

WOOD BOX



2024

Annual magazine for and by
Friends of Silver Lake



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Here We Grow

Like a sapling planted in the soil, here we grow our roots, connecting us to all of those who walked before us.

Though you may not see it, all of our stories are intertwined, leading us here together in this special place.

We walk together on this journey, spreading peace and love around us. Looking into the lake, may we listen to the songs of nature around us, feeling our connection to the earth and trees and water.

Watch the sunset as we close the chapter of today, and look into the beauty that the future will bring.



FRIENDS OF SILVER LAKE

The Friends of Silver Lake are donors, volunteers, staff, alumni, camper parents, and anyone wanting to hear what's happening at SLMC. This emailing list shares camp news, fundraising initiatives, work weekends, retreats, and more. Our Wood Box newsletter is the only paper mailing per year. If you would like to be added to the list (or unsubscribe), email fun@slmc.ca with your current contact information.

Please pass this year's Wood Box along to neighbours or family who may be interested in SLMC programs!

Everybody Look At The Clouds!



The one sentence I use to describe my love for camp is:
“Everybody look at the clouds!”

Many are aware of my admiration for clouds sometimes interrupting after-dinner games. This sentence encompasses everything meaningful to me about SLMC. Usually, I would say this whenever there were beautiful skylines across the field, or at the dock.

I think this sentence has many parts to it that represent SLMC's impact on me. First, it is an interjection. Camp can sometimes be a very busy place with people doing many different things all at the same time. Taking the time to appreciate the nature around us has been a gift given to me by camp.

The clouds themselves represent the nature and beauty of SLMC. Before going to camp, I had not spent time in the wilderness or had gone on outtrips. Being in nature, breathing the fresh air, and paddling on the glass-like water are memories that will stay with me forever.

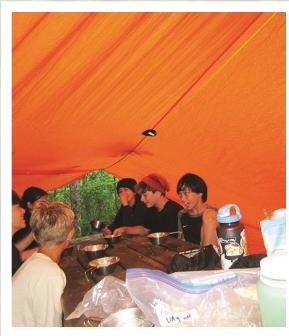
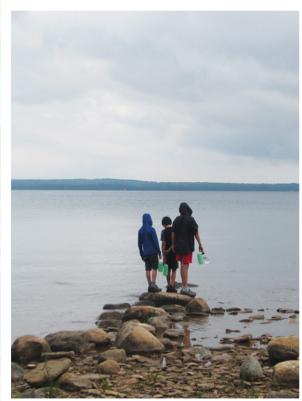
This sentence is also an instruction. Camp taught me to be a confident leader. Camp taught me how to be a steward of the land and a good role model. As a camper and CILT, I looked up to staff and hopefully, I have provided the same leadership for others.

Most importantly, this sentence involves everybody. SLMC's community has been one of the most welcoming and supportive places I know. I have made memories with lots of different people. I have made lifelong friends and wish to stay connected beyond my time on staff. The camp community, in my opinion, is SLMC's most beautiful element. Going to camp and working here has been transformative for many reasons but the biggest will always be the connections and relationships I made along the way.

I know that now when I miss SLMC all I need to do is take a minute and look up at the clouds.

Jonpier Carvajal, Fifth Year

Summer Outtrip



Reflections On My Canoe Out Trip Experience

"My first week of camp, I went on the Teen X canoe out trip. I really enjoyed the food on the trip. There was always enough for everyone. We had a small group of girls on the trip and we got our own site and we had lots of time to bond. I knew most of my counsellors from last year. It was less canoeing than I thought and the portages were like a break from canoeing. My favourite part was the time we would share all together on the campsite; swimming, fishing, having campfires, and eating. I want to do it again!"

Defne Aydin, 2024 Camper

Overnight Camp



A Song Written at music camp:

See the orange light
it flickers over me
Nights lit up by stars
we sing beneath the trees

all year we wait
until the day when we are

sitting by the campfire
glowing in the dark
together we'll grow like a wildfire
sharing from our hearts

Wind and rain can come
and try to keep us down
even when it's low
our flame will come around

we hope and pray
until the day when we are

sitting by the campfire
glowing in the dark
together we'll grow like a wildfire
sharing from our hearts

sitting by the campfire
glowing in the dark
together we'll grow like a wildfire
sharing from our hearts

**Grace Fast,
Ryan O'Donnell,
& 2024 Music Campers**

Thank You Fifth Years!

Second Home

There's no one phrase or metaphor that can properly encapsulate my time at Silver Lake. Camp is often likened to a "second home" by many campers and staff, and while I couldn't agree more, I feel it is important to explain what exactly that means.

