**REMEMBERING A GIVER AND DOERTop of Form**

Bottom of Form

He was one of my earliest role models, though I didn’t know it at the time. How could I have been aware of all those aspirational attributes at age of four? But they would unfold and be revealed over the years as I got to know Dan. All I knew at the time was, my father placed a tremendous amount of trust in him. I still recall our official first meeting when my father introduced me to Dan Koenig - the new head counselor at Timlo. Camp Timlo was the Adirondack summer camp for boys my parents operated. The scenic Shangri-La lay on the shores of Trout Lake near Bolton Landing, N.Y. My father may have been the camp director, but day-to-day operations couldn’t be carried out without a right-hand man.

Head counselors, I learned later in life, weren’t all that easy to keep year after year. Job duties revolved around running not just a tight ship, but a mammoth one. The camp was laden with boys ages 5 through 16 from around the country and South America. The 70 or so campers were shepherded by counselors who weren’t much older. It was the summer of 1968, and Dan’s age didn’t even meet the quarter-century mark. My father discovered Dan after sending out summer job recruitment feelers to Indiana University at Bloomington where Dan was an undergrad. He spent two summers at Timlo as a counselor before being promoted to the top spot.

I watched as my father ushered Dan into his office for the season’s first meeting. An hour or so later, Dan lumbered back into our living room with massive pieces of cardboard in tow. In addition to his impending duties as head counselor, my father had just saddled Dan with the project of completing construction of my new dollhouse, a 3D cardboard creation, complete with painted on windows and flower boxes. Seemed like a simple project, but it wasn’t. Somewhere at about the point where the cardboard roof was to be affixed to the cardboard walls, Dan hit a wall and was stumped. When he stopped to reassess, I hit a wall and threw a tantrum. I stomped, wailed, then stomped some more, waiting for the magic to kick in. Tantrums quickly wore my father down, but Dan remained curiously unmoved.

He looked me squarely in the eye and declared his intention to rise from the floor where he was seated and leave without completing project dollhouse if I continued behaving in such a way. I stared back in astonishment. As Dan assessed my next move with a stoic poker face, I knew in my pre-school gut there was no room for negotiation. Instantaneously, I shelved the tantrum and settled down to witness Dan resume the architectural puzzle until he solved it. That’s how our bond began. And cobbling that cardboard house together was a cakewalk compared to the nine weeks spent as commander in chief of a boys’ camp.

It wasn’t an easy ride: days began pre-dawn and sometimes didn’t end until well into the night. There were kitchen, maintenance, counselor and infirmary staff schedules to coordinate, conflicts to resolve, late food deliveries to remedy, rambunctious kids to protect, and the occasional wayward counselors (with a penchant for spending off hours at the town watering holes) to discipline. Dan, not being of especially muscle-bound stature, made up for it with iron-fisted integrity. He often found himself in the position of laying down the law with guys twice his girth, never flinching at the prospective consequences. Like that unfortunate day when a couple of the less-than-stellar employees paid a towny to rough Dan up after he refused to give them the night off to go drinking. His nose bloodied and his pride a bit hurt, Dan got right back on the horse and kept towing the line. Not only did he stick it out, Dan set a service record with five summers as Timlo’s head counselor.

My father said he never had to worry when Dan was in charge. His presence was a steady, calming one, and I know for a fact this made my parents’ lives infinitely easier. Chronologically, Dan may have been 24, but he was wise and reliable beyond his years. When he wasn’t at the lodge troubleshooting, he walked the property to check on operations. Dan took those responsibilities seriously and handled everything that came at him without delegation or excuses.

Dan Koenig came of age when standards were vastly different, and expectations commensurately high. Dan was hardly the only 20-something of his generation who earned himself an early ticket to resiliency and maturity, but even for that golden era of responsibility, he was a stand-out. When my grandfather, who founded Camp Timlo in 1935 passed away in July of 1976, Dan stepped into the center of the circle during evening flag-lowering ceremonies, surrounded by dozens of campers and counselors, and gave an impromptu and heartfelt eulogy.

“He had a calming demeanor and earned our respect as counselors,” said Steve Hessberg, who worked at Timlo as a counselor during the late 60s and early 70s.

