



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | TALLAHASSEE HEIGHTS UMC | MAY 2021

## CENTENARY CAMP CLOSES, BUT THE MEMORIES OF 60 YEARS LIVE ON

A few miles outside the Gadsden County town of Quincy, about 40 miles west of Tallahassee, lies a beautiful green space of memories known as Centenary Camp.

The 38-acre camp was founded in 1960, initially as a summer youth ministry for Centenary United Methodist Church. For more than 60 years, volunteers from the church and others in the surrounding area helped keep the camp in working order.

People were married there. Once a year, Centenary UMC members held a Sunday service there. There were family outings, church picnics, and, of course, camps. Children learned to swim and socialize there. And most important, people met Jesus there. It survived hurricanes and hard times, but continued to bless lives.

However, the cost of keeping the camp dormitories and other facilities in top shape had long since become too much for the church to shoulder. The Florida Conference took over the operation in 2009 and invested in upgrades to bring the facility into usable condition.

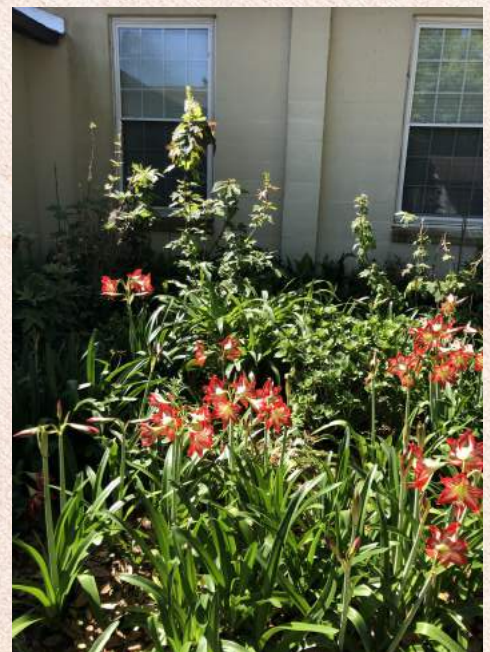
Unfortunately, the Conference finally reached the difficult decision to sell the land to a local Quincy businessman, who said he wouldn't continue operating the camp.

So, on April 25, members and friends gathered one last time to say goodbye to a place that meant so much for so many. Nearly 150 people showed up for some food, fun, and to reminiscence.

*Julie's Flower Garden —>*

## Church Events

- May 9th—Mother's Day
- May 8th—3pm Memorial Service in Sanctuary for Tammy Hopper
- May 23rd—Graduation Sunday 2pm-4pm Fellowship Hall
- May 30th—Hymn Sing







Let Your Change  
be the  
Change  
For a  
Young Mother  
and Her  
Unborn Child.



## How to Participate



1. Take a Bottle
2. Fill it with Change, Cash or Check
3. Return by May 31st

Our collected funds will be used to  
purchase Prenatal Vitamins for



# Congratulations

***Please join us in congratulating our graduates! Way to go class of 2021!***

Alyssa McKinnon—Leon High

Sydney Papka—Lincoln High

Desiree Reed—Chiles High

Mara Spitler—Lincoln High

Dr. Mark Franklin—Florida State University, *Doctorate of Music*

Dr. Rebekah Franklin—Florida State University, *Doctorate of Musicology*

Mundy Hopper—Tallahassee Community College

Erin Keeling—Tallahassee Community College

Rachel Lamantia—University of North Florida, *Bachelor of Finance*





## *Random Thoughts*

I love Spring. I love riding about and feeling my soul expand as I see the countryside renew itself. Some of my favorite things in Spring: seeing frisky horses gamboling across a meadow; newborn calves being nurtured by their mothers; a doe loping across an open field; the hummingbirds that are attracted to the nectar in my feeder; wild Easter lilies blooming along the roadside; newly green trees showing off their lacy finery in the evening breeze; Wild Plums, Wild Azaleas and Fringe Trees (Granddaddy Greybeards) decorating the forest. Nature at its' finest. God's artwork. I try to store the beauty in my mind so I can relive the experience. Or go take a picture! What a novel idea! Get out of the house and enjoy the outdoors before it gets too hot to ramble about and snap a picture to enjoy it again during less favorable weather.

This time of year, we are also accustomed to seeing a wooden cross in churchyards and inside sanctuaries. But often we see wooden crosses along roadways displayed in groups of three. Did you ever wonder where that grouping of three crosses, known as Mercy Crosses, came from? Thanks to an email from a friend and handy Google, I can enlighten you.

Bernard Coffindaffer was born in Craigsville, WV. His father died early on and his mother died with cancer when he was ten years old, leaving him an orphan. Despite his situation, he graduated from high school at the age of fourteen. Bernard enlisted in the Marines during WWII and served in the Pacific Theatre, including Nagasaki and the Battle of Iwo Jima. After the war, he earned a business degree, and made his fortune in coal washing, an industry which he founded. In 1982, after recovering from a second bypass surgery, he liquidated his business holdings. Coffindaffer had become a Christian at the age of forty-two, then eventually became a self-proclaimed Methodist minister and served seven small churches in Pocahontas County, West Virginia. Eventually he felt that the Holy Spirit was directing him to put crosses along roadsides in West Virginia, then expand to all fifty states. His hope was to remind people of the purpose of the crucifixion, the hope in Jesus Christ and the resurrection or second coming.



