

# WHITE OAK WORKCAMP

## HANDBOOK



Workcamp serves two purposes in conjunction with our ministry here in the mountains of Northeastern Tennessee. First (and primarily) it serves as an opportunity to educate the church in the area of missions in particular. Loving and serving are mission concepts that work more effectively when there are faces and names to go with them; when stereotypes and prejudices are broken down; when we realize how fortunate we are; when our world and culture collide with another, different world that is just as real and just as valid. Loving and serving quickly replace sympathy and pity when there is personal, intimate contact. Come to learn, to love, and understand our people.

Secondly, workcamp often serves as the bridge between dreams and reality for mountain families. A roof that doesn't leak, floors without holes, running water, hot water, steps, decks and porches for entry access and a way to escape the heat from the house during the late afternoon, windows that will keep the cold winter wind... all these and more are problems that many have no resources with which to deal. Workcamp extends this vital service to the community through adopting projects and raising the money to purchase the materials over and above registration fees for the week. Projects at the White Oak Center can also be adopted and funded to enable us to accomplish what needs to be done within a very limited budget.

The key works and concepts for our workcamp are serving and learning-learning by serving. Let me tell you ahead of time what we are not. We are not a Christian Coney Island or Disneyland with attendants at every ride to supervise your every activity and ensure a "good time." We are not a "spiritual retreat" in terms of organized Bible studies, group discussions, or structured classes.

Your week here is a chance to experience a different culture and its people and hopefully gain insights into the definition of mission. We

are here to accept the community people as they are and minister to them within the context of their culture and needs. This is not to imply that we are rigid and heavy-handed with the program. We enjoy different, sincere questions meant to gain understanding. We are open to suggestions – many of our recent changes have been based on input from groups.

Our emphasis here is on the attitude that your group brings with it. The attitude you come with will determine the type of week you have. We offer learning by serving. Learning comes in many forms – through good times and bad, frustration and joy, success and failure, questions and answers (incomplete answers sometimes), trusting and giving of yourself. We don't plan pain and frustration for you, but sometimes it happens, whether it's the heat or rain or the family you adopted or the food or whatever. These are still opportunities to learn about your mission agency, that community and yourself. We welcome you as you come to learn through serving.

### WHO CAN PARTICIPATE

We welcome youth, adults, college, intergenerational, district and conference groups. We discourage groups from bringing children under 12 (unless prior arrangements have been made). Accommodations permit us to house up to 48 people per week. Most groups average 15-20. Larger groups may be scheduled as long as there is adequate space available.

**ONE ADULT WORKER IS REQUIRED FOR EACH FIVE YOUTH.**

### LEADERS

Please prepare yourselves and your group for the week you will spend here. The ride on the way to Henderson Settlement/White Oak Center is NOT soon enough. As soon as you know you are coming, start preparing. Read books and/or discuss missions. (Night comes to the Cumberland's by Harry Caudill is excellent reading on Appalachia. A trip to the library for information about your type of work project is a good idea too.) Watch films; set up possible situations that can occur in a cross –

culture setting. Try to determine why you want to make this trip (to keep an eye on a boyfriend / girlfriend, getting away from Mom & Dad, or wanting to grow by experiencing something different?) the counselors are the key to determining the attitude and achievements for the week. (Will you be ambitious and accomplish more than you dreamed, or will you do only as much as you must and lead the group to mediocrity?) Leaders are responsible for their group's behavior and participation in activities. Looking over the past summers it is painfully obvious which leaders prepared and led their groups, and which ones simply acted as chaperones. Your group will rise to the level you set and maintain for them.

Curfew, schedules, activities, rules, registration and covenant are expected to be read and signed by all participants (to indicate willingness to comply) and returned to us!

