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Camp Alexander Mack

News from the Director

A wisp of snow falls from a tree in front of Sarah Major. It catches my eye and I see two squirrels chasing one another around and up and down three trees standing against the bitterly cold wind. The snow is still fresh, disturbed only by the tracks of deer, rabbits, turkeys, and other wildlife. There is a quietness as I sit in my office with no one else around on this day after Christmas.

The quiet feels strange after the busyness and rush of Christmas celebrations, but I am taking it as a time to reflect on what this year has brought us. In 2017, the mortgage of the John Kline Welcome Center was paid off. New windows were added to Ulrich House and the front and back were sided, giving that building new life. Jacob's Well was repaired so that it can be enjoyed again by campers of all ages. Our office staff reorganized, and we said goodbye to Mike Kauffman and hello to Deanna Beckner. We thanked Wanda Gall for her service in the kitchen and welcomed Vanessa Bohannon to new responsibilities. The Becker bell moved to the John Kline Welcome Center. A special service recognized the importance of Becker Lodge to the history of the camp and plans to renew the site were revealed. Volunteers placed plexiglass panels over the Good Shepherd Window in Quinter Miller Auditorium to protect it from the weather and flying objects. New programs began and flourished. Connections were made with many congregations, with more to be done in the future. Our volunteer banquet was held at the Mexico Church providing a better opportunity for some to attend. And, of course, guests and campers were served in retreats, camp programs, and special events, connecting with God in the unique environment of this place. A lot has been done to further ministry and meet our mission.

In the midst of this, the Indiana Camp Board and the staff have been working hard to examine our practices. This resulted in listening sessions in each district, a survey of all of our supporters, and the beginning of a strategic planning process. As that process moves on, there will be many new strategies and tactics for us to implement as we meet the needs of all our churches, campers, and guests.

The next event on the Christian calendar is the Feast of Epiphany. Traditionally this celebrates the visit of the Wise Men to the child Jesus, and it represents God's desire to include the Gentiles in the Good News of the Gospel. Jesus brings light to the world, and that light helps us to understand a God who loves all. It is our hope that the work we are doing every day, and the preparations we are making for the future, will continue the promise of Epiphany: The Light of the World that is brighter than the sun reflecting from the snow.

May 2018 bring us all peace. May we all find joy in the promises God gives us and the love revealed in God's great gift.

Gene Hollenberg, Executive Director



A Heavy Time of Year

I have a riddle for you...

Forward I am heavy, but backward I am not. What am I?

Read to the end to find out what the answer is!

This time of year can be difficult for some with the gloomy days lingering on like a long dark tunnel and the sunny ones like flashes of light in the cracks. Seasonal Affective Disorder, or SAD, is what you may think of as the “winter blues.” According to Stanley C Loewen in his article “Effects of Weather on Human Emotions” on healthguidance.org, “This condition is recognized in the 'DSM-IV' – the 'Diagnostics and Statistical Manual' used by psychologists where it is described as a 'specifier of major depression'.” People who experience this may feel a drastic change in mood every winter and can feel the effect on their day-to-day lives. I don’t personally experience much of this, though a dreary day can affect most people’s mood to an extent, but I have friends that do. Some turn to “happy lamps” that emit vitamin D, vacations in sunnier locations, or other mood boosters, but it’s not an easy thing to shake. Depression spans much larger than this, even within weather-related depression, but it may currently be affecting those you know.

Though weather-related depression isn’t as prominent during the summer, the campers that come through the arch at camp sometimes bear heavy burdens. Support can come in the form of an empathetic friend or a listening ear, and sometimes it can just be the knowledge of prayer and support. I hope you’re able to spark up a conversation with a friend or family member this winter and are able to get to know each other more, discovering what each other’s challenges, goals, unique qualities, concerns, and hopes are.

One of the greatest human needs is to know and to be known. Jesus knows us and placed himself in our shoes in order to save us. John 10:15-16 relays Jesus’s words, “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep.” As we begin this new year, know that Jesus is with you and truly knows you—He is your shepherd. I hope you are encouraged by this and share it by action and word with those you encounter.

