Camp Wakonda's Quarterly Newsletter Oct-Dec 2024

The Beam

Happy 65th Birthday, Camp Wakonda!

As we celebrate Camp Wakonda's 65th birthday in 2024, we reflect on its past. In 1959, Camp Wakonda held two one-week sessions. Junior Camp (14 campers/16 staff) and Junior High Camp (20 campers /15 staff). Only the bathhouses at the beach and one of the wash-houses had been built. Tents were rented or borrowed for housing and activities. The future could only be better …

The first Ox Roast was held at Camp in 1967. At the most recent Ox Roast on September 15,2024, many Christ Church members, Camp friends , families, and alumni gathered for a Worship service at Camp prior to the traditional meal. People reconnected, explored the beautiful campgrounds, and enjoyed the delicious birthday cake and cupcakes for dessert! It was a wonderful and joy-filled day.

As we review the Wakonda years, we know that they would never have been possible without the generous donations of money, time, and talent, on the part of so many individuals throughout these past 65 years.

Shalom and see you at Camp!

Carol Fleenor Boeryd / Camp Wakonda Board Secretary

CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Here is a link to the recording of the service that was held at camp on September 15, 2024.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=L1A0ym0fuWk

Hey Wakonda-ites (not sure what other term to use for all of us lovers of Wakonda) : I just want to bring you all up to date since many of you are not hooked into the church news blasts. Our campaign began its third year (of three) with pledges and gifts-made totaling about $660,000.00. You may remember our goal was $1M so we are about 2/3 to our target. I trust you have, where possible, been to the camp recently and seen (if not, pack up and get there soon- Zack is always open for visitors) and/or have read about the different projects from our campaign that have already been completed. But there's more to do and we continue to work to generate the balance of funds needed to do the job. So, if you haven't already made a pledge or gift to Pass It On there's no time like the present !! Make it part of your end-of-the-year tax planning or, if you are retired, making sure you meet the required minimum withdrawal from your IRA/SEP/401. Thanks !

Shalom

Steve Stocker

Summer Camp -

It's been a busy season at Camp Wakonda. We had a new Program Director, McKenna Bellamy, this summer and a great seasonal staff. We saw the program and the staff affecting the lives and perspectives of staff members, campers and parents in transformative ways. Many of the recipients of Campership funds shared with me how appreciative they were for the chance to send their kids to a place like Wakonda. One week, at check out, staff members were crying, campers were crying, and families were lingering long after they had taken care of the check out procedure. One family was leaving and the staff was gathered to run them out. They swarmed the car and gave fist bumps, and final goodbyes. I called out over their heads to the kids and said,

"We are glad you came to camp this week. We love you. We hope you come back." I noticed the mother in the front seat break into tears. She commented to the woman who was with her,

"They've never heard that from anyone before. They've only heard what they do wrong."

Camp is about sharing God's love with everyone that drives up the driveway. They may be campers, family members, staff members, chaperones, locals, or those who are literally lost and looking for lake access.

Wakonda Connectivity -

Since the summer ended I've had the chance to meet and talk to individuals or groups that together cover all the decades of the life of Wakonda. Former staff members, campers, directors, managers, and Senior Sacred Arts alumni have shared their stories with me. Many of them start with saying they just found themselves in the area and felt drawn to camp. I love to see alumni show up out of the blue. I watch them get out of their cars and look around. They take a deep breath, hold it for an instant and then let it out long and slow. The world just falls away in that moment and they revert back to being here, to letting in the peace and comfort of camp. Some of them find pieces of themselves that they have forgotten in the business and distractions out there in the world. Their shoulders lift, they stand a little straighter and their faces brighten. Then they come to their senses a little and look around to find someone to check in with and tell their reason for being at camp.

I think that's a good illustration of what God does with each of us. When we take the time to get away from the distractions and demands of daily life long enough to once again find that peace and connection to God, we can once again be transformed. We can reconnect to who God is and remember how His love changes us, we can allow ourselves to be refilled. It changes how we feel, how we look at the world and the people around us. It changes how we hold ourselves and how we think. Then we snap back to being aware of our surroundings and we go to find the ones we need to talk to, to share the reason we have found, our purpose for being there in that moment.

Who needs to hear the things you have to share?

Zack White

Who does camp rely on for support?

Other ways you can help camp

Ways you can help financially:

Support the "Pass It On" capital campaign at:

https://give.classy.org/PassItOn

Keep an eye on our Amazon wish list

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/EI3P3DR693VV?ref_=wl_share

Sponsor an individual camper, counselor, or work project

Contact Zack for specific details

Pray!!

We need people praying for camp throughout the year. Prayer is our greatest tool. God is the only one who sees all the parts at work that affect camp, how it operates and the effect that it has on campers and guests. Let us all ask God to intervene regularly and in specific ways that come to mind when we think about praying for camp.

Volunteer!

There are a multitude of ways that volunteers can help Wakonda, whether or not you can make it to camp in person. Contact Zack for further details if you are interested.

Share Your Stories!

I would love to hear your stories and camp experiences! I want to better understand the concept of what Wakonda is and how it affects people. I want to continue to find what parts are meaningful to people from different time frames. I want to continue to fill in gaps in my understanding of the history of Wakonda. I also want to fill in the gaps of former staff and former campers. Tell me when you were here, who you remember being here and any contact information for other alumni.

Staffing!

We need staff for next summer. Do you know someone who would be a good fit at camp? Have them contact Zack!

How to contact Zack:

Zack White

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