

SPRING & SUMMER 2018
MARMON VALLEY MINISTRIES

SPURS

SPURRING FAITH FORMATION
IN THE NEXT GENERATION



MISSED CONNECTIONS

Camp is International Crossroads

Laina Reams lives just outside Kansas City. She was looking forward to seeing some relatives when she came to horse camp last July. Her grandma, Janet Reams, lives just a few minutes from camp.

Dasha Holcombe's parents are missionaries in Mexico City, and she was returning for her third year at horse camp. The 15-year old would be seeing her grandparents, Charles and Zetabarbara Holcombe, and an aunt, who lives near Columbus.

The girls met when they arrived at camp on Sunday... both staying in the Shepherds cabin. Laina chose the bunk next to Dasha. They ate together, rode together, talked and laughed together for the entire week. Laina remembers Dasha as "kind of quiet, but really fun to talk to."

INSIDE:

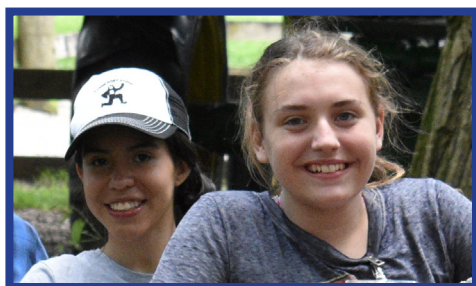
CAMP BENEFITS TEENS

6 THINGS KIDS NEED *(BUT DON'T ASK FOR)*

SMILE THROUGH TEARS

Dasha recalls Laina as very outgoing, initiating conversation, which was fine with Dasha because English is her second language.

"We sort of connected right from the start," Dasha says, "and we were frequently finding ourselves paired together the whole week." **A typical camp friendship, except...neither girl knew they were related!**



Dasha (left) pasted this photo in her journal without realizing she was related to Laina (right).

MISSED CONNECTIONS CONTINUED...

No one figured it out until the very last minutes of camp. On Saturday mornings, campers put on a parents' program to show the horsemanship they have learned that week.

Laina's aunt Debbie came to pick her up and was watching the show. When Dasha's name was announced as she was riding, Debbie remembered that she has a distant cousin named Dan Holcombe that lives in Mexico and has teenage daughters. She wondered if Dasha was his daughter.

After the show, Debbie asked Laina if Dasha was from Mexico. When she said "Yes," Aunt Debbie told her Dasha may be her cousin.

Laina found it hard to believe. "I was like, 'really. Are you serious?'"

The two hurried back to the cabin... but Dasha's stuff was gone. Hoping she stopped by the camp store, they rushed there. They ran into Wrangler Matt and asked if he had seen Dasha.

Unfortunately, Dasha and her family had left just five minutes before. But Matt confirmed, she was from Mexico and her parents were missionaries.

Dasha didn't learn of the missed connection until January.

"I couldn't believe it," Dasha says. "She was my bunk-mate. We had a lot of opportunities to talk, especially



Dasha was shocked to learn she was related to one of her cabinmates!

at night before sleeping, but **I never imagined we were related."**

What are the chances that two campers, who are related, but never met each other, end up going to the same camp, the same week, and are assigned to the same cabin?

Neither of the girls are sure if they will be able to come to camp this summer, but if they do, we will do everything we can to help everyone connect for a family reunion!





CAMP BENEFITS TEENS

More teens are suffering from anxiety than ever before and many parents, teachers, and therapists are struggling with how to respond.

Pressures rise from so many areas like school, social settings, sports, families, etc. and social media often compounds that stress.

With almost no personal time for thought and reflection, teens need a chance to recharge.

We have seen time and again the positive results of spending a week at camp. **Camp provides opportunities to be with positive role models, explore creation, and learn about Jesus in a safe and loving environment.**

Giving teens a chance to unplug, step away from situations, and experience life outdoors provides the hope many young people desperately need.



RESTROOM RENOVATIONS

During the chilly winter months our maintenance crew stays busy on indoor projects.

This winter, they worked on the first phase of improving the Activity Barn restrooms by adding barrier walls to the entryways.

While it is still a work in progress, the goal is to provide a more comfortable, private, and secure restroom experience for everyone.

Stop by the Farm to see for yourself!



6 THINGS KIDS NEED *(BUT DON'T ASK FOR)*

BY NATALIE FRUEH

1. ACCOUNTABILITY

Everyone has heard (and probably said) the phrase, “It’s not my fault!”

That phrase is heard all the time at the camp’s team-building challenge course. Challenge course facilitators intentionally set up scenarios where participants must choose to either shift the blame or be accountable for their own actions. Those scenarios show participants how to recognize the way their actions impact the outcome. Parents can use real life situations at home to teach the same thing. They can use each blaming situation as an opportunity to show their child that they are personally accountable for their actions.

