



Winter
2019

Little Eden Echoes

From the Director's Desk: *Looking back, looking ahead*

In 1944, Lewis Britsch, Phil Frey, Jesse Short, Harley Nofziger and Sylvanus Lugbill had a vision for a place that would provide a Christian environment for *“children, youth and families to gather – away from their daily routines – to relax, recreate and re-energize themselves”* (Little Eden archives). Their objectives in purchasing Little Eden, in northwest Michigan on the shores of Portage Lake, were twofold: *“1) Christian Fellowship – For boys and girls, Christian friends and families from various communities and for parents and children to really learn to know each other; and 2) To win boys and girls, men and women to the Lord, Jesus Christ”* (Little Eden archives).

This year marks 75 years for that vision. As we look back, these five men had tremendous faith in a time when there was uncertainty, financial difficulties and a worldwide war. What they did has had an incredible impact on the lives of so many individuals and families over the years. Families who have been coming to Little Eden for three and four generations have been blessed by their vision.

What began as families coming with their children has with time become parents, children, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, cousins, second cousins, and even great grandchildren all attending together. These families who come year after year develop a closeness – a fellowship – with each other that many other families don't get to enjoy. Their relationships are strengthened because of their time at camp. Even more so, they (parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles and cousins) have the opportunity to exemplify faith and speak truth into each other, especially to the young people in their

The camp entrance in 1946



lives because of time spent together. The early objectives of Christian fellowship and winning boys and girls, men and women to the Lord and the vision of a providing a Christian environment where

families can vacation together and grow their relationships with God and each other have been fulfilled. There is a visible difference in the lives of many.

This is part of what motivated families over the years to come back year after year and what continues to motivate the camp board as we look to the future. The question has been asked many times, *“What do we need to do now so that this ministry can continue for the Little Eden families for this generation, the next generation and the one after that?”*

We also see this desire in the next generation of young people graduating from high school and college who put their names on the waiting list (some the very day they turn 18) in hopes that when they are married and have a family, their family can have the same experiences they grew up with – coming to Little Eden, a place set aside as a Christian camp with that Christian environment to vacation in, surrounded by parents, grandparents, aunts and uncle and cousins.

As we look ahead to the years to come, it is important to pause and look back at our history. In 2019, our 75th year of ministry, we will take time to reflect on our past. In each of the newsletters this year, we will include an insert highlighting our heritage. In this edition, we feature an article written in 1965 by Roy Koch which talks about what motivated families to keep coming back to Little Eden year after year. Much of what was written then is still true today!

And this fall, we will hold a **75th Anniversary Dinner on November 9 from 6-9 pm at Sauder Village Founder's Hall** in Archbold, Ohio, for an evening of thanksgiving, celebration and praise. Save the date now and watch for more details as the year progresses.

And as we pause to look at the past and continue to look to plans for the future, let's remind ourselves of why we are doing so – so that the Little Eden experience can continue to 100 years and beyond!



Little Eden welcomes Joel Faber, *grounds & facilities*

Little Eden Camp is pleased to announce its newest staff member, **Joel Faber**. Joel started in mid-October as the **Grounds and Facilities** person. He is passionate about Christian camping and is excited to be a part of the Little Eden team on a full-time basis. Some of you may already know Joel as he volunteered and worked part-time at Little Eden in the past.

He comes to us most recently from Grace Adventures, another Christian camp in Michigan, where for the last three years, he was responsible for the maintenance and grounds at their Dunes Harbor Family Camp facility and assisted with maintenance at their other two facilities - main camp and Paradise Ranch. Joel is also a certified mechanic through both Ford and Chrysler and has a degree in automotive technology from Community College of Allegheny County. He is well-rounded in grounds and facilities maintenance as well as engine repair.

In his free time, he enjoys the outdoors (hiking, biking, swimming, hunting, fishing, boating, snowmobiling, dirt biking and more), going to the races and working on cars.

Joel who came to Little Eden engaged, was married to his wife, Megan, at camp on November 16. Megan is working for Munson Healthcare - Manistee Urgent Care and Walk-in Clinic and is pursuing a degree in nursing at West Shore Community College.



**Joel & Megan
were married at
camp in November**



Waiting List Postcards went out in the mail recently. Please send your postcard back prior to March 1 so we know whether you would like a call this year for an open cabin, lodge room or campsite. If you won't be attending camp, consider sending your membership dues in as well, which are due by September 30 of each year.

Benefits of being a member include being listed in the Annual Report and being able to receive a copy of the report, as well as receiving all of the newsletters and information about the camp. Members are also eligible to serve on the Board of Directors and vote at the Annual Meeting. Permanent reservation holders and those on the waiting list must be members to retain their spot. Annual membership is \$35 per person.

