

crooked creek review • two-thousand and six



COLUMBIA YOUNG LIFE

July 20-31, 2006

What's so Special about 82 Anyway...



Here's the whole group. We clean up pretty nice don't we.

What's special about the number 82? That's a good question. As far as I'm concerned there's nothing special about 82. I kissed my kindergarten girlfriend on the playground in 1982, but that's about all I could think of. That is, until July 19th. That's the day we signed up our last high school friend for Crooked Creek. We went from 81 to our final # of 82. The list of kids we as a YL body had been praying over for weeks and even months was finally complete. These 82 folks, then, were the exact ones God wanted

The Leaders

The majority of this little letter will be about our high school friends. After all, they're what the trip was all about. I do want, however, to draw your attention to a group of unsung heroes - our volunteer leaders. We had 12 college students give up a significant chunk of their summer, \$400 and numerous hours of sleep in order to make this trip happen. They didn't just make it happen

on the trip. They had gotten on the list in a variety of different ways. Some kids had been pursued and prayed for like a #1 draft pick for the NFL or NBA. Others were signed up by their parents and had no clue what they were getting into. There were even some who were on the list because a college student spent his summer waiting tables in order to pay all but \$400 of the camp cost for two of his high school friends in addition to his own fee (\$1600 total). The thing is though that as easy as it is to get excited about the number 82, the list, and even the way kids' names were added to the list, it is so important that we consider first that what we're talking about is an individual. It's a kid who is struggling, hurting and seeking. It's a leader who is trying to be every-

thing. Instead, they went above and beyond to make the trip the best possible experience for kids. They infused energy into even the most mundane moments. They spent their own money on uniforms for the volleyball contest. They went on the ropes course and endured heckling because they're afraid of heights. They sang "Hero" by Enrique Iglesias at the top of their lungs. They

did all this and more in order that our high school friends would have the time of their lives. More importantly than that, though, they did all this that the campers might see Christ in them and experience His love through them. That's pretty impressive given the numerous things they could have done with their summer! Please thank them if you get a chance! They deserve it...

Quick Facts:

- 432 - THE NUMBER OF SOFT DRINKS GIVEN OUT ON THE BUS
- 492 - THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CAMPERS AND LEADERS AT CAMP (THE LARGEST EVER)
- 13 - THE NUMBER OF COLUMBIA TEENS WHO MADE FIRST TIME DECISIONS FOR CHRIST
- 8 - THE NUMBER OF DAYS WE HAD NIGHTLY FOLLOW-UP AFTER COMING HOME (STUDYING THE BOOK OF MARK)
- 186 - THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS UNTIL WINDY GAP.

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Some Highlights of the Week



We were supposed to wear red to the Rodeo, but Shaefer only had pink. From what I hear though pink is the new black...

We surveyed the campers to see what they liked best about the week. Several things stood out from their responses. One of the most reoccurring things that kids enjoyed was Cabin Time. If you're unfamiliar with that, it's really not all that hard to explain. It's just the 45 minutes or more that each cabin spends discussing as a group what the speaker just spoke about. Given all the fun activities we took part in, it's pretty cool that this is what stood out to kids the most. Likewise, I was a little sur-

prised that club and the speaker's talks were second behind cabin time. This just speaks to the relevance of the gospel in kids' lives. The third thing that appeared with greater frequency is a conglomerate of activities. The campers loved the Western night, the obstacle course, all the rides, the volleyball tournament and all the funny characters. I loved all those things too. Young Life folks know how to have fun with the best of 'em. One other thing that was mentioned by a number of kids was Real

Life. This is a role play that several staffers take part in throughout the week. They tell their real life stories and allow for kids to ask them questions. It was a very open, honest and approachable way for kids to see how Christ brings about life-change. Of course there were many other things the students loved, but these few examples should give you an idea what made the week great. I am a little surprised though that no one mentioned the 70+ hours we spent on the bus in their highlights...

"MY WEEK AT CAMP WAS AMAZING. I CAN'T WAIT TO GET HOME AND SHOW MY FRIENDS HOW GREAT IT WAS SO WE CAN ALL COME BACK..."

What the Campers had to Say...

- "This week I finally began to understand the magnitude of God's love, and that God cleans you up from the inside out."
- "My week at camp was amazing! It was so much fun, and introduced me to God all at the same time."
- "I have been trying to form a relationship with Christ, but it was just this week that I truly accepted Christ into my life."
- "The thing that stood out the most to me is that God is on my level and Jesus understands everything because he lived it."
- "I realized this week that glorifying God is the most important thing about Christianity and living to the fullest for him."
- "This week I realized how much I've grown as a Christian and how much I want the other girls to get a taste of how amazing Christ's love is."

Special Thanks to our Supporters



Ever tried to spend a whole day hiking at more than 11,000ft in altitude? These Dreher folks did and are still smiling.

