

A “NEW NORMAL” at Virginia Tech

By: Steve Schmitt
Area Director, Blacksburg, VA

Our week at Lake Champion was vintage Young Life! All the kids in camp were treated to the best that Young Life has to offer - a great setting, super food, fun program and hearing about the love of God in Jesus Christ. Many of our kids grew spiritually with some coming to know Christ for the first time. One guy had never been to anything like Young Life camp before and by breakfast on the second day said “I can’t believe how much we have already done. This has already been the best week of my life”. I was so encouraged by the end of the week when he and another guy joined me for the new believers walk with our speaker Pat Cummings.

Pat used various aspects of the camp property as object lessons about how we can walk with Christ on a daily basis. The bridge represented crossing over from death to life and beginning a new relationship with God. The obstacle course provided a lesson in how we can face difficulties in life together. The sand volleyball courts were contrasted with the big rocks along the path to the dining hall as a picture of which foundation we should build our lives upon. At the end of

the week the physical property was as useful in communicating the gospel to kids just as it was the first day by giving kids a great first impression.

I also had several conversations throughout the week with other leaders and staff about the April 16th shootings here in Blacksburg on the campus of Virginia Tech. I am thankful for the care and concern people have expressed to me regarding this event. We are blessed by the fact that neither any of our leaders, nor any of the kids on our trip, were directly impacted by the shootings. It would be sufficient to say that we are getting back to a “new normal”. Things will never be the same. One thing that is the same, however, is that Young Life is built on relationships. As we strive to be “Jesus with skin on” to kids, we are encouraged that He is “the same yesterday and today, yes and forever” (NASB). When it comes to the issue of putting the pieces of life back together again for kids in Blacksburg the basics that Young Life has to offer, culminating in the message of the gospel, are still the most effective means of healing possible. Our week at Lake Champion was a major step in continuing to love kids like Christ and for Christ.



A YoungLife Camp

Lake
Champion®

THE BOLTHOUSE FOUNDATION

by: Marty Heiser, NY Metro Regional Board Member and long-time driver of the Bolthouse Van

What do finishing the carrots on your plate and helping some of the toughest kids in urban Bridgeport have in common? The answer is ... the Bolthouse Foundation.

In 1994, Andre and Lisa Radandt became interested in supporting Young Life in the urban areas of Bridgeport and Norwalk, Connecticut. They began giving scholarships for kids to attend summer camp. As they leafed through the postcards they received from kids who had gone to camp, they heard over and over about kids having, “the greatest week of their life,” and experiencing the love of Christ for the first time. Reading the postcards made both Andre and Lisa want to do more.

It was soon after that they decided to purchase the green Young Life van, through a foundation they direct called the Bolthouse Foundation. In addition to the van, their foundation provided substantial seed money to expand urban work in some of the toughest neighborhoods of the Greater New York Metropolitan Region. What started out as one van has grown into an outreach ministry reaching kids in Brooklyn, “Hell’s Kitchen,” Harlem and the Bronx.

The Bolthouse Foundation is a charitable foundation established by Bolthouse Farms, a company that supplies roughly 45 percent of all carrots consumed in the United States. The next time you are in your local grocery store, make sure to look for Bolthouse Farms carrots and the tasty fruit juices under the Bolthouse label. You can check them out at www.bolthouse.com.



That original green van made countless round trips between Bridgeport, Connecticut, Lake Champion and Saranac Village. After a change in the insurance rules, the seats were taken out and it was used as a truck for various construction projects, so some Young Life alumni could learn marketable skills in the construction industry.

Now, 12 years later, the van’s long life is over, but it is still occasionally visited by its loving followers in the local junk yard. As a ministry, we want to thank the Radandts for their ongoing help and their vision for Urban Young Life and the Lake Champion dining hall project.

So ... continue to pray for Young Life and make sure you finish all the carrots on your plate!

WHAT IF YOU LIVED IN A BUBBLE?

