



NATURAL LINKS

MENNONITE CAMPING ASSOCIATION

JOB OPENINGS

CAMP UPDATES

Tel Hai Camp & Retreat, Honey Brook, PA, seeks to hire a Facilities Maintenance Technician. The position requires experience in plumbing, electrical, carpentry skills, and a willingness to learn new skills. Position is full time (year-round) and includes housing and full benefits. To inquire email admin@telhaicamp.org or phone 610-273-3969.

Laureville Retreat Center, Mount Pleasant, PA, seeks a FT Food Services Director, this Leadership Team staff member manages the kitchen and provides delicious, nutritious meals and warm hospitality to 18,000+ guests/year. Position is hourly and includes benefits with option for housing. Qualified candidates will have served a minimum of two years in food service management. In addition, a part-time housekeeper (20-30 hours/week) is needed. Interested candidates should submit a resume and letter of intent to jlham@laureville.org.



Little Eden Camp, chess by flashlight.

Little Eden Camp, Onkama, MI, www.littleeden.org

After having no groups for 6 of the last 12 months we have started to see groups coming back and enjoying Little Eden. We are looking forward to being able to minister to youth and families again and have our family camps be a bit more normal this summer.

Laureville Retreat Center, Mount Pleasant, PA, www.laureville.org

Laureville has been stepping through a multi-year branding process to best articulate who we are, and what we do as an organization. Going forward, while we will remain Laureville Mennonite Church Center as our official 501(c)3 name, we will brand and market as Laureville Retreat Center.



Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp, New Hamburg, ON, www.hiddenacres.ca

There's the saying "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade". Well, I'd like to offer an updated version: "When life throws a pandemic at you, restricting how you can use your camp facilities, come up with creative ways to run new programs that fit within those restrictions". Now, I don't think the new saying will catch on anytime soon, but it was a motto that we used at Hidden Acres last year.

In the early fall, with our retreat centres essentially sitting empty for about six months, we began to creatively think about how we could welcome people to camp and stay within the guidelines that we were given from our local health unit. Around the same time, I had some conversations with some of the parents of campers who have come to SYAC (Supported Young Adults Camp), our camp for young adults with special needs. In those conversations, the parents shared with me about the need for safe opportunities to create community for their young adult children. They were no longer in school, their regular programs were closed, and they were spending a lot of time at home with very little to do. Out of this need, CLASP began.

CLASP, which stands for Community, Life and Skills Program, was an opportunity for young adults to come to camp, be a part of a safe, fun and welcoming community, learn new skills and enjoy great camp activities. It ran every Monday from October to December and then started back up again in February after the lockdowns lifted in our province. Unfortunately, we were forced to end it early due to another round of lockdowns and stay-at-home orders, but when we were together we hiked in the forest, built snowpeople, baked and decorated cupcakes and other delicious treats, learned how to knit, practiced yoga, tie-dyed t-shirts, made crafts, raked the lawn, and so much more!

CLASP also allowed us to provide a practical work experience for one of our long-time summer camp volunteers who has an acquired brain injury. She was hoping to go into her second year of a modified recreation and leisure program at a local college, but due to the pandemic and the shift to online learning, felt that it wasn't a good fit for this year. So, instead of attending classes each day, she came and helped us run CLASP, providing her with hands-on experience leading programs.

So, while we weren't able to welcome families, churches, schools and other groups to Hidden Acres over the past year, we were thankful for the opportunity to try something new and serve these families. We are looking forward to continuing to offer CLASP again in the fall of 2021. - *Chris Pot, Program Director*