



## *Risk*

By Olivia Bartel

Our lives are filled with risks.

There is a risk in speaking up in agreement or disagreement.

There is a risk in truly listening to people with whom we do not agree and a risk in giving a second thought to things we are absolutely certain are right and correct.

There is a risk in saying this isn't how we've always done it, but we see a real benefit in doing it this way.

There is a risk in asking questions about why *are* things being done differently.

Camp Mennoscah is taking risks. We're taking a risk in renovating the kitchen and making changes to the long-standing and traditional entrance to the kitchen/dining hall area. We're taking a risk looking at how to accommodate the Senior High Camp as the camp continues to grow and asking why our PreJunior camps have not grown.

Every summer parents take a risk sending their campers to Camp Mennoscah for a week of summer youth camp. The parents trust us to care for their campers physically and spiritually. They trust us to love and look after their campers in everything that we do.

The summer youth camp registration form has a permissions section which states "I acknowledge that camping entails known and unanticipated risks." There are the known risks. We go swimming, we play Borrow the Balls, we go fishing and trek through the river. We use wood burners in crafts. But campers and staff take risks in so many other ways that likely were not considered when the form was created.

We risk being laughed at or thought to be stupid. We risk our hearts when making new friends. We risk not being seen for who we are—or even being seen for who we actually are. Sharing jokes or the stories of our lives have an element of risk. Speaking up in a cabin group is a risk. Accepting others who are not like us is a risk.



Continued-Page 2 *Risks*

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## *Risk continued*

Throwing yourself whole-heartedly into an activity that is not “cool” is risky. Testing your beliefs, struggling with your faith, and making commitments to God are all risky.

All of these intangible risks are scarier to me than many of the physical risks that we take.

There is a risk in doing new things.

There is a risk in staying the same.

We took a chance this past summer in working to be more inclusive with our activities so that we might better serve campers. We’re making adjustments and looking at new ways to do things because someone took the risk to say, “Hey, there are some easy things

that could be done to make Camp Mennoscah more inviting and more comfortable to some. Can we talk about it?”

This may not seem like much of a risk. But it required trust and long conversations. It required learning new things. We had to change how we viewed activities and how we responded to different situations. It took time and there is still more we can do.

It’s a growing process and growth means risk and creativity. It also means listening to others, hearing from others and getting support from others. We want to hear your ideas. And we’re all here to support each other as risk-takers and part of God’s community in this sacred space called Camp Mennoscah.

## *Long-Term Volunteer*

*By Amy Wedel*

In May of 2016, I graduated from Bethel College with a Bachelors of Arts in Biology. Naturally, many have asked me what my plans are or what I am going to be doing next. To be completely honest, I am not sure. However, I am trying hard not to let that be my focus while I spend a year at camp. Our culture is so engrossed on what is coming up; we often forget to enjoy what is happening in the present.



This morning, I woke up in Murdock, KS. This morning, I drove the short distance to camp. This morning, I heard birds and wind. This morning, I came to the place I have often considered my home away from home. This morning, and every morning for almost six months, I have known that I would be spending my day serving at a

place I love. My work consists of a variety of things – everything from custodial and maintenance, to social media and website updates. Somedays I am in the office all day, other days I barely see my computer, but what I do every single day? Every day I work with great people; every day I experience God’s creation; every day I learn something new; and every day I discover that which I am good at and not so good at.

Camp Mennoscah is a place that makes me strive to be a better leader, a better person, and most importantly a better Christian. I am so grateful for the opportunity to be here and cannot express how much this place continues to impact me. My thanks go out to all the people who helped to make this a possibility and I look forward to the months to come.

## **Are you looking for a place of renewal for your family, small group, or organization this winter?**

Camp Mennoscah is the place for you! Our Bluestem and Retreat Center facilities are open throughout the winter and are available most weekends December to March.

Bluestem has space for approximately 20 overnight guests and the Retreat Center has space for 37 overnight guests

For more pictures of the facilities, please visit [www.campmennoscah.org/about/facilities/](http://www.campmennoscah.org/about/facilities/)

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Schedule your event today!