“Wisdom, temperance, justice, courage...all great traits of Dan's. He was an impressive leader. In some ways we feared him, which was a good thing at a camp with a 100+ young lunatics,” remembered Tom Lonergan, who began attending Timlo in 1969 at the age of 14, and went on to be a counselor. “After a meal, when Dan stood up at the head table, all campers went quiet. He had a silent way of commanding respect and certainly left his mark on the years he ran the camp.”

Somehow, it seems a stretch that today’s 24-year-old would sign up for what Dan excelled at for five summers. For starters, how would they tear themselves away from the selfie stick and forego separation from Black Myth: Wukong at the Play Station?

Josh Goldman and Robert Latour, who attended Timlo as campers in the late 60s both recalled their head counselor’s fondness of imparting wisdom through anecdotes. A favorite: Dan’s retelling of ‘the parachute story,’ and the importance of preparedness vis-à-vis packing one’s own parachute before a skydiving adventure. “Basically, he was telling us to be responsible for yourself and your own wellbeing,” remembered Goldman.

Dan’s pursuit of a master’s degree in education media (and later a doctorate) precluded him from continuing his summer career at Camp Timlo. In 1977, he took a position at Piedmont Technical College in South Carolina, where he remained until 2010, retiring as Dean of General Education.

After losing touch, my parents received a Christmas card from Dan in the early aughts, out of the blue. The cover was a photo of him with his mother in front of the tree, Dan’s arms wrapped lovingly around her. Several years later, social media reconnected Dan and me in a more cohesive way. By this time, my father was in a nursing home with Alzheimer’s, but Dan’s passion for camp nostalgia renewed my resolve to delve into my father’s legacy. Being proficient at web design and an ace researcher, he constructed a Timlo [website](https://timlopinelog.com/) and began to talk reunions.

Soon Dan had canvassed enough interest to make it happen. About 30 alumni (from Timlo and its sister camp, Pine Log) gathered on the shores of Trout Lake in June of 2014. We barbecued, sat around the evening campfire and reminisced, marveling at how fresh 50-year-old memories suddenly became when we gathered to remember things like swim competitions, the perils of incorrectly rigging a sailboat, and the handwritten letters we wrote home to the parents each week.

Dan made commemorative T-shirts for everyone and passed out memorabilia-laden gift bags to attendees. He was generous to a fault, perhaps too much so. He later shared with me on one of our subsequent Florida winter get-togethers his sadness at being taken advantage of by those of a somewhat, shall we say, less than-reciprocal nature. But the disappointments didn’t embitter him. He only seemed to get kinder with the passage of time.

A massive stroke six years ago robbed Dan of the ability to speak or walk, but Timlo alumni Mike Rush and Robert Latour got the fantastic idea to have monthly camp reunions via zoom, which brightened Dan’s world, to say the least. Those were beautiful, full-circle moments that made me especially thankful for the unifying powers of technology. The man who gave so much of himself all those years ago to the campers was now being given a price-above-rubies kind of gift when he needed it the most.

Dan was 80 when he passed away on Dec. 11th. His life was long and impactful. He was a positive role model to legions of campers, counselors, and no doubt, to his college students over the decades. From that memorable dollhouse dust-up, Dan enforced upon me the concept of consequence. Limits and boundaries unavoidably shape human character for the better – a distant and antiquated concept nowadays. But Dan dropped that little moral gem into my psyche early and effectively. And my gratitude for him is eternal.

Rest well, Uncle Dan. You’ve more than earned it.

