

Camp Alexander Mack

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MACKABILIA



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News from the Director

Keeping and Changing Traditions

In the very famous Broadway musical and movie *Fiddler on the Roof*, the main character sings a song about the importance of tradition. He shares that traditions create common space for people to understand life around them, and he is right. However, as the play moves forward, he discovers that too much emphasis on tradition can harm relationships and prevent growth in life.

There have been many traditions I have experienced in my life. Some of them continue—most have disappeared. One of the most enduring traditions is that my wife, Pam, and I begin each day with a smile for one another. That continues; however, because of our schedules, the smile might not take place until the late afternoon. Nevertheless, it is an important foundation of our nearly 40-year marriage.

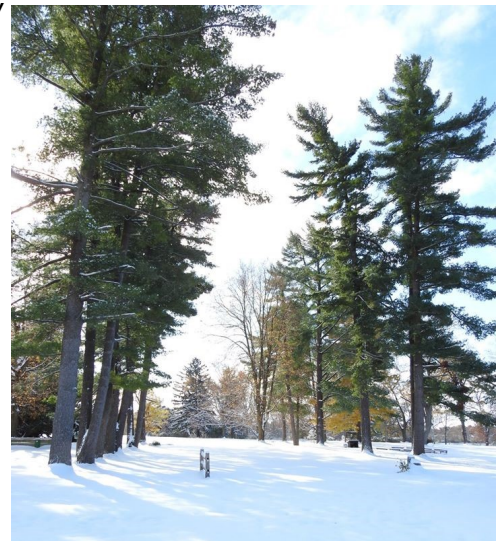
Another tradition that has persisted has been decorating for Christmas on the day after Thanksgiving (a tradition shared with many). As a young family, it was easy to orchestrate. Pam and I were teachers, so we had that Friday off. The kids were young and at home. We have been fortunate for the past several years because our children have lived close, so the tradition continued. This year, however, things have changed. Pam retired from teaching, has a part-time job, and is scheduled to work on Thanksgiving Friday. Our younger daughter, Keighdee, also has to work. Our older daughter, Becky, no longer lives nearby, so a trip to Nappanee on Friday to put up decorations doesn't work for her. Therefore, Pam and I put up half the decorations a week before Thanksgiving and the rest have to go up later.

I missed the gathering, the hot cider, the shared Thanksgiving leftovers, and the help. But, I am more than willing to trade in this tradition. You see, I now have more time to spend with Pam in her retirement. Keighdee is doing well in a job she really enjoys. Becky is working her dream job in Indianapolis and settling in to a new life there. Traditions can be wonderful, but when they control us and our lives, they get in the way of new opportunities and the ability to receive unanticipated blessings.

Psalm 46 begins: *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult* (NRSV). While the psalm illustrates God's protection in catastrophic change, it is appropriate here because many times we can believe that the loss of our traditions are also catastrophic. Isaiah says, *Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?* (43:18-19)

Tradition is a wonderful thing, but it can also hold us back. We need to remember that God calls us to grow, to listen to the voice of the Spirit, to perceive new opportunities and direction. And in the midst of all this change: *God is our refuge and strength.*

Gene Hollenberg,
Executive Director



Nature Nut News

Lifelong Learning



“Learning is a treasure that follows its owner everywhere” -- Chinese Proverb

Professional development is something to look forward to in the camping industry. This year, for me, it has included renewing my Lifeguard Instructor certification, attending the Environmental Education Association of Indiana's (EEAI) annual conference, visiting Camp Swatara for the Outdoor Ministries Association (OMA) annual retreat, attending the Christian Camp and Conference Association (CCCA) regional conference, and completing my Indiana Master Naturalist (IMN) class. These events are more than just learning. They are all about networking, learning from others, and even exploring areas that you don't normally work with. By the way, chainsaw training class was pretty amazing.

My Indiana Master Naturalist class just finished up, and it was a class I never wanted to end. The classes were great, the education events I went to were spectacular, and the volunteering was life enhancing.

