

Prayer Requests & Praises

Praise

- 50 campers finished 10 of their snail mail lessons and attended our Winter Mini Camp.
- A great showing of volunteers came to help with the winter mini camp.
- Many people made generous donations this winter helping us to finish the year well.
- 16 of about 45 seasonal staff members have been hired for the coming summer, including several seasoned returners.
- Growing relationships with several campers—some of whom have been attending church with us.
- A camper led to Christ by one of our full-time staff this winter.
- Several campers and staff involved in a Bible study at a local school.

Prayer

- For the remainder of the summer staff that need to be hired. Specifically ask for godly young people who will love our campers and one another well.
- For a few more volunteer youth groups to arrange a trip to camp this summer to serve as co-counselors.
- For campers who are trying to live our their faith amid tough home situations.
- That churches will lovingly welcome campers as they visit for their next set of Snail Mail lessons.
- Please pray that our campers who are doing their Snail Mail Lessons at home would understand God's word in a deep and personal way.
- Please pray that our visits to camper homes would provide meaningful connections and that full-time staff members would represent Jesus well.
- That we continue to grow and improve in the area of following up with and discipling our campers.
- Our Spring Mini Camp is not until April 17th, but pray that many kids would attend and that we'd have the staff to host them.

The Mission of Ray Bird Ministries is to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with Michiana children and teens, nurture those believers, and prepare them for participation in local churches. Ray Bird Ministries specializes in serving families who could not otherwise afford meaningful camping experiences.

Ray Bird Ministries, Inc. [501(c)(3)] would like to extend a very special **THANK YOU** to our Board of Directors for their dedication and support of our efforts. Members include Linda Burrell, Craig Clapper, Phyllis Hueni, Jeff Korhorn, Randy Meert, Kevin Mitschelen, John Rader, Tom Thompson, Don Wierenga, and Keith Walatka.

Donations were made...

In honor of Mike and Amy Houghtaling

(Charles and Sharon Nelson)

In memory of Thayne Garberick

(Ray and Diane Ritchey)

In memory of Dr. R L Parsons

(Douglas & Pamela Callantine)

In memory of Robert Foegley

(Paul & Karen Smiecinski, Keith Lineback, Mary Jane Stanley, Gregory & Kathryn Olson, Donald & Barbara Rowe, Gordon & Judith Polsgrove, Gordon & Janet Luck, Nancy Owsianowski, Jerry & Sandra Titsworth, William & Peggy Johnson, David & Nadine Collier, Jeffrey & Lona Tobey, Trinity Evangelical Free Church, Bill & Kathy Casey, Russell & Denise Graves, Patricia Rogers, Jim & Charlotte Smiley, Charles Mathews, Jim Mathews, Steve and Anne Campbell, Rick and Jane Van Laon, Joyce Waganer, Sue Terry, Dan and Cynthia Vanheste, and Jim and Ruth Banner)

In memory of Bill Webster

(Laura Baloun, Louise Swartz, Tom and Mary Steele, The Stumm Family, Paula Heffelfinger, Richard Paull, Jane Trenkner, and Genevieve Gray)

What are you doing this summer?

Camp Ray Bird is hiring 16 summer counselors for 2015. If you are a graduating senior or older, consider joining our team for a fun, relational, ministry-centered summer. See how God is working at camp and how He can transform kids' lives through you. To learn more or to get an application, visit raybird.org/involved or call (574) 232-8523

The Potter's Wheel



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



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(Left) A group of campers and staff forming a spontaneous conga line during ice skating time.

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www.raybird.org

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From the Director's Desk: A Growing Compassion

Thinking about 2014, there have definitely been some moments where God has confirmed that the work we are doing at Camp Ray Bird is for His kingdom. These moments are like mile markers along a road, indicating progress—progress of a growing compassion and resolve for ministering to the soon-to-be men and women of our community who we call our campers.

The other day I was visiting one of our campers, I'll call Caleb. After socializing for a few minutes with the family, I wanted to speak with Caleb more candidly, so he and I went out to his front porch to talk. The passing cars buzzed by as we shifted from one topic to another in our conversation—his fond memories of Camp Ray Bird, his relationship with God at home, and his feelings of loneliness at school. Wondering more about Caleb's life, I asked, "So, who would you consider to be your best friend?" My question must have touched something deep within him, because with tears welling up in his eyes, he answered, "I don't have a best friend." Caleb's lack of friendship may seem insignificant, but that afternoon my heart dropped. God stirred up in me a visceral compassion for the emptiness he felt and at that moment, there was nothing I wanted more than to empathize with him, encourage him, and invite him to my church. So that's what I did.

