

The Wilderness Way

Wilderness Way Camp School Newsletter



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Finding What Matters



Life moves at an incredible pace. Phones buzz, calendars stay full, and constant media fills nearly every quiet moment. We rush from one responsibility to the next, rarely slowing down long enough to notice God's creation, or to listen to what He may be trying to teach us.

At Wilderness Way Girls' Camp, days are intentionally structured with healthy routines and schedules. Routines provide the consistency and stability that are required for the girls to feel safe and secure. Through predictable daily responsibilities, they learn self-discipline, responsibility, and the security that comes from living within healthy boundaries.

Yet, the schedule isn't the goal. The goal is to create space.

For girls at camp, when life slows down, the emotional noise that has been drowned out begins to surface. Without the constant distractions of phones, social media, music, and endless entertainment, the thoughts, hurts, fears, and questions that have been buried begin to rise to the surface. Living in the woods, a girl's senses become heightened by the sound of the wind through the trees, the call of a bird, the warmth of a campfire, or the stillness beside a river.



It is often in those quiet moments that the girls come face to face with the hurt, trauma, or difficult family dynamics that exist below the surface. But they are not left there alone. As the distractions fade, staff are able to speak truths into the lies. They begin to hear a different voice, the voice of the One who says, "Be still, and know that I am God." (Psalm 46:10). They begin to discover that God is bigger than their past, greater than their pain, and faithful in every circumstance, if they will open up and allow God to do so.

Many of the girls who come to camp have believed at a core level that their lives are defined by what has happened to them. But as they hear and see God's Word lived out through camp staff, girls begin to understand a different truth: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." (Jeremiah 29:11). Their trauma does not determine their future. God does.

Chief Annie beautifully captures this experience in the article that follows. During the Pathfinders' trip on the Potomac River she wrote in an article what it felt like to have "all the time in the world." It is a reminder that while schedules are important, they exist not to hurry us through life, but to create the space to slow down, know that He is God, and allow Him to bring healing, hope, and purpose.

Sometimes the greatest lessons aren't found by watching the clock—they're found by forgetting about it for a little while.

"My alarm beeped quietly at exactly 6:00am. I reached out a still half-asleep hand and turned it off. Before my brain could fully face the day ahead, muscle memory took over and began packing up the contents of my tent. It wasn't until my tent was fully down and put away, that I glanced at my watch for the last time. I gave myself an imaginary pat on the back. It was 6:11am and I had just set a new morning record.

My watch was slipped down into the dark depth of my waterproof box next to my Bible and a leatherman. As I closed the lid, time disappeared for me. I drank my coffee as the sun peeked over the trees. We ate breakfast a few minutes after my stomach alerted me of it's emptiness with a grumble. Then, we set off on the rocky South Branch at a time that felt just right.

I lost myself in the beauty of the West Virginia mountains. Sometime in the mid-morning, we entered The Trough, a several mile section of the river that is parallel by steep mountain sides. I watched rocks covered with tiny water snails, glide under the canoe through the clear water. Two deer munched peacefully by the waters edge, totally unbothered by our chatter and singing. I watched the sun crawl across the sky, but I was so captivated by my surroundings, I didn't bother to even guess the hour based on its position in the sky.

By the time we reached our campsite tonight, the bright white strip on my wrist, from my watch, was pink, despite all the sunscreen I applied. But when you decide to watch eagles soar in a gorge instead of looking at a watch, a little sunburn doesn't matter. After the normal responsibilities of setting up camp were done, we enjoyed the rocky peninsula we were set up on for the night. I found an old fishing lure and rigged up a cane pole. I picked a bouquet for our picnic cloth. We ate when it felt right. The sun slipped behind the mountain side, while a few deer rambled across the railroad track on the other side of the river. I made a picture with flat river rocks. We recreated Mt. Rushmore and giggled while Chief Ruby tried to take a picture. The evening slipped away in singing and laughter. Later tonight, I will fall asleep on a bed of river rocks with all the time in the world." ~ Chief Annie K.

None of these moments happen by accident.

Because of you, they are possible. Your faithful prayers and generous support provide a safe, structured place where girls slow down and face the hurts, trauma, and struggles they have long tried to avoid. This is combined with discovering the life-changing truth that God loves them, has a purpose for their lives, and offers them hope for their future.

As healing takes place, **families are given hope, relationships are restored, and lives are changed.**



Thank you for making these moments of healing, hope, and transformation possible.



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Summer is a season of vacation for many, but the mission
of Wilderness Way Girls' Camp continues.

Would you prayerfully consider
making a gift today?

Because of you, lives are being changed.
Thank you for your faithful support.