Here is what my year with IMN looked like. Classes in Kosciusko County at Pike Lake (background on Gene Stratton Porter), Koinonia (birds), Wildwood ACRES preserve (wildflowers), Round Barn (trees), Pisgah Marsh (geology), Oak Island (forested wetlands), Lilly Center for Lakes and Streams (water quality), and Harrison Elementary School (astronomy). The classes were fantastic, but the volunteer hours reaffirmed my passion for the outdoors. Most of my hours centered around the water doing shoreline planting at Winona Lake, hopping on a raft for water drop doing water quality testing and teaching about watersheds, and teaching fishing during lake adventure days. Other volunteer hours included doing bird surveys in ACRES preserves and removing invasive species in Elkhart County parks.

It was a big year and I wouldn't change a thing. As I look forward to 2020, I am planning my next professional development activities. Advanced Master Naturalist will be part of it as will OMA and helping to plan the EEAi retreat at Camp Mack.

As you look forward to 2020, what is something you want to learn about? Professional development isn't something you need to frown about, dread, or avoid. Use it to explore your passions, and share with me something you've learned. Let learning be a lifelong adventure!

Jessie Kreider, Program Director

Sunny Camp Mack

An Old Friend is Leaving

Camp Mack staff, and especially the facility crew, is about to lose an old friend at the end of December. Pat Reuter is going to retire on December 31st from the Camp Mack staff.

Pat has been a part of the facility crew here at Camp for almost 20 years. She started as part of the kitchen crew and quickly saw the error of her ways, changing to the facility crew.

Pat has always been a believer in and one who carries out Camp's mission statement. She was one who truly helped create "... a sanctuary where people connect with God..." I cannot count the times when I have seen Pat drop what she was doing to help a camper or guest to find their way around. The facility crew has been together a long time and we have lots of stories of life with Pat, but they all center on her willingness to carry out this mission statement. She was always willing to do whatever was needed to be done to make Camp function.

She is a great leader and friend of summer staff. On hot July Saturday afternoons as we cleaned Camp for the next group, she would come alongside her summer staff crew and encourage them. She would listen to them and help them to finish the job of creating this sanctuary for the next group. Pat has always had a heart for people and a willingness to come alongside and help them.

The facility crew is really going to miss our longtime friend, and Camp is a better place because she served here. Blessings on you, Pat.

Galen Jay, Facility Director



Be Our Guest

Cookie Cutter Cookies

One of my favorite Christmas activities is making cookie cutter cookies with my Mom (and one of the best parts is eating the cookie dough). We have a go-to recipe that's lasted for many years, and it's a crowd favorite at the family gatherings. We don't do it to quite the extent we used to, but it's still fun when we spend time baking and decorating together.

Sometimes we take turns cutting out the dough in different shapes and rolling the dough out for the next person to hop in and begin the cookie cutter puzzle. Once the cookies are baking and the house smells AMAZING, then we begin decorating. Making these cookies is much better as a team effort—my sister is often around to help, and we mix up unique colors to the base white. The different colors would be in their own little dishes, each with their own knife. Some were decorated elaborately, while others would be simple and ready for gobbling up.

We have many Christmas celebrations coming up at Camp, and I so enjoy the time we spend getting together as a staff and enjoying each other's company (usually there is delicious food involved, too). Whether it's family, friends, or coworkers you're gathering with this year, I hope that you are able to spend time celebrating Jesus's birth and the love that is shared in the relationships in your life. Many blessings to you and yours, now and always.

Like a cookie cutter cookie is formed with such joy and care,
So too does God form each person with extra love for us to share.

Like the ingredients chosen wisely for the recipe,
So too does God choose the gifts you have to form the person you'll be.

Like the dough that was mixed and molded with tools and careful hands,
So too does God create peacemakers to go out into the lands.

Like the cookie cutters that give fun shapes to the lump of dough,
So too does God personalize us with laughter and quirks to show.

Like the cookie sheet that supports the cookies through oven heat,
So too does God stick by our sides to weather whatever we meet.

Like the cooling racks that give ventilation for setting up,
So too does God remind us to take a breath when we're mad and tough.