For me, camp has felt most like home when I have felt the love that the Silver Lake family has for one another and for the space we share. Small acts of kindness are what tie this place and these people together, always ready to lift one another up and step in wherever is needed.

It is these small acts of kindness and the support they have given me that has made Silver Lake a second home for me. I am forever grateful for everyone who has supported me in both big and small ways during my time at Silver Lake, and I hope I can continue to show my love and gratitude for this community going forward.

Thank you, Silver Lake.

Isaac Weber,
Fifth Year



Fifth-Year Staff

Jonpier Carvajal, Evelyn Rowe,
Isaac Weber

Thank You Volunteers!



Thank you, Barb Lemont

For 24 years, Barb has been the heart and soul behind the cleanliness at Silver Lake. Her attention to detail ensured that every corner of the camp, from the bustling dining hall to the serene retreat centre, remained clean and welcoming.

Barb's dedication never went unnoticed; guests, staff, and school groups alike have consistently praised the conditions that made their stays comfortable and enjoyable.

In addition to cleaning, Barb also drove buses or vans full of campers and staff, greeted rental groups, cooked, and volunteered along with her family.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude and best wishes in her retirement. Her legacy of care for Silver Lake will long be remembered and appreciated by all who have had the pleasure of experiencing our camp at its best, thanks to Barb's dedication.

Spring & Fall 2024

Newcomer Family Holiday

Newcomer Family Holiday is a weekend retreat for families that are new to Canada within the last three years.



Family Camp



Work Weekend



Outdoor Ed



Indigenous Land-Based Learning Program

The Land-Based Learning Program is an onsite, one-semester curriculum for Indigenous high school students.

The Program is designed in partnership with the local school board and with Saugeen First Nation.

Students receive high school credits through outdoor education



Summer 2025

| Dates | Week | Overnight Camp | Day Camp | Hike & Canoe Outtrips | CILTs |
|------------------|------|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------|
| June 29 - July 1 | 1 | Mini Camp (6-10) | Sauble Beach, Hanover, Kitchener | | CILT 2A |
| July 1-5 | 2 | Camp 1 (6-10) | Sauble Beach, Hanover, Kitchener | | CILT 2A |
| July 6-12 | 3 | Camp 2A (9-14) | Sauble Beach, Kitchener | Young X-2 Nights (9-12) | CILT 2A |
| July 13-19 | 4 | Camp 2B (9-14) | Sauble Beach, Leamington, Kitchener | | CILT 2B |
| July 20-26 | 5 | Camp 2C (9-14) | Sauble Beach, Hanover, Kitchener | Adventure X-3 Nights (11-14) | CILT 2B |
| July 27 - Aug 2 | 6 | Teen Camp (13-16) | Sauble Beach, Kitchener | | CILT 1A |
| Aug. 3-9 | 7 | Sports Camp (8-12) | Sauble Beach | Teen X - 4 Nights (13-16) | CILT 1A |
| Aug. 10-16 | 8 | Camp 3 (8-12) | Sauble Beach, Kitchener | | CILT 1B |
| Aug. 17-23 | 9 | Specialty Camps (9-14) Options: Boating, Music, Food & Garden, Woodworking Bronze Medallion/Cross (13-17) | Sauble Beach, Kitchener | | CILT 1B |

Registration opens Feb. 1 @ 7 am.
slmc.ca/summer-camp

Welcoming Our New ED—Alissa Bender

We are thrilled to welcome **Alissa Bender** as the new **Executive Director of SLMC**. We are so pleased that Alissa, who has been an active and engaged member of our camp community, has joined us in this new capacity.

Alissa brings extensive camp leadership experience to SLMC. She spent the past two summers at Silver Lake as Camp Pastor, and has also served as Spiritual Life Director at Fraser Lake Camp and Camp Pastor at Camp Valqua in Alberta.

Her other SLMC summers have included volunteering in the kitchen and leading specialized camp sessions. She even officiated the iconic chicken wedding that many remember from when the Silver Lake chickens were around!



Outside the camp setting, Alissa was the pastor of Hamilton Mennonite Church for 12 years and associate pastor of Calgary First Mennonite Church for three years. Her name is well known in the constituency having led MCEC committees around youth and capacity building. Young adult ministry has always energized her, especially accompanying young leaders.

Alissa brings collaborative leadership skills and leads with warmth and grace. A person of deep personal integrity, she is a strong communicator who engages well with all ages and brings everyone into conversation.

We are confident that with Alissa Bender's strength and purpose, we are on an exciting new path to a continued bright and successful future at SLMC. We feel blessed and wish Alissa our very best at this new beginning.

