

SAYF Worship Journal
March 2024 Retreat
Arthur Morgan School, Celo, NC

On the weekend of March 22-24, 2024 the Southern Appalachian Young Friends met at the Arthur Morgan School in Celo, NC. This is our witness. This is our story.

Dear SAYF,

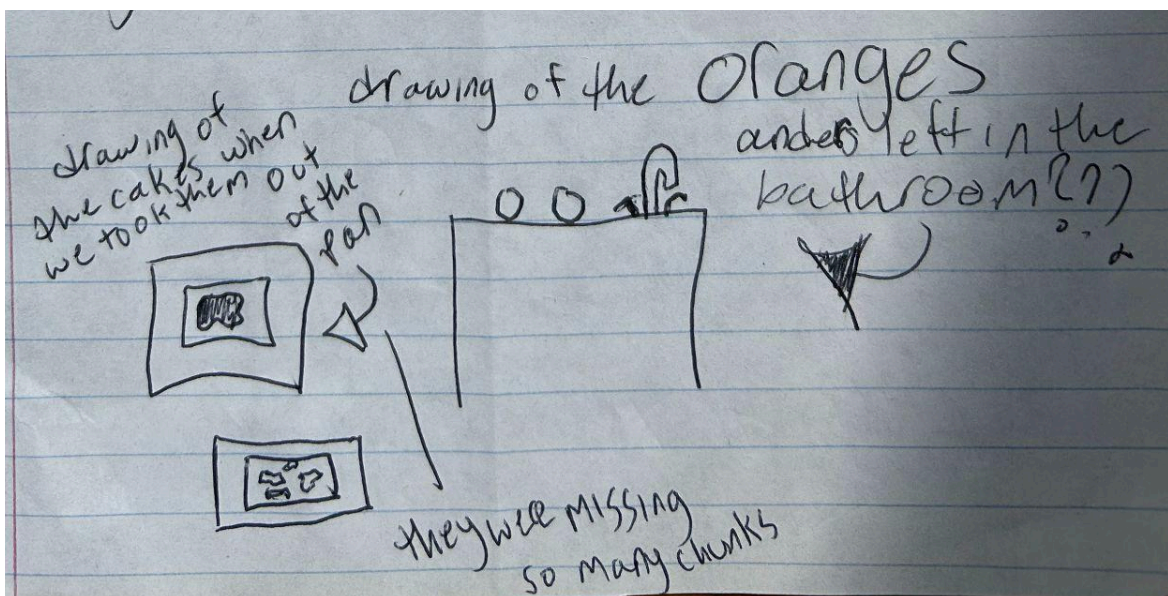
This retreat was amazing! I am still getting to know people, and I feel very welcomed. Every SAYF, we have more sleep-deprived laughs:

1. Finding the oranges in the bathroom and laughing at them three separate times
2. Playing "Baby if you love me," with Baxter's amazing rizz technique.

and finally, I would like to say that I love SAYF, and I am glad to spend time with people I love in a place I love. Thank you for helping create this space for me.

- Owen

God wreaking provides, y'all. I had so much fun meeting new people and hanging out with old friends. I love being together with people in the same room even if we're all doing different things. I met Charlie, Natalee, Julia and Grace this retreat, which was nice. I had fun at the bonfire even though it was kindof dangerous and very cold. George is a really good heater, and cat is very comfortable to share a blanket with. I talked to Owen a bit more than usual which was cool. We didn't play bear but I had fun playing "baby if you love me" instead. Baxter's go the ear rizz. Y'all are all so cool and I had a great retreat. It was also cool playing chess with lucius, rigel and noah and anything else I did with other people that I can't remember was really fun. Ngl the cakes turned out ok this weekend. Icing fixes all. Love y'all



For me, this retreat had a theme of stepping out of my comfort zone. The group singing and movement activities were new to me, and I didn't always feel like joining in. As I gain more experience with Nurturing, I realize that I'm not very comfortable directing people.

