

Praise:

- ◆ The \$100,000 challenge grant goal was met and Camp Ray Bird's 109 acres of new land has been paid off!
- ◆ With the new land project finished, we can focus on "doing what we do."
- ◆ 68 and 30 campers came back for Fall and Winter Mini Camps respectively.
- ◆ 14 summer staff members (out of about 45) have already been hired for the coming summer.
- ◆ Three camper families have gotten involved at a local church where parents from two of these families are participating in a parenting class.
- ◆ Recently a Sunday School class that Mike teaches was attended by seven junior high boys. Six had been campers and one was a friend who had been invited by one of the other boys.
- ◆ Mike is dating a very special woman named Amy.

Prayer:

- ◆ For campers who are trying to live out their faith at home and school—especially those who are doing their Snail Mail (Bible correspondence lessons).
- ◆ For the remainder of the summer staff that need to be hired. Specifically ask for godly young people who will love our campers well.
- ◆ Wisdom and guidance for new and better ways to follow up on campers.
- ◆ Financial provisions for off-season ministry.



Crack the whip: Always a favorite at Winter Mini Camp.

Is your church or small group looking for a work project?

Look no further! Camp Ray Bird has one for just for your groups size and skill level.

Projects can be done on a Saturday or over a weekend. Some youth groups come and stay at the camp on their spring break and do a project.

Interested? Email shawn@raybird.org



Donations were made...

In memory of Will Streeter

(Dave and Cathy Parker)

In memory of Mrs. Gerry Jakes

(John and Sandy Rader)

In memory of Thayne Garberick

(Ray and Diane Ritchey)

Save the date: Saturday May 11



Who's excited for the end of winter?



The Potter's Wheel

A publication of Ray Bird Ministries "God's Hand Shaping Young Lives"



Inside this edition...

- Now that the new land project is done, "What's next?"
- How churches can be involved at Camp Ray Bird
- Spring Forward details

Left: Everyone is always a little happier when God sends wintry weather in time for Winter Mini Camp.

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What's next?

We made it. With the help of many people, God enabled us to meet the \$100,000 challenge grant allowing us to completely pay off the mortgage on the 109 acres of new land we purchased in December of 2010. This new land project is something we have worked at off and on since 2005.

Now that the new land project is finished, some people have asked and I assume others might be wondering, "What's the next big project?" My answer, "There aren't any." I hope to be done with projects of this magnitude for a *long, long time*. We have worked hard to create the facilities we need over the last ten years and now we have this amazing land where kids can experience God through nature while enjoying all kinds of adventures. So now we don't need to take on any projects as far as I can tell. In the words of the former Indianapolis Colts head coach Tony Dungy, we need to simply "do what we do." What do we do? We host kids at summer camp who would otherwise not be able to experience it. We love our campers and tell them about the God who made them and loves them. We share Jesus with them in whom they can find hope and a real friendship with God. We disciple those who are serious about wanting to follow Jesus. When camp ends we go visit some of them at their homes and ultimately try to help them grow in their faith and get connected to a good church.

Presently we are working to get ready for another summer camp season, Camp Ray Bird's 95th. Even before then we have work to do with campers who came last summer and are still working on their Snail Mail Bible correspondence lessons. Most of these campers were at Camp Ray Bird February 1-3 for Winter Mini Camp.

At Winter Camp campers learned the importance of the role of church in their life as a follower of Jesus. At least, that is what was our planned theme for the weekend. In reality, the campers also learned a lot of different things that we had not planned. For example one cabin learned about loving others. Apparently one of girl campers who I'll call Madison (about nine years old) felt excluded by the other girls in her cabin so the counselor called a cabin meeting to talk about the problem. I do not know all that was said, but I do know that the other girls in the cabin decided to let Madison pick their next activity which they would all do together. From there it wasn't happily ever after. Some of the girls resented the activity Madison chose and this caused some further conflict. You know—the nine year old whining variety. But isn't that reality? Loving others can be messy and hard at times. I smiled when I heard that the following morning some of the others girls woke up early and made a sign expressing their desire to be friends with Madison, much to the surprise of Madison and the counselors. This is the cool stuff we see God do when we do what we do at camp.

I don't know about you but I'm *really* encouraged by this story. It's one thing to teach kids that Jesus taught us to love our neighbor. It's a whole other thing to be able to work with them on **how** to go about loving their neighbor. And this is one of the many things we need to be doing with our campers.

Until the cows come home, we will strive to remain focused so that we can "do what we do."

-Mike Houghtaling director



Save the date:

Saturday April 13th

No, it isn't that time to change your clock. But on April 13th Spring Forward will occur at Camp Ray Bird.



What is it? A dinner at Camp Ray Bird for the purposing of reconnecting with old friends and beginning to connect with new.

What is the goal? To help the community understand the ministry of Camp Ray Bird and to raise money for the 2013 camping season.

Want more information? Email mike@raybird.org

How church youth groups can minister at Camp Ray Bird

Did you know that your church's high school students can help out in the ministry at Camp Ray Bird? Each week we try to schedule a different youth group to be at Camp Ray Bird.

We train these groups of high school students, and then have each of them work directly with a college-aged counselor who works here all summer along with 8 campers. This counseling pair works together to demonstrate God's love while explaining the good news about Jesus. This "demonstration" includes among others things: doing fun things together, eating together, mediating conflict, and applying band aids.

More information can be found at www.raybird.org/involved. You can also email mike@raybird.org or call our office at 574-232-8523.

