



“The Current”

**The American Camp Association
Great Rivers Section Newsletter
December 2007**

From the Section President, Robyn Ratcliff

Weird that I get to write my final newsletter column of 2007, and it is only my second newsletter column ever! It's kind of like planning for camp...while everyone else is ending their year and doing the top-100-songs-of-2007 countdown, we're all deep in the planning and preparation stages for summer of 2008! Our beginnings and our endings are simultaneous! My presidency has just begun, and my first fiscal year is over!

If you're like me, you've been assuming it's already 2008 for the last 2 months...writing the wrong dates on your checks, etc., but—I digress. Speaking of our fiscal year, let me tell you a little bit about two final successes for 2007 that occurred at our ACA Great Rivers conference in Indianola in November. (What a great time! I wish you all could have been there. Those that were there certainly gained knowledge and expanded their networks.)

Following our annual meeting, we rearranged some section board positions and did some decision-making to move us toward the future. Two things to know: 1. Check the board roster included with this newsletter for an updated list of people and positions. (You can also always contact our section executive, Jim Cherry, with any question, because he can get it to the appropriate board member for you.) 2. Our section fiscal year is changing. This move has been needed for some time, and after the change, our year will align with the year at ACA's national office (July 01-June 30). This will simplify lots of accounting details and help the board members be better managers of the section's finances.

So, these may seem like simple things—having the right people in the right places and having the data and information needed for making good financial decisions. But, they are important parts of the work that we are doing, and progress towards our section goals. Each one of these items represents the work of a team of volunteers, input from the membership, and new information and leadership from our national organization. We are truly at our best when all of these elements work together.

ACA Great Rivers Annual Conference – Great Rivers – Great Resources

The ACA Great Rivers 2007 Annual Conference was held in early November. There were 54 people who were able to join the fun and participate in the great learning and networking opportunities. The Wesley Woods Camp & Retreat Center, in central Iowa was a terrific host location for our conference.

Great sessions helped camp staff learn new concepts and activities. Joey Greene from Smartypants Improv Theater Co. showed us how the theories behind improvisation relate to communicating with staff and campers. Joey also helped lead us in a sharing of campfire songs, skits, and stories. Peg Smith, CEO of the National ACA Office spoke on Wednesday about ACA's 20/20 vision to serve 20 million by 2020. (See the article later in this newsletter.) Kat Shreve, with the National ACA office also joined us for several workshops on ACA Standards and program improvement based on Youth Development Outcomes.

As usual, we had a fun time with our silent auction and evening white elephant gift exchange. We raised \$726.51 to support ACA's general giving fund. Thanks to all who contributed, and joined in the fun!!

Plan Ahead for our 2008 Great Rivers Conference!

The Great Rivers Education Committee has decided to rotate the Annual Conference in two year cycles. The conference will be held in the same location for two years, and then rotate to another region of our section. We already have the details for the 2008 Annual Conference. Put the dates on your calendar now, and plan to attend!! If you are interested in presenting a workshop session, or have suggestions of workshops we could offer, please contact Traci Haselhuhn at tracidh@iastate.edu.

Dates: November 11-13, 2008 (early-bird activities on the 10th)

Location: Wesley Woods Camp & Retreat Center near Indianola, Iowa

Keynote Speaker: Jim Cain is scheduled to be with us for the whole conference to lead activities from his books *Teamwork & Teamplay* and *Raccoon Circles* as well as building community with music and dance. His keynote

presentation will focus on the value of play. Dr. Jim Cain is the author of five adventure-based teambuilding texts, including the award winning book [Teamwork & Teampay](#), which received the Karl Rohnke Creativity Award presented by the Association for Experiential Education, [The Book on Raccoon Circles](#), [A Teachable Moment](#), [Teambuilding Puzzles](#), and [The Value of Connection - In the Workplace](#). In addition to his adventure-based activities, Jim is also an accomplished square dance caller, guitarist, boomerang maker, engineer, researcher, author and generally has more books in his library than many developing nations.
www.teamworkandteampay.com

Awards at the 2007 Annual Meeting

Several Volunteer Awards were given at the Great Rivers Annual Conference. The Distinguished Service Award was given to Cindy Findley for her outstanding and extensive service to Girl Scouts of Northern Iowa at Camp Tanglefoot. Cindy has been part of the camping movement for 4 decades, and served in leadership roles in the section. Cindy has recently retired from her Girl Scout career leaving behind a legacy of music and truly giving kids a world of good. Congratulations Cindy!

