

Praise:

- ◆ 767 campers were hosted this summer.
- ◆ 64 campers returned for a week of discipleship camp.
- ◆ God provided for another summer: staff, volunteers (including a couple of awesome new churches), and money (many gifts were sent in to sponsor campers and summer workers)
- ◆ \$65,000 has been given for the new land matching grant.

Prayer:

- ◆ Follow up of campers—especially those who came to our discipleship week.
- ◆ For campers who are working on their Snail Mail (Bible correspondence lessons).
- ◆ For the remainder of the matching grand funds.
- ◆ Financial provisions for off-season ministry.

New Land Update

To date \$65,000 has been given to our new land matching fund. We need to get to \$100,000 by December 31st of this year. If we do, a donor will give us another \$100,000 and we will be able to pay off our \$200,000 mortgage on the new land we purchased in December of 2010. (This is Camp Ray Bird's only debt.)

If we fail to get to \$100,000, we will receive no matching funds.

Will you make a gift to help out?



Save the date: Saturday Nov. 10

Fall WORK DAY

Will you join us? We will be raking leaves and doing other odd jobs to get camp ready for winter. Workers of all skill levels are wanted. The work will begin at 9:00 AM. Lunch is provided. Please let us know if you are coming so we can plan accordingly. You can email susan@raybird.org or call our office at 574-232-8523.

Donations were made...

In memory of Robert Parsons (John and Susan Shirrell)

In memory of Thayne Garberick (Ray and Diane Ritchey)

In honor of Bob and Linda Burrell (Kathryn Fallon)

In memory of William O. and Ruth Beghtel (Dr. Donald Brown)



The Potter's Wheel

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



Inside this edition...

- Reflections on Summer Camp 2012
- A Day in the Life of a Camper
- Prayer Requests and Praises
- New Land Update

Left: As usual, the best part about the summer is teaching campers about Christ while helping them experience God's love through us.

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Reflections on Summer Camp 2012

This time of year when people ask, "How was summer camp?" My typical response is simply, "It was good." They respond something like "It was good. That's it?" Then I proceed to tell them that lots of kids came, had a good time, and learned about the God who loves them. "Did a lot of kids accept Christ?" "Well, a lot of them said they did. And for some of them I am sure it was a genuine conversion. But they're kids having a blast at camp and desperately want to tell you whatever it is they think you want to hear. Maybe I'll know for sure in six months."

I don't think I'm becoming jaded. I think that I'm embracing reality. Jesus is very real. And I believe that He calls out to our campers in a special way at camp. But I also know they carry around a world of hurts and that many of them go home to very difficult living situations. One of our girls' counselor summed it well at the end of the summer: "I talked with a lot of kids who had been abused. I wanted to take them all home with me and hide them. But I couldn't." I don't know about all the other people who heard Karie share these words but I wanted to cry. I've been around long enough to know how true her statement was.

Don't get me wrong. It's not all sad. Sometimes we catch glimpses of what God is up to while the kids are at camp. Other times we hear from non-campers. We were encouraged to receive a thank you card in the mail from a mom/foster mom with the following message:

*"To the staff and volunteers:
Words cannot express my gratitude for all you do: For your hard work to make camp happen, for your love towards the kids, for your terrific lessons about the Lord, for your energy, smiles, laughter, hugs, games, food, friendship, peace, joy. God truly uses all of you and Camp Ray Bird to touch lives! To change lives! To save lives! --On behalf of a touched family"*

Camp just ended last month so I am still trying to figure out what happened as far as real fruit being born. I have been very encouraged to received several messages from one of the boys (13 years old) who attended our discipleship week.

"I just wanted to say that if it wasn't for Camp Ray Bird I would be in a sad place and I wouldn't know God. Ever since I was little I never thought God really cared about me and at some points I didn't even think God was real. I turned to a different religion but it didn't satisfy me. I felt there was more. I didn't really know my dad and my step father is mean a lot but I know God knows me and cares about my feelings and loves me more than anyone ever could. Kids make fun of me at school and at one point I thought suicide was the only answer until I came to camp last year. I felt so much love and people cared. Don't get me wrong my mom loves me but with a sibling, a job, and going to college things tend to get in the way. So I just wanted to say thanks. You made a big impact on my life."

A couple of weeks later the same boy wrote:
"Today I went to school and people were mean to me and I remembered what Jesus said that if someone slaps one cheek offer them the other and I can honestly say that I acted the way God wanted me to."

When I read that note I could see that God was doing something deep down in his heart. I trust that He is doing other things that I may never know about. Our job is to pray hard, love well, teach well, and listen. But God does the real work. So yeah, it was a good summer.

-Mike Houghtaling, director

I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.—1 Corinthians 3:6



A day in the life of a camper



In addition to being fun, a week at Camp Ray Bird must be quite a shock in this day and age.

	average American child*	campers at Camp Ray Bird
Minutes per day watching television	270	0
Minutes per day playing video games	80	0
Minutes per day spent playing outside	4	300
Minutes per week of meaningful conversation	3.5 (with parents)	A LOT (with their camp counselors)

*Source: Christian Camp and Conference Association