Stacey Morris

**CONTINUED**

**Postscript – Mike Rush**

**Some additional memories recently sent to me.**

*Whoever hired Mr. Koenig to work at Camp Timlo did a great job, thanks. He was “chill”, yet somehow “Full Metal Jacket”, all at the same time. Impressive.*

Tom Lapham

Camper 1968-77

*On a somewhat less serious note: My clearest recollection of interacting with Dan was when he came around the daily assemblage and judged who needed to be sent for a haircut.*

David Dain

Camper 1969-71

*I remember being bused over to “Butch’s Barber Shop” in Warrensburg.    It was right on Main Street, on the west side of the street.  I remember it was still there years later when I was in the area to hike or ski.*

Ken Korn

Camper, CIT and Counselor 1969-1975

*Dan LOVED mornings!  Particularly the misty quiet ones after the campers had left for the year. Coffee on the lodge porch with the heavy mist swirling around the aspens.  He was in his element.*

Bob Jones

Counselor and Staff 1971-76

*There was also the "Ice Cream" story.  On a hot day, a boy drops ice cream from his cone on the sidewalk.  Stranger shows how to make the best of an unanticipated situation by sticking his bare feet in the cool spillage. Dan told those stories like this season after season.*

Rich Bireau

Camper, CIT, and Counselor 1968-1976

**Dan’s Introduction From His Original 2012 Website**

**May 1965 Arriving at Camp Timlo…based on memories in 2012**

Dan Koenig (office porch)

My memories of Camp Timlo in the years 1965 are rich with positive experiences. I remember packing all of my belongings (at the time I could move in my car) into my 1955 Plymouth Plaza and heading from Indianapolis, Indiana to Diamond Point, New York. I packed a complete photo dark room film processing and printing setup into the car. I was told the camp had a small dark room that I could use for the photography classes that summer. I was expected to teach photography, take slides and black and white photos for camp brochures and direct an extensive hiking, camping, canoeing and out of camp experience appropriate for each of the age groups. I was to be a Senior Counselor. I knew very little about what I could expect when I arrived at camp. My only experience with summer camping was with the Boy Scouts where I experienced a hiking trip at the famous Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico (50 miles of hiking, backpacking and camping) and the equally famous Region Seven canoe base trip in Wisconsin (50 miles of canoeing, portaging and camping). Camp Timlo was a luxury hotel in comparison to my high school summer camping experiences with the Scouts.

I also had some basic training as a member of the Indiana University Air Force ROTC Candidate’s Training program where I participated for my first two years of college. After much consideration, I declined to participate in the advanced pilot’s training program that would have committed me to two more years of ROTC followed by six years active duty. The Viet Nam War had started heating up while I was in college and although I was very much a patriot, I was also intent on becoming a public school teacher (like my father). Unlike Barr Morris, I wanted to get started with my career as quickly as possible and needed to start making money from the skills I had attained. Camp Timlo was seen as a way to get pre-teaching experience that might be valuable in my future job searches. I thought it would be a one-summer experience.

My trip across the country was the longest trip I had ever made on my own and the 55 Plymouth was barely in condition for the trip. I almost burned out the clutch (yep, it was a “straight-drive” transmission) in West Virginia on a detour off the turnpike up a mountain. Who would have thought road crews would put a four-way stop on a steep grade at the top of a hill for through highway traffic? Well, it was the mid-60’s when few interstate highways were finished. I made it, though, and I was excited at the beauty of the mountain camp and the Adirondack Mountains, in general. I was awe struck on my trip up the Northway from Albany. What a beautiful place to spend the summers for a college student from the flat mid-West.

I met Barr Morris right away. He was living on the camp property with his wife, Margy. They had just moved up from their home (as I remember it) in Albany. The cabin they had on the property had heat and air-conditioning. It also served as an office during the winter. The old camp office sat on the top of the hill by the flag pole and had minimal heat and maybe a window air conditioner, but the walls were bare boards and had no insulation. It did have the best view of the camp lawn and Trout Lake. Barr and Margy were at work in their cabin on the phone and at the phone and typewriter (no computers then).

Camp office, 1965 (pre-tennis courts)

Barr was always moving between talking with his guests and answering the phone. He used the phone more than anyone I had ever seen. (He would have been a terror if he had our modern “smart” mobile phones.) If he needed an answer to an issue being discussed, he called someone who knew. He had a network of friends who would answer any question. He also had more than one phone line into the cottage he could manage from his rocker. He jockeyed them like a pro. Barr was 38 years old when I met him but I always thought he was just a little older than me. I was 21 in 1965 and looked 13. Barr was active with hiking, sailing, tennis and always talking with someone. He was actively managing a sizeable business that had many moving parts. I admired his skill, somewhat akin to a ship captain managing a ship at sea.