Margaret Nally, SLMC Board Chair

| 2025 Retreat Schedule | Dates | Overnight Camp | Date |
|-----------------------------|--------|----------------------------|------------------|
| | Winter | Fathers & Kids | Jan, 17 - 19 |
| | Winter | Women's Retreat | Jan 31 - Feb .2 |
| | Winter | Winter Camp for Grown –Ups | Feb. 28 - Mar. 1 |
| | Winter | Alumni Weekend | March 21 - 23 |
| | Spring | Music Retreat | April 4 - 6 |
| | Spring | Spring Work Weekend | April 25 - 27 |
| | Spring | Newcomer Family Holiday | May 2 - 4 |
| | Spring | Family Camp | May 16 - 18 |
| | Fall | Men's Retreat | Sept. 12 - 14 |

Fundraising

Grand Paddle and Hike

This year, our Grand Paddle and Hike fundraiser had a record 63 teams and 127 participants, raising a historic \$68,300. Thank you to everyone who helped!

2024 Corporate Sponsors:

- ◆ PeaceWorks Technology Solutions
- ◆ Angela Friesen-Brown, Forest Hill Real Estate Inc. Brokerage
- ◆ Purple Shark Embroidery
- ◆ Millers Home Hardware Building Centre
- ◆ Fawcett Tree Removal
- ◆ MAC LLP Chartered Professional Accountants
- ◆ Barclay Wholesale
- ◆ Herrle's Country Farm Market



Fall Coffeehouse

In September, we hosted our first Fall Coffeehouse fundraiser at 50 Kent Ave. This event also served as a farewell for former Executive Director Karen Cornies. Donations were made in Karen's honour.

Together we raised \$2655!

Thank You, Campfire Builders!

The Silver Lake Campfire Builders are a group of monthly donors who keep the spirit of Silver Lake burning strong throughout the year. Thank you to our 2024 Campfire Builders for their ongoing support for SLMC. [Visit slmc.ca/donate](http://slmc.ca/donate) to join the circle for 2025!

Fun at Camp Campaign

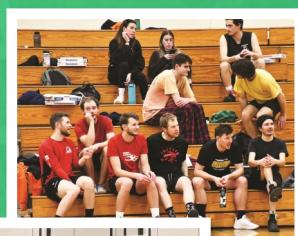
In 2023, Silver Lake launched the Fun at Camp campaign, aiming to raise \$160,000 for a multisport court and treehouse slide. Thanks to the generosity of the Silver Lake community, our camp had enough funds to construct the projects in Spring 2024.

SLMC extends a huge thank you to all who were involved. The sport court and slide brought many new opportunities for community building throughout the summer at Silver Lake.

BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Silver Lake held its first-ever 3-v-3 Basketball Tournament fundraiser at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate. Between eight teams, \$3,565 was raised.

Many thanks to the players, volunteers, and our sponsors (Price Health, Display Ontario, and Dominos) for making our first basketball tournament possible and a success.



New Multi-Sport Court

This past summer, the privilege to offer the multi-sport court as a new component of camp was surreal. Not only was it something that campers were immediately keen to use, but the quality and skill-adjustable nature of the court meant that it served as a centre of meaning for all ages, across all weeks. This was especially true in Week 6 of the summer, when the vision of learning through sport was realized through Sports Camp. An overwhelming success, made possible by the multi-sport court, Sports Camp brought the summer some of its most passionate, meaningful, and beautiful moments.

Cam Dingman, Staff



Seasonal Giving Opportunity

Consider supporting Silver Lake as part of seasonal giving. Visit the Ways to Give page at slmc.ca/donate. Check out the Silver Lake Wish List there, where you can purchase kitchen supplies, camping & sporting equipment, and other needed products. Lot of different items to choose from on the Wish List!

THANK YOU, KAREN!

This year we said farewell to Karen Cornies who served as the Executive Director at Silver Lake from 2016 to April 2024.

Karen's visionary leadership had a remarkable impact on SLMC and started many initiatives, including offsite day camps, Newcomer Family Holiday, bus transportation to and from summer camp, and our Indigenous Land-Based Learning Program.

During the height of COVID-19, she worked tirelessly to keep the future of camp in good shape.

Karen's impact at Silver Lake will be felt by many for years to come. We wish her the best in her new chapter as Associate Director of Work-Integrated Learning at Conestoga College.



WAYS TO DONATE

To donate **online**, visit: slmc.ca/donate

To donate **by mail**, please send cheques to:
209-50 Kent Avenue, Kitchener, ON, N2G 3R1

Follow SLMC on Facebook and Instagram for updates and fun content from camp!

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Instagram: [@silverlakemennonite](https://www.instagram.com/@silverlakemennonite)



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