CAP celebrates the Servant’s Servant

Most of us who chose to become involved in the mission of the Christian Appalachian Project remember why we came. We came to serve. We were ready to teach, prepared to build; and anxious to alleviate. Some came to fix; others to lead and some to save, but we all came to serve.

As we recall our service here, we by and large agree that we were most deeply touched and blessed by our direct experience with the people we served. It is interesting, then, when we look at one who has served here at CAP longer than any other person in our history, to consider the role that has kept her here so long.

Kathy O’Donnell Kluesener,’73-’80, arrived as a short-term volunteer 40 years ago serving in summer camp and home visiting. That experience was so fulfilling that she returned as a long-term volunteer, thinking she would serve in the same way. That didn’t last long after Fr Beiting learned that she could type. She soon began what became her predominant role for the rest of her service. She assisted those who were interested in becoming volunteers, supported them while they served, and kept them connected after they left. Her role was to make sure others had a valuable volunteer experience. She became the servants’ servant.

Many who remember her share that same image. Ken Stuber, ’90-’92, Director of Planning, Research and Development, remembers his first impression, “Kathy was one of the first people I met when

Continued on page 3

Daughters Erin (left) and Maureen (right) Kluesener surprised their mother, Kathy, as she celebrated her service to CAP.

CAP Quicks

In December, Family Advocacy paired the traditional Christmas Basket distributions with Christmas Stores, in which families who were not matched with a sponsor could “shop” (at no cost to the family) for toys and other donated gifts. Family Advocacy hopes to expand Christmas stores in the future.

NPR listeners may have heard a familiar voice in January. Owen Wright, Sandy Valley Human Service Director, was interviewed for a story commemorating the 50th anniversary of Lyndon Johnson’s visit to eastern Kentucky to declare the War on Poverty. We’ve posted a link to the story at facebook.com/ChrisAppProj.

As part of our 50th anniversary celebration, which officially kicks off in September, CAP released a one-hour documentary, “50 Years in the Mountains,” to CAP staff in February. The film was produced by Dave Harl, ’94-’96, and features interviews with Kathleen Leavell, ’76-’78, Kathy Kluesener, ’73-’80, Amy Schill, ’03-’05, and Max Koch, Summer Camp 2012. The documentary will air on Kentucky public television in May, with the possibility of being picked up in other markets.

Continued on page 2
1990s
Kim (Otto) Kennedy, ’96-'98, is excited to share that she recently earned a double promotion this past year! She currently is a Director with Thirty-One Gifts, a faith-based company named after Proverbs 31. She loves leading her team of 20 women and counting, and with her recent promotion bonus, she is going to treat her 4 year-old daughter and husband to a trip to Disney World in April! Kim can be reached at www.mythirtyone.com/KimLynn or KimLynnGifts@gmail.com.

2000s
(Above) CAP friends Erika Hajiantoni, ’07-'09, Jenny Geilfuss, ’07-'08, Liz Koschoreck, ’07-'08, Sarah (Fackender) Peters, ’07-'08, Taye Spink, ’07-'08, and Jennie (Biser) Bryan, ’07-'08, gathered in North Carolina over the Martin Luther King Day weekend.

Karen Shultz, ’02-'03, and Erin Battistoni, ’01-'02, were married on October 12, 2013 and reside in Massachusetts.

2010s
Pam Durkhoop, ’12-'13, has committed to serving at least 2 years in South Korea with HOPE 61, a human trafficking prevention ministry. Pam will work on awareness and prevention training with pastors and church leadership in the Korean church. She will also be helping the church develop ways to reach out to people at-risk of becoming involved in human trafficking - as clients, traffickers, or victims. Pam appreciates prayers from her CAP Volunteer Alumni family as she begins this ministry.

CAP Quicks
Continued from cover

It’s been a time of transition in the Volunteer Program this winter. We said goodbye to several volunteers who had served within the Volunteer Program - Daniel Landesman, ’12-'13, who served as our Volunteer Recruiter, and Tina Norris, ’10-'13, Mary Johnson, ’09-'13, Liz Pecoraro, ’08-'13, and Sarah Smith, ’11-'13, who served with the Groups program. In January, long-term volunteer Kelsey Boeckermann began as our new Volunteer Recruiter. Jen Eich, ’01-'03, an employee of CAP for 10 years and on staff in the Volunteer Program as the WorkFest and Cumberland Valley Groups Coordinator since 2007, left CAP to begin a career as a mental health counselor in Somerset, Kentucky. With Jen’s departure, we welcomed Erin Cusick, ’11-'13, as our new Groups Coordinator. We wish Jen all the best and thank her for her years of service, and we welcome Erin to the Volunteer Program team.

