



Barren Heights Newsletter

Winter 2011
Volume 5 Issue 1

"I will make rivers flow on barren heights, and springs within the valleys... so that people may see and know, may consider and understand, that the hand of the LORD has done this."

Isaiah 41:18

Barren Heights – Inside and Out

From the outside looking in:

Barren Heights is a beautiful, well maintained, serene little place, located in the middle of nowhere that seems peaceful and unique. A very well thought out little "neighborhood." One where friends/family must gather perhaps to find warmth and friendship. Opportunities abound for recreation and relaxation and this seems like a perfect spot to revisit nature and see God's beauty no matter which way you happen to be looking. From one end to the other I see extremes. The cross - it must be a Christian place (there is comfort in that) and at the other end you can't help but notice the old dilapidated barn (wonder why that still stands) somehow that doesn't seem to mesh with the more modern feel of the camp. Although a stranger, this place feels surprisingly comfortable. Perhaps it is the ol' barn that gives the feeling of familiarity.

From the inside looking out:

I was right. It is comfortable here...even more than appears at first glance. The beauty goes way beyond the structures and grounds, it radiates from the volunteers' smiles and their eyes that hold no judgment and see no differences in my family. I am stunned at this simple fact - we are loved and accepted - immediately and yet they don't even know us! Looking out, I see friendships formed at once, without any effort. Barriers are crossed, boundaries are no more and guests are adopted into this family, no questions asked. I can see clearly again. Gone is the bubble that I often create to surround my family to protect us or protect others from feeling awkward. I feel hope, not that it was ever lost, but it has risen again to the top as I watch my children "shine" almost immediately, feeling the love that I so obviously see.

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2011 Family Enrichment Retreats

Spring is just around the corner. The calendar is now posted on the Barren Heights website and we will begin accepting reservations online, **February 1**.

In addition to a full season of retreats, we will be hosting the first **Barren Heights Reunion** on Memorial Weekend. Save the date and watch for details!

WWW.Barrenheights.com.



A big "thank you" goes out to each of the individuals and businesses that helped make the 2010 Benefit Dinner and Auction such a fun and successful event!

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Mark your calendars: March 11-13 Barren Heights Spring Work Days

If you have interest in participating in this year's Spring Work Days, please call or send us an email by **February 15**, so we can assign you to a work team. *Food and Fun* will be provided for all. Limited lodging will be offered on the nights of March 11 and March 12. We hope to tackle several smaller and larger projects. All skill levels and ages are welcome. We love our volunteers!

Inside and Out (continued)

Peace comes over my heart and stirs again in my soul. All is well as we share our stories, so different but so similar. To be able to speak from my heart with words spouting out without the usual filter is a relief. Life is simple here. God has met needs I didn't even know I had. The golden rule reigns. People love unconditionally and these people "get it". I now see the connection - the cross and the barn (church). God has built this place. He is the architect and the obvious signs of His involvement, the Cross and Barn Church are the "bookends" that seem to shield the "other stuff" the worlds heaps on us out. This is Holy Ground. These are His people. Thank you Barren Heights for giving me the chance to see, first hand, how I think God wants us all to live.

(By Colleen B, a special mom and Barren Heights friend, who first visited with her family in 2006)



Significant Service

We want to express our undying gratitude to **Cyndi Bell** and **Terri Kolter** who rolled off the Barren Heights Board of Directors in December. These very special women (along with their families) have offered their talents, time, and resources over the last seven years. They were committed to Barren Heights before a single retreat was scheduled. Whether **Terri** was planting flowers, taking pictures or preparing auction tables, her desire has always been to honor God and to make Barren Heights beautiful "inside and out". **Cyndi** has served the ministry in every way possible, from naming cabins, leading devotions, and helping with the fundraiser to handling speaking engagements and filling water balloons. On top of that - she is a wonderful sister and best friend to founder, Toni Rose. We love you both and trust that you will continue to be part of the Barren Heights family for a long long time.



Wish List

- Paper Products (paper towels, plates, cups, toilet paper, tissue, utensils)
- Draperies for 15 windows
- Portable AED – Automated External Defibrillator
- Trees and Other Landscaping and Grounds Beautification
- Weed Warriors (volunteers willing to visit when camp is closed and work independently weeding beds and paths)
- 4 Area Rugs (5x8 size, neutral colors)
- Firewood (delivered)
- Hula Hoops, Tennis Rackets and Playground Balls (basketballs, kickballs)
- Bottled Water (17 oz or smaller)
- Basketball Court Coat and Stripe
- Board Games All Ages
- Bath Mats (5)
- Vinyl Table Cloths (60" round, 5 of each color: brown, green, white)
- Heavy Duty Ping Pong Table

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Barren Heights Retreat is a non-denominational 501c3 public charity. This Christian charity is operated **solely by volunteers**. The campus, located in Allen County, Kentucky near Barren River Lake was completed in 2005 for the primary purpose of hosting mini-vacation style retreats for families who have one or more children with a physical or developmental disability. The **family enrichment retreats** run Friday evening through Sunday afternoon, and they are free.