



Camper Rob Schwalm shares a quiet moment with teen counselor Melissa Mura during Family Camp at Italy Valley's Kamp Koinonia last summer. File photo

## Family Camp provides lifetime of experiences

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

In just one week, Family Camp can create an impact that literally changes lives forever.

Steve Schellenger of Palmyra converted to Catholicism after his first trip to Family Camp at Kamp Koinonia five years ago.

"I was of no faith at the time and my wife (Marge) had always been Catholic," Schellenger said. "When I got to the camp, I found I was the only non-Catholic there."

Yet he found acceptance rather than rejection. Schellenger said he was deeply moved by "the support group you get through Family Camp. People you've never met are like lifelong



Teen counselor Cheryl Battisti holds camper Barry Zachary during a group sing-a-long at Family Camp. File photo

friends." Since becoming a Catholic three years ago, Schellenger and the rest of his family have attended St. Anne's Church in Palmyra.

Joe Nagel, a parishioner of St. Mary's of the Lake Church in Ontario, said last year's Family Camp helped his family "find our faith again. We had let things kind of lie and had lost track of our faith, and the camp helped us get back to it. We became much more involved at our church."

Family Camp retreats are now in their 24th year. The ministerial program began at Camp Stella Maris in Livonia in 1968, before moving in 1978 to Kamp Koinonia in Italy Valley.

Situated on 296 acres of open land, Kamp Koinonia will be the site of three Continued on next page



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