



HIDDEN ACRES REVIEW

What Has Been Happening at HAC Lately?

There has been so much going on since our last newsletter that we're excited to share with you. First off, in the fall we made some changes to our staff team. Emily Taylor, now Riegert, expressed a desire to step back from full-time work and is now our part-time Assistant Program Director. As a result of that move, Josh Penfold shifted from focusing on Outdoor Education and now oversees all of our programs as our full-time Program Director. And, because both Josh and Emily live



Our current staff team, minus Kelsey

off-site, we welcomed Cassie Zehr back to camp in a new 8-month contract position called the Summer Camp Director. Cassie will live in the apartment in the basement of the Red Staff House and support Emily and Josh with running summer camp. We also welcomed CC Weber back to camp in the fall to run our weekly CLASP program and she will be working with us over the next 18 months to develop our new LINC (Learning IN Community) programs. You can read more about these new programs on the next page. And, finally, we welcomed Kelsey Heska who has occasionally been helping our housekeeping staff this winter and spring. We are thankful that these changes and additions to our staff team have gone smoothly and for a great staff team who genuinely enjoys working together each and every day.

In February and March, we ventured into new outdoor education territory offering winter programming to local schools for the first time. With funding from the Government of Canada's Community Services Recovery Fund we were able to purchase forty five sets of snow shoes, broomball



Chris, our Executive Director, with our local MP, John Nater.

equipment for twenty four players, outdoor skills gear, and new storage sheds. With all the gear and programs in place we were excited to welcome our first groups of students. There was only one piece to the puzzle missing that was unfortunately out of our control...the weather. While we didn't always have great winter conditions, it didn't stop us all from having a lot of fun. Whether it was converting outdoor shelter building into an indoor architectural challenge, or abandoning orienteering because of winter lightning storms or snow-less snowshoeing, the staff, teachers and students were



resilient and found ways to make the less than ideal situations great opportunities for learning and fun. With one season of winter programming complete we look forward to seeing what next winter will bring.

And lastly, since November, we have received four estate gifts totalling over \$78,000. We are so thankful that they are leaving a lasting legacy at Hidden Acres. We have put two of the gifts to use already, one helped us pay off our mortgage on the Woodhouse Retreat Centre and the second helped us complete the renovations to the basement of the Brown Staff House. The renovations were needed after water damage was discovered in the basement and repairs were made to the foundation. The renovations included finishing the den and converting some of their storage area into a bedroom.

Continue reading on to see more updates on other programs that happened at camp as well as many of the ways that volunteers and organizations supported Hidden Acres since the fall.

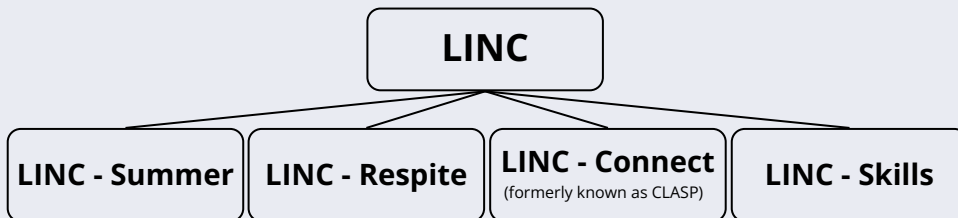
Grandparent & Grandchild Day

This year 19 grandparents and 26 grandchildren came to spend a day together during March Break. The theme for the day was “Discovering God through the Creative Process” with professional potter Mike Vlaming who used his pottery wheel to explore what it means to be made in the image of a creative God. Everyone had the chance to practice their creativity by making their own piece out of clay.



New Programs Coming to Hidden Acres

Since 1962, Hidden Acres has served youth and young adults with special needs in its programs. Our mission drives us to create safe and welcoming spaces and programs for diverse groups of people and CLASP (Community, Life And Skills Program) and SYAC (Supported Young Adults Camp) are examples of this as they help young adults with special needs connect and learn life-skills all while having loads of fun! In March, we received a generous grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (you can read more about the grant on the last page) to support us in expanding the programs we offer these young adults. Our SYAC program won't change but CLASP will get a new name and will be included in the new programs all called LINC (Learning IN Community). The new structure looks like this:



We are really excited that CC Weber has committed to developing these new programs. Stay tuned for more details in the coming weeks and months.

