



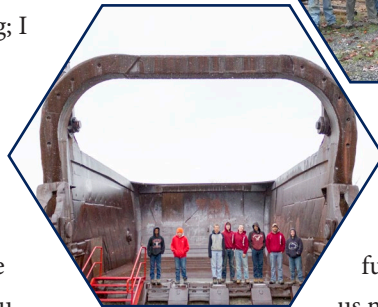
# ALLEGANY BOYS CAMP

*inspiring change through relationship*

July 2019

## Luke's Testimony

My name is Luke, and I attended Allegany Boys Camp about three years ago and it changed my life. I struggled with so much, but God brought me through and that is why I can write this from where I am. Camp is very structured and to me that was not super hard because I was already used to it. When you had problems, you were able to circle up with your group to solve it or talk about whatever issue that needed to be talked about. While I was at camp, I was fake for the first year. I thought if I could hold myself together for one year then everything would be okay. But I was wrong; I got to the point where God got a hold of my life and really made me realize that I was not living a good life. I truly believe God spoke through my group and chiefs and that was not easy. But if you are a mom or dad or camper in need of hope, there is hope because of Christ. He can do great miracles. He did one in my life and He can also do the same to you and your family and bring reconciliation.



efforts, however, seemed to threaten the very tools he had come to trust. We've grown to realize that learning to trust another when that trust was not formed early on takes a great deal of courage and time. It was frightening and unsettling for Luke to be in an environment which does not run by the same fight or flight system that he recognized. The chaos he felt within his heart, he created in our home, from the first week he was with us.

We could not have articulated this when we first brought him home. Raising Luke, we were learning along with him. He tried to learn how to function in a world that had let him down. But to trust us meant that he would be vulnerable to even more hurt.

So he fought back...in a hundred little and not so little ways.

His fighting brought confusion (which matched his inner world) and it was a way of expressing his heartache. We believe he longed to love and know love just like those around him seemed to. But the receptors in his heart for such love hadn't fully developed. He also had anger inside, and doubt about himself.

When Luke reached his teen years, the expression of these issues became more dangerous to himself and others. He reached a new developmental level to process his anger and insecurities, but our home was becoming less and less able to provide the space for him to do that. Life for us became more about survival, and we became less capable to lead him through the healing and growing season that was necessary. Two different women, who have each raised sons with similar stories as Luke's, both recommended out-of-home placement for a season...they each said it was the best thing they did for their sons at that age. It was difficult to think that

Luke's parents speak...

We adopted our son at a very young age. We quickly learned that he experienced significant deprivation of human attention in his first year of life. This experience had a profound emotional effect on him. Though we don't know exactly what those months looked like, nor why he was placed for adoption, we do know that shifting caregivers left Luke with an inability to trust those around him to meet his felt needs. He learned to compensate by being cute, intelligently manipulating the people in his world in order to survive.

Once in our home, he no longer needed those survival skills. Or so we would say. We sought to provide love and stability. Our

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having him leave would be the best thing for him. After months of prayer and counsel, one of these ladies helped us find Allegany Boys Camp. And when God opened the door, he opened it wide.

I have come to think of his time at Allegany Boys Camp as an apprenticeship for Luke...a place for him to grow as a young man in life skills. We realized it was a safe place for him to step back and explore the myriad of complex feelings and anger that he'd carried with him since infancy. God's beautiful, quiet, unplugged outdoors, and His loving, sincere, Christ-following people provided a beautiful healing place for this to happen.

It took two years for him to stop fighting and allow this work to happen in his heart. But it happened. Since his time at camp, Luke has had an emotional and spiritual foundation that he did not have before. When we talk with him through struggles now, there is a solid place that we can look back to, common and effective language that we can use (solving problems), and hope that God has brought him this far, and He will continue to lead, if Luke will follow.

In the past, as his parents, we felt that we should be able to provide all he needed to grow into a healthy adult. But we have come to realize that raising children is God's job, and we are his servants for as much as He is calling us to in that process. In Luke's life, God has brought many other dear people to pray tirelessly for him, to work alongside him, and speak into his life. And for this we are eternally grateful. The people at Allegany Boys Camp have been a precious and vital part in Luke's story.

Allegany Boys Camp was not the end of his journey. Nor was it his savior...Only Jesus can be that. He has continued to grow and struggle since camp. Entering back into a frenzied world of devices and noise has been tricky. Learning to put aside his highly developed skill of manipulation to meet his needs, and in exchange, allow love, trust, and hard work to provide for his needs, is still a daily choice for him. When he chooses well, he is free to be the young man God created him to be, full of life and enthusiasm, using his skills to bless others. When he doesn't, he has a familiar way to evaluate his choices and solve problems.



