Camp Wakonda's Quarterly Newsletter Jan-Mar 2023

THE BEAM

Full Circle

Hello! My name is Janet (Short) Ziol. I attended Camp Wakonda as a camper and staff assistant in the early 1990's. I was a counselor the summer of 1994. I wasn't a "Christ Pres Kid." Dick Barnard made a Taizé presentation at my church in Massillon, Ohio when I was fifteen years old. I traveled to Taizé that year and it changed my life. I was a counselor the summer of 1994. Dick was in attendance at my wedding and I attended his funeral. Like a lot of alums, I didn't have much contact with Wakonda for many years. I was busy building a career and starting a family.

Several years ago, I received an announcement about renovations completed at Camp Wakonda. I decided to introduce my sons and husband to Camp Wakonda and we traveled 2 hours to tour the camp. That summer, my sons attended for the first time, and I returned to Camp Wakonda as a volunteer nurse. My sons, Thomas (18) and David (16), have attended camp every summer since. They absolutely love it - we schedule our vacations and other activities around Camp Wakonda each summer. I have continued to volunteer as a nurse as well. David once said, "Pastor Ben really knows how to run a camp" as soon as he got in the car to head home. My nephews also attend.

This year, I joined the newly formed Camp Wakonda Board. I am serving on the Alumni Committee and hope to continue the mission of Wakonda and connect meaningfully with alumni. I have truly enjoyed this work so far - especially connecting with old friends and hearing new and old stories about camp. I am so excited about the great things going on at Wakonda. This year, Thomas will join the Staff as a Lifeguard, 29 years after me! In March, Pastor Ben will make a presentation at my childhood church in Massillon, much like Dick Barnard did. It's pretty incredible when life acts in a full circle. I know this is part of God's plan.

I have deep joy knowing my children have trekked the Beach Path, prayed at Vesper Point, and sang songs round the tables in the lodge. I realize the importance of camp for so many children and young adults and strive to continue to make the Camp Wakonda experience possible for years to come. I encourage you to reach out and reconnect with Camp Wakonda if you haven't recently. You might find yourself laughing at a story about the old bath houses, reminiscing about the Beach Path, or singing an old favorite song you forgot.

Shalom,
~Janet
Camp Wakonda Board, Alumni Coordinator

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Shalom!

The Last Few Years

We've all come through so much over the last few years (a global pandemic, financial upheaval, etc.). For many, it has been a really hard time, such that it has often been hard to see the good things amidst the challenges. Recently, I had the opportunity to write out a few of the positive things that happened with Camp Wakonda during the last few years, and as I wrote it, I sensed how God had been present in the midst of the hardships. Below is some of what I wrote; I pray that it inspires you to look for how God has been present to you in the last few years:

In 2020, even though camp was closed, Wakonda was blessed to have some donors who provided funds for us to temporarily hire people who had lost their jobs due to the pandemic. In the midst of the shutdowns, camp went through a strategic planning process (over Zoom, no less!), which clarified our core values, and provided us with a vision script and strategic plan that will guide us into the next few years. As a result, through 2021-2022 we have reconfigured our board, which now operates like a true non-profit board and consists of a wider array of constituents.

As the new board is getting its feet, we are also four months into a capital campaign (our first comprehensive one in our 63 years). The goal is $999,000, and as of January 31st, we've raised $521,446. It has allowed us to do some much-needed maintenance - and for the first time since we began, to potentially expand by purchasing a four-acre property next door that has a year-round retreat center on it.

These two simple paragraphs brought me such joy at what God has been doing at Wakonda. I pray you sense that same joy! God is at work! - Rev. Ben George

Support Wakonda With Our Amazon Wish List!

A great way to support Wakonda is to send us items from our Amazon Wish List. There's no need to guess what camp might need or want to make the campers' experience great—we've done all that for you!

CHECK IT OUT!

