

THE WILDERNESS WAY



Wilderness Way Camp School Newsletter volume 32 number 4 December 2022

The Christmas Season

The Christmas season is upon us. As I write that last sentence, I wonder “What does that mean to different people?” Does it mean a time of rest and reflection from a place of contentment? Does it suggest the season of fun, frivolity, and various Christmas movies? Does it imply the stress of a non-unified family; increasing financial burdens; or a foreboding feeling of never quite reaching some desired goal. Does it mark the completion of another year survived, endured, or enjoyed.

At Wilderness Way, we seek to build into Christmas together throughout the entire session. This year’s Christmas session thus far has been comprised of making gifts for others (some started back in October), cutting Christmas trees, making decorations to go on the trees, reading books, listening to stories, taking advantage of local concerts, parades, libraries, and singing in a local church built back in 1870. Additionally, we have all the wonderful sights, smells, and taste of meals and snacks from our wonderful cooks. The session ends with the Christmas Craft Party and Homesday. Whether your Christmas season is busy, subdued or somewhere off the charts, I would like to encourage you and me to have time to get distracted from all the distractions.

Yesterday was torn between helping a younger camper at

camp making a gift for someone else and listening to a former camper going through a sort of crisis for her. In the process of talking with the former camper, I saw my time dwindle down to the point that I did not have time to help the new camper with her craft.

At the end of the day, Luke 10:25-37 came to mind. The passage of the Good Samaritan during the Christmas season, does it fit? Upon reflection, I am wondering if the priest and the Levite were thinking that they were doing the right thing in season that they saw themselves in. I do not know where the priest’s and Levites’ thoughts or priorities were at – but maybe they were focused on “going about their day”, or “doing what is right and proper”.

The Christmas season may lend itself to one of being busy and doing things. Or present life may lend itself to confusion or turmoil. I would like to encourage us to determine what is truly important to us this season. Are we distracted by the fluff and chaff of what is going on around us. Or are we thankful and blessed? Are we ready to change our present course of action, if there is a need that God is directing us toward? Are we connected to others in a meaningful way?

Merry Christmas, and may God give you wisdom in your next ventures.- John Bowman, Camp Director

Bunkhouse Progress

God is Good! While the permitting process just takes some time, we are excited to see how funds have been coming in. Financially we have most of what we need. The site is leveled and septic approved. Road, water, and power are in place. There is a beautiful drive up to the site. We are just waiting to agree upon adequate water for fire protection. Then we can plan to move forward.



Christmas- Katrina C

Christmas session has finally arrived! Christmas session is my favorite session. We do so many fun activities. Already we have gone to cut Christmas trees and to Chief Flora's for a Christmas vespers. The tree we set up and decorated for the office fell down, so yesterday we tied it to the wall using fishing line and a screw that was already conveniently located in the wall. Last night was our excursion to Chief Flora's. We had a delicious supper of pizza, bread sticks, vegetables, and salad. Chief Flora always has pickled okra and it is a rule that you have to at least try some. I love pickled okra, so that's not a problem for me. After supper we watched "A Homecoming Christmas". It was about Bill and Gloria Gaither inviting a bunch of their friends over to sing. I love singing, so I enjoyed listening to all the different songs. Tonight we are going to a concert in Toccoa Falls, and we have so much more fun stuff coming up in the following weeks.

Going To Chief Flora's- Savanna H

Yesterday we went to Chief Flora's for Christmas vespers. It was so awesome. We had pizza and plenty of it. There were pepperoni, meat lover, Hawaiian, and supreme. It was the best pizza I had ever had. We also had some bread sticks with marinara sauce. After all of the delicious food and good conversation, we started watching a Christmas program. It was called "Christmas Homecoming". It was so beautiful to hear all of those people sing together. I really enjoyed all of those Christmas songs. They really just brought a lot of joy to my heart. A couple of them I have not even heard before. I really enjoyed going to Chief Flora's. I had a really great time watching the program. And a little before the program was over, we had little ice cream squares. When everything was done and we started to go out the door, Chief Flora and her dog, Cookie, gave all of us little candy canes. I can't wait till next year to do it all again.

Crafty Campers and Staff

Our December Session at camp ends with a craft exchange the night before we all go home for Christmas. Each camper, staff and staff family member draws a name in the fall, then creates a craft to give. Native materials of bamboo, logs, stones and slabs are transformed into works of art before the evening of the craft exchange.



Bringing Help and Hope to Hurting Girls and Their Families

Thanksgiving

On Saturday November 19 our camp had the honor of hosting our community Thanksgiving Turkey-in-the-Hole Celebration. Nearly two hundred guests and twenty-five volunteers helped us celebrate the blessings God has provided us. Many former staff and campers, from as far back as 1991, returned to join in on the day. Many folks added to the food spread. The campers sang and performed skits before digging up the turkeys that had been baking in coals in the ground. We all joined in song and prayer before departing for another year.



Mr. Dale Black making hot apple cider



Chief Kristina with a wheelbarrow full of hot turkey

Join Our Ministry

Camp is blessed with a solid staff, but openings do come up. We pray to God for replacements He leads here. Could we be praying for you? You may contact Chief John at 864-972-0611 or through the email address below. We have other support roles available as well.

Left: Campers and a board member relax after the event.





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Bunkhouse Progress
Christmas Crafts
Turkey In The Hole Recap
All Staff on Hand



All Staff On Hand

Greetings from our staff. We were all together at Turkey in the Hole on November 19, so we made a point to snap a picture! The family to the left are Brandon, Jenny, Sawyer, Jack, Allison, and Crew Weaver. Starting behind the baby and going to the right are Kayla and Tim Gibson, Haein Lee, John Bowman, Kristina Weaver, Reba Rogers, Denise Danson, Nikki Barron, Tek Mapon, Bill Collins, Lisa Mapon, Jodie Willey, Susan Willis, Amanda Martin, Annie Kauffman, Lena Weaver, and Emily Horning. *"We wish for you a Merry Christ-filled Christmas"*