

## *An Attitude of Gratitude*

❧ ❧ *From the Director* ❧ ❧

The leaves are changing colors and the air is feeling cooler. Fall is a season of change. Nature is transitioning from the season of summer with much activity to the winter season where everything is slowing or dormant. Our camp programming feels a little like this as well. We are just finishing up our last week of Outdoor Education after which we will have a break before our Winter Youth Retreats. But, like our natural surroundings that are still alive and working, we are busy with the planning of future events and next year's program visioning. It is truly a great time to put energy toward this vision and see how Camp Friedenswald can continue to meet the needs of so many people that visit.

Yesterday, all of our camp staff went down to Nappanee, Indiana, to help with cleanup efforts from the tornado that struck a little over a week ago. It is amazing that something like that can touch down and destroy as much as it did with only minor injuries. As we drove through town, we could see many of the homes and businesses that were damaged or destroyed.

As we worked for residents that were affected, I was struck by the reality that is so often true: the buildings that surround us and that we claim as our own have an immeasurable impact on us. When someone's house is damaged or destroyed, it is an emotional event, to say the least. These buildings do not define us, but they certainly do shape us. As the people of Nappanee and other areas rebuild and vision for what is next, I have to bring this thought back to Camp Friedenswald and what it means here in the Peaceful Woods.

I would like to reflect on the last year with an attitude of gratitude. The past year has been a year of accomplishing work projects. We have had several years of envisioning projects that are needed to keep Friedenswald growing and improving. And so, this has been a year of building. These buildings will become the structures that shape and nurture our ministry here at Friedenswald. This growth could not be possible without you. Thank you for what you have done and continue to do in making Camp Friedenswald what it has been in the past, continues to be in the present, and will be in the future. We hope that this *Friedensword* will be a good update for all of you on how things have progressed over the past year.

To our constituents, we are also excited to say that this *Friedensword* is being sent to several hundred of our lake neighbors. We are striving to make more connections with these important people who have also been a large part of camp over the years. If you are one of our neighbors, we hope you appreciate hearing what is happening in the Peaceful Woods and also hope you will share with us how we can meet needs you may have.



Cabins 2 and 6 were the first cabins to come down.



### *In This Issue*

From the Director  
 Lodge Openings  
 A Special Summer Story  
 Winter Youth Retreats  
 Project Updates  
 Fen Viewing Platform  
 What is a Prairie Fen?  
 Meet Our New Program Director  
 Program and Budget Updates  
 Builders Information  
 Staff Members  
 Board Members  
 Wish List

### *Lodge Openings*

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

November 30-Dec. 2	TL, SL
December 7-9	SL
December 14-16	SL
December 21-23	SL
December 28-30	SL
January 18-20	TL
February 1-3	TL
February 29-March 2	TL
March 7-9	TL, SL
March 14-16	TL, SL
March 28-30	TL, SL

Contact Portia for reservations or visit our website at [www.friedenswald.org](http://www.friedenswald.org) for more information.

## *A Special Story from the Summer*

by John Mackey

The week began similarly to the previous weeks of camp. I was the summer assistant program director and had prepared the staff for the less needy and relatively self-sufficient high school campers. The Monday morning meeting was always a time to discuss characteristics of each age group and any problems that could possibly arise. The program director and I had previously discussed a camper who would be attending camp that has had some disciplinary issues in the past.

One of this camper's great qualities, however, was his enthusiasm and love for camp. It had been discussed how to best meet the needs of this person. Our plan worked great and we had few issues during the week.

On Saturday, I was in the office preparing for the departure of campers when he came in and stopped at the front desk. He began to cry and said that he did not want to leave. As I gave him a hug and tried to console him, he continued and said that camp was the only place he felt at home accepted. Another staff member and I comforted him and he went on with the day in a somber mood, knowing he would soon have to leave.

Before he left that day, he said his goal is to one day work at camp and return the love and good feeling he has received. This moment continues to be very powerful to me. The feeling of peace and acceptance is so great a gift. Camp is truly a great place!