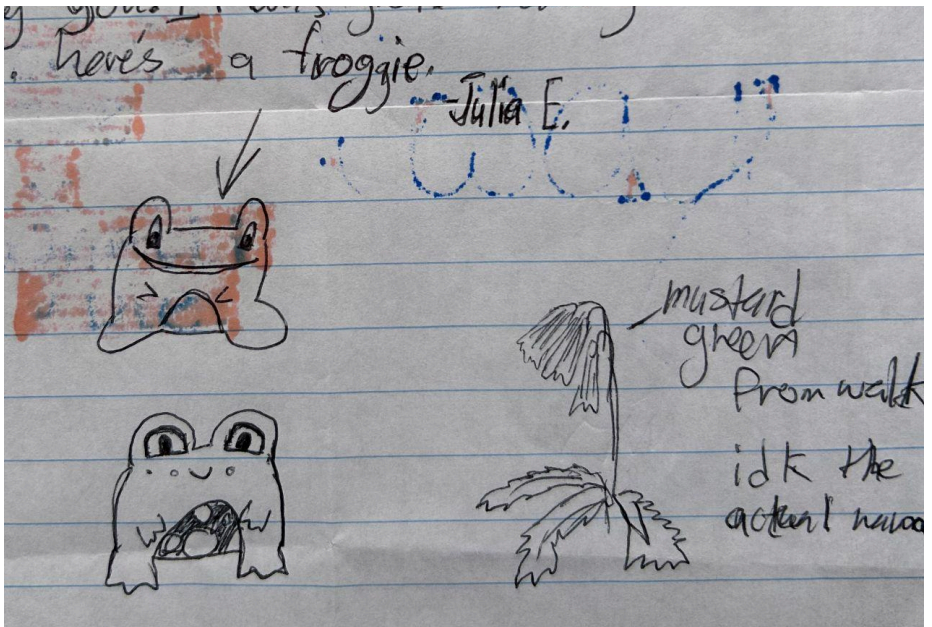
But with both of these things I tried to push myself to become better at them and more comfortable and accepting of myself and those around me.

PS: Epic retreat, loved the plant walk :)

- Lucius

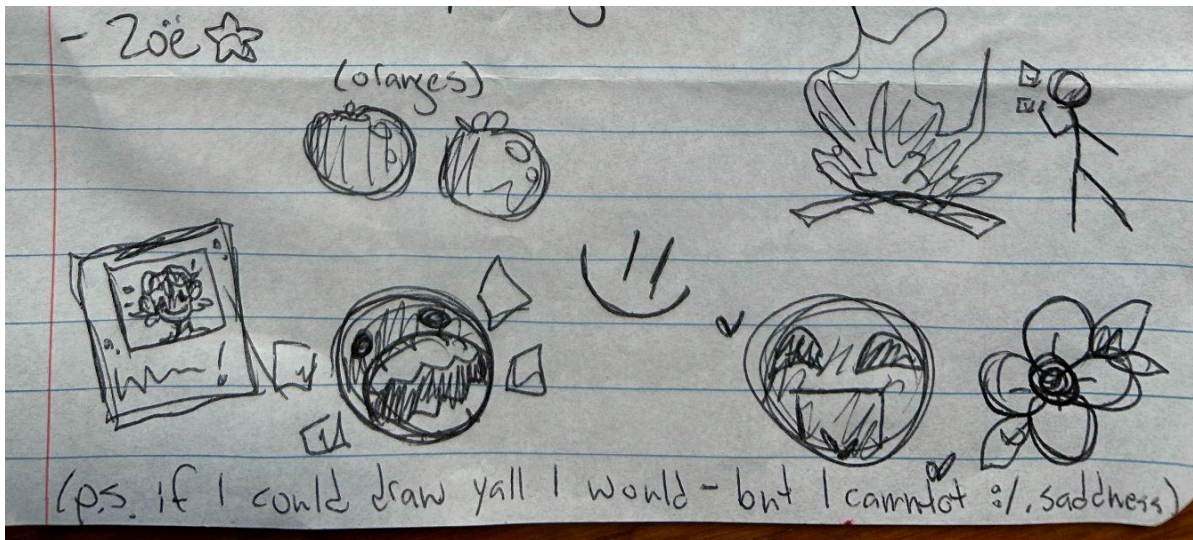
This was my first time coming to SAYF so I was a bit unsure. I thought it was going to be more like religion centered but it wasn't. I met a lot of new people who are really nice. It was just really nice to be able to connect with people. It was nice just to hang out with people where you're not worried about people judging you. It was great and relaxing. Yep. Here's a froggie.

- Julia E



Dear SAYF, I can't seem to find the perfect words to explain how much joy and comfort I get from this amazing community. The ride this time was rough, but totally worth it! I got to cuddle with Sage, draw together with Kat, create another "war" with the og. foot group against a child, create a bonfire (which was honestly the craziest fire I've worked on), and finally go crazy about 2 oranges in the bathroom with C.J., Charlie and a couple others. I felt so loved and wanted which I really needed after the hectic month I have had. I want to stay in this space for so much longer but alas, I have to drive to a festival at 5:30 am and need sleep before that...I love you all so much and wish all of you the best till I see you again.

- Zoe



Hey SAYF,

This will be an Oliver style epistle to honor the one and only.

