

Backwoods Bulletin



This Backwoods Bulletin is going to focus on the Chuckwagon Experience.

If you drive to the end of Wild Cherry Lane you will find our Chuckwagon. It is sort of an odd shaped building with a lot of different sized pop outs. On the side there is log cabin style siding stained dark brown. On the roof there is dark green tin. There is a little entry way through the main entrance where the campers hang up their coats on their designated hooks and neatly set their shoes. Once you are through the entry way you will find the dining hall. In here we can comfortably fit about

twenty-five people although the number is usually slightly higher.

Bordering the dining hall is the kitchen. This is where our three cooks call home. They put in a lot of work there without many complaints. At the end of the Chuckwagon we find the office. In our office we have three computers and two nice secretaries who do a lot of work behind the scenes to help camp run smoothly.

Our family worker does have a separate little office squished between the bathroom and the main office.

There is a set of stairs leading up causing many curious people to ask where that goes. Two supervisors actually sleep upstairs and call this Chuckwagon their full time home. They are pretty nice guys to have around most of the time.

The Chuckwagon experience starts at the ready logs. Each group gets to the ready logs fifteen minutes before each meal. This teaches them to be punctual and also gives them time to settle down after their work. Once they are on logs they set a couple goals for Chuckwagon. They would usually try to set some goals related to things they have been struggling with. A couple examples would be passing stuff, tuning in, and respectful callouts. One I heard today was to remember our please and thank yous. If they do not make it to ready logs on time, then they will eat outside on their ready logs. Supervisor goes out fifteen minutes before the meal and calls in a table setter. The groups have a rotation for whose turn it is to set the table. The table setter folds napkins, sets the table, and takes the food from the kitchen to the table. Once this is all complete, the Supervisor goes out and calls the rest of the groups in. As the boys file in in their line, Supervisor shakes each boy's hand and welcomes them to Chuckwagon. A proactive Supervisor will comment on their work goals or their new hoodie and make a quick connection if possible. When everyone has hung their coat up and made their way inside, Supervisor calls "Hoya Hoya" and picks someone to pray.

Then it is time for the part we all are waiting for, the food.

Chief asks each boy if they want a small, a medium, or a large. Chief dishes out the food, and it gets passed around the table to the boy. Once everyone has their food, Chief asks everyone to tune in. The tuned in boys go over their goals they set for Chuckwagon. Then Chief says, "Let's enjoy!"

"Thanks, Chief!" The boys reply.

If there are any problems during the meal the group will go outside to deal with it. At the end of the meal the table setter scrapes all the plates and takes the dishes back to the kitchen. The boys usually have about fifteen minutes to talk or read before we have our sharing time. For the last fifteen minutes of our allotted time of an hour, we have a little sharing session. The Supervisor who calls the boys in leads this discussion. It usually starts off with asking the groups how their morning was. Then we go over what we have on plans for the day. At the end of this, there is time for the group to bring any interesting thing they found. Then we will do some camp singing. This happens five days a week and three times a day. The two days we don't have Chuckwagon are our cookout days.

Some would say that Chuckwagon is the heart of camp.

-Chief Braden

"And they shall dwell safely in the wilderness."



aerial view of chuckwagon

Behind the scenes...

The good intentions are high. This morning I will pretend I love mornings and perhaps be even a little early. Today for me is lunch duty which means be at chuckwagon at 7:45 to assist with breakfast. 7:20. The phone not so kindly reminds me. Frantically getting ready, the pretending of love for mornings is long forgotten. 7:38. Great... Now I see there is frost on my good ole faithful whip which is named Pluto. After a battle with the hot water, there is now a peep hole in Pluto's windshield. 7:45. The lights of chuckwagon are very inviting. Along the hill line, boys are running hurriedly hoping against hope that they will make it for breakfast. I open the door for you to step with me inside the chuckwagon. Miss Beth easing around the kitchen finds a warm smile for everyone. A dialed breakfast of biscuits and gravy is just waiting to be eaten. I assist with the Chiefs' teas as each Chief is given their own choice of hot beverage, for we cannot forget these Chiefs are legends and deserve the world. If one would glance toward the fire place, Chief Jake sits reading his (how to not go broke ranching magazine), and we may or may not laugh a little at him for doing such, but that will be our secret. Now I hear Chief Braden calling the boys in for breakfast.

