

“Providing Labor of Love for Christ-Centered Ministries”



## SWAT Reaches Out To a National Crowd

By Steve Blakeman

The leadership of SWAT has decided that, in conjunction with the development of the two new SWAT Chapters in Texas and Ohio, we want to inform leaders throughout the US about our ministry concept. This is in line with our Vision to encourage people in various locations to develop similar ministries throughout the US. We are convinced that others can organize Teams and experience the same degree of success that we have over the past 8 years.

In following through with this idea, Steve Haney, Mike Stroupe and Steve Blakeman, three members of the SWAT Team Board of Directors, attended a conference in Nashville, April 10-12, put on by the National Coalition for Men's Ministries. The primary purpose for attending this conference was to introduce church leaders from various denominations to the mission and vision of the SWAT Team. We set up a "booth" which gave us the opportunity to talk to several men from various locations throughout the US.

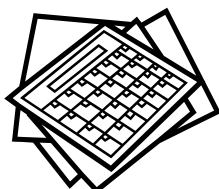
As we talked to conference attendees, we suggested that local Men's Ministry programs start up a SWAT-type ministry, with men taking leadership and involving their wives and children. We also communicated that the leaders of the SWAT Team are willing to provide support and consultation to new leaders who commit to developing their own "SWAT Teams", no matter where they are located.

The feedback we received confirmed that the SWAT Team is indeed a much needed ministry. Relatively few others focus on helping Christ-centered ministries here in the US. Also, few include the whole family, which is a characteristic of the SWAT Team that makes us unique.

While the benefits of our attendance at this conference may never be fully realized, it is our hope and prayer that others will embrace the SWAT concept and implement similar ministries throughout our nation. So if you know of individuals or couples who might be interested in starting up a SWAT-type ministry in their local area, let us know and we'll be glad to contact them.

### Upcoming Events

- May 2-4: Outdoor Mission Camp, Maggie Valley, NC
- May 23-25 (Memorial Day Weekend): Camp Marengo, Marengo, OH
- June 13-15: Virginia Nazarene Camp, Buckingham, VA
- July: Tapestry, Raleigh, NC
- August 29-31 (Labor Day Weekend): Gunter D. Moody Camp and Retreat Center (SC Nazarene Camp), Batesburg, SC
- September: Enfield House of Faith, Enfield, NC
- October: Potters Wheel, Mt. Olive, NC
- November: Camp Oak Hill, Oxford, NC



## SWAT Texas Holds Inaugural Event



By Daralyn Sacarello

SWAT's January trip to Texas was a great success. NC SWAT Team had four members travel by RV and two by plane. We met up with another couple from R.O.A.M. (RV'ers On A Mission) and the kick-off of SWAT Team West had begun. It was great to work with

Jim Stewart and meet the future Texas Team. We traveled down an eight mile gravel road to beautiful Camp Eagle. Once there, we did a variety of jobs: electrical wiring, tree cutting and trimming, constructing rails for bunk beds, a new adventure of re-carpeting a spiral stair case...and, of course, lots of painting. We took our painting to new heights by climbing a 10 ft ladder to reach the top of 12 ft walls.

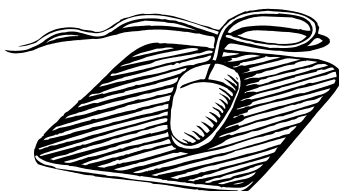
The weather started off cold and damp and ended sunny and warm. We ate our meals next to a huge wood burning fireplace and had wonderful fellowship. Our devotions each morning got us off to a great start each day. God's creation was all around us, from the stream that flows from one end of the camp to the other, to all the wonderful wildlife trampling through the hills. The Team was truly blessed to meet the wonderful crew who cares for this beautiful camp. On the way back to North Carolina, the RV group took some side trips to visit the disaster area in Mississippi, Peach Orchards in Georgia, and antique shops. We ended our trip camping at beautiful Stone Mt., Georgia and taking in a little history.

## SWAT Now Has Online Registration!

We are excited to announce that we now have online registration for SWAT events. It is our hope that online registration will make it more convenient for you to register and will help us to get more accurate counts of attendees.

