



DAVID LAWLOR/The Seaside Signal

**Waterfight:** Kids from Breakaway Lodge spray each other on the Necanicum River.

## Summer camp focuses on fun, faith

by DAVID LAWLOR  
Managing Editor

Children from middle schools across the Pacific Northwest hopped into pedal boats Thursday, Aug. 14 and set out on the Necanicum River with one goal in mind – to get sopping wet.

That goal was met as the youths sprayed one another with water guns provided by Wheel Fun Rentals. The group was from Breakaway Lodge and attending the Lodge's annual summer camp program coordinated by Younglife Camp for Kids. Clusters of kids come to the camp in waves and stay for five days before leaving and making way for the next group. Camps are held for 14-weeks during the summer, with a scaled back weekend program available in the fall. Campers pay \$200 for the week with the money going to maintain the Lodge's programs.

Volunteers and leaders of the camp stay in three week increments and lead the children in a variety of events. The water fight on the river was the climax

of the week as many of the kids we headed home on Friday.

"We've done all sorts of fun things," said Araya Williams, head leader. "We had a human clue scavenger hunt and played a night commando game on the beach."

Younglife, a non-profit organization, bought Breakaway Lodge in 1967, said Elaine Pine, office administrator at the Lodge. The program consists primarily of outreach ministry at the middle and high school levels.

Younglife, in existence since 1940, facilitates the Lodge's program from its regional office in Portland, Pine said.

Although there is an emphasis on enjoyment and having a memorable experience, the camps also teach children about spirituality and Jesus Christ.

"Everything we do has a specific message," said Jeremy Williams, a camp leader. "We get the kids to process thoughts about who Christ was without trying to jam it down their throats. We want them to think

about who God is and how he fits into their lives."

Pine expounded on Williams' thoughts.

"Our goal is to make them laugh and break down walls. We have a speaker who speaks all week and shares the gospel of Jesus Christ," Pine said. "We sing songs, play games, but everything is surrounding the central theme of Christ."

A good deal of counseling and guidance is also offered.

"We try to walk through life issues with them, help them make choices for themselves," said Jeremy Williams.

Williams added that the camp's religious teachings are non-denominational and that children from all backgrounds are welcome.

"I was a speaker at the camp last year and decided to come back," said Jeremy Williams. "Next year I'll be working with high school students at Wildhorse Canyon in California.