Observation and staring are my best hobbies I've decided, and so I observe the goings on of a chuckwagon breakfast. Chief Braden is heard cracking yet another one of his dad jokes. Chief Dave is patiently teaching a camper his Paracord skills. "Sunshine" can be heard from the singing coming from the Trailblazers, Chief Brandon right in the thick of it. Miss Jamie is artistically making a picture come alive at the Lifetime table.

Now we will leave this scene behind, for one must not linger too long. 9:38. Miss Beth is found hopping into her Gladwin, her duties done until she comes back to help with supper dishes. Now for that lunch that is "supposed" to be done at twelve thirty. The potatoes are tossed into the oven, and the meatloaf is baking. Turning around I glance at the water on the stove reminding me to not forget about him because he will be boiling soon. A Chief steps through the door, and I, of course, have to ask him a question or two. Poor dears must really get tired of my chatter at times. Another comes through and this time the conversation is headed towards a completely different topic. The water is now screaming loudly, all manners gone by the wayside. Still talking and pondering while trying to ease the water off, the pot holder decides he's been attention deprived and lights on fire. This will be our second secret, for if Miss Rhonda knew how many pot holders I'd burnt... I thought it rather rude of the pot holder. 11:40. The potatoes are not browning on top so broil seems to be just the thing. Well, indeed just a moment later we are met with a hazy kitchen and some blackened crispies on top of the potatoes, but one mustn't cry over spilled milk. We jus scrape the top layer of potatoes into the trash because who even likes crispy things on their potatoes anyway. Shall I panic, for alas, my meat loaf is also not getting done. The doors open, and the boys have come in to set their tables. I will not bore you with the rest of the scattered whereabouts of the kitchen scene, but let's just say that meal was tapping in on about seven minutes late.

Now we have arrived at lunch hour. Chuckwagon bursting with life. The camp staff finding yet another angle to look at the topic brought up for the fifteenth time. The campers' cheeks red from fighting the cold morning. The mascot dog lazily tucked away in the corner. This is what a day in the life of a cook looks like and is really the most wonderful thing. And now we will close the doors of the kitchen; for my duties are over for the day. ~Miss Nertle.



Education Goal- Different Countries

Check out what we learned, and the foods we got to eat!

Bangladesh

Welcome to Bangladesh. Bangladesh is the eighth most populous country in the world and was home to 171.4 million people in 2023. Not only is it home to so many people, but it is also home to 628 different species of birds and 6,000 species of plant life, 5,000 of which are flowering plants. Bangladesh welcomes 125,000 tourists a year to their country and to their amazing capital called Dhaka. Known for its tropical climate, the country has never recorded a temperature below 0°C or 32°F. The official language they speak in Bangladesh is Bengali, and their state religion is Islam. The currency of Bangladesh is the Taka which is used to buy or pay all their needs. Bangladesh has the world's 7th largest labour force which is sitting at 71.4 million. The biggest festival of the Buddhist across the country is Buddha Purnima, which marks the birth of Gautome Buddha. In Bangladesh, they celebrate Christmas just like us, but instead of calling it Christmas, they call it Baro Din. Bangladesh is still a thriving country to this day with its many people, animals, and its tropical climate. -Trailblazer Camper



Ethiopia



China



Bangladesh



Malawi

Holland

Holland is a beautiful place with a low elevation and majestic mountains. People in Holland are known as Dutch. A good portion of Holland is located beneath sea level. Some people in Holland wear wooden shoes. A little uncomfortable, huh? Amsterdam is located in North Holland with a population of 931,298 people. Amsterdam's streets are really cool with paved bricks. Some streets have a canal or waterway for touring boats in between them. Holland has a somewhat small military. They own offshore patrol vessels for the Royal Netherlands Navy. The F-35 Lightning II is used for the Royal Netherlands Air Force. Sports are something that Dutch people love to do. Football is a popular sport in Holland besides field hockey and volleyball. Some people have a heart for racing. Max Verstappen was the youngest Formula 1 driver to win a race and also the first Dutchman to win a Grand Prix and the Formula One World Drivers Championship. From Amsterdam, with its old history, to the world of modern sports, the Netherlands remains a fascinating country! -Frontiersmen Camper

Through the eyes of visitors...

