

# Tales From Possum Hollow

## Summer 2018

### A PLACE SET APART

### IN THIS ISSUE

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...

by **Andrew Plyler**

Well...it isn't the worst of times, because it could have been so much worse. But let's start on a positive note.

To say the least, Summer 2018 was a huge success! To give you a little context, when I started in May of 2016, there were only 24 campers registered for the entire summer and just 4 weeks of camp scheduled. Through the hard work of the Board of Trustees, Jennifer (Office Manager), maintenance staff, and of course the counselors, we set a new personal best of campers served in 2018.

With two weeks of Camp-In-A-Van partnering with Community Presbyterian of Pinehurst and West End Presbyterian of...West End..., Operation Fun from First Presbyterian of Lumberton, and 7 full weeks of camp, our enrollment increased 23% from 2017 and **served more than 300 campers!**

Everyone had a safe and fun summer!

Then came September. Over the course of 4 days, Hurricane Florence pounded the area with high winds and a mind boggling 15-20 inches of rain. More than two weeks later, only a mile and a half down the road from Camp Monroe, roads are still closed, houses are still flooded, crops sitting in standing water, and wells unusable. But Camp Monroe was one of the lucky ones.

Yes, we had some damage from Hurricane Florence. Many trees were down, water damage on ceilings around the fireplaces, a tree punctured a hole in the Picnic Shelter, and even a small sinkhole at the bottom of the field near the lake. We had many other smaller incidents and had to cancel several weekends user groups which were scheduled to be here (which is much needed income), however, many of our neighbors weren't as lucky.

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**Camp Corner**  
Meet John, a counselor who started in 2017 and can't get enough of Camp Monroe!

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**Hurricane Florence**  
Camp Monroe was in the path of Hurricane Florence. How are things now?

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## Imagine the Possibilities

At the end of August, Julian Butler, current Board member and former Chairman, secured an incredible gift for Camp Monroe from Laurinburg Presbyterian Church (LPC).

Sadly, LPC closed their child care service, however this unfortunate news has a silver lining for Camp. The Church uses 4-5 mini buses for their program, so having their child care services close, this left the Church with a surplus of vehicles.

After the urgency and lobbying of Mr. Butler, Laurinburg Presbyterian Church has offered to give Camp Monroe one of their mini-buses! In addition, the Butler Family Trust also secured the cost of a second bus from LPC for Camp!

This means that beginning in 2019 Camp Monroe will have 2 mini-buses. This will allow for camper transportation to not only offsite programs such as horses, but also allow for campers to be bussed to camp from various locations!

The potential for Camp Monroe to make getting kids to Camp easier for parents is limitless! What if there was a bus to pick up and drop off 6-7 year olds for Day Camp each day at Highland Presbyterian Church in

Fayetteville? Or what if there was a bus to pick up sleep-away campers at Old Bluff Presbyterian in Dunn on Sunday and drop them off on Friday? What if each week Camp could pick up and drop off for day camp at different cities like Laurinburg, Southern Pines, Raeford, or Pinehurst? All within the safety of a mini-bus and under the supervision of Camp Monroe staff.

What do you think? Would you like to set up a week to be designated for your community to have daily commutes for Camp? Are there other options you can think of that would benefit the communities of Camp?

The Camp Monroe Board of Trustees, staff, parents, and campers would like to thank Julian Butler and his family and Laurinburg Presbyterian Church for our new mini buses.

Imagine the possibilities!



## From the Board of Trustees

by Johnny Robertson



We all have something special in our lives, a time, a loved one, a place.

I am fortunate to say that Camp Monroe has been all of these to me and I carry this forward everyday as part of who I am.

My formative years are filled with memories and friends from Monroe and I am so very great full that I have this as part of the fabric of my life and the backdrop for many of the choices I continue to make.

I invite you to become engaged in this special place with me, to come to love and enjoy the magic of Monroe, to help preserve it for other young lives as they learn about the building blocks of life.

May your joy and grounding be tied to such a place and such wonderful people, folks who come as strangers but become family through the love of our Lord.

Johnny Robertson  
Chairman, Board of Trustees

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So we feel blessed to know that it could have been much worse than it was for Camp Monroe, and we are even more humbled by the volunteers who want to and have already come out to clean up Camp. The electrical company restored power to our community that Wednesday, Robin Sage (a group of soldiers that have used Camp for nearly 20 years) came and removed a MASSIVE tree that fell across our entrance, and folks have come to help pick up pine cones, sticks, and other debris to bring Camp Monroe back to our standards.

Now I don't want this to be all doom and gloom, because it's not! **We are serving a HUGE number of campers now (and are only expecting to grow each summer) and we were spared the worst of Hurricane Florence.**

Will it be difficult in the coming months and through the winter? Absolutely. The loss of income and the expense of repairs will be very challenging, but we can do it with your help.

So from the bottom of my heart, thank you. Thank you for your help during clean up from the storm. Thank you for your financial gifts. But most of all, thank you for sharing your experience and love of Camp Monroe with your friends and family.

