

HIGHLAND LAKES BAPTIST CAMP REPORT

Jim Shields, Team Leader

Highland Lakes Baptist Camp serves as a resource for others to **discover, develop and deploy a transformed life in Christ**. That is our mission; that is our method; that is our ministry. The past year has shown that, once again, our focus has been blessed several times over by the Father. All that was accomplished, all that was undertaken and achieved, all that we served and strived to do resulted in lives transformed and the Kingdom advanced. Our theme for our staff this year was taken from Philippians 1:27, “Just one thing: Live your life in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” Everything that we did this year was with that purpose in mind: Just One Thing.

During the summer, we had the opportunity and privilege to **see the Father work** in and through the lives of hundreds of campers. Each week, at each camp, story after story can be told of how God showed up and impacted not only our campers, but the counselors and pastors who served them. There is just something about the 426 acres known as Highland Lakes Baptist Camp and that something is the presence of God. From the moment someone steps onto the campground, you can be certain that their life will change as they come into His Presence.

A week or a weekend away from the hustle and bustle, the clamor and the chaos of the everyday world and into the peace and presence on the grounds of camp causes each individual to come to grips with a Holy God. Add to that the insightful and relative messages delivered faithfully by the camp pastors, the camaraderie of like-minded acquaintances and new lifelong friends, the excitement of aerial acrobatics performed on the Big Swing and the Blob, the unfathomable deliciousness of a Highland Lakes cookie or apple turnover, and you can't help but believe that this week in your life was like no other! It may just be (and often is) the turning point or starting point for an entirely new outlook on life—true life, abundant life, eternal life!

None of this happens without the input and hard work of **our staff and the many volunteers** who sacrifice time and talent to ensure that the Camp is in the best possible shape to facilitate a great experience for our campers. Hats off once again to Director of Operations Rick Porter for his tireless efforts to make certain everything

runs and works correctly, to former Office Manager Debbie Hymer and current Office Manager Sarah Wickersham for coordinating everything, to Maintenance Director Craig Kratzer for fixing whatever needs fixing, to Linda Collier and her crew of food service people, and to Paula, Shelly, Christie, and the rest of the housekeeping crew. These are the people who day in and day out make the Camp work.

Thanks also to **our wonderful volunteers**: the Indiana and Kentucky Campers on Mission, the Builders for Christ, all the SBC churches who sent folks out to work (HopeSpring of Griffith cleared 18,000 feet of trails!). Because of their offering of time and talent, we were able to accomplish tasks, such as trails cleared, new front fence installed, dorm cabin foyers updated, mission lodge remodeled, “Prayer Ridge” cleared, a new bouldering wall on the challenge course, Retreat C remodeled, kitchen repainted and new lighting added, a new gazebo added to the front pond, a new “Y” shelter built, just to name a few! Folks, if you haven’t seen Highland Lakes in the past five years, you haven’t seen Highland Lakes!

God also blessed us with a number of our SCBI churches and individuals, as well as a couple of organizations, who gave **financial gifts** that have enabled us to do the things already mentioned and to complete a new 6,840 square-foot Worship Center! This building will enable us to bring 400-500 individuals together for corporate worship and conferences. This wonderful facility will give us the flexibility needed to accommodate larger venues, as well as allow us to free up space in the current chapel for multi-use purposes. The building is being constructed debt free, because of the generosity and willingness of so many to give financially to the vision of this project.

Under the direction of Dr. Cecil Seagle, our State Office has also moved into **new office space** just north of the campground. This move is a bold and insightful move, allowing SCBI to make Highland Lakes the missional center that it was intended to be. While the move was not easy or quick, it will help us in being better stewards of our time, talent and resources.

And we are not done. The **next several years** of Highland Lakes will be years of continual growth and vision. Next year, we will host the SCBI Annual Convention Meeting. We continue to find ways to improve the facilities, to increase the usefulness of resources,