Dear Reader,

My heart is full tonight with warm thoughts of camp and all the hard working people who are making it happen. Dennis and I decided to take our only available day off and slip down to camp for the afternoon. We knew it was cookout day for the campers so we probably wouldn't see them and the chiefs on duty. We would also miss the cooks since it's their day off.

We always enjoy the drive to Berkeley Springs, and today was a beautiful fall day. Pulling into the parking area, we noticed Chief Alex hard at work putting in a new walkway to the campers' entrance so he was the first person we visited with. He's just retired from chief to chief supervisor, and he shared how tough it's been. He misses those campers, and so he is trying to stay busy.

Next, we walked into the office and were greeted by the two friendly secretaries, so much paper and computer work to do! They don't have a large office and many people coming and going through there, but somehow they stay focused and upbeat, and the office work gets done.

I have been impressed with the cheerfulness everyone seems to have at camp. Everyone we meet has a smile for us, sometime a handshake and a "Welcome here!"

The afternoon flew by as we visited with various ones, trying to figure out how to keep going forward. So many positive things have happened, and we want it to continue. Chuckwagon is maxed to the gills, and we all dream of spacious space. Someday we'll see our dreams come to reality, hopefully sooner than later. After leaving chuckwagon we mosey over to where Dad (Chief Reuben) is working on the house for our new workers. It's up a steep hill, but the view off the new deck was well worth the climb, and the view from the back porch is so quiet and serene. Things are getting nicer there every day, and we hope it's be ready when the new workers arrive. Thanks to all those who helped with that project. Truly, an amazing project.

By then it's 6:00 and time for supper. Dennis asked Chief Lee if we could eat with them. We had a wonderful supper hour. I wish you could have seen what I did! Miss Carol wasn't sure how many would come for supper, and she kept adding more plates to the bar since the table was already full. Altogether she served eleven chiefs/maintenance guys plus us. The food was delicious and plenty, and the guys had a lively, noisy discussion. It was such a homey time.

Here's a sincere thank you and a deep appreciation for all the workers who make camp happen. You all are needed. Keep up the fantastic job.

And for the Reader- Please keep this tremendous work in your prayers. We want God to be at the center of all the endeavors, and He is to be praised!

- Mae Oberholtzer (board member's wife)



Cookie Decorating
and cheer basket
making for the
neighbors

Progress Report...

- Family Worker house renovation almost completed. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped make this project a success!
- New Chuckwagon walkway entrance completed.
- The schoolhouse is completed and being put to use!
- Many improvements in the maintenance shop have been happening.
- Frontiersmen have completed their privy tent and been working on trail logs. Good work!
- Trailblazers have completed a new chuck tent and been working on trails! Way to go!

