

# Camp Alexander Mack

## News from the Director



It used to be easy for me to answer the question, “What is your favorite season?” For me, the answer was always fall. There’s a lot to love about fall. Sunny days are frequent as it tends to be a drier season. So, we can have warm days to enjoy the turning of the leaves and cooler nights for great sleeping, campfires, and stargazing. My birthday is in the fall, and we have Halloween, Thanksgiving, and the preparation for Christmas!

These days, however, I can’t easily answer that question. While I still love the fall, especially its weather, I am equally excited about the other seasons. Each one offers new challenges and wonderful opportunities. Winter is filled with planning, conferences, and working with people. Spring begins the preparation for summer programs and training staff and volunteers. Summer, of course, is full of excitement and laughter with our summer camps. It’s really hard to choose a favorite because each of these seasons is full of meaningful and enjoyable work.

Fall is no different. September is our busiest month for retreats and outdoor education. October brings the Camp Mack Festival, adult camps, and evaluation meetings. November is full of meetings with community groups, our Volunteer Banquet, Get-a-Way Days, budgeting, and preparing materials for the new year.

God reminds us that each season has its place and beauty (Ecclesiastes 3:1). This is true in our lives, and it is true in our faith. The peak of autumn color has passed, and the leaves are falling to the ground. We can make that mean whatever we want, but I choose to think of this time as a nourishing one. The bounty of summer is being harvested not only by farmers in the fields, but by forest animals putting away the fruits of the trees for winter. Nourishment continues by the transforming of leaves and the remains of annual plants into new soil for the next growing season. All of God’s people nourish themselves as they shift activities and give thanks for the blessing of life.

Let us be part of your seasonal growth. We have many opportunities for you to connect with Camp Mack over the next few months. How can we help you connect with God? If you’ve never been here with snow on the ground, you can’t fully appreciate the quiet and peace of this place.

Personally, I love fall. Professionally, I love all the seasons for the anticipation of what God will bring to our ministry, and what you, our family, will bring to the life of our camp!

Happy Thanksgiving. I hope to see you soon.

Gene Hollenberg, Executive Director



# Be Our Guest

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## A Fun and Beautiful Place to Go

I've given a few tours recently, and it's often the best part of my day. Tours allow me to interact with the diverse people that come through the arch at camp and to show them what Camp Mack is all about. Some of the tours recently have been for weddings and retreats, and each seeks to use camp differently, but they come because of the beautiful place we have here. It's a wonderful time of year to be at camp! Even amidst the scattered gray skies and sometimes persistent rain, the colors and sounds of camp remain. Today happens to be a sunny day, and the rays seem to rest



on the leaves, irradiating them to embolden their colors. I looked out of a window in the office the other day and realized the wide spectrum of colors visible out of just that one window. What a joy it is to be in this holy space, experiencing God through nature. Showing people around camp gives me a chance to get out of the office and really feel like I'm at camp. I'm thankful to be here every time I see another gorgeous sunset over the lake or swirling red leaves in the air, and it's exciting to see our guests noticing the beauty, as well.

A recent tour guest exclaimed near the end of the tour, "This must be a fun place to go to camp!" That was certainly true for me, and I hope we can continue to make that true for all who find the treasure that is Camp Mack.

If you hear of someone planning a wedding, wanting to host a retreat, interested in bringing students for a day of outdoor education, needing a place to have a reunion, searching for a meeting place, or some other event, please feel free to have them email or call me!

Email: [deanna@campmack.org](mailto:deanna@campmack.org) Phone: 574-658-4831

Deanna Beckner, Guest Services Director



## Volunteers!



There seems to be a recurrent theme to some of my newsletter articles—volunteers. Well camp would not exist without them. On October 14, Northern Indiana District had a work day here at camp. We had nine volunteers come and help us. Duane and Bev helped me with putting the fascia on the front of Ulrich. We worked on scaffolding two stories in the air and we had a few bees flying around, but we had a good time finishing the fascia. Byron, Charlie, and Mike helped Travis with putting siding on the last porch on the front of Ulrich. When they completed that, we had the front of Ulrich completely sided and the fascia on except for one of the gable ends of a porch. This was a giant leap forward for us to complete one side of this huge building. Since that

time, we have about one day's work left on the back side until we will have completed our goal for this summer. Next summer we will do both ends.

