of 2011. She always loved Miniwanca. It ignited in her the idealism and dreams to bring peace and justice to the world. It was for her a guide, an inspiration, and a framework as she journeyed into adulthood. And for us it was a lens through which we could understand her passions and her values.

We approached AYF President Anna Kay Vorsteg with several ideas and eventually decided to make a gift in memory of Martha that would help restore the I Dare You Library at Miniwanca. As visitors, campers, and leaders we had our own experiences in this building—memories of teaching and learning in classes, quiet meditations, conversations, and planning meetings. We recognize it as an embodiment of the four fold philosophy and a structure that provides continuity from AYF’s earliest days when Danforth’s book I Dare You! provided the original funds for the building.

Recently to our surprise and delight, we found a photograph of the graduating Class of 1935, including Martha, standing in front of a newly constructed I Dare You Library. She didn’t tell us about the building, but it is obvious that the members of the class considered it a very important spot; one to remember for the rest of their lives.

The AYF extends its sincere appreciation for the gift of restoring the I Dare You library, but more importantly for the continued embrace of the mission and the youth whom we are honored to serve.

by Beverly Johnson Farrell, Susan Johnson Gullickson, Julie Johnson, and Cal Johnson



AYF BY THE NUMBERS

2013 SAW
6,600 people
 from **40** states
 and **12** countries
 enjoy programming
 at Merrowvista,
 and Miniwanca.

2013 ANNUAL REPORT

MINIWANCA SUMMER CAMP:

During the six weeks of camp, Miniwanca runs separate gender camps for boys and girls in grades 3 – 12. Once a camper enters seventh grade he/she can join the 4-Trails program and go on out-camping trips, including a 23 day cycling tour from Merrowvista to Miniwanca!

667 Campers

MERROWVISTA SUMMER CAMP:

Merrowvista Summer Camp: Set on over 600 acres of the Ossipee Mountains in New Hampshire, Merrowvista offers 1- to 4-week opportunities for campers 8 – 17 years old. The younger campers take part in the in-camp program, while campers in rising 9th – 12th grade take part in the 4-Trails program.

519 Campers

DAY CAMP:

A week long program, Day Camp is geared towards rising 1st – 6th graders. This is a great way for young campers to experience everything Miniwanca and Merrowvista have to offer!

Miniwanca: 46 campers

Merrowvista: 29 campers

NATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE:

Based on a four year progressive curriculum, NLC is an 8-day conference for high school and college students from across the country. First Year participants are between 15 – 18 years of age. The curriculum focuses on tangible leadership skills while continuously addressing the notion of best self, balanced living, and positive community.

259 Participants

VOLUNTEER WEEKEND:

A FREE weekend filled with service to the camp and games with friends. Volunteers come together to help ready the site for the upcoming program season while also having a chance to play on the high ropes course and take part in the first Polar Bear Plunge of the year.

Miniwanca: 78 volunteers

Merrowvista: 60 volunteers

EPIC:

An evening of zany camp games geared towards adults, EPIC had its inaugural run in St. Louis in November, 2013. Imagine the Amazing Race, Double Dare, and Minute to Win It all mashed up together. It’s a truly EPIC event helping raise money for scholarships.

150 participants

COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL PROGRAMS:

Throughout the academic year, Miniwanca and Merrowvista serve thousands of students and educators through CSP. Students come from across the Midwest and Northeast to experience a 3 – 7 day program that is specially formulated to their group’s needs, outcomes, and objectives.

Miniwanca: 2279 students from 30 different schools/organizations

Merrowvista: 2557 students from 40 different schools/organizations

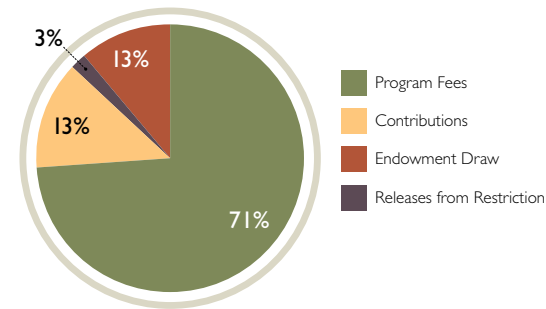
REVENUE

Program Fees (Camps, Conference, Schools)	\$ 4,066,907
Contributions (Grants, Donations & Other)	\$ 761,317
Releases from Restriction	\$ 161,389
Endowment Draw	\$ 714,180
TOTAL REVENUE SUPPORT & DRAW:	\$ 5,703,793

