

# A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Summer 2023 Brantwood Recap

**F** all is in the air and it's hard to believe that my first summer at Brantwood has come and gone. It goes so fast and I wish that I could make the summer linger just a little longer.

We had a dedicated group of young adults who gave their all to provide a memorable experience for our campers. Most of the usual activities at camp happened this year.

The girls camp hiked North Pack each session and the boys hiked Monadnock. It is always such a thrill to actually get to the top and enjoy those amazing views. A packed lunch never tasted so good! The LIT's from both camps did a sunrise hike at North Pack, which meant hiking in the dark! They made it up to see the sunrise and were about to enjoy breakfast at the top. The girls had planned a yummy pancake breakfast which they cooked, and the boys had pop-tarts. They asked if they could have some pancakes and as you can imagine, the answer was no!

The campers and staff enjoyed their time at Silver Lake, learning all the safety details for their challenges and getting the reward of canoeing or kayaking on the lake. Once that was accomplished, they cooked over an open fire and heard the owls call at night. The lake was as beautiful as you remember it and we all enjoyed our fellowship at this special Brantwood place.

Sporting events were as competitive as ever. Each cabin working tirelessly to win the B jersey. I enjoyed watching the campers compete with each other as well as supporting their cabin mates. Not everyone comes with the same talents on the sports field, so that is where the challenges come in. During Term 2 a boy's cabin won the B Jersey by one point. Maybe that was someone helping another camper finish a challenge they were struggling with. You never know how



Amy R. Boyd

those points are going to add up, but it is all very important.

We had challenges at both pools this summer. The boys pool had to have the filter replaced and a pipe replaced under the concrete. With great tenacity, Trustee Peter DiMaggio was not going to give up on that pool. It was fixed and the campers enjoyed beautiful clear water for the rest of the summer. The girl's pool was going along pretty well until the plaster separated from the gunite foundation and started to come off in chunks. Again, quick thinking by Peter and Bill Gurney, we were able to get large mats with holes and put them over the part that was coming up. It was not ideal and sections of the pool were cordoned off, but we made it work and the campers got to swim and that was the most important thing. Both pools need major repairs before camp opens again next summer. Stayed tuned for information about how you can help!

I was able to introduce sewing to the girl's camp third term. They had a lot of fun making potholders for their loved ones. Next year, we will step that up a bit and get more creative on what they can actually make. We had 3 sewing machines, and one was donated by Alumni Richard Davisson. He drove up from MA to deliver it to camp. It was a great gift, and we appreciate his willingness to give us the machine.

The leadership team did a great job this summer and were responsible for making the Brantwood experience be the best that it could be for our campers. Thank you, Brittany Brasher, Vanesa Dominguez, Mikayla Sheppard, and Rosio Oliva in the girl's camp. Tremayne Castel, Robbie Welcome, Tim O'Connor, and Nazir

White carried the boy's camp. I'm grateful to each of them for helping me learn about Brantwod and sharing the Brantwood spirit. I would also like to give a shout out to our chefs, Pat Donaghue and Cliff Fields. And last but not least our nurse Lisa Walsh.

Our year-round staff did a stellar job as well. Ashley Denning kept all the registrations in order for us and so much more. Shawn Plourde did his best to keep the facility running and was a great help with both pools.

We were blessed with a lot of volunteer help this summer and really couldn't have done it without our volunteers: Ed Puliafico, Noelle Leonard, Peter DiMaggio, Krystle Keriazes, Jenn Carmichael, Erin Good, Curt Henderson, Paul Faison, Gerry Donaghue, David Boyd, Megan Welcome, Bill Gurney, Amy Willey, James Carmichael, Kevin Mitrano, Dylan Sullivan & Ayden Minson.

We are already working on summer 2024. The biggest challenge that we have is finding counselors. If you know of anyone age 18+ looking to have the time of their lives this summer, please send them my way, aboyd@brantwood.org.

Together for Brantwood!

