



Christian Youth Camps

of the former Soviet Union

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“I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.” 1 Corinthians 3:6 & 7

God Made It Grow

A LONG-TIME FRIEND and director of a camping ministry in Ukraine, came to Dave Loewen at the October 3-5 annual Christian Camp Leadership Conference in Kiev and said, “KVI’s ministry in the Former Soviet Union has gone far beyond camping. It has produced leaders in many fields of Kingdom work. Your leadership development seminars have inspired many to become leaders who have initiated ministries that are producing a new generation. Your leadership gave me direction for developing Radooga.”

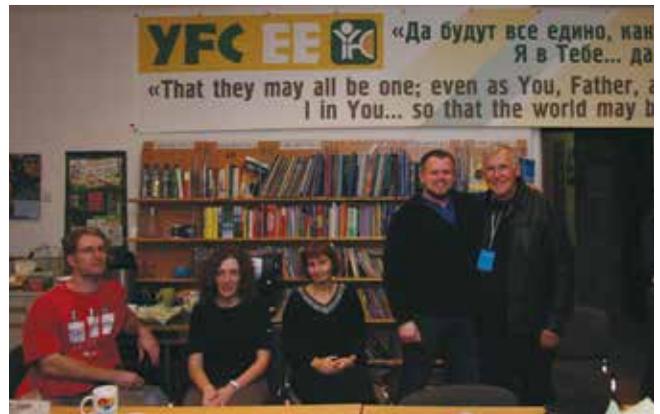
In the following days Dave met numerous people who have been at our workshops and training seminars or worked at our model camp in the past. Here are a few glimpses into their lives.

SASHA A. from St. Petersburg, Russia, was in Kiev for a Youth for Christ (YFC) conference. Sasha and his wife, Nelya, were on staff with us in Anapa in the 1990’s. We have not seen them for about 15 years. Today Sasha is the director for YFC from St. Petersburg to Moscow. As part of their ministry they train leaders to establish programs for youth in the churches. Sasha owns a furniture factory to support his wife and

three daughters and volunteers his time for YFC.

OKSANA S., who was on our CCI/ Ukraine staff for six years, was at the Children’s Christian Literature Exhibition in Kiev. Today she is the director of Circle of Friends, a ministry to orphans. In 2012 their mission facilitated the successful adoption of seventy orphans. With a fulltime staff of five, they visit ten orphanages on a weekly basis teaching them God’s Word and clothing them. Oksana thanked Dave for being her teacher and for equipping her for ministry.

ELENA B., a former camp director and CCI/Ukraine board member, was in the next booth at the literature exhibition. She owns and operates a successful business making sports equipment and costumes for dramas. She saw the need for these items and began designing and manufacturing all types of sports equipment and costumes for camps. Now she employs ten people. “I learned how to set and achieve goals from you at the training seminars.”



Peter is Director of Educational Ministries of a large and growing denomination in the former Soviet Union. We first met Peter in 1996 at the annual Camp Leadership Conference in St. Petersburg. There Peter caught the vision for camping and spread it throughout their churches. Today they have their own camping association through which they develop the camp leaders for their denomination. In Ukraine alone they have 78 camps.

NADIA K., graduate of our CCI Leadership and Management program, is the Director of Children’s Ministries for the Baptist Union of Ukraine and Director for Grain of Wheat which serves 178 camps in Ukraine.

AND THE LIST GOES ON:

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Shelter+ in Krivoy Rog grew out of Green Pastures Camp begun by Ludmila Morozova and her family. She was on our first camping board in Ukraine. The Evangelistic Sports Ministry is directed by Ira Z. whose leadership skills were developed during her years on staff with us. Bob Hilts who joined KVI in 1996 as instructor now supports a dozen or more ministries in the FSU including marriage seminars that teach married couples how to have godly homes. Carolyn Rice joined KVI in 1995 and is headquartered in the Republic of Georgia and does Post Abortion Healing seminars in several countries. Rudi and Olga Dueck, founders of Christliche Freizeiten, Germany, got their inspiration for this ministry while serving with KVI in Kazakhstan in 1993. They established camps in Siberia, Germany and Brazil.

