

**“The Current”**  
**The American Camp**  
**Association Great Rivers**  
**Section Newsletter**  
**October 2006**

**FROM THE PRESIDENT, LEE WALZ**

I've been careening through September thinking camping season is over and in a couple days it will be time to slow and take a deep breath to relax. It hasn't happened yet for me. I hope you are having better luck! I can tell fall is coming. Football's started, the leaves are changing and your section board is stepping up its activity. We will meet in October and then the section meeting is in November.

The Annual Great Rivers Conference being planned this fall is excellent. There is literally something for anyone. I hope you will seriously consider this continuing education opportunity for you, and/or your people. Please refer to the article about the Conference to find out more. Also the Annual Section meeting will take place during this time. Your input is needed for the continued growth and development of our section. Plan on helping us out. I look forward to seeing you there.

**FANTASTIC FALL CONFERENCE**

The ACA Great Rivers Annual Conference will be Nov. 14-16 at the Heartland Presbyterian Center, Parkville, Missouri. The theme is "What's All the Buzz". There are fantastic speakers including Michael Brandwein, one of the top trainers in the fields of education, camp and recreation, and Scott Arizala, a camping professional with an expertise in staff training. The new Standards Training and Visitor Update will be held, and many other great sessions.

ACA members should have received an email and a mail information piece about this conference. You can find more and updated information at the conference website at

<http://aca.flamingmarshmallow.org>

Register before Nov. 1 to save money!!!

Thank you to the ACA Great Rivers program committee and chair Traci Haselhuhn, for all of your hard work in putting this conference together! If you have any questions, contact Traci Haselhuhn at 515-795-3338 or [tracidh@iastate.edu](mailto:tracidh@iastate.edu).

**ACA STANDARDS REVISION**

The American Camp Association Standards are revised! All ACA Great Rivers camps should have received their camp copy of the new standards. It is now in a three-ring notebook, so looks different than the former standards books and is titled

*Accreditation Process Guide*. There is also a resource CD.

Usually only the camps that are to be visited the next summer receive books. Our section decided to have a book sent to every camp so ALL camps have plenty of time to prepare for the new standards. If you did not receive a book in the mail, please let Linda DuBrul know. Call 417-862-0004 or email [ldubrul@dogwoodtrails.org](mailto:ldubrul@dogwoodtrails.org).

For more information about the new standards, check out the ACA web site at [www.ACACamps.org](http://www.ACACamps.org). New Standards Books

**CAMP MEMBERSHIPS LAPSED?**

Camps whose membership dues have lapsed or who have not signed the annual Statement of Compliance need to take care of these tasks immediately. Your camp will lose its Accredited Camp status if you don't remedy the situation. The national ACA office has already contacted those camps missing a Statement of Compliance. You can sign this electronically by logging on to the ACA website at [www.ACACamps.org/soc](http://www.ACACamps.org/soc).

**BUSY CAMP VISIT SEASON IN 2006**

This summer 34 camps in the Great Rivers section were visited by our ACA Standards volunteers. Two visits were done as reciprocal visits by adjoining sections. A big "Thank You" goes to all the volunteer visitors and to all the camps that worked hard to have everything ready for the all-important visit day. Good job everyone!.

**STANDARDS TRAINING AT FALL CONFERENCE**

The first training on the new standards will take place at the Great Rivers fall conference in November. All camps that are due a visit in 2007 are strongly recommended to attend this fall to give them plenty of time to prepare for their first visit under the new standards. All other camps are welcome to attend and get a head start on revising their documentation for upcoming visits. Be sure to bring your new standards book with you to the training. We only have a limited number of extra books.

**VISITOR UPDATE AT FALL CONFERENCE**

All section visitors should plan to attend the visitor update scheduled for Tuesday, November 14, 7 – 9 pm. at the Great Rivers Fall Conference. All visitors will need to have this update before conducting visits in 2007. All Visitors at the training will receive a Visitor Copy of the new ACA Standards Book. After Section Exec Jim Cherry and Standards Chair Linda Du Brul attend training at the national ACA fall leadership training in October, they will have more information on

possible on line training or other options for those that were not able to attend this training.

