

FH Memories

The Fair Havens
Newsletter
Week 8
August 15 - 22

Highlighting the power of God in the lives of our guests and staff

Recipients of Extravagant Love

Camp volunteers John (left) and Jean (right) share how God's powerful hand healed their deepest hurts in the middle of their greatest suffering.



John and Jean take a moment to rest in the memorial gazebo for Jean's late husband, Ken Burns. John landscapes the area around the memorial.

Crushed loves and broken dreams are not the only markers on the road of suffering. In the midst of that difficult walk, there are also rest stops and first aid stations, where weary travelers may find rest and healing. For Jean and John, Fair Havens became one of those places where God brought healing and new blessings to their lives.

After Jean's first husband of 35 years died within weeks of discovering he had cancer, Jean was heartbroken. One of the things that got her through it was her community of friends at camp. "As soon as I came up here I was

mothered. I got so much support from my family up here—and the camp really is my family," Jean said. "Some of the people from Fair Havens phoned every week. I got more support from here than I did at my own church."

God used the camp community to minister to Jean again when she met her second husband, John. Her friends at home told her not to go out with him so soon after her husband's death. Her camp friends wouldn't allow her to be persuaded against love. "Bring him up with you," they said. "We want to

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Rest and Fellowship at

Fair Havens:

This week's speaker shares how good it is to take quiet time and enjoy the company of others at camp.

First time guest and speaker of the week, Carey Nieuwhof, is delighted to be at Fair Havens. For him, the blessing of camp comes from the time he has to rest and interact with people.

As the lead and founding pastor of Connexus Community Church, a multi-campus church in Barrie and Orillia, Carey doesn't get much time to reflect or enjoy peaceful quiet. This week's experience lead him to say, "I feel like my soul is re-connecting with God."

Though Fair Havens has plenty of activities for guests, Carey doesn't mind that he's missed most of them. "I haven't really explored Fair Havens," he said. "But it's been a great haven."

Another aspect of camp that Carey likes is seeing the people he ministers to in chapel. Since Connexus Community Church is televised, he doesn't get to see

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From cover "Rest"

his congregation due to the bright lights used in the filming process. At chapel, he can see his audience and gauge which of his points are affecting them the most. "There's something neat about seeing God at work in the moment," Carey said.

From cover "Recipients"

meet him."

When Jean brought John to camp, he was impressed. He had never been to camp before and didn't know what to expect. The community embraced him as if he were a part of their family, even though John didn't know anyone.

Months later, John still feels blessed at camp. "Coming to camp opened up a whole new world for me," John said. Before Jean opened this world for him, John had never known that camps with a Christ centred focus existed. Now he fellowships with other believers and is regularly challenged in chapel.

One thing that Jean greatly appreciates about the camp is that it gives both her and John the opportunity to minister to others. Jean is the Cruise Director, a bookstore volunteer, and a volunteer

Along similar lines, Carey appreciates building relationships with guests. By Wednesday of his week at camp Pastor Carey already formed a kind of relationship with chapel attendees. He felt blessed to watch the hand of God work in the lives of people.

"I think it is remarkable that

for the Season Siter garage sale and benefit auction. John gardens, helping alongside others to turn the camp into a beautiful paradise.

Even while ministering to others, Jean and John feel ministered to. Jean, for instance, drinks in the glory of God's creation and talks with Him when volunteering on board the pontoon boat ride. John is blessed by meeting the various people who seek him out to talk. John, like Jean, lost his spouse to cancer, and people look to him for support. "It is incredible the number of people who have opened up and told us their stories about losing their spouses," John said.

Jean believes that their tragic experiences are a blessing. "I think because of our past, God can use us to help others," she said. John and Jean want others to know that "God is not helpless among the

people would take seven days of their summer, prime vacation time, and say, 'God, teach me,'" he said.

End

Pastor Carrey's vision for Connexus is for it to "Be a church that unchurched people attend." For more information, log on to: www.connexuscommunity.com

ruins." He knows what will happen to them before it happens. He is alongside them every moment of the experience.

"God has taken this terrible tragedy and turned it around for His good. We have been the recipients of extravagant love," Jean said.