Permanent reservation holders must respond by March 1

Just a gentle reminder that after many years of grace, last year the board unanimously approved strict adherence to the **Permanent Reservation Policy**, which states, "**All permanent reservation holders (Pre-family 1 through Lifetime Activities) must respond by March 1.**"

Response was great last year and is so far this year as well. Thank you to all permanent reservation holders who have been diligent in getting their reservations back in a timely manner! We greatly appreciate it.

When you respond that you are coming, you will receive a confirmation postcard or email from the Little Eden office within a week or two. If you do not receive a confirmation,

please contact Kathy at 231-889-4294 to ensure we received your reservation response.

Those who haven't responded by February 20 will receive a phone call reminding them of the upcoming March 1 deadline.

Those who have not responded by March 1 will be notified that their 2019 reservation has been cancelled and their spot will be made available to someone on the upgrade or waiting list.

If a permanent reservation holder responds after March 1 and a cabin or lodge room is still available, they will be given an opportunity to reserve one of those spots.



Why They Keep Coming Back to Little Eden Camp

75th
ANNIVERSARY
EST. 1944

“I t is something of a family tradition for us. Almost every year we arrange to meet relatives who do not live in our home community at camp where we have time to enjoy activities together.” This is only one of the reasons the Dave Lehman family of Elkhart, with six children ranging in age from one to eleven, return to Little Eden Camp summer after summer.

By Roy S. Koch (written in 1965, the 21st year of camp)

Little Eden Camp is located on beautiful Portage Lake about fifteen miles north of Manistee, Michigan, and a short two miles from Lake Michigan. Every year dozens of families from Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Pennsylvania and other states as well as Ontario, speed over the good Michigan roads all directing their aim at the cozy camp where Christian fellowship and wholesome recreation await them.

The family coming to the camp for the first time finds the winding road among the acres and acres of cherry, apple and peach orchards a good preparation for the camp welcome just a short distance farther along. Summer homes along winding Michigan 22, bobbing boats on Portage Lake, and the vacation atmosphere in nearby Onekama set a proper psychological mood for the rustic Little Eden Camp sign at a sharp bend in the road.



When you drive through the gate between the heavy stone pillars you instinctively feel like Miles Pletcher from Goshen, Indiana, that Little Eden Camp is *“a good place for a vacation.”* An old rowboat, retired from active duty on the lake and now spending its golden age years as a flower bed in front of the rambling porch of the camp hotel, might suggest that this particular vacation spot is for retired people, but such is not the case.

“Why did we come?” asked Ken Stevanus, a busy pastor in Indiana, *“because Robert Masts recommended it. We wanted to go some place in a scenic area from which we could go to see the sights. No, we have not been disappointed.”* How many other families have come to Little Eden because someone recommended the place to them no one knows.

Fred and Anna Yoder from Wooster, Ohio, demonstrated some broad appreciations when they said, *“We like Michigan in general, and Little Eden in particular.”* Maybe their praise was tinged with special appreciation because they saw how enthusiastically their sixteen year old son, Fred, handled the sailing boat made available to campers without extra charge.

“The nature paths, too, are a place for us adults to shut out all but God’s real and true handiwork,” continued Fred. Many others share their sentiments. From the rambling central lodge inviting paths lead in all directions. One may invite the camper over the rustic bridge spanning the artificial lake of crystal clear water from which rises a miniature fountain. Others may lead past the old wooden water wheel perpetually cascading its clear liquid into the stream below or out to the cottages which campers call ‘home’ for a week. More careful observation reveals no less than two waterfalls and six rustic bridges spanning the turbulent little stream that finds its way through the center of the camp.

Nature loving campers will be able to identify the quaking aspen, the white birch, cedar and spruce, tamarack, maple and oak trees. Little wonder that one camper who returns year after year said, *“Little Eden Camp is a well-kept ‘Garden’ spot where communion with God is a natural response amidst the unspoiled beauties of nature.”*

Appreciates the Cottages



“We always stayed at one of the new cottages because I could cook for the family, thus making it cheaper,” said Mrs. Ralph Krabill from Paris, Ohio. A casual walk over the grounds illustrates vividly how the great varieties of cottages meet the needs of the campers. Their very names are inviting: Wel-Com-In, Heart’s Desire, Idle-A-While, Brookside, Linger Longer, Whispering Winds, Shady Nook and Sunset to name only a few. The sounds of laughter from one cottage, the lazy plume of smoke rising from the chimney of another and the inviting

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Why They Keep Coming Back to Little Eden Camp