Luke's parents, John & Lois

## Camp Kindling ... *small pieces of camp news and needs*



- 🪵 We said farewell to Jonathan Smoker in June. He has given two years of his time to make a difference in the lives of the Woodsmen Group.
- 🪵 Welcome to Spencer Funk from Chambersburg, PA. He arrived the middle of May, and is serving as chief in the Woodsmen group.
- 🪵 Rodney Sensenig transitioned from our maintenance department to being a chief in the Navigator group.
- 🪵 Chief Ben Zimmerman graduated from camp in April. We are grateful for his time and dedication to helping us start the Navigator Group.
- 🪵 We are happy to welcome Wyatt Bange to camp. He is from South Carolina and will be serving as chief.
- 🪵 Camp is in need of a 3/4 ton pickup truck. Contact camp if you would like to help with this need.
- 🪵 We hosted our annual Families Day on Memorial Day. Members from each boy's family came to share the day together. We started with campsite tours and group activities, then gathered for some exciting games, an inspirational chapel time, and a BBQ chicken dinner. We had excellent participation and were encouraged by witnessing strengthening bonds between boys and their families.





# ADVENTURE LEARNING - Pioneer's Agriculture Bus Trip

## THE SHEEP FARM

Today we went to a sheep farm. We met a man named Galen and he showed us a pen with lots of baby sheep and mama sheep. He told us to try to catch some baby sheep and he said "surely it will not be easy." Braeden was the first to catch one but then everybody got to catch one. Then he told us to catch an adult sheep so he could shear it. If I knew that you could stop it by lifting its head and it would stop, I could have got it under my control but Chief Shawn knew that so he got the sheep.

Curt



## AN AFTERNOON AT LESHER'S POULTRY

As we walked to Lesher's Poultry, we met our board member, Dwight Martin. He was going to give us a tour. We walked in and we saw all sorts of stuff. First Dwight showed us a corner of the room with lots of eggs. He told us that the light turns on at 12:00 am in the chicken room. It stays on for 16 hours then it shuts off. The chicken lays one egg per day. Next he showed us a station where a girl was working. She picks out the cracked eggs and the computer picked out the blood eggs. Dwight showed us a blood egg. It was almost filled with blood. Next was the packaging machine. A box slides through the machine. The machine puts eggs in the box. Then on the other side of it closes it. There is a machine that puts it into boxes. After that a different machine closes the box and then it tapes it. Then that tour was over. Dwight led us into a huge garage. The combine was there. It was huge! We next climbed into it. It was fun. That was the end of the tour in Lesher's Poultry.

Sam

## FARM CHORES

Last night we helped with some chores around the farm. The first chore was milking the cows. They milk with the tie stall milking barn. Next we filled up a milk transporter with an electrical pump. They usually move it with a four wheeler, but we pushed it. We took it up to the calf barn. Then Brian (Cleason's son) showed us how to fill up the tubs with milk and water. Then we fed the bigger calves grain. Kruz cleaned up soggy feed in the cow barn. Then Kyle was mixing feed for the big cows for their supper. He put liquid protein in the silage. Silage is chopped up corn stalks. They mixed it up in a mixer on the back of a tractor with haylage, soybean meal, and ground grain. It was fun doing farm chores.

Ashton



## BIG FARM

Today we woke up and knew that it was going to be fun. First we ate breakfast and we did morning chores. Then we got stuff packed and a guy named Cleason brought his tractor and we drove to his farm. After we got there, Cleason took us to his chicken house. We saw people loading eggs into boxes. Then we went into his shop and the cracked eggs that were not good. Inside them we saw an air bubble that the chick breathes. Then we went to his pig barns and we fed them. After that we went and saw their puppies. Then we played with them. We went and saw a manure digester. After that we had lunch and siesta then we started writing articles. That's all.

Alex



## THE MAN AND HIS HORSES

It was about 2:00 on a sunny afternoon and we were rumbling down the rode in our old gray, 12 passenger van. We were heading back from touring a creamery. As I sat in the passenger seat in the front of the van, I casually glanced to my left side, "Hey guys," I said, "look over there." In the field to the left a tall, lanky Amish man balanced effortlessly on a clattering disc with his 6 magnificent work horses striding ahead of him. Behind him the dirt crumbled into a smooth surface. The man carefully guided the horses smoothly across the field. The perfectly matched brown horses swayed back and forth with each swing of their legs. The white hair of the horse's tails and manes waved in the wind. It was an awesome sight.

Jeffery





## ALLEGANY BOYS CAMP

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We send out printed newsletters twice a year. The rest of the year is by email. If you currently are not receiving our email newsletter and would like to, email our office at [ruth@alleganyboyscamp.org](mailto:ruth@alleganyboyscamp.org).

# OPEN HOUSE

*fun activities for the whole family*



**August 3, 2019**  
10:00 AM until 2:00 PM

**Tours from 10:00-11:30 AM**  
**Pork BBQ Lunch: 11:30 - 12:30**