Would You Considering Supporting Hidden Acres?

There are many ways to support the work and ministry we do and help us impact the lives of thousands of people each year:

- donate to Single Moms Camp, camper subsidies, summer camp staff wage support or with a general donation to be used where most needed. You can give by visiting: www.hiddenacres.ca/donate
- come as an individual or coordinate a group to lend a hand with a project, help mow the lawn, tend to the grounds and trails or other work around camp.
- volunteer on a committee or the board of directors. For more information, contact Chris Pot
- help to spread the word and share with your friends and neighbours about what we do
- and, maybe most importantly, pray for us and those who come to Hidden Acres.

Family Day Open House

On Feb 19th the retreat centres and grounds were filled with families enjoying an open house with family and friends. We had about 135 people and 27 volunteers for the day. Whether making pretzels, playing 9 Square, going on a scavenger hunt, snowshoeing and tobogganing or playing a game, there was something fun for everyone.



Spring Seniors Retreat

On April 29th around 45 seniors gathered for the Spring Seniors Retreat. The theme for the day was "Choosing to Live! Choosing to Die?" The day's guest speakers offered information, stories, and facilitated discussion around the difficult topic of MAID (Medical Assistance In Dying). Though a challenging topic, the day was rich with sharing that was vulnerable and touching.



Wish List

- Canoes and lifejackets in good condition.
- Sports balls (volleyball, soccer, football and basketball) in good condition
- Household stove - new or very good condition
- Wooden or metal framed picnic tables
- 10-12 foot plastic slide
- New blankets, quilts and knotted comforters
- Zippered pillow protectors
- Snacks and treats for our summer camp staff

Bowlathon

With 29 bowlers representing 15 churches, we were able to raise over \$28,000. Thank you to our bowlers and everyone who gave. This will help us replace the steps to the Pineview and Hilltop Cabins, purchase new picnic tables and replace some windows in Stonehouse and Hilltop with more energy efficient ones. If you or your church would like to get involved in this fundraiser next year, please contact the camp office for more information.

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.

- **Dominos Pizza in New Hamburg** for offering free pizzas as prizes for the Family Day Scavenger Hunt.
- **Myron Wagler** for repairing our canoe paddles.
- **Tim Schwartzentruber** for Stonehouse refrigerator repairs.
- **Trevor Kropf and Dino Trucking** for donating multiple loads of gravel and helping to deliver mulch for the new playground structure.
- **Nathan & Don Erb and the Property Committee** (Shane Gallian, Matt Jantzi, Brian Ropp, Devon Grainger and Andrea, Mark and Ian Cole) for helping to turn the 'Tree House' in the playground into a 'Play House'. They used a crane to lift the house off its legs and move it to a new location to allow space for the new Log Jam structure.



Ontario
Trillium Foundation



Fondation Trillium
de l'Ontario

An agency of the Government of Ontario
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

We appreciate the support of the **Ontario Trillium Foundation** for awarding us a \$63,300 grant through the **Resilient Communities Fund**. The grant, which spans 18 months, will help us build our resilience and sustainability as an organization by expanding our programs for young adults with special needs. The expansion, which is outlined on the previous page, has already started as we've begun developing the first part which will be called LINC - Summer. We are thankful for the support of CC Weber who helped us write the grant application.



THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR VOLUNTEERS!!

Hidden Acres could not function without the help of hundreds of volunteers each year. From serving on committees and our board of directors, to helping run our Chicken BBQ and Bowlathon fundraisers, to coming for a week in the summer and hanging out with our campers, to working on projects around the camp, volunteers are vital to the success of HAC and key to helping us live out our mission. We simply cannot list everyone who has helped over the last year, but we do want to acknowledge and thank everyone who has lent a hand.

Thank you!