Bluestem



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**Lessons from Summer**



I've always known that I am a child of God, but spending my entire summer at a place where I am constantly reminded of that helped me to accept me for who I am and to better share Christ's love with others. I am amazed at how big of an impact the campers had on me. I didn't get to spend as much time with them as I'd originally hoped, but the time I did spend with them was so inspiring. Their acceptance of each other and childlike faith challenged me to have the same.  
 —Ashlyn Hamm, Media-Office Assistant



God is such a central part of Camp that I think it's always somehow easier to feel God's presence and talk about spirituality with others in that setting. The lessons that I learned from living and working in such a beautiful community will certainly stick with me and impact the way I interact with people in the future. Everybody in the world wants to be known and loved, and I learned a little better this summer how to show people that they are indeed known and loved. No two people are exactly the same, but every one of us is on this Earth for a reason and is incredibly valued and loved by God. We talked a lot about courage this summer at Camp, and sometimes it takes more courage than we would like to really show God's love. Living in a place where I could see others show unconditional love to campers and staff alike has helped me to know how to do the same.  
 —Roxy Gehring, Music



My time at camp has been amazing, even better than I could have ever imagined. I wanted to come to camp so that I could hopefully make an impact in the lives of campers and that they could come to love camp as I do. But I never knew the massive impact that the campers would have on me. I have grown so much in my faith, and it will make all the difference even when I am not there. We should always remember to hear the music and keep singing.  
 —Josh Carlgren, Assistant Lifeguard



I came to camp hoping to impact campers in some way, but the truth is I've been impacted so much by every camper, staffer, and awesome volunteers throughout the summer. I am blown away by the acceptance and unconditional love shown at camp. I am blown away at the vulnerability, the energy, and the passion for God and for serving others that is so evident every day. I am blown away by how one camp can be a place of refuge and a breath of fresh air for campers and staff alike. This summer has been the best summer of my life, and I couldn't be more grateful for this opportunity. Being on staff has been a constant reminder that there is beauty found in the craziness and that with God all things are possible. Our God really is great, and I'm so thankful I was able to praise Him alongside so many wonderful folks all summer!  
 —Hannah Carlgren, Assistant Lifeguard



There are not words to describe my experiences at camp this summer. Truly, these past few months have been the best months of my entire life. Every day I am learning more about God's love. The closer I walk with Him, the better able I am to bless others. The more of myself I give to others, the more I myself am blessed. These campers have taught me so much about life and love; their passion for life and willingness to share about their joys and hardships has impacted me deeply. God is so good and He is definitely alive and working at Camp Mennoscah.  
 —Keri Kauffman, Head Lifeguard



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 The 2017 Catalog will be sent out in January but you can see the 2017 Camp Mennoscah event calendar now!  
 Go online at [campmennoscah.org](http://campmennoscah.org) or contact us at [office@campmennoscah.org](mailto:office@campmennoscah.org) or 620-297-3014 to request a copy now!





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Christmas with  
Peace, Joy and  
Happiness for the  
coming year!*

*Camp Mennoscah  
Board of Directors  
and Staff*



What a blessing and how blessed we are! We've had so many wonderful guests and campers this year and such an amazing time. Thank you for supporting us through prayer, volunteering, and many other gifts!

Your gifts and prayers help make Camp Mennoscah a great experience for everyone who visits. There are some items that we love to see on our doorstep no matter when (like toilet paper, paper towels, and advanced strength duct tape) and there are specific items listed below. If you are gifting us with your generosity, shop local or give back even more with items purchased through AmazonSmile.com once you've signed up and designated Camp Mennoscah as your chosen organization. A percentage of what you spend through AmazonSmile.com will be donated to us. We put items on our Amazon Wish List throughout the year, so check back often! See additional information and links for these items on our website at <http://campmennoscah.org/wish-list/>



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- **55" Televisions for Main Camp and Retreat Center** (sale price \$500 each)
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## ***Kitchen Update: We've Got It Covered***

*By Michael Unruh*

The warm weather this fall has created a comfortable work environment for the Miller Construction crew working on the addition to the kitchen! They have sure been working quickly to have the new construction enclosed within the next month. It hasn't taken long to put up the exterior walls, frame the interior of the addition, and set the trusses.



One challenge was shingling the roof to create a seamless transition between the existing kitchen and the new construction. But, they were up to the task and have done excellent work! As I am writing, the crew is making progress on the exterior walls, which will have the same stucco look as the existing facility. Once the doors and windows are in place, construction will pause until the end of the 2017 camping season, when the major renovations to both kitchen and dining hall will resume.



For more information, renderings, and a floor plan of this project, please visit <http://campmennoscah.org/how-to-help/kitchen-renovation/>. For regular picture updates, visit the Camp Mennoscah Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/campmenno](http://www.facebook.com/campmenno)) or the Camp Mennoscah website, [campmennoscah.org](http://campmennoscah.org). We are thrilled with the progress of this project and look forward to sharing more updates and pictures with you very soon!



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