

NAZARETH NEWS

Issue No. 3

Summer 1997

Building Community Every Wednesday

The energetic Red Rover game in front of the Red Barn last Wednesday seemed to draw more and more people in to play as it drew Lori McIntyre and me over to spectate on the fun. Lori squeezed my hand and said, "There goes Grover!" as Grover charged through several linked volunteers, or "There goes Bubby!" as her grandson Danny McCune ran across faster than anyone. The "EXPECT A MIRACLE" sign on the barn behind us seemed appropriate as always. The fact that Sr. Paula and the home crew manages to feed sixty-plus people a great meal every Wednesday seems the biggest miracle, especially in the heat and humidity when everyone is grateful for a picnic. But, as volunteers from across the country and our friends from the local community share a meal together, the community that forms here becomes one of many miracles that blesses the Farm repeatedly.

Several of our old and new friends are regulars at the Farm on Wednesday nights, even on weeks when only the staff is here. Lori and her son Grover are regulars familiar to many—and Grover probably remembers you by name if you spent some time with him. Lori has been in the doctor's office a lot lately—keep her in your prayers. Kriss McIntyre usually comes up here as well, and this week brought her three darling children. Little Sammy and I threw rocks in the creek while Elizabeth and Luke played some mean Red Rover. "Little" Danny McCune grows several inches every week, and has made friends with all the volunteers who are up for a football challenge after dinner.

Alice Thompson is still

going strong at 83, teaching many new friends how to play dominoes and crocheting like crazy. Bill Gelhausen takes delight in crushing everyone's self-esteem at checkers; he is the indubitable champ. Bill has also been joining Nazareth Farm volunteers at the Summer Feed programs in Central Station each day this summer. Gail Williamson is another fellow you are guaranteed to find here every Wednesday, either charming everyone or causing trouble with Grover. Hazel LeMasters has been joining us since March, and is a terrific lady and a terrific Yahtzee player. Dallas Morrison also comes every week. The Farm helped his family several years ago when he was a teenager and now he feels as if the Farm is like his second family, too. He started helping out our work crews if they were working near his home in West Union and has been joining us for dinner all summer.

When the red-faced rovers finally tired out, we gathered around the porch as the day's home crew led the community in a prayer focusing on creating a home. They allowed everyone present to speak about the way they have found a home, a community to share, and people that mean something to them at Nazareth Farm. The prayer was a simple and moving testimony to the many blessings God provides for us at the Farm. Sometimes it seems like everything—community, prayer, sim-

licity and service—comes together so nicely on Wednesday night, and God is very present in the love and fun shared by all from age four to eighty-three. The home crew ended their prayer by presenting a "Welcome Home" sign that seems to have always belonged on the tool barn. We hope it welcomes you soon.



Lori McIntyre out-wrestles Scott on Community Night

by Anne Niebler

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Nazareth Farm, Inc.
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July 1997

Just Down the Road a Bit at the McClure's

At the end of our road sits a modest, hundred year old house right across from Ralph and Mary Sandora's home. The McClures live there and this month we had the pleasure of working for them. Every morning after driving a long and perilous drive up Little Battle Run, Nelson would greet us on his front porch. His first question was always "Where are y'all from?" Nelson would then come back with "lots of you are from Indiana and Illinois."

After our morning greetings, the day would begin. Between tearing out the old porch, replacing it with a new one, and re-shingling the roof, there was a lot of work to be done. But each day God granted us just the right mix of volunteer crews to achieve the job for the day. Every single person involved contributed to in an essential way. Without Tom and Larry diligently setting the posts, we would not have been able to continue with our work. Without countless numbers of you hammering in, taking out, or simply bending down nails with complete joy, we would not have smiled quite so much. Without Ben, Kevin, Christine and the cutting crew, it may have taken us twelve hours instead of just three to put in a seven foot piece of soffit replacement board. Without Toni, Mike and the rest of Da Mafia, I might still be laying out the railing to this day. Finally without Mitch, my trusty, dynamic partner for two weeks, none of the pain in the neck jobs like putting in the flashing would have been done. Plus I now have nifty new names for items at the construction site, like "Sanskrit" for Sakrete, or a "space bar" for a flat bar.

Through it all, Nelson and Evelyn were there to lend a helping hand and share some of their stories. Nelson set up our extension cord everyday, told us lots of stories about his brother racing motorcycles, showed off his Harley, and baked fresh bread. He was also happy to report that his cholesterol levels were way down, showing he is on his way to recovery from heart surgery. Evelyn serves the elderly patients at nursing and private homes all over the county by cutting hair. She had many anecdotes about her experiences.

