



BACKWOODS BULLETIN

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Psalm 27:5

The leaves crunch beneath my feet as I walk the single file trail up to chapel. Fall has come and is so quickly disappearing. The mountains still hold a somewhat faint hue of many colors, and I stop and think of how quickly life passes us all by. I remember just last year watching the leaves change and wondering what my life at camp would hold for me. I was very new here at that time, and time seemed to stretch as far as the mountains all around me. Now, my time at camp is coming to a close, and I stare off into the distance.... wondering.

“For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me upon a rock.” (Psalm 27:5) A small noise is heard in the distance. I turn to look and see a small group walking up the trail. There is the general banter back and forth among them. I notice how they trust their leader. Not always do they understand His commands but they trust him as their “chief.” In their time of trouble they have found a pavilion, a place to rest.

I am extremely thankful that God has led me to this land. I still feel like I don’t always understand all the winding paths through the



woods, but God has set me on a rock, and I feel safe here. How often do I not trust the Leader as I walk down the small winding path in the woods? Do I stop to argue with those I walk with, and tell them how much better they could do? The path ahead of me is clearly marked and the next step is in view. My Leader is strong, yet I venture off into the unknown by myself. I get scrapes and bruises, and my body is tired and sore. Just down from the path, I see the lights of home, and I know there is a "welcome home" inside for me. I know those inside would love to serve me a fresh hot meal and cheer me on. But I turn blindly away and wander off on my own. I know my Leader loves me even if I have chosen to forge my own path, and one thought keeps gripping my heart and almost makes me turn and go back. This is the thought: "If at any time I wish to return, my Leader will accept me back with open arms." But I know that I don't deserve this love, I have made far too many wrong choices, and I deserve nothing more than to be left alone to fend for myself. I look once more over to the lights of the "pavilion" as I run farther away. The lights seem to be more welcoming than ever, but still I know I don't deserve this love. I wonder to myself, "Why do I run from something so secure? Why do I feel so threatened?"

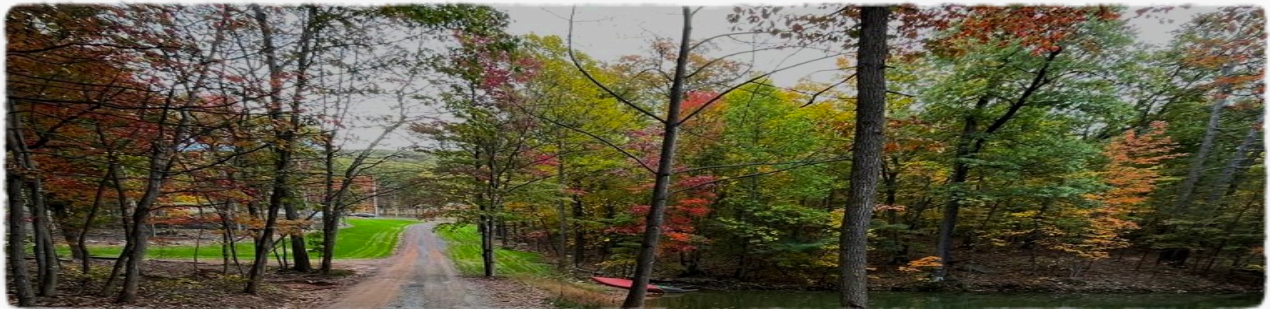
Not being able to understand my own thoughts, I turn and run faster so I can't change my mind. As I run I take others with me. Together we feel that we will make this life better than being safe in that warm comforting refuge among the trees, still trying to remind myself that I don't deserve that love any way. After all, I am now free, out from under the leadership of my Chief. Why am I not happier? Where is that secure feeling of safety and rest that I had been feeling? My friends and I decide we want to just see if someone still thinks about us, still knows that we are out here alone in the trees. Once more, we approach the "pavilion" we have learned to call

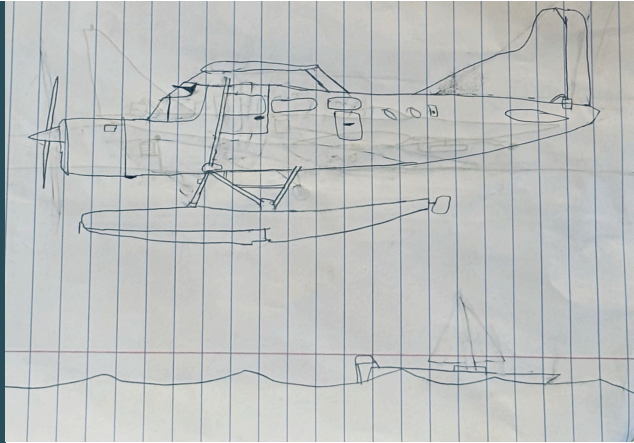
home. Just as before, the lights glow warmly out into the darkness. I know there is love inside just looking at it from a distance. I inch closer to see what I can see. My eyes meet with the eyes of my Leader, who still leads the rest of the crowd through the brambles of life, and I know He still loves me. His eyes still hold the same love.

