



CHANGED LIVES

Volume 9 No. 2 Koinonia Camp and Conference Center News Summer 2021

KOINONIA CAMP AND CONFERENCE CENTER



Changed Lives

I was walking through the camp kitchen the other day when I heard a song from the movie "Aladdin". I don't know the entire song... I am not much of a music person... but the lyrics to this one, or at least a phrase, caught my attention. The phrase you ask? ... "You ain't never had a friend like me."

My brain being what it is thought ... this guy must have been to Koinonia Camp. I know it is a "genie" singing to Aladdin but that phrase ... that phrase describes so much of what happens at Koinonia Camp.

So many life-long friendships are ignited during camp activities. Those friendships are kindled while studying God's Word. Every year young and old develop bonfire type friendships through time spent together singing praise, playing games, praying together, worshipping, riding horses, playing paintball and breaking bread together (in the form of pizza sometimes).

These friendships are more than "summer" events, often these friendships are life changing and life-long. Some become best friends that lead to marriage. While others become friends that can be counted on during all seasons of life. The article that you will read later in the newsletter is from a dear friend of mine. Monica has impacted countless lives while being a camp counselor. While her story is about how her life was changed, I want to tell you that she has been used to change many other lives.

Her story is just one among many. Koinonia Camp's purpose statement reads, "Changed Lives". I wish I could share the literally thousands of stories I have heard or experienced of Changed Lives that have happened through friendships beginning at Koinonia Camp.

Please continue to pray for Changed Lives at Koinonia Camp. Please send your stories, of how your life was changed at camp, to us so that we might share your joy. Help us continue to Change Lives by becoming one of our prayer and monthly financial supporters. Contact us at 440-466-1278 to find out more information.

BTW – I think the genie missed the point of friendship ... I think true friendships are built through a common connection with Christ... yet another thing that happens at Koinonia Camp.

Eyes on the Prize

Randy Brookes, Koinonia Camp Executive Director

Every new friend is a new adventure ... the start of more memories!

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By Monica Whaley

If you don't know me, I was a camp counselor for many summers for a week. It was always an amazing time, but I want to share some things about the summer of 2011. Most of what follows was written later that summer. I don't want to try to write about everything that happened; I almost feel like that would diminish it somehow. However, I do want to share what God showed me through some of the amazing people with whom I had the privilege to spend a week.

Supernova!

First, I want to share a little about my small group. There were three of us counselors (I was the oldest by an unspeakable number of years) and 10 campers. From the first activity we did as a group, we were totally bonded.

I have been going to camp as a camper or counselor since I was 12. In all those years, I have never experienced a group like this. They were so open with each other, trusting, caring, encouraging, honest, etc. I cannot find words sufficient to express my awe of them and their hearts. I told them a little of how God touched me through them, but I'd like to share a little more.



I have always had a VERY strong defense mechanism of not feeling things that I deem too painful, sometimes even just mildly unpleasant. You can imagine how well that's worked out. I have worked on it with a few therapists and pastors, not to mention much prayer. I'm certainly better than I was, but noted a few years ago that because of this auto-defense, I have trouble having much compassion for others. I'm afraid that if I let myself feel for others too much, I will just be undone 24/7. Think about it: war, famine, torture, rape, any kind of abuse, the troubles my friends/family may be going through, etc.

I feel things very deeply, so the idea of letting myself feel anything for anyone on that list or beyond just seems to be too much for me to uphold, even with God's help. I've just been too scared to allow it. I've always felt I would drown in an overwhelming flood of despair.



We're making an "S" for the name of our group: Supernova.

Having a past with severe depression doesn't help. If that's where I was when I was turning off my feelings, what would happen if I allowed myself to feel for others? I'm not saying I'm a frozen, unfeeling robot. I just don't let myself feel enough to risk that "coming undone" that terrifies me so.

In some of our small group meetings, the campers shared things that they were struggling with. They were willing to be open and raw with us. God absolutely spoke to me through them.

See "Feeling God ...", Page 3

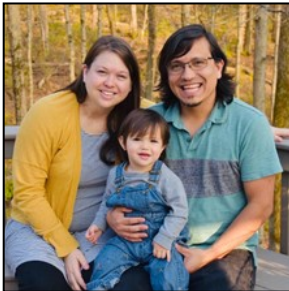
"Feeling God ...", Continued from page 2

I felt so much for them, it could only come out in tears several times throughout the week. I do NOT like to cry in public, but I cried every day that week. And every time (but one I'll address later) was feeling true compassion for someone else.

God used them to push through that wall and help me to see that feeling compassion will not result in me losing it and ending up in the psych ward. I'm not saying that I'm totally over it, but these wonderful, sweet, transparent campers have shown me so much. I cannot thank them enough.

Lilia and Leo

Another privilege I experienced was talking to Lilia and Leo Morales. Lilia and I were actually campers together years ago, though I'm not sure that we ever really hung out together. I always liked her, but God has done some amazing things in her since those days. You can see it in her face as if she glows with His light or something.