"I worked like a dog for the money, eighteen hours a day for thirty-five years," he said. 'The Holy Spirit knew I had the money and was willing to spend it, and I'm not going to back down.'" Following what he saw as a specific call from the Holy Spirit, he formed "Crosses of Mercy-Cast Thy Bread, Inc." which he ran from his basement. He employed seven full-time crews erecting the sets of three crosses, starting in WV. The first sets were made of telephone poles, but he later switched to Douglas Fir. The center cross was painted gold to represent royalty and the two side crosses were blue to signify earth. The central cross stands 25 feet tall, and the flanking crosses are 20 feet tall. Landowners donated the land and Bernard paid the other expenses. He was following the instructions he felt he had received from the Holy Spirit.

Before his death, he would erect 1,842 sets in 29 states, District of Columbia, Philippines, and Zambia. 352 were planted in his home state of West Virginia. Sadly, some of the sets of Crosses have not survived. However, his mission was picked up by a lady in Mississippi, Sara Stevenson Abraham, who established a new Crosses Across America organization, which is restoring some of the established Crosses as well as erecting new sets internationally.

Coffindaffer was planning more sets when he died of a heart attack in 1993. He was only 68 years old. He had spent every penny he made, cashed in his life insurance and his retirement plan to fund his mission. It was written in a few places that he died broke. No, he didn't, he was richer than most, amassing his treasure in heaven which he now enjoys. When asked why he pursued his mission, he said "Because the Lord loves me that much... Absolutely, I know that's true."

Coffindaffer, the colorful businessman turned evangelist, was the subject of a PBS documentary on his life entitled, "Point Man for God," and was shown on the award-winning series "Different Drummer." CBS News did a segment on him for "CBS Sunday Morning."

-Sandra Kelly



# The Front Porch

Florida United Methodist Children's Home

## Madison Youth Ranch Learning To Garden

Last year the children at our Madison Youth Ranch began learning about gardening. They started with a small raised bed garden along with some containers, and raised small crops of beans, cucumbers, potatoes, and more.

And they learned more than just how to grow things. Not only did they learn how to shell Black-eyed peas and cook them, they learned how to freeze them for later use. Their zucchini harvest was used for

dinner as a side dish as well as zucchini bread for breakfast.

In the Fall, the children learned how to harvest sugar cane, process it, and cook it down into cane syrup. This Spring the children are going all-out with much a larger garden.

For most of these children, growing vegetables is new to them.

But they're doing a great job, and it's really building their sense of self-worth and pride.



**Mica Renfroe, our on-site Administrator for the Madison Youth Ranch, is available to answer your questions or meet with small groups to tell you about how we're helping children and families.**



## Virtual Day On Campus

Day On Campus began thirty-five years ago on our main campus in Enterprise as a way for

the Children's Home to thank donors, churches, and the community for their support. When the pandemic began early last year, we decided to cancel our Day On Campus in the interest of safety for our children, staff, and guests. This year we

created a virtual version of the program that includes testimonials from an alumni and foster parents as well as a virtual tour of both our Enterprise campus and Madison Youth Ranch. You can enjoy our Virtual Day OnCampus simply by visiting our website.

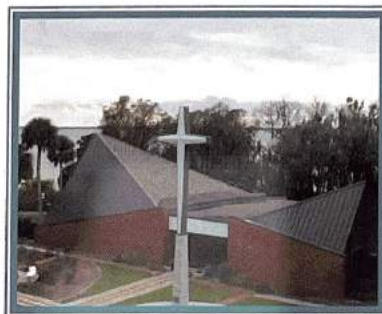


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Travis & Meghan Marchant	6 Years
Alex & Kay Szigeti	9 Years
Kevin & Shay Chapman	21 Years
Merle & Kristie Manzi	29 Years
Brian & Merideth Middleton	37 Years
Doug & Elizabeth Ostrus	38 Years
Thaddeus & Sharon Grimes	40 Years
Don & Laura Bizzell	45 Years
Walt & Liz Glass Sr.	59 Years





Warner Garrison 05/01

Ed Nelson

05/23

Randy Lane 05/04

Buddy Spradley 05/24

Libby Warren 05/09

Bob Boyd 05/27

Jacob Nelson 05/11

Jim Matthews 05/28

Carolyn Ingram 05/13

William Benjamin  
05/29

Khanh Tuong 05/14

Anita Tuong 05/29

Devon Lynn 05/14

Lori Lynn 05/29

Rachel Lamantia 05/14

Mundy Hopper 05/29

Anne Pelt 05/17

Sue Stephens 05/31

Jessica DeLoach 05/17

Gwen Adkins 05/31

Sydney Papka 05/20