



S'mores & More

The Quarterly Newsletter of Cedarkirk Camp & Conference Center

Upcoming Events:

- **Christmas Retreat**
December 18—20
- **Christmas International House**
Dec. 18—Jan. 2
- **Mission: Encounter**
January 17—18
- **Confirmation Retreat**
March 5—7
or
March 12—14

Check out our new Facebook page—"Cedarkirk Camp & Conference Center" or visit our website www.cedarkirk.org for more information on these and many of the other programs offered at Cedarkirk.

Cedarkirk Year-Round Staff:

- Rev. John Reiter**
Executive Director
- Mark Orendorf**
Assistant Director
- Matt Shick**
Program Director
- Kevin Taylor**
Director of Facilities
- Karin Dale**
Office Manager and Event Coordinator
- Jackie Butler**
Food Service Director

Christmas Camp at Cedarkirk



What have you missed most about summer camp... the great food, your counselors, outdoor activities, arts and crafts, song times, Bible study, or old friends? Or, if you haven't been to summer camp at Cedarkirk before, but would like to try it out, this is your opportunity! You don't have to wait until summer to enjoy all the fun that camp has to offer. **December 18th – 20th**, Cedarkirk is offering its annual Christmas Retreat for all of our experienced campers and new friends alike.

This year's offerings are: a Junior Retreat (campers currently in 3rd – 5th grade) and a Mid High & Senior High Retreat (campers currently in 6th – 12th grade). Campers will participate in traditional summer camp activities like Bible study, canoeing, large-group games, archery, zip lining, climbing the wall, arts and crafts, and song time, all with a unique holiday twist. Everyone will stay in climate-controlled lodges or cabins during this Christmas retreat.

Camp staff from the previous few summers will return to serve as counselors and they hope to see you there as well. Camp staff will lead worship and Bible studies focused on the meaning of Advent, the Christmas story and what the birth of Jesus means for us today.

The retreat will begin on Friday with check-in from 5:30—6:30 PM (dinner included) and will wrap up with a closing program at 1:30 PM on Sunday. The cost for the program, lodging and meals is on \$115.00.

We are excited about new things in Cedarkirk's summer program and are already planning for 2010. Christmas retreat participants will be the first to hear about next summer's program.

Interested? Contact the Cedarkirk office (813.685.4224) or check the website (www.cedarkirk.org) for additional information or to register. We are expecting another great weekend and look forward to seeing you at camp this Christmas!



To the Fields! – Mission: Encounter 2010

January's successful new program, *Mission: Encounter*, is returning in 2010! Middle school and high school youth will spend part of MLK Jr. weekend exploring mission and social justice issues. Worship, Bible studies and discussions, as well as hands-on volunteer work will highlight the kind of mission-focused life scripture calls each of us to live.

Mission: Encounter 2009 focused on providing participants with a general awareness of social justice issues and ways to identify mission opportunities in their own

communities. The 2010 edition of this program will illuminate a specific mission pertinent to youth from our area: gleaning fields to feed the hungry.

The retreat's scriptural focus will be Leviticus 23:22: God's command to the Hebrews to leave some of their produce in the fields to feed the hungry. Participants will help glean a field in Cedarkirk's vicinity as a group and discuss the importance of using our abundant resources to feed and nurture the many people with empty plates. We hope to

energize and empower these youth to return to their communities with a renewed commitment to make an impact there. Of course, there will be plenty of time scheduled for everyone's favorite camp activities.

The *Mission: Encounter* retreat will begin the evening of Saturday, January 15 and end with lunch on Monday, January 17. For more information or to register, contact Matt Shick or Mark Orendorf at 813.685.4224 or email program@cedarkirk.com.

Alternative Christmas Gift Idea



This Christmas, honor a friend or relative by giving a meaningful gift to your loved one and help a child enjoy a week of summer camp.

During the summer of 2009, we had almost 900 campers attend our camp program. Of those campers, over 50 were given scholarship assistance that made summer

camp possible for them and their family. We were able to give these summer camp registration scholarships because of the generous donations from friends like you.

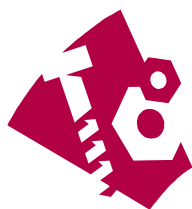
According to *Advent Conspiracy*, we spend \$450 billion dollars each Christmas season showering each other with gifts. And when Christmas is all over, many of us are left with presents to return, looming debt that will take months to pay off, and this empty feeling

of missed purpose. Is this what we really want out of Christmas?