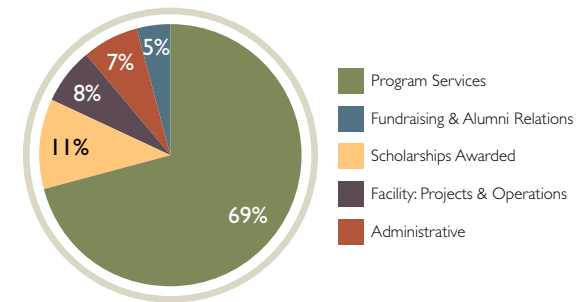
EXPENSES

Program Services	\$ 3,961,308
Scholarships Awarded	\$ 638,183
Facility & Operations	\$ 453,989
Administrative	\$ 392,933
Fundraising & Alumni Relations	\$ 257,380
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 5,703,793

Breakdown of 2013 Revenue



Breakdown of 2013 Expenses



If you would like more information about our financial statements, our annual audit and annual IRS Informational Return Form 990 are available to the public. A copy can be obtained by visiting our website and clicking on "About AYF" and following the link to the financial reports.

The American Youth Foundation extends our deepest gratitude to the following individuals, corporations and foundations for their generous support of our programs and the children we serve.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this list. Please accept our sincere apologies for any errors or omissions.

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As a nonprofit organization, the American Youth Foundation is deeply committed to broadening the reach of the important mission with which we are charged. Thanks to contributions from our friends and alumni, hundreds of campers and participants received financial assistance and discounts through our scholarship funds. The stories in this magazine spotlight the AYF's commitment to year-round programming and the life-time journey that is becoming your Best Self.

Please continue to support and share our mission with others. The work of the AYF goes well beyond the camp experience and we hope that the core values of four-fold balanced living will reach tens of thousands of young people in future generations to come. We invite you to be the strength of the organization, the heavy lifters: our volunteers, our staff, our donors, our camper parents, our recruiters...our Founders.



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In Honor of Emily McIntosh
Donald McIntosh
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D. Nancy Paysinger
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2013 COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

MERROWVISTA

Berwick Academy
 Brewster Academy
 Camp Kesem - MIT
 Camp Lance-a-Lot Families
 Camp Lance-a-Lot Teen Program
 Camp Meridian
 Christchurch Youth Group
 Codman Academy
 Concord Middle School
 Conway Elementary School
 Conway Elementary School
 Down Syndrome with Zebra Crossings
 Esperanza Academy
 Essex Elementary School
 Hampton Academy
 Heronfield Academy
 Inter-Lakes Middle Tier
 John Fuller Elementary
 Kids4Peace – Boston
 Kids4Peace - continuation
 Leadership New Hampshire
 Manchester Memorial School
 Margarita Muniz Academy
 McCarthy-Towne School
 Merriam
 New Castle Elementary
 NH National Guard Winter Camp
 North Country Fall Prevention Youth Council
 North Country Leadership Retreat
 North Country Spring Prevention Youth Council
 North Hampton School
 Northwood Elementary

Ocean Hill Collegiate Charter School
 On Belay
 Ossipee Central School
 Rye Junior High
 Sandwich Central School
 Seacoast Charter School
 Shaver's Creek Environmental Ctr-Discovery Trip
 St. John's Vestry
 St. John's Youth Group
 Strafford Elementary
 The Fay School – 5th Grade
 The Fay School – 9th Grade
 The Fenn School
 The Pike School
 Tuftonboro Central School
 UNH – Campus Activities Board
 UNH Leadership Camp
 UNH Senate Retreat
 Volunteer Weekend
 York Middle School

MINIWANCA

Association of Interfaith Ministries
 Breton Downs 5th Grade
 C.A. Frost 4th Grade
 C.A. Frost 5th Grade
 C.A. Frost 6th Grade
 Center for Economicology
 Grand Rapids Medical Education
 Ealy Elementary 5th Grade
 EGR Cub Scouts
 Elementary Leadership Camp
 Family Camp
 Lakeside Elementary School
 Loyola Academy
 Mason Lake ISD
 Michigan Middle School

Leadership Initiative
 Montague High School Football
 Montessori Children's House of Lansing
 Montessori Radmoor School
 Montessori Radmoor School - Fall Leadership
 Muskegon Youth Leadership Summit
 Sierra Club-Mackinaw Chapter
 Stepping Stones Montessori
 Teen H.Y.P.E.
 Wakonse

Memorials

After a courageous struggle with neurological complications from melanoma, **William (Bill) Swift Comfort** died on June 9, 2014. Born June 7, 1938, Bill was a pillar of four fold living, serving on the Board of Directors for 26 years (1987 – 2013). Referred to as a “Renaissance Man,” Bill was a gifted athlete, a jazz enthusiast, well-read, and well-traveled. He thought it so important to teach his children and grandchildren about the world, he took them out of school for a year to circle the globe.

