



From the Director's Desk



For the two years before I came to Friedenswald, my wife Lyz and I were Service Adventure Unit Leaders. We are strong supporters of this program which provides a setting where young adults leave life as they know it and spend 10 months with other young adults and leaders far from home. As each year started Lyz and I would talk with our group about this being an opportunity to try things differently. We knew very little about how they acted in everyday life before this point. We talked with them about how we can often feel limited in how to act because of what the people around us expect. This was a chance for them to take a new path or try something different. It is a new opportunity!

I heard it explained best in a DVD I watched recently from the Christian Camping and Conference Association. They talked about permanent communities and temporary communities. Permanent communities are something we are all a part of which is just simply every day life. We have a plan and we are in a routine which is good for many things but this setting can also lead us to feel as though we are stuck in a rut. Temporary communities provide an opportunity for new experiences and growth.

Camp Friedenswald is one of these settings in which we can try new things. We can replace the usual with the unusual. Whether you are a camp counselor, summer camper, or summer volunteer you can take part in new ways, gain experiences and learn lessons that will not soon be forgotten. Come and join us in the Peaceful Woods!



1 Corinthians 12:4-7

God's
GIFTS

We all have different gifts. Certainly we have heard that phrase many times. We live in a society that frequently seems to elevate certain gifts over others and assigns worth by how successful, productive and competitive our gifts make us. While it is at times difficult to remember in the face of this bombarded message, we do all have meaningful gifts.

God created us, and that very fact makes each of us a gift. We seem to verbalize this best with little babies, "Oh he/she is such a gift from God". As we age and grow, we seem to forget this fact. We highlight our differences from others and being right becomes more important than acknowledging that others are gifts from God. Yet, we **all** are in fact gifts; people we love and enjoy, people we don't know, people we dislike, people working for justice and peace, people making decisions that hurt and destroy others, big people, little people, people from every corner of the globe, people from every profession, ourselves, we are all gifts from God. We would do well to try and start each day with this in mind.

Remembering all this is important, but it should also inspire us to act. God gave each of us gifts, not to simply be aware of, but to use. Gifts to use to reach out, create relationships and find out about all the many people around us. Gifts that replace the spaces where fear and stereotypes of others may dwell. Gifts to confront apathy and create an arena where accountability can thrive. Gifts that strengthen our image of ourselves and agitate us to do little acts every day that reflect the teachings, actions and love of Jesus.

To me this is very exciting! It is also what we'll be exploring this year through our theme, God's Gifts. Each camper coming through the peaceful woods this summer will have amazing gifts. Together we'll celebrate them and explore how to use them in play, service and work to spread God's love, peace, justice and healing.



Lodge Openings (LL-Lakeview, TL-Tamarack, SL-Sycamore)

April 13-15: TL, SL
 April 27-29: LL
 May 4-6: TL, SL
 May 18-20: SL
 May 25-27: TL, SL
 June 1-3: LL, TL, SL
 June 15-17: TL
June 22-28: LL, TL
 August 24-26: LL, TL

*This entire week is open due to a recent cancellation.

Contact Portia for reservations or visit our website for more information.

~Colin Rusel, Program Director



Winter Reflections



Winter retreats are over! It feels good, after five consecutive weekends, to be done. Yet though I am glad, there are things that already I miss.

The clatter and squeaking scrape of metal chairs fills the chapel. Youth and sponsors move into circles for small group discussion on the evening's topic. I wander, listening to questions asked, ideas shared, individuals supported and challenged. I am struck by the number of faith paths being walked and reminded how big our God must be to accompany each of us in our journey.

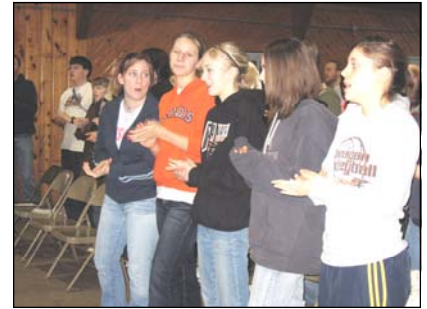
Laughter and applause fill the dining hall. Skits, jokes, stories and music have once again filled the Saturday night talent show. I look around at people having fun putting on acts, sharing talents, supporting and cheering for each other. I am reminded how many ways God moves among us and through us and am thankful for God's presence where two or more are gathered.

I eat the last bite of my grasshopper pie and people start stacking dishes and clearing the table. "Good visiting with you." they say, heading to the dish window. I've lost track of how many people I've talked with, eaten with, played with, fellowshiped with this winter. I've lost track of the number, but not of the interactions themselves. I am reminded how far reaching God is to be present in each of us, all of whom are created sacred. I think too how easy it is to forget or overlook God in each person and am grateful for the reminder.

These are just three times among many that I miss from winter retreats, and yet I'm glad they are done.

As winter thaws and spring arrives, I am reminded that our God is a God of busy times filled with energizing community and of quiet times filled with renewal and reflection. I think back on winter retreats, on the youth, sponsors and families that were here and am truly grateful for a God who lives in us and walks with us through all the times in our lives.

~ Colin Rusel, Program Director



Enjoy this favorite recipe of camp guests and staff!