*ALVBYL*

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## Camp Corner

### Meet John Motter!



**First time at Camp Monroe:** I came to camp for the first time last year. I had never heard of Camp Monroe before!

**Favorite Activity:** I love doing SUPs (stand-up paddleboards) with the kids and watching them learn and get the courage to stand up. I also love archery when they first hit the target and how excited they get.

**Favorite Meal:** Hands down the pulled pork and Mac and Cheese! It is a really good meal to enjoy with kids before we said goodbye until the next summer.

**Favorite memory of Camp:** The camp dances! It is so fun seeing the kids get excited for, getting dressed up, and having a great time. Not to mention, I get to show off my sweet dance moves. Can you say "FLOSS"?!

**Favorite Camp Song:** Tarzan! It's a really short song, but I'm a very loud person, so it gives me an excuse to be loud and engage the kids with the porch traditions.

## By The Numbers

23%

**Percentage increase of campers coming to Camp Monroe during the summer, from 2017 to 2018.**

2,000

**The approximate number of people who have come to and/or used Camp Monroe from January-August 2018.**

316

**Total number of children served by Camp Monroe summer programs in 2018.**

15-20

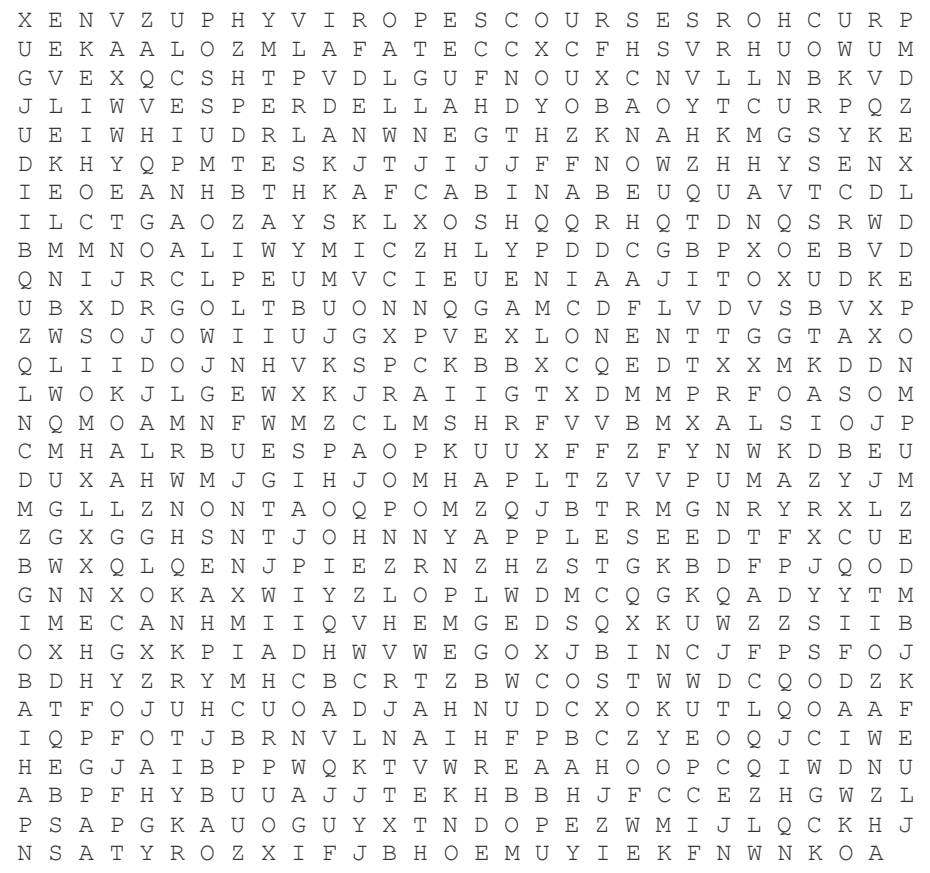
**Estimated total inches of rainfall from Hurricane Florence.**

\$38,000

**Projected bare minimum expenses of Camp Monroe during the last quarter of 2018.**

# Can you figure out this puzzler?

- BOYD HALL
- CABIN
- CAMP MONROE
- CANOE
- CLIMBING
- COOKOUT
- CRAFT HUT
- FANTASY
- FISHING
- GAGA
- HAMMOCK VILLAGE
- HONEY
- HORSES
- JOHNNY APPLESEED
- LAKE ANDREW
- NANTAHALA
- OUTPOST
- PADDLEBOARDS
- POOL
- POSSUM HOLLOW
- ROPES COURSE
- VESPER DELL
- WHITEWATER
- ZIPLINE



