



June 2026- Volume 37 - Issue 1

HIDDEN ACRES REVIEW

In This Issue

- Meet our Summer Camp Director, the new housekeeping staff and the newest member of the HAC Family.
- Honouring Those Who Helped to Build Camp
- The Gift of New Camp Vehicles
- Spring Retreat Updates

Meet our Summer Camp Director



This summer Hannah Richardson will be the Summer Camp Director. She has been on summer staff for the past three years and we are excited to invite her back once again. We thought it might be fun to use the newsletter to introduce Hannah to the Hidden Acres community. Below is an interview between Hannah and Josh, our Program Director:

Josh: This is your fourth summer at Hidden Acres, how did you get connected with HAC? **Hannah:** Camp Kahquah has always been a part of my life in different capacities. In 2023 my cousin, Emily Riegert, (the Program Director at the time) asked me if I would like to come work with her one summer and I said yes and I have been coming back ever since.

Josh: As Summer Camp Director you'll be using your real name for the first time. The last three years campers have only known you by your camp name, Sibi. Can you tell us the story behind how you got that name? **Hannah:** Sibi stands for singing bird. Singing and music is something I really enjoy and during my first summer one of the other staff members and I would often spend the evenings sitting at the piano singing together.

Josh: So you're the Summer Camp Director, what does that even mean? What does the Summer Camp Director do? **Hannah:** I work with the Program Directors to give general management to summer camp. The summer camp director position also begins in January to help with planning and preparations for the summer.

Josh: What's a memory from a past summer that still makes you smile? **Hannah:** One of my favourite things to do at camp is to play guitar during Focus. It is so fun to hear the campers get really into singing and doing the actions.

continued on the next page...



Welcome the newest member of the HAC family!

We want to celebrate with Emily and Luke Riegert as they welcomed Sophie, into their family on February 6. We are thankful for a safe and healthy start to Sophie's life.

Honouring Those Who Helped Build Hidden Acres

In 2004, **Laverne Martin** was approached by Campbell Nisbet (former Executive Director) and the Board with a vision for a new facility, along with a rough sketch of what it could look like. Laverne took that sketch and vision and transformed them into the preliminary drawings of what would become the Woodhouse Retreat Centre. Beyond the design work, he also served on the building committee for Woodhouse, helping to bring the project to life. Laverne passed away earlier this year, and we are deeply grateful for his dedication and commitment to helping Hidden Acres *Widen the Welcome* - creating space for thousands of people each year to connect with God, one another, and nature.

Wray Bender helped to build camp in a different but equally meaningful way. Throughout his years on the Board of Directors and the Finance & Fundraising Committee, Wray brought his financial expertise helping to strengthen the camp's finances through sound accounting practices while also championing fundraising efforts and inviting others to invest in the camp's mission. Wray passed away near the end of 2025.

Considering the Birds

Quite unintentionally this winter we found ourselves nested within the theme of birds. **Grandparent and Grandchild Day**, the Monday of March Break, was titled "Wings Over the Rainforest" and began with a presentation including a variety of exotic birds. The rest of the day was filled with a bird themed scavenger hunt, and making bird feeders. We sang songs that featured birds in some way and explored various places where birds are found in scripture. It was impossible to miss the theme for the day!



Grandparent & Grandchild Day

It was completely coincidental when the **Seniors Retreat** Committee landed on the theme "Consider The Birds"

for their retreat day in April. There were no live birds inside for the seniors retreat, instead their theme of hope in a worrisome world tied back to Jesus' words in Matthew 6 to consider the birds of the air that do not worry. Elaine Erb shared about sacred pathways and spiritual practices of hope. In the afternoon Lyle Friesen and Carol Ann Weaver shared pictures and sounds of birds of Southern Ontario as well as their status and what we can do to help them. Some also had opportunities for some birding on property, either outside or by watching birds feed by our one way viewing window.



Spring Seniors Retreat

continued from previous page...

Josh: What's your favourite camp meal? **Hannah:** Any meal that Cyndi makes.

Josh: What's your favourite camp song? **Hannah:** Lord, I Lift Your Name on High.

Josh: If you're at camp each spring and summer, what are you up to the other 8 months of the year? **Hannah:** I have just finished my B.A. in Biblical Studies and Theology at Tyndale University. In the fall I will be heading out to Vancouver to start a Masters in Divinity at Regent College.

Josh: Last question and a camp classic question...if you could fill an olympic sized swimming pool with a dessert what would it be? **Hannah:** Strawberry-Rhubarb Pie!