### **ANNOUNCING STUDENT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY**

The Student Camp Leadership Academy information is now available online. The Student Camp Leadership Academy (SCLA) is an opportunity for university and college juniors, seniors, or graduate students, who are passionate about the camp experience, to explore the potential for a career in the camp experience field. The pilot event took place last November . . . this year's SCLA will be held Friday, November 3 – 5, 2006 at Timber Pointe Outdoor Center. Visit [www.ACACamps.org/scla](http://www.ACACamps.org/scla) for full information and a registration form.

Please contact Tom Neppi with any questions. [Tom@NeppiLandscapeArchitecture.com](mailto:Tom@NeppiLandscapeArchitecture.com)

### **NATIONAL ACA DOES RESEARCH**

What's Up With Research?? While you were focused on running great camps this past summer, ACA was busy gathering information and developing resources to help answer some common questions. Below are highlights of just two of these projects to let you know where you can find more details.

#### **Financial/budget Information for Camps:**

This project provides you with the latest financial data from over 1000 ACA accredited camps. The information is broken out by day and resident camp. For each one, you can look at a summary of findings by region and sponsorship or you can look at tables broken out by gross revenues and sponsor on areas such as annual camper days, gross revenues, expense categories, weekly fees, profitability, and revenue and expense by camper day. The information is available in PDF to members by going to <http://www.acacamps.org/research/> and clicking on 2006 Business Operations Survey. Also look for an article in Sept-Oct. *Camping Magazine* as well as a new book to be published in 2007 to help camps with financial management!

#### **New Youth Development Booklets**

Look for your mailed copies of *Inspirations* and *Innovations* in September! These booklets provide the benchmark (starting point) of 80 camps who participated in Phase I of the Program Improvement Project (PIP) that assessed youth development supports and opportunities at camp. The *Inspirations* booklet provides a summary of this information based on camp and camper characteristics. *Innovations* is the third in this series focused on outcomes and opportunities for youth development in camps. This booklet provides a summary of the strategies and practices

implemented by 23 camps that went through a program improvement process and offers camps a step-by-step way to carry out your own process. Both of these projects were generously funded by the Lilly Foundation, Inc. Beside the mailed copies, you will be able to find both booklets as PDFs on the ACA Research website at <http://www.acacamps.org/research> - also look for a series of PIP articles in *Camping Magazine* as well as other educational resources.

#### **More to Come from ACA Research**

Stay tuned this fall for several other exciting research-based resources! Here's a hint of what is to come:

**New Outcomes Tools** that are camp specific as well as age-appropriate are currently being tested. We hope to have 6-7 outcomes available for next summer that are modular (you select the ones you want to intentionally target) as well as a way to easily score and interpret what the numbers mean! This project was funded by the Independent Not-for-Profit Council and by Lilly Endowment Inc. grant.

### **ACA ENROLLMENT STUDY**

Camp Directors! We need your enrollment data!!! We asked in January and April how your enrollment and recruitment processes were going- now we want to know exactly how your summer went. Please go online to <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=721272578221> to complete a brief 10 minute survey that asks for you to estimate enrollment and recruitment information for the Summer of 2006 as compared to Summer 2005. These data are CRITICAL to our efforts to develop trends and track changes that may be occurring around the country. Once you complete the survey, you can immediately look at the results and even "filter" the information by characteristics like camp type, sponsorship, section, etc. Go online TODAY (but if not today, at least by Oct. 27<sup>th</sup>) and contribute your valuable data to our efforts to have accurate enrollment information for you!

### **ACA SALARY SURVEY**

Been wondering if your salaries are in line with what staff are paid from another camp similar to you? Check your mail boxes for this year's industry survey focused on Salaries and Compensation. This mailed questionnaire was sent to 1,700 camps randomly selected to provide this vital information. If you receive one, please fill it out and return it by Oct. 27<sup>th</sup> ! We need our information to be as accurate as possible, so every single survey response is important to us.

This questionnaire is the second in our annual systematic industry surveys, and the effort to compile needed information around business operations (Fall '05), salary information (Fall '06), and program/site information (Fall '07) so the data are never older than three years AND we can start to track trends. Thanks for your help!!

