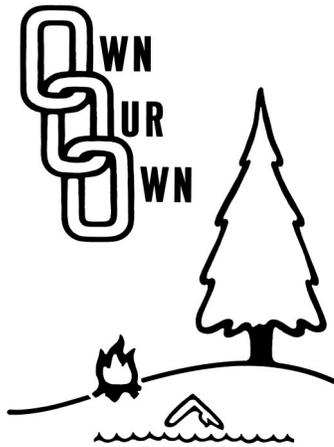




# Join Us: Hidden Acres' 40th Anniversary Celebration and Alumni Reunion

What were you doing 40 years ago? Graduating high school? Getting married? Rejoicing in the discovery of Jupiter's rings? Attending one of Billy Graham's crusades in Nova Scotia, Nashville, Milwaukee or Sydney? Celebrating the invention of the Happy Meal? Pumping 86 cents a gallon gas while wearing your \$200.00 Walkman? Or were you just a twinkle in your parents' eyes at that time?

Forty years ago, the camp's board members were getting plans together to purchase our original 640 acres. Recently I was going through some papers documenting the history of the camp and found a letter from the District Board Chairman dated May 17, 1979. This letter solved for me a mystery I had always pondered: where did the name "Hidden Acres" come from? It turns out the name is older than the camp itself, as the former land owners already called the property by that name!



Own Our Own, one of the original fundraising campaigns to purchase our original 640

Regardless of what was happening in your life 40 years ago, you are receiving this letter because these acres are no longer hidden. God has used them for His glory for 40 years and we think that calls for celebration!

We will be hosting an open house to look back at what God has done, enjoy what we are blessed to have, and look forward to what is to come. The event will be Saturday, June 15th from 1:00 – 8:00pm. The day will include the opportunity for food, fun, and fellowship!

We want you to enjoy some of your favorite parts of camp, whether that be something relaxing like paddle boating at the pond, riding a wagon around the camp, or just taking a walk in the woods. Perhaps you would prefer an activity a little more likely to raise your heart rate like riding the zip line or flying high off the blob. The choice is up to you; the grounds and facilities will all be yours to fully enjoy as you see fit. We will feed you a traditional camp meal at 6:00pm, followed by a special 40th Anniversary Celebration Ceremony featuring present & former summer staff, district staff, directors, and board members.

That day our camp store will feature a lot of new items, including a few 40th Anniversary items. We'll be selling wooden mallets handcrafted by 99-year-old camp friend LeRoy Sigmund. They're made from our own ironwood trees and make a great Hidden Acres souvenir. We'll also make sure to bake lots of cookies!

In the Dining Hall we will have tables set up to take us all down memory lane with old items we have, but we also want you to bring your memorabilia! Do you have camp t-shirts, competition paddles you won, photographs, or a note a camper left you? Please drop them off at the Dining Hall when you arrive, just make sure everything has your name on it.

Our commitment to tradition, Christian community, and the love of God's creation lives on as our Mission Statement says: To glorify God in service to mankind through organizing, conducting, and scheduling Biblical camping and retreat programs that: urge commitment to Christ, nurture Christian character, encourage daily Christian service worldwide, and strengthen family life in a wholesome natural environment.

Come to gather with your camp family, reconnect with old friends and make new ones, and let us share what God has been doing here. Our staff is excited to host you and share all that is new and is to come at camp.

There is no charge for this event, but we do ask that you let us know a week in advance that you are coming: call 515-547-2751 or email [office@hacamps.org](mailto:office@hacamps.org). We welcome and encourage you to make plans to spend time at camp to help us celebrate this special anniversary. Invite your friends, too!

I look forward to seeing you soon.

# Summer Camp Sideline

by Eric Smith

The month of May can be a bittersweet time for a lot of families. There may be big transitions as students graduate from high school to college, or from college to a career. Even smaller transitions like completing a grade and starting summer can bring a wide range of emotions.

The month of May at Hidden Acres will be a bittersweet time for our camp family, and for me specifically. Our first class of students in The Ministry School will be leaving us, and another group of summer staff will be coming in.