Like the sweet frosting that glides on the top of the cookie face,
So too does God sweeten our lives with kindness, connection, and grace.

Like the kaleidoscopic sprinkles dusting the frosting plane,
So too does God paint the world in color from the birds to the rain.

Like the family that comes together to bake and eat and play,
So too does God send Jesus to fellowship with you all today.

Deanna Beckner, Guest Services Director



Mom with part of the
cookie setup 6 years ago



A not very Christmas-y
elephant

Another Way of Giving

Efficient Fundraising

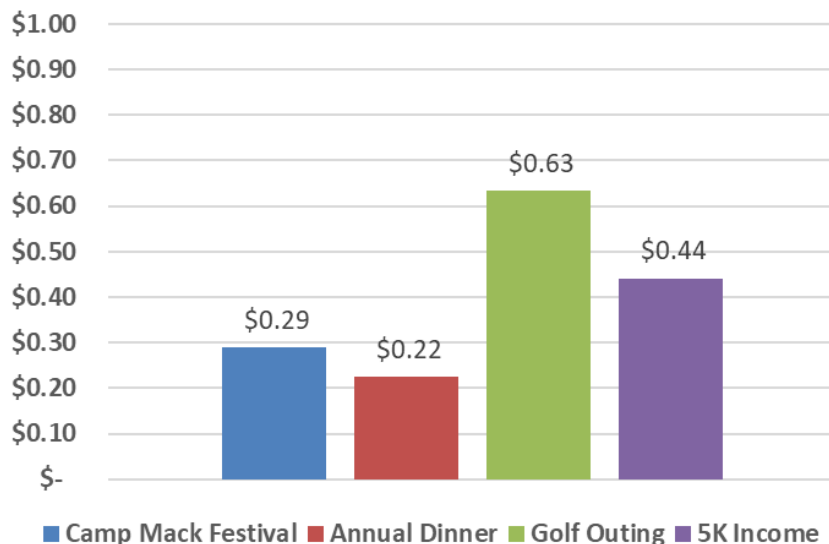
Many of you know that I am a data nerd. I have so many spreadsheets of so many things. Data helps us understand several things ranging from registration trends to cash flow since 2014. In 2014 we switched to Quickbooks for our bookkeeping, so when I analyze our financial data, that is where I start.

Here at Camp Mack, we brought in a total of \$38,283.55 from our fundraising events this year. This is a combined total for the Annual Dinner, 5K, Golf Outing, and Camp Mack Festival. This chart shows how well these events did this year as a percentage of funds earned.

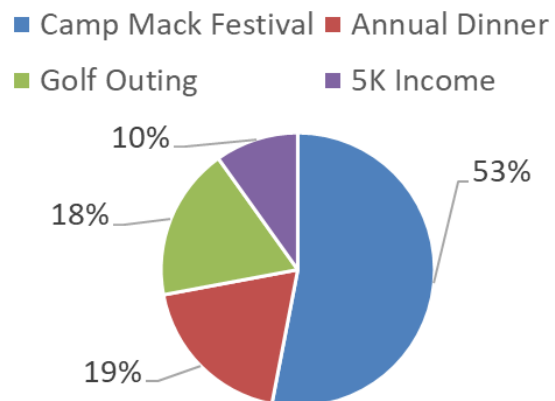
It is great to have four strong events that serve as consistent sources of revenue. However, the total amount made is not the only way to look at a fundraiser. One metric is the cost to raise a dollar, or how much would you have to spend to make 1 dollar? If you had to spend 99 cents, that's bad. If it cost you 1 cent, that's

amazing. The book *The Complete Guide to Fundraising Management* by Stanley Weinstein lists the cost effectiveness of special events as \$0.45 to \$0.55 per dollar. The chart below shows the cost to raise a dollar for each of our events this year.

Cost to Raise a Dollar by Event



Percentage of Funds Raised by Events



When this time of year comes around, I am excited with the fact that the Golf Outing brought its most revenue since at least 2014. However, it has room to improve in how efficient it is. It will always be more expensive since we do not have our own golf course. It's not just about the amount we raise, but the costs to do so. How can we make these great events even greater?