## Hurricane Florence

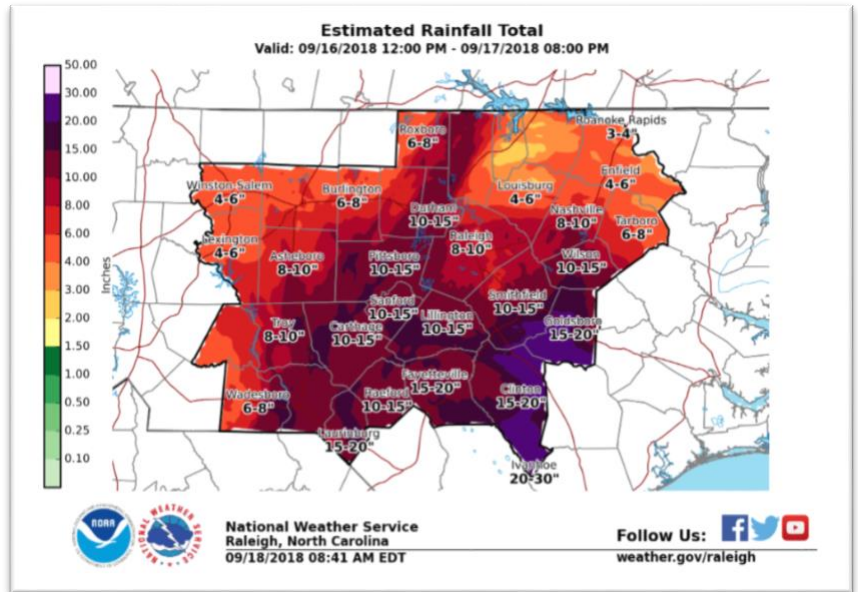
We hope all of our campers and their families are safe and sound after the past few.

For four days, September 13-16, Hurricane Florence dropped an estimated 15-20 inches of rain on Camp Monroe. Fortunately, we knew we were in for a slow moving hurricane and we prepped camp likewise.

As with any hurricane, we had our fair share of damage, but overall we were lucky. There are trees down, a sinkhole at the base of the field by the lake, a tree which punctured a hole in the Picnic Shelter roof, water damage on the ceilings around the fireplaces, and extensive erosion.

But we were lucky. We have had many calls and email from camp families wanting to help clean up camp. Your support is humbling, so we set October 13<sup>th</sup> at 9:00AM as "Camp Clean Up Day", where we will pick up sticks, pinecones, and debris across the property. Thanks to volunteer groups like Robin Sage, the biggest huddles have already been taken care of and our maintenance staff are working daily to get Camp back to normal.

If you would like to help at another time or another way, send us an email at [office@monroecamp.org](mailto:office@monroecamp.org).



# CAMP MONROE COVENANT KEEPERS

Camp Monroe Covenant Keepers are churches and individuals who commit to supporting Monroe Camp and Retreat Center by praying regularly for the Camp's ministry and provides support with talents and financial gifts



## Frequently Asked Questions

### How do I participate?

Simply fill out the enclosed form and send it to MCRC with your initial contribution. To help in other ways, contact the Camp office.

### Is this program tax deductible?

Yes!! Monroe Camp and Retreat Center is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization. Any charitable donation given is a tax deductible gift and you will receive a tax receipt at the end of the year with the total amount donated.

### Do I have to give \$150?

Yes and No. Give what you are able, however, to be considered a Covenant Keeper, \$150 is the minimum. Remember that every little bit helps, whether it's \$100 or \$100,000!

### Can I donate online?

Yes! Donations can be made via PayPal using Office@MonroeCamp.org as the recipient.

COVENANT KEEPER: \$150

As an original Covenant Keeper, you ensure the ongoing daily operations of Camp Monroe. A gift of \$150 helps Camp with day to day operations. From water-proofing the deck to fixing the many screens around the property to office management software, Camp has many needs. With Presbytery support dwindling to less than 2% of our annual budget, every little bit matters.

CAMPER KEEPER: \$400+

As the name suggests, a Camper Keeper's donation is the amount it costs for a camper to attend Camp in the summer. Monroe has many exciting offerings: Stand Up Paddle Boards, Canoes, Archery, Hobo Pies, a Hammock Village, horses, and more! But more importantly, Camp Monroe offers a safe environment where campers can grow in their faith and character.

SERVANT KEEPER: \$1,000+

Camp Monroe is here to serve. Our mission is to provide a place where relationships with God, others, and creation are nurtured and where Christ's call to discipleship is discovered. As a Servant Keeper, you help ensure our mission is fulfilled through larger operations. From resurfacing the road to updating infrastructure, you enable the camp to continue its mission for another 60 years.



Happy, safe, enthusiastic, and caring staff.



The High Ropes course allows for a challenge for all.



Opening Campfire is for fun, friends, and fellowship.



Smiles all around for everyone at Camp Monroe!

# Thank You to Our Donors

The staff and Board of Trustees of Monroe Camp and Retreat Center wish to thank the following for their support of Camp Monroe in the second quarter of 2018.

- Anonymous
- Ruth Angle
- Virginia Bates
- Robert Bedingfield
- Joy Blalock
- James Boles Jr.
- David Ferrell Branch, Jr.
- David Breeden
- Dominique Brooks
- Brownson Memorial Presbyterian Church
- Jill Britt
- John and Truett Buie
- Julian Butler
- John & Peggy Calhoun
- Bryan Carter
- David Carter
- Crystal Cauthen
- Lindsay Chadwick
- Allison Clark-Pait
- Catherine Clark
- Claudia and William Clark
- John Clark
- Gordon Dove, Jr.
- John Dove
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