

2022 Annual Report

Mar-Lu-Ridge Conference and Educational Center

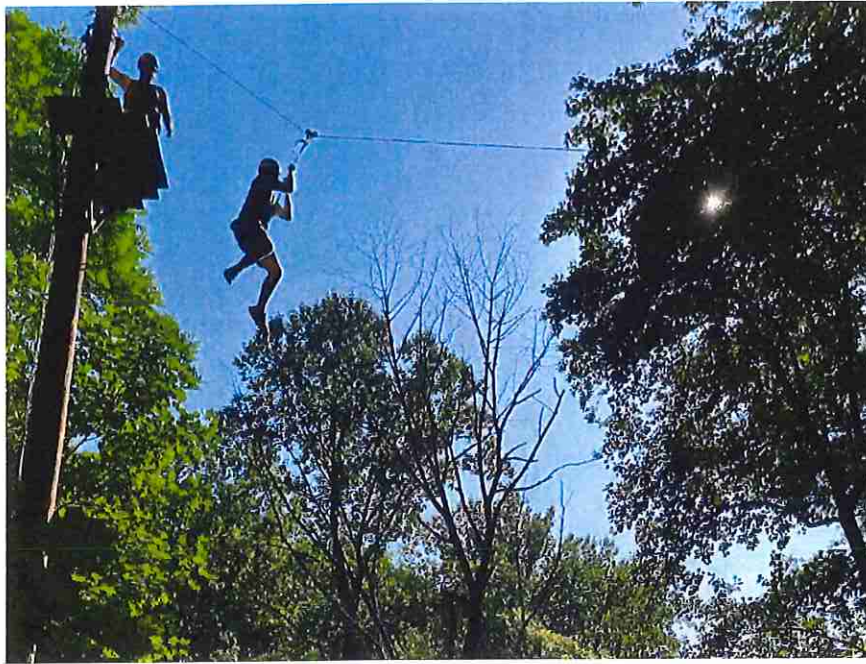
Mission Statement: Rooted in Christ, we welcome all to encounter God's love through sacred hospitality, deepening relationships, and care for creation.

Board of Directors:

Rev. Matthew Fuhrman, President
Rev. Kate Davidson, Vice-Pres.
Dr. Julianne Nelson, Treasurer
Dave Garman, Secretary
Dr. Anthony Kerlavage
Sarah Lefler – Exec. Director
Diana Edelblute – Assoc. Director

Bishop William Gohl
Bishop Leila Ortiz
Madison Baber
Caitlin Muhlbach
Rev. Dan Roschke
Rev. Kathy Ierien

Community – Service - Sanctuary



Zip line fun on a beautiful summer day.

"I thank God each time I remember you." Philippians 1:3

Your prayers and support mean a great deal to us, and we remember you daily in our own prayers. These last 12 years have been full of challenges, especially regarding facilities, but you have remained faithful and we have made great progress. No gift is more important than another, so whether you are a monthly donor, like to support one particular fundraiser, or give to each fundraiser through the year, we appreciate you! Thank you for lifting up the ministry of Mar-Lu-Ridge.

We want to include a special thank you to all those people who have directed their Thrivent Choice dollars to Mar-Lu-Ridge. In 2022, we received over \$6,525.00! This has been a tremendous blessing each month, and we deeply appreciate you choosing our ministry for these donations.

Thrivent Action Teams are another blessing to our ministry. Members sponsored Quilt making supplies for Lutheran World Relief, Cabin boxes for campers, Mailing supplies, Health Kits supplies, and Cabin flooring supplies. Thank you for sharing your generosity!

We enjoy a strong partnership with the DE MD Synod and the Metropolitan DC Synod of the ELCA. Groups associated with these synods utilize our facility for meetings and retreats, as well as send youth to summer camp. Additionally, both synods contribute financially to help meet the needs of our ministry. We are grateful for the support of our Bishops: Bishop Leila Ortiz (Metro DC), and Bishop Bill Gohl (DE MD) for their prayers and counsel as we strive to improve and increase the ministry of Mar-Lu-Ridge.