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The key to community involvement is to adopt a project in the community. People in the community come to

Henderson Settlement to fill out applications for work to be done on their homes. We develop a project list of work

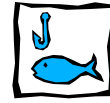


to be done in the Community (and also at the Center) which is then made available on our webpage. Groups "adopt a project, raise money for the materials, then come and complete it. While not all groups can do community projects, many can and it is the best way to experience the wonderful people here. Please consider your project in light of our real life situations. A mobile home trailer with 8-10 years of life left doesn't need a 20-year roof. We don't have 1-2 foot snows and thus don't need to frame to those specs.

Consider the budget of the project – funds are limited. Nevertheless, do your best. Part of poverty, other than waiting, is having to make do with what you have. Do as good a job as you would on your own home even if it isn't the way you'd do it.

## FREE DAY

Wednesday is our Free



Day but groups can choose to work all or part of the day if they wish. A host of local parks and recreation areas are within reasonable driving distance.



Breakfast and supper are served to workcampers on Wednesday but NOT lunch. Any group leaving the Center must return before 10pm.



## COST, ACCOMMODATIONS, MEALS

Summer (June, July, and August):

\$250.00 per person from Sunday evening to Saturday morning. This covers all lodging, meals, supervision, and programmed evening activities. The Sunday evening meal will be available on Sundays to only those groups, which register for the meal ahead of time. The meal will be cold cut sandwiches only and will be served at 6:00pm. Otherwise groups should plan ahead for Sunday evening meals and snacks before arrival. Groups should also plan to arrive between 4:00pm and 6:00pm on Sundays, with orientation taking place at 7:00pm Sunday evening.

## REGISTRATION FEE

\$250 is required as a nonrefundable group deposit to reserve your week. Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. One half of the total fee is required by March 15<sup>th</sup> for the summer groups. After March 15<sup>th</sup> the group is required to pay for the total number registered regardless of a drop in the actual number of people attending. We will maintain a waiting list in case of cancellations. Confirmation of your reservation will be sent upon receipt of the reservation fee. The total number of participants should be indicated on the registration form and the breakdown of male and female should be kept as nearly equal as is possible. If a group is very one-sided in gender please let us know as early as possible.

We accept applications and make reservations (with deposit) on a first come, first served

basis. It is best to register early. No reservation is confirmed until \$250 deposit is received.

### WHAT NOT TO BRING

DO NOT BRING alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or fireworks.

Do not plan to do laundry while at the White Oak Center. Adequate water and laundry facilities are not available except in emergencies. We do not have public washers. Plan to bring an adequate supply of clothing or visit a Laundromat in Jellico (15 miles) on your free day.

### WHAT TO BRING

Sleeping bag/bed roll, linens, pillow, towels, washcloths, soap, shower shoes, trash bags etc. Work clothes (enough for a week of dirt and sweat), boots (work shoes), gloves, rain-gear, jacket, swimwear, (Please bring only modest clothing). Bibles, notebook, pencil, camera, film, flashlight, musical instrument (if desired), insect repellent, large thermos, plus materials for skits, singing and devotions.



**HAND TOOLS**, hammers, saws, drills, masonry tools and shovels. Many groups have chosen to donate their tools when they leave and you may wish to consider this also. If adopting a Community



Project, it is requested that you bring pick-ups or vans for transporting people to your work site.

Charter buses are not much help getting you to a site on a back road.

**Note:** You may bring your own tools/equipment at your own risk. Henderson Settlement is not responsible for theft or damage of your personal items.

### INSURANCE/MEDICAL FORMS



Each group must provide its own medical and accident insurance. The White Oak Center cannot provide this coverage and is not liable for any stolen or damaged items. Valuables can be stored in the safe upon request. Workcampers are not insured to drive Center vehicles.

A medical release form is enclosed.

Copies should be made for every workcamper under age 18 and **KEPT IN THE GROUP LEADERS POSSESSION**. Do not send them to us. If you have an accident on the way here you must have a release form with you to get medical treatment for a minor. It is recommended that tetanus shots be obtained or date of last tetanus given recorded. All allergies should be recorded.