Though He never speaks, I can feel the drawing that I so badly want to try to erase from my mind. I sit down to watch awhile in the safety of a hiding place. I watch the world go by and see how the others look so safe. After all, they seem to be much happier than I. I realize that even though life is cruel, nobody waits for you. You must choose. The love that is strong and so kind, or the power of darkness that lies on the outside waiting to enfold you in its grasp if you let it. I understand now that there is nowhere else for me to go. I can always come 'home' and I can rest in the care of my Leader. It will be ok. There will be times when darkness will slip in again, and I might even wander away from the fold again. But somehow, even though it is dark, the lights of "home" never dim, and God's love always will prevail. I join once more the others and their Leader. I am accepted back with open arms. There isn't much said, and even though I had strayed, my Leader still loves me. I don't doubt that.

As we stand in the gap for others, no matter what place or time in life we find ourselves, love those that stray, and love them even more when they return. "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you, and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

The above article are thoughts about some of life's struggles written from a camp cook perspective.... - Miss Miki





“Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere.”

-Albert Einstein

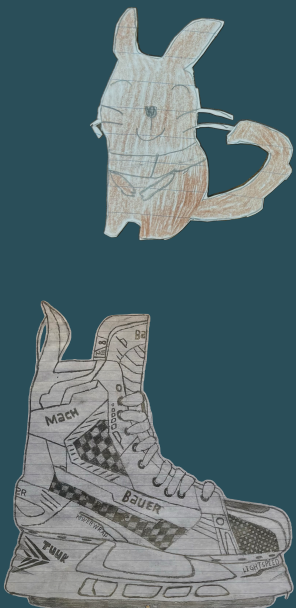
CIVIL WAR HISTORY TOUR

The 20th of September, found us leaving Chuckwagon around 10:00. There was much happy chatter, waving to fellow travelers, and occasional outbursts of singing, as the newly purchased bus took us to the first major battle site of the Civil War (the battlefield of Manassas). When we arrived, we watched a documentary about the battles fought on the grounds. The battle of First Manassas is often referred to as “the battle that took the innocence of the nation.” There were some sober discussions later among the campers about the horrors of war with several campers commenting that it was crazy that so many men fought, bled, and died right here on the ground that we were walking on. As we were eating lunch on the grass beside the bus, a lady came up to the group and said she was impressed with the well behaved group of boys. She then tucked \$160 into my shirt pocket saying that we should get the boys some ice cream. Later the campers all went over to where she was parked to shake her hand and ask her about herself. She told us she was a nurse from Grand Rapids, Michigan, and she was on a road trip in honor of her husband who had recently passed away. He had always wanted to travel but had never been able to, so her Uncle and her were taking an extended road trip and honking the horn for him every time they crossed a state line. After we were done at the Manassas Battlefield, we hit the road headed for the town of Harpers Ferry. We arrived at the Bolivar Heights Battlefield, the sight of a siege of the Union forces, and eventually the largest surrender of American troops recorded in the Civil War. To blow off some steam, we marched, ran, yelled, and charged our way around the still visible trenches and trails around the hilltop, reading the interesting signs and informative plaques as we went. Coming upon a grove of fruit laden Paw Paw trees we sampled, ate, and carried fruit away as naturally as any plundering army. Then we headed for home, stopping to fill our bellies at a McDonalds along the way. There was much happy chatter and singing as we rocketed along the winding roads, and we arrived back at camp exhausted and happy, getting to bed as soon as possible so we could be ready for the next day's adventure.

-Chief Josh



Battlefield of Manassas



Turkey in the Hole



November 21, 2023

Turkey in the Hole Preparation

Monday: Cut and split firewood. Cut green logs 3ft. long and 4-5in. thick. Dug hole 12ft. long 30in. wide, and 30in. deep. Laid green logs over the hole.