2. BOUNDARIES

Clear boundaries are critical to establish accurate expectations.

Farmers put up electric fencing to keep their animals close to the safety of the barn and far from the dangers of the road and wild animals. The fence gives animals a small shock if they try to push their boundaries. God is much like a good farmer. God wants to keep us close to Him and far from the dangers of sin, so sometimes he allows us to experience

the pain of consequences when we push boundaries. Talk to your child about what boundaries your family has in place and the consequences of pushing the line or crossing the line. Showing your child how your boundaries are based on God’s Word will help them set their own boundary lines as they mature.

3. CHALLENGES

Doing hard things is a part of life.

When young people are given high expectations and difficult challenges, many will rise to the task at hand. Through challenge, they learn to problem solve and become more independent adults. To learn more about how to help your kids do hard things, reference the article in the Fall & Winter 2017 edition of Spurs.

4. DISCONNECTION (FROM TECHNOLOGY)

It takes effort to disconnect from technology and connect with the “real world”, but it’s so worth it.

Few people are willing to admit they are addicted to their phones, however, research shows it’s a growing trend. No matter the level of phone usage, everyone needs time to



“unplug” from technology. To break the habit, promote healthy phone use by establishing boundaries. A good place to start is to make “phone free” zones, like bedrooms, restrooms, or the dining room table. Instead of using your phone to fill “dead time,” look for ways to engage with the people around you, enjoy nature, or talk to the Lord.

5. ENCOURAGEMENT

Encouragement can be the difference between quitting early and completing the task.

Most of us wouldn't be where we are today without the encouragement of people around us. Sometimes the way we naturally give encouragement may be different than how other people best receive encouragement.

For instance, heartfelt notes may be huge encouragement for you, but your child may prefer a hug. Being aware of the other person's differences can go a long way when you offer encouragement.

6. FAITH

Helping your child develop their faith is the highest responsibility and the greatest gift parents give.

While going to church is a great place to learn about God, it shouldn't be the only source of “spiritual food.” Talking openly and honestly about your own faith journey will encourage your child to share about their own beliefs. When you show your kids how your faith impacts your everyday life, they can learn to apply it to their own lives.





SMILE THROUGH TEARS

Aiden Carter is one of those people you never forget.

Each summer since he was old enough to attend, Aiden lit up the camp with his big smile and fun-loving personality. He was an icon of the Insight Horse Camp and was well-liked by both campers and staff.

Aiden never let his visual impairment or health concerns stop him from enjoying life and spreading joy to those around him. **He was a Smile-ologist Extraordinaire: If you'd lost your smile, he'd help you find it!**

On January 7th, 2018 MVM was shocked to learn that Aiden passed away suddenly at the age of 15.

At the funeral, camp staff were touched to see how much MVM had impacted his life and were happy to see so many pictures of Aiden having fun at camp. With bittersweet tears, we sang Aiden's favorite camp song alongside hundreds of people in the packed church.

Everyone left the service encouraged to follow Aiden's example and be the

sunshine in this dark world.

Aiden's parents know how much MVM meant to him and started a scholarship fund in his memory to help other visually impaired young people have a life-changing camp experience.

There are several ways you can honor Aiden's memory:

1. Spread the Sunshine!

You never know what struggles other people are facing, so be sure to spread God's love to everyone. *"he light shines in darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."* John 1:5

2. Spread the Word!

If you know children who are blind or visually impaired, tell them about Insight Horse Camp. We never want financial need to prevent a child from attending summer camp.

3. Spread the Blessing!

If you want to help kids attend Insight Camp by donating to this fund, you can make an online donation at marmonvalleyministries.org.



A SUMMER TO REMEMBER

Marmon Valley Ministries offers **eight unique camps** that allow families to choose what best meets their child's age, riding experience, and interests.

Campers participate in the morning horseback riding program and enjoy afternoon activities with their cabin group. Evenings include Farm fun for the whole camp like barn dances, hay rides, games, and campfires.

Faith formation is central to the purpose of all of the camp programs. Activities, devotions, and meaningful relationships provide opportunities to disciple young people and lead them to Jesus in a personal way.

Many of our camps are filling up fast, so be sure to sign your camper up for a summer to remember!

Visit marmonvalleyministries.org to register today!



SUMMER CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS

Of the 766 kids who came to camp last summer, 105 got the chance to attend with assistance from the Summer Camp Scholarship Fund, more than \$46,000 in scholarship assistance.

This summer our goal is to help 110 boys and girls experience a week of camp. If you would like to make a secure, on-line donation to the Scholarship Fund, click on the **Donate** button below. Marmon Valley Ministries is a 501(c)3 non-profit and donations are tax deductible to the full extent of IRS regulations.

For more information about our camps or applying for scholarship assistance, call our office at 937-593-8051.

Click Here to
Donate
to the camp scholarship fund



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