



Airnasium Progress: Construction & Fundraising

If you've been following Hidden Acres for several years, you know our history is one of huge growth from the late-1990s to 2017. We added major buildings, developed programs and retreats, and expanded our full-time staff. I worked at Hidden Acres from 2010-2014 but returned in late-2016 as the new Executive Director. At that time we were in the middle of a multi-year project: the new Dining Hall. This was one of the largest buildings ever added to our camp, and after its completion we consciously took a break from new building projects.

In fact, when I came on as director and we finished up the Dining Hall, I came up with a new slogan: "Better Before Bigger." We had a campus full of wonderful buildings and activities, but each area seemed to need a little attention. Starting in 2017, we redirected our construction focus to maintenance, remodeling projects, and small additions. During this time we haven't added a large building, but we have built a few cabins, replaced windows, added outdoor seating, developed hatchet throwing, re-stained the climbing wall, and more. Our guests appreciated the time we took to better our facilities, and we felt ready for a big project in 2023.

In May we announced the start of fundraising for our new Airnasium. I highlighted the details of this project in the September newsletter. In short, we are taking the Outdoor Chapel Court (where summer camp chapels have met since 2020) and adding a structure over the top to provide protection from extreme heat and rain. It will seat 800-900 people comfortably. With insulated walls and large garage doors that can be opened or closed as needed, this space can be used all year long. When it's not needed as a meeting space, guests can use its small indoor rock climbing wall or start a game of basketball, volleyball, or pickleball on the court floor.

Work has already started at the project site. The existing concrete has been extended and reinforced underground, making it strong enough to hold a giant steel structure. In-ground electric has been run to allow electricians to work this winter. The building materials are arriving this month and contractors will start putting up the steel structure. We need to finish work by April 12, 2024 in order for a large middle school group to use the building. Please pray for safety and productivity!

In September's newsletter we also highlighted our fundraising needs for this project. We are trusting God to raise roughly \$850,000 to complete this building. As we

presented these needs to our churches, donors, and camp friends, people have responded in such an encouraging way. Last month on Giving Tuesday we set out to raise \$125,000 via a live telethon. It was a big goal, and our staff sent out letters to friends asking for their support. We went live on Facebook and YouTube at 9:00 am. The live stream included fun with emcees, chats with Hidden Acres staff, and summer camp highlight videos. Between the checks that arrived in response to our staff's letters, two matching gifts, and phone and online donations from that day, we exceeded our goal and raised over \$178,000. Praise God!



A fun promotional image used during the telethon!

We still need your help to reach our fundraising goal:

- \$850,000 needed for the Airnasium project
- \$178,000 raised during our telethon
- \$222,000 in other donations
- **\$450,000 remaining to reach our fundraising goal!**

We believe God has mighty plans for this building. Our staff is praying for God's provision and that He would open the hearts of those who are able to give. Would you consider praying with us and partnering financially as we continue to see God's plan unfold? If you feel led to give, you can use the card and envelope enclosed or give online at hacamps.org/donate. You might also consider attending our Fundraising Banquet in February! There are more details about this banquet on the back page.

If you have questions, feel free to reach out to me at steve.pinkley@hacamps.org or 515-988-2121. Thank you so much for your support and friendship. Merry Christmas from all of us at Hidden Acres!

Fundraising Banquet

Our next big fundraising event for the Airnasium is an evening banquet on Sunday, February 18. Mark your calendars! The night will include appetizers, dinner, special desserts, a live auction, a silent auction, and guest speakers. We are still working out the final details, but stay tuned to our website and Facebook page for more information!

Get Involved Today!

If you are interested in partnering with Hidden Acres, we have two things for you to consider this December.

First, you might consider becoming a Hidden Acres volunteer! For more information, please visit our website at hacamps.org/volunteer.

Second, did you know that Hidden Acres has a monthly donor program? In 2020 we discovered that only 6% of our annual budget was from donations. We set out to increase that percentage, and to date we're up to 10% donations. Our goal is to someday have a budget made up of around 20-25% donations. Our monthly donor program is helping us increase toward that goal!