### **ACA NATIONAL CONFERENCE NEWS**

ACA 2007 National Conference will be February 13 – 16, 2007 in Austin, Texas. The theme is Widening the Circle. This conference will challenge us to increase our capacity to bring the camp experience to people who are not yet "in the circle" and to rethink the role that camp can play in the community and the lives of all connected with it. Every camp can fill beyond capacity if we succeed in showing our potential families that the camp experience can make a difference for each and every camper, *for a lifetime*. We're committed to continuous improvement, with a shifting focus on strategies each year. Our efforts to widen the circle complement our past focus on putting missions into action and partnering with parents. View more information about the conference in general at (<http://www.ACAcamps.org/conference/>). Research submissions are welcome as part of the ACA Research Forum (<http://www.ACAcamps.org/cfp/research/>).

**ACA 2008 National Conference Site Confirmed**  
Start thinking about 2008! The confirmed dates are February 12 – 15, 2008. The Gaylord Opryland Hotel, in Nashville, Tennessee, will serve as our site. More information can be found on the web site [www.acacamps.org](http://www.acacamps.org).

### **ACA MID STATES CONFERENCE**

The ACA Mid States conference is set for April 11-14 2007. Mark your calendars because this years theme is "Learn Together Grow Together" and that is what we intend to do. Camp directors, program staff, counselors, and specialty staff can all come together and experience the ACA Mid States conference. One of our goals for this conference is to make it like camp, so we will learn together while we play together and have a whole bunch of fun in the process. By together means we need your help. You are all doing cool things at your camps and have expertise in many different areas and we want you to share that with others in the camping field.

Please visit [www.acamidstates.org/presenters.php](http://www.acamidstates.org/presenters.php) to learn about being a presenter. It is a great opportunity to share your knowledge. And do not forget to mark your calendars for this years conference!

The Leadership Institute which happens just before the Mid States Conference, will once again be offering certification, and more indepth training. ACA courses in Standards, New Director Orientation, and the Basic Camp Director Course are also being scheduled. More information is on the web site at [www.acamidstates.org](http://www.acamidstates.org).

### **AWARD WINNING COMMUNICATIONS**

The American Camp Association (ACA) was recently presented with the 2006 APEX® Awards for Publication Excellence "One-of-a-Kind – Print Publications" award for the publication, *CAMP: A Resource for Families* – 2006 issue. In addition, ACA received the 2006 APEX® Awards for Publication Excellence "Web Sites" award for the parent and family Web site, [www.CampParents.org](http://www.CampParents.org).

### **NEW LOOK FOR "Camping Magazine"**

Bolder and better! The September/October issue of *Camping Magazine* debuted with a striking new look. The changes in graphic elements make reading, finding, and seeing the same great editorial content in a new light. Sweeping changes in the presentation of features, columns, and smaller, more subtle improvements combine to make a simplified, more distinguished, and professional design statement.

### **"IT'S OFF TO CAMP CHARLIE BROWN"**

National ACA collaborated with Random House to provide expert camp resource information as the publisher began planning the new book, "*It's Off to Camp, Charlie Brown*", last year. ACA is featured on the jacket, and you will find positive messages about the camp experience from ACA interspersed throughout the book. You can order the book through the ACA Bookstore at 888-229-5745 or [www.ACABookstore.org](http://www.ACABookstore.org).

### **CAMO REGULATIONS BY STATE**

A complete database of information about the camp-related regulations in each state is available on the ACA Web site. ([www.ACAcamps.org/publicpolicy](http://www.ACAcamps.org/publicpolicy))

The data provides active links to the regulations and information in each state. The database is sortable by state, plus a viewer can compare all fifty states (and DC and Puerto Rico). Additionally, the database can indicate whether the state allows FBI records checks and information on how to access driving checks in each state, including costs and links to request forms.

ACA will continually check the links and information supplied on this database to ensure accuracy.

## **ACA Partners With Healthy Learning in a New Publishing Venture**

Healthy Learning, a Monterey, California, based company is the exclusive publisher of ACA educational materials. All materials published for ACA by Healthy Learning (HL) will carry the ACA logo, and all ACA-authored titles will be copyrighted to ACA and remain our exclusive intellectual property.

How Will This New Partnership Affect You?

A new 800 number to call for ACA book orders! 888-229-5745

Members can continue to order ACA titles online at [www.ACABookstore.org](http://www.ACABookstore.org).

All forms will be available through the online bookstore for download (charged as now).