The Distinguished Service Award was also given to Becky Godfrey, former ACA Great Rivers Section president and recently retired director of Girl Scout Camp L-Kee-Ta. Becky served girls at L-Kee-Ta for over 25 years. Now working as volunteer, outreach and property manager for a woman's health organization Becky continues to help young girls grow strong, and has agreed to serve on the section board as Nominating Chair.

Sunni Richardson was this year's recipient of the Meritorious Service Award for her work in the Nebraska area. Sunni has been the "go to girl" and trainer for standards for years and as one person said, "Sunni actually makes standards fun!" Congratulations Sunni and thank-you for all you do! Sunni has recently left her position at NLOM Carol Joy Holling Camp in Nebraska, and has taken the position of Ministry Coordinator with a Lutheran church in Lincoln. Sunni will continue with her ACA standards work.

The highest award given at the section level is the Honor Award. Roger Sasse of NLOM Carol Joy Holling Camp in Nebraska was the deserving recipient for 2007. Roger has served as the Section Treasurer for over a decade and helped us put into place policies and procedures that protect and utilize our resources to the fullest. Roger's work in the section has affected every camp and member of the Great Rivers Section. To Roger we say a heartfelt thank-you --- for your time, your commitment, and for the sharing of your kind and generous spirit!

Vendors who attended and supported our conference: You can still contact them!

Camp in a Can

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Cash-Wa Distributing Company

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Challenge Options Inc.

15980 94th Street
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National ACA 20/20 Vision – by Robyn Ratcliff, Section President

Last week, I had the opportunity to participate in a telephone conference with ACA national president, Ann Sheets, and president-elect, Peter Surgenor to discuss the new 20/20 Vision that our national organization is adopting. Those of you who were at the conference at Wesley Woods in November will remember the basics of this vision as it was carefully articulated in Peg Smith's keynote address.

It was interesting to hear feedback from other section presidents and presidents-elect from around the country. Everyone seemed to be very supportive of this new vision, and I look forward to seeing how it plays out in the Great Rivers section and impacts our work as a section board.

While I'm sure that much information about this vision will be coming your way, I'd like to give you a little "snapshot" of the exciting ideas that will be motivating our future as an organization:

1. Currently, 10 million children go to camp each year. By 2020, it is ACA's vision that 20 million children, youth and adults will go to camp each year.
2. Association systems and demographics must change to maintain relevance in a changing world.
3. ACA's mission is not about "camp," a noun we do not own and really cannot define. It is about making people better.
 - a. The camp experience is the best way to address the world's nature deficit disorder.
 - b. The camp experience is the best way to establish and maintain primary human connections to real, authentic relationships.
 - c. The camp community is the best way to deliver opportunities for human-powered activities that promote wellness.

This is the "bare bones" of a vision that will be reaching us in many different formats in the year ahead. Our national organization has a vision of the preferred future which is currently being communicated to section leadership and the national board. These are bold moves for our organization, and more will be known about how we will progress following the council of delegates at the national conference in February in Nashville.

This is truly an exciting time to participate in the changes and experience the energy as ACA, a 100-year old organization, makes the adjustments and "leaps of faith" needed to stay relevant in 2020 and beyond.

If you have concerns, comments or questions about any of this material, feel free to contact me, or either of our other delegates: Anne Snyder, Secretary or Lee Walz, VP Development.

Standards News Fall 2007

Standards Books Updates: All member camps in the Great Rivers ACA section were mailed new standards notebooks last fall. We will not be sending out additional copies to camps that are to be visited in 2008. Since last fall visitors and camps have discovered a number of issues and needed clarifications to this new book. The national ACA website has all the revisions in PDF format to download. You should download the file and place these pages in your standards notebook. The revised standards are what you will be scored on at your visit. Go to www.acacamps.org/accreditation/interpretations.pdf.

Standards Trainings for 2007-2008: The first standards training for 2008 visits will take place at the Great Rivers fall conference on November 5. There will be three additional sessions. Please register for one of the following sessions by emailing outdoorprogram@dogwoodtrails.org.

ACA Standards Training, Des Moines, IA, January 7, 2008

Camp Fire USA office, 9:00 am - 3:00 p.m.

Address: 5615 Hickman Road, Des Moines, Iowa 50310.