We currently have several new families committed to sending a donation monthly. If that's you, thank you so much! Please notify us if you have changes for 2024. If you're interested in joining our monthly donor program, please call us at 515-547-2751 and ask for Judy Swanson.

And to all our church donors, monthly donors, and one-time donors: we can't thank you enough. Your support allows us to continue our mission to be a place set apart to encounter Jesus!

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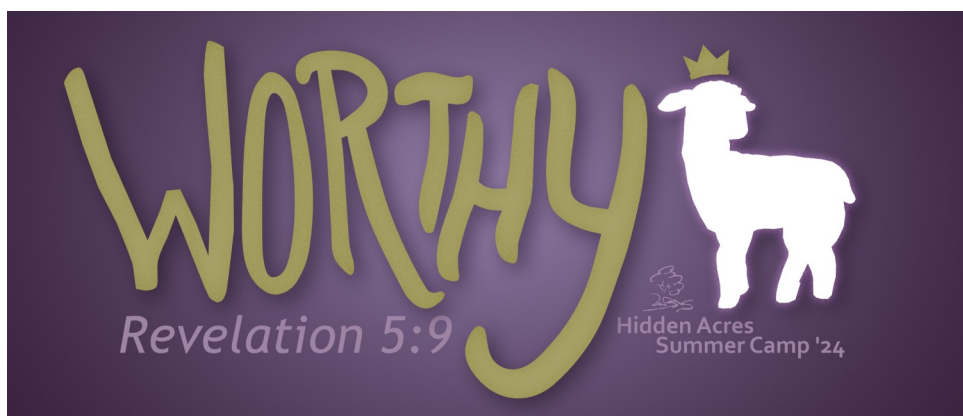
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Summer Camp 2024: WORTHY

You may have heard that summer camp planning and registration for 2024 is in full swing. We've been advertising our summer staff positions for months, and on November 1st we opened online registration for campers!

This summer's theme is **WORTHY**. Revelation 5:9 states, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation." Every person is tempted to worship something, like money, comfort, sports, celebrities, friends, or family. This is because our hearts were made to worship, and they won't rest until they find something worthy of praise and adoration. This summer, we'll discover why the only person worthy of worship is Jesus. He is King, He is God, and by His blood He purchased us for His Father. One day, every knee will bow down to King Jesus. We hope your children will join us this summer to learn why Jesus alone is **WORTHY!**



Hiring for summer staff 2024 is going well! Taylor and Josh handle that entire process: applications, interviews, and contracts. Their goal is to hire 190 staff, including 50 support staff and 140 counselors. We've had 165 applicants already, and that number increases daily. To reach our goal, they hope to have at least 250 applications submitted. If you know someone who would make a good addition to our summer staff, please encourage them to apply! Learn more at hacamps.org/summer-staff.

To date, we have 317 campers registered. Though these registrations come in rather slowly in November and December, things really pick up in the new year. In fact, we expect to receive over 2,000 registrations between January and March. If you have children to register for summer camp, we suggest you get them signed up now to ensure they get into their preferred session before things start to fill.

Summer Camp 2023: Final Numbers

We didn't get a chance to update you on our final Summer Camp 2023 numbers in the last newsletter. That summer's theme and curriculum, "Flip!" was a huge success! We ended the summer with 3,477 registered overnight campers. We also traveled to four churches to host our Day Camp program, and we had 326 students attend those programs—our highest attendance ever! Our grand total of overnight and day camps was 3,803 campers.

These campers were served, befriended, and taught by 180 summer staff. These high school and college students worked tirelessly to share the gospel with and pour into each camper. By summer's end, 275 children had accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior! Another 117 campers had already trusted Jesus but rededicated their life to Him during their week at Hidden Acres. That totals 392 decisions for Christ at Summer Camp 2023. We're excited to see how many lives will be changed this summer at Worthy 2024!