You can register online by going to our website at [www.ServantsWithATool.org](http://www.ServantsWithATool.org) and going to the upcoming events page. Find the event you will attend and click the link under it to register.

Please make sure to include dates and times for your arrival and departure so we have accurate numbers for meals and lodging.



### About S.W.A.T

The S.W.A.T. Team is an all volunteer inter-denominational ministry, and a non-profit 501-C-3 corporation.

Service opportunities include construction, remodeling, landscaping, evangelism, education, administration, and fundraising.

When participating in events, transportation and personal insurance must be provided by individual Team members.

## SWAT Ohio Gets Its Start

By Nate Wanner

*Exodus 4:13-15 (NIV): 13 But Moses said, "O Lord, please send someone else to do it." 14 Then the Lord's anger burned against Moses and he said, "What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and his heart will be glad when he sees you. 15 You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth; I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do.*

After six years in North Carolina, Amy and I returned to Ohio in the fall of 2006. While we were excited to move back to the state where we began our life together, we were sad to leave our friends and SWAT. We hoped to find a ministry similar to SWAT in Ohio, and after a year had passed with no luck we decided to prayerfully try start a new chapter of SWAT.

We got our first opportunity last fall during a chance discussion with the youth pastor at our church, St. John's Lutheran in Grove City, Ohio. I explained to him how SWAT operates as a family friendly work and witness ministry. From him, I learned that some of the families attending the church had expressed interest in doing work and witness ministries, but he was having trouble finding a place for them to serve. Many of the local ministries needing this type of work have age requirements for volunteers that exclude younger family members, while other ministries required families to travel for a week at a time. A SWAT-style event seemed to be exactly what was needed.

The result of this discussion was SWAT-Ohio's first event, held April 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> at Lutheran Memorial Camp in Fulton, Ohio. SWAT provided the structure for the event – communicating with the camp, tracking attendance, and leading the event. St. John's church advertised the event in the bulletin, newsletters and through word-of-mouth. Lutheran Memorial Camp is where many of the church's youth attend camp and retreat events and is dear to many in the church.

One of the most difficult things in managing a SWAT event is letting go. I tend to try too hard, worry too much, and start to question: Can I do this? Will we have enough people to do the work? How can we get more people? Will everyone have something to do? What if it rains?

In the end, I just drive myself crazy to no avail. No matter how hard I try, I can't do it. Only God can make it all work. In the nearly five years we have been working with SWAT we have never seen an event fail, no matter what the situation. God always makes it work, and He made it work this time as well.



The Lord provided a pastor and church ready to advertise and support the weekend. When we needed to spread the word, but didn't know how He sent people to encourage and recruit others. He provided twenty hard-working individuals with the expertise and equipment necessary for the jobs the camp most needed help with

Over 175 volunteer hours were contributed to the camp. We cut, split, moved and stacked approximately three cords of firewood to replenish the camp's dwindling supply. We replaced four windows in a cabin. The new windows are insulated and are larger so they provide additional egress in case of an emergency. The "larger" part of that required a good deal of head scratching for even our capable craftsmen, but in the end they looked great. Flower beds were cleaned out around the entire dining hall, and repairs were made to a climbing wall and plumbing line.

Please pray for continued progress in expanding SWAT's mission nationally. To us here on earth who can't see the whole picture, it feels a bit like an overwhelming experiment. Sometimes we are like Moses and we wish God would send someone else, but we continue to hope that He will give us what we need to bring SWAT to a new region. How this will best be accomplished is not yet known to us. It may be through partnership events such as the one this past weekend where we work with an existing church or group to help them do something new. It may also be through SWAT-led events such as Camp Marengo coming up this Memorial Day weekend, where a variety of people from different churches and backgrounds come together to serve. Or it may be something entirely different or a combination.

For the time being, we must pray and trust that God has "Aarons" already on his way to meet us, whether to be our spokesman, teacher, or perhaps electrician. If you are one of the "Aarons" being called, our hearts will be glad to see you.