The Building Block Society

Members of the Building Block Society have pride in the rich history of Mar-Lu-Ridge and are committed to a vision of its continuation as a part of God's tomorrow. We thank and recognize the following people who have chosen to include Mar-Lu-Ridge in their planned giving strategy:

Rev. Gerry and Mrs. Elizabeth Rickel
 Mrs. Joan Orso*
 Dr. Monica E. Yost
 Rev. Darrell and Mrs. Mary Layman
 Mrs. Ilona Ries*
 Mrs. Phyllis Nichols*
 Mr. Thomas Bikle
 Anonymous
 Rev. Chris Ramsey*
 Ms. Edith Robson*
 (*deceased)

Anonymous*
 Rev. Eric and Rev. Wendolyn Trozzo
 Anonymous
 Ms. Carol Johnson*
 Rev. Donald and Mrs. Miriam Keyser
 Mr. Mark Huffman
 Mr. David and Mrs. Judy Price
 Mrs. Sandy Banko
 Mrs. Margaret Powers*

From the President of our Board of Directors:

As I write my last President's Report for Mar Lu Ridge's Annual Report, it is the weekend of Transfiguration of Our Lord Sunday: a day in the liturgical calendar where we recall a mountaintop experience between Jesus and some of his closest disciples (and through them God's Church) as God's glory and transformative grace is revealed through Christ Jesus. For Peter, James, and John, it is a moment that was unexpected. For the Church, it is a reminder of whom we serve and who it is that calls us to service for one another.

As I reflect over the last several years that I have had the privilege to serve as President of the Board for Mar Lu Ridge, it has brought unexpected moments where I was able to witness God's grace and goodness found in the faithfulness of those dedicated to the work of the Gospel in the context of Outdoor Ministry. The faithfulness of the staff and volunteers has been inspiring, and I consider it a blessing to have had an opportunity to serve alongside some extraordinary leaders in the care and stewardship of this mountaintop community.

There is a commitment to the work of the camp and its ministry of hospitality, Christian community, faith formation, and care for the environment that runs deep and always rises to the occasion of whatever is needed. To know and work with Mar Lu Ridge and its mission, is to see and know a spirit of Christian life that has been a blessing to many, many people over its 60+ years of existence. And from the dedication of all those who make up its diverse and wonderful community (campers, counselors, their families, supporting congregations and synods, retreat groups, volunteers, donors, Board members, and, without question, the outstanding staff and leadership provided by Executive Director Sarah Lefler), it will continue to be a blessing to all those who follow.

Thank you for the opportunity to have been able to serve Mar Lu Ridge in this capacity. I look forward to seeing all the new places God will lead the camp in the future, and all the new chapters of its story to be written.

The Rev. Matthew C. Fuhrman
President, Mar-Lu-Ridge Board of Directors



A message from the Executive Director:

There were many comments from camper families this summer, and each one was very heartening, but one in particular stopped me in my tracks. *"She absolutely loved camp. She came home a different child. (camper) has suffered a lot of loss and trauma in the past 1.5 years, and this experience was an absolute blessing!"* I knew the story of this camper prior to their arrival, and the grandparent guardian was hesitant to send them because of all that they had been through recently. Our staff did a wonderful job supporting the camper, and it was clear that they felt safe and welcomed. I was so pleased to see them getting the opportunity to just be a child – no responsibilities beyond their years, no fear of what might happen, just the chance to relax and have fun with their friends.

God was very much present as we served all our campers, provided safe space for our staff to explore their faith and grow in community, and welcomed in thousands of retreat guests to a space of quiet. Our mission is being lived out each day.

Mar-Lu-Ridge exists and thrives thanks to our supportive community. I am excited for what lies ahead, and deeply grateful for all we have accomplished together this year: a COVID-free summer, assisting families with over \$15,000 in Camperships, quarterly Community Meals, successful fund-raising in each season, numerous improvement projects, and a clear and renewed mission statement.

The Board of Directors developed a new Strategic Plan, which brings together our mission elements of Sacred Hospitality, Deepening Relationships, and Care for Creation and overlaps those areas with our Core Values of Community, Service, and Sanctuary.

In 2024, Mar-Lu-Ridge will celebrate 65 years of ministry. You are a piece of that story, and a vital partner in the future of our beloved camp and retreat center. I thank God for you!

