



OZARK WILDERNESS

BOYS CAMP

Issue #9, Summer 2025

Lessons From Fire-Building Setting the Stage

It's interesting to observe the many lessons fire-building can teach us about life.

I remember, as a teenager, watching a grown man attempting to build a campfire. He had several full-sized pieces of firewood leaned together in teepee formation. There was no obvious tinder or kindling under his firewood and a small flame crawled weakly about on the flat, wet surface of a few of the pieces where he had doused them with lighter fluid. As we watched a fading struggle between life and death, he informed me that he needed to go to town to get some more lighter fluid. Being fascinated with woodlore and survival skills, I was rather disturbed by this man's approach and lack of understanding. What was he missing?

Sometimes at Camp, we hold fire-starting competitions, where the goal is to build the first fire to burn through a string or boil a can of water. Often, there'll be some competitors who haphazardly plunk their first tinder bundle down and immediately light it, hastily piling bigger sticks and other random material onto the newborn flame. Beside them, surrounded by frenzied activity, another crew will be patiently preparing their tinder and arranging their sticks, refusing to light it before it is set, and refusing to add oversized or unqualified material. About the time this second team has a small steady flame rising, the first team will be desperately puffing on some receding glow underneath their pile only to finally tear it apart in frustration and start again. What happened?

How many times have there been buckets of diesel fuel sloshed over some ornery "brush pile" that flamed up eagerly at the start but hours later remained a smoldering structure, blackened, but as unconsumed as a sandwich left on a child's plate with only a bite out of it? Why?

In many ways, starting a camp is like building a fire. Perhaps there are folks who are starting to wonder "when are we going to get this thing going?" or "what is being done with all the money that is being poured into this camp?" Those are fair questions, and maybe good answers can be found in the comparison of starting a fire.

The purchase of the camp property was much like the building of a fire ring. An act that states that *this* is where it happens, and *that* is where it doesn't. An act of provision and anticipation.

The work that has happened over the last two years is like the patient work of preparing tinder and arranging wood for a fire. Thank you for your interest, your participation, and your prayers. If the Lord is willing, soon the flame will rise.

And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, And establish the work of our hands for us; Yes, establish the work of our hands. Psalm 90:17 NKJV

Albert Stoltzfus - Camp Director

Glimpses of Camp Progress



Volunteers laying block
for the shower house



Installing field lines for
the septic system



Chiefs and supervisor
working on the privy tent



Releasing grass carp
in the pond



Staff team
worshipping together



Milling cedar logs
for chapel benches



Well drilling in progress



Building tables
and benches
for the
Chuckwagon

Staff Update

- Denley Schrock came from Barnett, MO to serve as a Chief in our first camp group. Welcome, Chief Denley. It's good to have you here.
- Anthony Weaver, from Stuart Draft, VA, joined us this spring. He previously served as a Chief for two years at Allegany Boys Camp and plans to help us establish our first camp group. Welcome, Chief Anthony.
- Martha Stoltzfus, from Port Royal, PA, joined our team to serve as our camp Secretary. Thank you for coming, Miss Martha. It's good to have you here.
- Peter and Melody Beachy and their family moved from Salisbury PA. Peter will be serving as a Family worker. Welcome to Camp. It's good to have you here.

Opportunities to Get Involved

Camp Representative: We would like to strengthen our communication link with midwestern churches by having individuals who will partner with us to represent the camp to their home congregation. Our plan is to contact church leaders who will assist in choosing individuals for this role. The Camp Representative will:

- Be a key person to inform his group about the events and needs of the camp.
- Be on a list to receive specific camp updates on a regular basis.

Monthly Pledge: So far, the financial needs of the camp have been met. There have been some very sizable donations. There have also been numerous times when we have had to wait to pay bills because of low finances. Our goal is to have a more consistent income, and we are asking for individuals to join a team who will:

- Give a pledged monthly donation toward the work
- Receive regular updates on the progress and the camp's financial state.

We recently sent out a poster explaining this opportunity and will continue to send updates. Please contact us if you are interested in more information.

Bed Sheets for the Campsite: There have been some bed sheets made to fit the camp cots used by the chiefs and campers. We will soon be needing more. If you are part of a group who would like to help with this, please contact us about sizes.

Library Books: We have received a nice assortment of books to start our camp library. Our goal is to create a much larger selection than we currently have. This includes Classics, Fiction and Nonfiction, Biographies, Field Guides, Science, History, Woodcraft, Arts and Skills, and the like. If you have books that you would like to find a new home for, please consider our camp library.

Open House

September 13, 2025

10:00-2:00

12:00 BBQ Dinner

Everyone
Welcome!

Camp Contact Info

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Send donations to:

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