Bring your lunch or money to go get fast food.

ACA Standards Training, Ashland/Lincoln, NE, February 25, 2008

Site TBA, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

ACA Standards Training, Kansas City, MO, March 10, 2008

Girl Scouts of NE Kansas and NW Missouri office, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Be sure to email Linda DuBrul to register, and bring your new standards book to the training; we only have a limited number of extra books.

Visitor Update: Most ACA Great Rivers section visitors were updated in 2006-2007. If you are a visitor who did not update and would like to do visits in 2008, Please contact Linda DuBrul, Standards Chair, at 1-417-862-0004 or outdoorprogram@dogwoodtrails.org.

Visitor Training: Are you interested in becoming a volunteer camp visitor? An Associate Visitor training is scheduled for January 24-26 in the Kansas City area. Contact Linda DuBrul, Standards Chair for more information and an associate visitor application. Her contact information is phone 1-417-862-0004. Email: outdoorprogram@dogwoodtrails.org.

Section Staff Training Events

Does your camp offer a training that other camp staff could attend? Are you looking for an Archery course or other trainings? Jim Cherry, ACA Great Rivers Section Executive, collects information about camp staff trainings that are open to other camps. He has placed the information on the ACA web site. Go to www.acagreatrivers.org/training.php to see what has been collected. The following are some of the trainings listed. If you have other trainings to share, please email them to Jim Cherry, executive@acagreatrivers.org.

American Red Cross Wilderness First Aid: Course to be held at Carol Joy Holling Camp, Ashland, Nebraska, January 9-10, 2008. Wilderness First Aid is a two-day, 14-hour class designed for trip leaders, camp counselors, and outdoor enthusiasts. No previous experience is required. This emergency response training includes patient assessment, musculoskeletal and soft tissue injuries, splinting, and a variety of other topics. \$125 per person - includes housing, meals and program supplies. Register on-line at www.nlom.org. Click on "Get involved," then "Adult Programs," then select Wilderness First Aid. For more information, call or email Gretchen at 888-656-6254 or gahrens@nlom.org.

AAHS Instructor Clinic: Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries will be hosting an American Association for Horsemanship Safety Instructor Clinic May 13-17, 2008. The clinic will take place at Carol Joy Holling Center in Ashland, NE. It is a 40-hour intensive training program for riding lesson instructors, trail guides, wranglers and other equine staff at camps or stables. Registration is on line at www.nlom.org. Click on "Get involved," then "Adult Programs," and then select the AAHS instructor clinic link. Cost of clinic is \$425 for commuters and \$525 including overnight lodging, May 13-16. \$150 deposit is due at time of registration and balance is due at the start of the clinic. Registration deadline is April 1, 2008 and class size is limited to 12 participants. Registrations will be taken on a first come, first serve basis and last year the clinic filled up very quickly. For more information, call or email Gretchen at 888-656-6254 ext 605 or gahrens@nlom.org

No Child Left Inside! Part Two: Saturday, March 8, 2008 at Girl Scout Camp Maha near Omaha. Project WILD is a national conservation and environmental education program emphasizing wildlife. This program is based on the premise that young people and their adult mentors have a vital interest in learning about the Earth as the home for people and wildlife. Participants will receive the Project WILD K-12 Curriculum & Activity Guide and the Project WILD Aquatic K-12 Curriculum & Activity Guide. Cost is \$12. Contact Luther Mardock for more information, 402-558-8189. Registration required. Bring your own sack lunch.

ACA Great Rivers Cluster Meetings Return!

The second annual ACA Great Rivers Cluster Meetings will be held on March 4, 2008 in Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas/Missouri. The events are **FREE** and will be held 10 a.m. – 3 p.m., with lunch provided.

- The Kansas/Missouri event will be held at the Tall Oaks Conference Center, with Anne Wood as the facilitator.
- The Nebraska event will be held at the Nebraska Eastern 4-H Camp in Gretna, Nebraska, with Robyn Ratcliff as facilitator .
- The Iowa event will be held at Girl Scout Camp Sacajawea, near Boone, Iowa with Lee Walz facilitating.

More specific information will be announced later. We had our first annual Great Rivers Cluster Meetings last March. They were a great opportunity for camp staff to network, discuss topics related to their state or region, and learn about topics discussed at the ACA national conference. Our section delegates, Robyn Ratcliff, Lee Walz and Anne Wood are hosting these events and sharing information from the national conference as well as facilitating the regional discussion. Put this date on your calendar now, and watch for more information!