Sarah Lefler, Executive Director

Associate Director's Report

Boundless: God Beyond Measure" was truly the perfect theme for my first summer at Mar-Lu-Ridge. The theme verse came from Ephesians 3:18-19: "I pray that you and all of God's people will understand what is called wide or long or high or deep. I want you to know all about Christ's love, although it is too wonderful to be measured. Then your lives will be filled with all that God is." Our curriculum gave five ways God's gifts are beyond measure: goodness, love, welcome, forgiveness, and generosity. Often subtle signs of how the Spirit moves within the MLR community in these ways and more came constantly:

Goodness: *Fourth of July worship at Shock Rock, where we were reminded against a backdrop of the spectacular goodness of creation that no matter what we see when we look into the mirror, God always looks at us and says "Good."*

Love: *A team of selfless volunteers coming to camp to clean cabins on the Friday of Night Owls so the exhausted staff would not have to clean after staying up all night with their campers.*

Welcome/Hospitality: *The look of happiness and amazement of campers at having a "pop up" changing tent in their cabin so no one needed to change clothes in the open.*

Forgiveness: *The staff during weeks 6 & 7, exhausted by a challenging but rewarding summer, continuing to extend grace to one another when colleagues forgot something or needed extra help.*

Generosity: *The community raised almost \$800 for Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services through a free-will offering at Friday evening worship throughout the summer.*

Joy: *Campers and families filling Agape Hall, praising and singing to our worship band of musical Arts campers, counselors, and Pastors of the Week.*

Patience: *A counselor sitting beside a struggling camper, just being with them, until they were ready to rejoin the group.*

Hope: *First-year counselors continuing to try new things, even in the final week of camp, always striving to create the best possible experience for their campers.*

There are, of course, ways we do measure the impact a summer at camp. We had 237 unique campers across seven weeks of camp on the mountain, several of whom attended for more than one week, resulting in 274 camps sold. Our tier-pricing breakdown was 40% in Tier 1, 11% in Tier 2, and 49% in Tier 3. Forty-two family campers attended between two family camps, and campers ages ranged from two months to grandparents. We relaunched the Mobile Mar-Lu program at a new congregation (Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, McLean, VA) and had seven campers. Our seasonal summer staff was 16 folks strong. In that group, 11 were first-year staff, 1 was an international staff, and two were totally new to the MLR community. Finally, our volunteers truly made camp happen! We had 25 volunteers help with everything from staff training, registration, and cleaning cabins to cabin counselors, pastors of the week, and health team.

I am personally grateful for the support and welcome I received in my first summer at Mar-Lu-Ridge. This place and this community are incredibly special and I feel blessed to be a part of the ministry here. I look forward to the upcoming year and summer season!

In Christ's Peace,

Diana Edelblute

A few quick stats!! All Beyond Measure:

466 Chipwiches eaten at store time; the joy of cooling off with a tasty treat!

120 Zipline Rides; a new-found pride in oneself from overcoming fears!

54 Sunset Worships; feeling seen as part of a loving, inclusive, welcoming community!

7 Ice Cream Cake Creations savored; being part of an exciting, delicious camp tradition!

1 Unforgettable summer of camper memories to last a lifetime!



2022 Summer Staff

Financial Report for 2022

During 2022, Mar-Lu-Ridge (MLR) continued its recovery from the impact of Covid: fees from summer camp operations increased by 40 percent, while revenue from other camp operations grew by 82 percent relative to 2021. The camp also benefitted from the Federal Employee Retention Credit (ERC) program designed to avoid pandemic-induced layoffs (a smaller version of the 2020 and 2021 Payroll Protection Programs). The combined impact of these trends led to an 18 percent increase in overall operating revenue.

In the face of expanded camp operations, careful resource management limited growth in operating expenses to only 7 percent. The net result was that the Mar-Lu-Ridge's operating loss was half the level reported for 2021. MLR has been able to absorb this loss in part as a result of the Maryland Conservation Easement contract awarded in March 2021.

To meet financial challenges going forward, MLR remains dependent on donations, grants and Synodical support, as well as continued growth in revenue from retreats and camps, to meet its expenses. Fortunately, God continues to generously bless the Camp with congregations and individuals, staff and volunteers who are dedicated to supporting this vital ministry. As always, your financial support and earnest prayers are essential and are very much appreciated by everyone who experiences Mar-Lu-Ridge.