Todd Eastis, Director of Development and Business

Kitchen News

Tomato Soup

As camp slows down and we get into a slower season in the kitchen, I often find myself using lots of leftovers to make soups, sandwiches, and casseroles for staff lunches. My go-to soup is vegetable soup. I can often just throw leftover vegetables or frozen vegetables into a pot and make a pretty yummy soup. But lately, the staff has been raving about this tomato soup recipe. Kitchen supervisor Nathan has made it for some of our groups and they absolutely loved it. Pair it with a warm ham and cheese sandwich, or garnish with croutons. Enjoy!

Tomato Soup

Serves 40

Ingredients:

½ cup butter
1 yellow onion, diced
1 #10 can diced tomatoes, undrained
2 64 oz. cans tomato juice
½ cup sugar
2 ½ Tbsp. chicken base*
1 ½ cups heavy cream
¼ cup basil
¼ cup parsley
Pepper, to taste

Directions:

In a stock pot, melt butter. Add onions, sautéing until translucent.
Add tomatoes, juice, sugar, chicken base, and pepper.
Cook until almost boiling.
Turn off and remove from heat.
Stir in cream.
Add basil and parsley.
Stir and serve.

*Vegetable base can be substituted for the chicken base to make vegetarian.

Vanessa Bohannon, Food Services Director

Serves 6

Ingredients:

1 ½ Tbsp butter
¼ yellow onion, diced
1 15 ¾ oz. can diced tomatoes, undrained
2 ½ cups tomato juice
1 ½ Tbsp sugar
1 tsp chicken base*
1 cup heavy cream (or ¼ cup for less creamy soup)
2 tsp dried basil
2 tsp dried parsley
Pepper, to taste



Education Station Part I

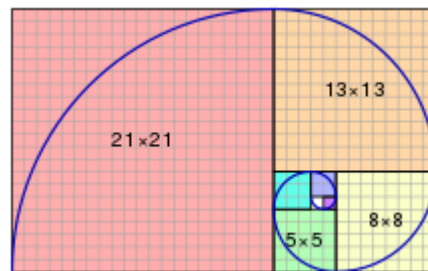
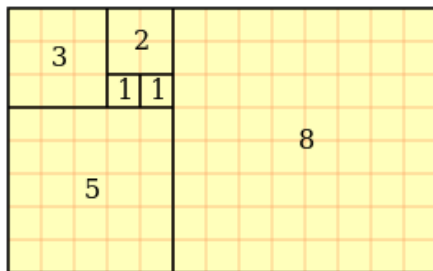
Fibonacci for Thought

Outdoor education is not just about environmental science; sometimes we like to talk about other school topics at camp, and math is certainly one of them. We recently celebrated Fibonacci Day on November 23. About 800 years ago, there was a mathematician named Leonardo de Pisa (though his friends called him Fibonacci). He came up with a sequence of numbers we call Fibonacci numbers:

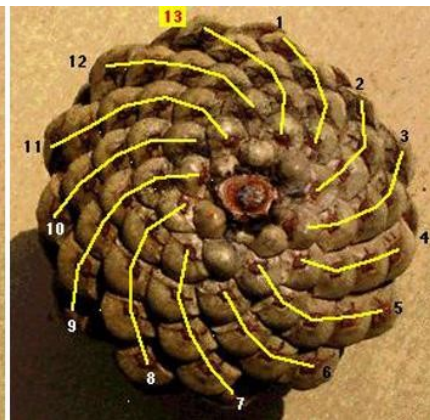
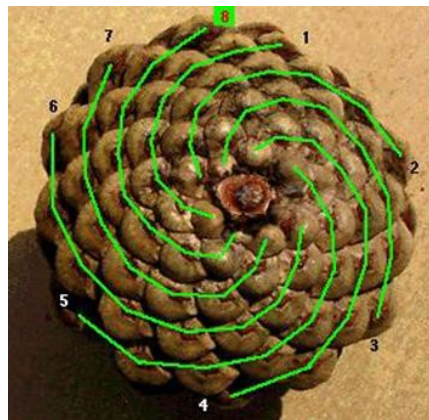
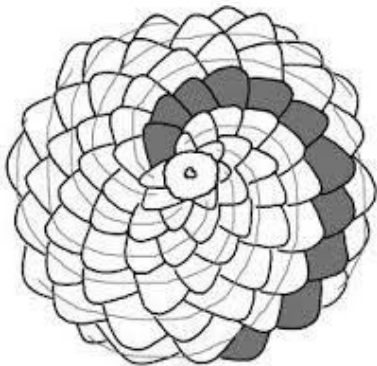
0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89, 144...

