



# Newsletter

Volume 7

Spring 2014



*Choosing books after lunch.*

## The Mission of Camp Agape

To provide a free summer camping experience, in a setting of *agape* (the kind of unconditional love God has for each of us) for Vermont children who have experienced the incarceration of a parent or caregiver

### 2014 Camp Dates

**Ages 8-11:**  
**August 3-8**

**Ages 12-15:**  
**July 13-18**

At

**Covenant Hills  
Christian Camp  
Cabot, VT**

## It's All About Relationship!

Missy was born to addicted parents. She spent her first few years in a chaotic, often violent world. She experienced neglect and sexual abuse as a young child. Her parents, even if present physically, were not interactively present, living in a haze of drugs and depression. Science now tells us that it is the interactive nature of relationships that form the myriad synapses, the connections that are the brain's architecture for future learning and behavior. An infant is forming 700 synapses

each second! If those connections aren't used and reinforced, they are lost.

So has Missy lost her opportunity for a healthy and productive life? The good news is that new connections can be made, even into young adulthood, if youth have access to supportive, loving, and consistent healthy relationships. Missy is fourteen, and is returning this summer for her fifth year, her third as a Camp Agape "Older Kid". Her mother has recently been

released from prison and Missy is struggling with how much of a relationship she wants to have with her. She is having behavioral outbursts in her foster home as she struggles to define who she wants to be. She tells us that at Camp Agape, she has come to realize that God is with her in her struggles, and she wants to know more about that.

Isn't it wonderful when science and the experience of God in our lives arrive at the same truth?

# Meet the Camp Agape Board

The Camp Agape Board of Directors is an all-volunteer, working board. It meets throughout the year to plan the camp program, recruit staff and campers, raise funds, and make the reunion happen each spring.

**Beth Ann Maier** is currently the chairperson. She is a pediatrician and a deacon in the Episcopal church. She resides at camp all summer as the medical staff person. That makes it handy to support our older campers that come throughout the summer.

**Tom Whitney** is our vice-chairperson, and his wife **Carol Whitney** is our registrar. They are both very active in the Walk to Emmaus, and Tom is involved in Kairos Prison Ministry as well.

**Phyllis Hanley** is our secretary. She is also active in Walk to Emmaus and is a former director of Covenant Hills Christian Camp.

**Chris Kapsalis** is our treasurer. He has served on a wide range of boards in health, education, and the arts. He is also the treasurer for the Joint Urban Ministry Project (JUMP) in Burlington.

**Leslie Desrosiers** is on the board of Covenant Hills Christian Camp and has served in ministries in the UCC church on a regional and national level.



**P. Howard (Skip) Flanders** serves the Village of Waterbury as Trustee and Water Commissioner. He and the Wesley United Methodist Church are still working hard on recovery from Tropical Storm Irene.

**Sheri Smith** is moving toward the diaconate in the United Methodist Church. She has training and experience in outdoor ministry and camping programs.

**Judith Christensen** is spending a trial year with the Board. We find that is a good way for an

individual to learn whether or not they want to make the commitment to full board membership. She brings a wealth of experience and knowledge as a member of the UVM psychology faculty, and counselor at the Woodside Juvenile Rehabilitation Center.

We meet about nine times a year for two hours, usually in Waterbury. Meetings are productive and fun! If you are interested in joining us, call any of the phone numbers on the back of this newsletter.

# Looking Ahead to Our Ninth Summer

In 2013, we had forty children attend our camp week for 8-11 year olds. We had a record number of volunteer staff, allowing us to have three adults for every five children in the cabins. We also provided a week of camp for seventeen youth aged 12-15, who have previously attended Camp Agape.

This summer, we will again offer, free of charge, a week of camp to forty 8-11 year olds who have experienced a parent or significant caregiver's incarceration. We can also offer 24 camperships to our older campers, ten of whom can choose the special camp session for "Older Kids".



The Water Balloon Toss



Singing the Moose song

## Thank You

### Fanny Allen Corporation

For several years, we received a generous yearly grant from The Permanent Fund for the Well-being of Vermont Children. When the focus of their efforts turned to younger children, we sought out the Fanny Allen Corporation. Their mission is "to continue the mission of the Religious Hospitallers

of Saint Joseph by supporting nonprofit organizations that reflect the compassion of Christ in their service to people who are sick and poor." We were so fortunate to have their generous support for the 2013 camping season.

Thanks also to the individuals and congregations that have continued to support Camp Agape in these tough economic times.

## 2013 Financial Summary

### EXPENSES

Covenant Hills contract (facilities, meals, staff).....	\$15,585
Stipends to expand staff.....	\$1700
Camper gear, supplies.....	\$2622
Graduate Campers(19).....	\$6955
Board/Director's Insurance....	\$1107
Printing, mailing, etc.....	\$1977
Total Expense.....	\$29,946

### IN KIND DONATIONS

Handmade Quilts.....	\$15,200
Donated Supplies.....	\$3800
Volunteer Staff... @\$10/Hr..	\$21,600
Volunteer Board..@\$10/Hr....	\$6300
Camper Transportation.....	\$900
Total In Kind Donated.....	\$47,800

### REVENUES

Individual Donors .....	\$10,456
Congregations.....	\$10,643
Fanny Allen Corporation.....	\$7500
Family Foundations.....	\$6105
Other.....	\$440
Total Revenues.....	\$35,144



P.O. Box 8283  
Essex, VT 05451

Phone: 802-325-3019  
802-793-4234  
802-985-3028

**Please  
VOLUNTEER**

*Please DONATE*

Email: [campagapevermont@yahoo.com](mailto:campagapevermont@yahoo.com)

An ecumenical ministry of:

The New England Conference of The United Methodist Church

The Episcopal Diocese of Vermont

The Vermont Conference of The United Church of Christ

## What Can You Do ?

- Do you have a special skill or activity to share with campers?
- Can you spend a week being a friend and mentor at camp?
- Can you gather good new or nearly new books for our campers?
- Can you organize your church to contribute funds or supplies?
- Can you come help with fishing or carpentry times?
- Do you have legal, organizational, or fund-raising talent to share with the board?



- ◆ VOLUNTEER
- ◆ DONATE
- ◆ PRAY

Visit our website:

[www.campagapevermont.org](http://www.campagapevermont.org)