ACA National Conference-*The Strength of Many Voices*

February 12-15, 2008, Nashville, Tennessee. Join a nationwide network of camp professionals and others furthering child and youth development. Attend this educational event and bring bac to your camp valuable insights. *The Strength of Many Voices* offers a platform to explore ways to share what we know, with new and expanded audiences, in a compelling way. Headlining Speakers include Rick Rigsby, Ph.D., speaking about *Making an Impact in the Lives of Children, Youth and Teens*, Sally Jewell, CEO, REI, Inc. speaking about *Creating Winning Teams* and Michael Thompson, Ph.D. speaking on the topic, *The Pressured Child at Camp*. Read more about specific sessions and register at www.ACAcamps.org/conference.

ACA Mid States Conference- *Learn Together, Grow Together: Our Camper's World*

April 10-12, 2008, St. Charles, Illinois. The 16th Annual Mid States Camping Conference is a great opportunity to connect with camping professionals, train your staff, shop for deals, and fill your "bag of tricks". The 2008 theme, *Learn Together, Grow Together: Our Camper's World*, embodies the conference mission of staff and administrators learning together with emphasis this year on the campers we all serve. The keynote speaker, Dr. Michael Thompson is a psychologist, school consultant, and author. From director to first year counselors, there is something for everyone with over 100 educational sessions. In addition to the conference, Leadership Institute sessions are held prior to the Mid States Conference, and offer full day workshops and certifications from industry leaders. Put April 10-12, 2008 on your calendar, and visit the Web site www.acamidstates.org for more information.

If you have other training sessions to share, please email Jim Cherry!

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

Paul Denowski reports that Amy Henry, former Assistant Director of YMCA Camp Wapsi in northeast Iowa is moving to Utah to be a Camp Director. Good luck Amy!

Suz Welch has accepted an interim position with the Camp Fire USA Georgia Council. She is both the executive director and the camp director, as she works to build the programs in the Atlanta and northeast Georgia area.

Nicole Rottinghaus, formerly of Camp Tanglefoot and Northern Iowa University will join the Girl Scouts of NE KS & NW MO as an outdoor program specialist. Nicole will direct Camp Prairie Schooner resident camp and work with the Girl Scout challenge program.

Deke Rider has been named Director of Camp Wesley Woods following a national search and interviews with the top candidates. He started working at Wesley Woods in 1998 as Waterfront Director and became the Program Coordinator in 1999. He has been serving as interim director of the camp since this spring.

News from NLOM Camp Carol Joy Holling:

Sunni Richardson has moved from NLOM and Carol Joy Holling Camp after 17 to a new position at First Lutheran Church in Lincoln. She will be serving as the Ministry Coordinator starting January 1. Sunni will be working with evangelism, community connections, Stephen Ministries, volunteer coordination and teaching projects such as retreats, trainings and workshops. With a little luck and the right schedule she is hoping to continue serving as a Standards Instructor and Standards Visitor. You can reach her at sunnir@alltel.net.

Tim Barr, recently added to the NLOM Program team, is headed off in new directions. Watch for Tim's name in light as he pursues his acting career and looks for new, exciting ways to work with youth. He wraps up his work with NLOM in December.

Dave Coker has been named the new Executive Director of Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries. He takes over in January stepping in for retiring Roger Sasse. Pastor Eric Meissner will become Director/NLOM Programs on January 14 and Susan Bolte will join the NLOM staff as Assistant Director/Retreat & Conference Operations on January 2. Please welcome these new folks as you have an opportunity to connect with them.

Great Rivers Newsletter By E-mail

Communication with Camping Professionals in the Great Rivers Section has changed over the past years. With more people communicating by email, our section executive, Jim Cherry has been passing on information to our section members 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, 816-285-2004 or email: dd.gass@campfireusa.org.

ACA Great Rivers Section Board Roster 2006-07

If you have questions about the ACA Great Rivers Section, contact Jim Cherry or one of the board members listed below.

Section Executive:

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Secretary:

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Standards Chair:

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Education Chair:

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Legislation Chair:

Public Relations Chair:

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Board Member-At-Large:

Nominating Chair:

Becky Godfrey, Burlington, Iowa 52655
Phone: 319-753-6209 Email: yerfdogs@yahoo.com.

