



Life Saver Ministries  
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Dear Life Savers,

Someone posted the following on Facebook: Name one thing you miss from your childhood. Some of the replies were: parents, grandparents, the ice cream man, street hockey, a neighborhood where everyone knew everyone, my body working without a thought, not being afraid to walk anywhere and talk to people. I miss all those things, too, but what I miss the most is summer vacations.

During my grammar school years, I spent my summer vacations at my grandparents' home in rural Connecticut. My cousin, Paul, who is 3 years older than me, lived there with his mother and my grandparents. My sisters came down for varying amounts of time during the summer, but I was there from right after school let out until just before Labor Day. I loved it there.

I love my grandkids, and I love having them visit, but I'm pretty sure that, if they moved in with Cathie and me for an entire summer, I would be stark raving mad by the beginning of August, if not sooner. I don't know how my grandparents put up with me.

My grandparents lived in an old farmhouse, with a barn and a windmill out back. Yes, there was a real 4 story windmill that we called The Tower. The barn housed 3 or 4 horses. Paul and I shared a quarter horse named Chub. There was always a dog or 2 and a bunch of barn cats, that were determined to get past you and into the house whenever you opened the back door. There was a well with a hand pump that brought up the cleanest, coldest, best tasting water, just off the back porch.

The horses were a mixed blessing. Riding them and feeding them and leading them from the barn to the pasture was fun, cleaning their stalls – not so much. We had 10 acres of land to roam around on and lots of cool places to explore. The upstairs of the barn had a bunch of old stuff in it, and the tool shed housed all kinds of antique farm tools. The windmill was basically our own 4 story playhouse. We usually only used the bottom 2 floors, though. The third floor was full of junk, that would probably be valuable antiques now. The fourth floor had no windows and always had hornet nests. It was pitch black and kind of scary, but it was the only way to get to the roof, so sometimes our desire to get to the roof overcame our fears.

My grandfather hired a bulldozer to come out and dredge a swampy area to turn it into a small pond. He brought in a truckload of sand, and we had our own swimming hole with a raft in the middle to dive off.

There was a paper mill down the road, which we weren't supposed to go into, but of course we did. We got to know the truck drivers who hauled the paper from the mill up to the train siding, which was just up the road. They let us hang around and climb on the box cars while they loaded them. They also always left a bunch of soda bottles lying around for us to carry over to the combination post office/variety store and cash in for penny candy.

There was a river across the road where we fished. Whenever we caught something, we would bury it between rows of corn in my grandfather's garden, for fertilizer. That's what the Indians did, or so we were told. (They weren't Native Americans back then.)

When the corn was ready to pick, thanks to our fish, we would have corn on the cob at dinner, and my grandfather would often disappear into the cellar and reappear with ice cream cones. After dinner, we'd play hide and seek in the dark with the kids in the area, or just sit on rocking chairs on the front porch, listening to the bobwhites and whip-poor-wills and see just how long the ash on my grandfather's cigar would grow before it fell off. Friday nights often included a trip to the stock car races.

It was an idyllic time in a magical place, except for cleaning those stinky horse stalls.

Listening to the girls who come to My Father's House tell stories about their childhood is heartbreaking. Many had parents who suffered from alcoholism or drug abuse. Some had bounced around in the foster care system for most of their lives. Others have been victims of physical or sexual abuse. For some, celebrating Christmas at My Father's House was the first time they ever had a Christmas tree. Many have had their sense of self-worth crushed by the very people who should have encouraged them.

I wish I could go back in time and give the young moms who come to My Father's House the kind of childhood I enjoyed. I can't. What I can do, with your help and through the efforts of our loving staff and volunteers, is try to make up, just a little bit, for the pain of their childhood and point them toward a brighter future. We can give them a safe, clean, loving home. We can show them the love that God has for them. Maybe most importantly, we can equip them to give their children the type of childhood they wish they had.

We can encourage them to be nurturing and loving. We can instill in them a desire to put their children's welfare ahead of their own. We can give them the tools to create a stable home, where their kids feel secure and loved. We can let them know that, no matter what pain they have suffered, they can put it in the past and move on, there are people who love them, and they and their children can achieve their dreams.

That's why My Father's House is here. Thank you for providing the funds and prayers that enable us to continue to help these wonderful kids, both the moms and the children. My Father's House can't exist without you.



How many of you recognize this guy? This is Daniel. Daniel lived at My Father's House, with his mom, back in 2008. He came by on his February school vacation to help me clean out our basement. Here he is mixing some paint hardener into one of the many old cans of paint that have been sitting in the basement since before he lived here, so we can finally throw them out. He promised to come back and help clean out more old stuff.



Daniel is the little guy on the left.



Meet Jeremiah. Jeremiah is a wild and crazy guy. Every time he sees me, he runs over and wants me to pick him up and toss him over my shoulder. Luckily for me, Jeremiah doesn't weigh very much. His mom watches us very closely out of the corner of her eye, to make sure I don't drop him. She really doesn't have to worry. I'm very careful. The only kid I ever dropped at My Father's House was Daniel, and that was 10 years ago. As you can see, Daniel is no worse for wear.

In His service,

*Kevin*  
Kevin Coffey