Erin hit the ground running in March with the beginning of our 23rd WorkFest. The 2014 edition of CAP’s alternative spring break welcomed more than 400 volunteers, including more than 50 Volunteer Alumni returning as assistant crew leaders, cooks, runners, and college leaders. WorkFest served 18 families in Floyd, Rockcastle, and Jackson counties. YouthFest is currently underway, with seven high school groups participating.
Servant’s Servant

Continued from cover

I came to CAP nearly 24 years ago. She and Barb Delmonico, ’89-’90, interviewed me before I was assigned to Summer Camp. Kathy then gave me directions to Mt. Vernon from Lancaster, making sure I understood the landmarks and driving directions that can be peculiar to this part of the country. Being a native to Kentucky, I did find Kathy’s New England’s accent a bit out of the ordinary, but I was comforted by her genuine and gentle persona.”

Mike Loiacono, ’97-’98, Cumberland Valley Director of Human Services, recalls “My first impression of Kathy was one of a humble servant of God and that impression has proven itself over the last couple decades. Her peaceful spirit is a touchstone that helps keep me centered when I’m around her and when I think of her.”

Mary Kay Gilbertson, ’83-’86, shared, “My first impression was how friendly, calm, easygoing and understanding this person was, especially with so many volunteers coming through at the time. That first impression still stands true to this day. Kathy is a key component in what continues to make CAP what it is today.”

In the words of Bev (Potter) Penkalski, former manager of our outreach program, “We can only guess at the positive changes in the world as a result of the ripple effect from her calm example of acceptance and guidance with each of the hundreds of individuals she has cared for and ministered to through these many years.”

Kathy’s ministry is preparing the way so that our ministry will be successful and fulfilling. That’s the impact of someone who had relatively little direct contact with the people most of us came to serve. That’s the immeasurable impact of a servants’ servant.

Our January orientation welcomed nine new long-term volunteers: Mary McGarvey (North Carolina), Colton Fitzgerald (California), Bethany Geist (Georgia), Brad White (Kentucky), Connie Tae (California), Erin Bottomlee (Tennesse), Nate Algar (Connecticut); kneeling: Alanah Rempel (Colorado), and Ethan Tubach (Virginia).

A new adventure

We wish a heartfelt thank you and best of luck to Beth Dotson Brown, ’90-’91, who has served as the CAP’s Connection’s Contributing Editor for more than 15 years. She has also produced CAP’s Christian Partners newsletter. Beth recently began a position at Berea College as the Associate Director of Collaboration and Communication with the Promise Neighborhood Program. We have greatly enjoyed working with Beth to bring you the latest news from CAP and help keep you connected to the mission. Thank you Beth, and we hope you enjoy receiving your next CAP Connection and not knowing the contents beforehand!

Help us find tomorrow’s volunteers

Know someone who would be a great CAP Volunteer? We’re still accepting applications for Summer Camp 2014. Volunteers needed to serve as:

- Camp Counselors
- Lifeguards or Counselor/Lifeguards
- Medical personnel (RNs, LPNs, and EMTs)
- Floaters/office helpers

We’re also looking for outstanding volunteers to join our August long-term volunteer orientation class. Spread the word!
Thank you

Thanks to these volunteer alumni who recently helped CAP through their recruiting, hospitality or both.

Emily Benvenga, ’12-’13
Hope Christensen, ’04
Beth Nadler, Summer Camp ’11-’12
Theresa Gilmore, Summer Camp ’12-’13
Tiffany (Ritter) Silveira, ’07-’08

Help children prepare for school

CAP’s Family Advocacy program is collecting school supplies, clear or mesh backpacks and new children’s clothing for School Readiness. Contact Jenny King, ’08-’10 at christianpartners@christianapp.org for a list of needed items.

Alumni Resources

Visit these online resources for job postings, webinars, and networking and volunteer opportunities:
- christianapp.org/vol/alumni
- facebook.com/groups/capalums
- catholicvolunteernetwork.org/alumni
- americorpsalums.org

Follow us on social media

Save the Dates

June 26-28, 2015
Volunteer Alumni Reunion

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