



## *Blessing Honor Privilege*

By Olivia Bartel



Every summer ends and there is a sense of relief because I will get more sleep, sadness because all my staffers go home, and a sense of blessing from the awesome campers and volunteers who have been at Camp Mennoscah.

566 campers (including 4 campers who came to camp twice!) spent time with us this summer, learning and growing as part of our camp community and part of God's community. Another 167 young adults and wise adults joined us as volunteers, mentors, program staff, support staff and counselors. Some of them doubled, tripled and multiplied their weeks at camp.

I am with the campers, summer staff and counselors less than I would like to be. I am over the moon when a camper stops to talk to me or when I am "required" to have conversations with the summer staff. Sometimes these folks are returning and beloved campers who have been coming to Camp Mennoscah as long as they have been able to, the older ones moving from camper to counselor to program staff or nurses or cooks. Sometimes these are newer beloved campers who are here for their first year or maybe their second, convinced by a friend or family that camp is the greatest ever.

I get to see these nifty, wonderful folks become so much more during their time at Camp Mennoscah. I see it the

most with the summer staff, perhaps, because I meet with them each week one-on-one and talk with them constantly throughout the day. I see how they open up in their faith, how they struggle with issues and how much they care for the campers and each other. It's a hoot, too, to find the first time camper who was unsure at the beginning of the week bouncing around and even arguing with new friends about whether a 4-square ball was in or out. You can see what being in this sacred space with God's community has done for them. You hope they will take all they have learned and experienced home with them. I hope I see them next summer and the next summer as they delve further into what it means to be a Christian and become leaders. I want to be part of that growth and discovery and everyday worship. But the summer is over.

The last straggling bits of the summer lost & found are stuffed away. We continue to discover things in weird places or returned to the wrong spot. Notes have been taken about needed improvements and repairs. We start dreaming about the upcoming summer.

It is a blessing, an honor and a privilege to be part of this amazing summer adventure. Thank you for sharing that gift with us.



## *Camp Mennoscah Annual Meeting 2016*

By Michael Unruh

What a joy it was to have 45 Camp Mennoscah supporters at the 5th Annual Meeting of the Camp Mennoscah Association! Highlights included video testimonies from campers and staff about seeing God throughout their experiences with people and nature at Camp Mennoscah and sharing the important parts of camp that keep them returning each year. It is clear that people and a safe, caring environment are key elements to formational camp experiences. Jim Yoder also shared exciting plans for the Kitchen, Dining Hall and Entrance project, which is now underway!

## *The Dirt is Flying!*

By Jim Yoder

Plans are moving for the kitchen and welcome entrance additions, remodel of the kitchen and dining hall. The foundation and exterior walls for the addition to the kitchen will be completed before next summer with the interior scheduled to begin the Fall of 2017.

Next month we will reshape the landscape to the east and north of the dining hall to provide proper drainage for the area around the kitchen, entrance and both staff houses. This should fix some problems of the long standing flooding issues in all these areas.

We will go thru 2017 camping season before continuing with the kitchen and entrance renovation. The interior remodel work on the kitchen and front entrance will begin December 2017 and continue through March 2018. During this time the kitchen will be closed.

Depending on funds available, the dining hall renovations could also be completed at that time. A lot of planning has gone on with the Camp Facility Committee in consultation with cooking staff and camp staff.

Architectural plans were presented at the Annual Meeting in September and the enthusiasm for the project was quite positive. The committee is excited to be able to present a workable plan.

We will be looking for volunteers to help with construction on the project. Currently, we are looking for people to add to our database that we can contact when construction schedules are finalized. If you are willing to



add your name, please complete the following form and return to camp or give to your church office and they can relay to us.