Hidden Acres' New Van & Truck



For a while we noticed that the rust on our 2007 pickup truck was getting quite bad and that it was time for a new truck. And with our LINC and LIT programs growing, a van was becoming more of a necessity than something that would be nice to have. So we did what we often do - we prayed, shared the need, and waited to see how God might provide.

In early 2025, Bruce Schumm told Chris Pot during a conversation that he'd keep his eyes open for a truck for camp. Then in September, the North Easthope Antique Tractor Club came to camp for breakfast where Chris shared about the need for a truck and long-time supporter Doug Wagner mentioned his company would have one available later that fall that he would donate. And then a few days later, Bruce called to say he bought a truck for camp that would fit our needs quite nicely, it just needed a bit of work. Just like that, we went from zero new vehicles to two truck donations in the span of a few days. Amazing!

Of course, what we really needed was one truck and a van, not two trucks. Doug generously offered his truck to be sold, with the proceeds going toward a gently used 8-passenger minivan, while the truck from Bruce became the new camp truck. Thanks to Bruce and Barb Schumm and Doug Wagner for the donations of the trucks as well as Expressway Ford, Lynn & Nancy Steinmann-Yantzi, Don & Marilyn Steinmann, the Crosshill Wellesley VBS, Mike & Julie Ellison-White and one other anonymous donor who all contributed towards getting the camp set up with two new vehicles without incurring any costs.



LINC participants in front of the new van

Staff Updates

This spring brought some changes to our Housekeeping staff at camp with Rachel and Esperance having begun new journeys in new workplaces. We are grateful to both of them for faithfully serving and helping Hidden Acres meet its mission of 'providing a peaceful and welcoming gathering place' for so many. We are also grateful that Joan Schooley joined our Housekeeping team in May. Welcome Joan!

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE HIDDEN ACRES ASSOCIATION

As a member you're part of the association that cares for and stewards Hidden Acres, meaning you get a real voice and vote in how the camp operates. Becoming a member is easy, you just need to align with our mission and core values and make an annual contribution, which can be as simple as either a minimum \$25 donation, volunteering 10 hours of your time, or serving on the Board of Directors or a committee. You can get more information or sign up to become a member by scanning the QR code to the left. Come be part of the community that keeps Hidden Acres thriving. If you're making making a donation as a part of your renewal, scan the QR code to the right.



**Membership
Application**



**Make a
Donation**



THANK YOU!

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

- **CR Plastics** donated six Muskoka Chairs & **Yantzi Building Supplies Ltd.** donated a bench. Both of these donations are helping to create comfortable and welcoming seating areas around the camp as a part of our 2026-2028 Strategic Plan.
- **Brian Ropp** fixed up the Steiner tractor extending its life as well as helping with cutting up fallen trees and splitting the wood into firewood.
- **Gerry Pot** helped with mowing lawn and painting the exterior doors on Stonehouse.
- **Mark & Ian Cole** repaired and welded some tables and chairs.
- **Dominos Pizza** in New Hamburg donated pizza coupons for our Family Day Open House as well as generously provides discounts for pizza orders.
- **Kids in Camp** is providing support to help cover the cost of camp for six campers this summer totalling **\$1,253**.
- The **Canada Summer Jobs** program is providing funding for five summer camp staff positions totalling **\$27,600** in support.



LINC enjoying the new chairs



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

We are thankful for **The Waterloo Region Record - Lyle S. Hallman Foundation Kids to Camp Fund**, held at WRCF, which gifted **\$3000** towards camper subsidies this summer.

OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED:

- Bring your youth group, bible study group, staff team, etc. to help with a project or work day at camp.
- Volunteer on a committee or on the Board of Directors.
- Pray for Hidden Acres and its staff team.
- Help Hidden Acres continue making an impact in the lives of thousands of people each year by making a donation towards Summer Camp, Single Moms Camp or a general donation to be used where most needed.

WISH LIST

- Composite Muskoka chairs and benches
- 50-60" Flat screen TV(s)
- Picnic tables
- New or in good condition volleyballs, soccer balls, basketballs and footballs.
- A Terrarium or Aquarium
- New Life Jackets/PFD's

IMPORTANT DATES

- **Summer Camp:** June 27 - August 28
- **Family Camping Weekend:** Sept. 4 - 7
- **LINC Connect & Skills:** Mondays & Tuesdays, September to May
- **Fall Seniors Retreat:** October 5
- **Fall LINC Retreat:** October 23 - 25
- **Annual General Meeting:** December 2



We are proud to be a part of the following associations:



CHECK US OUT ON

