



# HIDDEN ACRES REVIEW

## Smoke Signals of Peace?

“Fire! Fire!” The panicked cry resounds as the thick black smoke rises in an enveloping haze against the blue sky. Quickly the highly-efficient fire-suppression crew springs into action and the orange flames are doused...but only for the moment, as from out of the smoke another alarm is raised and the fire-fighters again waded into the choking wall to deal with yet another flare-up.

Is this a sad tale of spontaneous combustion and destruction? No, today’s fire scene is much less worrisome, except for threatening to expand a few waistlines: it’s only the barbecue pit at the annual HAC Chicken BBQ, where smoke-begrimed volunteers are grilling over 1,500 chicken legs for the hundreds of HAC supporters, alumni, staff, future staff, and future campers, who make this annual reunion trek to sample the most mouth-watering BBQ chicken ever produced.

This pilgrimage of the “face-full” has been taking place every year since 1966, although the camp only has records for the Chicken BBQ Committee starting in 1967-68. Interestingly, only males were listed as serving on the committee until 1979, at which time all of a sudden the names of spouses also appeared in the records (as cited by Tina Wheaton and Christine Nisbet in *Hidden Acres Camp 50 Years*). Somehow I’d be willing to bet that the ladies had been helping ever since the beginning of the event, but their efforts were only formally recognized in 1979. Women’s Lib arrives at HAC?



The programme for this evening has also evolved through the years. At various times it has included an MYF volleyball game, a sing-along, and live entertainment. However, most people apparently found programmes to be too much of a distraction from the real function of the evening—apart from raising funds for the camp, of course—which is to take advantage of the opportunity to catch up with old friends and acquaintances. As a result, the only organized activity, besides consuming the supply of chicken, is to observe the fierce competition at the pie auction which began in 2007. Churches take turns supplying pies for this event, and any way you slice it, it is entertaining to watch the action.

As the light begins to fade over the pond, the crowds thin. Winners cheerfully pay for their trophy pies, while losers try desperately to win invitations to pie parties. This is the time when the leg-weary BBQ Committee, greatly appreciative of scores of volunteers who have helped make this event one more successful fund-raising evening for the camp, start the process of bagging and selling off surplus food supplies, cleaning food containers, replacing picnic tables in their normal habitats all over the camp grounds, and listing surpluses and lacks in the food supply for next year’s committee. Knowing that in only nine months the planning will start for next year’s event.

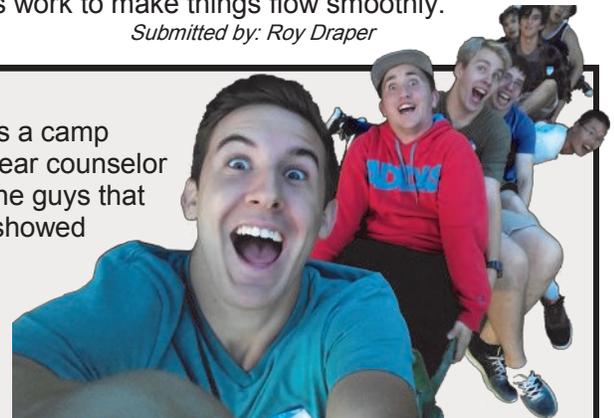
As a HAC board member, I have been privileged to serve on the BBQ Committee for the past six years. Although it involves some planning, and a lot of hard work around the time of the event itself, it has been a truly rewarding and enjoyable experience. I respect and appreciate those who have served with me on this committee. In particular, I’d like to thank Campbell and Chris and the office staff for all their behind the scenes work to make things flow smoothly.

*Submitted by: Roy Draper*

## Working as a Team

When I first set foot on the gravel parking lot in 2015 for my second year as a camp counselor at Hidden Acres, I didn’t know what to expect. Being a second year counselor meant there were higher expectations. I was going to be a leader, one of the guys that had the answers. I knew I was going to learn new things as well, but God showed me more than I could have imagined.

Single Moms Camp was my first week on the job. At the start I was nervous—tense, but excited at the same time. The week turned out to be my personal best! I actually handled every situation very well. I found I was a leader for the other male counselors and I used my experience to



*(Continued on page 2)*



## Seniors retreat - Strangers No More



“The future of the church depends on being intercultural,” Rudy Baergen told mostly mono-cultural participants at the Hidden Acres Seniors Retreat on May 2 and 3. Baergen commented that the established church must intentionally reach beyond themselves to be a faithful church. “It is not easy work,” he said, an observation reiterated by Brian Bauman who added, “Most of the biblical story is not the easy route.”

