



YMCA CAMP CARSON

Spring 2018
Volume 12, Issue 1

CAMP PLAYED A PART IN HELPING MY GRANDSONS THROUGH A VERY DIFFICULT TIME FOR OUR FAMILY

By Walt Lewis - Camp Carson camper and parent and grandparent of Camp Carson campers



Above:
Walt and Selma
Lewis

My family's first involvement with Camp Carson occurred over sixty years ago when, as a 14 year old trumpet player, I attended Bosse High School band camp there. Then later as a father I sent our daughter and two sons, band campers from Harrison High School, wanting them to reap some the same benefits that I had.



Alex (left)
with one of
his counselors
and some camp
friends.

Much of the positive nature of our experiences resulted from the well-organized and disciplined programs conducted by the band directors, but the setting made the band camp much more than the early morning rattle of snare drums and the blare of the brass. Camp Carson provided outdoor summer activities and counselors to befriend, to instruct, and to serve as good role models. Whether at the waterfront, at the archery range, in the cabins, or in the dining room—a positive and caring attitude was always there along with a smile and an encouraging word. We all grew. We became more independent, more confident, and more understanding and respectful of others. All of us still consider our Camp Carson experience to have been a very important part of our lives.

Maybe, however, even more important than what the camp experience was for us is what it has been for our two grandsons. Alex and Nick are the sons of Andrew, our younger son. Andrew passed away in January 2016 after fighting cancer for three years. Those years and his death took a deep toll on all of us, especially on his sons and his wife, Lisa. Knowing that the boys needed to be in a safe setting and around compassionate role models to work through their difficult time, we were pleased when a good friend and member of the camp board, Steve Fritz, suggested Camp Carson.

Therefore, in the summer of 2016, we sent both Alex and Nick, ages 13 and 10 respectively at the time, to Camp Carson. At the end of their week, both were excited and hoped to attend the next year. Alex had defeated the great tower and Nick mastered archery, and both had enjoyed many varied activities and had formed friendships with fellow campers and counselors. The smiles on their faces and the sparkle in their eyes testified to the self-reliance and self-respect that had remarkably unfolded in just one week.

In 2017, Alex shared with Lisa his interest in the two-week Leaders in Training program. During this session, he not only enjoyed all the usual activities, plus a few new ones, but also participated in LIT work projects and challenging assignments. Afterward, he chose to attend a third week, not yet ready to say goodbye to the friendships and the feelings that surrounded him there. Nick likewise attended during this third week and honed his athletic skills and reconnected with the staff and other campers. Both boys wholeheartedly agreed that camp had been "fun," but we grandparents saw that their experience had been much more. Their comments and attitudes about their fellow campers, the counselors, the staff, and even about themselves showed how Camp Carson was helping them become responsible citizens and family members.



Above: Nick (forefront) gives a wave during slip-n-slide time with his cabin mates.

When the 2017 fall volunteer work week was announced, both boys and their mother were eager to participate, making the three-hour drive from their home in Florence, KY. Selma and I joined them there for an afternoon of work and fellowship, where they reunited with counselors, staff, and even some fellow campers and importantly gained a feeling of ownership as they worked up a sweat cleaning out offices and washing windows.



Right: Alex, Lisa (Mom) and Nick at volunteer work day.

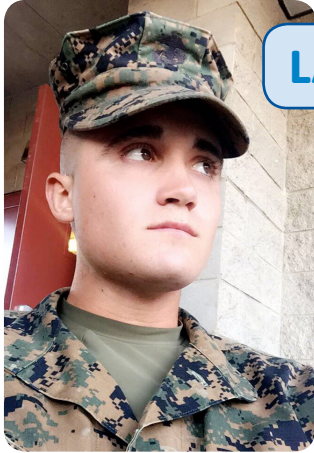
Naturally, the loss of their father has left a chasm in our grandsons' lives; however, a loving and caring family, organizations such as scouts and athletic teams, excellent schools and their church, and experiences with places like Camp Carson have helped them fill part of that void. Needless to say, both Alex and Nick plan to be at Camp Carson again this summer, with Alex this time enrolled in the Counselor in Training program!