75th
ANNIVERSARY
EST. 1944

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lounge chairs beside still another amplify the testimony of the Bill Pletchers from Elkhart, Indiana, who said, *"We like the privilege of cooking breakfast in the cottage and having friends over in the evenings, and the fact that the cottages have facilities for this."*



Meal being served in 1946

But this is not to say that the cooking at the central lodge is something for which to be apologetic of that the staff is not friendly or helpful. No indeed. *"We enjoy the excellent food prepared by the staff and served in the dining room,"* said one lady. *"We have enjoyed seeing some of the old faithful on the staff, Ella Beck, the Shorts, as well as learning new ones,"* said another. *"They generally have very good and likeable personnel,"* said still another.

Good for Family Fellowship

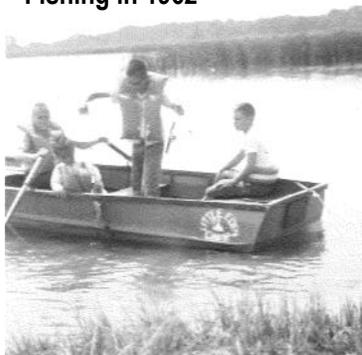
Howard Blosser, a chemist from Dayton, Ohio, summarized their week at Little Eden with this testimony, *"Our boys enjoyed the whole week immensely."* And why shouldn't they?

They could climb into one of the numerous boats always available free to campers and go fishing with their father, or join other enthusiastic youngsters in the craft classes, or go splashing and swimming in the lake.

A week at Little Eden is a highlight for the whole family. *"We enjoy our vacation as a family at a church camp,"* said Dave Ebersole from Sterling, Illinois,

who has brought his whole family to Little Eden year after year. They always drink fresh tea from the mint that grows along the creek on the grounds while they are at camp. But the camp also serves well for special family circumstances.

Fishing in 1962



"Little Eden is an especially welcome haven for a widow who usually finds that vacationing brings numerous problems in fulfilling the interests of child and parent alike," said Mrs. Arlene Shipley from Sterling, Illinois.

Enriching Personal Relationships

One of the greatly appreciated parts of vacationing at Little Eden is the personal dimension it contributes to those who go there. *"We enjoy the close fellowship with other Christian friends"* is the testimony of the Carl Nofzigers from Wauseon, Ohio. *"We are still exchanging greetings with friends we made at Little Eden,"* said the Krabills. *"Fellowship with those of kindred minds in a restful atmosphere is one of the primary reasons I enjoy vacationing at Little Eden,"* said Arlene Shipley.

The Best is the Spiritual Lift

But again and again vacationers love to talk about the spiritual uplift they receive from a week at Little Eden. *"We particularly appreciated the spiritual tone Little Eden gave the vacation,"* said the Blossers. *"We enjoy the evening meditations around the campfire or in the lodge. These help us to experience wholeness in our recreating experience. We have no desire to vacation from God,"* added the Dave Lehmans. *"We like the Christian emphasis and fellowship,"* said the Dr. Pletchers.

This Christian dimension of vacationing at Little Eden permeates every part of the program. It is experienced, of course, in the formal devotional periods. But it is no less present on the tennis court, in the horse-shoe, ping-pong, or volleyball tournaments, on the exciting canoe trips, amid the din of family-style dinners or at the amateur 'world series' with a neighboring camp.

Dave Lehman summarized the advantages of a week at Little Eden Camp in this way, *"Little Eden Camp offers a much more complete vacation than we could have traveling extensively, camping with our own equipment for cooking and sleeping, or even renting a cottage at a nearby lake where we would not have dining room and recreational equipment available."* 



Winter Golf Scramble & Dinner: February 13
Love to golf in a warm climate with Little Eden friends? Join us at the **Highlands Course at the Meadows Golf Club** in Sarasota, FL with dinner to follow at **Der Dutchman**. For more details or to sign up, contact Wayne Lambright ASAP at 574-536-6375.

President's Day Weekend: February 15-18
The long weekend makes it a great time to come to Little Eden to ski, skate, sled, ice fish (it's also **Michigan's Free Fishing Weekend**), snowmobile, snow shoe, participate in Winterlochen at Interlochen, Betsie Bay's Frozen 5K, Crystal Mountain's Paintball Biathlon or just relax at camp. Cabins are available and food service is being offered.

Family Camp Reservations Due: March 1
Permanent reservations for Family Camps & Waiting List postcards are due.

Scrapbook Retreat: April 11-14
We still have room for you—download a brochure at <https://www.littleeden.org/scrapbook-retreats.html>

Work Weekend: May 16 - 19
Help with spring cleaning, building projects and repairs as we prepare camp for the summer.