She and her husband Leo (who's from Columbia, where they both live) were there to lead worship, and WOW! They were (and still are) very much walking with the Lord in the Holy Spirit and are very open about what they've learned, their struggles, etc. The freedom they have in Him is palpable and incredibly inspiring. I lost count of how many campers wanted to go to Columbia to work with them. Their joy in the Lord is infectious and makes you long for more in your own life.

Bum Tire

Finally, the only time I cried over something about myself. On the last day of any week of camp, after the campers are gone, the counselors get together before we all take off in our separate directions. We

usually ate at Wendy's. We were about to drive off when someone stopped me because one of my tires was flat. I didn't make a lot of money and I was over 3 hours from home.

I was also ridiculously tired. If you've never counseled camp (especially Sr. High Xtreme), you may not know that in the end, you are completely drained spiritually, mentally, physically, and emotionally. Anything that happens is too much, so I started to cry and was really at a loss. I just shut down. I started to get my luggage out so we could get to the spare, which also ended up being flat.

Without the slightest prompt or delay, several folks jumped right in and started caring for me. Laura lent kind words and a shoulder for me to cry on. Logan, Jim, Leo (I may have missed someone since I was busy blubbing) right away assessed the situation and got enough air in my tire to get me to the tire place that Randy suggested. If the tire hadn't had any air, I have no doubt they would have found a way to get my car to the tire place.

Then Lilia offered to ride with me (I couldn't stop crying). At first, my tears were about feeling defeated, lost, hopeless. (As things happened to several counselor cars, we began to feel it was Satan trying to ruin our week since he couldn't touch us during.)



As all those beautiful people reached out to me in love, the tears became those of ... I'm not sure how to describe it... a most deeply felt sense of love, caring, feeling cherished, and many other words that are insufficient. Every time I think about this or talk about it, the tears come again, so I know it wasn't just being tired. [You need to know that I have to repeatedly stop typing as I wipe my tears even now.]

See "Feeling God ...", Page 4

“Feeling God ...” Continued from page 3

I am a VERY verbal person (as anyone can tell you) but trying to put this into words that are full enough truly eludes me and may always. Nevertheless, I am left with example after example of God’s love for me. I will never be able to thank Him enough for giving me that nor my friends for listening to His prompt.



**Published by Monica Whaley.
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Hillside Project



Have you ever witnessed the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly? It seems to take forever for that beautiful flying creature to break through the pliable shell and take flight. But once it is out and flitting from flower to flower, the color, whether it be orange, yellow or blue, is captivating.

The Hillside renovation, while moving along much quicker than a worm changing, still offers a captivating quality. As volunteers scurry around removing walls, relocating wires, destroying concrete to install new water lines, we watch as a new phase of a well-used building becomes reality.

I am not sure of the number of man hours that have been poured into this project and I am not positive how many more hours will be involved in completing the project. What I am sure about is that the volunteers and donations that are making this happen are investing in Changed Lives. This metamorphosis is the beginning of something very beautiful. It is the beginning of a new phase at Camp



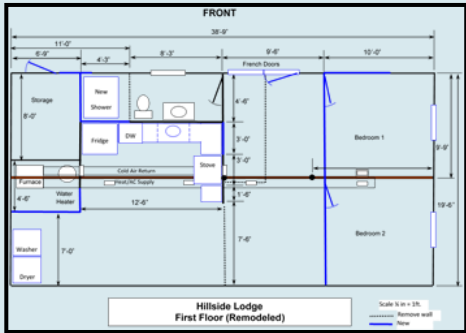


Koinonia. To begin with, this space will allow for a full time staff person to live and serve at camp. In the future, it will become a get away for pastors, housing for missionaries on furlough, or space for session directors to lay their weary heads in comfort.

I am a simple man and don’t fully understand how a caterpillar becomes a butterfly ... I do know that a great deal happens inside that cocoon. I do know that behind this project are many men and women giving of their time talents and resources to make everything happen ... and I am convinced that when it is completed ... the beauty, like that of the butterfly, will be mesmerizing. Thank you to all who have given to make this happen.

If you are interested in helping further the renovations, contact Denny McDonald at 330-705-1850. Denny will hook you up!

Randy

Hillside Project

CARE AND SHARE - ITEMS TO DONATE

Do you want to be a part of the ministry at Koinonia but are too far away for a single day trip, or just don't have the time to commit to being there to volunteer? That's OK!

Below are a few different ways to donate your treasures to Koinonia Camp!