*Faces  
from  
the  
Summer  
of  
2007*

## *Don't Miss Our Winter Youth and Family Retreats!*

**Junior High I  
January 4-6**



**Speaker:** Steve Yoder, 1<sup>st</sup> Mennonite Bluffton  
**Topic:** Priceless Insights from Parables  
**Music:** Tim & Sarah Koontz

**Senior High I  
January 11-13**



**Speaker:** Jane Stoltzfus Buller, Walnut Hill Mennonite Church  
**Topic:** Life in the technological world: How do we navigate?  
**Music:** Jeremy Kempf

**Family Retreat  
January 18-20**



**Speaker:** Nina Lanctot, Florence Church of the Brethren-Mennonite  
**Topic:** God Calls Us to CHOOSE LIFE!  
**Music:** Teresa and Kent Duchersmith

**Senior High II  
January 25-27**



**Speaker:** Kevin Wilder, Hesston College  
**Topic:** Blank Yourself  
**Music:** Jess Buller

**Junior High II  
February 1-3**



**Speaker:** Paula Snyder Belousek  
**Topic:** Mission...Ordinary?  
**Music:** Phil Schmidt

**Meet  
our  
New  
Program  
Director**



Jason Harrison is full of life when he is engaging others in their spiritual journey, playing drums or guitar, experiencing nature, or acting goofy. He is enjoying his new job where he can experience all these things. He has studied youth ministry at AMBS and Business Administration at Goshen College.

Rhiannon, his wife, is a high school teacher in Elkhart, Indiana. They are expecting their first baby in March! Jason is looking forward to meeting you and to hearing stories of how you have seen the face of God at Camp Friedenswald.



**Program and Budget Updates**

Our 2007 camping season was a great one. We had a fantastic summer staff and a theme of God's Gifts that was fun to work through and pass on to everyone who came to experience Friedenswald. One reality that I would like to pass along to all of you is that we are having challenges in retaining the same number of campers we once had. This is not an issue specific to Friedenswald but is an issue most camps are facing. We are also experiencing ever rising expenses like so many other organizations. Our health insurance premiums for staff continue to rise as do our utility bills (ask me about our defective electric meter sometime). It seems as though just when we claim an opportunity to save a few thousand in one area there is something else that comes along to absorb those funds in another area.

Overall 2007 has been a good year. However, we are behind in

our operating budget. We would like to enter into 2008 with renewed energy and passion for what we are doing and with a clean financial slate. We would appreciate your consideration for year end gifts as we continue to discern where God is leading us and how we are to continue to grow and change. I would welcome any questions or comments on what camp is currently doing as well as what we can do in the future to meet the needs of you, our constituents.

It is with this attitude of gratitude that I would like to thank all of you for what you have done and continue to do for Camp Friedenswald. It is with this continued passion and energy that Friedenswald will remain a crucial part of faith formation for young people and families alike.

~ Justin Weaver  
Executive Director

**CAMP FRIEDENSWALD BUILDERS ASSOCIATION**

The Builders Association exists to provide both financial and volunteer support for the camp. It also gives Camp a network of people with a variety of special skills and services to call upon and it gives the Board a communications link with its constituency. Financial contributions are used for specific capital improvement projects, such as our cabin or sewer projects. Membership benefits include a free weekend at Camp Friedenswald during the Builders Celebration in July. You can become a Builder by volunteering a minimum of 5 days at Camp and/or an annual contribution in one of the following categories: \$300 or more for adults, \$50 or more for high school/college students, or \$25 or more for youth grades K-8. Call Camp for further information or complete and mail the form below to become a Friedenswald Builder today!

- I pledge \$\_\_\_\_\_ to Builders. A check is enclosed.
- I would like to volunteer. Please add me to your list and call me!
- I would like more information. Please give me a call!



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse/Family \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Permanent Staff Members**

Justin Weaver.....Executive Director  
Jason Harrison..... Program Director  
Portia Amstutz.....Operations Manager  
Brad Cogdell.....Outdoor Learning Director  
Deb Smith.....Registrar/Bookkeeper  
Penny Yarman.....Maintenance Director  
Dale Way.....Maintenance Assistant  
Ellie Solano.....Food Service Director  
Vicky Solano...Housekeeper/Kitchen Assistant  
Matt & Deb Hickman.....Guest Group Hosts  
Colin Rusel.....Guest Group Host

**Board Members**

Kent Yoder (Chair)     Stephanie Company  
Alison King             Scott Preheim  
Jim Eicher               Daryl Martin  
Steve Stenger         Greg Nofsinger  
Steve Yoder

**Wish List**

Heavy-duty jumper cables  
Ready-to-hang picture frames  
(single or collage, larger sizes)  
New Dutch Blitz card games  
New Rook card games  
AA rechargeable batteries  
New ping pong paddles  
New (or gently used) ping pong tables  
Cedar Adirondack chairs for lodges  
User-friendly digital camera  
Powerpoint Projector  
Wax for candle-making

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

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*

15406 Watercress Dr.  
Cassopolis, MI 49031-9532

