

HIDDEN ACRES REVIEW

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Reflections from Summer Camp 2023

As I reflect on this summer, my heart is full of gratitude for the team of people who all come together to make camp happen. I have recently been reflecting on the book of Nehemiah and how together, the people of Israel rebuilt the wall around Jerusalem in record time because they each focused on their section of the wall and because the favour of the Lord was upon them. Making summer camp happen takes a team of people, all playing their role and focusing on what has been placed before them. It is so beautiful to watch God unite our hearts and efforts to serve Him and build His kingdom through the work at Hidden Acres. Over the course of the spring and summer we had 992 students through our Outdoor Education Program and 519 campers through our



summer camp programs. What a joy to see the efforts of our year round staff team and our summer staff come together to create an unforgettable summer and to impact lives in such meaningful ways. I reflect with deep gratitude on the parts that you all play as supporters of HAC. A big thank you to every hand that plays a part in making Hidden Acres the impactful place that it is!

Submitted by Emily Taylor, Program Director

Coming into this summer, I didn't have much experience in camp. I was very unsure of what my role as Program Coordinator entailed, and this made me very nervous. The first week of summer was very hectic. I was thrown into my role, and while this was pretty terrifying, it was exactly what I needed. I had support when I needed it, but I was also given the space to be creative and experiment. This allowed me to step up as a leader and become confident in my decisions. Of course, I made mistakes along the way. However, the directors of HAC were very understanding and always helped me learn from these mistakes to become a better person and a better PC. In my interview in April, I was asked what I wanted to get out of this summer. My answer was that I wanted to learn how to be a better servant of Christ. Camp provided me with exactly that. Working 15 hour days, surrounded by kids full of energy is very draining. Add personal problems at home to this equation, the outcome should be very bad. However, the community at camp is one full of support. We learned to support each other where we needed it while keeping the campers and program as our top priority. Putting others first, while keeping gas in my tank, is something I learned at camp. I've also carried this lesson with me into my second year of university. I live with 6 other girls and it can be complicated learning to live with other people. However, camp has taught me to be understanding of others needs and how to serve others in a healthy way. Camp will always have a special place in my heart. It revealed to me who Christ made me to be and how to live as someone who knows their purpose and worth in Christ.

Submitted by Brianna Wellman - Program Coordinator

We are thankful for our kitchen staff who served hundreds of nutritious and delicious meals and snacks to all of our campers and staff this summer. Pictured are **Cyndi and Rebecca** who led our kitchen. They are making a new favourite, Pizza Buns, with flour donated by **Oak Manor Farms Organic Mill**. Thank you to Perry and Oak Manor for your generous support each year by donating flour and oats.



Reflections from Summer Camp 2023 Continued...

2023 Summer Staff Team:

Leena Abo Al Soud - Quipp
Caleb Bannerman - Splash
Simon Bolhous - Squeegee
Aliya Bowman - Tealee
Charlie Cheng - Homitto
Naomi Dejan - Pittu
Atlantis Dickison-Wolter - Zzipy
Jailynn Dockstader-Wilker - Chefcar
Emma Ellison White - Duckie
Michael Farrugia - Onahnah
Anika Fitzpatrick - Dilly
Lydie Herrle - Troot
Liam Hoogendoorn - Juicio
Alannah Hurst - Picksea
Zane Mazal - Nulit
Farah Mckellar - Inwo
Itrina-Kay Melanson - Twinkle
Sergio Morales Garcia - Slakon
Katie Musselman - Pita
Alberto Parra Toval - Beyp
Skye Power - Wug
Hannah Richardson - Sibi
Adam Roth - Monton
Zafiraah Sanderson - Dile
Zoiyaah Sanderson - Fooah
Julia Schroder Kipfer - Gohpa
Mitali Sharma - Spiff
Naomi Stockdale - Essa



The Summer Staff Team of 2023

My experience at Hidden Acres was spectacular. The people and the moments I spent there I will remember all my life and it has been a place that has helped me to advance and grow as a person in many aspects. Despite having many difficulties with the language from the beginning, everyone helped me learn and put all their trust in me and my work. To have been able to help and positively influence the lives of so many children is something I will always be grateful for. Without a doubt it has been the best summer of my life!

*Submitted by **Sergio Morales Garcia** (Sergio is from Spain and served as a Cabin Leader. This summer we had two staff from Spain with whom we connected through an organization called Camps Canada. We are grateful for Camps Canada and the work they do to recruit good quality young adults to work at camps across Canada).*

Busy Fall Season for Outdoor Education

Our Spring and Fall Newsletters always fall right in the middle of the Outdoor Ed seasons, making it difficult to report on something that is still underway. So, I'll give an update on how the Spring season concluded and how the Fall season is shaping up so far for us here at HAC.

The Spring season of Outdoor Ed was a great success. We were blessed with a fantastic staff team making each day of school groups a fun and engaging experience. Over six weeks of programming there were 14 different schools that cumulatively brought 992 students to camp. There was a wide variety of groups:

continued on the next page...



Opportunities to get involved

- Pray for Hidden Acres
- Become a Member (see page 3)
- Help out with a project around camp or coordinate your group (youth, men's/women's, bible study, book club, etc.) to come and help out.
- Volunteer on our Board of Directors or one of our committees (property, seniors retreat, alumni, bowlathon or chicken BBQ)
- Support a camper or Single Mom by making a donation towards a subsidy.