*Thank you for supporting Camp Mennoscah!*

*I would like to help with the kitchen renovation!*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Work preferred/skills \_\_\_\_\_

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# Camp Mennoscah, My Thin Space

By Michael Unruh, executive director

From church retreats and summer youth camps as a child, to counseling, summer staff, Mennonite Voluntary Service, and junior high program director as an adult, I have experienced camp in countless meaningful ways. On September 6, I began the role of executive director at Camp Mennoscah. With the days I have spent at camp numbering in the ballpark of 700, starting this new position at camp feels a lot like coming home. Quite literally, my wife Lina and I moved back to Kansas from Indiana in August, where I was taking classes at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary. We are thrilled with the opportunity to be involved with Camp Mennoscah in such a considerable way.

In one of the readings for my seminary class over the summer, author Kenda Creasy Dean introduced to me the concept of thin spaces--places on this earth where the presence of God is so real that the space between heaven and earth feels very thin, as if you could reach right through it. Well, Camp Mennoscah has always been a thin space for me, and I am certain that is true for many

of you as well. It is no coincidence that coming to Camp Mennoscah is rarely a one-time experience. It is no coincidence that our youth include Camp Mennoscah as a crucial place of faith formation in their testimonies. It is no coincidence that camp holds services of baptism in the river many times throughout the year.

As executive director, I look forward to plugging back into the camp community, affirming the wonderful work and formation that is already taking place, and envisioning how Camp Mennoscah can continue being a place of renewal now and in the future. Of course, none of these are possible without the support and prayers of people like you, and we are ever so grateful for that. I am excited to be back at camp and hope to see many of you here in the coming year!



## Small But Mighty

By Olivia Bartel

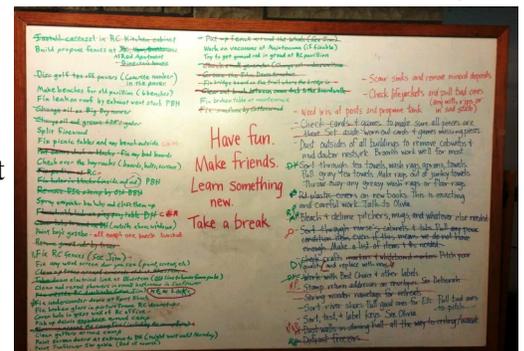
Before Work & Play Camp begins, tasks and projects are written on a whiteboard. People initial tasks they are working on and cross them off when completed. It's gratifying and satisfying to see the increasing number of tasks marked off. A small but mighty group of approximately 10 to 20 people from junior high to over 90 years old attended Work & Play Camp this year. We had a great time.

This year marks the first year that Work & Play Camp was held over a weekend instead of the usual Monday through Thursday timeframe. Over the five days, dedicated volunteers joined us from a few hours to the full retreat to work on various projects. Some were simple and took only time to complete, like threading yarn on name tags. The task of covering the jackets on our new books took careful hands. Fixing the wheels on the ping pong tables took a trip to Kingman. Homegrown beans were snapped, blanched and frozen to be enjoyed later—and we ate some, too.

Whatever task or project being done, our dedicated volunteers were constantly interrupted by breaks. It cannot be denied that we probably would have gotten more done without so many breaks, but we needed them. It got hot. We got thirsty. We would have missed getting

to know people and hearing what they've been doing, if all we did was work. Yes, everyone was here to help out, but we were also here to connect with others and hear their stories. Besides, there were brownies to eat.

We give three cheers to everyone who volunteered, prayed, and gave so generously. We look forward to seeing so many of you at the next Work & Play Camp! Thank you for all you do for Camp Mennoscah!





## Camp Mennoscah

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 **Go Green!**  
Contact us at  
[office@campmennoscah.org](mailto:office@campmennoscah.org)  
to receive the newsletter  
by email!

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 867  
Newton, KS

### Join the Fun!

*The dam will be removed on Sunday, October 16,  
at approximately 2pm. Meet us at the sports shed.*



*People are welcome to participate  
or to watch. Dress appropriately  
and bring spare clothes if you  
would like to change after helping  
or are not sure whether you'd like  
to be in or out of the river.*

*All are welcome!*

## Camp Sing 2016



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