



## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK...by JUSTIN WEAVER

Wow...what a great time to experience the energy and excitement of "The Peaceful Woods"! The past few weeks have been a time of learning, transitioning, and getting a feel for my new role here at Friedenswald. Our family is adjusting to life here at camp. Our children have had the opportunity to be involved in lots of activities which helped them to feel like camp is going to be a good place for them to settle. Lyz and I have also had the opportunity to partake in some activities that help us to know what the camping experience is all about (we have both had the honor of taking part in the infamous "swamp hike" which could possibly also be called a mud swim). We have enjoyed campfires, kayaking, canoeing, and fishing to name a few. We have also enjoyed getting settled into the Friedenhaus. With the adventures of camp life all around us and a great place to call home we are honored to be here.

In many ways this is a homecoming for me. I grew up not far from here in Middlebury, Indiana. My home congregation is First Mennonite Church of Middlebury. After graduating high school from Bethany Christian I went straight to work in construction, and more specifically excavation. My wife, Lyz, and I enjoyed being involved in our congregation's activities. With some encouragement from our church leadership and a calling from within we wanted to get more education with future ministry in mind. After visits and much conversation we packed up our belongings and our children (Emily who was then 4 and Alec who was 2), and headed for Hesston, Kansas. The next three years were spent studying for many exams and writing lots of essays as part of the Pastoral Ministry Program at Hesston College.

From Hesston we felt lead to participate in a two year term of service with Mennonite Mission Network in a program called Service Adventure. This lead us back closer to home in downtown South Bend, IN. While in South Bend I went on to complete a bachelor's degree in Organizational Management at Bethel College in Mishawaka. It was during the last months

of discerning where God wanted to lead our family next that we were made aware of the opening at Camp Friedenswald. While discerning the possibility I was excited about the opportunity to combine these two degrees and use what I have learned here at camp.

As we made connections here at camp through this process we also faced the reality that our coming meant that Todd, Alison and the girls have moved on to something new as well. In the process of overlapping some and spending some days together to get a feel for camp, we have come to appreciate Todd and Alison as friends. From our own perceptions, as well as what we hear around us, they have been a great gift to camp. Todd has done a great job of leading, which essentially makes it much easier for me to come in and carry on from here. I guess all this is to say, Thank you Todd and Alison, for all the ways you lead this organization, ministry, and lifestyle!

As I look to the future and what many of you, Todd and the board have envisioned it is an exciting time to join the ride. Along with continuing to think of new and creative ways in which to expose new people to the many facilities and programs the camp has to offer, I am excited about the cabin projects that are coming together. To be on the brink of building five more new cabins that will have a different appeal to groups that come to stay at the camp is an exciting thing to be a part of. Many of you have been integral in raising and or donating funds for these cabins and we are on our way to making these a reality in the near future. We do need to keep spreading the word about these cabins and how they will continue to open new and exciting possibilities for the camping ministry here at Friedenswald. If you would like to donate funds toward one of the cabins, this would greatly help us to continue toward our goal of funding each cabin before we break ground. We have great staff at camp right now and ministry is happening but without your contributions of time and/or financial resources we would have little to offer. Thanks for all you do! ~ Justin Weaver



The Weaver Family

## A TASTE OF FALL

August is in full swing with sunny weather and humidity that at times seems relentless. For many this weather motivates a search for shade, the nearest pool or a well-running central air system. To me it means time to get ready for fall retreats.

Every year at this time I get to shift out of my summer mode and jump into creating fall weekend retreats that are meaningful, relaxing, fun and challenging. I recruit speakers, music leaders and resource people. I plan activities and send out brochures.

I do all this, but in the end we still can't have fall weekend retreats without you, the participants. So mark the dates and times for the retreats listed below. Invite 3 or 4 friends and come enjoy a weekend at Camp Friedenswald this fall! ~ Colin Rusel

### Upcoming Programs and Events



#### Women's Retreat

September 15-17, 2006

Speaker: Anita Rediger



#### Senior Retreat

September 25-27, 2006

Speakers: Marilyn & Glen Miller



#### Fall Scrapbook Retreat

October 20-22, 2006

Lakeview Lodge



#### Men's Retreat

November 10-12, 2006

Speaker: James Krabill

For more info, call Camp (269-476-9744) or email (colin@friedenswald.org).

## THOUGHTS FROM TODD KIRKTON

As the thunderstorm outside my window at 2 a.m. picked up energy, I decided I could no longer ignore it. The junior high boys were camping out at the teepee site that night. The responsible thing to do would be to bring the boys back in from the woods. The practical thing was much more difficult. Feeling the pressure of responsibility, I decided to try and make a run to bring them back in, taking the big white van out to the woods.