For the past ten years, Rudi has been doing Leadership and Management Seminars for thousands of Slavic pastors in Ukraine and USA, teaching them biblical leadership principles, something that had been lacking in the churches for many years.

Men and women whose leadership skills have been developed in KVI sponsored seminars over the years can be found in churches, in the public sector, in business, in the professions and in educational institutions. Campers have become adults with established Christian families and are the workforce in churches and camps. There is truly a new generation developing that lives by Judeo-Christian morals and ethics and is salt and light in a dark part of the world. God makes things grow...far beyond our expectations.

Word of Truth Church

ON SUNDAY October 13 Dave, together with two CCI staff visited the Word of Truth Church in Komsomolsk. This 20-year old church with an attendance of 1200 people is vibrant and serves its community well with programs for the poor, the orphans, alcoholics and the unsaved. We first met the pastor and their camp staff at our seminar in 1997. Their camp director is an instructor at our training events.

Komsomolsk is a typical example of why living in Ukraine is so difficult. The main industry is open pit granite mining. The company employs thousands, has modern equipment and turns a good profit. Yet the average wage paid to its employees is 450 USD equivalent per month. This practice is common all over Ukraine. Most people attending Word of Truth are employed in the mining operation. No family can survive on such income!

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State-of-the-art equipment yet employees grossly underpaid

Who We Are...

Kingdom Ventures Inc. (KVI) founded in 1990 is a Canadian faith mission focused on training Christian Youth Camp leaders in the former Soviet Union. KVI's Resource Teams in the former Soviet Union publish program resources and train camp leaders. KVI networks with Christliche Freizeiten Internationale (CFI) in Germany; Christian Camp and Conference Association/USA (CCCA/USA); CCI/Russia; CCI/Ukraine; and with other followers of our Lord.

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The church is well administrated and has a good atmosphere. To become a member one must be baptized, be at least 18 years of age, have a good reputation and serve in one of the many programs the church offers. Of the 1200 attending, 300 are members joyfully serving the Lord.

The banner on stage reads **JESUS IS LORD**. The worship was outstanding – over one hour of singing songs with rich spiritual lyrics accompanied by a variety of instruments, flags waving, interspersed with prayer and scripture. Jesus was lifted high. It was a joy for Dave to preach. One of our staff gave a brief report on camping and sang a solo.

After dinner was served the pastor thanked Dave and

the staff for inspiring them and invited them to return. “Next summer we will surely send some of our teenage boys to your camp,” the pastor said. The parting was unusual. The pastor handed Dave a thick envelope (part of their offering) and said, “you are like a father to us and Ukraine has very few of them.”

After our visit with the pastor, our team went to see the camp the church purchased in 2012. They had been leasing various campsites in the past. Camp is an important part of their church. They wanted professional advice on how to restore this rundown communist camp and how to maximize its program potential. Thank God for Word of Truth, their leaders and their ministries.

Teenage Orphan Camp

THE COMMUNIST regime created many orphans and the problem is not going away. Today there is a new wave of Social Orphans, abandoned children due to their parents’ drinking problem. Ukraine alone has over 100,000 orphans. At 18 years of age they must leave the orphanage. They have not been prepared to enter society so 40% of them join gangs, become alcoholics or drug addicts. One out of every three end up in prison. Fewer than 40% find jobs. 60% of the girls become prostitutes. Only one out of 100 orphan graduates receives a higher education. Due to these difficult circumstances 16% commit or make serious attempts at suicide.

Working with orphans is very demanding. Because they are so love-starved, helping them drains the worker physically and emotionally. Thank God for the brave souls like Oksana S. who, with God’s daily provision of grace, is making a permanent difference for many

orphans through Circle of Friends which she founded in 2010. Her mission is to prepare teenage orphans to live productive lives after they leave the orphanage.



As part of this program, KVI plans to partner with Circle of Friends in operating a 12-day camp for 75 of the 14-17 year-old orphans in our tent camp next summer. The campsite and the way it operates is designed to teach teenagers to take responsibility and to motivate them to develop character based on biblical principles. The orphans will learn how to cook, follow a schedule, do housekeeping, set goals and work in a team to accomplish their goals. They will feel loved and learn to trust.

