



Ninnescah News

SUMMER REFLECTIONS

For every week of camp, the summer staff are asked to write a few sentences, usually a camper story or a significant experience that they had. Every once in a while, we'll get a letter or story from a camper, too. Whether a funny happening or a meaningful conversation, each narrative represents part of a joint faith journey of campers and staff. The reflections included here have been edited for length and shared with permission.

Letter from a camper to a summer staffer

Two weeks ago, I was an atheist. Not an angry one, not even against religion. I mean, I was comfortable to come spend time here knowing [...] that I wouldn't feel much. [You] said you were so happy I was here, and there was a tone or a feeling or a vibe from your voice that was so genuine. I knew it was you, but I also almost felt God welcoming/pulling me back. And I resisted. ...I almost didn't come back this week and it was confusing, realizing apart from being ridden with abusive relationships, depression, and eating disorders, my emptiness was caused by removing this place, people and savior from my life, my heart.

After I forced myself to come back, I almost left again, and you again popped up in a moment of fear and weakness and without words told me to stay. And I did....

To continue, [another summer staffer] coming to me after campfire. She didn't care that I was snotty and gross and sobbing, and she did exactly what I needed even though I didn't know what I needed. She told me of her experiences and of how God shined through her life even through the terrible times. She held my hand and talked me through all my thoughts and contemplations. She was patient and loving and I'll never be able to thank her for that. Also, [...] I looked up and saw the most splendid shooting stars. That's when I finally accepted there is a God and for some reason he loves me without condition.

Last night changed everything for me....

... I hope you know that without you I would be as lost as ever and more than I was two weeks ago. ... I hope in some way I can keep you all in my life. Maybe I won't be able to, but no matter, I'm blessed for the time I've had with you this summer. Thank you.

See Reflections page 2

*Camp Mennoscah has **dates available** for your next meeting, retreat or gathering!*

October 6-7

Main Camp, Retreat Center, Bluestem

October 7-8

Retreat Center

October 13-15

Retreat Center, Bluestem

October 27-28

Main Camp, Retreat Center, Bluestem

October 28-29

Main Camp, Bluestem

November 3-5

Main Camp

November 10-12

Main Camp, Bluestem, Retreat Center

November 17-18

Main Camp

November 17-19

Bluestem

November 23-26

Main Camp, Retreat Center

December 1-3

Retreat Center, Bluestem

December 8-10

Retreat Center, Bluestem

December 15-17

Bluestem

December 22-24

Retreat Center, Bluestem

Weekdays also available. Contact us and schedule your event now! office@campmennoscah.org or 620-297-3290



Reflections of a summer staffer

Camp has played a huge role in my journey since my first time as a camper nine years ago. Some of the people I've met here are now my closest friends, a second family. This is the first place where I really felt God's presence and the place where I finally believed that Christ loved me. This is because of the love and acceptance that I felt and continue to feel daily here. This authentic Christian community has inspired me and supported me through both high points and low points in my life.

I am so inspired by seeing campers interact with each other throughout the week; whether that be through small acts of kindness to brighten a fellow campers day, having the courage to speak in front of their peers at campfire, praising God in worship, and of course, seeing them develop in their faith and accepting that they are loved by God, no matter what. Camp will always hold a special place in my heart, and I couldn't feel more blessed to call this place my home away from home.



Join Us to Celebrate Another Wonderful Year at Camp Mennoscah!

We invite you to Camp Mennoscah on Sunday, October 1 at 5:30 p.m. for the 6th Annual Meeting of the Camp Mennoscah Association! You will have the opportunity to:

- ◇ **Enjoy dinner** on us as we show our appreciation for your support of camp's ministry.
- ◇ **Bid on a meal** hosted by camp supporters in a live auction! (meal descriptions below)
- ◇ **Celebrate** Kelly Stucky's 19 years as Senior High Camp program director.
- ◇ **Listen** to youth campers share about how camp has impacted their lives and faith.
- ◇ **Hear** updated details and progress on the dining hall and kitchen renovation project.

Meals On the Ticket in Live Auction:

Old-fashioned Sunday Dinner (6-10 Guests) Hosts: John & Valerie Klaassen

Enjoy an old fashioned Sunday dinner on a farm east of Newton! Meal will include farm-fed roast, homegrown potatoes, sweet corn, fruit salad, and homemade Colorado peach pie with homemade ice cream.

German Sausage-Tasting Fall Festival (8-10 Guests) Hosts: George & Jeanette Leary, Mike & Ann Doerksen

Test your knowledge of the distinctive flavors of German rope sausage by sampling several varieties in a "blind" taste test. Vote for your favorite and try your hand at matching each to its hometown. Roasted vegetables, hearty bread and a pumpkin dessert will round out the meal.

Mic Drop Lasagna and Cheesecake! (6 Guests) Hosts: Darrin & Karen Hiebert, Kevin Wilder

Lasagna, salad, bread and your choice of cheesecake in a beautiful country setting a few miles west of Hesston. You and your new 5 best friends will be full and happy after this meal!

Bed and Breakfast at Bluestem! (6-10 Guests) Hosts: Mariah Banning and Renetta Gooden

Join Mariah and Renetta for a quick night away in the Bluestem House at Camp Mennoscah! Enjoy a filling supper of homemade bierocks, veggies, and fruit cobbler, and after an evening of games and fellowship, wake up the next morning to the smell and sound of crackling bacon, along with pancakes or french toast. Don't hesitate to seize this special opportunity to spend time at Camp Mennoscah!

We hope to see you at Camp Mennoscah on Sunday, October 1st!

Other Upcoming Events at Camp Mennoscah

Here are some more opportunities this fall to spend time with friends and family out at Camp Mennoscah! Watch your church bulletin, check the Camp Mennoscah Facebook page, or visit campmennoscah.org for updates on these upcoming events.