Bernard Sejour shared his story of missing his early education and being orphaned by age 15. Fortunately with the help of others he got to go to high school and eventually became a lawyer. His observation of the work of MCC led him to embrace the Mennonite church and its values. Sojour, endangered by his social justice work, fled to the USA. A small Mennonite church in Kansas City welcomed him with love. Now ordained, he is a ministry partner with Mennonite Church Eastern Canada (MCEC) networking with community organizations and churches in Ottawa and Quebec. He says he is the fruit of seeds of love, peace and hope planted by Mennonites who now must receive the gifts of “fruits” like him.



Lively interchange happened when Brian Bauman, MCEC's “Mission Guy,” interviewed relative newcomers to MCEC which included Noramy Gonzalia originally from Colombia and Fanosis Legesse from Ethiopia. Responding to Bauman's invitation, several attendees spoke of their discomfort as strangers when they moved to a new country, served as missionaries or volunteers.

Bauman commended the planning committee for helping seniors explore welcoming strangers.

“Retreat participants really engaged the topic. Everyone showed such respect and appreciation for the presenters from different cultures [who] were so happy to be able to share some of their cross-cultural Mennonite story.”

*Submitted by: Ferne Burkhardt (amended)*

## Grandparent and Grandchild Retreat

Each year, the Grandparent & Grandchild Retreat at Hidden Acres provides a great opportunity for grandparents and their grandchildren to spend time playing, singing, creating, laughing, eating and worshipping together. This year 21 families totaling 71 grandparents and grandchildren came and explored the theme of “Family Ties”. Everyone had a great time making “Amish Family Bread” to share with others, a stuffed snake craft made from old neck ties, working together to build the tallest tower out of spaghetti and marshmallows and exploring their family history by making a family tree. Overall we had a lot of fun together and we are looking forward to next year!

## Family Day

This year's Family Day Open House, which is a good opportunity to introduce Hidden Acres to new families as well as reconnect with those who are already familiar with the camp, was a great day that was enjoyed by 140 people. There were a lot of activities for everyone to participate in from crafts to pretzel baking to sledding and roasting bannock over the campfire. Fun was had by all!

*(Continued from page 1) - Working as a Team*

demonstrate maturity. It was a good feeling being independent and not having to ask for help. When the week was over I knew I had done a great job.

So naturally when kids' camp came two weeks later I was pretty confident. I was ready to do things and be a leader!

That pride got tackled down quickly though. The kids, as awesome they were, were a handful. At first I tried to do everything myself. I tried to be the hero who could handle whatever came my way. But as the week went on and I pushed towards this goal I found myself tiring out and getting more and more drained. Being a counselor takes energy, so something needed to change. With still half a week left, it was time for a new game plan. I had no choice but to take a step back and

let God take control. I realized I wouldn't be able to do things alone, so I turned to my co-counselor. We needed to work together as a unit, not as two separate individuals.

Working together and supporting each other worked out perfectly! When I needed to take a break from a camper he would step in. If he needed help entering into a new activity I encouraged him. This kind of teamwork was a new experience for me. From it I learned that to be a true leader in whatever situation God brings me into, I can't have my pride get in the way and think I'm on a solo mission when actually I am in a community that has been put in place to work as a whole unit. We can do more together than what I can do as an individual.

*Submitted by: Joey Winterbottom*



# SUMMER CAMP



THE KITCHENER AND WATERLOO COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Thank you to the **Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation and the Kids to Camp Fund**

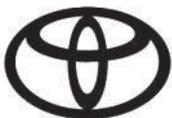
who are supporting 15 campers to come to Hidden Acres this summer.



STRATFORD PERTH COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

*It all comes back to you*

Thank you to the George and Edna Hislop Family Fund, the Jim and Laurel Laughton Family Fund and the John and Colleen MacDonald Family Fund, held within the **Stratford Perth Community Foundation** for providing funds to support campers who would otherwise not be able to attend.



TOYOTA

We are grateful for the support we have received from

**Toyota Canada**

to help cover the cost of the chicken for our Annual Chicken BBQ.



TD Friends of the Environment Foundation

Thank you to the **TD Friends of the Environment Foundation** for their continued support of our Gravel Pit Re-naturalization. This year they have supplied funding for the purchase of 70 trees (10 different varieties )

## Staff Share Their Hopes for the Summer



Hello! My name is Christina Warkentin and I have the privilege of being the Camp Pastor at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp this summer. I am so excited to see the Lord work in the lives of the campers and staff this summer. Our spiritual theme this year is "What Does Peace Have to do With Me?" During each week of camp campers will have opportunities to explore different aspects of peace and social justice from a Christian Anabaptist perspective. Through the use of

games, songs, crafts, memory verses, skits, activities and my own experiences I hope to give campers practical ways to apply these concepts into their daily lives. The campers will also have the opportunity to do at least one thing throughout their week at camp that will have a larger impact in the community and the world. My hope is that campers will begin to look beyond their own circumstances and learn about issues that are going on in their schools, communities, and the world. I want everyone who comes to camp to believe that they can have a part to play in spreading God's peace and love throughout the world. I look forward to stepping into this role and watching campers learn and grow.



