

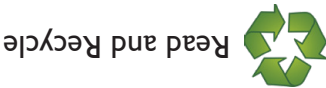
2022 PROGRAM CALENDAR

- January 7-9 - High School Winter Camp
- January 14-16 - Junior High Winter Camp
- February 4-6 - Winter Getaway
- February 18-20 - Family Winter Camp
- April 8-9 - Grand Camp (grandparents+kids)
- June 12-14 - Primary Camp (grades 1-2)
- June 12-17 - High School Camp (grades 9-12)
- June 19-24 - Junior High Camp (grades 7-8)
- June 26-July 1 - Pre Junior Camp (grades 3-4)
- July 3-8 - Junior Camp (grades 5-6)
- July 11-15 - Family Camp I
- July 16-17 - Builders Weekend
- July 18-22 - Family Camp II
- July 25-29 - Just Camp...for Justice
- Sept 16-18 - Women's Retreat
- October 14-16 - Fall Getaway I
- Oct 21-23 - Restoration Retreat
- Nov 4-6 - Fall Getaway II



WE'RE HIRING FOR SUMMER 2022!

See Friedenswald.org/employment to learn more about open summer staff positions and apply today.



Return Service Requested

15406 Watercress Way  
Cassopolis, MI 49031



# The FRIEDENSWORD

Camp Friedenswald

Volume 29, Issue 2: December 2021

*Camp Friedenswald provides people of all ages the opportunity to grow in relationship with God, self, others and nature.*

## Reflection from the director

By Jenna Liechty Martin

As winter arrives and the days grow short, I accept and welcome the opportunity to slow down and to reflect on all the year has held. When I do, I can't help but to release a deep sigh...a sigh that holds far more than words can express...but holds something of these memories...

I remember back to January, when we received snow upon snow, and the pile of plowed snow amounted to a mountain in the parking lot. The mountain turned into an elaborate tunnel system, designed for the camp kids, but big enough for an adult to squeeze in. After watching the kids play for hours on end, I took a turn through the slides and tunnels just before it melted. I remember the joy of playing in the snow tunnel...and I'm grateful for the gift of play. I'm eagerly anticipating the completion of the new playground (see page 3) for the kids, of course.

I remember the joy that May brought, the bright green shoots emerging from land that had been burned in March as part of a controlled burn throughout the prairie, savanna, and woodland areas. I'm grateful for the land, and for all its wisdom.

I remember the warmth of June as twenty three summer staff arrived and gathered together in Mosquito Hollow. As instruments came out, and voices were raised in song, something was awakened that had been dormant for the past nearly two years. Something of a healing balm for COVID-weary bodies and souls was poured out in abundance this past summer, and it was all made possible because of the love of those twenty three summer staff. I'm grateful for the magic of summer at Friedenswald.

I remember August, and how we wondered how 180 hungry marching band campers could be served for a week without the staff who had already gone back to college or work. And

then, fifteen shifts daily were filled by volunteers, all eager to serve in the kitchen, providing hospitality and good food with a smile. I'm grateful for people who have space in their lives to share their gifts and time in service.

I remember the fall months, the rain that fell upon rain, and the new staff who joined us (see page 2) bringing their own wisdom and experiences to share with the Camp Friedenswald community. I'm grateful for the staff, new and "old," who have committed to sharing their lives with Camp Friedenswald during this season, tending and carrying out its mission.

There's so much more between the memories, holding them together. And, in the deep sigh, there's a recognition that God was/is with us. As my six year old child, Henry, recently shared with me, "I think God's farther than the farthest star AND God's closer than the tightest hug." There's something there that seems true and can hold my sigh at the end of this year.

While these dark days hold moments of rest and exhale, there's also energy and anticipation for what is yet to come. Over the course of the next year, the Camp staff and board will be creating and affirming a new strategic plan to follow our Resilience and Sustainability Plan 2022. (You can visit Friedenswald.org/sustainability/ to view our progress.) Imagination and energy from staff is ripe for dreaming. A time of pandemic has raised questions and opened cracks of possibility. As we look back and imagine what is unfolding, I'm eager to see where the Spirit will lead. Along the way, I welcome conversation with you - to hear your dreams and wonderings for Camp Friedenswald.

Until then, may our collective deep sighs be heard and held within the darkness of these winter days.



## Blurbs from the Blog

You can read the full blog posts at [Friedenswald.org/blog](https://Friedenswald.org/blog).



**Titus King, a volunteer from Silverwood Mennonite Church, shares his love of bats and information about the newest bat house at Camp Friedenswald.** Bats migrate when the flying insect population decreases, going south to abandoned mines to hibernate during the cold months. Upon their return migration bats give birth May through June, with both common species producing one young, called a bat pup. Young bats grow quickly and are able to fly within three weeks. The placement of the bat house at the upper end of the lower flat is positioned to catch the first rays of the morning sun. The sun warms the box increasing the chances of bat pup survival.

