

# *My Green Lake Story: Caroline (Jungwirth) Overzet*

My first trip to Green Lake was in about 1956. As a Sunday school teacher at First Baptist Church, Omro, WI, I came to attend a training meeting for Sunday school teachers. I really liked the place!

Early in 1969, I received a letter asking if I'd consider being on Children's Center (CC) staff that summer. I excitedly said, "Yes!" I feel very blessed to have been at CC every summer since then.

Throughout my years on CC staff, I've had the pleasure of teaming with a variety of great co-workers. I've seen CC children grow up, spend their summers on CC staff, and then I've had great pleasure welcoming their children to CC! In my first many summers, we were located "up on the hill" in five buildings. Among my favorite memories are those of walking from building to building early each morning to unlock them. I'd often see animals which were harder to spot during the day. Among them, of course, were the deer.

One early spring I saw a groundhog peeking out from a hole under the White House. He whistled and I whistled back. Another morning when I looked at the hole, he wasn't there. I whistled down the hole and he came up and whistled back! Whistling him up became a really fun activity!

During the first year of the Experimental Aircraft Association Air Show at Oshkosh, I was teaching in Yellow Door (Primary) and we wanted to have our own "lofty" experience. We decided to see if we could drop an egg from the top of Judson Tower without it breaking. (This was before the fence was at the top of the tower.) The children suggested various ways of protecting the egg--from putting it into a tin can and covering it with plastic wrap to putting it in a basket suspended from a Styrofoam airplane. The tin can idea (and numerous similar ones) did not work. The airplane idea did, as it descended slowly. But we wanted to find a way to



let it free-fall to the ground without breaking. We finally made lots of jello and when it was partially set, we put it into a plastic bag and put the egg into the center of the jello. After it had completely set, we put it into a box 2 feet by 2 feet by 3 feet, with lots of Styrofoam peanuts. We carried the box up to the top of Judson Tower and pushed it off. We watched as it hit the ground and burst open, splattering jello all over. We were disappointed, but went down to take a closer look. We discovered, to our amazement, the egg, still unbroken in the center of the mass of jello!

Another fun thing we did was a July 4 parade from Children's Center to the main conference area. The children usually made red, white and blue paper hats to wear, flags to wave and decorated wagons. We usually ended it with a watermelon feast.

Once a hike to climb one of the small towers on grounds, a 6-year-old boy looked out the window across the prairie toward Judson Tower and said softly and reverently, "Teacher, that's pure beautiful!"



Because of Green Lake, I'm very happily married! I met John and his now-deceased wife when they vacationed and brought their children to CC; later they became summer volunteers. A few years after Marilyn's passing in 2004, John and I started dating and we were married at Green Lake in 2008.

*"I have had an immense number of 'pure beautiful' experiences at Green Lake which I treasure and for which I thank God!"*