Tuesday: 1:00 AM- All campers arrived at the hole and helped start the fire on top of green logs that covered the hole.

Next 3 hours- Threw wood on fire, socialized, drank hot cocoa, ate boiled peanuts, and stared into the flames

3:50 AM- The fire burned through the green logs and filled the hole 3/4 full with coals

4:00 AM- Prepared 7 turkeys with 1 pint of butter per turkey, a liberal layer of Lawry's seasoning salt, filled the body cavity with ice for extra moisture, and wrapped each turkey in 40-50 ft. of tinfoil.

4:45 AM- Buried the turkeys in the coals and covered the hole with dirt.

12:30 PM- Dug the turkeys out, cut open the tinfoil and served.

"Time to get up, boys!"

"Why?" I asked.

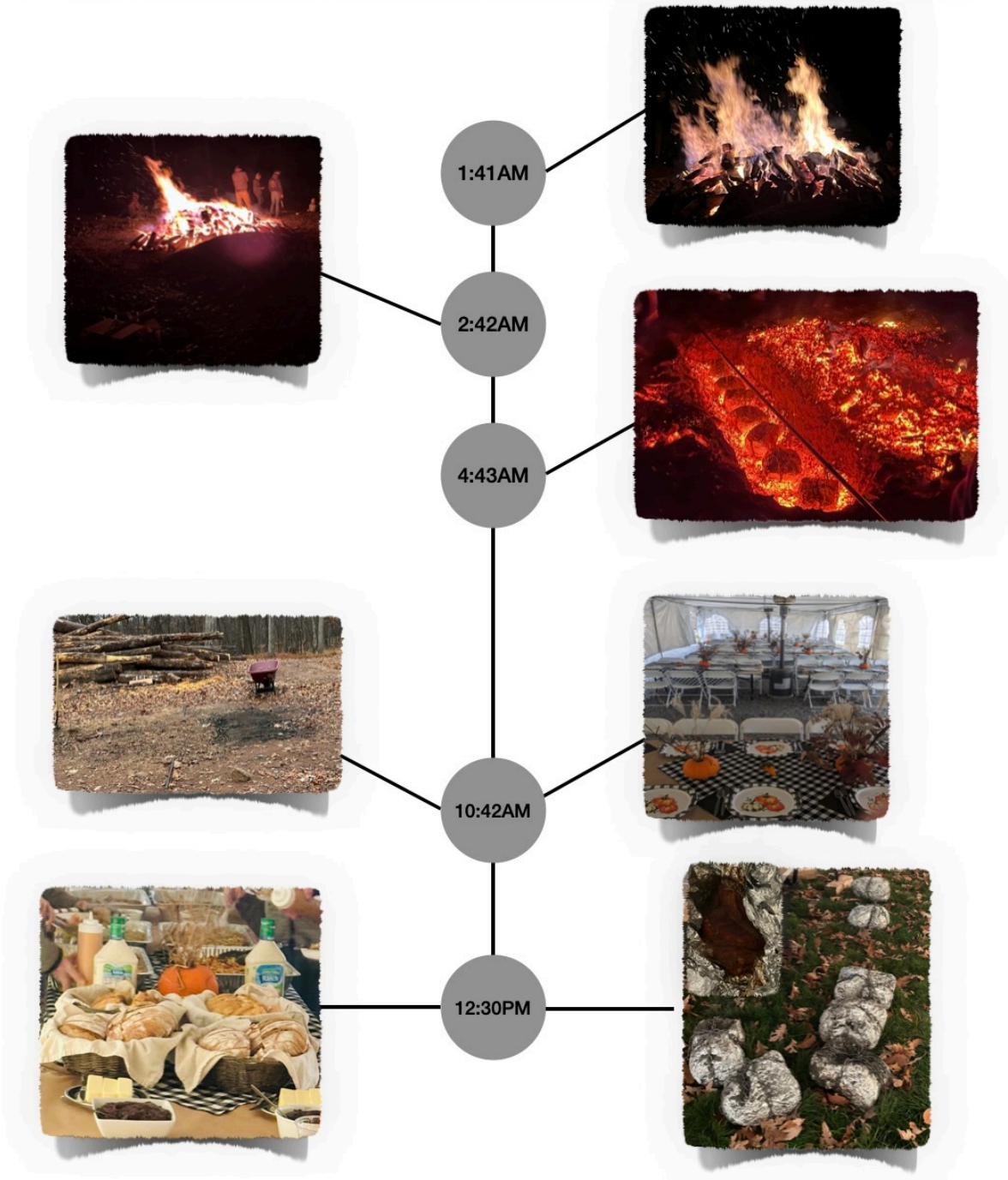
"We got to be down at the hole at 1:00AM."