Barr was the most intense manager I had ever met. He attended to every detail of every project, and there were many projects underway. Every activity had to be done quickly and efficiently, in his mind. All projects were underway simultaneously. Each had near-emergency urgency. All had the same priority, by my observation. The trash man coming determined that the waste cans had to be emptied immediately into the dumpster or it could be a week before the next visit and the bin would overflow. The parents and campers would be arriving in three weeks and the camp had to be transformed from its winter survival into a bright, clean, attractive summer camp. New health codes and inspections had to be passed before the opening day.

There were campers to talk with, counsellors to hire, funds to raise, buildings to paint and repair, grass to mow, boats to repair, tennis courts to build (and some to repair), letters to write, and a complete camping season to organize and manage. I arrived in time to see the “raw product” turned into a working children’s camp. Barr and Margy attended to all of the details from their camp home. In addition, Stacey, the youngest daughter, had recently arrived and was with them. I can’t remember when each of the other three Morris children arrived, but it seemed like one every other year, Dory then Michael then Jeff. They all eventually made it of age to join the paying children as campers.

Barr welcomed me into the camp, showed me where the “camp dark room” was behind the camp store, and told me to meet up with the camp program directors for a place to bed down for the night. I found a vacant bed with a mattress in the first cabin behind the camp store and made it my home. There was a small bathroom in this cabin, the only one to have inside “facilities.” Larry Kappauf and Rich Gulbin provided directions for what needed painting and fixing and I started working. It was cold, even during the day. I wasn’t accustomed to the mountains. The ice had just thawed from Trout Lake. The pump had just been started to provide water and had to be attended to each day. The nights were very cold. I was glad to have my cold-weather survival sleeping bag for the nights.

**Barr and staff, launching the Star, 1965**

Sometime during the opening days, I met with Barr’s Mother, Dorothy Morris. She was the camp nurse for both the boys’ camp (Timlo) and the girls’ camp (Pine Log). She also provided the kitchens’ with menus and food. There were basic foods available pre-camp and Bob Brew, the camp cook, was occasionally in residency in his abode in back of the kitchen to help us find food. Dot Morris, along with Mary Frances, Barr’s sister from Bolton Landing, also helped with food for the camping trips, so we worked together to order and plan menus for the campers on hikes and while camping in the woods.

One of those early days, I first met “Country” Morris, Barr’s father, the camp’s founder. He had a bunk in the back of the kitchen area in a small room across from the cook’s quarters. He didn’t come to the camp often but was interesting to talk with when he was there. Coach William Morris had an extensive coaching career at the Albany Academy in Albany, NY beginning in 1924, where he produced winning overall records in every varsity sport that he coached for 34 years. He coached football, winning 113 games and losing 70, tying 13. He also coached 24 baseball teams and 25 basketball teams to winning records.

Country Morris attended McKinley High School in Washington, DC where he was an outstanding athlete; attended the University of Maryland, where he was a member of the football, baseball and track teams. He was team captain his senior year of the football team and was honored as an “All-Southern” back. He briefly coached at Clemson College as the head coach for baseball and basketball (1916–1917, 1919–1920) and assisted with the football team, prior to being hired at the Albany Academy. Country Morris held a coveted .667 win/loss record in basketball during his career at Clemson College (now Clemson University, just up the road about 60 miles from my current home in South Carolina).

**Country Morris**

He was the fourth basketball coach in their history, Frank Dobson was their first (1911-13, with the best percentage win record of .722, Coach Morris held the second best record in their history to date).  He founded Camp Timlo on Trout Lake as a football camp for his football players at Albany Academy in 1935, as a training camp in the summer. He and his wife directed the camp and expanded its mission as a boys camp until his son, Barr, was able to direct it and make it into a full-service summer camp for swimming, sailing, tennis and athletics it became by the 1960s. Country Morris passed away in 1976 and I remember providing a memorial service at the camp honoring his contributions through the years.