- Thanks to Blue for being the best Samwise Baggins and Mr. T/S
- Thanks to Sage for endless cuddles
- Thanks to all the new (and new to me) SAYFers who I have the utmost hope for: Natalie, Bat, Noah, Gray and Julia (younger)
- Thanks to everyone who got demolished at “baby if you love me” and laughed at oranges
- Thanks to NEVIN for being the OG.
- Thanks to the wonderful FAN team and the iconic nurturing team
- Thanks to Julia (older), Zoe, Daniene and all the bonfire builders
- Thanks to Sam and all those who appreciate my incessant music
- Thanks to Mari as always for your sweetness and leadership at Celo. Thanks to Lucious for being my team captain op
- Thanks to Mike for bringing the party!!!
- Thanks to Aunt Jenny for doing much more than her fair share of kitchen work and to all the washers and cookers. Thank y’all for coming.

~ Bax H.

P.S. The moon landing isn’t real

P.P. S. taps nose, traces ears

It sounds so cliché, but there really is something magical about singing around a campfire together. I was laying there, under the almost full moon, watching sparks fly high into the air, surrounded by Friends singing, I felt memories resurfacing that I hadn’t thought of in years. Of being here, in Celo, singing late into the chilly summer nights. Of being a child, younger than all of you, cleaning the house on Sunday with the “Oh Brother where Art Thou” soundtrack playing on the kitchen radio. Of laying in a Tennessee meadow, wearing kaleidoscope glasses and looking up at the fall trees with singing and guitar playing around me. All of these moments had a deep spiritual meaning to me, and last night at the fire was the first time I’d felt that spiritual tingle in a while. It’s a kind of aliveness I often yearn for.

It’s a joy to be with you all, as ever. Happy full moon, happy aries season, see ya in Durham!

Asa

Dear SAYF Community,

It was wonderful to have all of you come to Celo retreat! And we miss those of you who are not here. It was great to have new friends join us and all the nurturers that are ready to step up to take the leadership for the community!

When we are together it sure is nice to be able to talk, walk, cook, clean, share the meal, and attend campfire, etc., but maybe if we try, we can still feel the connection in our hearts when we are apart. I hear someone humming right now and reminded me of the "toning" that Sarah talked about last night during the bonfire. Toning is to hum, the vibration to harmonize with the earth and air around you. Thank you for joining us in the cool March weekend. Thank you for all that you are.

Love from Mari

I really enjoyed this retreat. I love the land of Celo and the AMS space. Thank you so much for sharing it with us. I loved our Saturday morning hike. I learned so much about tree identification in winter and the spring ephemeral flowers. Making paper covered eggs occupied much of my time, as well as catching up with friends. I also got to sit in on a SAYMA planning meeting which makes me excited for the next retreat and SAYMA.

See you again soon, Danielle (FAN)

This is my first epistle as a FAN!! The last time I sat in this space, I was saying goodbye to this beloved community. I wasn't imagining that time would actually pass, that I would actually become an adult one day, and that I would be back in this circle. I didn't see it at the time but I'm so happy time did pass, that I grew so much after being welcomed into the YAF community, and that I found my way back here with you all. It warms my heart to see you. I remember feeling that wave of energy, on arrival day full of thrill, excitement, love and joy. One by one as the vans and cars pull up late at night. The rush of hugs around friends you've been missing to open the retreat.

I'm so happy I've become a FAN and I'm so happy to have met you. This retreat was so much fun. Thank you for coming.

Julia Hudson

Now what will follow are the hugs goodbye. Hearts not wanting to leave but knowing it's not truly goodbye. Just see you next time, old friends and new.

Dear SAYF,

We found ourselves among the green and brown growing things this retreat. The rich browns so different than man-made things, smelling of decomposing and enriching. Life and death occurring simultaneously. I saw two trees at a 45 degree angle stretching over the creek yesterday. They seemed connected even with a different root structure. I imagined a giant coming and straightening the trees so they are vertical, tidying up. But the trees would then break. They are stable in their growth, sprouting from the sides of the creek bank. There is no wrong or right in nature, no orientation, appearance, or lifespan is superior. All is of the whole, all belongs. these trees will never feel shame or insecurity. They may feel loss and fear as the world around them continues to breathe, live, die. And they play their part.

Beth Myers,
FAN

I love SAYF. I am glad that all these youth have this space to be, to grow, to recharge, to find joy. I also appreciate the freedom that FANs have. So many volunteering opportunities are at least as exhausting as this, but without the fun. I love working, laughing, sleeping and existing alongside each of you. And I'm really happy that I found the fun fairy match for my bad cop.