As the sun flooded each afternoon with a golden light we knew another God-filled day had come to rest. We all piled in the truck and waved to Evelyn and Nelson, as they stood on their "work in progress," much as we all do in our lives. Have a wonderful week. *by Gina Fosco*

**A Million Thanks To Friends**

As usual, our biggest thank you goes to all the volunteers whose hard work and commitment make Nazareth Farm possible. Thanks for coming out and sharing your many gifts. But we especially want to thank those who go "above and beyond," whose generous donations allow us to continue to work and grow. Groups that have sent us donations this summer include Loyola University, Chicago; St. Mary's Church, Youth Ministry, and the St. Vincent de Paul Society in Downers Grove, IL; Our Lady of Presentation in Lee's Summit, MO; St. Louis DeMontfort Church in Fishers, IN; and the youth ministry programs of St. Raphael's Church in Naperville, IL; St. Malachy's Church in Brownsburg, IN; and St. Joseph's Church in Downers Grove.

From the Director . . .

August began my fifth month here as Director at Nazareth Farm. I had been a Youth Minister in Illinois and have been bringing volunteer groups here since 1988. Year after year, I was always amazed at the spirit present at Nazareth Farm. Even though the staff changed each year, the work sites always varied, and physical changes had been made on the property, none of these changes affected the spirit of the Farm.

Now that the summer is coming to a close, I have again been amazed! Each group week has its own "personality"—no two weeks this summer have been the same! Some groups play a lot of games in the O'Connor Room, some spend their free time on the front porch, others take many walks. However, no matter what the differences, each group leaves having the same experience of love, hard work, new friends, and an experience of God in all that happens here. I have realized that it is the volunteers that bring the Farm to life. On off weeks there is a lingering of the energy that is awakened during volunteer weeks.

I have also seen that the Farm and the experience of being here is much bigger than the staff, bigger than any one group, bigger than a summer full of group weeks. The Spirit and Grace of God continue to keep Nazareth Farm alive. All who have spent a week here since our founding have shared their gifts and a part of themselves with the Farm. Thank you to all of you who spent time here this summer. All the families we have worked with are grateful for your help. Thank you to everyone who has shared your gifts and your faith over the years, for it is this giving that keeps the Spirit alive and thriving! *by Jennifer Jackman*

The Wish List:

The flood of safety glasses in Monza, Iowa, Gery, and Margaret Mary Youth Ministry has been a terrific sign that, hey, people care. The staff is now adopting another to use power tools again, which may or may not be a safe change. The family Doehner sent a magnificent hammock for Gina to nap in, and Colgate University stepped up with a donation of all the bunk beds for our new dorm. Many thanks. If you can, please help the Farm meet these current needs and wishes:

- Vacuum cleaners (industrial)
- Escamator ladders
- Paint brushes
- Computers
- Voltage cables and sockets
- Four-drawer fireproof file cabinet
- Prayer resources (books you liked, prayers, tapes)
- Animal carrier for cats and dogs

St. Mary's Parish Gives Its Generous Support to Nazareth Farm

Like so many groups, St. Mary's in Downers Grove, IL has had a long relationship with Nazareth Farm. In 1980, Betty Krupp, now a former board member, began bringing high school groups to the Farm. In June, I had the opportunity to return to St. Mary's, my home parish, to speak to the parishioners about Nazareth Farm, the Doddridge County community, and the many volunteers who make the Farm possible.

I was overwhelmed by the parish's interest in all that the Farm does, as well as its tremendous generosity toward the Farm. At the end of each mass, a group of people would gather to ask more about the Farm or offer their encouragement for the continuation of the Farm's mission. Most parishioners were touched to know that young people were doing so much good for others.

When I returned to the Farm I received a call telling me that the parish would be sending a check for \$10,000 to Nazareth Farm (no, that is not a typo). I want to again thank the people of St. Mary's for their donation. In addition, I want to thank all of you for allowing me to have such amazing stories to share. Your contribution to the Farm extends far past your week here. May God continue to bless you.

by Megan Kennedy

A Ryall Grant for the Farm

This spring we requested and received a \$4000 Ryall Grant from the Congregation of Christian Brothers. This grant is named after Bro. Eugene Finbarr Ryall. Throughout his entire life as a teacher and principal, he maintained the objective to provide disadvantaged boys with the best possible Catholic education. As a recipient of the Ryall Grant, the funds we received must be used for direct service to the materially poor. We will use this money for families that cannot afford to purchase materials and who, without our assistance, would not be able to have their homes repaired. We are grateful to the Ryall Grant Committee for their belief in Nazareth Farm and their support with this generous grant.

by Jen Jackman

WELCOME HOME

Our friend Dorothy has been doing great work since she joined the staff in June. She has many gifts to offer the Farm. However, she has returned to her home in the Chicago area to help her mother through a serious illness. Our thoughts and prayers are with you, Dor.