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Junior High Youth Camp: June 9 - 14
(completed 6th, 7th & 8th grades)

Boys & Girls Camp: June 16 - 21
(completed 3rd, 4th & 5th grades)

High School Camp: June 16 - 21
(completed 9th, 10th & 11th grades)

Download Youth Camp Registration Forms at www.littleeden.org or contact the camp.

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Pre-Family I Week: June 8 - 15
- No resource person or camp program.

Pre-Family II Week: June 15 - 22
- No resource person or camp program.

Genesis Week: June 22 - June 29
Sarah Short of Archbold, OH

First Family Week: June 29 - July 6
John Schmid of Berlin, OH

Christian Fellowship Week: July 6 - 13
Jeff Reichenadter of Indianapolis, IN

Home Builders Week: July 13- 20
Jeff Polen of Applecreek, OH

Christian Business/Prof. Week: July 20 - 27
Cal Emerson of Owosso, MI

Second Family Week: July 27 - August 3
Tim Miller of Naubinway, MI

Farmers Week: August 3 - 10
Bill Holsopple of Archbold, OH

Rest & Relaxation Week I: August 10 - 17
Gary Waterson of Benzonia, MI

Rest & Relaxation II/Home School Week: August 17 - 24
Tyler Hartford of Goshen, IN

Lifetime Activities: August 24 - 31
- Biking, Hiking, Relaxing, Fishing, Beaches
- No food service, resource person or camp program.
Enjoy any of the above activities or just come to enjoy Little Eden during a quieter week of the year.

Golf and Fellowship Week: August 31 - September 7
To be determined

Quilting Week: September 8 - 13
Carolyn Snyder of Archbold, OH

Enjoy quilting or just come enjoy Little Eden in the beautiful fall. This will be Carolyn's last year - quilter Cynthia Denlinger will be our resource person in 2020.

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Fall Work Weekend: October 17 - 20
Annual Meeting on Saturday, October 19

Fall Scrapbook Retreats: October 24-27 & October 31-November 3
We still have room for you in the October 31-November 3 weekend - download a brochure at <https://www.littleeden.org/scrapbook-retreats.html>

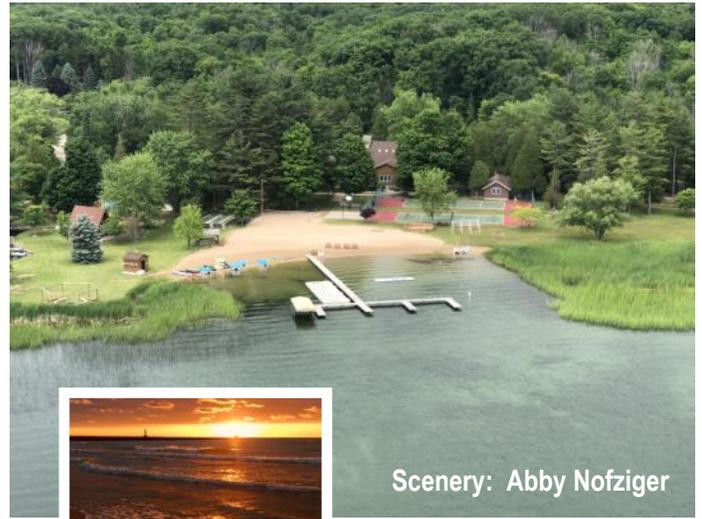
Little Eden's 75th Anniversary Celebration: November 9
Save the date for our **75th Anniversary Celebration** to be held at **Sauder Village Founder's Hall** from 6-9 p.m. This will be an evening of thanksgiving, celebration and praise. More details to come in future newsletters and at camp this summer!

2019 Events, Family Camps & Summer Programs

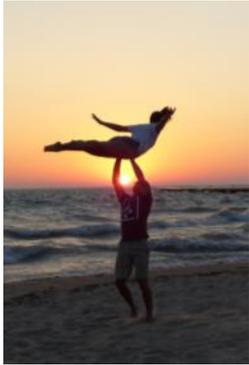


Photo Contest Winners

Thank you to everyone who submitted pictures for this year's **Little Eden Photo Contest**. We had so many great photos to choose from! Pictured to the right are the winners of **\$25 gift certificates** to the **LE Gift Shop**, and shown below are a few of the many photos submitted. 🌲



Scenery: Abby Nofziger



People: Sarah Short

Annual Reports are now available.
You may request a copy by:

- Calling the camp at 231-889-4294
- Emailing office@littleden.org
- Go to <https://www.littleden.org/annual-meeting.html>

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