Camp Wakonda's Quarterly Newsletter Jul-Sept 2021

THE BEAM

What a Year!!

If you are reading this, you know the powerful impact that Wakonda can have in the life of a child! This summer, campers learned about God, how to live and serve with others, and about how God has uniquely shaped them.

Want to hear more? We are attaching our 2021 Camp Wakonda Report on the second page of this newsletter so you can hear about all of the exciting work done at Wakonda over the last year. If you read nothing else on this newsletter, read the 4th paragraph of this report, which tells how one camper's life changed from their time at camp. God has been at work this summer!

Fall at Wakonda

As we finish our summer season, we are looking forward to welcoming a variety of groups this fall. In addition to groups like Malone Chorale and Boy Scout Troops, we are excited to welcome some adults to camp through: "BASIC: A Men's Retreat," "Wakonda For All" (aimed at campers of all ages), and a new "Wakonda Staff Weekend" (for current & former Wakonda staff). Check out the website to see dates and learn more about these events!

Long-Range Taskforce

The Wakonda Long-Range Planning Taskforce is has been working hard over this summer, developing a 5-year Goal Plan for camp, as well as designing a new Camp Wakonda Board. They will be continuing this work into the fall. This is exciting and challenging work, so please hold them in prayer!

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Shalom!

2021 Camp Wakonda Report

What a year! But Camp Wakonda is stronger for the excellent work done by so many throughout the pandemic. Many thanks to our incredible alumni and donors for helping us to make our 2020 budget. And a special thanks to Brian & Melanie Husted for their incredible dedication to the camp over the last year and a half. Bonnie Wiggins has done a phenomenal job as our transitional chair, leading the Wakonda Intentional Faith Taskforce as they have been developing a five-year goal plan and designing a new Camp Wakonda Board. Kathryn Nutt brought her expertise and guidance to the role of Program Director. And by God's grace (and many of your prayers!), we had a wonderful Head Cook in Pat Moore. I give special thanks for our great volunteers, who support camp through hands-on projects and training for our leaders: Scott Sproul, Rick Angeli, Adam & Bonnie Wiggins, Jennie George, Kevin & Jen Anderson, the Hudson family, and so many others.

During the year that we did not have our regular camp program and guests, Camp Wakonda welcomed 45+ families, as well as multiple Boy Scout troops. We were also able to accomplish some long-deferred projects: repairing the beach drainage system, upgrading the water well, replacing several cabin exhaust fans, painting the windows on the Health Center, installing a new roof on one outpost building and repairing the roof on the other, repairing one cabin roof, adding screen doors to the Hoover Building, replacing a urinal, and repairing various odds & ends all around camp.

The big exciting news: after a year away, we are in the middle of running our camp program and welcoming guest groups this summer! Campers, guests, and parents have all adapted to our COVID precautions (masks in the lodge, meals at the pavilion, cabins in pods, a drive-thru drop off and pickup) – and Wakonda is as exciting and impactful as ever. Campers are getting to know the God of creation in powerful ways. This year, we are focused on prayer practices that draw each of us closer to God (both at camp and in our daily lives).

We got a letter recently that shared how one teenager, after her first time at Wakonda, was deeply touched by her time at camp. Her mother wrote, "We were saying our good nights the evening she arrived at home and she said, 'this just feels so weird – I should be out in the woods playing games with my new friends.'" Her mother expressed how much joy that brought her, and more so, when the young woman decided to delete social media from her phone because of her experience at Wakonda.

Wakonda's impact this year is far and wide: we served 134 campers just in our program, plus 20 staff (a group of impressive young leaders from the U.S., Mexico, and Colombia). As guests, we are welcoming Glenoak Golf Team, Boy Scout Troop 265 (x2), Royal Family Kids Camp, East Canton Band, Lake Cross Country, Northwest Band, Jackson Cross Country, Lee Lavery's family, Malone Chorale, BASIC: A Men's Retreat, Wakonda for All (with the Ox Roast!!), Rick Angeli's Cub Scouts & Boy Scouts, and a potential Wakonda Former Staff Weekend. All in all, Wakonda is directly serving over 800 people this season, which doesn't include the lives of family and friends of our campers, guests, and staff. Truly, what a year!

Shalom, my friends. Shalom!

Rev. Benjamin D. George, Pastor & Director of Camp Wakonda