With all the joy in my heart, Aunt Jenny

Cyrus

Everybody says BJP isn't real

But they just ain't in the know or feel

Fast like a chipmunk don't call me Theo-

Doors get open by the knob and we know

Hark! BJP rappin on the beat

He don't know how to stop so go on

tap your feet

Tap yo feet, sing along, it's the Jonas Pickle song

You're the Beta in the Sigma we just can't

get along (2x)

BJP is a literal wonder

added to the seven wonders made eight the number

No BJP's gotta leave he had to make

this song quick

If you're playing chess and need

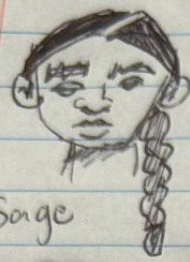
a star pawn you better call rick

(Chorus (1x).

I'm THANKFUL FOR:

Rizz-Living Dunne-Baby Gronk-Sigma-Alpha-Beta-Edging-Gooning-Sounding-Felching- Munting-Blumpkin-Velging-Skibidi
Toilet-Ohio-Gyatt-Ishow speed - Kai Cenat - Mr Belding - LeBron James

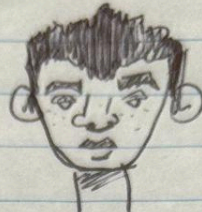
This is
Layla's other half
of the room
people



Sage



Adelani



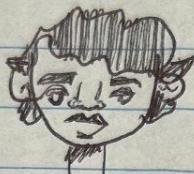
Blue



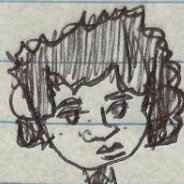
Baxter



Leah



BAT



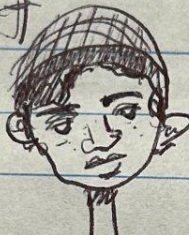
Even



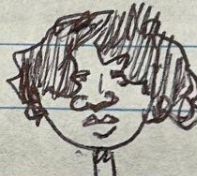
Egligera



Lina



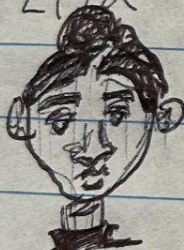
Owen



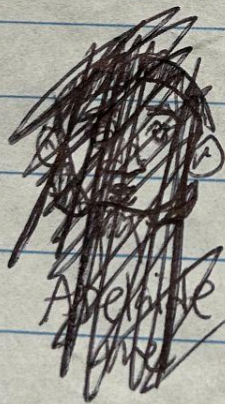
CJ



Zoe



Mari



Abernie



Layla



ASA

BY

Adelani

please don't be

~~mean~~

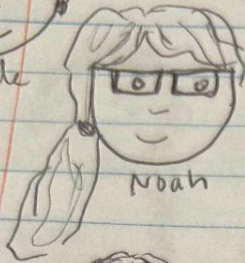
also I can't

spell names

Adelani



Adelaide



Noah



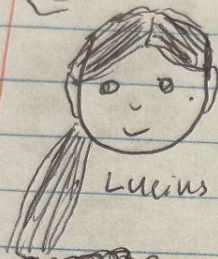
Barron



Cyrus



Aunt Jerry



Lucius



Anders



Imani



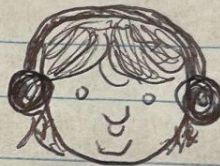
Mike



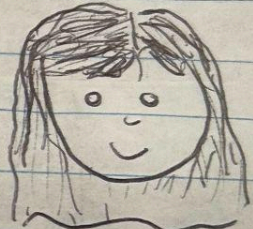
Nevin



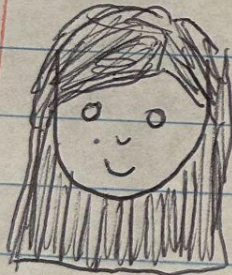
Natalie



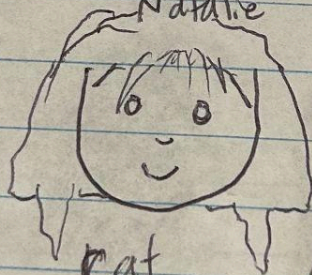
Stitch



Miles



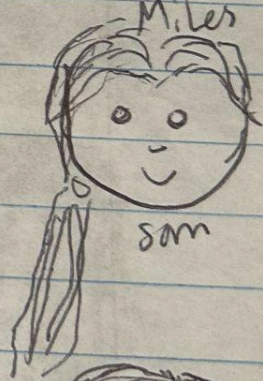
Danielle



Kat



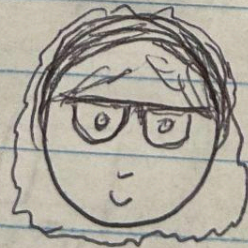
Tom



Sam



Julia



Beth



Rigel



Julia (FAN)