This Christmas, or at any other time of year, consider donating the meaningful gift of summer camp by contributing to our scholarship fund. After your donation, we will send a gift card to tell your friends or family that you have honored them with a Cedarkirk gift.

For more information please visit www.cedarkirk.org or contact Mark Orendorf at 813.685.4224.

Nuts and Bolts



"Good things come in small packages."

We are all familiar with this expression and Cedarkirk has been especially blessed this fall with many small hands helping improve our landscaping in front of Cedar Lodge.

We have had numerous Cub Scout packs take advantage of our reduced camping rates in exchange for a 2-hour service project. They worked very hard pulling weeds and spreading mulch. We thank them for their service and look forward to hosting them again.

Clearing the pathway for our new Retreat Cottage is another project

where Boy Scout troops and other volunteers have helped out at Cedarkirk. Construction plans are being finalized and we are hoping to start construction sometime this winter.

Volunteers are always appreciated. If you or your group are interested, please contact Kevin at 813-685-4224.

PCCM/Cedarkirk Board Member Corner

Hello! Ginny Canning here. I am a member of Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church. This means that I represent Peace River Presbytery on Cedarkirk's Board of Directors.

I am a "semi-native", having spent almost half my life in Ft. Myers. The first half was spent in the Pittsburgh, PA area. Yep, that makes me a "Steelers' fan"! I am a retired high school history teacher and church educator. I am an

ordained Deacon and Elder, have taught church school, Vacation Bible School, confirmation classes, and been a camp counselor.

I became interested in Cedarkirk as soon as I joined CLPC. When I was young, I couldn't wait until I was old enough to go to church camp, and attended every year—moving to Sr. High Conferences upon entering high school. I believe Christian camping to be one of the most important events we can offer our

children, youth, and adults.

Cedarkirk offers a unique atmosphere for persons of all ages. It is inspiring, restful, peaceful, fun, beautiful, and God- and Christ-centered. I encourage everyone to visit and spend time here. I'm sure you will grow to love it as much as I have. I am grateful and honored to have the opportunity to serve on the board.

Confirmation Classes Come Together At Cedarkirk



Cedarkirk has been offering Confirmation classes for over 10 years.

Participants have come from around the state to participate in our 3-day retreat. For 2010, we are offering two retreats: March 5—7 and March 12—14.

Each church group/class will act as their own "New Church Development" providing a basic overview of confirmation studies.

Each group, no matter how large or small, will:

- Discuss statements of faith.
- Create a church mission statement.
- Learn about Presbytery and General Assembly support.
- Discuss mission funding and allocate funds from their NCD budget.

In addition to these NCD sessions, there will be time for worship, great food, and some Cedarkirk fun. Our goal is to learn what it means to be a

part of the church family both in theory, through the NCD exercises, as well as through the fellowship with one another in a family setting.

Cedarkirk's Confirmation retreat has been an integral part of many churches Confirmation classes year after year. We hope your church will join us this March for this spiritual activity. For more information please visit www.cedarkirk.org or contact Mark Orendorf at 813.685.4224.

From the Cedarkirk Kitchen to Yours - Russian Tea Mix



Russian Tea Mix has been a mainstay on the coffee bar at Cedarkirk for years. It is a great drink for a cold night. Plus, you can package this tea mix in a jar and give it as a gift. If calories are

your concern, use an artificially sweetened orange drink mix, eliminate the sugar and sweeten to taste with sugar substitute.

Ingredients:

- **1/2 cup Instant Tea**
- **1 cup Lemonade Mix**
- **2 cups Tang**
- **1/2 tsp. cloves**
- **1/2 tsp. cinnamon**
- **3/4 cups sugar (less if using sweetened tea)**

Directions:

Mix together all ingredients. Keep in an airtight container. Use 2 tsp. to a cup of hot water

Instructions to include with gift:

1. Place 2 to 3 rounded teaspoonfuls in a cup.
2. Add boiling water and serve.

Looking Back on a Great Year and a Dear Friend

2009 witnessed another amazing year of ministry at your camp and conference center. Over the past year, Cedarkirk served thousands of guests, including nearly 900 campers (marking a five-year high) in our summer camp programs, as well as hundreds in our year-round Christian education and mission outreach events. We also offered a free Shepherd's Sabbath retreat for church professionals and held our first Homecoming Event in the fall. In addition to those served in these programs, hundreds have experienced a ministry of hospitality while on retreats in this place apart. Thousands have come down the camp road and experienced community and encountered God in new and exciting ways. Cedarkirk truly is a life-changing place and we look forward to sharing those stories with you in the year to come.

