



Central
District
Conference

A conference of
Mennonite Church USA

focus

KNOWING CHRIST'S LOVE
ANSWERING GOD'S CALL

DECEMBER 2015

Greening the Michiana Relief Sale

If you have attended the Michiana Mennonite Relief Sale, held in Goshen, Ind., each fall, you may have noticed the appearance of multiple ways to dispose of waste. What began as an effort to lessen the amount of trash from the annual event's pancake breakfast trash headed to the landfill has turned into a sale-wide endeavor.

David Gerber, from Eighth Street Mennonite Church in Goshen, said that Eileen Saner, another Eighth Street attendee, had invited him to help with recycling following the relief sale's pancake breakfast three years ago. Since that first year, the relief sale leadership has added more recycling and composting collection barrels and has purchased all compostable dishware and utensils.

The relief sale's board has been very happy with the results and there has been "very positive feedback at the sale," Gerber said. "Across the board there's been affirmation."



Sarah and Paul Horst of Assembly Mennonite, Goshen, Ind., helped sort through compost at this past fall's Michiana Mennonite Relief Sale.

Next year, Gerber said the committee they have organized the last few years hopes to do more with signage to help people sort waste correctly and understand what products go where.

In 2013, the committee collected 12 cubic yards of recycling, one trailer of compost, and one trailer of cardboard. In 2014, they collected 21 cubic yards of recycling, one trailer of compost, and two yards of clear plastic. In 2015, they collected 26 cubic yards of recycling, four trailers of compost, and two yards of clear plastic.

"It's been a passion of mine for a long time," Gerber said about his involvement with the sustainability efforts, mentioning how he helped begin a city-wide recycling program in Hesston, Kan., before he moved to Goshen five years ago.

Gerber mentioned that he and others involved have been grateful for local churches' support and for the involvement of Goshen College and local high school students' efforts. Young people interested in joining the committee's work can contact David Gerber at davidgerber40@gmail.com.



The CDC Reporter will be highlighting Central District Conference congregations and individuals' efforts focused on creation care.

Have a story to share?

Contact the CDC Editor at
marlys.weaver@gmail.com

Living and being on “camp time”

By Jenna Liechty
Executive Director, Camp Friedenswald

As a child growing up, the beginning of a week of camp at Camp Friedenswald begged the question: does registration start at 2 pm Indiana time or 2pm Camp time?

But times have changed and Indiana time and Camp time are now the same time. Yet, while it's no longer necessary to change the watch, I still recognize that Camp time is different. And it is a difference that campers, staff, and all who visit the peaceful woods recognize, too.

On Camp time, phones and screen use are kept to a minimum and days are punctuated by a polar bear swim and singing around a popcorn campfire instead.

On Camp time, watches aren't necessary because time is kept by the sunrise and sunset and the ringing of the bell.

On Camp time, there is space in the day to marvel at the sight of the Sandhill Crane nesting in the fen, to dip your toes in the bubbling stream and to gaze at the glow of fireflies.

On Camp time, the subtle, daily changes in nature are reminders that time is not static, and that there are cycles and seasons in all of creation.

On Camp time, we are invited to simply BE and to dwell in the beauty of God's creation.

After living on Camp time for a weekend, a week, or a whole summer, one feels equally exhausted and renewed -- tired and reconnected. There is an exhaustion that accompanies the experience of living fully in each moment as well as a sense of being most fully alive.

Throughout my first two years as executive director, I've been grateful for the opportunity to hear the stories of people



whose lives have been positively impacted by their experience of living on Camp time.

This past fall, one person shared how his time at Camp Friedenswald was a life-changing experience, where he was invited to “get back to nature” and “to reconnect with his son.”

A former camper and summer staff, Joelle Friesen, from Mennonite Church of Normal, shared that “Camp has given me the opportunity to take breaks from the rush of everyday life and to just dwell in the beauty and peace of nature and community...strengthening my faith and understanding of the world around me.”

I am grateful that for over 65 years Camp Friedenswald has provided people of all ages the opportunity to retreat and to be renewed and reoriented through their experience of Camp time. If you are in need of a retreat, I invite you to the peaceful woods this year to experience life on Camp time. I hope to see you here!

Mark your calendars for the CDC Regional Gatherings

The Central District Conference Regional Gatherings provide a time for CDC congregations to meet with regional neighbors for a time of worship and reflection. This year's theme is “Abounding in Love... Abiding in Grace.”

The 2016 Regional Gatherings are set for:

CDC West Regional Gathering: Feb 13, 2016 at Community Mennonite Church, Markham, Ill.

CDC Central Regional Gathering: Feb 20, 2016 at Faith Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

CDC East Regional Gathering: March 5, 2016 at Emmaus Road Mennonite Fellowship, Berne, Ind.