# SWAT At Victory Mountain - Three Perspectives

By Danielle Tafel, age 8

Victory Mountain Camp was very fun and cool. I wish that we could do that again and go there some time. I liked working with the girls by painting. I also liked working in the kitchen with the girls. I pretty much liked everything that I did. The team trip to Victory Mountain Camp was the best camp I have ever been to in my life. I can't wait for the next trip that we are going to in June because I think that I will have a very good time at the next one and I really liked working with the tools that were there.

By Dylan Tafel, age 11

The trip to Victory Mountain Camp was a cool experience. I got to paint part of the foundation of the house. Paint the pickets for the little railing. But what I liked most was on Saturday Mr. Steve Blakeman gave me a really cool compliment and I thought about it and on the way home I told my dad that I wanted to start my own SWAT team in another state or lead a project when I'm much older. But I really like the combination of being with God, making new friends and just learning how to operate tools or use them. I also thought my dad and Mr. Steve Blakeman did a really good job on the stone.

By Bill Tafel, dad

Victory Mountain Camp was the first long weekend that I got to watch and see both Dylan and Danielle work. They worked independently and they worked together and either way they had the team spirit and both understood that the goal was to serve the camp. It has been truly amazing to watch Dylan grow and learn in his servanthood. Even more awesome is to see that he is being groomed and shaped to become a leader in ministry. Danielle is still fairly new at participating on these trips, but she is growing into a beautiful young lady who is learning humility and developing a heart for servanthood. Proud would be an understatement, humbled and blessed that these two kids are actually getting what SWAT is all about would be more accurate. Our trips home always revolve around what we learned, what we liked most and as always we talk about the next trip for our family. Thank you SWAT Team for being a vehicle to guide and teach servanthood to families, for being a part of shaping the lives of our children and preparing the way for their future ministry in the Kingdom of God.



Above: The house at Victory Mountain as work began

Right: Although the SWAT Team did not finish all the work to be done, their hard work really shows in the "after" picture





Make me a servant  
Humble and meek  
Lord, let me lift up  
Those who are weak  
And may the prayer of my heart  
always be  
Make me a servant  
Make me a servant  
Make me a servant today

*Kelly Willard  
Maranatha! Music*



## Camper/Storage Unit Delivered



By Della Moore

Saturday, February 9th, the SWAT Team gathered in a circle in the Blakeman's driveway and Nancy prayed we would have a safe journey taking the remodeled trailer to Enfield. PRAISE THE LORD, HE answered our prayers!!! The old dry-rotted tires held. Bill, his children and Steve Haney followed behind the camper with the tool trailer in tow. We pulled over before entering I-95 to check how "It" was traveling. Bill said the trailer was a little wobbly, but not bad. We continued on at about 48 MPH. The next stop was just before HOUSE of FAITH to decorate "It" with balloons and bows.

"It" was backed into the backyard and the crew went to work setting "It" in place. Bill gave the roof a final coat

of COOL SEAL. Danielle was busy with a brush cleaning shelves. Unfortunately Mike, our electrician, was unable to come, so the plan was to complete the electrical hook-up and build bigger and better steps when the crew came March 14 & 15 to rebuild the porch. But since that event was canceled due to lack of materials, other arrangements will be made.

It was neat how Dylan took a tire pump from the tool trailer and, with Darnell's (Mr. HOUSE of FAITH) help, pumped up the tires of the bikes which belonged to the kids' living at House of Faith. We were also pleased to have Glenda and Richard Justice drive up to visit.

As always, Gloria was a gracious host and fed us very well.

## CONTACT US

**Steve Blakeman**  
Director of Operations and  
Carolinas Chapter

919-554-4343  
steveblakeman@earthlink.net

**Jim Stewart**  
President and  
West Chapter

919-623-4821  
SLRodgers439@sbcglobal.net

**Nate & Amy Wanner**  
IT, Newsletter and  
Ohio Chapter

614-305-7068  
Ohio@ServantsWithATool.org

[www.ServantsWithATool.org](http://www.ServantsWithATool.org)