We all got up slowly. Finally, we were all at the ready logs. Chief led us down to the hole. One of us guys lit the fire. Soon the fire was roaring, and we were all fanning. About 45 minutes later, someone brought boiled peanuts and hot cocoa. We all crowded around and waited our turn to get boiled peanuts and hot cocoa. Around 3:15AM the fire started falling in. Some of us went up to toolshed to get the turkeys ready to go in the hole. At 5:00AM we put the turkeys in the hole. Finally, we got to go eat breakfast while the other group went to take showers. Breakfast consisted of donuts, cheese sticks, and oranges, and a beverage of milk. We got done with breakfast and went to take showers.

When we had finished with showers, we went to our warm beds to sleep from 7:00 to 11:30. Then we all got up very excited and did our chores. When we had finished, we grabbed our luggage and went to our families. Finally it was time to eat. Chief Daniel prayed for our food, and then we went through the line to get a delicious meal of sweet potatoes, salad, bread, and turkey. When we finished our main meal, we went to get some pie and coffee. Then our parents answered some camp questions. After that, a few of the dads had a race on making beds. The Frontiersmen dads won. Then we sang, "Lord, I Hope Homestay Is Good." Finally, Homestay.

- Written by a Camper

Turkey in the Hole Timeline



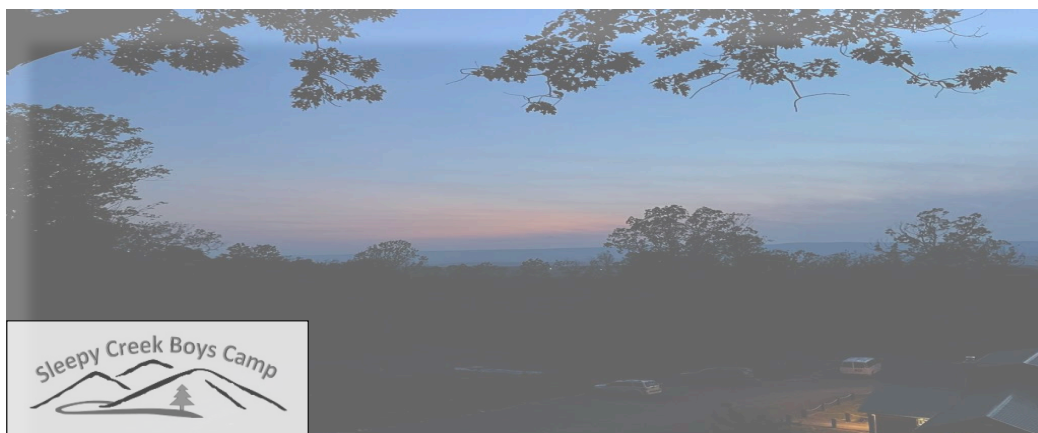
Camp Facility Progress Report

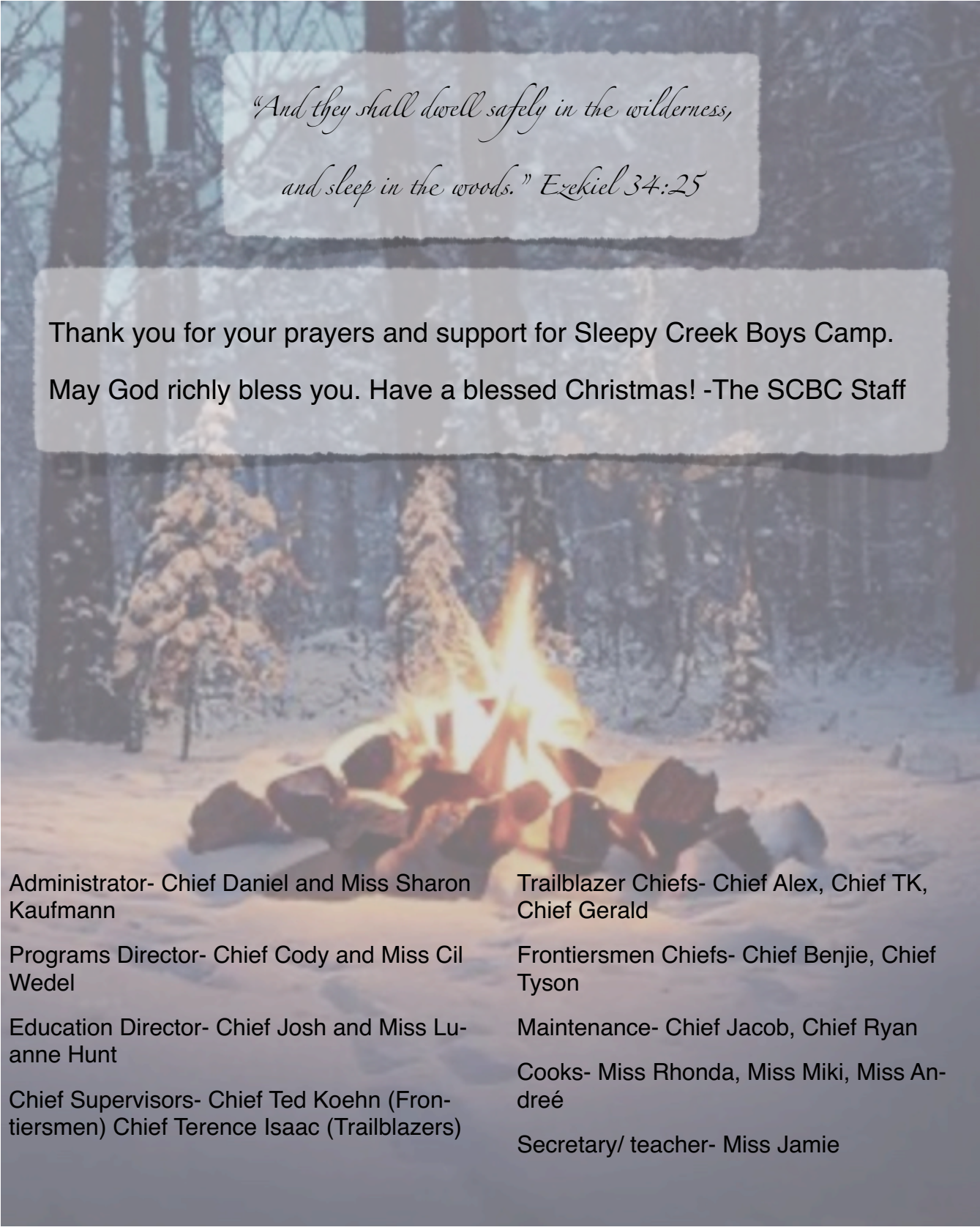