CELEBRATING THE ACHIEVEMENT OF TWO CARSON CAMPER/STAFF MEMBERS

Please join us in congratulating Aiden and Derek on successful completion of their training to become United States Marines. These young men have grown up attending camp and credit their camp experiences with giving them some great tools to be successful in life and as a service member. We also asked their moms to share their perspective on camp's effect on their son's progress through childhood and on to the remarkable adults they are today.

Aiden and Derek, as your camp family, we are so proud of you and your accomplishment. Thank you for your service to our nation.



LANCE CORPORAL AIDEN REINHOLD

**Basic Training MCRD (Marine Corps Recruit Depot) San Diego, CA
Graduated April 15, 2017 • Platoon 2143 Golf Company**

After a stop and start due to a broken foot, completed ITB (Infantry Training Battalion) at Camp Pendleton and graduated December 5, 2017. Now stationed at Camp Horno to continue job training as a Rifleman. Aiden is quite the shooter. During boot camp he earned the Rifle Expert Badge with a score of 347 out of 350 – just one point below the range record!

Aiden is scheduled for deployment in November as part of a MEU (Marine Expeditionary Unit).

AIDEN "I wanted to serve in the Marine Corps because I knew that there was something bigger than myself out there and I wanted to protect it. I feel a great sense of accomplishment because I know that I am doing something only 1% of the world's population is able to do mentally and physically. I love seeing the expressions of pride from my family. It pushes me through all the hardships we all go through in training."

MOM AMANDA "Aiden's experience at Camp Carson shaped him throughout his youth. Camp Carson provides a consistent stress free place where the kids can return year after year, knowing that they will be loved and appreciated. We were introduced to Camp Carson by a family friend who had sent her son the year before. Aiden was only 9 or 10 years old, and a week away from home seemed like such a long time. That said, he was enthusiastic about attending, so I was supportive. I remember feeling so anxious during that first 24 hours, not knowing how he was doing. I also remember seeing the photos on day 2 and realizing that I had absolutely nothing to worry about. Aiden appeared engaged and excited. His smile was broad. His eyes were bright. I was relieved and grateful. From that summer on, Aiden and I regarded Camp Carson as a hallmark of summertime."

The years happened, as they do, and Aiden progressed from camper to counselor. He experienced the ups and downs that come with life, and throughout every experience, he knew that he would return to Camp Carson, able to debrief his year and tell stories around the bonfire. Now, Aiden is a United States Marine. He's signed up for a challenge that few will ever fully understand. I know that, even when he is thousands of miles away, his memories of Camp Carson will connect him to home in his mind's eye. No matter where he is or what mission he is on, he will be able to see Camp Carson in his memory and feel a sense of warmth, and that is a blessing to us both."

AIDEN "Camp was a place where I could be myself and get away from all the negativity going on in my life. There were no cell phones and no TV so I was able to be free from drama and the tough things that always seem to be in the news. At camp, I think I learned respect more than anything. I met people from so many different backgrounds and countries and camp helped me learn to appreciate the value of the many different perspectives people have. As a young camper, Nathan, from South Africa, was my favorite counselor. That was the summer I learned to ride dirt bikes. Not only was he a great teacher on the bikes, but as my counselor, he was such an understanding person. In later years, I especially gained a lot from my LIT (Leader in Training) year. I learned to lead and to be lead. In fact, when I got back to school that year and earned the captain spot on my basketball team, my coach actually asked me what I had been doing over the summer that I came back with these leadership skills. I told him, 'I went to Camp Carson!' My LIT and CIT (Counselor in Training) Director was Ryan Meeks and he was amazing. I learned so much about how to engage kids and help them be involved with our cabin group. My camp experiences definitely helped me feel more confident to be myself and how to interact with others to achieve positive outcomes."



**Camp Carson
Camper through CIT
2008-2015
Camp Carson SLP
(Servant Leader
staff) 2016**



Above: Aiden treats his counselor to a pie in the face!



Center: Aiden (far left) helping teach riflery as a CIT.



Below: Aiden (center) in crazy cabin photo.