Dr. Julianne Nelson

Treasurer, Mar-Lu-Ridge Board of Directors



<u>Income</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
Contributions and Legacy	\$ 210,669	\$ 179,113
Grant Income	\$ 12,000	\$ 5,900
Other Camp Usage	\$ 183,650	\$ 100,639
Summer Camp Operations	\$ 120,623	\$ 86,143
DE/MD Synod	\$ 10,350	\$ 10,350
Metro DC Synod	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000
Camp Scholarship Funds	\$ 15,165	\$ 12,592
Agape Hall Mortgage Donations	\$ 460	\$ 8,130
Store Income	\$ 8,053	\$ 4,344
Other Income (incl. Interest)	\$ 17,514	\$ 18,473
Refunds	\$ (6,686)	\$ (7,915)
ERC, PPP Grants	\$ 60,130	\$ 117,362
Total Operating Income	\$ 637,928	\$ 541,131
 Expenses		
Camp Operations	\$ 143,749	\$ 123,397
Staff Salaries, Benefits	\$ 311,181	\$ 289,652
Payroll & Property Taxes	\$ 21,496	\$ 20,433
Services & Insurance	\$ 66,003	\$ 74,636
Utilities	\$ 67,178	\$ 58,362
Repairs & Maintenance	\$ 52,662	\$ 49,749
Agape Hall Mortgage Payments	\$ 28,404	\$ 28,404
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 690,674	\$ 644,633
 Net Operating Income	(\$52,746)	(\$103,502)

Mountaintopper (\$5,000+)

Wendell & Rev. Anna Anderson
 Kathy MacDonald
 Lawrence & Lynn Ries
 Dr. Julie Nelson
 Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Burns
 DE/MD Synod of the ELCA - Kaste
 Gift, Baltimore
 DE/MD Synod of the ELCA
 Metro DC Synod ELCA
 Zion Evangelical LC, Middletown
 Christ LC, Bethesda
 Divinity LC, Baltimore
 Lutheran Home & Hospital
 Foundation
 Loats Foundation

Ridge Runner (\$1,000 - \$4,999)

Bruce & Carolyn Albright
 Ken Anderson & Joan Enerson
 Missy Arp
 Rev. Dave & Nancy Asendorf
 Adam & Johanna Bachman
 Rev. Vicki Beilfuss
 Karin Belsheim
 Elise Bowman
 Anonymous
 Douglas Davis
 Rev. Joseph Donovan & Cheryl
 Roberson Donovan
 David & Allison Garman
 Rev. Richard & Nancy Ann
 Graham
 John & Laura Holland
 Dr. Christopher & Martha Horne
 Dr. Tony Kerlavage & Barbara
 Harner
 Rev. Donald & Miriam Keyser
 Wendy Kishimoto
 Keith & Sarah Lefler
 Hugh McConnell
 Bruce Moyer & JoAnn Bowman
 Rev. Karl & Caitlin Muhlbach
 Floyd Musk
 Richard & Janet Nickels
 Viola Noffsinger
 Stephen & Sarah Padre
 Tim & Tammy Panther

David & Judy Price
 Bruce Robinson
 Edith Robson
 Sam Rogers
 Ruth Sorenson
 Bethlehem LC, Fairfax
 Christ LC, Baltimore
 Faith LC, Arlington
 Good Shepherd LC, Alexandria
 Gifts of Hope Metro DC Synod
 Nativity & Holy Comforter,
 Baltimore
 Prince of Peace LC, Gaithersburg
 Salem Lutheran Church,
 Catonsville
 St. Mark's LC, Springfield
 St. Martin's Evangelical LC,
 Annapolis
 Trinity LC, N. Bethesda

Star Reacher (\$500-\$999)

Petko Arnaoudova
 Betty Askew
 Charles & Sandy Baber
 Roxanne Barrow
 Kevin & Dawn Bracken
 Rev. Matthew & Rev. Diane Day
 Rev. Matt & Andrea Fuhrman
 Nancy Gordon
 Chris & LeeAnn Hart
 Laura Higgs
 Joe Irwin & Suzanne Tegge
 Bill & Bunny James
 Abigail Kane
 Thomas Kane
 Donald Lewis
 Rev. Tom & Linda Perry
 Hanna Pillion
 Zibby Pillote
 Rev. Ray Ranker
 Kevin Resh
 Rev. David & Rev. Brenda
 Ritterpusch
 Mary Anne & Chris Rossbach
 Rachel Schmidt
 Rev. Joseph & Barbara Skillman
 Karen Smith
 Terry Switsky