## Nick Noble Appointed as Brantwood Camp Historian



Nick Noble

Richard E. ("Nick") Noble was appointed as the first Brantwood Camp Historian by the Board of Trustees in August. Nick wrote two volumes of Brantwood's history, the first, *Brantwood – Among these glorious hills and woods in friendly comradeship – A history of Brantwood Camp*, was published in 1985. It traces the history of Brantwood – beginning with Rev. Donald E. Browne who brought small groups of boys from Episcopal parishes in the industrial cities of Haverhill and Lawrence to hike and camp on the side of North Pack Monadnock Mountain —and ending with the earliest years of the Girls' program in the early 1980's. A second volume, To Honor the Trust, chronicles the modern Brantwood era from the late 1970's to the dedication of the

Girls' Campus in 1995. While Nick has documented Brantwood's history, he has also played a large part in it starting as a shack counselor from St. Mark's in 1975, working as a PC and then Assistant Director from 1976 to 1988, and serving two terms as a Trustee from 1995 to 2005 and 2012 to 2023. As readers of this newsletter know, Nick has written numerous articles about various aspects of Brantwood's history including his most recent article in this issue about the old pool and the "new" pool at the Boys' camp. As Nick recently stepped down from the Board, we are thankful for his many years of service to the Camp and delighted that he agreed to become our inaugural Camp Historian.

### Boy's JC Highlight: Joshua Hall

Joshua Hall has been a camper at Brantwood for 4 years and this summer he was a Junior Counselor (JC). Josh did a great job caring for and having fun with his campers. He was inspired to come back



to Brantwood as a JC this year because of the way his counselors really loved their job. He also wanted to make Brantwood a loving place for his peers and he definitely succeeded at that. He also showed loving care for his campers, as one of them was having some medical issues and

he had to be flexible to make sure the camper's needs were taken care of and that he could still participate in the program. Josh is hoping to come back as a Middle Counselor (MC) next year as "Brantwood has been like a second home to me and is something I will cherish in my heart for the rest of my life."

### **Amazon Wish List Update!**

Summer 2023 was the first year we launched our Amazon Wish List, and our community DEFINITELY delivered! All summer, our Campers and Staff were able to enjoy constant surprises and extras that arrived via cardboard boxes of all shapes and sizes. This community helped deliver a variety of needed items: program essentials for our new sewing classes, tie dye for fabulously designed tee shirts, bright pool toys, brand new sports equipment, and crafting supplies such as scissors, colored pencils & paper. You all also provided much needed essentials to our Campers & Staff who may not have what they need when they come



Take a picture of the QR code with your camera or QR reader on your smartphone, and it should take you to our wish list.

Here's the link as well: https://a.co/iBYB3FX

to camp-toothpaste, socks, soaps, even sleeping bags! There is so much gratitude for this incredible community and the love & support you all constantly provide. If you missed out and want to use your online shopping for camp-see the QR code & link!



## Checking In at the Pool: 115 Years of Swimming at Brantwood

Nothing is more refreshing on hot summer days at Camp than swim periods at the pool. Whether instructional or free swims, these moments are welcomed by campers, and they cheerfully line up to check in at the pool. For more than a century, thousands have taken advantage of the opportunity.

This was not always the case. For Brantwood's first four summers—from 1904 through 1907— there was no pool at the camp. The only swimming available was in lakes and ponds, and those nearest still required a hike of at least two miles. The return hike, invariably uphill, would then erase any cooling or cleansing advantage gained from the swim.

In 1906, Dr. C. Hanford Henderson, Chairman of the Brantwood Board of Trustees, proposed that the camp look into constructing and maintaining its own swimming facility. Dr. Henderson was pioneer in the nascent summer camp movement, particularly educational camps for boys. In 1896 he founded the groundbreaking Camp Marienfeld in Milford, Pennsylvania. In 1899 Marienfeld moved to Chesham, New Hampshire. When Brantwood was established five years later, Henderson, by then a lecturer on education at Harvard, was invited to be on the new camp's board.

At Dr. Henderson's behest, Brantwood's director—Rev. Donald Browne—began looking into various options for swimming at Brantwood. He connected with Greenfield neighbor Fred Brooks, who owned a large tract of land immediately east of the main Brantwood plateau. In 1907, the Board of Trustees purchased forty acres from Brooks, immediately abutting the Brantwood Road.

On the newly acquired land, less than fifty yards east of the road, was a marshy patch fed by a natural spring, which had been used for decades as a source for ice in the winter (a small ice house had stood for years at the edge of the spring). A \$300 donation from trustee Delia Spencer Caton Field (Mrs. Marshall Field) in 1908 allowed work to begin to dig out a "swimming hole" at the spring, with sides reinforced by wood. More of a small bathing pond than a pool, it would serve to cool down overheated campers for the next few years, until Brantwood was closed down in 1917 due to the First World War.

