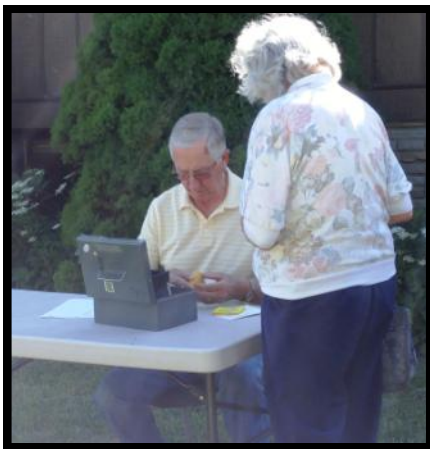




BBQ Chicken Legs: Still Kicking at 50 Years



The Hidden Acres Annual Chicken BBQ turned 50 years old in 2016 without much fanfare. But it certainly was another successful outdoor party here, hosted by lots of volunteers for around 1000 satisfied folks who came to enjoy the latest celebration in this event's long history at the camp. In the midst of all the busy activity, Dale Leis, who has been faithfully manning the ticket table at the BBQ for many years, turned to me and said, "I would like to make a donation to cover the cost of the chicken this year." He added that he had realized it was also fifty years since he had started feeding chickens, a notable coincidence.

I quickly recovered from the shock of his statement and thanked him for his generosity. Then I needed to dash off to show someone where to take their donation of pies for the pie auction. I actually never made it back to talk further with Dale that day, but made a point to follow-up later.

I sat down with Dale earlier this month to pick up the conversation. I had to wait for a rainy day when he wouldn't be out on the tractor doing field work. "So Dale", I asked, "why did you decide to donate the cost of the chicken for this year's Chicken BBQ?"

Dale told me that he had thought about finding a way to provide the chicken for the annual chicken bbq in the past and it just hadn't worked out. This year he was struck by the fact that this was a special anniversary for the Hidden Acres BBQ and that it coincided with the 50-year milestone for his own chicken farming business. It seemed like now was the right time to do it.

Dale related that his parents had been very involved at the start of the annual barbeque, and this would also be a way to honour them. Oscar and Anna Mae had been involved in supporting Hidden Acres from its beginning back in the early 60s. Dale along with his wife Elaine have continued to support the camp in a variety of ways, including Dale's term as President of the Board and Elaine's involvement on the Retreat Committee. So they have been well acquainted with the positive impact this ministry has on people's lives. As Dale noted, "This involvement has given us insights that motivate us to support the camp." He then referred particularly to the program for low-income single mothers and their children, and the many children whose camp fees are subsidized by the camp each year. He concluded by reflecting that during the fifty years his chicken business has grown, for which he is grateful to God, Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp and Retreat Centre has also grown and been blessed—and in turn has been a blessing to many others.



I thanked Dale once again for his donation and for taking the time to share these thoughts with me. As I drove away, a scripture sprang to mind, the one that observes it is more blessed to give than to receive. Gratitude is meant to overflow! I felt uplifted and refreshed by the gratitude that had spilled over from one family's life to affect others connected to this ministry. Many such acts of generosity have been shared in past reports and newsletters. I also reflected on Dale's comment that it was partly because of his and Elaine's volunteer involvements that they were aware of the difference the camp was making. I couldn't help but wonder: might there be others thinking about contributing because of an impact the camp has had on them or someone close to them?



EVENTS

Hidden Acres Retreats

Hidden Acres hosts a number of retreats throughout the year to connect with everyone from little children to seniors and grandparents. This fall we hosted two retreats, our Building Community Retreat and our Fall Seniors' Retreat.

The Building Community Retreat was started in 1987 as a place for folks with disabilities and their families,



Building Community Retreat Participants

supporters and friends to come together for fellowship, relaxation, worship, learning and fun. This year we had 33 people attend and explore how their faith and disability intersect. Matt Arguin, who serves as an assistant curate for the Church of St. Jude in London, ON and Catherine Gitzel, a pastor at The Gathering Church in Kitchener challenged everyone to think about how they can use their gifts to

Bowlathon & Chicken BBQ

We give thanks to God for all the support we have received from supporting congregations, donors, staff and volunteers for our many events and programs. Your financial support of our annual Bowlathon (\$32,200), Chicken BBQ (\$8,150) and Pie Auction (\$3,150) helped us provide programs to 591 campers (children, single moms & supported young adults). Thank you!

encourage and support their families, friendships, churches and communities.

Our Fall Seniors' Retreat provided an opportunity for the participants to reflect on the homes they have had throughout their lives. Ingrid Loepp Thiessen, a chaplain at Sunnyside Long Term Care Home in Kitchener, led 80 seniors through various activities which provided an opportunity for folks to reminisce about life from birth to death. Ingrid's ability to tie in singing, story telling and reflections created a memorable day of celebrating God's promise to dwell with us through our life's journey. **Chris Pot, Program Director**

HAC OPPORTUNITIES

Board of Directors
Property Committee
Chicken BBQ Committee
Bowlathon Committee
Retreat Committees

Bring a group and help with a variety of seasonal tasks. We'd love to host you!