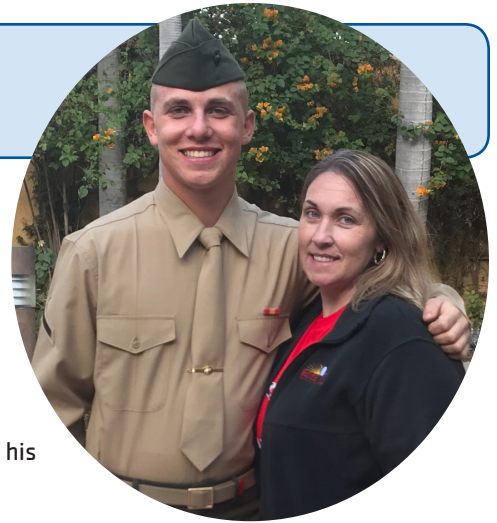
PRIVATE FIRST CLASS DEREK MARKSBERRY

**Basic Training MCRD (Marine Corps Recruit Depot)
San Diego, CA**

**Graduated December 8, 2017
Platoon 1043 Charlie Company**

Completed MCT (Marine Combat Training) at Camp Pendleton and graduated January 30, 2018

Now stationed at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri for his Military Occupation Specialty (job) training.



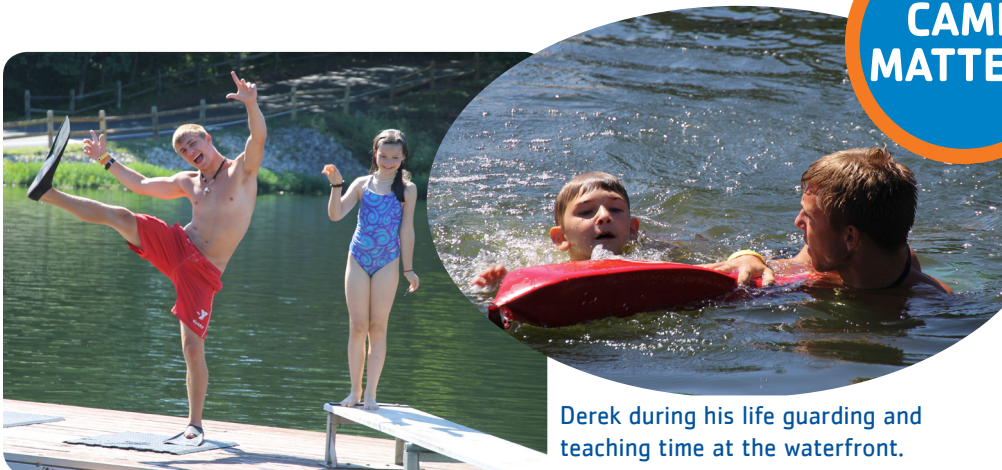
DEREK "I joined the Marine Corps because I wanted to learn more about myself, travel, seek self improvement, and grow as a person. I've already done things the Marine Corps helped me accomplish that I never thought I could and it continues to build my character and make me a better person, but over all, I joined the Marines simply to help others in need, and protect our country."

MOM REBECCA "The first year Derek attended Operation Purple I believe he was 8. I was unsure of what to expect other than I just knew I would have to go pick him up in the middle of the week. Every day I expected a phone call and it never came. He was very shy, not a social kid and needing some self confidence. When I picked him up I was amazed at the friends he made and the interaction he was willingly involved in. I could not believe how much he changed in a week. He has attended camp every year since then. Every year I could see more growth.

I was hesitant in signing up for Operation Purple Camp at Camp Carson in Princeton the first time because it was so far from home. This was by far the best decision. Through the Camp Carson programs he continued to grow and learn even more leadership skills as he attended LIT then working as a SLP. This boy would have stayed the whole summer as a SLP if he could have. Last summer he returned as a staff member and was so excited to be selected. He even worked out boot camp with his recruiter so he could spend one last summer with Camp Carson before beginning his military career. He has had some amazing opportunities and experiences due to camp and has made many friends from all over the world. I could never express how grateful I am for everyone and everything Camp Carson has done for him. His love for Camp Carson has now been passed on to his younger brother!"