**Christine Guth, a volunteer from Eighth Street Mennonite Church, reflects on why she chooses to contribute to land stewardship efforts at Camp Friedenswald.** When I volunteer at Friedenswald, you'll usually find me, loppers in hand, removing invasive plants. A love of plants is what first brought me to care about invasive species. In rambling through wild lands, it didn't take me long to observe that some natural areas are bursting with plant diversity, and others have a monotonous sameness. As I learned to identify plants around me, I realized that a lot of the monotony is due to a small number of species introduced from Asia and Europe that like to take over and crowd out native plants... My growing passion has found a happy outlet in Friedenswald's land management efforts.



*Phil Nyce, Christine Guth, Jack DeLee, and Sandi Hostetler contribute to land stewardship efforts.*

**Camp Staff**  
Vicki Archer, *Dishwasher*  
Eric Emerson, *Food Service Director*  
Nicky Foust, *Food Service Assistant*  
Jonathan Fridley, *Facilities Director*  
Andrea Golden, *Bookkeeper*  
Abigail Brunk Greaser, *Program Assistant*  
Emily Hilton-Nickel, *Sustainability Assistant*  
Amy Huser, *Sustainability & OE Director*  
Jenna Liechty Martin, *Executive Director*  
Jane Litwiller, *Program Director*  
Lora Nafziger, *Program Advisor*  
Phil Nyce, *Facilities Assistant*  
Anita & Paul Pawelski, *Guest Hosts*  
Vicky Solano, *Housekeeper*  
Jess Whicker, *Guest Services Director*

**Board of Directors**  
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Todd Kirkton  
Even Miller  
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Matt Troyer, *Secretary*  
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Kendra Yoder

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Moving? Need to update your address? Please let us know!



**Meet the newest staff at Camp Friedenswald!** Pictured below from left front: Lora Nafziger, Abigail Brunk Greaser, Jess Whicker, and (in back) Emily Hilton-Nickel, and Jane Litwiller, all joined the Camp staff in the past few months. Learn more about the experiences each brings to Camp and a little bit about how they'll be contributing to the staff team. For fun, you should know that among them we have a hacky-sack guru, a wild mushroom identification expert, musicians, two former summer staff, and a regenerative farming enthusiast! Read the full blog post to find out more.



**A new book is now available in the Camp Store!**  
**An Alphabetical Hike through the Peaceful Woods** by Allan & Marie Blunt  
Explore Camp Friedenswald's flora and fauna across four seasons and five ecosystems. With multiple collaborative contributors, this full color stroll through twenty-six alphabetical themes (from Amphibians to Zero Waste) is a visual delight and a welcome addition to anyone's coffee table.

## Time to Play! An Introduction to the new playground project

The current playground was constructed in 1987 as a memorial to Martha Graber of Dalton, Ohio. It featured a rope swing hung between two tall trees, a slide, monkey bars, and swings. Over the years, it's been a central place for campers to gather, play, and just be kids! **After over thirty years of swinging, sliding, and running feet, the structure has grown tired and worn, and needs to be replaced.**

Over the past few years, Jonathan Fridley, Facilities Director, has facilitated conversation among staff, constituents, and of course, kids, and listened to their hopes for a new playground. He even involved his own children in the process, making a special point to visit all the playgrounds they could find on family trips. As he watched them play he took notes.

In addition to wanting a playground designed with kids in mind, **Camp staff also felt strongly that how the playground was built and what materials were used were consistent with our values and vision for Camp.** We wanted a playground that would be unique to Friedenswald and reflected who we are.

Thus Jonathan got to work, creating drawings, involving an architect, and other playground experts for input. In the end, a plan emerged that included a **climbing tower stretching twenty-two feet into the sky, helping campers feel as if they're among the treetops and birds.** Slides, climbing elements, and monkey bars are all a part of the plan. In addition, the playground area includes swings and a rope swing.

A special feature of the playground is woven into its construction as **black locust trees harvested from Camp Friedenswald will be used in building its structure.** Black locusts are a natural choice for playgrounds, as they are highly rot resistant, and should remain standing for years to come.

The process of building a playground takes time, especially when it comes to preparing each piece of wood that's used in the process. It takes hours upon hours to prepare each log, removing the bark and sapwood layer (pictured right). While there is still a ways to go before the playground is complete, it's exciting to have the swing set and rope swing installed. Campers enjoyed both this summer!

The total cost of the playground will be over \$120,000. With the generous support of **Camp's Builders** we are nearing that goal with nearly \$90,000 given. **We welcome your support in helping to make this dream become a reality and to complete the playground.** Financial gifts can be given online or by using the enclosed envelope. If you have interest in volunteering, please contact Jonathan at [Jonathan@Friedenswald.org](mailto:Jonathan@Friedenswald.org). Thank you for your support!



*Jonathan Fridley share a replica of the tower design during Builders Weekend 2021.*



*Volunteers Carter Steinmetz, Oliver Fridley, Tate Steinmetz, and Sam Stolpe lend a hand during summer 2021.*



*Youth and sponsors of Eighth Street Mennonite Church volunteered in the construction of the swing set in April 2021.*