(Thanks to Todd Kirkton for sharing it with us during his tenure here)

Spiced Chicken Stew with Apricots

2 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 pounds chicken breasts, cubed
1 large onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 1/2 teaspoons curry powder

1/2 teaspoon coriander
1/2 teaspoon chili powder
1 3/4 cups chicken stock
1/2 cup peanut butter
1/2 cup dried apricots, halved

1/3 cup raisins
1 tablespoon brown sugar
1 tablespoon lemon juice
salt to taste
1/3 cup peanuts

In large saucepan, heat oil and sauté chicken breasts for 4-5 minutes or until browned. Remove from pan and set aside. Add onions and garlic to pan and sauté over medium heat about 3 minutes or until onions are soft. Stir in rest of spices and sauté 30 seconds...keep stirring. Pour in chicken broth and peanut butter and mix well. Keep stirring and scraping off the bottom of the pan to prevent burning. Bring mixture to a boil and stir in apricots, raisins, brown sugar and lemon juice. Return chicken to pan. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer about 40 minutes or until chicken is tender. Season with salt to taste. Place stew in warm serving dish and serve sprinkled with peanuts. Serve with

Habitat Restoration at Camp

Several rare plant and animal species that are of special concern in Michigan occur here at camp. These species persist here because of the wide diversity of habitats represented on the Camp's property. These include Beech-Maple forest, Oak-Hickory forest, remnant Oak Savanna and several unique wetlands including Prairie Fen and Sedge Meadow. We have been working with experts from the Michigan Natural Features Inventory and The Michigan Department of Natural Resources Landowner Incentive Program to better understand how to maintain and enhance these habitats and species.



Summary:

- Camp Friedenswald is home to several rare plants and animals
- We are working with experts to better preserve and enhance these species
- Many of the habitats occupied by these species depend on periodic fire
- A prescribed burn has been recommended for several of our wetlands

Throughout southern Michigan, fire was a historic natural disturbance that helped to maintain many natural communities. Fires occurred naturally as a result of lightning strikes. In addition, Native Americans used fire extensively to manage the landscape. In the absence of fire these communities are frequently taken over by invasive species or closed in to the point where they no longer provide habitat for the plants and animals that once lived there. Today, prescribed fire is regarded as a safe, effective and frequently required means to maintain communities in their natural state.

This spring, a licensed burn professional will be implementing a controlled burn on camp's wetland located on the northeast end of Lake Shavehead. The first prescribed burn will likely occur in March or April. Specific weather conditions as decided by the burn contractor will determine the exact date. Visual effects of the burn will likely not be noticeable after just a few weeks from the time of the burn. The net result of the fire will be to reduce shrub cover and promote a healthy habitat for many native plant and animal species.

Public Meeting

Camp had a well attended burn informational meeting on Saturday, February 24, at Friedenswald's Dining Hall which included an excellent powerpoint presentation by Doug Landis and a lively question and answer time. About thirty people from the lake community came to the meeting. We received much positive feedback for the project with many offers of help. There were also many thanks from the lake community for including them in the information loop.



Special Thanks

Special thanks to Doug Landis, member of the Natural Resources Task Force, for all his hard work on this burn project. Doug has put in countless hours of his time in giving powerpoint presentations, making phone calls, and mucking through camp's wetlands to make this restoration project happen.

Wildflower Association Grant to Help Fund Meadow Project

Prior to European settlement, Cass County contained a rich array of tallgrass prairie, wet prairie, and oak savanna with some areas of tallgrass prairie comprising twenty square miles. But today, with most of this land having been converted for agricultural use, the Cass prairie has been whittled down to a few meager clumps along railroad rights-of-way and in field corners, a dim reflection of its former self. But thanks to a \$500 grant from the Wildflower Association of Michigan (WAM) and the Harold and Jean Glassen Memorial Foundation native plants will once again flourish in the meadow at the base of Turtle Hill.

Camp staff member, Matt Hickman, caught a vision for restoring the meadow and began inventorying plants and researching the makeup of local native plant communities. Matt's grant proposal was approved and Matt traveled to the WAM conference in Lansing to accept the check. The project has several goals, among them are: 1) to reintroduce a broad diversity of native grasses and wildflowers to the meadow; 2) to control Spotted Knapweed, an aggressive, invasive plant; and 3) to better complete the Turtle Hill trail system by creating a trail through the meadow that connects back to Lakeview Lodge. For more information about the Wildflower Association of Michigan you can visit www.wildflowersmich.org.

Permanent Staff Members

Justin Weaver..... Executive Director
Colin Rusel..... .Program Director
Portia Amstutz.....Operations Manager
Brad Cogdell.....Outdoor Learning Director
Deb Smith.....Registrar/Bookkeeper
Penny Yarman.....Maintenance Director
Luke Penner.....Outdoor Learning Assistant
Ellie Solano.....Food Service Director
Vicky Solano....Housekeeper/Kitchen Assistant
Matt & Deb Hickman.....Guest Group Hosts
Dave and Marlene Suter.....Volunteers

Board Members

Kent Yoder (Chair) Stephanie Company
Alison King Scott Preheim
Jim Eicher Curt Bechler
John Fox Steve Stenger
Steve Yoder Greg Nofsinger

Wish List

- Heavy-duty jumper cables
- Random orbital sander
- Ready-to-hang picture frames (larger sizes)
- New table games
- New Dutch Blitz card game
- AA rechargeable batteries
- New ping pong paddles
- New (or gently used) ping pong tables
- New archery bows (call camp for specific type)
- Cedar Adirondack chairs for lodges
- User-friendly digital camera
- Powerpoint Projector

Financial contributions toward any of the above items would also be greatly appreciated!

Need to contact us?

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❖ Design and layout by Portia Amstutz, Edited by Justin Weaver

Camp Friedenswald seeks to provide people of all ages the opportunity to gain a better understanding and love for God/Christ, self, others, and nature.

Return Service Requested

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