<https://www.nytimes.com/1976/07/11/archives/william-g-morris-sports-director-85.html>

Dorothy S. Morris (Country Morris’ wife) was a co-director of Camp Timlo starting in 1943 and Pine Log Camp since 1960. Her primary responsibility was managing the food service for the two camps and as a Registered Nurse, served as the camp nurse for both, as well. She was “an energetic and forceful person.” Earlier camp staff members remembered fondly the wonderful outings she had for them at her cottage on Trout Lake just a half mile from the Timlo campus.

Sadly, she died from injuries suffered in an automobile accident on the Northway between Saratoga and Albany in February of 1967. She was a tremendous help in planning the camp’s menus my first two years at Timlo and was important in helping me plan for the campouts for our off-camp hiking and canoeing outings in 1965 and 1966.

**Dorthy Morris, cutting anniversary cake.**

Three years after “Country” Morris started coaching at Albany Academy, his son Barr was born June 10, 1927. Barr attended Albany Academy where his dad coached. He graduated from the Academy, playing varsity football and basketball. He immediately enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served during World War II aboard the USS Terror, a minesweeper stationed in the Pacific near Japan. He later attended Colgate University where he was actively involved with the Sigma Chi fraternity. In his senior year, Barr was awarded the distinction of “Colgate Man of the Year.”

Barr was married to Margaret “Margy” McComas on September 29, 1962 in Warren, PA. By that time, Barr was actively involved with the management of the two camps as owner and director. I met them both three years later at Camp Timlo and didn’t realize that they were only recently married. Running the camps was a full-time job for both Barr and Margy. Barr traveled extensively as a part of his recruitment of campers and visitation of parents during the winter months. Many of the trips, they both traveled. After the children started arriving, Margy was less available for travel but still arranged time to attend the annual camp reunions in the New York City area each winter.

By 1965, the camp had a main lodge, crafts house, office, camp store, eight cabins for campers, athletic/tennis activities building, rifle range, shower/restroom building, tennis courts, basketball court, sailing docks, swimming dock, infirmary, Morris cottage, weight room/showers, head counsellor cottage, and four campfire areas. It was a well-defined and beautiful camping environment for boys and their counsellors. In the late 1960’s a new CIT cabin was built for older campers and showers were added to the garage (weight room) for them. The darkroom was in the camp store area (somewhat primitive but functional for two or three at a time). The athletic/tennis activities building doubled as a storage area for the camp sailboats during the winter. The garage/weight room housed the camp star sailing boat in the early days. Later it would be housed at the Lake George Sailing Club.

My first year’s cabin assignment at Timlo was with cabin 4 for ten-year-olds. I had a great time working with that age group but due to the nature of my job as “trip director,” I was out of camp many days on camping and hiking trips. I do remember quite well the Gookin and Bell duo from Pittsburg who became the outstanding campers in many areas from our cabin group. Overall, we had a great team of campers. The camping trips included: Mount Marcy hiking, Raquette River Canoeing, Mount Pharaoh hiking, Long Island camping, and the greatest of all Mount Katahdin in Northern Maine at the Northernmost end of the Appalachian Trail (we camped along the way and visited the White Mountains, the Old Town Canoe factory, and camped at the base of the mountain before and after our day-long climb.)

1965, Cabin 4, Dan’s first.

It was a memorable season for camping. Del and Roma Jordan brought their expertise and some equipment and sailboats and started, what was to become a quality sailing program. The Hillier’s (Ken and Roland), also from Orlando, Florida, followed shortly after to provide a quality water skiing program, complete with a competition ski jump. The sailing tower was constructed on the point to manage and oversee the extensive watersports program that developed. Over 24 sailing boats dotted the lake at the landing. The Pine Log girls were encouraged to come on two afternoons to learn sailing along with the boys. During this time, the boys interested in horse riding were encouraged to go in the camp van to ride at Pine Log while it was picking up the girls to come to Timlo for sailing and waterskiing. Several co-ed programs, including evening dances were provided with the sister camp.