However KVI needs your help to partner with Circle of Friends. Our cost to make this camp possible is \$165 per teenage orphan. We are looking for new donors to participate.



Ivan's mother telling Dave about her son's Vertical experience

My Son - Becoming a Real Man

SKIMMING THROUGH the New Generation magazine, I stumbled across the Camp Vertical advertisement. My 14 year-old son is not ready for such intense activity and the Carpathian Mountains are so far away...we just didn't want to let him go. But Ivan was headed for trouble. His school friends were leading him astray. The Lord sent a sister my way who insisted I visit the Vertical website. We liked what we saw and heard, so my husband and I decided to take a chance. We put the money aside little by little until we had enough to pay the camp fee.

The train ticket to Vertical was \$45 so Ivan found little jobs and earned the money. His backpack was so heavy that I felt sorry for my son so I put it into a cart and helped him to the train. Twelve days with no phone calls was torture. How is he? What is the camp like? How is the weather? What if he gets sick? But the Lord helped me through this time.

Then came the day of Ivan's return home. Hurrah! I took my cart and ran to the train depot. I did not expect the surprise God had prepared for me! Ivan, like a real man, carried his heavy backpack as I was running next to him pulling my empty cart. I overflowed with joy and happiness.

For the next two weeks my whole family listened to Ivan's camp stories. He is still sharing memories of how he was treated, how he learned to pray, to canoe, to cook, to reach the mountain top, identify poisonous plants – the evil cow parsnip which leaves burns on the body. He was so enthused about paintball. He shared about the night watch and what he learned about the stars.

The changes in Ivan were immediately visible. He began to do muscle building exercises daily. He showed our

family how to climb mountains. He cooks supper for his younger brother and looks after him when I am at work. When I go to the market with him I only carry my purse and Ivan carries the bags. When I am close to him I feel like a real lady. One day as we were walking home we met a beggar. Boris, his 9-year old brother and I walked by but Ivan dug into his pocket and gave the beggar two hryvna. I felt so ashamed of myself and so happy for Ivan; especially when he recited II Corinthians 9: 7-8 to us.

Ivan does more things that he never did before. When he does something wrong he asks for forgiveness immediately. He prays regularly and his prayers have become more meaningful and sincere. He teaches his brother to pray The Lord's Prayer. He memorized and recites Bible verses. I even followed Dave Loewen's advice and wrote the verses to be memorized on small pocket cards for myself, for my mother and Ivan. It really works. During my time on the bus to and from work, I take the cards out of my pocket and memorize. I have already memorized Isaiah 55:8-13. Ivan and I inspire each other. And it is very nice when Ivan calls Viktor, his counselor, and recited the verses to him on the telephone. His counselor visited him a month after camp and that meant much to Ivan.



I thank God for the well developed follow-up assignments Pavel, Vertical follow-up director, sends Ivan each week. They are a very strong incentive to study God's Word, to meditate on and memorize the scriptures.

Ivan attends church services and with great desire helps in the Sunday school. He is doing better at school too. He made new friends at camp and learned to work in a team. He is becoming a Real Man and is a joy to his parents. You have sown good seed. I am 100% sure we will send his brother to Vertical when he reaches age 14.

For those who love to pray

About Prayer

“For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”

Luke 2:30-32

Simeon spoke this prayer in the temple holding the eight day old baby Jesus in his arms. It was a very emotional moment for him for he had been waiting for this experience for a long time... the consolation of Israel. Thousands of youth had a similar experience at camp this summer when they opened their hearts to Jesus who filled that deep void in their souls with peace, joy and hope. Their first prayers as new believers are always a flood of rejoicing and thanksgiving for the Gift of all gifts. Why not prepare your special prayer of thanksgiving and joy for the Gift of all gifts...JESUS.