By: Mike Chilcoat, Metro Director of Columbus, OH

I have taken numerous trips to Young Life summer camps over the years, but the trip of June 2007 will remain a most memorable one for me. Seventy kids from Olentangy High School, (suburban Columbus, Ohio), made the trip to Lake Champion in the Catskills of New York for the best week of their lives. Our Campaigner group had stepped up when challenged and invited countless uncommitted kids to join us. Some of the new guys that I had personally forged relationships with during the school year, stayed in my cabin. This group included most of the offensive and defensive lines for the Olentangy football team—a rough group of guys! A couple of them had never set foot in a church before and, consequently, were hearing about Christ for the first time in their lives. I wondered what their response might be. During one of our cabin times, the tone in the room became more serious as guys faced, for the first time in their lives, what the gospel says about our depravity and our separation from God due to sin. A guy named Eric spoke up and asked, “So you’re telling me that everybody has sinned? What if you just never sinned?” I responded, “Well, everyone sins. Nobody is perfect and we’ve all fallen short of God’s perfect standard.” Eric sat silently for a moment and pondered what I had said. After choosing his words carefully he ventured, “What if you lived in a bubble?” Over the years I have fielded lots of curve balls in cabin times, but this

was the first time I had been asked about living in a bubble. I sat quietly for a moment unsure how to respond. Before I could speak up, a guy named Adam chimed in. Adam had been sent to a military school in Kansas the previous year for having a gun in his locker and for selling drugs. He looked at Eric with stone cold sincerity and said, “Yeah, you’d sin if you were in a bubble! You’d be so mad at the people who put you in the bubble that you’d want to kill them!” Although we were talking about a nonsense question, the authenticity and sincerity with which Adam shared his response was both refreshing and compelling, and the truth in it was hard to deny! I am overjoyed to write that Eric, Adam and many others met Jesus that week and began a relationship with our Father. Our kids were so blessed by their week at Lake Champion. The speaker, program, property and assigned teams did a wonderful job and for that we are grateful! However, the real highlight was watching the Holy Spirit move and seeing our kids hear with new ears what Jesus Christ had done for them when he went to the cross at Calvary. He proved once and for all that there is no limit to his love for his people! “For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38, 39).



Watch construction progress at lakechampion.younglife.org

WE CAN BUILD IT TOGETHER

Just over one million dollars, if given by September 1st, will allow completion of the construction of the new Dining Hall by Christmas. Another \$400,000 will transform the old dining hall into a Game Room, Snack Bar and Camp Store soon after.

Giving Made Easy
Donate online at: www.younglife.org/giving.

MAC MCNALLY: RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

By: John Wagner, Senior Vice President, Eastern Division

May 1st of this year, Mac McNally was named Vice President of Strategic Growth for the Eastern Division. We are very excited about this new appointment because Mac brings to our mission both a proven track record and a unique gifting in the areas of development and the growth of new work.



Mac McNally, Vice President of Strategic Growth for the Eastern Division

Mac is in a strategic location to do both. Some estimates say that there are 25 million people in the New York Metro Region and that close to 5 million of these are under the age of 18. This region has one of the largest and most diverse populations of any piece of geography in the country and Young Life is just beginning to scratch the surface here.

As Mac and his team have gathered and talked about the future of Young Life in the New York Metro area, they have settled on a goal of starting 95 new clubs and ministries in the next 5 years. What an incredible vision. I am convinced that, with Mac’s leadership and along with his excellent team

in New York, we will see explosive growth in this region over the next several years.

Lake Champion will play a significant part in this vision. Situated only 2 hours from New York City, Champion is well suited for outreach to teenagers in the New York Metro area. This camp will not simply be used for summer outreach, but for outreach weekends, urban weekends, leadership weekends and staff retreats year round.

Mac and his team are committed to seeing Lake Champion be that flagship property that will serve kids in the East

in the finest way possible for years to come. The dining hall project is but the first phase of that dream. I would like to invite you to join me, Mac and the rest of our Young Life family in the Eastern Division to help make this dream a reality.

In Christ,
John Wagner