Cleaning Supplies

- 2 Gallon Buckets
- Paper Towels
- Shower Curtains/Liners
- Toilet Bowl Cleaner
- Toilet Bowl Brushes
- Liquid Hand Soap
- Cleaning Rags
- Garden Hoses
- Magic Erasers
- Hand Sanitizer
- Simple Green (Cleaner)

Office Supplies

- Rubber Bands
- Mechanical Pencils
- Standard Copy Paper
- Windowless Business Envelopes
- Legal Pad Notebooks
- Sticky Notes
- Scotch Tape
- White Out
- G2 Pens
- Gift Cards

Kitchen Supplies

- Ziplock Bags (All Sizes)
- Heavy-duty Pot Holders
- Cleaning Rags (Bar Towels)
- Styrofoam Plates
- Simple Green (Cleaner)
- Stick Matches
- Laundry Detergent
- Unscented Bleach
- Dish Soap
- Paper Towels
- Steel Wool Pads
- Scotch Scrubbing Pads
- Magic Erasers
- BUNN Glass Coffee Pots

Maintenance Supplies

- 2 Cycle Chainsaw Oil
- Reciprocating Saw Blades
- Chainsaw Bar Oil
- Paintbrushes (Any Size)
- 9" Roller Pads
- Paint Roller Handles
- Drop Cloths
- Tarps
- Paint Roller Trays
- 4 ft. LED Light Bulbs
- Safety Glasses
- Work Gloves
- Rubber Gloves

- Shop Paper Towels
- Marking Paint
- Extension Cords
- Ear Plugs
- Gift Cards (Home Depot/Lowes)

Programming Supplies

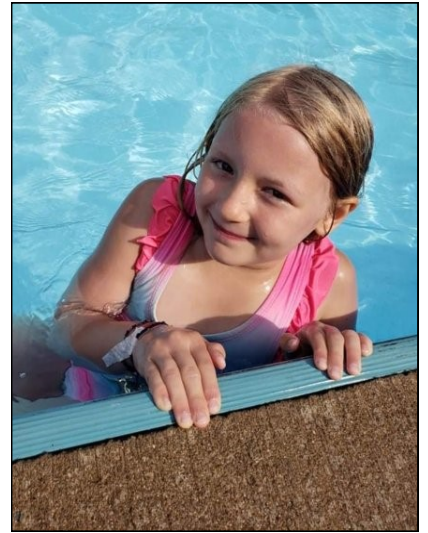
- Rubber Playground Balls
- Basketballs
- Soccer Balls
- Basket Ball Nets
- Volleyballs
- Washable Paints
- Clothes Line or Rope
- Duct Tape
- Panty Hose
- Spray Paint
- Gift Cards

First Aid Supplies

- Band Aids - Large and Small
- Triple Antibiotic Ointment (Neosporin)
- Eye Wash
- Tampons
- Feminine Hygiene Pads
- Aloe Vera Gel
- Sunscreen
- Children's Benadryl



2021 Koinonia Camp Summer Activities



S.W.A.T Saturdays



Sometimes... only sometimes... I wonder if I could ever run out of things to say about Koinonia Camp. And then another S.W.A.T. Saturday happens.

S.W.A.T stands for Servants Working All Together. Without servants volunteering their time and talents Koinonia Camp would be a terrible mess. But thanks to those who give of themselves great things have been happening to our physical facilities.

The name SWAT Saturday is kind of misleading. Not because we don't have Servants and not because we don't Work All Together to make Koinonia Camp special. The thing is not all of the servants come on Saturday.

Just this week we had electricians fixing incoming electrical feeds, plumbers installing new water lines and mechanics working on vehicles. You see the needs of the camp are great and Saturdays are so limited. So some Servants need to help out at other times.

Now we still have the third Saturday every month when we have work teams doing all kinds of fun stuff to improve the camp. At our last Saturday gathering we poured eight yards of concrete, cleared trails with leaf blowers, cleaned up fallen trees and ran weed whackers around buildings.

I guess what I am saying is... Every day can be a SWAT Saturday all you need to do is let us know you want to lend a hand. We have a retired school teacher who has been helping in the kitchen all summer ... What gift or talent is God asking you to use at Koinonia Camp? If you can't figure it out give us a call 440-466-1278 and we will help you.

Hope to see you August 21, 2021 9-12:30 for SWAT (or any other day you have available). *Randy*

Work Projects



Koinonia Carnival



Pumpkins, apple cider, sweaters, hayrides and of course, KOINONIA CARNIVAL!!! All things to look forward to this fall.

It's back... **OCTOBER 9th (10am to 4pm)**. After a year off... not because we didn't want to have it... all of the fun, exciting entertainment a family could ask for will return to Koinonia Camp. Come join us and see all of the changes that have happened in two years.

Horseback rides, wood fired pizza, games, cart rides, tomahawk throwing, canoeing, creek hikes and laughter all open and all FREE. No promises on pumpkins this year... our crop has suffered greatly due to all of the rain.

If you would like to help with this event ... we could use extra hands. Hope to see you all **October 9, 2021 (10am – 4pm)**. *Randy*

Memories



Koinonia Camp and Conference Center
6810 Cork Cold Springs Road
Geneva, OH 44041

Summer 2021



Visit the Koinonia website
(christiancampohio.org)

SWAT SATURDAYS

**Third Saturday of every month
at Koinonia Camp**



**Servants Working All Together!
Contact the camp for more info!**



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Please consider helping future generations of campers at Koinonia by including the camp in your estate planning. Thank you!