To make a long story short...the van (along with about 15 youth) became stuck in the mud about 150 ft from the campsite. After several efforts to push out the van, Colin and Penny showed up with a 4 x 4 to help us. By that time the lightning had stopped and the kids were soaked. Simeon offered to just walk the boys back to the Dining Hall to get dried off and back to their cabins. After the “executive decision” was made to walk back, the lightning and rain picked up again. A few of us stayed back at the campsite in the mud-bogged van until they could come back with the 4 x 4 for everyone else. I drove the truck back to camp, “mudding” through the woods for the first time in my life.

As I was driving (in my car) back to my house at 5:30 am, I was hit with some of the realities of my late-night rescue attempt and how well they represent the life of a camp director in general. The position is so unique that the only people who really understand it are other camp directors. Here are some of my “firsts”:

- Reviewing sewer line plans (I didn’t know what a septic tank really was until I was at camp)
- Preaching
- Meeting with state and local health and fire inspectors
- Hiding in the woods to catch trespassers
- Fixing high pressure toilets and industrial dishwashers (thanks to looking over Pete’s shoulder)
- Plowing snow (thanks to Dave’s 5 minute training)
- Paddling a pontoon across the lake (and helping rescue the “dead” pontoon)
- Scraping frost off the pontoon to give rides in October and November
- Walking across the path of a rattling rattlesnake
- Asking for large sums of money (with help from many

board members)

- Managing a \$600,000 budget and 10 full-time staff
- Hiring 35 staff per year
- Being both landlord and supervisor for 10 staff and their families
- Performing live “music” in front of up to 200 people barefoot (with Colin’s “characters”)

The list could go on...

I am truly grateful for the opportunity to be a part of the history at Camp. I know that Camp has also been a place of many firsts for other people as well—first time to experience the unconditional love of God, first truly spiritual experience, first time away from home...

I am even more grateful to have the privilege of getting to know many of you—the campers, constituents, and volunteers that make Friedenswald special. I am especially appreciative of the staff at Camp, both summer and year-round. They work extremely hard and deserve much credit for the great things going on. The staff help to create a temporary community, which allows the campers to experience God in new ways.

Please continue to stay involved at Camp. I encourage you all to welcome Justin and his family to the Peaceful Woods. Share your faith stories and fun times from Friedenswald with him. Give generously of your time and financial gifts, attend the programs, and read the newsletters. Camp Friedenswald is your camp!

~ Todd Kirkton



Todd Kirkton



## NEW HOME SCHOOL PROGRAM THIS FALL

I am excited about a new outdoor education program for home school children starting this fall. Consisting of six sessions that will meet once a month from September to March, the “home school nature study course” is for children in grades kindergarten through 5th grade. This hands-on program is on a 3 year cycle with the themes of: animal habitats, soil, and the world of water. Exploring the world of water is this year’s theme and canoeing the lake, examining turtles, and ice fishing are just some of the exciting activities that are planned.

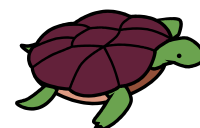
Another exciting aspect of the program is that it is a joint venture with our sister Camp Amigo. Amigo has been so gracious to allow Friedenswald to use their home school program. Cheryl Mast, the Outdoor Education Director at Amigo, and I have been working on improving Amigo’s curriculum and also adapting it for use here. Both camps will also benefit from having the other camp’s O.E. director as a staff member. I am very excited about this new joint project and the many opportunities it will provide.

So if you know of families who might be interested please contact me by phone, via email [brad@friedenswald.org](mailto:brad@friedenswald.org) or by going to Friedenswald’s home page [www.friedenswald.org](http://www.friedenswald.org) and click on the home school link for registration forms and more information.

~ Brad Cogdell

## CAMP NATURALIST BLOG

If you’re interested in camp’s wonderful wildlife then check out “The Camp Naturalist” Blog on Friedenswald’s website for the most current nature photographs and information. You can find links on Camp’s main page or you get there directly by going to: <http://gocb.wordpress.com/>.



**‘PEACING’ IT TOGETHER**

The past 7 weeks at camp are not what I would, off the top of my head, describe as peaceful. Exciting, busy, hectic, tiring, challenging, fun, chaotic, invigorating....all those terms come to mind, yet peaceful....I don't know. Camp has been filled with people; people of all ages, tall, small, quiet, noisy, long time Friedenswalders, first time attenders. All of them hustling and bustling in and out of camp, playing, learning, laughing, fellowshiping, resting, romping. People, people, people.

We spent the summer with these people tracing paths others took to peace as well as discovering paths we could create to help bring about peace. The summer was

a wonderful time of learning about ourselves and how peace could be taken and shared, spread around in our day to day lives.

Yet part way through the summer I realized that amidst all the hustle and bustle, I was in fact surrounded by peace this entire summer. Peace in the campers and families walking the paths with me, peace in the staff and summer staff with whom I worked and peace in the world around me. I forgot, what I think we all sometimes forget out of fear or comfort or sadness or preoccupation, that peace is people and the willingness to create relationships with each other. Peace is not a thing, but a dynamic between people. A dynamic

that moves us to make sure we care not only for ourselves, but for all those around us. I got a taste of peace this summer at camp. The challenge for me (and the rest of us too) now that the summer is over is to share the peace we started here at camp with other people wherever I may be.

