



# ALLEGANY BOYS CAMP

*inspiring change through relationship*

September 2018

## Wood Corral

Is there ever a man who deep down inside does not want to be known as a “hard workin’ guy?” And what is it that seems so honest about calloused hands, worn leather boots, and threadbare jeans? We’re talking today about the importance

of the wood corral and the place it has in our camp. You can be sure, it is a very central place in the development of character – and muscles.

There are several tools that gain much use in the wood corral. Drawknives are used to peel bark from tent poles and make shavings for fire starting.

Chisels cut notches clean and square for joining tent poles. Bow saws will make short work of smaller firewood logs. The two tools, though which take the bulk of our work and stand as symbols of forestry are surely the crosscut saw and the splitting axe.

Perhaps there ought to be a sign above every wood corral entrance that reads “Wood Corral – Where the Proverbs Are Lived Out.” There is something about working with firewood that instills in a man his role as a provider. In reference to Solomon’s words, wisdom combined with diligence.

Of the many exciting and adventurous things boys get to do at camp, few of them are as favored a standby as cutting and splitting firewood. There is a depth to this work that is hard to describe. Lars Mytting in his book *Norwegian Wood* handles the subject with quite a reverence, “Chopping firewood with an axe is one of the most primitive jobs left for man to do... This

is a chance to wield a heavy handheld tool with all the strength you possess. For a few blessed hours the simple, but concentrated business of striking steady rhythmic blows with a lump of forged steel banishes all the burdens of modern life... Chopping wood is an opportunity use power – brute power if you will to triumph over something... Months later, with a nod mingling self-satisfaction and admiration for the logs resistance, you savor with particular pleasure the warmth that very same log dispenses as it slowly turns to ash in your fire. Yes, it is an effort – but wasn’t it always thus that sweetness comes after difficulties... Physical work creates a kind of spiritual peace.”

There is certainly a satisfaction in cutting and burning firewood – a living close to the earth itself. And on hard work... It was just stated at our lunch table today that “breaking a sweat has a way of cleansing your mind.”

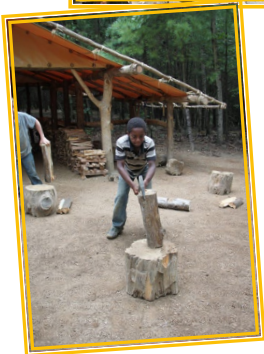
“People love chopping wood. In this activity one sees immediate results.”

Attributed to Albert Einstein

Follow me down the trail now to visit a group of boys. We arrive on a scene bustling with activity. Fresh wood chips fall in lines beneath the steady stroke of

bucksaws. This rhythm of the saws is interrupted by determined, smashing blows from splitting axes and the chatter of the workers. A single yellow leaf floats silently down from above. First turning, then shifting, it settles to the ground near the middle of the scene. Unnoticed, it is a lone messenger to be followed by many more, proclaiming the necessity of this work, the coming of frost, and the white of winter. On the far side a pair of boys carefully lays another wood stack straight and square with the previous stacks. They set each piece with deliberation – with pride. We’re in the wood corral where boys become men.

Albert Stoltzfus  
Program Director



## MY TIME BACK AT CAMP

On December 22, 2017 I graduated from Allegany Boys Camp. It wasn't long until I started missing camp and everything it has to offer. So, I got into contact with Chief Brian about coming up to camp for a brief visit. On August 6, I met Chief Brian at the Cumberland train station for an 8-day visit. I found out that I'd be helping with the demolition of our Chuckwagon.

The very first day on the project we were taking the siding off, which was relatively clean, but just a few days into the project we started with the dirty work. We busted the ceilings out and then cleaned up all the drywall and insulation which was incredibly messy. While this was happening, another group was digging footers around the old Chuckwagon, for the new Chuckwagon. Once we were done busting out the ceilings we took out the windows and the trim. The work was hard at some points, but we got a lot of down time.

I spent a lot of time with my former chief, Chief Jon. We went canoeing from Spring Gap to Oldtown with Chief Lester, Elmer, and Aaron. That night we went to the park for dinner. We played ultimate frisbee and enjoyed sandwiches.

The next day we helped the cooks by moving the kitchen appliances from Chuckwagon to a temporary set up in the maintenance building. We did a lot of hard work, but we had to remind ourselves that the new chuckwagon would be 10 times better.

Since I've graduated camp I've found myself in a lot of situations where I have to use the tools that I learned at camp. I've learned that you have to find different ways to apply the tools you learn at camp. For example, if somebody is trying to provoke you at camp you would call for a circle-up, but in a public school you can't do that, but you have to find other ways to apply what you've learned. One common example is peer pressure. At camp you would call for a circle-up, and talk about your feelings to your group, but in school you have to use those tools in different ways. Such as just using willpower to say no and walk away. You also learn about talking to your authority responsibly, which is very helpful when you have something you talk about with your parents or teachers.

In your time as a camper you have a lot of ups and, I'd be lying if I said you didn't have a lot of downs as well. But I've discovered that camp was a place I had come to love and that I couldn't wait to come back and visit.

Miles  
Former Woodsmen Camper



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



- 🏠 Welcome to Rodney Sensenig who came to camp from Mt. Pleasant Mills, PA came to camp on August 6. He is working in our maintenance department.
- 🏠 We are happy to welcome Rachel Miller from Meigs, GA. She is helping out in the kitchen and office while we are working on our chuckwagon project.
- 🏠 Stafford Eberly from Ontario, OR came to camp to serve as chief. Welcome to camp, Chief Stafford!
- 🏠 Progress is being made on our chuckwagon. The kitchen section is framed in and we are working on plumbing and wiring. We are hoping to be moved back into the kitchen by the end of the session.