DEREK "I grew up in a military family and attended Operation Purple Camp for several summers at other camps. My Dad (now retired after 22 years of service) was deployed with the National Guard three times - 6 months in Bosnia, 9 months in Iraq and 18 months in Afghanistan. Attending military sponsored camps growing up really took my mind off things back home and let me relax a little with other kids that share the same lifestyle. I believe camp has helped me a lot. Not just being a military kid but also building a variety of skills at camp I took with me going into military! Some of the skills I learned at camp that I took with me to the Marine Corps were from my amazing counselors and my Leader In Training (LIT) and Servant Leadership Position (SLP) family. They taught me a lot about myself and how to work with other people to accomplish many goals. They also taught me responsibility and caring by doing service projects and giving back to camp and the community. Many of the core values at camp relate back to everyday life and make you a better person. Camp has changed my life in a very positive way and I hope every kid gets a chance to go!"

**Operation Purple Camp Camper
Camp Carson OPC Camper
and LIT 2015
Camp Carson SLP
(Servant Leader staff) 2016
Camp Carson Staff Member 2017**



**CAMP
MATTERS**

Derek during his life guarding and teaching time at the waterfront.



Derek (second row, far right) at Camp Carson for a Indiana National Guard Kids Fall Camp weekend a few years before his first summer with us.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR 2017 GIFTS

PARTNERS \$1 – \$99

Anonymous
 Robert & Michele Barton
 Cynthia Blanford
 Michael & Maryann Bury
 Connie Casey*
 Gene & Julie Cobbs
 Ann Craney
 Randy & Judy Cron*
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\$1,000 – \$2,499
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 Optimist Club of Evansville
 -Downtown, Inc.
 Bill & Mona Wooten

GOLD CHAMPIONS

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 Charley & Pookie Storms
 Jay Cutler Foundation

PLATINUM CHAMPIONS

\$10,000 +
 Courtney & Jo Carson
 Craig & Mary Fenneman
 William E. Schmidt Foundation, Inc.

THANK YOU TO THESE COMPANIES WHO MADE MATCHING GIFTS FOR SOME OF OUR DONORS

Bristol-Myers Squibb
 Raymond James Financial, Inc.
 Soros Fund Charitable Foundation

* Gifts in Memory of Laurel Szorcscik
 Sep 14, 1997 - Sep 11, 2017

As a camper from 2008 through her CIT year in 2014 and staff member in 2015, Laurel was a well known member of our Camp Carson family. Throughout her battle with cancer, her enthusiasm for camp and life never waned. She will truly be missed.



**CAMP
 MATTERS**

THANK YOU TO THESE DONORS WHO JOINED THE CONTINUING THE LEGACY CAMPAIGN IN 2017

Elizabeth Canizales

Walter & Selma Lewis – Bridge Builder*

Kevin & Richelle Williams – Bridge Builder*

* Bridge Builders have contributed a minimum of \$1000 to the Endowment Fund and/or have named YMCA Camp Carson as a beneficiary through their estate plans.

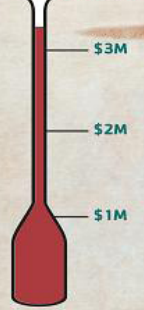
\$3,405,737 towards \$4,000,000 Goal

EMPOWER THE FUTURE OF CAMP

SUPPORT THE CONTINUING THE LEGACY CAMPAIGN



TOTAL CAMPAIGN NEED: \$4 MILLION



- | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cabin Replacement | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suspension Bridges #1 | <input type="checkbox"/> #2 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Waterfront renovation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Campfire Renovation | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff Wellness Center | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land acquisition | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health Center | <input type="checkbox"/> Generator | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adventure Village | <input type="checkbox"/> Endowment | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Equestrian Center | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> \$1M Cash | |
- ✓ = Fully Funded

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATION OF GOODS AND/OR SERVICES IN 2017

Berry's Produce & Country Market
Jay Davis
Heritage Petroleum, LLC
Jim Hipp Nursery
K & K Industries, Inc.
Lefler Repair Center
Pavement Sealing Company, Inc.
Q-Stripe

Sgt. Pepper's Fireworks
Jeff Snyder Coaching
Gayle Sprinkle & Charlie the service dog
Straeffer Pump & Supply, Inc.
Vicki VanDenburgh & Andy the service dog

THANK YOU FOR THE GUITARS!