Feel free to share the riddle, as well!

The answer is: a ton

If you have any questions or concerns for this year at camp, please feel free to be in touch. (Online registration for upcoming 2018 events will be ready soon!) You are a blessing to us, and we look forward to seeing you again!

Happy new year,

Deanna Beckner, Guest Services Director



The New Year!



We have begun the adventure of another new year. What opportunities and challenges will come our way this year? We begin the New Year with some projects from December. We are finishing the work in the apartment kitchen in Ulrich. The floor had some cuts in it and needed replaced. We had a volunteer helping us tear out the old floor, and his family decided to gift us some funds to do a little more. We replaced the drywall and added wainscoting on the bottom half of the walls. We also replaced the backsplash behind the sink and stove with some tile. This really changed the looks of the kitchen. That area is used by summer staff and the health care folk in the summer and some of our retreats in the retreat season.

The next project we are working on is changing the paneling in the entryway of Wampler. The sun had bleached the wood pretty badly on the lake side in front of the deck door, and we had some moisture damage by the entry door. We decided to replace the paneling down the whole hallway between the two doors. We chose to put paneling half way up and finish with drywall. This really lightens the hallway. We had to take down part of the suspended ceiling, so we will probably replace a couple of the fluorescent lights with LED's. Little projects like these really help the appearance of our buildings.

In closing, Deanna and I were able to attend the CCCA conference in Colorado Springs, Colorado in the early part of December. These conferences are such a spiritual lift and great for our professional growth. I always come away with a good feeling that we are part of the Christian community with a mission statement that says "Camp Mack is a sanctuary where people connect with God."

Galen Jay, Facility Director





As I write this, it is negative 5 degrees outside my window. The lake has just frozen over, and the morning sun glitters over its surface. Winter is a great time for activities, indoors and out. Sometimes, for safety, we should stay indoors. But, with proper layering, the outdoors in winter can be a magical place. Remember, cotton kills, so your base layer is a dry layer for warmth and moisture control. Have fun outdoors this winter and be sure to share your winter bucket list adventures with us on Facebook.

Jessie Kreider, Program Director

WINTER BUCKET LIST

**Snowball Fight - Go Ice Skating - Drink Hot Chocolate -
Build a Blanket Fort - Bake Cookies - Go Sledding -
Put a Puzzle Together - Skiing - Make Snow Angels -
Observe Animal Tracks in the Snow -
Have a Campout in Your Living Room -
Write Letters to Shut-Ins - Make Snow Ice Cream -
Catch a Snowflake on Your Tongue - Make Birdfeeders -
Learn to Snowshoe**

Kitchen News

What do you DO all winter?

When I tell people that I work at camp year round, they often ask me what all we do in the winter time. The short answer is everything. The longer answer is that along with serving any guests who are retreating on the facility or preparing for upcoming banquets, the kitchen staff also spends their winter hours working on menus, finding and trying new recipes (the facility and office staff love being our taste testers), and cleaning and organizing. We often find that in the heat and hurry of summer, things get placed in the wrong locations or we get a buildup of grease and dust on our shelves. Winter time is when we work on correcting those issues. Sometimes it's as simple as taking pans or platters out of the storage room and putting them back on the shelf where they belong. But we also use this time to rearrange and make our kitchen as functional as possible, so the hand mixers that only get used two or three times a year may find a new shelf in the storage room to call "home" instead of "living" underneath the baking shelf. Right now we are working on pulling out all of the shelving units in our walk-in cooler. We are wiping the shelves down, cleaning the walls behind the shelves, and mopping the floors underneath them. Our walk in cooler is starting to sparkle! It's so nice to see the fruits of our labors and walk into a shiny clean cooler.



Vanessa Bohannon, Food Service Director



Camp Mack Wish List

We are in need of Team Leaders for the following camps:

Beginners June 6-8

Seekers June 3-8 and July 8-13

Archery June 12-16

Please contact Jessica Kreider at jessk@campmack.org if you are interested in being a team leader, cabin counselor, counselor in training, medical staff, or health check in staff this summer.



GREAT NEWS!