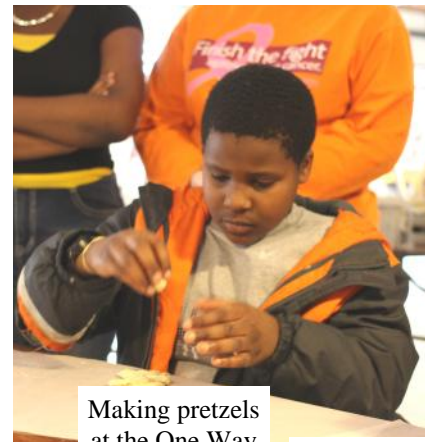
This moment with Caleb was one of several instances over the last year when God seemed to be saying to me, "This is why I have you here." It's a real blessing to have these reminders as plans for our 97th summer get underway.

Winter Mini Camp 2015

About 50 campers came back for the Winter Mini Camp on January 30-February 1. Those who attended completed another set of five Snail Mail lessons focusing on church, praying, and reading the Bible. During the mini camp, we held a few chapel services that included worshipping together and learning about the importance of the church as well as how we can pray like Jesus taught. For fun campers enjoyed ice skating, cross-country skiing, making pretzels, hot chocolate at the One Way Café, making Apostle's Creed bracelets, and playing pit ball.



Making Apostle's Creed bracelets



Making pretzels at the One Way Café



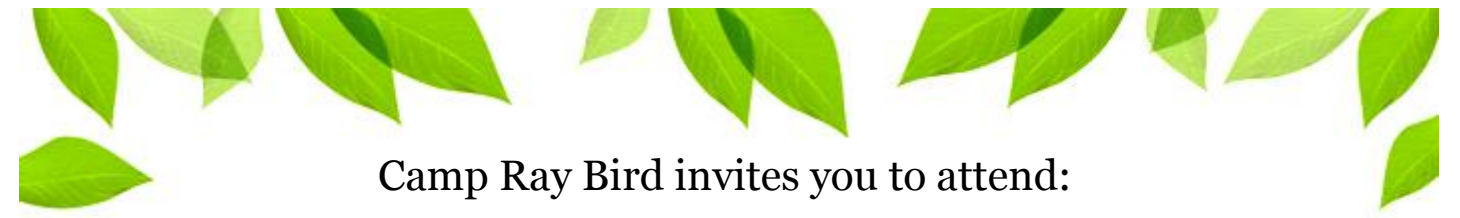
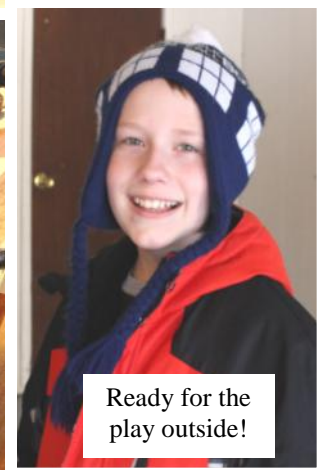
Learning how to ice skate



Cross-country skiing on the lake



Ready for the play outside!



Camp Ray Bird invites you to attend:

Spring Forward

A dinner for the purpose of sponsoring children from lower income homes and introducing new people to the circle of Camp Ray Bird's friends.

Saturday, April 18th at Camp Ray Bird
25765 Edison Rd., South Bend, IN 46628
Beginning at 6:00 PM.

Please join us and bring a friend for a casual dinner, a brief ministry update, and an opportunity to hear from and meet some of our campers.

Kindly RSVP to david@raybird.org
or our office at (574) 232-8523 by Friday, April 10th.



Youth Missions Trips

Looking for a domestic missions trip for your church's senior high youth group?
Our camp could be the place for you!

Each volunteer will serve as a co-counselor alongside one of our summer counselors, staying with a cabin of 8 to 10 campers. Volunteer co-counselors have an opportunity to participate in many activities and games as well as be exposed to the tough realities of urban children. Throughout the week there will be opportunities to share your faith, build relationships, and see how God can use you to impact the life of another.

Visit www.raybird.org/involved for more information or contact us at david@raybird.org or 574-232-8523.

