

“Providing Labor of Love for Christ-Centered Ministries”

## Reflections on 2008

By Steve Blakeman

The SWAT Team has completed the 8<sup>th</sup> and final event for 2008. This also marks the end of our 8<sup>th</sup> year in ministry. During this time we have held 81 events. Most of these have been what we call “local events” in the Carolina’s and Virginia, while 15 have been “national events”, ranging from the states of New York, Ohio, Mississippi and west to Wyoming.

2008 provided the leadership of the Team several unique opportunities. In January, Daralyn Sacarello and Jim Stewart organized the “kick off” event in Texas, at Camp Eagle, where 13 of us gathered to help this camp. Jim and Joy continue to work steady at getting a group of committed couples and families that will help establish a solid SWAT Chapter in Texas.

In April three of us set up a booth at a National Ministry Conference in Nashville. We talked to several men from throughout the US about the SWAT Team and hope that new SWAT Chapters will come from that effort.

In May three of us from NC traveled to Ohio to help Nate and Amy Wanner kick off the initial event of the Ohio SWAT Chapter at Camp Marengo. A total of 12 came to minister together there. Nate and Amy are working within their local church to establish a core team they can count on to help as they prepare for the 2009 year.

The Mission of the SWAT Team continues to be: *“To provide a means for families and individuals to encourage and partner with Christ-centered ministries through construction and related activities.”* Our long-term Vision is *“To become a nation-wide ministry with multiple local SWAT Teams.”* It is our intention to design everything we do with these goals in mind.

In January 2009 the Leadership Team will be meeting to plan the events for the new year. Currently, our biggest need is that of finding new families, individuals, and/or couples to become committed to the SWAT Team on a regular basis. We ask that you pray for the leadership to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit in all we plan and do in the coming year.



### Upcoming Events

- 2009 Events will be announced following the January planning meeting. Stay tuned for more exciting opportunities to serve!



## No “Tricks”, Only “Treats” for SWAT at Oak Hill

By Steve Blakeman

Twenty-seven SWAT Team Members, including nine teenagers from the North Raleigh Church of the Nazarene, chose to go to Camp Oak Hill on Halloween weekend instead of going “trick or treating”. What a testament of commitment by these kids! While the teens and women busied themselves in “camp beautification” projects, the men removed the existing plastic structure over one of the main wells of the camp and built a permanent “dwelling” for the pump. Prior to our arrival, Jerry Zimmerman, the Camp Manager, informed the group of this project, giving



the guys an opportunity to think things through in advance. It had to meet state building codes and be a long-lasting solution to a problem. Used trusses donated by State College, made building the roof structure much easier.

The Team has developed a special relationship with Camp Oak Hill and Jerry over the past three years and look forward to helping them in the years to come as they continue to increase the Kingdom of God. Each time we go to this camp Jerry excitedly tells us what the Lord has done in hundreds of kids’ lives as a result of attending Camp Oak Hill during the summer.

Once again we enjoyed the unique fellowship that is so familiar to the SWAT Team, which comes about by working side-by-side with each other. The spirit of cooperation and kindness is incredible.

## Youth Pastor Takes Teens on a SWAT Adventure

By Pastor Brittany Cottle

North Raleigh Church of the Nazarene

The SWAT Trip to Camp Oak Hill was a great weekend. This was my first SWAT Trip but it will not be my last. It was nice to be able to bring our youth group and give them an opportunity to serve. I was very impressed with the fact that SWAT does not look down on children and teens. They are not seen as an annoyance but as servants of Christ and that was wonderful to see.

The cabins at Camp Oak Hill are some of the nicest that I have stayed in. It was great to have a bathroom in the cabin. The teens really enjoyed mealtime. There was a lot of delicious



food to eat. We raked leaves from around the cabins and picked up trash along the road. When the work was finished we even had some time to play. Our group did some team work on the obstacle course, went fishing, and had s’mores by the bonfire.