Busy Fall Season continued...

private and public schools, home-school groups, day groups and a few overnight groups.

For the second year we hosted Unity Camp (a week-long program run in partnership with the Waterloo Catholic District School Board's international program) and 79 girls from Colombia were introduced to a Canadian camp experience. They didn't let mid-May cold mornings or a chilly Lake Laverne dampen their enthusiasm.

For the first time we worked with the Waterloo Region District School Board's Multilingual Language Learner (MLL) program and welcomed 164 students who are new to Canada within the last two years. It was beautiful to see students helping to translate for one another while experiencing safe and fun places to develop friendships and new skills.

At the time of writing this report we have hosted our first few fall school groups. At this point there are seventeen distinct days of school programming scheduled, with additional interested schools. It is shaping up to be our fullest fall schedule yet.

Hidden Acres is grateful to have received funding from the Government of Canada's Community Services Recovery Fund for our Outdoor Education Program Redevelopment and Expansion Project. The Community Services Recovery Fund responded to what community service organizations, including charities, non-profits and Indigenous governing bodies, needed and supports them as they adapt for long-term recovery. This investment will help the camp to develop winter programming, pay staff, and purchase equipment for winter activities which will allow the Outdoor Education program to expand, for the first time becoming a three season program.

Submitted by Josh Penfold, Outdoor Ed Director

Wish-list

If you would like to support the camp by providing any of the following items, please let us know.

- Metal picnic tables or frames
- New Pillow Protectors/Mattress Protectors
- Hockey Nets (a matching set is ideal but single nets are welcome)
- Hockey Helmets (various sizes with cage or ability to attach cage)
- New 30L Backpacks for new, winter outdoor ed programs

Examples of wish list items...



Notable Dates

- **Annual General Meeting:** November 21, 2023
- **HAC Office is CLOSED:** December 25-29, 2023
- **Winter Outdoor Ed:** January - March 2024
- **Family Day Open House:** February 19, 2024
- **Alumni Gathering:** May 17-19, 2024
- **Spring Outdoor Ed:** May & June 2024
- **Summer Camp:** July 1-August 29, 2024

cut here and mail in

Membership Application

cut here and mail in

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: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

THANK YOU

We are grateful for, and appreciate the support of the many individuals, groups, organizations and businesses that give their time, energy and finances to support the mission of Hidden Acres.



The Waterloo Region
Record - Lyle S.
Hallman Foundation
Kids to Camp Fund

We are thankful to have received \$2,500 from the **Waterloo Region Record - Lyle S. Hallman Foundation Kids to Camp Fund** held at Waterloo Region Community Foundation, to go towards camper subsidies this summer. This grant will help us ensure that campers from Waterloo Region as well as Cambridge and North Dumfries will not experience financial barriers preventing them from coming to camp.



Community Fund
Alfred C. & Shirley E.
Filsinger Fund
Art & Barb Janzen Fund
Douglas Mitten
Endowment Fund
Strahan Chan Community
Endowment Fund
Weiland Family
Foundation Fund

Thank you to the following **Waterloo Region Community Foundation** funds for supporting our Single Moms Camp Programs this summer: **Community Fund, Alfred C. and Shirley E. Filsinger Fund, Art & Barb Janzen Fund, Douglas Mitten Endowment Fund, Strahan Chan Community Endowment Fund, Weiland Family Foundation Fund.** Combined, these funds, granted a total of \$19,800.

Community Services Recovery Fund



Canadian
Red Cross



COMMUNITY
FOUNDATIONS
OF CANADA



United Way
Centraide
Canada

Funded by the
Government of Canada's
Community Services Recovery Fund



We are grateful to have received an investment of \$44,700 through the **Community Services Recovery Fund**. The Community Services Recovery Fund is a \$400 million investment from the Government of Canada to support community service organizations, including charities, non-profits and Indigenous governing bodies, as they adapt and modernize their organizations. The funding will support the expansion and development of our Outdoor Education programs.

- Thank you to the **Shantz Mennonite Church Bequest Fund** for a \$5000 donation that supports the work of the camp.
- We appreciate the generosity of **Wallenstein Equipment** who donated a wood chipper. It will come in handy with clean up around the camp supplying wood chips for flower beds, trails, etc.
- Thanks to a group of volunteers from **Shantz Mennonite Church** who cleaned up and chipped branches, split and stacked firewood and picked apples which were pressed into 268 litres of cider. Thanks as well to **Brian Ropp** for cutting down some dead and dying trees in preparation for the group and to **Bruce Bechtel** for lending us a wood splitter.
- A group of volunteers from **Rossmere Mennonite Church** in Lancaster PA, came for a week in July and helped with cleaning the Oakview cabins, clean up in the kitchen, splitting and stacking firewood, and other grounds cleanup. They also built a new deck and patio area on the back of the brown staff house which was designed by **Devon Grainger**. Thank you!
- Thank you to **Carl Erb** and **John Iutzi** for help with mowing our 22 acres!
- We are grateful to **John Iutzi** for building bird houses, which hosted tree swallows and house wrens this year, as well as boxes to store basketballs, volleyballs and gaga ball at the courts.
- We appreciate **Don Erb** and **Nathan Erb** for volunteering their time and expertise to provide some structural supports to the Stonehouse Retreat Centre.



To help Hidden Acres continue making an impact in the lives of thousands of people each year, consider making a donation by visiting: **www.hiddenacres.ca/donate**

Hidden Acres is proud to be a part of the following associations:

