

In Touch

from Hidden Acres' Executive Director

April 2014

A place set apart

by Earl Taylor, Vision and Design Director

Lost in the Corn

When I was six months old, my mother was traveling on a hilly gravel road. I was lying in the front seat, wrapped in a blanket. She was taking me to my great aunt's house. When Mom came over the top of a hill, she met a car parked in the the road. The driver was changing a tire; Mom swerved into the ditch. The man with the flat tire rescued her and contacted the emergency crew. They took her to a hospital in Newton. Shortly later my dad arrived and asked, "Where is the baby?" Within minutes, rescue crews were back at the scene. Upon impact, I had been tossed out an open window, landing some distance away. Mom was unconscious from the collision and was unable to explain anything. I was found in the corn field. The only reminder is a scar in my hair line over my left eye. (Others say I landed on my head, which explains a lot of things.)

I was flabbergasted when I heard this story. For 58 years the story went untold to me; I knew about the wreck, but I never knew I was lost in a corn field! As a result of the accident, I did get to stay with my Great Aunt Bessie and Uncle Ernest for six months while my mom recovered from the accident. I attached myself to them until the day they died. I believe Aunt Bessie's love and care during that season played a big part in my life. Aunt Bessie loved the Lord – my mother did not. I can assume Aunt Bessie prayed often for me.

It's 58 years later and I am still thinking of how we influence each other; I think about my role here at the camp and the role the camp plays in young people's lives. I think about how many campers come through the doors and what our impact is on their lives. I know we have influence. I know we have lasting results. I know we produce fruit.

Influence is a powerful thing—to direct; to change; to lead. Webster defines it as "*the capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behavior of someone or something.*" That is a sobering responsibility!

A child arrives at camp on Sunday afternoon, gets placed in a cabin with a couple of counselors and maybe ten other kids; they will stay at camp for a total of 120 hours. I call a week of summer camp a youth group experience on *steroids*—many of the same things will happen at camp as would happen back in the local church; however, it is compressed into an intense block of time.

The counselor begins to know the camper. The camper begins to trust the care of the counselor. Spiritual conversations happen in the cabin and on the lake; they happen in the chapel and they happen on a horse. There are questions, there are answers. The Spirit of God begins to move in the camper's heart, and influence begins to take root. A commitment is made and character and behavior change. *I love our influence in a child's life.*

Aunt Bessie influenced me whether she knew it or not. Hidden Acres sets out intentionally to influence; it is our desire that each child who attends a week of camp has their opportunity to have their "encounter with the Almighty."

We do live in a lost world of people who are wandering as if lost in a corn maze called Life; may we be faithful to use every opportunity available to influence them to understand the work of the Cross and help them in finding their Savior and Lord.

Introducing Christina!



If you have not had a chance to meet Christina Driver, you need to! Christina is our new Adult Ministries Director. She is responsible for all retreats that Hidden Acres sponsors. She selects the speakers, creates the schedule, and makes sure the weekend runs smoothly.

She is also responsible for developing the District Women's Retreat to be held September 12-13, 2014 at Hidden Acres.

*Christina is more than willing to come and speak at your next ladies' event—whether a church meeting or retreat! Please contact her if you would like to have her speak at your event:
christina.driver@hacamps.org*

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No Place to Sit

You should know me by now; I am never without the next project. I like to be consistent.

I wrote to you last fall about the wonderful news of the matching gift for our new dining room and kitchen. We have spent the winter discussing details, looking at other kitchens, and trying to find the right size and scope for the building. We now have the plan.

It's big. It's functional. It will be pretty to look at and beautiful to eat in. This 20,000 sq. ft. structure will give us the space to feed over 700 guests. Five separate dining rooms will allow us the opportunity to host several different groups at one time or one very large group!

Currently we are operating out of a kitchen that was designed to handle groups of about 200; we regularly feed between 500 - 600 every meal during the summer. We eat in two shifts, three times a day during our summer camp season.

I have no place to sit and neither do many others.

Now I need your assistance. The \$500,000 gift needs to be matched. I need your help to make this a reality. Can you help? We have established a donation button on our webpage to make it easy for you to give toward this specific project.

With your help, it's our plan to begin construction on the dining hall this summer. Another pond will be dug, with the excess dirt being used to create a level building site. As with the last nine buildings, we will be installing a geothermal system, which will be located at the bottom of the pond. It would be our goal to have the cement work completed before the first snow flies. Construction of the walls will begin in the spring of 2015.



Just You & Me, Grandparents! Camp June 30—July 2, 2014

Sometimes it's hard to find new ways to create memories with your grandkids. Let us help you! Bring them to Hidden Acres and join us at Just You & Me, Grandparents! Camp (suggested ages 5-12). You'll attend chapel, play games, go on horse rides, swim in the lake, try the giant swing, and eat lots of food!

For more information, please visit our website at www.hacamps.org or call 515-547-2751 to request an informational brochure.

Lodge 139 Update

The paint is drying and the fireplace is being built. Trim and interior doors are being installed.

We are down to the last interior finishes before we move back outside to install the sidewalks and finish up the deck. We will be done by May 31st!

*If you would prefer to receive this newsletter electronically,
please send an email request to Rachele at rachele.rasmussen@hacamps.org.*