During the summer, camp received an estate gift. After placing a quarter of the gift into endowed funds, the Indiana Camp Board agreed to use the rest of the funds to reclaim the Becker Lodge site and to purchase a camp truck.

The plan for the Becker site is to turn it into a grassy hillside overlooking the lake. This will provide space that can be used for outdoor performances, weddings, and camp programs. An excavating firm has been hired to pull down the remaining walls, fill the open space, and create an easy sloping hill to take full advantage of the view of the lake. It is our hope we can have the hillside open for people to enjoy by midsummer.

Our 2003 pickup truck has been difficult to maintain for the last couple of years. This summer, the bed of the truck rusted to the point that it was resting on the fuel filler pipe and had to be jacked up in order to fill the gas tank. In order to get the best possible vehicle for the future, we went to sales representatives at three local dealerships. Each was given our specifications and asked to write the best possible deal they could give us on a late model, low mileage used truck and a deal on a new truck. We told them that we would start with the best deal and if that truck was the right one, we would buy it. If not, we would go to the next one on the list. Once we had the deals in hand, we prioritized the top three offers.

We only received one used offer. We found that there are not many late model 3/4 ton pickups on the market without a lot of features we don't need, driving up the cost. However, we looked carefully at this deal first. It was a 2014, 47,000 mile truck for about \$5,000.00 less than a new one. This truck would come with a 12 month, 12,000 mile warranty and two and one-half years left on the power train warranty. The new trucks have a 3 year, 36,000 mile warranty and six year power train warranty.

So, we looked at a new Ford F 250. It had all of the elements we needed with a few additional options. It also is a vehicle that has a full warranty and will be under our maintenance plan for its lifetime. The previous truck was purchased used, and we had it for thirteen years. We expect this truck to last at least fifteen.

We are grateful to the Bigler estate for this opportunity to meet some very important needs.

PHYSICAL NEEDS MET IN 2017

In late 2016, the Indiana Camp Board Finance Committee requested a list of important maintenance and facility needs that would have to be met within five years. It was a long list, and it appeared overwhelming as it totaled almost a million dollars in needed work. In 2017, we began tackling that list using regular donations, our operating funds, and bequests. We are happy to report our progress.

Jacob's Well has been completely repaired. Much needed equipment for the kitchen has been replaced. Essential repairs have been made to some of our underground infrastructure, HVAC systems, and fire suppression system. A path from Ulrich House to the John Kline Welcome Center was funded by the Labor Day Family Camp and will be in place before camp begins next summer.

An estate gift is covering the cost of cleaning mildew out of Wampler and installing a central air conditioning system. Another estate gift has provided for improvement of the Becker site and the purchase of a ¾ ton pickup truck. The sale of the old truck should provide enough funds to replace the transmission in the compact pickup truck. Specific donations to the preservation of the Good Shepherd's window in Quinter-Miller Auditorium were added to a grant received from the Efroymsen Family Fund to provide protection and prevent further deterioration of the window. The latest estimates for repair of the window are optimistic that it can be repaired without full removal, significantly lowering its cost.

The North Winona Church of the Brethren in Warsaw has taken on the reroofing of Shultz Chapel as a project, providing funding and promised labor to occur in early summer of 2018. Funding has been provided to create outdoor lighting in the parking area east of the John Kline Welcome Center. This should be completed early in 2018.

Within our regular budget, upgrades have been made to the summer staff housing in Ulrich House, installation of fire exit systems in Ulrich House, repainting of cabins and outdoor restrooms, repair of wall damage in Wampler, and replacement of some lighting with new LED fixtures and bulbs among our regular maintenance and repair work.

Perhaps the biggest financial impact comes with our exploration of alternatives for replacement of the septic system on the west side of camp. This is an expense we know will be coming soon, and through the work of the ICB finance committee and our facility staff, a plan is developing that could cut our cost in this area to less than half the original projection.

All told, a projected list of expenses totaling almost a million dollars last year at this time is now at less than four hundred thousand dollars. This has been possible because of the dedicated work of our camp board, the implementation of our facility staff, and your donations and prayerful support.