Huge thanks to Jay Davis who donated 8 brand new FG800 Yamaha guitars. This past summer campers were able to spend Rec Hour playing or being introduced to the guitar. We are excited to expand this program in 2018.



SUSPENSION BRIDGE IS BACK!

- Left: Original bridge by current zip line tower.
- Bottom Left: **NEW** bridge at same location as original! Thank you Spencer and Mary Goodson.
- Bottom Right: **NEW** bridge from Ridge Top Village to athletic field.



WELCOME TO RYAN MEEKS - INTERIM PROGRAM ASSISTANT



We are excited to introduce our new Interim Program Assistant, Ryan Meeks. Ryan is graduate of Ball State University with degrees in Chemistry and Education. Previously, Ryan has worked seasonally at Camp Carson helping to facilitate the Teen Leadership programs. He recently returned to the United States after spending a year and a half in the United Arab Emirates working as a high school science teacher. As of late January, Ryan has joined the Camp Carson team and has begun assisting in interviewing our summer staff and planning for the summer programs.

"I am very grateful for this new opportunity and extremely

excited to be working with this team of individuals that have been a tremendous influence in my life. During previous summers, my work at Camp Carson really ignited a passion for youth development and education, and gave me the confidence to pursue an international education position. Each summer that I come back, I am blown away by the growth I witness in the youth that come through this camp. Seeing how much a camper can grow in their confidence, communication, and leadership skills in just one week never ceases to amaze me. I cannot wait to assist in the research, development, and implementation of programming that continues to make our campers feel accepted, challenged, and empowered."



FORMER CAMP CARSON STAFF - SAVE THE DATE!

SATURDAY, June 2
6:00 - 8:00 pm CST

Please help us plan well.

RSVP

812-385-3597

INVITE

other former staff!

2nd Annual Strawberries and Cream Event

Calling all alumni staff! Join us for the evening.



- Light dinner followed by Strawberries and Ice Cream
- Meet and encourage the 2018 Summer staff
- Catch up with your camp staff friends from all decades
- See what's new at camp
- Hear about what's coming up at camp

WISH LIST & WAYS YOU CAN HELP

- Volunteer to help with the **Annual Fund Campaign** which helps us extend our outreach to kids for traditional, military, and Safety Patrol camps as well as NYPUM and other camp programs.
- Volunteer to help organize two annual **workdays at camp** (Spring and Fall).
- Volunteer to be a **Host Family** for a 2018 Camp Informational Night to introduce other families to the magic of camp.
- Donate a used **Station Wagon** or Mini Van.
- Sponsor a **Student Life Application Bible(s)**. It is our desire to make a Bible available to any camper upon request.
- Sponsor the **NYPUM program (North American Youth Project Using Mini-bikes)**.
- Volunteer to help maintain plants and shrubs around camp.
- **Write to your local newspaper** about the benefits of a summer camp experience.
- **Ask your PTA** to have us come and speak to students/parents about camp.
- **Invite us to speak** to your local civic organizations about camp's work in the community.

You can Sponsor...

- **GPS Cross Country** orienteering program
- **Digital Photography and Video Program**
- **Tree House or Tree House Village**
- **Adirondack Shelter** as part of our Eagles Ridge (Camp Out) Village
- **New cabin at camp**
- A **Suspension Bridge** at camp
- **Mini Glass/Jewelry kiln** for Creative Arts
- **Precision Air Pellet Rifles**
- **Ammunition** for riflery (.22 LR)
- **Costumes, props, dress up clothes** for skits

JOIN US FOR FAMILY CAMP 2018 Labor Day Weekend September 1-3



Update on the BBC/Wild Pictures and Harry Potter Actress Film Documentary at YMCA Camp Carson



Our segment has already aired in the UK. We will release it to our camp family as soon as they give us the green light! Stay tuned.



YEAR ROUND DIRT BIKE PROGRAM

DID YOU KNOW?