Meanwhile, Norm, Carol, and Harriet worked inside on our dining room chairs. In the course of the summer, our chairs get slimed pretty well. We use a carpet spotter to clean the fabric portions of the chair and just a rag to clean the metal parts. This crew worked their way through about 130 chairs that day. We have since cleaned the rest of the 300 chairs, and now we have a dining room full of clean chairs for our retreat guests. At the same time, Paul worked on our dining room windows. We have a lot of windows down the south side of our dining hall, and they accumulate a lot of little finger prints and bug spots in the course of the summer. We now have beautiful clean windows for our guests to look out upon the fall scenes here at camp.

We had a great day of fun, fellowship, and work, and much was accomplished to keep this place "... a sanctuary where people connect with God". Bless you, volunteers!!

Galen Jay, Facility Director



## Special Note from the Executive Director

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### Strategic Planning

In the last two newsletters, I have shared that we are entering a strategic planning process. So far, the Indiana Camp Board has been reviewing the mission and vision for Camp Mack. The staff has reviewed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (commonly called a SWOT analysis). Then the management staff reviewed the SWOT and recommended four areas for a community planning process.

So, now the community planning begins. We need people who are willing to spend some time over the next few months developing goals and strategies for moving Camp Mack into the future.

The four goal areas are:

- New potential
- Business operation
- Building and facility
- Rearticulating and restating

We want you to be involved in this process. Teams will form and receive orientation during the morning of November 11<sup>th</sup>. Our goal is to have reports ready for the Indiana Camp Board by the end of January, but it might go longer. If you would like to be part of a team, please contact Gene Hollenberg as soon as possible by calling the camp phone number, 574-658-4831, or emailing [gene@campmack.org](mailto:gene@campmack.org).

If you are not able to be part of a team but have ideas on any or all of these goal areas, please share them with us. You can send your ideas to us through email or regular mail.

We really want your input. Please consider how you can be involved.

## Kitchen News

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My family used to go camping at the same little campground every year with a lot of our extended family members. Each family had a designated spot that was “theirs” for the weekend. There was always a potluck for lunch one day. The kids pretty much ran all over the place! We went fishing, caught frogs, played on the playground, and ran from one campsite to another. It was always one of my favorite weekends as a kid. My grandmother would always make a pot of ham and beans in her deep cast iron kettle, and my sister would always have to find something else to eat because she hated ham and beans. Ham and beans and cornbread cooked over the fire is one of my favorite meals, and anytime I think of those camping trips, I always think of that meal.

### Ham and Beans

1 lb package dried northern beans  
ham bone, hocks, shanks or diced ham (about 1 pound)  
2 tsp onion powder  
1 tsp granulated garlic  
6 cups water  
salt & pepper to taste



Rinse and sort the beans for any pebbles. Add the rinsed beans, onion powder, garlic, salt, pepper, and ham to the Crock-Pot. Add water. Cover and cook on low about 8 hours, until beans are tender. Remove ham bone, shanks, or hocks and pull off the meat. Add meat to the Crock-Pot and mix. Serve with cornbread.

*\*I have also used canned beans instead of dried and cooked it over the stovetop with diced ham for a quicker option.*

Vanessa Bohannon, Food Service Director

## Nature Nut News



### Fall Migration

I hear the bugling Kar-r-r-r-o-o-o, Kar-r-r-r-o-o-o call as soon as my door opens and I step out of the van. Sandhill crane migration is in motion, and I am fortunate to experience it each year. We hear the Sandhill cranes at camp a couple times a year, but it is nothing compared to seeing over 10,000 of them at Jasper Pulaski Fish and Wildlife Area near Medaryville, IN. This gathering spot is the largest staging area for Sandhill migration east of the Mississippi, and cranes will reach over 20,000 at peak. They scatter through the day eating out of corn fields in the area before returning at sunset to socialize in Goose Pasture before settling into the shallow marshes for the night. These majestic birds stand three to four feet tall and can be heard over two miles away.



If you have never experienced the awesomeness of Sandhill crane migration, I invite you to attend the Sandhill crane Get-a-Way day on November 11 as we travel to Jasper Pulaski.

Jessie Kreider, Program Director

## Christmas and Holiday Parties



**Camp Mack** is the perfect location to host your Christmas and holiday parties and banquets. Our dining hall has the capacity to host parties of 25-300 people. For banquets, we offer everything from buffet style service to plated dinners. So if your club, business, church, or family reunion is looking for place this holiday season, give Camp Mack a call at 574-658-4831 or email us at [info@campmack.org](mailto:info@campmack.org). We look forward to serving you!



## Camp Mack Wish List

### **Maintenance and Financial Needs**

Camp is still facing a financial shortfall because of unexpected maintenance. Thank you to all who have assisted with your donation. We are still running about \$20,000.00 behind.