When St. Mark's School reopened Brantwood in 1920, the 1908 "pool" had basically returned to

its earlier swampy marsh. Instead, the young St. Markers on the staff found a stream well down the hill into the view which they dammed up for a new swimming spot, which would serve the Camp for the next five years. "Leaks were discouragingly frequent," wrote director Gardner Monks. "On a warm day, when we had climbed back up the hill, we BY NICK NOBLE, CAMP HISTORIAN



were almost as perspiring as we had been before the swim." More and more this Brantwood swimming hole became dependent on rainstorms to keep it full. Despite occasional efforts to expand its capacity, this pool was regularly inadequate for the purposes of sometimes fifty campers and a dozen counselors.

It was Mr. Monks' successor as Brantwood director—John Harris—who solved the problem. Mr. Harris consulted with camp caretaker Hugh Murphy, who told him about the spring beyond the eastern edge of the road and the 1908 effort to create a pool there. An elderly dowser was brought in to search the marshy area with his divining rod for the water source. With the spring revealed, work began in earnest. Mr. Murphy supervised the operation, which involved much blasting of dynamite and hauling of debris and dirt by a horse-drawn sledge. A horse was almost lost in the mud-drenched abyss, but a massive hole was finally dug. Concrete walls were then set on two sides of the excavation, and Murphy reckoned that wooden walls on the north and part of the west borders of the pool would accommodate any expansion due to freezing in the winter. Starting in the summer of 1925, Brantwood finally had something akin to good-sized pool. The natural spring, now channeled by a pipe and cleansed by rain, contrived to keep the pool full. Director Harris saw to it that rudimentary diving

Swimmers from the 60s

Are you **looking to connect** to the Brantwood Camp community in more ways? Check out our brand new **LinkedIn** Page! Thanks to Joyce Cadesca for putting this together!



Continued on next page

#### Brantwood Pool continued

boards were added, and for more than two decades the Brantwood pool would be greatly enjoyed and appreciated by all.

Many a young camper from the cities and towns of New England and the northeast (by the 1920s, campers were coming from New York and Philadelphia as well) learned how to swim in that pool. John Hrones, a young camper in 1926, recalled thrashing about helplessly in the water when Mr. Harris reached out and grabbed hold of him. "Next time," advised the Brantwood director, "don't panic." A few days later, Hrones pencilled a postcard home: "I learned how to swim!"

Still, after twenty-plus years of hard use, the Brantwood pool could not stand the scrutiny of the post-WWII trend toward regulatory oversight. The counselor in charge of the pool in 1947 was St. Marker Fred Cammann, and he was horrified by the lack of filtering and general marshiness of the facility. Later that summer his concerns were validated when the New Hampshire Department of Health condemned the Brantwood pool outright.

Immediately, the recently organized "Friends of Brantwood," led by trustee John Harris, began to raise money to support the efforts of co-directors Charlie Cook and Ned Hall in their urgent need for a new Brantwood pool. Construction was originally budgeted at nine thousand dollars, but this pool would end up costing fourteen thousand. The original funds budgeted would be covered by the fundraising Friends of Brantwood. The additional monies would come from a pair of sources cultivated by director Ned Hall. Roy E. Larsen, a Brantwood camper in 1914, was by 1947 the president of Time Magazine (he would later help create Sports Illustrated). Larsen contributed three thousand toward the new Brantwood pool. Actor John Carradine, who had also spent a session at Brantwood during its early years, encountered Mr. Hall one evening at the Copley Plaza's revolving bar. A few days after their pleasant conversation which touched often on Brantwood, the Camp received a letter from Carradine, containing a two thousand dollar check.

The pool, situated on the western edge of the main Brantwood property, overlooking the Camp's stunning view, was still under construction at the start of the 1948 season (a neighbor's pool off of nearby Russell Station Road was an awkward substitute for the first couple of weeks. But it was soon completed, and Fred Cammann was cheerfully and enthusiastically heaved into its brand-new and



appropriately chlorinated and filtered depths to celebrate its christening.