A MOTHER'S ADVICE

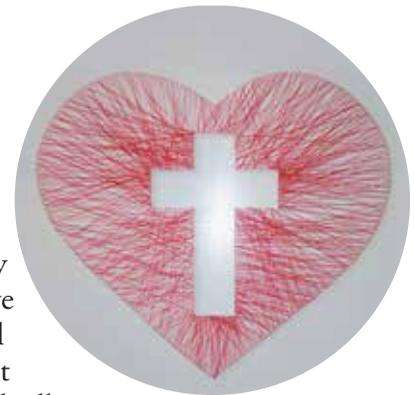
“As a mother, I want to give advice to other mothers. If you want to keep your children from the effects of sin, then send them to camp Vertical. Boys Camp is especially valuable for families where the father is an unbeliever or no father at all. Vertical really teaches boys how to become true servants of Jesus Christ, a true man for his wife, a wise father to his children and a loving son.”

Praise God for His hand of grace upon Vertical. Ask His blessing upon the weekly follow-up program the boys and counselors are engaged in. Ask God to remove all obstacles that prevent parents from sending their sons to Vertical. Camp was not full last summer and we would like to have a full camp in 2014.



UNITED IN CHRIST

One staff handed each person at the conference a nail during the morning chapel and asked, “What can be done with one nail?” Each nail represented a person. After the audience gave several answers, the nails were collected and the audience was told they would see what can be accomplished when we all work together. During the evening chapel they presented this picture. “This is the result when we serve collectively rather than individually, when we are focused on Jesus (the cross) and motivated by love (the heart) each sacrificially doing the good works God planned for us to do (the red string). Better Together – our conference theme! In His prayer for His disciples in John 17, Jesus asked His Father three times for unity. Unity in Christ is one of the most difficult things for Christians to achieve. Ask God for unity in all camps and churches.



GOD DID IT

KVI had no idea what God had in mind when he sent us to Russia in 1991. We knew that we were to develop national leaders for a camping ministry so we consciously narrowed our efforts and resources to this task. God blessed far beyond our imaginations and we thank Him for His awesome deeds in an empire that insisted for 70 years that He did not exist. Join us in thanking God for all the grace He has poured out upon the needy, suffering people of the former Soviet Union.

KVI herewith also expresses its deep gratitude to all who have been so faithful in prayer and so sacrificial with financial support all these years. You made KVI's ministry possible. Thank you for sharing our vision with devotion. The work is far from complete. Ask God to call new supporters both here in the west and in the FSU to continue and complete the work God wants done.



I AM A REFUGEE

“I live in a refugee village since the Russian army occupied my village in Georgia in 2008,” reported Miriam. “My family has not been allowed to visit our village since then. To me camp is much more than a place of entertainment. It is the place where I learned about God’s endless love and it will flame in my heart as an inextinguishable fire. I am happy at camp but sad that the camp ends.”



Praise God for the opportunity to operate these places of happiness and the thousands of children and youth that attend them. Thank God for the churches and staff who operated these camps at great personal sacrifice. Praise God for all the new believers who are aflame for Jesus.



PERSECUTION

Pressure to close Christian camps is increasing. The camps are illegal in five of the countries of the FSU. At the conference, a camp director told us that the police came to his camp and told him if he replaced the Bible Lessons with a disco they would not close the camp.

Thank God for all the churches who continue to operate camps in spite of the threats. Ask God to place His hedge of protection around the camps and to give the staff wisdom and grace to deal with the officials.

This prayer bulletin is published monthly. If you are not receiving it monthly and would like to, please notify us at kingdomventures@msn.com or call us at 204-224-4175 or write to: Kingdom Ventures Inc. PO Box 38144, East St. Paul MB R2E 1H3 to receive the monthly issue by post mail.



TWO UNBELIEVERS?

Elizabeth, a counselor, tells her story. “God blessed me with a most original and unusual group of teenage girls. Two of their names were Liz, both unbelievers. One was calm, the other hyperactive. They participated in all activities, constantly expressing their gratitude. They carefully participated in the Bible studies and tried to pray. At the end of camp both prayed a prayer of repentance. After camp, both girls joined in my home Bible study group. I am not saying that everything goes smoothly but they are open and share their experiences with me. I can only pray and believe that they will fully dedicate their lives to God.” Praise God for counselors like Elizabeth and all the follow-up work they do after camp is over. Ask God’s blessing for the spiritual development of all campers and wisdom and grace for all staff engaged in the important follow-up ministry.