# Extreme Heat Can't Stop the SWAT Team



The final week of August was very hot in the Carolina's. That didn't stop the 25 people who made the 7<sup>th</sup> annual SWAT trip to the D. Moody Gunter Camp/Conference Center in Batesburg, SC from having a good time, being productive and making memories with their families.

We were happy to welcome a new family to the SWAT Team. Chad and Katie Revelle brought their 4 children (the youngest being 4 months old) all the way from Youngsville, NC. It was great to see these parents demonstrate to their children what it means to serve Christ by serving others. Promoting "Servanthood" is a main focus of the SWAT Team and a key reason why we do what we do. It is our mission to give people the opportunity to engage in the ministry of serving others. We are especially gratified when we see parents step up to the plate and make the sacrifices required to get to a SWAT Event after a busy week.

The entire team enjoyed participating in projects that allowed each to have "fellowship" while we worked. Daralyn and Dawn were in charge of the Landscaping Crew, which made a noticeable difference throughout the grounds. Katie had the opportunity to teach her son how to operate a leaf blower. The young children were able to "play in the dirt" while pulling weeds. Mike and Robin worked relentlessly in the hot sun on the electrical systems of several A/C units. Scott and Kaylin had the privilege of

working inside the maintenance shop cutting and preparing sign posts (with a huge fan blowing on them)! They had to go outside after lunch to set the posts (no fan this time)! Steve Yee and Chad didn't complain while they spent most of their time on top of a shed installing metal roofing, while Bill, Dylan and Steve Blakeman worked down below. Phyllis, who flew in from Ohio, helped with labeling room keys and worked outside with Lynn to help clean cobwebs from the walls of the Dining Hall. Della took on the task of imprinting numbers on room keys and making sure everyone was "hydrated" by delivering cold water to all. As is usual at any SWAT Event, it was common to hear laughter and see smiles on faces as we all labored out of love.

Late in the afternoon on Saturday, the pool became a welcome oasis for the children and several adults, under the watchful eyes of Dawn, a Master Swimmer. After enjoying the evening meal on Saturday (thanks to the SC Camp kitchen crew!), the Team gathered around the lake-side fire pit and heard words of wisdom from Pastor Dennis Johnson. Scott led in choruses and everyone was given the opportunity to tell what they had done throughout the week-end and what was most meaningful to them. The evening ended on a sweet note with the traditional treat of soft serve ice cream made by Pastor Dennis. Sunday, after worshipping together with the local congregation, we headed home, talking about the memories that had just been made and looking forward to the next SWAT Event.



# SWAT Helps Solve a 911 Predicament



cut and trimmed 50 posts for these new signs. I had fun learning how to use a table saw for the first time! By lunchtime, all the posts were cut and ready to be put in the ground. After a great lunch, provided by the camp kitchen crew, we were geared up to start phase two. Phase two involved using a post-hole digger. I was already familiar with how to use one, so after a couple of holes, I let Scott have the fun of post-hole digging! We worked as a team digging, leveling, and packing the dirt around the posts. At the end of the day, we had actually accomplished more than they had hoped. It gave us a good feeling knowing we helped solve their problem. Now if the camp has an urgent situation, the Emergency Personnel will know where to go! I had a great time learning new skills and being able to help the camp solve the 911 predicament!

By Kaylin Blakeman

It was a hot and muggy Labor Day weekend when my brother, Scott, and I set out to tackle a pile of timber. Our objective was to make posts for the 911 address signs. In the past, the camp encountered problems with Emergency Personnel being able to find specific areas of the big campground. The GPS system would only recognize a single address for the campground. This caused problems in the reaction time to an emergency. Wanting to avoid future troubles, the camp director immediately assigned different parts of the campground new addresses and street names. All Saturday morning Scott and I

## About S.W.A.T

The S.W.A.T. Team is an all volunteer inter-denominational ministry, and a non-profit 501-C-3 corporation.

Service opportunities include construction, remodeling, landscaping, evangelism, education, administration, and fundraising.

When participating in events, transportation and personal insurance must be provided by individual Team members.

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