Here's the deal. Students see the cost for the trip is \$755 and they automatically think that the leaders and staff are making out like bandits on the deal. It's not true though. Most leaders and staff are actually independently wealthy and don't need any extra income. I thought everybody knew that. I'm

being facetious of course. The fact of the matter is, we swallowed about \$40 per person in costs this year. We also only charged leaders \$400. These factors, in addition to the number of scholarships we offered kids, resulted in us losing approximately \$12,000 on the trip. That sounds pretty bad I know. We could do this though because of the fact that our supporters have

given above and beyond this past year. We received a \$5000 gift towards camping and had the remaining \$7000 available in our operating account to cover the cost. So if you've given to YL this year, you too played a role in getting our high school students and leaders to camp. Thank you so very much. Trust me when I say it may be the best money you spent this year!

A lot can happen in 15 minutes...

At two different times throughout the week the campers were given a very special thing. They were allowed to be silent and still before God. They were given 15 minutes beneath God's grand display of stars and the enveloping Rocky Mountains. This setting along with the wonderful message of Christ's death on our behalf led to some pretty real and genuine moments with God. Below, is just one of the many responses we heard from our friends as they came in from this time alone with God. - One note of explanation the speaker showed some clips from the Passion before the 15 minutes -

THE FIRST TIME I SAW THIS MOVIE [THE PASSION], IT WAS VERY PAINFUL TO WATCH; THEREFORE, THE REPLAYING OF THOSE SCENES BROUGHT BACK THOSE PAINFUL FEELINGS. WHEN I VIEWED THOSE SCENES, IT MADE ME REALIZE WHAT JESUS WENT THROUGH ALL ~~OUT~~ OUT OF LOVE FOR ME. THIS MADE ME REALIZE HOW SELFISH I KNOW THAT I HAVE BEEN. I IMAGINE EVERYONE HAS FELT AT SOME POINT. KNOWING HOW MANY BAD THINGS HAVE HAPPENED TO ME UP THROUGH THIS STAGE OF MY LIFE, I FEEL EXTREMELY SELFISH BECAUSE I KNOW THAT FOR ALL OF THESE PAST EXPERIENCES I HAVE BLAMED GOD IN MY HEART FOR THEM HAPPENING TO ME. DURING THE FIRST PART OF MY 15 MINUTES, I SPENT MY TIME ASKING FOR FORGIVENESS FOR MY SELFISHNESS. THE TEARS OF SORROW SOON TURNED TO TEARS OF JOY WHEN ~~REALLY~~ I CAME TO THE REALIZATION HOW MUCH GOD HAS GIVEN ME. HE HAS BLESSED ME MORE THAN I AM WORTHY, I PRAYED TO GOD THANKING HIM FOR ALL OF THE BLESSINGS HE HAS BESTOWED UPON ME. MY SELFISH WANTS & DESIRES ARE WHAT I ASKED FORGIVENESS FOR, I THEN REALIZED THAT I WAS REALLY JUST SCARED TO BE ALONE. GOD REVEALED TO ME THAT NO MATTER WHAT THE SITUATION, HE IS ALWAYS WITH ME. THIS HELPED ME TO NOT BE AS ~~WORRIED~~ WORRIED ABOUT HANDLING MY TRIALS & TRIBULATION ON MY OWN ANYMORE.

"I SPENT MY TIME ASKING FOR FORGIVENESS FOR MY SELFISHNESS. THE TEARS OF SORROW SOON TURNED TO TEARS OF JOY WHEN I CAME TO THE REALIZATION OF HOW MUCH GOD HAS GIVEN ME..."



You guessed it. These are the YL leaders acting mature as always.

Every Kid, Everywhere, for Eternity

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What makes Young Life unique is our passion for being where kids are and being a part of their life in every way possible. This kind of involvement in kids' lives will make them all the more apt to see Christ in us and hear about Christ from us. I've heard it said that kids' don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. That's true in more cases than we'd like to admit. So, we're all about showing kids that we care. Camping, then, plays a huge role in our efforts with kids. Our camping program is leader-centered. Our leaders go with kids to camp, spend time with them there exploring the message of Jesus and then come home with them. That's a unique model in today's camping environment. Our leaders are not camp counselors. They're friends and they're friends that don't exit the scene following camp. Instead we're intentional about building on the time spent at camp once we get back home. That's the very short version of our camping philosophy. There's a great deal more, and if you would like to find out more, please feel free to contact us.

We're on the Web:
www.columbiasc.younglife.org

Can't Say Thanks Enough...

I asked each student and leader to write a postcard thanking all the folks that give so graciously to support Young Life. We had some very heartfelt responses. Here's one that one of our leaders wrote. It characterizes well the gratitude we all feel...



Yes, we're ok with the fact that we're strange.

Crooked Creek Ranch owned and operated by Young Life.
Located outside Winter Park, Colorado.
www.crookedcreek.younglife.org

God Bless, Justin Ralston

Dear Friend of Young Life,
As a YL leader, I wanted to thank you for your generous help sending kids to camp. Out of the nine girls in my cabin four stood up at "Say-so," announcing their new faith in Jesus Christ. Please pray that the fire they feel now for the Lord will stay with them as they come home to their various challenges. I want to say thank you again! I am super excited about these four girls and the relationships that have gotten so much closer with the other five. Because of you many kids from Columbia came "home" this week!