Chuckwagon- Finally, there is positive movement! We have connected with a local contractor who has helped us get our septic requirements mapped out and a plan ready for the engineers. The pieces are slowly coming around, and we are starting to see some evidence. We hope to get started on Chuckwagon by spring 2024.

Volleyball and basketball court- Retaining wall and slab have been poured, lines have been painted, and volleyball is being played! We have greatly enjoyed it... Thanks, maintenance guys! At some point we will be getting a fence built around the court so we don't have to run so far for stray balls.

Toolshed at administrator's house-Toolshed is now storage, toolshed, and staff retreat. We have it insulated, a wood stove installed, game tables, and furniture. It is a great place to relax.

Chiefs housing- Chief Housing is being renovated. Thanks, Chief Reuben! It seems that you are doing most of the work on this project. Trees have been removed and a blind spot in the road taken out. The yard is much nicer as well. We have even found a bit of topsoil... a rare commodity in this land.





*"And they shall dwell safely in the wilderness,
and sleep in the woods." Ezekiel 34:25*

Thank you for your prayers and support for Sleepy Creek Boys Camp.
May God richly bless you. Have a blessed Christmas! -The SCBC Staff

Administrator- Chief Daniel and Miss Sharon Kaufmann

Programs Director- Chief Cody and Miss Cil Wedel

Education Director- Chief Josh and Miss Luanne Hunt

Chief Supervisors- Chief Ted Koehn (Frontiersmen) Chief Terence Isaac (Trailblazers)

Trailblazer Chiefs- Chief Alex, Chief TK, Chief Gerald

Frontiersmen Chiefs- Chief Benjie, Chief Tyson

Maintenance- Chief Jacob, Chief Ryan

Cooks- Miss Rhonda, Miss Miki, Miss André

Secretary/ teacher- Miss Jamie