Other Improvements:

Inventory will be in Healthy Learning's warehouse, not ACA's;

Shipment of orders will be the same day or next day;

Any calls to the national office will be transferred directly to Healthy Learning;

Pricing of all books and materials through HL will reflect a new valued pricing structure;

Additional books published by Healthy Learning will be available; and

ACA members will continue to receive a discount, which will be reflected at "check out."

## **ACA HOTLINE NUMBER**

The American Camp Association has a hotline number that can be called if camps need to talk with someone in case of an emergency. Camps may face a situation that they need help in determining the proper course of action. ACA staff are assigned to answer the hotline calls, and then route the calls to the appropriate staff that can assist staff. This number is available 24 hours a day, year round.

**The Hotline number: 800-573-9019.**

## **ACA ADDS SPANISH SPEAKING SERVICE**

To make it easier for Spanish-speaking parents to find expert advice on the camp experience, ACA has a new family-dedicated web site with a section for Spanish speaking families. View the Spanish site at [www.CampParents.org](http://www.CampParents.org), and click on espanol on the top tool bar.

## **USE THE NEW ACA ACCREDITED CAMP LOGO**

ACA is asking all ACA accredited camps to join in a united marketing effort to enhance the value of accreditation consistently not only in camp marketing materials, but on web sites. Camps can go to [www.acacamps.org/accreditation/marketing.php](http://www.acacamps.org/accreditation/marketing.php) to download the new logo for use in marketing materials and Web site.

## **WILDERNESS FIRST AID CLASS**

A Wilderness First Aid certification class will be offered at Carol Joy Holling Center, in Nebraska in January. For more information go to [www.nlom.org](http://www.nlom.org) or contact Gretchen Ahrens at [gahrens@nlom.org](mailto:gahrens@nlom.org).

## **TOWER FOR SALE**

The Timberlake Ranch Camps in Marquette, Nebraska has an Aqua Tower for sale. It is 2 1/2 years old, and is a great water activity. We just need to room in our water area for other things. Make an offer! Contact Greg at 308.946.3871 or [gregr@timberlake.org](mailto:gregr@timberlake.org)

## **CAMP KITAKI SHARES PROGRAM INFORMATION**

Camp Kitaki, located in Nebraska, has added to their Ranch Camp program. Their program now includes a progressive horsemanship program in which campers can work up through six achievement levels. Campers set goals for skills they wish to learn. The achievement levels and riding 'tests' are always 'challenge by choice' and there is no pressure to obtain a certain riding level. Overall, the campers have shown great enthusiasm for the achievement level program and are welcoming the change. The program has also shown itself to be a great teaching tool in the area of goal setting and, with a few campers, in how to deal with the let down of sometimes not reaching the goals you set for yourself. For more about this horse program, contact Jamie DeJong, [idejong@ymcalincoln.org](mailto:idejong@ymcalincoln.org).

## **CAMP DIRECTOR REMEMBERED**

Sandi Stotts died on June 16, 2006 after a long battle with cancer. She was the Camp Director at Camp Sacajawea in Iowa and an ACA member for many years. There was a celebration of life service at camp this past summer to honor her passing. There were many people in attendance. A memorial will be added to Camp in recognition of all that Sandi gave to Camp Sacajawea and the Girl Scouts.

## **DIABETES WORKSHOP HELD**

A one-day seminar on diabetes was held on Friday October 13th at the Des Moines YMCA camp. If you would like more information on what was covered during the seminar, contact Vivian Murray, Director, at [CampHertkoHollow@aol.com](mailto:CampHertkoHollow@aol.com)

## **NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS**

**Gretchen Ahrens:** Great River's Section would like to extend our sympathy and prayers to Gretchen Ahrens and family. Gretchen is a member of the Program Team with Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor

Ministries and sisters Rachel and Amanda have worked on the staff at Carol Joy Holling Camp. Their father, Jim, was killed in an accident on I-80 near Grinnell, Iowa on August 11. Their mom, Beth, was seriously injured but okay and slowly healing. Gretchen is spending most of her time in Iowa caring for her mom and the farm.

**Mary Quinn** has joined the NLOM staff serving as the Coordinator for Guest Services at Carol Joy Holling Center. Mary has most recently worked at Comeca in Cozad, Nebraska. NLOM is pleased to have her on the staff and glad to have her in the Great Rivers Section.