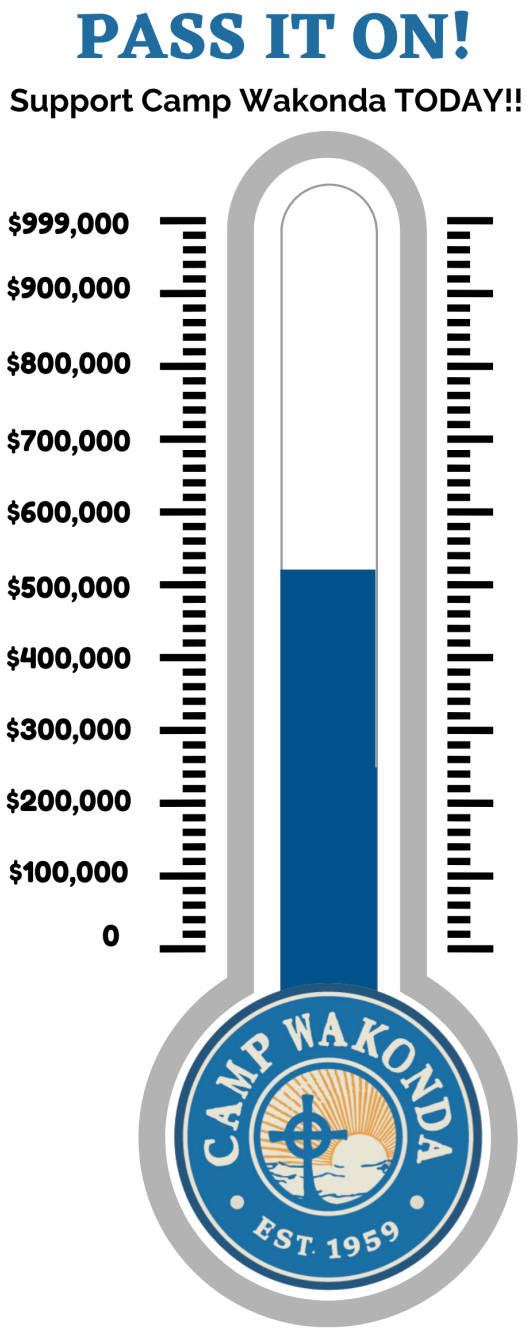
“Pass It On” - UPDATE

Brothers and sisters in Christ: last month, we found out why Pastor Ben was sleeping so well (new generator = no power outages). Now, I have found out that he's not sleeping so well because he has been hearing hammers pounding and saws doing-well, what saws do-saw. When I asked, he told me he was dreaming of all the work being done at Camp Wakonda as a result of your commitment to the Pass It On Capital Fund drive. As of the end of January, a total of $521,000 plus has been pledged and/or gifted to the drive. This is better than 52% of the $999,000 goal.

As a result of your monetary gifts being made, in addition to the projects completed as reported in our last communication to you, we have repaired gutters, replaced the back porch roof on the Director's house, and removed dangerous trees and tree stumps. As we anticipate the weather improving and the beginning of the camp season, Ben has scheduled painting for the cabins, the Activity Building bathrooms, and Director's house porch; upgrading the Health Center, Director's cabin, and the Activity and Maintenance buildings with safer electrical systems; purchased new freezers; and scheduled new siding installation of the Director's house to protect it from further weathering and provide better insulation; and anticipates paving the entry road.

But as you can see from the numbers above, we still have a distance to go to meet our goal and to complete our project list. Please be in prayer for the campaign's success. Additionally, please prayerfully consider your own level of support. God has blessed Christ Church with 60-plus years of Christian camping. We believe the Camp has been a blessing to God through all who have attended and had their faith nurtured, as well as those who have given their lives to Christ as a result of a week at Wakonda.

Shalom, my friends - Pass It On Ministry



Support the “Pass It On” campaign at:

https://give.classy.org/PassItOn

THANK YOU!