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A YoungLife Camp

THE COST OF NOT SENDING A KID TO CAMP



FOR 20 YEARS, LAKE CHAMPION HAS PROVIDED TERRIFIC STAFF, SPECTACULAR ADVENTURE AND HAS BECOME AN ENDURING PROPERTY.



On a cold, dark winter morning in 1985, I left my house at 3:00 a.m. and piled into a car with several other Young Life staff to drive to New York. I fell asleep thinking about the camp we were heading up there to see, which Young Life purchased shortly thereafter. Twenty years later, more than 280,000 kids and leaders have visited this place we call Lake Champion.

— just like close to 100,000 kids similar to him. Although I was unsure at the time, I look back now and think, “Pretty good investment, huh?” These kids’ lives will be changed forever; where they go to college, what they study, who they marry, how they raise their children. They will be doctors and pastors and moms and dads and business people and art teachers and congressmen.

As we look forward to the next 20 years, I believe we are at another crossroad. We have the opportunity to make Lake Champion a first-class camp for years to come. The first phase is finishing the new dining hall that will comfortably seat close to 600 people, and transforming the old dining hall into a game room and snack bar.

One of those teenagers was a guy named Tony from Northern Virginia. When he returned home from camp, he wrote these words to his leader:

“It was all so fun. I’ve never had so much fun and I felt so much love from the staff there. Everything was just so amazing and so different every day, I didn’t know quite what to expect. The skits blew my mind, the hoedown, ‘50s night, everything was just wow!!! It just filled me with such joy, how could such people show such love for me ... ”

That week, Tony stood and gave his life to Christ

I personally want to thank you for how you have helped thus far, and invite your participation in the completion of this project. Literally millions of kids live within hours of Lake Champion. We would like to take a lot of them to camp, maybe even this summer. We are grateful for you and your help.

John Wagner
Senior Vice President, Eastern Division





BUILDING ON A FIRM FOUNDATION

Teenagers today often find themselves in an era of transition. Their childhood pursuits have begun to give way to more grown-up passions, and their thoughts linger on the future. Along the halls of their schools, they walk an undefined trajectory. They look at the pictures hanging on the wall and find images of yesterday's victories that haunt them as much as tomorrow's fretful silence. Their lockers fill with papers that whisper the promises of success that comes with achievement. At their desks, they read of the great challenges quelled in the last century by a generation of heroes. Meanwhile, as they look around the room at each other, they find their world of relative safety entering a time of threat and uncertainty.

News stories tell of the weapons that may hide in the lockers of their peers. Their families endure times of separation, either by the call of duty to their country, or the knife of divorce. In places where adults have turned away, kids turn to each other to find the love they so desperately crave. Some find purpose in gangs. Others find solace in sex or drugs. Each of them face a seemingly endless search for authentic relationships.

For more than 60 years, Young Life has built a foundation to meet this need by walking alongside these kids down dark hallways, and leading them into light. Meetings at club every week set a cornerstone, and begin to sew new threads of trust and authenticity between leaders and teens. This effort reaches its zenith at camp where kids spend an unforgettable week of high adventure and discovery.

Young Life's innovative camping experience aspires to firm this foundation by providing a place of safety, an experience of unparalleled quality and comfort and an introduction to the hope of Christ. Kids receive the cheering applause of staff and crew leaders as they arrive for their first day. The place settings at every table,

set with meticulous precision, serve as one method (among a plethora of others) designed to peel away the layers of distraction common to their lives. Everything — from the thrilling attractions, to the talks with leaders after club, to the very food served at meal time — invites them to place their trust in something other than themselves.

All of this extravagance means to reflect the bountiful love of God, alive in the person of Christ. This hope reaches the ears of kids through daily messages at club talks, and nightly skits that produce raucous laughter and softened hearts. Here, presented with the Gospel, many of them for the first time, they are given the opportunity to choose and make a stand. Those who choose Christ leave camp changed forever. Many return to become Young Life leaders. Others will return home to influence their homes and their schools in special ways. All go out to light the world for Jesus Christ.

The growing population in the New England states has introduced a new challenge to maintaining the integrity of this experience at Lake Champion, Young Life's camp two hours northwest of New York City. Of the 21 camping facilities operated by Young Life, it draws some of the heaviest use. Already this year, Lake Champion has served more than 15,000 individuals, its dining hall filled to capacity nearly every week of the past summer. The camp expects more kids next year, further threatening to crack an already weakening foundation under an unbearable demand.

A new dining hall, capable of seating 600 people comfortably, will ease the burden. The new hall will provide ample room at each table, allowing greater ease of service, as well as opening more visibility to the stage area. The old dining hall will undergo renovation to create a new, much-needed snack bar, game room and retail store. Together, these new establishments offer the

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WE INVEST IN WHAT WE TRULY BELIEVE SO THAT IT MIGHT GROW, MULTIPLY AND PROSPER.

BUILDING ON A FIRM FOUNDATION

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space needed to better the service to every kid, and room to enjoy the fellowship for which so many of them yearn.

An investment in the future of Lake Champion anticipates the fruition of tomorrow's church. Supported by a firm foundation, kids will enjoy a facet of their lives often concealed from them every other week — that they are kids. Under this enduring refuge, they will have the chance to learn as well as the chance to run, to play and act their age. They will hear the Gospel at a time when their hearts are the most fertile. They will learn of a God who will carry their burdens. They will learn that they do not return to the halls of their school alone. That future, that hope, will grow and take flight from the foundation built here, in their hearts.

CONSIDERING AN INVESTMENT IN LAKE CHAMPION



Is camping at Lake Champion effective?

Young Life camping has maintained a strong and consistent passion for lost kids. It has never faltered from the task of presenting a simple Gospel message to non-believers as its goal. God has given Young Life leaders a special gifting to know how to put non-believing kids at ease by communicating with them, sharing with them and earning the right to be heard.

Is camping at Lake Champion a sustainable endeavor?

For 20 years, Lake Champion has provided terrific staff, spectacular adventure and has become an enduring property. The faculties of the camp are designed so that, once the dining hall is built, camper fees will cover all future maintenance.

The downside to a 20-year record of accomplishment

After 20 years, it's easy to take camping at Lake Champion for granted. Its fortitude creates the illusion of constancy, the feeling that someone else will see that its budgetary needs are met. Lake Champion has

no service from which to produce revenue; it receives support entirely from generosity. If the new dining hall is to be built, it will be paid for by people reading this newsletter.

The difference between contributing and investing

We contribute when we give gifts to charity, like the United Way, or purchase cookies from Scouts standing out by storefronts. We invest in what we truly believe so that it might grow, multiply and prosper. Perhaps you began reading this newsletter with the idea of making a contribution. If you have caught some of the importance of sending a kid to camp, would you consider investing instead?

Monthly gifts keep friends connected and praying for the ministry happening at Lake Champion. Please pray for the dining hall project, as well as future leaders of the kingdom of God who will visit first as teenagers.

Enclosed with this newsletter is a commitment envelope through which you may buy a seat or a table at Lake Champion. The options will allow you to choose your level of investment, and any gift is appreciated. In joining with this effort, you help make certain the promise of offering Christ to lost kids.

Note: If you would like more information about this campaign, please contact Campaign Director Cindy Knupp at (866) 513-3365, cknupp@sc.younglife.org.