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: _____

Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp & Retreat Centre
1921 Line 37,
New Hamburg, ON N3A 4B5

Phone: 519-625-8602
Fax: 519-625-8606
email: info@hiddenacres.ca



Summer Staff 2016

Seyi Balogun - Sunny
Anhad Binopal - S'mores
Jessica Chatson - Froast
Duane Cressman - Fluume
Amanda da Costa - Teaya!
Roan Dawson - Shieflo
Rebecca Doering - Minalto
Hunter Fulmer - Simba
Bethany Herlihey - Fuzz
Maryann Hoyos - Gullibug
Ashley Jefferies - Frizzle
Sage Kelly - Twone
Favour Kio - Etoile
Ibi Kio - Ca-swi
Meredith Klynstra - Teef
Anna Kuepfer - Teka
Emily Lantz - Coora
Kira Larochelle - Snaps
Lindsey Lesage - Talown
Alicia Martin - Lårröw
Cedric Martin - Pen-Gee
Greg McKecknie - Enzlo
Chris Miller - Elkip
Zerka Mya - Gub
Dexter Newman - Pippi
Jonah Noseworthy - Hishfa
Kyle Reitzel - Stolaf
Emily Rempel - Pinky
Madalyn Ruby - Resoo
Andrew Shantz - Zone-ix
Madi Taylor - Gusto
David Tenute - To6ix
Christina Warkentin - Catoo
Alecia Weber - Leebea
Natalie Weber - Latoof
Isaac Zehr - Woble
Andrew Zettel - Vox
Eve Zhou - TipTop



This summer was one the most memorable summers of my life. When the opportunity to work as a camp counselor for the summer first came up, I was admittedly a little apprehensive. Having never counseled before, I was unsure of what to expect. What I experienced, however, was nothing short of spectacular.

Although it's likely been said before by others, Hidden Acres is a truly special place. Very few workplaces offer the opportunity for employees to work and live in such close proximity. And yet, at Hidden Acres, everyone is able to collaborate effectively because of a shared set of values and a genuine concern for each other's well-being. Over the course of the summer, I always felt so supported: as a counselor, as a young adult, and as a Christian.

I was also so blessed to work with a variety of young campers. These kids have (sometimes) boundless energy, and an insatiable curiosity, which is inspiring to everyone around them. Watching my campers canoe for the first time, work together to pitch a tent, or sing songs of praise during Focus, gave me clear confirmation that the work I was doing was very meaningful.

It's safe to say my summer at Hidden Acres proved to be an unconventional work experience, particularly for a University of Waterloo co-op student. But the growth I experienced, coupled with many happy memories and new friendships, made this summer very special. I wouldn't trade it for the world!

Andrew Zettel, Boys Inclusion Counselor

Hidden Acres - Developing Leaders

A summer camp experience at Hidden Acres can provide a young person with so much. It can be the place they overcome fears and conquer the climbing wall, meet a new best friend that sticks with them for life, hear about the unending love that our God has for us and so much more. It can also be the place where they learn how to lead and have the opportunity to put that learning into practice.

This summer we had 13 youth participate in our Leaders in Training (LIT) Program. This three-week program provides opportunities to build community, learn about leadership, explore and develop faith, gain practical leadership experience by working alongside our summer staff and have a ton of fun creating memories together. This year, we are thankful for the support that MCEC has given towards this program through the Legacy Initiative Fund.

Deborah Odia, who came to Hidden Acres for the first time this summer, described her experience as being wonderful from the very start despite her nervousness, "I remember feeling welcomed into the community by the staff and other LIT's, some of whom had been going to the camp for years." Karina Leclair, another first timer at Hidden Acres, shared about the importance of being organized when providing leadership and how the program helped her grow: "I gained a lot of leadership responsibility during this week that helped build my confidence." Alexis Peters, who had been a camper for the past five summers before joining the LIT program, reflected

UPDATES



Pineview gets a new tin hat! Okay, it's really a roof to better protect everyone who sleeps under it. A big THANK YOU to volunteers Paul Dyck, Scott Lorentz, John Nighswander and crew chief Murray Frey. Your generosity and hard work have made an improvement that will last for many years to come.

Thank You - Hidden Acres would not be the place it is without the help of many faithful volunteers. First, we would like to thank those volunteers who serve one of our committees, which include the Board of Directors, the Bowlathon committee, the Chicken BBQ committee, the Property committee, the Building Community retreat committee, and the Seniors' retreat committee.

In addition to these ongoing working groups we have various individuals and groups to help out from time to time, like those from Hillcrest Mennonite Church who came to help with the fall seniors' retreat and the Shantz Mennonite Church group who came out for a workday and put a new roof on the ShuffShak, a coat of stain on Nature Centre and painted exterior doors on the Stonehouse and Pineview.

Regretfully, we have probably missed mentioning some names of other volunteers that deserve recognition. We are truly grateful for all the help we receive.

(Continued from page 3)

on her experience during the end of summer Out Trip as an event that had a big impact on her faith. "Being able to spend the time bonding together and sharing our testimonies made a huge difference. We were given the time to reflect and speak to God. Not only have I learned to trust more in God, but my relationship with Him is stronger from my experiences this past summer".

Alexis summarizes the experience well, "The L.I.T program is awesome! I can't wait till next summer!"

Chris Pot, Program Director

Mark Your Calendar for 2017

Annual General Meeting - November 22, 2016

Family Day Open House – February 20

Bowlathon – March 4

Grandparent & Grandchild Days – March 13 & 14

Spring Seniors Retreat – May 1 & 2

Chicken BBQ Fundraiser – June 13

Family Camping Weekend – June 30 - July 2

Summer Camps – July 3 – August 30

Building Community Retreat – September 8 - 10



THE KITCHENER
AND WATERLOO
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

Thank you to the Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation, The Waterloo Region Record, and the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation Kids to Camp Fund for providing funding for 18 campers this past 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 costs of 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).