September 29 - October 3: Work and Play Camp-*Register online*

October 1: Camp Mennoscah Annual Meeting, 5:30 p.m.-*Register online*

mid-October: Taking out the dam (specific date coming soon!)

October 14: Visit Camp Mennoscah's booth at Bethel College Fall Festival!

November 3-5: Fall Scrapbooking and Crafts Retreat 1-*Register online*

November 17-19: Fall Scrapbooking and Crafts Retreat 2-*Register online*

December 16: Summer Youth Camp Volunteer Christmas Party



Valiant Volunteers: Carola Ratzlaff

By Willmar T. Harder

“Cooking at Camp Mennoscah is hard work! But it’s fun because of all the good people,” declared loyal camp volunteer Carola Ratzlaff. Carola fell in love with Camp Mennoscah the first moment she saw it. “It is just the right mix between wilderness and civilization.” Her parents were WWII refugees who fled to Uruguay where she was born. At sixteen, she and her family moved back to Germany, where she lived for seven years and completed nursing school. She longed to return to South America, however, and the German Peace Corps sent her there to serve in Bolivia, where her oldest two daughters were born.

In 1977 she and her family moved to the Buhler, KS area where she still resides. In Kansas two more daughters were added to the family. In 1982 she first attended an event at Camp Mennoscah and later all her daughters attended and counseled there. This past summer three of her grandchildren attended summer camp (one from Kansas, two from Taiwan). Travel and cross cultural experiences are key values for the Ratzlaff family, and Camp Mennoscah provides this by bringing together people from different areas of life. Carola reflected that,

“Many people share that they experience God in nature, but my main experience of God at Camp Mennoscah is through the people (relationships).” The people and her ethic of service keep her volunteering at Camp. She has served for several years as Camp nurse and cook. Attending Mennoscah’s annual Work & Play Camp has resulted in other service opportunities.

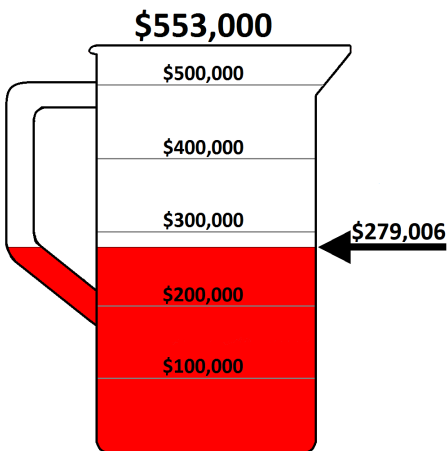
Camp Director Olivia Bartel encouraged her to apply her passion of sewing toward making curtains, beanbags, and other sewing projects.

She attributes her enjoyment and willingness of helping at Camp Mennoscah to Olivia’s positive leadership. When asked about continued volunteering, she unequivocally said, “I am already signed up for the next Work & Play Camp.” A BIG Thank You to Carola for helping make the ministry of Camp Mennoscah a success!



Help Us Fill The Pitcher

We’re over halfway there! Thanks to many generous donors and a \$50,000 grant from The Sunderland Foundation of northeast Kansas, we are



getting closer to fully funding the dining hall and kitchen renovations. We are excited to continue work starting in December!

If you would like to donate, you may send

cash or check to Camp Mennoscah or donate online at: campmennoscah.org/how-to-help/kitchen-renovation

Calling All Volunteers!

Big Things Are Happening at Camp Mennoscah!

Contingent on the successful outcome of our fundraising efforts (see updated progress on left), the remodeling of the Kitchen, Dining Hall & Entrance will begin this December. And WE WILL NEED VOLUNTEERS!!! We invite you to participate as you are able in the demolition and construction. Here is a beginning/tentative schedule:

December 2 - 9: Remove all present equipment and fixtures in kitchen. Remove ceiling and all plumbing pipes and electric as needed.

December 11: Have kitchen area ready for plumbing and electrical contractors.

Further dates will be advertised as we progress. We will make some Saturday work days for those with jobs during the week. If you are interested in working on the remodel project, please respond as soon as possible to Jim Yoder at 316-284-3890 (call or text), jdyoder@cox.net, or to Camp Mennoscah at (620)297-3290, office@campmennoscah.org. Include your name, address, phone, and e-mail address.

Thank you for your reply,

Jim Yoder





Camp Mennoscah

PO Box 65
9458 SE 40th St.
Murdock, KS 67111

Go Green!
Contact us at
office@campmennoscah.org
to receive the newsletter
by email!

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
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Newton, KS

Camp Mennoscah Wish List

Items can be purchased at smile.amazon.com, your favorite local store, or wherever you find them.

- 1/2" Air Impact Wrench \$99.00
Harborfreight.com #62627
- Rubber Mallet 1 lb. w/Fiberglass handle \$6.99
Harborfreight.com
- sets of flat & fitted sheets and pillowcase for full and queen beds--preferably white or off-white
- Corelle tableware--\$120 Corelle.com
livingware-winter-frost-white-50-pc-dinnerware-set/1125143
- Scholarship funds
- Dutch Blitz cards or Qwirkle games
- Rubbermaid food storage containers, 2.5 gal.
- Rubbermaid TakeAlongs, 1 gal.

Thank you!

Camp Sing 2017!

What fun! Over 200 people gathered on August 13 at Faith Mennonite Church for the annual Camp Sing. We sang, heard summer staff share about the importance of camp, and snacked on popcorn and pop. You raised \$3,465.00 for upgrading the sound system! It was an absolute blast to see everyone again and we can't wait until the next time we see you!






www.campmennoscah.org