Due to the economic downturn, we faced financial challenges as our funding from Tampa Bay and Peace River Presbyteries was reduced. However, the generosity and support of the churches and individuals in these presbyteries has been an answer to prayers as the funding was restored as they responded to special appeals. So many people have given to continue this ministry and help it grow and we are tremendously grateful. In this newsletter, you will find an invitation to become a Friend of Cedarkirk. Please consider making a gift to this important ministry at the end of this year or in 2010 as we seek to be a transforming presence in the lives of the children, youth, and adults we serve.

This year we lost a dear friend in Sam McCammon (89). Sam was the Presbytery Executive when the property for Cedarkirk was located and purchased. He worked closely with founding Director A.T. Brown in laying out the long range plan for both the physical site and the programs that would be offered. Sam's wisdom was evident as he helped guide this ministry to construct Cedar Lodge so that the conference center would be a place for adults as well as a camp for kids. At our Homecoming event, we celebrated Sam's life and ministry as a foundational part of Cedarkirk's history. A.T. sent a letter remembering Sam's influence in the life of Cedarkirk and that can be found at our website. As we reflect back on a great year of ministry, we give thanks to God for Sam McCammon and all the saints who have played important roles in shaping and strengthening this special ministry.

Discover more about Cedarkirk on
Facebook at "Cedarkirk Camp &
Conference Center" or visit our
website www.cedarkirk.org

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Dear Friends of Cedarkirk,

November 18, 2009

On behalf of the Cedarkirk staff and Board of Directors, I want to express my deep gratitude for the wonderful ways in which you have supported this ministry throughout the year. Many of you have entrusted us with your children, shared experiences here on retreat, or contributed your time, prayers, physical labor, and dollars to make a difference in people's lives through camp and conference ministry. In 2009, we have had the privilege to witness some amazing stories of spiritual growth, mission outreach, and transformation.

Lives are changed at Cedarkirk. This year we heard the story of a youth who was being raised by his grandparents. Since the recent passing of his grandfather, this young man had been quiet and struggling with such a loss. During a worship service of the camp community, he encountered God in a way that reminded him that God had not abandoned him, that God loves him, and that God has a plan for his life. We heard the story of a young adult on summer staff who was struggling with discerning what was next after graduation. Through a summer of service, this young person encountered God in a way that opened her heart to the possibility of continued service to God in the mission field. We also heard the story of a Challenge to Change adult participant who encountered the presence of God by serving those who are less wealthy in the eyes of the world. This encounter with God changed how she viewed all of God's children, her fellow brothers and sisters, and she surrendered her life to the transforming power of Jesus Christ.

Truly, God has found ways to make this *place apart* a blessing in so many people's lives.

As we go forward in ministry, we know the difference your gifts can make. In a world of uncertainty and economic hardship, Cedarkirk continues to play an important role for individuals and churches who truly need a place apart. The gifts of our friends have helped in so many ways. From providing the rocking chairs that bring the sense of relaxation and renewal, to the program equipment that helps build community, to the new dinning room chairs and kitchen equipment that feed the body, evidence of the importance of your gifts to this ministry are visible every day.

We invite you to take this opportunity to be part of giving someone an experience that may have an effect on their faith journey for the rest of their lives. We invite you to make a gift today or make a pledge for 2010. Enclosed you will find a pledge card with more information. Your gift can go toward the Friends' Fund or can be designated to provide scholarships. We will be sending another invitation to become a Friend of Cedarkirk in the start of next year with more detailed information about how the Friend's Fund will make a difference in 2010.

On May 1st, we will be hosting a lunch for the Friends of Cedarkirk to express our gratitude to you and celebrate God's presence and work here in this ministry. This is also the same day as our Open House, so there will be a wide range of activities taking place throughout the day. We look forward to partnering with you this year and celebrating your commitment to this unique ministry in May.

Thank you for your gifts, your time, and most of all we thank you for your prayers, as we go forward in serving the Lord together.

In Christ's Peace,



John Reiter
Executive Director

PRESBYTERIAN CAMP & CONFERENCE MINISTRIES OF SW FLORIDA, INC.
FRIENDS OF CEDARKIRK ANNUAL GIVING OPPORTUNITY
1920 STREETMAN DRIVE, LITHIA FL 33547

My total gift to the ministry of Cedarkirk for 2009/2010 is/will be:

\$200 \$150 \$100 \$75 \$50 Other: \$_____

Please designate my gift as follows:

The Friends of Cedarkirk Fund: \$ _____

Camp Program Scholarships: \$ _____

Name _____

Telephone _____

Address _____

E-Mail _____
