

October 31, 2019

Dear David and Arli,

██████████ provided me with a copy of a letter, ██████████ ██████████ ██████████, received on October 28, 2019 from you. I had a combination of frustration, anger and disappointment when I read the letter.

This will be my last communication with you and I kindly ask for you not to contact me in future.

I don't know why you mentioned Lawrence in your letter. I forwarded Pam Fehr, the Silver Lake Mennonite Camp Board chair, three emails that Lawrence sent to me after he received the no-trespass order from Silver Lake's lawyer. As an organization, Lawrence was Silver Lake's employee who you hired and paid. You allowed him to have a public voice without any retaliation or consequence. Ultimately putting out there, whether you meant to or not, that it is OK for a director of a summer camp to be in a "relationship" with a 17-year-old child. To this date, I will never understand why you stayed silent. You need to think about your lack of response, not just to me but to every parent who sends their child to a camp or other Mennonite related organization.

Your letter of October 28th was the first time I heard that you were also concerned about the Canadian Mennonite article where my abuse was reported. In your letter, you suggest that you have been in contact with Canadian Mennonite to address your concerns about the article, but never once did you think to reach out to the person who the article was written about – me. This is hard to understand. You admit that you are in discussions about it. Let your discussions lead to action. In the Canadian Mennonite article, when Lawrence stated that he apologized to me for the stress and pain caused as a result of his "relationship" with me, Silver Lake and MCEC had an opportunity to publicly respond to his comments and clearly state that no camper or counselor will ever be in a relationship with a person of leadership at a Mennonite institution – camp or otherwise. You were completely aware that he was a married man with children, living on the Silver Lake premise and he was abusing a 17-year-old and acknowledging it as a "relationship". You do all know this is wrong?! The fact that you all stayed silent was and remains appalling!

Regarding the Safezone curriculum/document. As a survivor, I would have only wanted to be involved in the Safezone document if it showed signs of being excellent. At the time of the Press Release, it was confirmed by Silver Lake that the Safezone document was already in progress – that made me anxious as I knew to create a quality document it would take time. The fact that you publicly used my name and attached myself to the Safezone document in the Press Release when there were so many missteps in the document is terrible. As you were trying to create a document to keep young people safe and protect future victims of sexual abuse, what would make me think that you could create a successful document when I heard of another incident of sexual boundary crossing at Silver Lake in the same summer.

In the document, the only thing you did was tell every survivor and every future victim that they won't be cared for and the institution will always have more power than the people it is there to protect. The Safezone document has been widely criticized to me which again victimizes the

person who it was to protect. What I have heard from several people this summer is the Safezone document was used at camp, and there was “snickering”, “laughing” and a general sense that the document was “stupid”. I noticed you have made an edit to the inside cover of the online Safezone document which is in fact a disclaimer.

When I came forward, I assumed that it would trigger and provoke Silver Lake and MCEC into action because of their “zero tolerance” policy. Being passive with discussion and action will never render a zero tolerance culture. You have proven not just to me but to your wider community that you are not serious about taking action and holding people accountable. I am not interested in connecting and “sharing my concerns more fully with you” – that is again discussion and not action. What more would you need from me to feel compelled to do something? In your letter you acknowledge that you should reach out to me and explore how to respond. If you wanted to reach out so that I could share my concerns with you, you had about 14 months to do that. It is only now that you have received two letters from concerned individuals within MCEC that you are responding to me. I am weary of sharing my concerns as I have done that numerous times with the Silver Lake Mennonite Camp’s board chair and it is exasperating. You have proven no action comes of it.

Lastly, I am fully aware that I don’t expect you to understand the mind, the heart and the scars of a survivor of sexual abuse. I am not asking you to. Perhaps, what I am asking is for you to determine what is right and what is wrong. Not just for me, and any victim or survivor but for you as an institution and an organization. I am not expecting anyone to do something that I am falsely thinking will make it all go away. I have been on a healing journey since I was a youth at Silver Lake when I was 16 years old. I have made peace and moved forward with many aspects since coming forward. However, everything that has happened since then has only left me in shock over how a group of people, some who are connected to Silver Lake, some who are connected to MCEC and some who belong to both, claim that they need to do right by this for myself and for future campers and yet continually do nothing at the same time.

I was profoundly impacted by a book on sexual abuse by Greg Gilhooly. “Stories of sexual abuse are nothing to run from and they should not be situations where the first thought is to focus on possible legal liability. Instead they are extreme examples of a failure in the human fabric that leaves behind victims who are in desperate need of the best that humanity has to offer”. Moving forward, I pray that you are met with knowledge and common sense and called to action and find ways to respond as caring individuals.

Ruth-Ann