

Dozens of people descend on church campgrounds to build a dorm

“If you build it, he will come,” is one of the most well-known phrases in the Academy Award winner movie ‘Field of Dreams’.

Recently the words could be reworked locally to say, “If they come, we will build it!” Recently, in three days, nearly 100 volunteers descended on Northeast Iowa Christian Service Camp, located northwest of Dumont, just off Highway 3. And build it they did!

While the basement was in place, all the construction work on the 96’ x 28’ building, was done between Friday and Sunday, October 20 – 22.

By sunset on Sunday, walls were up and the roof was on. The building was ‘dried in’ to keep it from the elements. Windows were in and some of the preliminary work on the inside was completed. A walkway on the south side of the new structure was near being completed.

David Fink with World Mission Builders was the director of the project. “World Mission Builders come together to build churches, children’s homes, or other mission projects. We come from 10 –11 states,” he said. “This is a smaller project (most of them are 10 days to 2 weeks in length), so there are only ten of us here this weekend.” Nearly all of the volunteers are retired but use their building skills learned from employed years.

Camp Director Craig Harris said, “This project was in our hearts and minds for a number of years, but it was in January that we began putting our plans into action. Fundraising efforts began at that time. The new facility will be able to house up to 50 boys and 50 girls in two section of the dorm, separated by showers, stools, and sinks. The basement, which will also serve as a storm shelter, will have three separate classrooms when it is finished.”

Along with the Mission Builders team, there were volunteers from an Illinois college, a school in Mason City, several volunteers from Rochester, Minnesota, a number of pastors, camp board member’s, plus former and present campers. World Mission builder Bruce Smith of Mason City was first contacted by Harris. “Some of our projects are in the United States; some are overseas,” he said. “Things went together well for us here. Inside the walls are ready for sheet rock and for wiring. Our workers have been great.”

Clarion native Dean Kluss who serves on the camp’s Executive Board, said, “It was absolutely amazing to watch the Hand of God with us. It was supposed to rain all day on Saturday. And the rain held off! It is just amazing to see the quality of the work and how quickly everything came together.”

The big groups are gone and much finish work remains, but Harris is optimistic. “We will have smaller groups of volunteers working on some things. We will have to hire some things done. But we have taken a giant step forward.” He said they have until June (when the camp season begins) to get the work completed.

“This new building will really an upgrade for our camp facility,” said Harris. “The old boy’s dorm didn’t have air conditioning. This building is in much better condition. Young people today like more comfortable surroundings and we are happy to provide it, as we reach to minister, not only to youth of our supporting churches and our area, but to our community as a whole.”

Karen Weld – Clarion Church of Christ-

Photo Captions: # 1 - Northeast Iowa Christian Service Camp Director Craig Harris (left) continues to make plans as he talks with David Fink who served as the director of the building project on the camp, the weekend of October 20 – 22. Fink serves with the World Mission Builders team, who were part of the building work.

#2 – Nearly 100 volunteers helped to construct a new dorm on Northeast Iowa Christian Service Camp. The team was able to ‘put up the building’ in three days, getting it ‘dried in’ (weather proof), along with some of the internal work completed, getting ready for sheet rock and other finishing work.

