

Icthus News May 2011

Greetings to all from the Great Smoky Mountains! Edith & I have been running hard this spring taking care of family, clearing pasture, planting gardens (3), building a chicken coop, landscaping, mowing, and getting the retreat center up & running. John Denver sang, "Life on the farm is kinda laid back..." He must have had somebody else running his farm! Here's a brief rundown on what we've been up to & are looking toward.

So far this year we've hosted a family group of 20 from Raleigh, NC and 34 middle schoolers & teachers from Melbourne, FL. Unfortunately, all my children were sick when the family group was here, so we had limited contact with them in an effort to not share the love we had going through our house at the time. The "crud" left our house by the time the middle school group arrived, so I had the pleasure to share the Word with them & lead them on a couple of Icthus adventures. The Lord blessed us all with his presence. Everyone came away with a greater understanding of what Jesus accomplished on the cross for us.

I had the opportunity to travel down to Summerville, SC on three occasions to be with my Dad who is in the latter stages of Alzheimer's. We had some very sweet times as well as the typical challenges that come with that disease. Please pray for Dad to have comfort & peace, and for my siblings as they care for him during this time. Daddy is 89.

In April I spent two weeks camping in TN helping out Educational Talent Search with their 20th outdoor classroom with middle school students. We led them in rock climbing, rappelling, mountain biking, canoeing, and caving activities. Then we encouraged the students to apply the skills they used in the activities in the classroom, i.e. perseverance, trust, practice, cooperation, etc. I am always grateful for the divine appointments God brings during these outings!

The rec. field at the Haven is getting lots of use from our local neighbors. Two little league baseball teams and a girl's softball team are using the field for practices, and many individuals come out to hit a ball, play soccer, volleyball or shoot some hoops. A few families have used the pavilion for cookouts. We even hosted two Easter egg hunts. Now that we're living on the Haven it's been fun to see & interact in a greater measure with the folks that are enjoying the Lord's place. Almost every day someone is stopping by to enjoy the facilities. We are looking forward to the day that the new lodge is built on site and we can move everything to the Haven. Please join us in praying to the Lord to provide funds & resources that the construction would begin soon. Speaking of construction...

We are planning on closing down August 21 through September 30 to totally renovate the boy's dorm. When it's done there will be a new bathroom, roof, walls... new dorm! The plumbing will finally be run inside the building and it will be easier/cheaper to heat. All these improvements will give us the option to host winter groups. If you'd like to help, here are some specific ways:

1. Pray- especially for favor with the inspectors, protection, & provision.
2. Funds- sometimes we think that if we don't have a large amount to give it really isn't worth it. A little boy once brought five small loaves and two small fish to Jesus & he fed 5,000 men plus women & children with it AND had extra! Write "Icthus" on a jar, box, envelope, dump truck, whatever, and put it in a place where you see it often. Periodically put in the amount the Lord is saying & send it when He says. Like the loaves & fish none will be wasted.
3. Come work- the work is plentiful, the laborers are two. We need cooks, wrecking crews, construction

crews, salvage crews, etc. Everyone will be housed in the girl's dorm (22 beds) and the overflow/staff area (8 beds) so it is possible to have workers of both sexes at the same time. Roy Bonifus has agreed to be the job foreman for three weeks starting September 1. Call 828-488-0553 or e-mail dingle.bill@gmail.com if you're interested in helping.

Sunday, May 29 begins our summer season. Bethany Cochran will be back on staff for her third summer with us. We will be hosting a youth group almost everyday until August 20 (15 total groups) . Some groups will be leaving in the morning and the next group arriving the same afternoon. Sometimes we will have a day or two between groups to catch our breath (& fix stuff). We will also be hosting folks in the ministry house and taking care of our five children, ages 1,3,5,8,&9, throughout this time; then we go right into the renovation project. Pray for strength & sensitivity. Pray that every person leaves here with a greater love for Jesus!

If you want to help this summer we need:

1. Mechanical work- tractor/dozer repair, brakes, equipment serviced, lawn mowers & weed eaters repaired
2. weed eating
3. pasture clearing
4. wood cutting/splitting
5. help revamping our web site
6. air conditioner/duct work cleaning/repair

Thanks for taking the time to read this. Let us know how we can pray for you! Blessings!

Trusting JESUS,
Bill (for Edith & family)
Prov.3:5-6
www.ichthusministries.com