Hello, my name is Madi Taylor and I am this years' Summer Camp Program Coordinator! I am a student at the University of Waterloo and am going into my fourth year of Therapeutic Recreation with a minor in Religious Studies. I have been attending a multitude of camps since I was six years old and have been working with organizations such as the YMCA and Agape Valley Bible Camp for the past seven years of my life.

Going to camp was always one of the most incredible parts of my summer and so I am excited to help create a fun and safe environment where campers will be able to build friendships, go on adventures and have the freedom to explore and experience a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. This past month I have learned so much about Hidden Acres and have gotten to know some of the incredible staff while preparing for the summer ahead. I know that God is going to use Hidden Acres this summer to impact the lives of many children across Ontario. With a lot of prayer and hard work this summer will be an incredibly rewarding experience.

As the summer approaches, please pray that I will continue to rely on the Lord for wisdom and guidance during this time of preparation and that we as a staff will remain focused on Him. The peace of the Lord be with you.

### HAC OPPORTUNITIES

- Hidden Acres Board of Directors
- Hidden Acres Property Committee
- Hidden Acres Chicken BBQ Committee
- Volunteer Gardeners

### HAC WISH-LIST

- Utility trailer (2000 lb capacity)

Help make a difference at camp by donating online. Visit us at [www.hiddenacres.ca](http://www.hiddenacres.ca) and look for the logo below





We want to express our deepest gratitude for the many people who have volunteered at camp since the fall.

**Rockway Mennonite Collegiate** planted trees, collected debris from the spring ice storm, raked and cleaned summer cabins as part of their Evirathon/ Servathon fundraiser. We are grateful for the ongoing support from Rockway and their students.

**Lawn Mowers** are always needed to help keep the many acres of lawn neat and tidy. Thanks to Carl Erb, Cecil Wagler and Gerry Pot for their help this year so far.

**Sandy Shout** is gathering the history of rental groups from many old calendars/ documents and creating a computer copy of the this information for our records.

**Branch Mulching** - Mark & Mike Cole from Happy Hills brought their chipper to camp to grind up all the branches collected from the spring ice storms. We will now have some nice mulch to spread on nature trails and flower beds.

**Stonehouse Face Lift** - Joe Wagler coordinated the installation of HardiePanel siding to the block wall of Stonehouse. Volunteers from Shantz Mennonite Church and the property committee provided the labour. Additionally, Jim Baechler shared his stone mason skills with us to finish of the lower portion of the wall.

**Spring Work Day** - On Friday May 7th, Hidden Acres had a work day organized by the Property Committee. The focus of the day was to finish up collecting all the debris left by the April ice storm and get the grounds ready for the spring and summer seasons. We are very grateful for all the work the Property Committee manages through-out the year.

**Retreat Volunteers** - Thank you to those folks who volunteer to help with our retreats - *Grandparent/Grandchild Retreat*: Zerka Mya, Aaron Lantz, Maryann Hoyos, Natalie Weber, Duane Cressman, Jevon Looser, Mallory Gitzel, Bruce Pham, Tina Wheaton and Meredith Klynstra. *Family Day*: Natalie Weber, Duane Cressman, Beth Reitzel, Zerka Mya, Isaac Zehr, Aaron Lantz, CC Weber, Bruce Pham, Andy Wenger, Megan Lowery, Clayton Kuepfer, Lisa Cressman, Lukasz Mietus, Suzanne Bender, Mallory Gitzel, Josh Filion

**Mark Your Calendars**

**2016**

**July 1 - 3**  
Family Camping Weekend

**July 4 to August 31**  
Summer Camp

**September 9 - 11**  
Building Community Retreat

**September 26 or 27**  
Fall Seniors Retreat

**November 22**  
Annual Meeting

**2017**

**February 20**  
Family Day Open House

**March 4**  
Bowlathon

**March 13 or 14**  
Grandparent & Grandchild Days

**May 1 or 2**  
Spring Seniors Retreat



### *Membership Application*

I would like to support the ministry of Hidden Acres by becoming a member of the Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp Association. I agree with the Hidden Acres mission statement which is *“to provide a welcoming, peaceful gathering place where diverse groups of people experience life-giving connections with God, one another, and nature.”*

Enclosed is my \$25 membership donation.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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