End



John and Jean were married May 30, 2009 by Season Siter neighbour and ordained minister, Milt Henderson. 85 friends plus staff attended the ceremony on the F.H. beach.

From Tragedy to Triumph: God's Work in a Young Girl's Life

Day camp mom, Colleen, shares how God used Fair Havens' day camp program to transform her daughter's life from grief to happiness.

Miracles happen to us everyday. They aren't always flashy, like the dead coming back to life or walking on water, but they do happen. Sometimes they are present in a still small voice, and sometimes through camp. This is the experience of day camp mom, Colleen, who battled to save her daughter Evelyn from depression after her grandfather suddenly passed away.

Evelyn's grandfather, whom she affectionately called "Gru-Gru", passed away of sudden heart failure when she was six years old. Gru-Gru was "one of the most important figures in her life," Colleen said. There was hardly a day the two didn't spend together. Gru-Gru always bought her snacks and played with her.

When he died, Evelyn was

devastated. "She wouldn't go out and play, she wouldn't smile, she wouldn't make eye contact with people—she just shut down," Colleen said. Evelyn wouldn't even talk to her closest relatives. If her grief was confronted, she denied it, even to the point that she refused to admit her grandfather had ever lived.

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The BUZZ: Thoughts from our youth

My Fair Havens Experience

“Fair Havens is a place where I have come to every summer since I was three. I am now 12 and still love every day here. I love that you can spend time with your family and grow with God. I love Fair Havens so much that when my dad [was really sick], my Mommy would drive me up here every day so I could still participate in the Rock and then my Mommy would drive me back home again.

Fair Havens has also been a place to recover and get back on track...It has been a big part of my life for these last 9 years. Not only has it made my relationship with God stronger, but it has made my family stronger too.”

Katelyn, age 12

“Fair Havens is so fun. I have been going here since I was a baby. Now I am 13 and I want to go here forever! My favourite thing to do here is swim. I love the pool, but I’m not so sure about the lake. I love how everyone here treats you so nice. Everyday here I learn more and more about God. I hope I can come to this camp for a long time after this because it is amazing!”

Nina, age 13

Photo of the Week



Camper Paul checks his tee-off during Thursday morning's golf skill. Golf is a popular choice for kids at camp. Among the various things the kids learn, are driving, putting, good sportsmanship and improving overall technique.

Object lessons by our youth:

“Life without Jesus is like an unsharpened pencil: there’s no point. When you ask God into your heart, he erases your sins, just like a pencil eraser erases mistakes.”

Emily, age 13

“God is like a dog. When we betray dogs, anger them, or get too busy to walk them, they will always forgive you and love you anyways. God is the same way, even if you forget to pray. God is also man’s best friend, just like a dog is.”

Kaley, age 14

“Just like a Band-Aid, God heals us and protects us from anything that might come our way that would otherwise harm us.”

Rebekah, age 13



11 year old Evelyn (left), is a different person after attending Fair Havens' day camp. Her mother, Colleen (right) wondered if Evelyn would ever learn to love again after grieving a death in the family.

From p. 2 "Tragedy"

"Death is a difficult concept for anyone to understand, let alone

a six year old," Colleen said.

Grasping at straws, she saw a Fair Havens day camp brochure in the grocery store. Colleen signed Evelyn up and was amazed to see the change that took place in her daughter's life over that week. Colleen signed Evelyn up for another week, then another and another. By the end of four weeks of camp, Evelyn had transformed from a shy, grief stricken girl, to the warm and enthusiastic girl she is today.

Colleen credits God's presence at the camp as the main reason Evelyn came out of her shell. Before coming to day camp, she exhausted all other options. "We saw grief counsellors, we tried help from books, but nothing was working. Even Evelyn's Christian school

tried to help," Colleen said.

In 2006, when Colleen drove Evelyn through the camp's gates for the first time, she felt the peace of God blanket them. She knew this was where her daughter needed to be.

Colleen is also happy that Evelyn has continued to mature at a Christian camp. "When girls are between Barbies and boys it is important for them to engage in religious discussion," she said. Colleen is also thankful for the good role models her daughter has here. "Whenever she has a tough problem she asks, 'What would my counsellors do?' It's amazing how influential all the counsellors are," Colleen said.

End



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