We are in need of a 2010 or later model 3/4 ton pickup truck before winter. If you know someone who can help us find one at low or no cost, please contact Gene by calling 574-658-4831 or emailing [gene@campmack.org](mailto:gene@campmack.org).



# Upcoming Get-A-Way Days

***\*Please sign up for Get-a-Way Days 1-2 weeks in advance.***



**November 11, Sandhill Cranes Trip:** Travel with camp to the Jasper-Pulaski Fish and Wildlife area to observe upwards of 10,000+ cranes in the fields as they fly in and dance while traveling along their migration route. Cost is \$20 (snacks included). Come dressed for the weather. Bring binoculars. We will stop for dinner at Christos on the way home (dinner not included in the trip cost). **2:00 p.m.—10:00 p.m.**

**December 2, Wreaths and Swags:** Get started decorating for the Christmas season as you make a traditional Williamsburg Wreath, Christmas wreath, or a swag using fresh greens and fruit to grace your door. Cost is \$30 (lunch and all materials included). **9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.**



**December 2, Christmas Ornaments:** Gain new skills in the woodshop as you make beautiful Christmas ornaments on the lathe. Cost is \$20 (lunch and all materials included). **9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.**

**December 2/3, Christmas Cookies:** Fill your cookie jar for the holidays! Camp provides the ingredients and supplies. You mix the dough, sample cookies, and decorate to your heart's delight. Best of all, camp cleans up the mess! Choose 4 batches of cookies (each batch makes about three dozen cookies). Cost is \$45 (lunch and all baking materials included).

**Choice of 3 sessions: December 2, 9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m./12:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m. and December 3, 12:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m.)**

-For more information, check out Get-a-Way Days at [www.campmack.org/get-a-way-days](http://www.campmack.org/get-a-way-days) or by emailing [info@campmack.org](mailto:info@campmack.org).



# Camp Mack Festival

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**Over \$14,000 raised at the Camp Mack Festival!**

The 2017 Camp Mack Festival was one of our best years! The weather really cooperated with us, and festival goers came from the surrounding communities, as well as our own Brethren. Our net income came to \$14,111.57! What a blessing to camp! Many thanks to everyone that helped in whatever capacity and to all that came to eat and enjoy. Perhaps you did both!



## Upcoming Events at Camp Mack:

### Camp Mack Calendar

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Nov 4	Volunteer Banquet	Dec 31– Jan 1	New Year's Eve Retreat
Nov 7—8	Pastor's Sabbath	Jan 13	Camp Rep Meeting
Nov 13—15	Volunteer Work Days		

### Volunteer Banquet

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**You are invited** to our annual volunteer banquet in recognition of all those who have volunteered in any capacity in the last year (November 2016–October 2017). There is no charge for this event. Join us at Mexico Church of the Brethren (4460 N Mexico Rd, Mexico, IN 46958), **Saturday, November 4.**

Appetizers begin at 4:15 p.m., and dinner begins at 5 p.m.. Enjoy great food, fellowship, and special entertainment by the Boomer Boys. RSVP by calling 574-658-4831.

## Pastor's Sabbath

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**The Sabbath** experience at Camp Mack is a time of reflection, fellowship, personal meditation, and recreation for Church of the Brethren pastors. There will be plenty of time for fellowship with a balance of structured and free time. Guest leadership is Gene Hollenberg who will be sharing on the topic of Adult Education. **November 7-8**. Fee: \$20. Come for a few hours or both days. Encourage your pastoral leadership to attend.



## Volunteer Work Days

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**Volunteers** will work with the Camp Mack staff as we make preparations for winter and do projects around camp. We have planned work tasks for all skill levels and ages. **November 13-15**. Come for a couple hours or all three days. Meals and lodging are available during this event. Anyone under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult. There is no charge for this event.

## New Year's Eve Retreat

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**BEYOND BELIEF!** Why bring in the new year sitting at home when you can be at Camp Mack reuniting with friends from summer and introducing someone new to camp? Camp Mack is the place to be on New Year's Eve as you count down the minutes until the ball drops at our very own "Times Square" event. This overnight event is filled with awesome activities indoors and out, live DJs, dancing, pizza, games, Bible studies, workshops... the list goes on and on!



This event is for all youth in the 6th through 12th grades. **Be sure to register before December 5 to pay the early registration price of \$60 and to be guaranteed a one of a kind event t-shirt.** A scholarship of \$10 is available during the early registration period. After December 5, the price goes up to \$70.

**December 31, 2017– January 1, 2018.** Sunday 2 p.m.—Monday 12:30 p.m.