Virginia Trygstad
 Joette Webb
 Amy Zemanick
 Christ LC, Millersville
 Grace LC, Westminster
 Resurrection LC, Arlington
 St. John LC, Westminster
 Trinity LC, Taneytown

Ascenders (\$250 - \$499)

Louis & Lois Ahalt
 David Baker
 Michael & Rev. Stacy Brady
 Philip & Elizabeth Brohawn
 Mark D. & Louise Burkhardt
 Rev. Jason & Vickie Burns
 Rev. Robert & Rev. Terri Driver-
 Bishop
 Nancy Charitonuk
 Alma Edgerly
 Dr. Raymond Ediger
 Marvin & Hannah Finnley
 William & Diane Floria
 Lois & Craig Giles
 Suzanne & Tom Grove
 John & Kathryn Harllee
 Jason Hirsch
 Jim & Julie Kempton
 David & Karen Kretschmann
 Rev. Albert & Dayna Lane
 Jeff Miles
 Robert & Deborah Moore
 Michael & Lisa Muhlbach
 Kimberly & Rick Norgaard
 Alane O'Neill
 Rev. Mark Parker & Rev. Christine
 Meyers Parker
 Mc Elfish Family
 Rev. Ron Reaves
 Rev. Gerry & Elizabeth Rickel
 Rev. Ryan & Rev. Bre Roberts
 Woody & Debbie Rush
 Vernon & Betty Rushing
 Kristy Schlueter - Kuck
 Thomas & Katharyn Wheeler
 Advent LC, Arlington
 Christ LC, Hagerstown
 Grace English LC, Lutherville

St. Paul's LC, Lutherville
St. Paul LC, Jefferson
St. Peter's LC, Keedysville

Ridge Climber (\$100 - \$249)

Martha Adams
Rev. Lans & Rev. Sandra Alexis
Rev. Teal Anderson
Brittany Ashe
Walter Bell
Thomas Bikle
Albert Brima
Stephen Burd
Emried & Wanda Cole
Rebecca & Ben Crawshaw
Neil & Margie Donnelly
Rev. Sarah Dorrance
Rev. Dale Dusman & Dr. Paul Walker
Valerie Eigner
Rev. Charlie Frekot
Scott & Susan Gahs
Morris Gold
Darius & Janet Gross
Sharon Harris
Rev. Ed & Janet Heim
Carlton & Andrea Heyser
Jeffrey & Mary Hemler
Eric & Kristine Holocker
Marc & Julie Howell
Mark Huffman
Dr. Matt & Laura Iager
Roger Rasnake & Inge Harman
Jim & Diane Kane
Charles & Ann Kelly
Kerry Kirkman
Rev. Darrell & Mary Layman
Kyle Lefler
Diane Loewner
Jennifer Marquardt
Megan McConnell
Ted & Susan Meyer
Patrick & Gail Miglio
Jon Niznandky
Katie Niznansky
Richard Null
Connie Otto
Henry & Shirley Quaskey

Melanie Rutkauskas
Rev. Elizabeth Platz Smith
Neil & Pat Robinson
Lee Ropp
Norman & Brenda Schafer
Christopher & Jennifer Schoen
Vanessa Shanks
Katrina Straker
Michael & Karen Summers
Paula Thistle
Russ & Lori Werner
Rev. Ed & Victoria Whetstone
Janet Withers
Rebecca Wright
Fred & Nancy Wymer
Sarah Wright
Dr. Monica Yost
Georgia Zirkle
Brown & Brown Insurance
St. Luke LC, Frederick
St. Michaels' LC, Baltimore
St. Paul's LC, Funkstown
Trinity LC, Boonsboro
St. Luke LC, Silver Spring
Prince of Peace LC, Baltimore
Hope LC, Baltimore

Community (\$50 - \$99)

Richard & Janet Ahrens
Monica Areford
Sandra Banko
Jenny Burns & Anton Dvorak
Jessica Echols
Brian Frekot
Richard Fulton
Jennifer Gannon
Melissa Graves
Claudia Harrington
Robert Hauser
Dr. Gary & Christine Horne
Kevin Judd
Lynda Kelly
David & Katie King
Anonymous
Loza Lee