- Our **summer** dirt bike program is not the main focus or purpose for Camp Carson dirt bikes.
- **Honda provides** these bikes to help our year round outreach work. The program is called **NYPUM** (National Youth Project Using Minibikes) and was created to help motivate kids, especially at-risk youth.
- Each young person meets with their NYPUM leader to set specific **personal goals**. Examples include: attending school, completing school assignments, refraining from engaging in negative behavior in and out of school, showing respect to their peers, teachers, parent or authority figures. When they meet their goals each week, they are rewarded with dirt bike riding time. As a result of improving their decision making skills, learning self control and being accountable for their own actions, they are able to build positive conduct and relationships in all aspects of their lives.

HOW CAN YOU BE INVOLVED?

- Help us make youth organizations aware of this outreach program!
- Join us in securing funding to sponsor kids through this program. Funding is often the singular roadblock for youth organizations who would like for their kids to participate in this program.
- Volunteer to go through the 21 step NYPUM dirt bike course so you can help supervise trail rides.
- Volunteer to help maintain the bike mechanics.

CAMP
MATTERS



18 NEW DIRT BIKES FOR SUMMER 2018!

As part of our partnership with NYPUM, Friends of Honda donates new dirt bikes every 3-4 years.

The new bikes are assembled by West Side Honda on Franklin Street in Evansville. West Side Honda then sells the used bikes.

2018 ANNUAL FUND CAMPAIGN



Let's work together to help build up and prepare more kids for life by giving to the 2018 ANNUAL FUND CAMPAIGN

The Annual Campaign benefits EVERY family who enters our gates and helps make camp accessible to ALL families and kids who desire a week at Camp Carson. Literally hundreds of families receive help through our many scholarship opportunities.

- Financial assistance to families who qualify
- Financial assistance which are available to all families through our 3 rate pricing
- Helps provide 2 camp programs for kids from military families
- Helps us conduct outreach programs like NYPUM for kids who need help year round.
- Helps underwrite the Safety Patrol Program
- By helping offset program and facility operational costs which helps us keep all camper fee increases under control.

CAMP
MATTERS



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the Y **YMCA CAMP CARSON**

2034 Outer Lake Road • Princeton IN 47670

A Branch of the YMCA of Southwestern Indiana, Inc. • 222 NW 6th Street - Evansville IN 47708
812-385-3597 • campinfo@ymcacampcarson.org • www.campcarson.org

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Mr. Terry Yunker
Executive Director
Mr. Mark Scoular

**Mom & Dad,
Have campers moved on? Please email camp with their new address!**



REGISTER NOW FOR SUMMER 2018!

CAMP
MATTERS



SPRING EVENTS

VOLUNTEER Morning

Saturday, April 21 • 9 am - 1 pm CDT

Recruit a team and join us as we get ready for Open House. Lunch is served.

OPEN HOUSE

Sunday, April 29 • 1-4 pm CDT



SUMMER EVENTS

STRAWBERRIES & CREAM

2nd Annual Staff Alumni Event

Saturday, June 2 • 6-8 pm CDT

An opportunity to fellowship with staff alums and encourage our summer staff as they make final preparations for our first campers arriving the next day!

SUMMER CAMP BEGINS

Sunday, June 3

BRIDGE BUILDERS DINNER

Tuesday, July 10

Recognition for our endowment donors.

FALL EVENTS

FAMILY CAMP

Labor Day Weekend • September 1-3

VOLUNTEER Afternoon

Saturday, October 27 • 1-5 pm CDT

Recruit a team and join us for an afternoon of camp work projects and fellowship.

BONFIRE Evening

Saturday, October 27 • 5-8 pm CDT

All ages! A cozy night of chili, hotdogs, s'mores and songs around the campfire.

RSVP for all EVENTS at 812-385-3597. This helps us plan well!



The YMCA of Southwestern Indiana, Inc., following the example of Jesus Christ, responds to community needs by serving all people, especially youth, through relationships and activities that promote healthy spirit, mind, and body.

CONNECT OR RECONNECT WITH CAMP

Links available via our website gateway page.