**Robyn Ratclif** has accepted a position in the Outdoor Program Dept. at Girl Scouts Mid Continent Council. This is a BIG and EXCITING change for Robyn! She is very happy to be back in Outdoor after her stint as a "desk-jockey fundraiser!!!!"

**Lisa Nichols** has taken a position with Kansas city Parks and Recreation. Her new email address is [lisadarbyblue@yahoo.com](mailto:lisadarbyblue@yahoo.com). Lisa also recently purchased a house, and spent many hours uncovering, sanding and sealing the wood floors of the home. Lisa and her two dogs are excited about their move!

**Suz Welch** is enjoying retirement. She is doing some updates to her home and taking photography classes at the Area Community College. Her winter project is to work on a memory history book for Camp Hantesa.

**DD Gass** has taken a new position with National Camp Fire USA in Kansas City. She is a Project Manager, working with the Program department on grants and curriculum. She will be moving to the Kansas City area this Fall.

### **GREAT RIVERS NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL**

Communication with Camping Professionals in the Great Rivers Section has changed over the past year. With more people communicating by email, our section executive, Jim Cherry has been passing on information to our section by email. This helps us all stay informed in a timely manner.

The ACA Great Rivers Section newsletter will be compiled periodically. It will be distributed by email. This newsletter will also be sent by mail to those that request a copy and those not currently ACA members. If you would like to continue to receive this newsletter by mail, instead of email, please contact DD Gass, Camp Fire USA, [dd.gass@campfireusa.org](mailto:dd.gass@campfireusa.org) .

## ACA Great Rivers Section Board Roster 2006

### Section Executive:

Rev. Jim Cherry  
(641) 927-4428 (home)  
(641) 927-4429 (office and fax)  
[ACAGreatRiversExec@ACAcamps.org](mailto:ACAGreatRiversExec@ACAcamps.org)  
2335 300<sup>th</sup> St.  
Ventura, IA 50482

### President:

Lee Walz, United Methodist Camps  
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### President-Elect:

To be elected in 2006

### Vice President Development:

DD Gass, Camp Fire USA  
816-285-2004  
[dd.gass@campfireusa.org](mailto:dd.gass@campfireusa.org)  
1100 Walnut, Suite 1900  
Kansas City, MO 64106

### Vice President Program:

Robyn Ratcliff, Girl Scouts of Mid-Continent  
Council  
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[rratcliff@girlscoutsmcc.org](mailto:rratcliff@girlscoutsmcc.org)  
8383 Blue Parkway Dr.  
Kansas City, MO 64133

### Treasurer:

Roger Sasse, Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor  
Ministries  
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27416 Ranch Road  
Ashland, NE 68003

### Secretary:

Chris Klingenberg, YMCA Camp Kitaki  
(402) 434-9225 (office)  
(402) 499-8404 (mobile) \*  
[CKlingenberg@ymcalincoln.org](mailto:CKlingenberg@ymcalincoln.org)  
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Lincoln, NE 68507

### Nominating/Awards:

Lisa Nichols, Kansas City Parks and Recreation  
[lisadarbyblue@yahoo.com](mailto:lisadarbyblue@yahoo.com)

### Education Chair

Traci Haselhuhn, Iowa 4-H Camp  
515-795-3338 or [tracidh@iastate.edu](mailto:tracidh@iastate.edu)

### Standards Chair:

Linda DuBrul, Girl Scouts of Dogwood Trails  
Council  
(417) 862-0004  
[ldubrul@dogwoodtrails.org](mailto:ldubrul@dogwoodtrails.org)  
210 S. Ingram Mill Rd., Springfield, MO 65802

### Legislation Chair:

Currently vacant

### Public Relations Chair:

Currently vacant

### Membership Chair:

Tom Nepl, Nepl Landscape Architecture  
(866) 750-5500  
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PO Box 906, Ames, IA 50010

### Complaints Resolution Chair:

Dave Sherry, Des Moines YMCA Camp  
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### Board Member-At-Large:

Dennis Hisek, United Methodist Camps  
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### Nominating Committee:

Sunni Richardson, Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor  
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### Nominating Committee:

Becky Godfrey, Girl Scouts of Shining Trail  
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