

## Camping and Retreat Ministries District Conference Report 2024

In the beginning of the year Camping and Retreat Ministries/Camp Sugarwood held two weekends of Winter Blast. Fourteen attended the K-5 with accompanying adult and twenty-two youth attended the weekend for 6th grade to 12th grade weekend. Cookie Camp, the previous month, provided enough funds to cover the cost of Cricket Holler and most of the other expenses.

In February we had a Sewing and Crafting Day retreat, held over three days at Happy Corner. There were 19 in attendance. This was a new opportunity this year and it was wonderfully received and will be repeated next year.

We also held our first District Game Day in March. This was held at West Charleston. Thirty people attended. Board games were played all day; it was a fun time of fellowship and getting to know others. We will be holding a second Game Day on October 5.

A half day retreat, the Women's Mini-Retreat was held in April at Salem. Twenty-one women attended. The theme for this retreat was "Created in God's Image."

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.

Our theme/curriculum was Linked by Love from InsideOut Ministries.

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 had 11 campers. There were many challenges this week, but nonetheless it was a blessed week. The campers had an amazing time as we met with David Radcliff from New Community Project. 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.

The District Picnic was held in July at Salem. Dennis and Tammy Delk provided wood-fired pizza and homemade ice cream. About 45 people were in attendance. The bit of rain that we had that day didn't dampen the mood and the children played 9 square in the air in the gym.

In July, the first Intergenerational BDM trip went to Dawson Springs, KY. Helen Wolf and I worked together to promote this trip. In the evenings I planned activities for everyone to participate in. It was wonderful to serve with multiple generations learning from each other.

The summer camping season ended with Pieceful Quilt Camp held at Bergamo. It had nineteen campers. There was much sewing and laughter and support for each other during this camp. God's spirit definitely was moving among us.

The Golf Scramble was held on August 17. There were 23 teams. Many thanks to all who volunteered their time and to those who provided hole sponsorships and door prizes. The total to be split between CRM and BDM is \$7369.61.

Women's Retreat is in September. Twenty-seven women will be in attendance as Barbara Menke leads us in "The Lord's Prayer: Discovering Jesus' Plan for Transformation." A recording of her sessions will be available (possibly for a small fee) in the week or two following the retreat.

October 5, as was mentioned previously will be a District Game Day at West Charleston.

November 1 and 2 will be the new Fall Family Gathering (family camp) at Cricket Holler. Registration is open now.

Cookie Camp, the Winter Blast fundraiser, will be held December 6 and 7 at Salem. Please volunteer some time and/or purchase cookies.

This year the Camping and Retreat Ministries planning committee developed a mission statement and a logo. They are:

**Camp Sugarwood provides 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.**



Thank you for allowing me to serve in this ministry for another year. It has blessed my life and I pray that Camp Sugarwood and all the camping and retreat ministries continue to bless the lives of campers and retreatants of our District. Thank you also to all the churches who opened their space for us to use and to all the volunteers who dedicated their time to planning and running all of the ministry opportunities CRM/Camp Sugarwood provides for the District. It has been a blessing to me to get to know each of you better this year and to work with you in this ministry.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carrie Drees  
Director of Camping and Retreat Ministries  
SOKD CoB