Bill was incredibly faithful to the AYF. He provided wise counsel at Board gatherings, reminding his fellow Directors to constantly do “what is best for the kids” that attend Miniwanca and Merrowvista, which included his children and grandchildren. He could often be found hiking around both camps, taking notes on what needed improving to ensure the AYF was providing the best possible experience for young people. His vigilance towards the health and safety of all campers was ever-present; early on in his Board tenure he stressed the importance of campers wearing sunscreen, sharing his own experience with skin cancer.

A true enkindled spirit, Bill inspired all who knew him to live life fully and to care for others. We are so grateful for his many years of service to the AYF and his strong support of our programs.



After a long battle with cancer, **Margaret “Ann” Ahrens** quietly passed on Feb. 1, 2014. She was born Nov. 5, 1934 in Cincinnati, OH and was a Bucks County, PA resident since 1969. Ann was a lover of family, friends, fun, and her first grade classroom. In addition to adoring her children and students, Ann had a lifelong love of the AYF and its traditions. A Miniwanca camper from 1947 – 1950, Ann was also Miniwanca staff member and spent time at Merrowvista, even serving on the Merrowvista Advisory Board in the 1970s. Throughout her life she supported the mission of the AYF, and shared the gift of Miniwanca and Merrowvista with her children and grandchildren, who are still experiencing AYF programming today.

Jennifer Lynn Mason, age 25, died on Thursday, September 18, 2014 after a three year battle with ovarian cancer. A Shelbyville, MO native, she earned her Associate's degree in baking and pastry from Kendall College in Chicago in 2009 and a Bachelor's degree in restaurant and hotel management from Western Illinois University in 2013. An active member in all her various communities, Jennifer's special passion was to be an advocate for ovarian cancer awareness. She coordinated the *Turn the Town Teal* program for Macomb, IL in September 2012 and was a speaker about this silent cancer. Jennifer also participated in many clinical trials in hopes of finding a cure.

Through Shelby County 4-H, Jennifer received the *I Dare You!* Award in 2003, and went on to graduate from the National Leadership Conference in 2007. She then served four years as a volunteer staff member. She contended that NLC helped her to become the woman she was and enabled her to impact the lives of many.



Dr. M. Elizabeth (Lee) Tidball, 84, died on Monday, February 3, 2014, at Buckingham's Choice in Adamstown, MD. Lee arrived at Camp Miniwanca as Betty Peters in 1943 as a “YG” (Younger Girls) camper; she was known for always going barefoot around camp (it was allowed in those days). Lee served as a YG Leader from 1947-1951, and graduated from “OG” (Older Girls Conference) in 1948 with the class of *Wookiye*. She enjoyed the mentorship of *Kodaya* (Osbert Warmingham), who wrote a poem for her, including it in his book *From Dusk and a Voice Singing*. After graduate school Lee returned in 1967 to the OG/OB Leadership Camps with her husband Charlie to teach on the faculty, a commitment that lasted until 1977. Lee embraced the model of four fold living throughout her life, daring to live the philosophy intentionally each day. She was chosen to be the mentor of the *Ecedan* class in 1971.

She was a passionate advocate for women in leadership. In 1988 Lee created Summer Seminars for Women, an intergenerational

program for women. She used the AYF leadership conference model that had so influenced her life to create a program that encourages women to follow the four fold philosophy intentionally throughout life. This program continues as her legacy to promote women as leaders and mentors, challenging all who attend to also become WOYUS TAN: women of “many achievements.”



Mary Ellen (Schatz) McCarthy, 91, died peacefully at her home with her family and friends on Wednesday, March 19, 2014.

Born May 23, 1922, Mrs. McCarthy lived most of her life in Webster Groves, MO. A Miniwanca camper and staff member in the 1930s and 1940s, she lived her life by the AYF motto, *My own self, At my very best, All the time*. Alongside her husband John, who also attended Miniwanca, they shared the mission of the AYF with their children and grandchildren who all attended camp. Mary Ellen left a legacy both in St. Louis and at Miniwanca.



A HUGE thank you goes out to all of the contributors to the 2014 Founder Fire. Your stories are amazing! If you have an interesting AYF story or know someone who does, please send an email to development@ayf.com as we look to build the 2015 Founder Fire.