DETERMINED PENSIONERS

In the August Prayer Partner we wrote about pensioners in a remote village in a country where Christian camps are forbidden. Due to pressure from the government, all communication with the church the pensioners attend was stopped. At the conference, Dave met a member from the church who told him they were not able to operate their camp this summer so they sent 17 village children to another camp. Those children now attend the Sunday school. The children always talk about their camp experiences at school so the teachers invited the church to present a Christmas program in school. This has gone on for several years. These poor village children are now waiting for the delivery of the Samaritan’s Purse Christmas boxes. There is no road to the church in winter so they will be delivered by sleigh. Praise God for the pastor and determined pensioners in this church who make good things happen.



Conference Report

Seventy-eight camp leaders from eight countries representing 42 camps attended the annual Christian Camp Leadership Conference (CCLC) in Kiev from October 3 to 5. The theme “Better Together” was well developed throughout the conference. Camp leaders commented on the warm family atmosphere in spite of the cold temperatures (we wore our parkas the whole time) and the opportunity to form new friendships. We heard many camp stories of God’s guidance, provisions and changed lives.

Some of the comments participants wrote in their evaluation were:

“I got answers to my questions and a new vision and I renewed my goals.”

“There was a good balance of instruction, fellowship and testimonies.”

“I will use what I learned in the church and the camp.”

“Meeting with successful people is encouraging.”

We heard many testimonies at the conference. One example is Nazira’s testimony which really touched our hearts.



Nazira

Nazira directs camping ministries in a country we cannot name for security reasons. Christian gatherings are forbidden yet in the past ten years many new camps that we never knew about were started. Nazira and her team lead training seminars for the new camp staff. Staff is taught to work in harmony, and how to start camps in their cities and villages. They had to change the location of their training seminar daily for security reasons. Thirty-eight leaders participated in the training. Many camps for teenagers, youth and families were held in various places. Churches learned to work together. Campers found godly friends and continue their friendships after camp. They have a big thirst for God and are searching for their true identity and the purpose for their lives. They wrestle with doubts, fears and self-esteem. Worship at camp was very special for them because they are very limited in their home group worship. Two camps were invaded by police and arrests made. During their court trials they testified about our Almighty God. They were given heavy fines and released but are under strict surveillance. “We are so thankful we were only fined and not put into prison,” she told us. “It is a sign of God’s unlimited grace. He is expanding His Kingdom in spite of all restrictions and persecutions.”

“HymnSing is heart-warming and inspirational”

HymnSing

Sunday, April 6, 2014, 6:00 p.m.

Eastview Community Church
3500 Devries Ave., Winnipeg
Featuring: Ruth Ens, sing-a-long leader
Male Vocal Octet

Visual presentation on Kingdom Ventures
Youth Camps in the former Soviet Union

Admission – Offering for KVI camps
Dessert & Coffee - \$5 at the gym door

EVERYONE WELCOME

www.kvicanada.org



HymnSing

March 16, 2014, 7:00 p.m.
Clearbrook M.B. Church

KVI will give a report on Youth Camps
in the former Soviet Union

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE TO GIVE . . .



“We and another 71 orphans would appreciate the opportunity to develop our characters and the life skills necessary to become contributors rather than users of society.”



“Thank you for all the leaders you have helped to develop for our countries. You have enriched our lives and helped to renew our churches and society. Your faithful support will ensure this transformation process continues.”

Donation Policy: Spending of funds is confined to KVI Board approved projects. Gifts designated towards approved projects are used as designated with the understanding that when the need for a project has been met, or the project cannot be completed for any reason determined by the Board, designated gifts will be used where needed most. Gifts are acknowledged with a receipt for income tax purposes.

RESPONSE TO KVI – WINTER 2014

DONATION FOR: Training Camp Leaders (\$200 ea) _____; Orphan Camp (\$165 ea) _____

Where Needed \$ _____

____ I would like to receive the KVI newsletter by post mail.

____ I read the newsletter in the MB Herald (inserted in May, August and December)

____ I would like to be removed from the mail list

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address: Street _____ City _____

Prov/State _____ Postal Code _____

My email address is _____

Donation receipts will be issued. Please make cheques payable to and send to:

Kingdom Ventures Inc. PO Box 38144 East St Paul, MB R2E 1H3