That is the pool that has served the needs of Brantwood boys for 75 years now. It has been re-patched, re-painted, repaired, renovated, and restored countless times during that stretch, but after three quarters of a century it is definitely showing its age. The girls' camp pool is, of course, considerably younger, but what, we should ask, is the next step in the history of swimming pools for Brantwood boys?

NOTE: The Old Pool would see use as a rifle range in the 1960s and as an opportunity for nature study through the end of the 20th century. Today it has fully returned to marshy swamp and is off-limits to all.

#### Campers and staff from the 80s

### **DiCicco Bridge Acknowledgement**

Those of you who have walked on our Girls Campus have most likely enjoyed the beautiful DiCicco Bridge that goes across the stream separating the main campus and Junior Cabins from the Senior Cabins. After several extremely stormy & wet summers, there was some damage that led to the bridge needing to be replaced, but it stands strong & safe for our Campers and Staff to enjoy!

See Board Members Curt Henderson, Linzee Coolidge, and Mike Razza posing on the bridge with its beautiful new lights during our Alumni Day this past summer.



## Greetings from the Board President

One of the joys of being President of the Brantwood Camp Board of Trustees is hearing from alumni. Many alumni send notes with their Annual Appeal contributions to the "best camp in the land," relating how their Brantwood experience has stayed with them throughout their lives, years after they first walked down the Brantwood road.

In a letter accompanying his donation, Richard Bingham, who was a camper from St. Paul's in Brockton, recalled his time at Brantwood in the 1940's. Richard has fond memories of swimming in the old "swamp" pool as a first year camper and then jumping into the new pool during his second year. And he has never forgotten a conversation with his shack counselor who related the reason for his late arrival at camp that term - engine trouble on the airplane he piloted. Richard wrote, "I spoke up and said, 'I bet I could fly,' and he replied, 'I bet you could.' That was the first and only encouragement I can remember having. As things turned out, aviation



A wonderful evening was had by all who attended the NYC Brantwood fundraiser in June. Trustee and Alumni **Bilal Wilson** was the resident DJ who kept the Brantwood crowd dancing! The event was attended by NY/NJ alumni, several trustees, and new friends of Brantwood. Many thanks to Rosie Dunn's pub who hosted the event and PC's Vanesa Dominguez and Ella Leonard for staffing the check-in table. Look out for an announcement of a Boston area fundraiser next year! was my life's work." Richard was a pilot and flight engineer in the U.S. Navy and on private aircraft. He concluded, "Those words of encouragement are still in my mind from time to time. Brantwood was one of the highlights of my life."

**Suzanne Hampe** has had a successful 20 year career serving in the U.S. Navy and more recently in other branches of the federal government. She credits

Brantwood with developing her many skills, among them, teaching, facilitating recreational activities, and supervising work in industrial kitchens. Suzanne, who was a camper and a counselor in the 1990's, has become a steadfast Brantwood donor. After attending Alumni Day this

summer, Suzanne wrote, "Not only have the ideals fostered at Brantwood remained with me but to this day, over 20 years after working at camp, I still have Brantwood on my resume. I can honestly say, I don't know where I would be without Brantwood Camp and will forever be grateful."

Alex Abreu came to Brantwood in 1999 as a volunteer shack counselor from St. Mark's but his experience compelled him to stay for a second term. Growing up in an immigrant family in a New York City housing project, Alex explained that after having the privilege of attending St. Mark's, he wanted to connect with campers whose life experiences were similar to his own – "that was me when I was a little kid." Alex worked as a PC in the early 2000's and, after four years in the Army during the Iraq war, came back to camp for several years while completing his college degree. Alex observed that he wanted to continue working with campers to "give them experiences that let them know there was something different out there." Alex is currently an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the criminal division of the Department of Justice. Reflecting on what he gained from working at Brantwood, he noted, "Doing justice and doing the right thing - those are the things that we were trying to teach the



kids but I was also learning and reinforcing those things for myself."

Brantwood's impact goes beyond the campers and counselors to family members who never attended camp. **Ann Gentry** did not have the opportunity to experience Brantwood as she was an adult by the time girls were admitted but her father, the Reverend Robert Holton, rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Peabody, Massachusetts sent many boys to Brantwood including her brother, Peter Holton. Ann

remembers her father coming up to camp as an E.V. (Episcopal Visitor) to check on his campers and to preach at chapel. Although both her father and brother are now deceased, she fondly recalls hearing from both of them "how kind everyone was at Brantwood" and that "everyone was accepted no matter who they were or where

they were from." Despite the passage of many years and her moves to other parts of the country, Ann's generous annual donations honor her brother Peter and the happiness he experienced as a camper, counselor, and camp chef at Brantwood.

