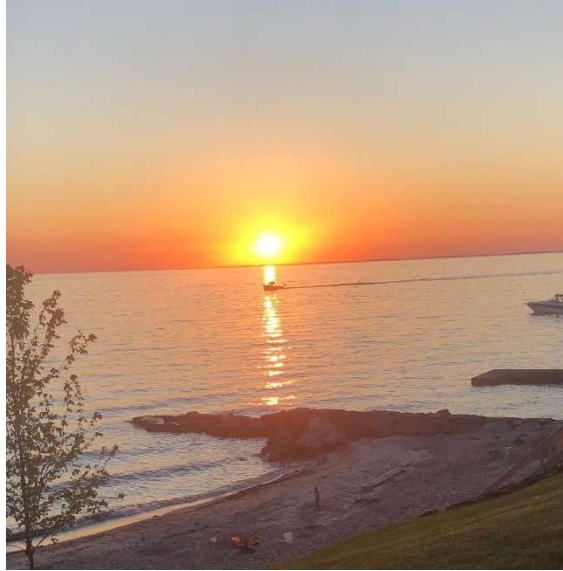


# Family Vacation!



Our fourth annual family vacation to a guest house on the shore of Lake Erie was a success! We have found the perfect place for us. How is it perfect? Let me count the ways:

- It is close to Cleveland, where my daughter and her family live. (There is sun, sand and water! A much easier beach vacation than driving all the way to Florida.)
- The house has plenty of room for all of us, with a full kitchen and large dining tables on the sun porch and on the deck.
- There is a huge grassy area with play equipment for the kids (and adults) to play!
- The cabins come in a variety of sizes, and our friends from Kansas City join us for the week (in their own cabin).
- The communal fire pit and private beach foster friendships among the guests.
- The sunsets are beautiful!!



We have tweaked several things over the four years we have been coming to the lake. Here are some things that have helped things go smoothly:

- My daughter does all the meal planning. Being a mom of three, she is a master meal planner. She can accommodate diet restrictions which can be a challenge!
- We have a general daily routine of breakfast, beach time, simple lunch, more beach time with snacks, showers, play time in the common grassy area (with frequent ukelele jam sessions), dinner, board games, then fire pit with other guests.
- Occasional outings like blueberry picking. As kids get older, we may try Cedar Point amusement park!
- Dinners are often prepared using a crock pot or grill, so kitchen stays cool.
- Much planning goes into who is bringing what: food, paper goods, swim toys/inflatable, air pump, ear protection for fireworks, at least 6 cans of spray sunscreen, rainy day toys/crafts, board games, etc.
- My son-in-law built a huge collapsible wooden towel rack which was VERY helpful as there aren't great spots for a clothesline.

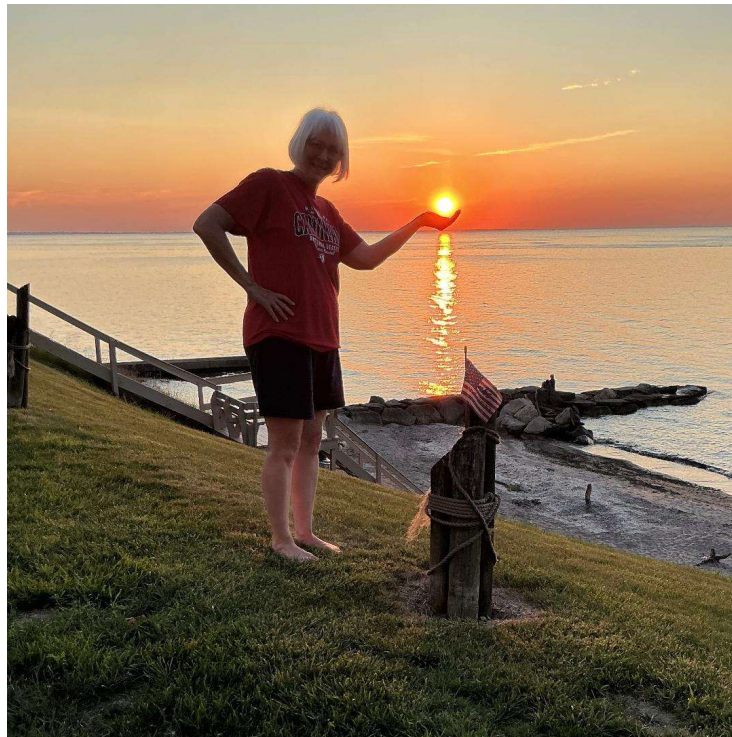


I offer these tips for a successful family vacation:

- Start planning well in advance.
- Take notes during and after your trip to help with your planning for next year.
- Divide up the chores so nobody feels overly burdened.
- Allow for rest times for adults and kids (stagger so adults take turns monitoring kids).
- Plan for rainy days!
- Be flexible and willing to change plans if needed.
- Find out ahead of time exactly what is provided and what you need to bring (kitchen supplies/staples, bedding, towels, paper and cleaning supplies).



I can't wait til next year!!



Stay tuned for next month's newsletter to hear about my presentation entitled "You Too Can Be a Writer", shared at senior living communities!

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Thanks so much!!!

Julie