Each year, several enhancements at Timlo were designed during the winter and constructed after the snow and frost left in the spring. Additional tennis courts were constructed, the rifle range was rebuilt and the old range became my cabin behind the office. The old head counselor building was remodeled to house the sailing instructors, Bill and Roma Galle and later the water skiing instructors Ken and Roland Hillier, all from Orlando, Florida. As the folks from Florida stayed longer to run specialized programs and after-camp programs, they eventually moved into the Morris cottage and the Head Counselor cottages and Barr and Margy Morris moved to Diamond Point onto the property owned by the Lake George Sailing Club, where they could live year-around with their expanding family between the two camps, Pine Log Camp and Camp Timlo. This property was located on Lake George on highway 9N at Diamond Point.

Margy and Barr entertained staff and CITs for meals and meetings on several occasions at this beautiful Lake George lakeside property. It also provided the site for the sailing competition on Lake George during the seasons in the 1970’s with local sailing clubs and camps on the lake. Long Island in the middle of Lake George became the site of the sailing camp for the older boys and a two-day camping trip for the youngest campers. It was also the site of my 1969 Christmas visit where I top of 48 inches of snow on the ground. The cabins were in danger of collapsing from the weight of the snow, so we hiked in with snow shovels and removed the snow on the roofs. We were able to walk right onto the roofs without a ladder where the drifts had moved the snow to the level of the roof tops. It was quite a memorable experience. See picture.

**Christmas Snow, 1969, Craft Shop**

My favorite memory was the summer of 1974 when my oldest brother’s children, Brent and Brenda (my niece and nephew) attended the two camps. That summer on Parents’ Day, I was able to fly my parents to camp to visit with all of us and see the camp for their first time. It was a great day. Pictures and my memories are included in the 1974 Timlogs. [Click here for pictures and full story.](https://web.archive.org/web/20161013024851/http%3A/camptimlo.org/dans-narrative-on-parents-day-1974/)

Barr continued to visit on rare occasions after I moved to Greenwood, SC in 1977. On one occasion, I was able to assist him in creating his presentation folder and slides for his Northwestern Mutual Insurance work. It was great working with him again. On another occasion, he was visiting colleges for his youngest son, Jeffrey, and wanted my opinion on Furman University in Greenville, SC, just 50 miles from Greenwood. I think he was looking for quality colleges in the South that might be of interest for Jeff and maybe even thought of his father’s brief work at Clemson College nearby, as a part of his and Jeff’s heritage. After that visit, I lost contact with the Morris family, receiving only occasional Christmas card notes. The latest note arrived in 2011 from Margy in response to my Christmas card relating to my retirement and the loss of my mother in 2010. I moved my parents to Greenwood, SC to be near me to allow them care in their later years. My father passed away after several years of Alzheimer’s regression in 1998. My mother lived to be 97 and was able to stay in her home until her death.

Dan, Raquette River canoe trip

My most memorable years were the summers at Camp Timlo. Barr Morris whose death was recorded shortly after I decided to create this Web site to reminisce the days when summer camps in the mountains were the place to be for young people. I also wanted to create a Web site to remember the Morris family and their contributions to the many young men and women who enjoyed their summers in the Adirondack Mountains on Trout Lake and Second Lake near Lake Luzerne. I was certain they might enjoy the memorabilia I had collected from Camp Timlo. It was most fortunate that I was able to get back in touch with Stacey Morris and learn of her father’s death on September 29, 2012, while working on this site.

I hope to hear from campers who attended Camp Timlo and Pine Log Camp via the Web site. I also hope to collect additional photos and newsletters for inclusion on the site. When completed, I hope to preserve the site to CD or DVD for history to preserve. Your encouragement and words of support are hoped for and your contributions to this history will increase its value by including your memories and candid pictures. This Blog site will be the best resource for your inclusions. I hope to hear from many of you, campers and counselors, both.

Dan, 1965, sailing on Trout Lake

It's fitting that during the 2024 holiday season when many of us gathered among those close, that this tribute came to life. I wish to thank Stacey Morris for her singular memoir; Richard Bireau for his graphics including the Timlo Green scheme which I requested; and the individuals who responded to my request for personal memories of Dan which are included in Stacey's section as well as the bridge to Dan's website introduction.

I'm not a religious person, but I feel that a mountain lake tribal campfire is glowing somewhere out there surrounded by Dan and all of us.

Mike Rush