Our Ministry School students, Elisabeth, Jonathan, and Doug, have been a great addition to our staff, and it's hard to believe their year at camp is over already! It's been awesome to see their growth over the course of the year. They laid a great foundation for this new gap year program, and have set the bar high for future students. I'm so excited to see where God takes them in the future. It's been an honor to work alongside them during this season of their lives.

As The Ministry School winds down for the year, preparation for summer camp picks up. Our staff of 150 high school and college students has been hired and is excited to spend their summer ministering to the campers that come to



L to R: The Ministry School Community Advisor, Allison Bailey, and Ministry School Students Elisabeth, Jonathan, and Doug.

Hidden Acres.

Our theme for this summer is "Illuminate." We'll be looking at the idea of light and darkness all throughout Scripture, and learning how to follow Jesus, the light of the world. We're praying that our campers will understand their need to go from darkness into light.

As you go through transitions with your family this month, will you pray for the Hidden Acres family? We're looking forward to seeing how God works as we anticipate the start of summer camp!

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# Ministry Corner

by Ryan Graden

"I'd rather be busy than bored!" I heard that saying a number of years ago, and it's come to be a truth here at camp during the spring season. I'm so thankful that our staff has embraced that saying and has been willing to put in some incredible hours to care for the folks that God has brought here over the last few months.

In March we hosted the 29th annual Sportsmen's Retreat, an event filled with four days of fantastic speaking, worship, fellowship, and great food. Shooting ranges were open and busy! Nearly 600 men got to hear the gospel presented loud and clear by our speakers, and I know God will use those truths to change some men's hearts. Next year is our 30th anniversary of the retreat and we are hoping to add some incredible "extras" to the schedule and see a huge turnout for the weekend.

Our next programmed retreat was Just You & Me, Mom! This event is still one of our newer additions, but almost 200 moms and kids signed up. They enjoyed contests, activities, food, and quality time together as a family. Two weeks later it was the fathers' turn for their weekend with the kids at Just You & Me, Dad! Over 220 attended that retreat, and both the moms' event and dads' event have room to grow. We love providing a unique opportunity for purposeful, Christ-centered family time. Please share about these events with

your family and friends and encourage them to attend next year!

We also just wrapped up another Senior Saints Day for adults age 50+. These day events have quickly become some of our staff's favorites. Seniors join us for hymn singing, a delicious family-style lunch, wagon rides, horse rides, crafts, the Giant Swing, and more. Guest speaker Don Long did a wonderful job speaking to the crowd, and we closed the day with pie and a choral performance. The next Senior Saints day will be Tuesday, October 1.

Now we are preparing for our annual Memorial Day Family Camp. There isn't too much room left for housing and camping, so sign up soon if you want to attend. We have great speakers lined up, and we are praying for God to continue to impact people as He always has. We are so thankful for the opportunity to be a part of His ministry through Hidden Acres.

Pray for continued energy and endurance as we finish strong with retreat season and move into summer camp! It's going to be full of God stories and what He's done for people. Thanks for being a part of things here at Hidden Acres.

# Welcome Pals Family!

We welcomed two new staff in May—Jonah & Joy Pals from Mason City. They've moved to the area with their three young children, Aniya, Kip, and Wilder, and are excited to begin working at camp.



Jonah & Joy aren't new faces to the camp family. Jonah served on our summer staff in 2007 & 2008 and worked in areas like maintenance, horse barn, and the tower before interning on full-time staff for a year. Joy served on our summer barn staff from 2007-2009 and also

started managing Hidden Acres' website during that time.

Jonah & Joy married in 2010 and purchased an acreage in Mason City. Jonah worked as a heavy-duty tire technician. Joy worked as a marketing manager at a car dealership for a few years, then decided to stay home with their kids and work as an entrepreneur.

On full time staff at Hidden Acres, Jonah will work on our construction, building maintenance, and vehicle maintenance teams. Joy will serve in marketing and also work at the horse barn during retreats and summer camp.

Join us in praying for the Pals family, that their transition into these new positions would be smooth and that they would find a small acreage in the area to purchase for their young family and many pets (including a goat!). We're thankful to have them here!