To get the next number in the sequence, you add the previous two numbers together. The ratio between one number to the next is 1 to 1.618 (the “Golden Ratio”). Because of that relationship, here’s a weird trick you can do to convert miles to kilometers: take two consecutive Fibonacci numbers, like 21 and 34. 21 miles is the same as 34 kilometers! That’s it! (The exact answer is 33.79, but close enough.) Interesting, huh?

Fibonacci numbers are seen in many other ways too, including throughout nature. For example, we can use these numbers to make grids that when stacked together always form a rectangle. If we draw an arc across each square, continuing it from the previous smaller square, we form a “Golden Ratio” spiral. This spiral can be seen everywhere!

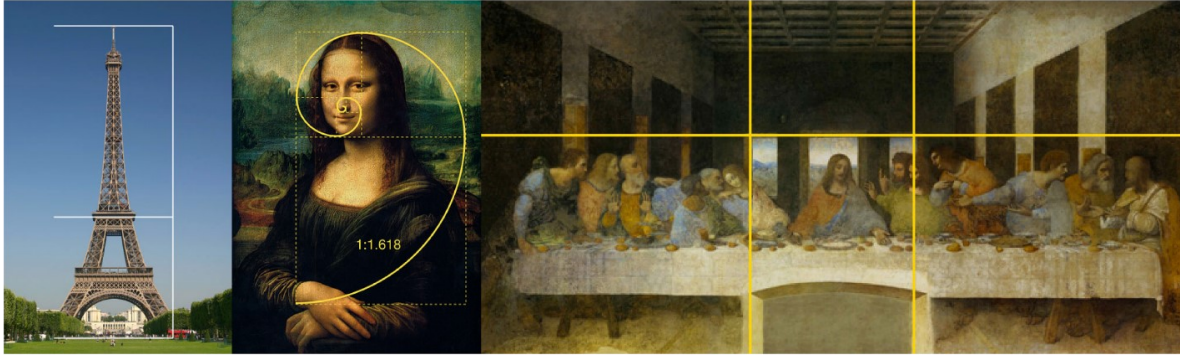


Take a look at a common decorative item this time of year: the pinecone. Pinecone seeds grow in perfect spirals. The number of spirals in one direction of this pinecone is 8 and in the other direction is 13—both Fibonacci numbers.



Education Station Part II

Pinecones aren't the only thing in nature to have this shape: snail shells, sunflower seeds, artichokes, aloe plants, seahorse tails, roses, human ears, crashing waves, hurricanes, and even the shape of the galaxy! Some minerals and bacteria grow in the Golden Ratio spiral as well. People love the perfect spiral so much that you'll find it in art going back hundreds of years and even as a design tool for famous logos today. We can find it in the design of violins as well as the arrangement of music and the western diatonic scale, so it is not just a visual thing!



As you're out and about visiting friends and family this time of year, take a look around and see how many examples you can find of the Golden Ratio and the art of numbers and take time to thank God for the beauty we see around us.



Kristen Werling, Outdoor Education Coordinator

Upcoming Events at Camp Mack

Camp Mack Calendar

December 14	Children's Christmas Party
Dec. 31–Jan 1	New Year's Eve Retreat
January 11	Camp Rep Meeting

Plan now for these upcoming events!
For more information, check out the website or a Camp Mack brochure. You may also call the office at 574-658-4831. Click "Register Online" at the top of the campmack.org website.