Many camper and staff alumni have similar stories to tell about our time at Brantwood. While many things have changed since Richard Bingham learned to swim in the old pool, the lessons learned, the encouragement provided and received, and the fun and joy of making friends and playing sports, remain constant. For many of us, these experiences have an enduring effect on our careers, our ability to cope with life's challenges, our service to others, and our understanding of those who have both similar and vastly different life experiences. As we approach the 120th year of providing this unique, enduring experience for our campers and counselors, we invite you to share your Brantwood story along with your contribution to our Annual Appeal. No donation is too small (or too large!) as a one-time or monthly contribution. We look forward to hearing from you!

Yours for Brantwood, Noelle R. Leonard

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### St Mark's Partnership Is Alive and Well

**E** ach year St. Mark's brings their 3rd Form (9th gr.) students as a culminating activity for their school year. The students spend time together at camp, learning and having fun while giving back to Brantwood. Each year they ask what we need or want and then the students work to make that happen. This year we asked for raised beds to plant vegetables with the campers. The hope was that they could see that even a pot on the porch can produce beautiful and delicious tomatoes. The campers enjoyed planting the raised beds, with tomatoes, basil, oregano, dill and sweet peppers. We had so much rain that we didn't have to water them, as Mother Nature took care of that for us. We are still picking cherry tomatoes off the vine and eating them.

The other project they tackled was building a chicken coup for each camp. The chicken coops are really cute, but we were not able to use them this year because we didn't get chickens in time. Next year we will be on top of that and make sure that we have chickens and eggs for the campers to gather!

The students had an opportunity to use the ropes course and they played lots of sports, had campfires and roasted s'mores. We are always excited to host St. Marks and we look forward to having them again next and are already thinking of projects.

This summer we had 5 volunteers join us as Cabin Counselors at camp. They were Rory Hutchins, Thanos Nicolopoulos, Justin Lu, Peter Yu and Grace Pieper. The students were impressive and did a great job. With all young people there was some trial and error, but that is to be expected.

Brantwood is proud of our relationship with St. Mark's and we will work to continue to grow our volunteers numbers so more students can experience the Brantwood Spirit.

### Want to support Brantwood Camp?

Scan the QR code or head to our website at **brantwood.org/donate/** to support with a recurring

monthly donation or a one time option. Each and every donation helps us give an incredible experience to hundreds of Brantwood Campers each summer!





## Work Weekend Recap

Brantwood Camp's Work Weekend was hosted September 22-24, 2023. Despite the slightly chilly weather, all who attended were in good spirits, and led a very successful effort! Brantwood Camp has always been defined by the Five Ideals and the lessons taught to our Campers & Staff during the summer operational months. The true testament to the success of those lessons though can really be seen in the quality and caliber of our people after they leave these gates behind. The Brantwood Camp community continues to show up-for each other in times of grief or need, for their own communities to better the lives of those around them, and of course showing up to help take care of the greatest camp in the land.

As many of you know, we rely heavily on the support of our Alumni, Staff, and Friends to help maintain our property, to fully open and close camp. Led by the fantastic Amy Boyd & Amy Willey (along with the strict guidance of Ed Puliaifico), we had several volunteers work through both days to clear, clean, and close camp! Several members of the Board of Trustees had a productive walk through, making notes and solid plans for much needed maintenance & improvements for our facilities to



ensure a safe and fun summer experience for 2024 and for years to come.

Work weekends are a great chance for many to give back to Brantwood Camp in a meaningful way, as well as to enjoy the gorgeous view on the Murphy Porch, Chef Pat's yummy meals, or walking the trails with some familiar faces! Great conversations, shared stories & memories, and hard work led to another great Work Weekend.