Stranger and stranger . . .

This staff update is dedicated to the passing on of Andy and Matt, who left the Farm in May for greener pastures. Matt is now a homeless advocate in Indianapolis. In his spare time, he plans to open a halfway house for former Naz Farm staff and take pictures of distinctive patio furniture. Andy is currently vacationing at home in NJ, but plans to start his full-time job of sleeping late, snacking, and watching videos at Villanova for this fall. He also mentioned publishing a magazine which he described as "oriented toward lay ministers and jugglers, but not choezy." Title? AMDG.

The Farm welcomes new staff member Dorothy McKee, a former youth minister and stunt person from Chicago. Dorothy has been with us since May, and her ice pops have helped to cool off the staff. . . Rodney left. . . oh, he's old news. . . Jen continues to laugh and laugh and laugh. She's been missed, though, since she started working out of the Habitat office. . . Gina Fosco, the glamorous Sun Queen, is still looking good. Parents seeking tanning lessons for their children should contact the Farm. . . Megan is looking for her replacement as Volunteer Coordinator. Anyone who can count to forty and demonstrate "scrape and stack" is welcome to apply. Scott is even willing to give the orientation speech for as long as we care to listen. . . Anne, the Farm's world traveling missionary, gathered some of the staff in Wisconsin for some evangelical work. The attending staff tried to convert all of Milwaukee at Summerfest. James Taylor saw the light, as did Pat McCurdy, who sang, "I think I'll join the Farm". . . Everyone is grateful that St. Paula is back as summer house manager except Gina, who claims that she doesn't use enough garlic and doesn't understand the nuances of a strata. Gina does concede that Sister's blueberry pie is phenomenal. . . Scott would like everyone to pray for his car. The Oldsmobile has become a haven for wayward cats recently. Donations to keep his institution running will be accepted. Give the cats something to do; keep them off the streets. . . Tom continues on his quest to muck every roof in Doddridge County. The staff applauds his efforts. . . The talented Pam is still busy with our books, and did you know she's a licensed pyrotechnician?

The Farm welcomes short term (like two weeks) staff, Chris Faust and Tim Mitchell. Chris is a former staff member who should have known better. Board member and teacher Tim Mitchell helped to clean up the Farm and foul up the English language. Thanks to both for the much needed help.

by Scott Michalman

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OUR FEARLESS HIKERS TRUDGE ON

At the time of print, we have received word that the hikers made it to Bear Mountain, NY two days ahead of schedule and planned to continue hiking through New York. They should be at the end of their journey shortly and, as you read this, they are probably adjusting to a life which includes sleeping in a bed and cooking in an oven.

The current Naz Farm staff traveled with Jess, Alicia, and Amy to Harpers Ferry WV and hiked three miles with them. After camping on the river, we left the three of them to begin their journey. The report is that they were a bit nervous when we left. However, their anxiety was quickly replaced with excitement and enjoyment. Somewhere around half-way, Jess started having trouble with her feet and visited two different doctors. She was diagnosed with stress fractures in her feet and had to fly back to Wisconsin. Amy and Alicia continued on without her and miss her presence and spirit. They have seen beautiful sights and met many wonderful people.

Thanks go to all those people who pledged their financial support to their hike as well as those who prayed for them. Watch for their own story in the next newsletter.

by Meg Kennedy



How About an Adult Volunteer Week?

We receive many requests for an adult (21 and over) volunteer week and want to try to give one a shot. We have selected Friday through Tuesday, November 7 to 11, as a week set aside for adults who want to join us for work and prayer. We want to structure it according to what participants want out of the week. You can come alone or with friends—just let us know if you are interested. We'll do this for one or thirty, depending on interest. Call us at (304)-782-2742 and let us know if you're coming!

Attention Attention Attention! Your registration packs are coming!

We are sending out registration packs for the 97-98 volunteer season in September. Youth and campus ministers, PLEASE

- Read all the enclosed information carefully.
- Call if you have any questions.

There are some groups express mailing their registrations—this is not necessary. If you received a registration packet last year and do not intend to register, let us know. Thanks and good luck.