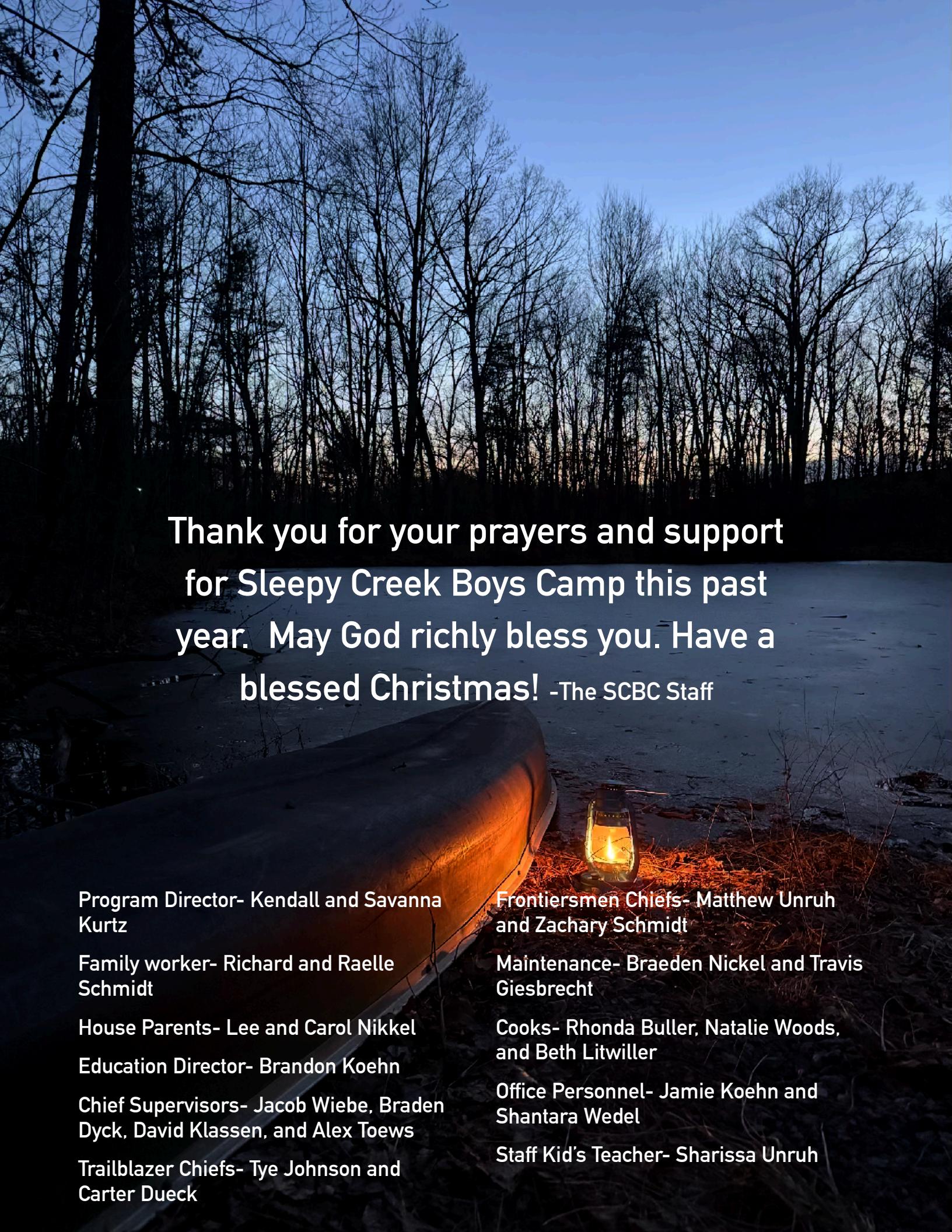


Welcome...

- Miss Shantara, Your help in the office is invaluable.
- Chief Travis, Welcome to our maintenance team!

Goodbye...

- Miss Andrée, Thank you for the many hours spent in the kitchen, teaching the staff kids, and helping in the office!
- Chief Kody, Thank you for the time you spent on our maintenance team!



**Thank you for your prayers and support
for Sleepy Creek Boys Camp this past
year. May God richly bless you. Have a
blessed Christmas! -The SCBC Staff**

**Program Director- Kendall and Savanna
Kurtz**

**Family worker- Richard and Raelle
Schmidt**

House Parents- Lee and Carol Nikkel

Education Director- Brandon Koehn

**Chief Supervisors- Jacob Wiebe, Braden
Dyck, David Klassen, and Alex Toews**

**Trailblazer Chiefs- Tye Johnson and
Carter Dueck**

**Frontiersmen Chiefs- Matthew Unruh
and Zachary Schmidt**

**Maintenance- Braeden Nickel and Travis
Giesbrecht**

**Cooks- Rhonda Buller, Natalie Woods,
and Beth Litwiller**

**Office Personnel- Jamie Koehn and
Shantara Wedel**

Staff Kid's Teacher- Sharissa Unruh