

Lakewood Reflections Fall 2014

50th Anniversary



Lakewood Retreat is a testimony of God's wonderful provision. 50 years ago, the Southern Mennonite Camp Association was founded in Sarasota, FL for the purpose of beginning Lakewood Retreat. On March 27-28, 2015 there will be a Golden Jubilee celebration at Lakewood commemorating God's faithfulness and the many people who have established this wonderful ministry. We hope you will plan to join us for the festive event.

For those wanting to take part in the celebration, call the Lakewood office at 352-796-4097.

For any who have pictures of the "early years" please call us or email a copy to info@lakewoodretreat.org. Thanks!

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Administrator's Reflections:

I've never been a big fan of roller coasters. I can appreciate those who enjoy the thrill but there is something about the sudden drops and twists that bothers my sight and gives me a headache. A slow smooth tram ride is more my style. And, so with life. Some are exhilarated by life's ups and downs. Me, some gentle hills better fit my comfort level.

There is a fine line between comfort and complacency. And, God knows how to keep us from becoming complacent—life's roller coaster. An unexpected climb. a beautiful view, a sense of victory. Suddenly a

drop, a twist, a turn, everything a blur, some fear, some doubt. But still on the track. A track of God's design winding us along toward an intended destination as we keep a tight grip on Him.

Been there? Lakewood, too. As we approach our 50 year anniversary and look back there have been many twists and turns, highs and lows. But God has been faithful and He has used Lakewood's setting and staff to turn the course of countless lives. For many, Lakewood seems like a constant, a quiet peaceful place of God's presence. A fun place where cares melt away and the Lord is able to reach the inner places. And in that sense, it is and has been just that. But on the inside where most don't see, Lakewood strains and groans. There is always more to do than can be done. There are always choices of which priority takes precedence, how to solve this problem, and how to make ends meet. That is the challenge of most ministries and that is our challenge today. We are on the wild ride, and we know God is faithful. Your prayers on our journey are coveted.

Bud Goodwin 

Lakewood Reflections



A MINISTRY OF THE SOUTHERN MENNONITE CAMP ASSOCIATION

Fall Festival

Come join us for our fourth annual Fall Family Festival.

On the Friday and Saturday evening after Thanksgiving (November 28-29 from 5pm-10pm), Lakewood Retreat will be hosting live Christian music, popcorn, hay rides, and tons of activities. The cost is \$4 per person or \$12 per family.



WTBN Conference

WTBN Christian news / talk in Tampa, hosts an annual pastor's appreciation luncheon. This year Lakewood Retreat set up a booth at the event. There were over 500 pastors in attendance, and Lakewood was able to connect and share our story with many of these pastors.

Lakewood's booth was so busy that other vendors came after the event to ask us our secret. What an exciting opportunity to share the beauty of Lakewood with all of these church leaders.

Next, Lakewood plans to begin an ad campaign on regional Christian radio so that many more will learn about us. We are seeking support to help us begin this important effort right away.



Join with over 1600 friends at www.facebook.com/lakewoodretreat.

Summer Camp 2014

Summer camp at Lakewood is always a highlight and this year was no different. God was at work in the lives of dozens of campers. It was exciting to see the counselors praying for the campers and for one another. No doubt, many lives have been changed for eternity.

Pastor Lief opened up the Word of God from the book of Jonah. Each day, every session highlighted the theme that Salvation belongs to the Lord. God was at work bringing salvation to this great city of Nineveh. The daily sessions were packed with practical teaching from God's Word.

We were encouraged to see camper enrollment climb 31% to a total of 88 campers this past summer.

Financial Update and Donations

2013 was a record year in both bookings and donations. 2014 looked to be on the same track but suddenly we experienced over \$100,000 of random cancellations in April leaving the summer short. As a result we have had to cut staff hours and improvement progress. We are now surviving off earnings from last year. God has always been faithful and we are confident that He will provide.

As a vital local ministry tool for many churches, we have sent a request to those who use Lakewood for consideration in becoming a mission project for either a one time gift or for ongoing support. Please pray that God would move on these churches to partner with us. For those interested in supporting us in a financial way, please call the office at 352-796-4097.



To receive weekly or monthly email updates, contact us at info@lakewoodretreat.org.



Volunteers Needed

During the winter months, Lakewood Retreat focuses on improving the facilities. Thankfully, each year we have help from volunteers all over the US and Canada. Some of our volunteers stay with as long as 3-4 months. Volunteers from all over the Tampa Bay area come for a day or a week.

Year-end donations are used to provide project supplies. Due to a shortage of funds, this year we expect to focus mainly on low cost / high labor beautification tasks plus completing some projects started last year for which materials are on site.

Would you be willing to send a year-end tax-deductible donation? 100% of your donation gets used for these volunteer projects.

If you feel that you might be able to serve along with the team here at Lakewood, give us a call at 352-796-4097. We would love to have you join us.



Visit www.lakewoodretreat.org for more pictures and the latest information.