Thank you especially to our friends: Amy Boyd, Amy Willey, Ed, Ryan & Aidan Puliaifico, Don & Patti Caffelle, Kevin Mitrano, Chef Pat Donaghue, Ben & Jeffrey Delaware, John Noel, John Newell, Robbie Welcome, Tremayne Castel, Shawn Plourde, John Sweeney, Henry, Charlie & Bill Gurney, Noelle Leonard, Peter DiMaggio, and last but certainly not least Ashley Denning. If you missed us this time around, keep an eye out for information in the Spring on our Alumni Page (FB), or through our emails! Please email us at **brantwoodcamp@gmail.com** with any questions!

## 2023 Brantwood Camp Awards

### Boys Stay Over Awards

Teddy Mitrano Aubrey Frazer Oliver-Willey Crane Gavin Sullivan Liam Kiguta Kaleb Ngumo Isaiah Vodden

### **Boys 2023 Cup Winners**

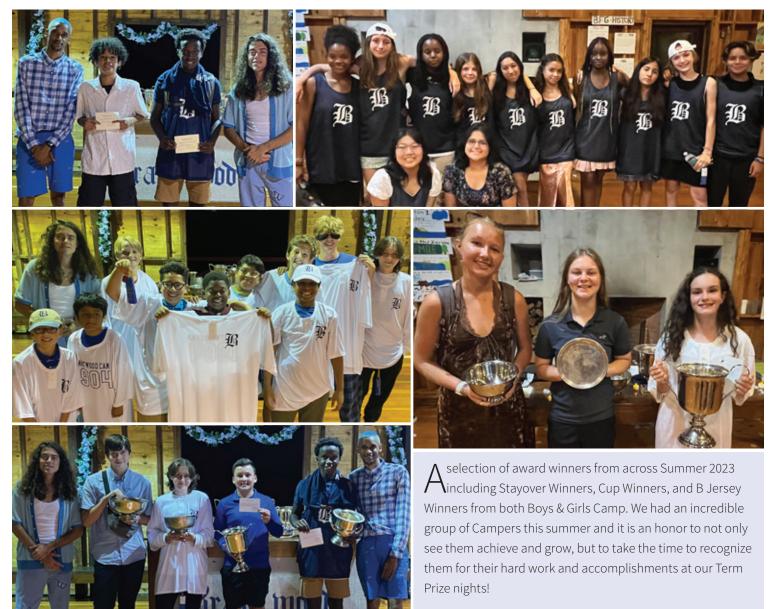
The Cook-Hall-Peirce Cup – *Kaleb Ngumo* The Barton-Clabaugh-Door Cup - *Arlo Dube-Hooker* The Delia-Leroy Improvement Cup – *Caleb Gossibe* The Kean-Monroe Cup – *Oliver Crane-Willey* The Clark-Marshall-Topka Sportsman Athlete Cup – *Gavin Sullivan* The Brantwood Cup Junior – *Aubrey Frazier* Senior – *not awarded* 

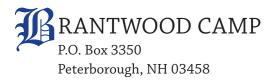
### **Girls Stayover Awards**

**Term 1** Fiona Jewell Mariangel Leon Peggy Raulerson Olive Morrill Adriana Arevalo Alayna Brien **Term 2** Miyuki Vilyvanh Maci Carmichael Alexis Costa Julianna Dow Emelia Leavitt Cecilia Walsh Jay Zow Irelyn Coffey Laila Zarrella **Term 3** Trinity Lisenby Dylan Lucci-McShain Jill Kwapong Fatima Hernandez Eden Gwynn Brianna Contreras Norah Lane Hannah Dyckman Raelea Krouse Zariah Snelling Kaylee Arpi

#### 2023 Girls Cup Winners

The Cook-Hall-Peirce Cup – *Miyuki Vilyvanh* The DiCiccio Cup – *Jay Zow* The Clark-Marshall-Topka Sportswoman Athlete Cup – *Dylan Lucci-McShain* The Kean-Munroe Prize – *Hanna Dyckman* The John Elliot Seager Cup – *Sasha Tereshko* The Brantwood Cup Junior – *Fiona Jewell* Senior – *Alexis Costa* 







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## Announcing Our Brantwood Camp ONLINE STORE!

Do you or someone you know want to have more Brantwood gear? Look no further! Scan the QR code or use the link to access our customizable store. Filled with high quality brands like Nike, North Face, Under Armour and more. Check out the link and select your favorite design. Items can be purchased, customized, and sent directly to you.



### Just in time for the holidays! bit.ly/BrantwoodNH

Thank you to Paul Faison for organizing the new on-line store.