



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SPECIAL CAMPAIGN FOR OPEQUON QUAKER CAMP

Why did Opequon Quaker Camp move? There are 3 main reasons:

- The previous site was a rental property, and the lease was up.
- There were significant issues with the physical plant, including that it flooded in heavy storms, closing the access from the road – in case of an emergency, equipment could not get to the camp.
- Safety and Security – Campers and Staff had to walk through a populated area to access trails. There were incidents of harassment and unkindness directed at our BIPOC and LGBTQ campers and staff, leading them to feel unsafe – and very sad.

Why Rolling Ridge – What is the arrangement contractually and financially?

- We have been visiting Rolling Ridge with our campers for years. It is a marvelous 1600-acre natural location with wilderness, the Appalachian Trail, the Shenandoah River.
- The other organizations there are very aligned with BYM values, One of those is Friends Wilderness Center, created in 1974 by Quakers for “perpetual spiritual use,”
- There was already a camp on the property. The group using it moved into DC, leaving behind the camp facilities, including a Dining Hall that can be used year-round, an infirmary, a building that can be the Arts Center, cabins, and a lodge (with kitchen and bathrooms) suitable for year-round programming. The site needed MAJOR renovations as well as new construction, but it was a start!
- We have signed a 40 year lease, so our capital investment will come back to us over the life of the lease.

How many campers can the new site accommodate? How many campers does BYM serve?

- We opened camp for 64 campers per session in 2024 – and hosted 2 two-week sessions in summer, 2024.
- We anticipate being able to serve more campers (80 per session) in 2025 and beyond.
- Throughout all our camps, we serve 600 unique campers and 150 unique staff/year

What is OQC known for?

- OQC is BYM’s creative arts camp – Campers and staff make and perform a lot of art during their sessions, along with spending time in nature – they are painters, sculptors,

musicians, actors and singers. OQC hosts Visiting Artists during the summers, and the new location will make that even easier – with the rooms available in the Lodge.

- OQC is BYM’s most diverse camp, with the most campers attending on STRIDE scholarships, and the most BIPOC counselors and staff. 25% of the OQC community is people of color.
- OQC has the highest percentage of campers and staff who identify as LGBTQ, and is known for its “radical inclusivity.”
- OQC is considered the BYM Camp that most intentionally prepares BIPOC leaders.

What additional benefits are there for locating Opequon Quaker Camp at the Rolling Ridge Conservancy?

- The new Opequon Quaker Camp property at Rolling Ridge is approximately 230 acres within the larger 1600 acres of the Rolling Ridge Conservancy. Throughout those 1600 wooded acres there are miles of trails, streams and waterfalls, as well as ponds and cliffs.
- The property touches both the Appalachian Trail and the Shenandoah River. Campers can walk to the AT, swim or float in the river, and have simple and constant access to the wild spaces that are at the core of our camping program. It will allow us to both deepen our arts programming at Opequon Quaker Camp and provide improved 4-season facilities for non-summer camp uses.
- The camp is deep in the forest on its own private driveway. The site will allow us to create a safe and protected experience for all campers, something that has proven difficult in and around these Appalachian Mountains that we love. This move is a big step in our journey to making the Opequon camp community a genuinely inclusive and welcoming space where all campers can find a sense of home and connection and belonging.

I’m a Catoctin person, I’m a Shiloh person, what about those camps?

- OQC’s move to Rolling Ridge, and this campaign to support it, is a major step forward in the sustainability of the BYM Camping Program as a whole. All our camps are strengthened by this major project.
- Both Catoctin and Shiloh have had major physical plant improvements, including fundraising efforts to support them, in the past. This is the first effort focused on Opequon.
- All our BYM Camps have used the Rolling Ridge site before, and it will be used by all the camps going forward. The lodge can be used off-season for leadership training for all the camps. The full site can be used off-season by BYM and its Monthly Meetings for other activities and events, overnight retreats, spiritual formation, etc.