~ Colin Rusel



**Special thanks to Dave, Beth, Elam & Maggie Maurer** for spending their sabbatical summer with us! Dave is a pastor at Grace Mennonite Church in Pandora, Ohio. It was great to have you here!

**CHANGES ABOUND AT CAMP FRIEDENSWALD**

**THANK YOU, PETE AMSTUTZ!**

This past May, Pete announced his resignation from Camp, after three years as Maintenance Director. While here, he used his varied skills to make many improvements to the camp facilities. A favorite staff memory is when Pete was so excited about having a new generator installed. He tested it several times before it was needed and could hardly wait to use it for the first time. When that time came during a heavy storm, he flipped the switch and...nothing!

Pete is now working for Hope Builders in Elkhart, while Portia continues working at Camp in the office.



**THANKS FOR YOUR VOLUNTARY SERVICE, SIMEON PAULSON!**

If you want to grow in life, you must always be searching for those things that stretch you outside of your comfort zone. Being chased by a deer, learning to ski, making maple syrup, learning to wood carve, seeing 4-6th graders mesmerized by the wonders of nature, seeing the first flowers of spring break through the ground, and catching my very first perch, were some of the highlights of working at camp for the past year. Camp is amazing, but there have been some things that have been difficult. Deerflies, whiny campers, mice and isolation can throw extra challenges into life at camp. All these things and more have helped me to step out of the comfort zone with which I was so familiar. The most profound lesson I have learned is that we as Americans live way above our need. Living simply is simply better.

As for the future, my time at camp is finished on August 15. Rebekah and I will be moving to Fort Wayne to again step out of our comfort zones. I have accepted a position as a program director at Science Central. Rebekah will be employed as Activities Assistant at Golden Years Homestead. We are looking forward to being involved at Maplewood Mennonite Church. As we move on, we are excited about what God has in store for us.



**WELCOME BACK, PENNY YARMAN!**

Once again I find myself back in the Peaceful Woods. Since I've worked for the past 5 directors (I missed Dave Moser as interim), I figured it would be good to help break in the new one. ☺

I'm looking forward to working with Justin and the other great staff here and am excited about renewing old friendships and making new ones.

**Previous Camp Experience:** Wilderness Wind, Ely, Minnesota

**Positions Held at Friedenswald:** Everything except male counseling  
**Current Position:** Maintenance Director



**WELCOME, LUKE PENNER!**

**Position:** Maintenance/OE Assistant  
**Hometown:** Indianapolis, Indiana  
**Home Church:** Shalom Mennonite  
**Interests:** Outdoors, camping, fishing, hiking, sports, motorcycles  
**Camp Experience:** Two summers  
**Why He Likes Camp:** Camp combines everything I love in life.  
**Favorite TV Show:** The Cosby's  
**Favorite Movie:** The Swiss Family Robinson

**Little Known Fact:** I got the chicken pox when I was a senior in high school.



**THANK YOU, JEREMY BRAUN!**

We say goodbye to Jeremy who has served three summers on summer staff and one year as Maintenance/OE Assistant.

Jeremy's highlight has been watching people enjoy themselves on their vacations. One of his funniest memories is when Ellie and Vicki asked him for a jack so they could remove their golf cart from a brick on which the cart was "mysteriously" placed.

Jeremy will be working at Wakeside Marine in Elkhart. He leaves camp with this advice for Luke: Most things at Friedenswald can be fixed with a hammer and a leatherman!



**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.....Maintenance Assistant  
 Ellie Solano.....Food Service Director  
 Vicky Solano.....Housekeeper/Kitchen Assistant  
 Matt & Deb Hickman.....Guest Group Hosts  
 Dave and Marlene Suter.....Volunteers



**WISH LIST**  
 \*Tennis racquets  
 \*Fishing reels  
 \*Microscopes  
 \*Binoculars  
 \*Electronics “expert” for  
 Outdoor Education project

**Board Members**

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

**ATTENTION SCRAPBOOKERS!**

Don’t miss our second annual fall retreat on October 20-22, 2006. This will be a “crop only” weekend with plenty of time to work on your albums. Scrapbooking, meals and lodging will all be in Lakeview Lodge.

Vendors will be available with supplies to purchase and order.



If you can’t make it in October, plan to attend our Spring Scrapbook Retreat on March 2-4, 2007!

**Need to contact us?**

Phone: 269-476-9744    Email: [info@friedenswald.org](mailto:info@friedenswald.org)  
 Fax: 269-476-9745    Web: [www.friedenswald.org](http://www.friedenswald.org)

❖ 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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