Upcoming Get-A-Way Days

***Please sign up for Get-a-Way Days 1–2 weeks in advance—thank you!**

Register now! If there are not enough registrants by the Monday before an event, it will be cancelled. Check Facebook or call Camp Mack to inquire.



December 7—Wreaths and Swags Get started decorating for the Christmas season as you make a traditional Williamsburg Wreath, Christmas wreath, or a swag using fresh greens and fruit to grace your door. Be sure to bring gloves. Meet in Ulrich House Basement. Cost: \$30 (lunch and all materials included). Saturday 9a–3p.

December 7—Christmas Ornaments Gain new skills in the woodshop and watch sawdust fly as you make beautiful Christmas ornaments to grace your tree or give as gifts. Stain, paint, or wood burn your finished creation. Let your imagination be your guide. Cost: \$20 (lunch and all materials included). Saturday 9a–3p.



December 7 and 8—Christmas Cookies Fill your cookie jar for the holidays! Camp provides the ingredients and supplies. You mix the dough, sample cookies, and decorate to your heart's delight.



Best of all, camp cleans up the mess! Choose 4 batches of cookies (each batch makes about three dozen cookies, so you'll go home with about 12 dozen cookies). Meet in the John Kline Welcome Center. Cost: \$45 (lunch and all baking materials included). Choice of 3 sessions: Saturday, December 7, 9a–1p; Saturday, December 7, ~~12p–4p~~; OR Sunday, December 8, 12p–4p.

Please bring an apron and containers to take home your cookies. Cookie choices include: chocolate chip, double chocolate chip, gingersnaps, sugar cookies, monster, oatmeal raisin, peanut butter, snickerdoodles, snowballs (a.k.a. Mexican wedding cookies), and butter cookies (this cookie will be pre-baked and ready for you to decorate!)

Saturday afternoon is filled!

-For more info, check out www.campmack.org/get-a-way-days or email info@campmack.org.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support!

Upcoming Party, Retreat, and Camp Rep Meeting

Children's Christmas Party Join us this winter at Camp Mack for a Children's Christmas Party on Saturday, December 14, from 11a-7p, for all your children ages 5-12. We will have a full day of fun activities with the kids while you relax, shop, or go on the date you have been waiting for. Camp will provide the activities, supervision, and yummy meals for your kids. Program is \$20 per child. Register today by calling the camp at 574-658-4831 or by emailing info@campmack.org. There is limited space for this event.



New Year's Eve Retreat

Returning this year is the New Year's Eve Retreat! The age range has been revised to grades 6-10. Great fun for youth, peace of mind for parents! Why bring in the New Year sitting at home when you can have a great time reuniting with friends from summer or introducing someone new to Camp Mack? This is the place to be counting down the minutes until the ball drops at our very own "Times Square" event. This overnight event is filled with awesome activities indoors and out, live DJs, dancing, Bible study, games, free time, and more. Cost: \$61 per person for early registration. \$71 after December 9. A \$10 campership is available only during early registration.

Camp Representatives Meeting

Talking about summer camp and all the programs that happen at Camp Mack throughout the year starts now. We want all camp reps to attend the camp rep meeting on Saturday, January 11, 2020 at Camp Mack. When you attend, you will have breakfast provided for you and you will receive all the print resources of camp events. Camp staff will let you know about important changes coming to the registration process, and most important, you get to network with other camp reps to see what special things they are doing within their churches.



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Samplers	June 4-6	Eco Adventure	July 5-10
Beginners	June 7-9	Splash	July 5-10
Archery	June 7-11	Samplers	July 12-14
Seekers	June 7-12	Seekers	July 12-17
Grand Camp	June 11-13	Finders	July 12-17
Seekers	June 28-July 3	Followers	July 12-17
Finders	June 28-July 3	Survivor	July 12-18
Youth	June 28-July 4	Samplers	July 15-17
Culinary	July 5-10	Dadirri	July 19-25
Creative Arts	July 5-10	Grand Camp	August 2-4

Save
your date
now!