Thomas & Pamela Lehman
Ginny Lefler
Mark & Leona Maggitti
Amy & Daniel Mambu
Jamie Pflasterer
Mark & Jennifer Poffenberger
Paul Ries
Kimberly Rosekrans
Grover & Sherri Sensabaugh
Bradley Simpson
Susan Strobl
Luella Tabor
Mark Taylor
Shannan Vail-Goodman
Tim Waskiewicz
Theodore Weatherby
Cheryl Wiedley
Kyle Wilson
Kimberly Yourick
Mt. Joy LC, Gettysburg

"I thank my God every time I remember you." Phil. 1:3

Gifts given in Memory:

Ruth and Philip Brohawn, by Philip and Elizabeth Brohawn

Charles and Waneta Sackman, by Charles and Sandy Baber

Gayle Carlson, by Rev. Sandra Alexis

Maria Arnaoudova, by Petko Arnaoudov

Wade Martin Zirkle, by Georgia Ann Zirkle

Dorthalee Ropp, by Lee Ropp

Rev. LaVern Rasmussen, by Dr. Maria Yost

Rev. LaVern Rasmussen, by Rev. Albert and Dayna Lane

Ben Horne, by Mary Hemler

Rev. LaVern Rasmussen, by Rev. Ed and Vickie Whetstone

Rev. LaVern Rasmussen, by Hannah and Marvin Finnley

Matthew Hamblet, by Sam Rogers

Jay Schlueter, Ben Horne, and Ann Elder, by Ted and Susan Meyer

Rev. Fred Gross, by Susan Strobl

Ken and Marie Gahs, by Scott and Susan Gahs

Joan Orso, by Kimberly Rosekrans

Joan Orso, by Betty Askew

Chapel Window gifts in memory/honor:

Ruth and Philip Brohawn, by Philip and Elizabeth Brohawn

John Burrier, by Louis and Lois Ahalt

Lee Ropp, by Douglas Davis

Charles and Waneta Sackman, by Charles and Sandy Baber

Gifts given in honor:

John Burrier, by Louis and Lois Ahalt

Lee Ropp, by Douglas Davis

Anne, James and Rebecca, by Joshua Wade

Michael Muhlbach, by Rev. Karl and Caitlin Muhlbach

Julia Meyers, by Pamela Lehman

Bishop Bill Gohl, by Valerie Eigner

Allison Keller, by Tom and Suzanne Grove

Rev. Matthew Fuhrman, by Dave and Allison Garman

Summer staff, by Ginny Trygstad

Sarah Lefler, by Margie Fiedler

Rev. Richard and Nancy Ann Graham, by Rev. Elizabeth Platz Smith

Rev. Anna Anderson, by Advent Lutheran Church

Joanna Albright, by Bruce Albright

Bishop Bill Gohl, by Rev. Ed and Janet Heim

Rev. Charlie Frekot, by Grace Lutheran Church

Ginny Trygstad, by Robert Hauser

Bishop Bill Gohl, by Rev. Dale Dusman and Dr. Paul Walker

Thrivent Choice Donors:

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Roxanne Barrow
Jay Bidle
Miriam Brennan
Thomas Cleaver
Cathleen Coss
Douglas Davis
Kaye Kerr
Rev. Matthew Fuhrman
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David and Anita Grooms
Susan Harne
Barbara Harner
LeeAnn Hart
Carrah Holmes
Julie and H Marc Howell
Linda Howser
Rev. Donald Keyser
Gayle Krol
Rev. Albert and Dayna Lane
Leona Maggiti
Valerie Mayer
Floyd Musk
Kimberly Norgaard
Sarah Padre
Laura Pearce
Charles and Sally Pearl
David Petr
Eugene and Pamela Pontillo
Rev. Ron Reeves
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M. Lee Ropp
John and Linda Strider
Michael Stumpf
Luella Tabor
Selma Tepper
Lynda Turner

Elizabeth Tweed
Kendra Wells
Doreen Young
Richard Young

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Alma Edgerly
Amy Zemanick
Adam and Johanna
Bachman
Sarah Wright
Muhlbach
Brady
Leeann Hart
Hanna Pillion
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Kristy Schlueter
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Brittany Ashe
Jon Niznansky
Jason Hirsch
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Zibby Pillote
Wendi Kishimoto
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