Of course, through estate gifts, we have also done considerable work in renovating Ulrich House, and that project should be completed by June.

We still have a lot to do. There is more work to be done on the Good Shepherd's window, and there is a great need for restoration and repair of the murals. We have roofing projects for Quinter-Miller Auditorium, Jacob's Well pavilion, and some cabins. Carpeting is needed in Sarah Major and Ulrich House, and we have some storage needs to be met.

There is a lot going on here at Camp Mack, all of it dedicated to giving our guests the best possible experience so that they find the sanctuary of this space and connect with God!

Upcoming Events at Camp Mack:

Camp Mack Calendar

Jan 13	Camp Rep Meeting	March 3	Team Leader Training
Feb 15-18	Quilt Retreat	March 9	Annual Dinner
Feb 22-25	Scrapbooking Retreat	March 9-10	FLYE Weekend

Camp Rep Meeting

Talking about summer camp and all the programs that happen at Camp Mack throughout the year starts now. We want all camp reps to attend the camp rep meeting on Saturday, January 13, 2018. When you attend, you will have brunch provided for you, you get all the print resources, camp staff will let you know about any important changes, and most important, you get to network with other camp reps to see what special things they are doing within their churches.



Quilt Retreat

This is a unique opportunity for quilters of all ages to gather and share their expertise and love of quilting while enjoying the tranquil scenery of Camp Mack. Bring your sewing machine, UFO's (unfinished objects), and quilting supplies. February 15-18, 6p Thursday (early arrival) to 3p Sunday. Cost: \$123 per quilter arriving Friday night, \$138 for Friday morning arrival, and \$167 for Thursday evening early arrival.

Scrapbooking Retreat

Crop until you drop with a weekend of scrap therapy. Bring the scrapbook you need to finish or may have been waiting for the perfect time to begin. Spread out your supplies and enjoy an uninterrupted time with fellow scrappers. February 22-25, 6p Thursday (early arrival) to 3p Sunday. Cost: \$117 per quilter arriving Friday night, \$131 for Friday morning arrival, and \$146 for Thursday evening early arrival.



Annual Dinner



This is our annual fundraiser dinner to provide support for special projects and operations support. Fee is donation of \$35 per person, \$300 for a table of six or \$400 for a table of eight. Additional contributions are gladly accepted. Please contact our office for registrations. Friday, March 9. Appetizers begin at 6:15p. Dinner begins at 7p.

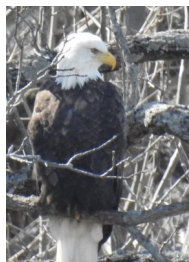
FLYE Weekend

FLYE weekends (Fun Leadership Youth Events) will train youth to be leaders through team building, service, and leadership. FLYE participants will help serve our Annual Dinner this year. These weekends will help youth grow in leadership and may lead them to serving as a CIT (Counselor in Training) or counselor at Camp Mack. The first FLYE weekend is Friday–Saturday, March 9–10. Ages: 14–17. Cost: \$25.



Upcoming Get-A-Way Days

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



February 11—Eagle Watch

Eagle Watch is a program put on by the Upper Wabash Interpretive Center. We will meet at camp and then travel to the Salamonie Nature Center for a brief program on Bald eagle restoration in Indiana. From there, we will caravan to popular eagle locations in the area before ending up at the roost site. Dress for the weather. The colder the weather, the better the Bald eagle viewing. Sunday 1p–10p. Cost: \$20 (Includes travel and snacks)

February 24—Scrapbooking

Join the Camp Mack scrapbooking crew for a day of preserving memories. Work on the book you need to finish, catch up on your journaling, scrap a page or two, gain inspiration from the projects surrounding you, and find treasures at the swap table. Saturday 9a–4p. Cost: \$15 (Includes lunch)



February 24—Board Games

Winter is the perfect time to light up the fireplace, gather up snacks, pull up a table, and bring out your favorite board games of yesteryear and today. Saturday 9a–3p. Cost: \$15 (Includes lunch)

-For more information, check out Get-a-Way Days at www.campmack.org/get-a-way-days or by emailing info@campmack.org.