

THE WILDERNESS WAY



Wilderness Way Camp School Newsletter

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Wendy and Mike's Story:

In 2018 we had to make one of the hardest decisions of our lives – we made the decision to send our daughter to camp? Our decision was multilayered as it required that we, as parents, admit that we were not capable of handling the needs of our daughter. The admission of that realization felt like failure because we knew that God had called us to love this little girl and that He is able to heal all things. We questioned why he would not heal her through the love that we had to offer. However, what we did not realize is that some of the healing that needed to happen was within our family, and that God had given us the gift of parenting her both for her healing and for ours. Before she joined our family, we felt fully capable of managing the “broken places” in our lives, but in managing the broken places we had not allowed Jesus to heal us. It was not until her hurts began to unravel us, that we realized we needed help. No longer were we able to hold things together. As our lives spun out of control, the dream of keeping our family together shattered. We investigated group homes and other options, and in our search for a place for our girl, we called Wilderness Way Girls Camp.

During our first home visit, we saw growth in our daughter’s ability to understand her true identity. For the first time in a long time she was comfortable in her own skin and could make decisions she previously would have struggled to make. Over the next two years, we watched her grow and heal. While she grew, we also grew. The journey of healing is not always beautiful. In fact, throughout the two years there were times that we felt hopeful and times that we felt hopeless. But through the journey we learned so many things. **We learned that failure is an event, not an identity.** We learned that asking for help is not failure. We learned how to understand and respond to trauma in different ways. More than anything we learned to work together with each other in ways that have allowed us to have hope for life. Before our daughter left for camp, the trajectory of her life was not good. Because of her choices, we were concerned that she would not live through her teen years. Now, life is completely different. **She has the tools** to process her pain in different ways. Her life has hope, and I love who she is. I have watched as she has not only been able to work through her own hurts, but she has used the tools that she learned at camp to help many of her friends as they too have gone through hard times. We still have struggles, but they are struggles that we have learned to overcome together.

Turkey In The Hole.....POST COVID.

With a little practiced distancing let's celebrate Thanksgiving together. Please bring a side dish or two and come join us around 10:45 for tours or 11:30 otherwise. The date is Saturday November 20. A big feast, then a big game! Go Tigers! Plan to join us. Please RSVP at 864-972-0611. Feel free to wear a mask, but please wait until next year if you are feeling bad.



Angie (left), returned this summer to help restore a washed trail.

Angie's Story (Wendy & Mike's Daughter):

I made the decision to go to camp in 2018. Before that time, I was living a life I hated. Because I hated the life I was living, I made sure everyone around me hated it too. I got Baker-Acted (look it up) multiple times and day by day was getting worse. I had so much baggage I wasn't willing to put down. I remember the morning my parents sat me down on the couch and laid it straight. I knew I needed help, or I wasn't going to be here much longer. I was so scared and didn't want to, but knew it needed to be done. They gave me 2 options. Hospital or Wilderness Way! Well I knew what hospitals were like and that I wouldn't actually get help. They would make me controllable, so I looked polished on the outside but on the inside just waiting to burst. So, I said I would visit this camp 600 miles away from my home. I went and made the decision to go.

.....I was at camp for 2 years and 1 month. I never thought it was possible to be the person I am today. And that's all because of camp. I can't even begin to thank everyone there and those who have left that made a huge impact on my life. Am I perfect? Ha-hah, far from it! But I see the beauty in life and have the tools to live it successfully. Also, this rarely gets talked about, but the things you get to experience and see while being there are things you wouldn't see or do anywhere else. So, do I regret going to Wilderness Way Girls Camp? Not one bit. Best decision I've ever made. So, if you are looking to come, come ready to fall. Cause you got a camp full of people ready to catch you!

Angie, former Trailblazer

Turkey in the Hole is..... an opportunity to ...

See camp,

Feast and fellowship with our community,

Praise and worship our Creator, Sustainer, and Savior!

Turkey in the Hole is.....Saturday November 20, 2021

Please call camp at 864-972-0611 for details and to RSVP.

Badin Lake Trip

My Favorite Parts of Campsite Are...

The rope swing in the tree. The arched tree that doubles as a pull-up bar. Our four-legged wash-up station. The two trees we can sit against in comfort. Our fireplace. Our dish hammock. The monkey vine swing. The harbor for our canoes. The river bank at sun set. Our quadruped tepee table. Our pow-wow site. Each of these places give me a sense of joy. Maybe it's because I have a lot of fun there. Perhaps it's due to the food that's before me, or the hammock filled with clean dishes used to make a delicious meal. Our wood-working inventions give me a deep sense of pleasure and satisfaction since they are the products of our own hands. One of the most important things in life is finding joy wherever you are, whatever is around you. This helps ground you and helps you have a deeper appreciation for life. Another one of my favorite parts of camp is bed... good night!

--Briana H (day 6 at Badin Lake)



-Reflect on the Past-

If you ever look into a pool of water you can see your reflection in the water. That's what I am doing in this article. I'm taking a look into the "water" and reflecting on our lake trip. The trip started with a good send off of really loud "3 Hows" out of camp from staff and Trailblazers. Off we were! So looking back at that, that was an amazing start to the trip. Once we arrived at Badin Lake we found a perfect campsite and made it very creative with putting tarps up and sticking all our stuff under it. We gathered and lashed dead wooden saplings creating a table between two trees so we could put our cooking stuff on top and cut wood underneath it. We also made a dishwashing station to put our A-tubs on, we built a quadpod table to eat on, complete with benches to sit on. We also made a fun rope swing to swing on. Looking back and reflecting on those accomplishments I see hard work and fun going into it. Those small things we built helped us out really much. If we wouldn't have built those things our campsite would maybe have looked disastrous and chaotic but with these projects it didn't. Reflecting on past things help out so that you know what to do in the future and what you could have done in the past. The next time you're by water look in and take time to reflect back on your life and thank God for what he's done for you.

--Nevaeh C (from day 9 of PF Badin Lake trip)



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Come join us November 20!

Community Thanksgiving at Wilderness Way

What a great privilege we have in hosting a community Thanksgiving celebration!

We have experienced another year of God's blessing and hope you have experienced that, too. On Saturday November 20 we invite you to bring a side dish or two to add to a Thanksgiving meal. Brief tours of campsites begin at 10:45. Trails to the campsites stay open until 11:15. By noon the girls and staff will be leading in songs. The campers and chiefs will dig up the birds around 12:30 and our feast will begin. We'll share a little more after dinner, and before saying our good-byes. If you would like to join in please RSVP at 972-0611. We have some pictures of past Thanksgivings on our website, www.wildernesswaycamp.org.



Baked turkey fresh from the ground!!!