

## Camping and Retreat Board Report July 2024

The last month and a half has been exceptionally busy. The summer camping season began with Camp Set up at Cricket Holler. We had 18 volunteers help this year to clean the lodge and cabins, haul items from the storage unit, and to place items where they belonged.

Unfortunately, we canceled adult/child camp due to lack of registrations. It is my desire to look at this camp and see how we might modify it to make it more attractive to the families it serves.

Sewing and Crafting camp was a big hit. We had 15 campers, which is almost double from last year. We had a minor hiccup on Monday when the refrigerator stopped keeping things cold. We moved the food to the fridges in the cabins which made for extra steps in my days and several changes to the menu. The only food lost was due to the mini fridge freezing the lettuce. There was much positive feedback about this camp and the desire was expressed to have another day camp in the Fall. I think the success of this camp was due to incorporating a Winter Sewing and Crafting Retreat.

Between this camp and the next the program and arrangements team held one of their sessions at Cricket Holler.

Junior Discovery and Junior Creative Arts Camps were the following week. We had 5 Junior Discovery campers and 12 Junior Creative Arts Campers. We had a great week. There were many tears when the Junior Discovery campers had to leave on Tuesday evening. Many of them would have loved to stay for the whole week. It was extremely hot this week, but with lots of popsicles and swimming in the afternoons and water balloons the kids managed to continue to have fun and learn more about God and Brethren Heritage as we made a field trip to the Brethren Heritage Center.

Senior Creative Arts week was full of activity but also challenges. We were going to have 12 campers, but the week before one of our campers had something come up and was unable to come. Among other challenges were some campers who were not invested in being at camp and there was the fact that only one of the campers was a girl. These campers left on Thursday. The remaining campers had an amazing time as we met with David Radcliff from New Community Project. The work he does is always inspiring, and he connected with the kids really well. It is amazing to me how well the kids bond and seem more carefree and playful. This age group can be full of angst but camp allows them the freedom to let some of that go and just be. Be themselves, be present to each other, be present to God.

We closed up at Cricket Holler directly following the departure of our campers. I then turned around and went to Annual Conference where I was able to connect with other Camp Directors at the OMA Breakfast.

July 14 is our District picnic to be held at Salem Church of the Brethren. The Delks will once again be serving wood-fired pizza and homemade ice cream.

I am now in the midst of planning some evening activities for the Intergenerational BDM trip July 21-27 which I will be going on with my eldest son.

Then in August Quilt Camp will be held at Bergamo Retreat Center the 6-9. We will have 20 in attendance. A couple had to cancel due to health reasons.

Through all of this our camping and retreat programs strive to provide a safe place for all: a place to be enlivened by God's creation, to be rooted in Christ's love, to grow in community, and to branch out in faith.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Carrie Drees  
Director of CRM