



“The Current”

The American Camp Association
Great Rivers Section Newsletter
September 2008

From the Section President, Robyn Ratcliff

September? Really?

There are so many things demanding our attention right now. If you're like me, you are flipping between news sources, following media storms and real-live storms, too. Meanwhile, resident camp is over, fall programs are demanding attention, and next year's budget is looming on the horizon. It's enough to make me long for summer—for issues like lost sleeping bags (How do you lose a sleeping bag? It's huge!) and overcooked tater tots (Crunch!).

With the “simple” days of summer behind us, I guess it's time to knuckle down, buckle down and return to “cubicle” or “office” or “school” life. Get your dress pants ready! If the earlier sunsets and turning calendar pages aren't inspiring you this month—here are a few things that ACA has in store:

1. Our exciting annual Great Rivers conference with Jim Cain! There is comprehensive info about this exciting, affordable education and networking opportunity in the pages of this newsletter. I look forward to this conference every year—and I ALWAYS walk away with new information, new contacts and new ideas!
2. The ACA 20/20 vision! As we look critically at our own camp registration numbers and program evaluations, we can clearly see ACA supporting our efforts. Now, more than ever, our national organization is poised to help individual camps increase and to boost national awareness of our important industry. All of our organizations and programs will benefit from ACA's new plan.
3. Pumpkin Cider! Oh, wait...that doesn't really have anything to do with ACA...but it IS a special autumn treat!
4. The ACA Great Rivers Annual Meeting! Where else can you see your fellow camp professionals recognized with our annual awards ceremony, watch us wrestle with Robert's Rules of Order, vote on your local board leadership and learn about the “business” side of our great section? (Check conference materials for date, time and registration info!)

So, get ready, iron those creases in your khakis, and I'll see you in November in Indianola, Iowa! Bring on the leaf raking! The candy corn! And the great opportunities ACA has in store!

ACA Great Rivers Section 2008 Fall Conference

The 2008 ACA Great Rivers Fall Conference is coming soon! Join ACA friends November 11-13, 2008 at Wesley Woods Camp and Retreat Center near Indianola, Iowa. The theme for the conference is “Building Something Great Together”. The Tuesday Keynote speaker will be Dr. Jim Cain, from Teamwork & Teamplay, with a session titled, *The Value of Play*. You can read more about Jim Cain at his Web site, www.teamworkandteamplay.com. On Wednesday, there will be a variety of great sessions. And this year, there will be an additional special food service track. The conference is offering a day-only package including access to the expanded vendor show, lunch, and workshops so that food service personnel can attend for the day. Registration information should be available soon. Watch your e-mail box.

New! Pre-Conference Session!

Something else new this year, is the opportunity to participate in a Pre-Conference session with Dr. Jim Cain. This interactive session, *Exploring Leadership Actively* will be held Monday, November 10, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Camp Wesley Woods. The fee is \$75 per person if registered by 10/13/08. Visit the Great Rivers section Web site at www.acagreatrivers.org for the conference details including: registration form, event schedule, pre-conference information, vendors and workshop session proposals. If you have questions, please contact the section's Education Chair, Traci Haselhuhn, at 515-795-3338 or tracidh@iastate.edu.

Standards News

Accreditation Visits Take Place in Spite of Floods and Storms

Midwest camps – and especially those in Iowa – were hit very hard this summer with flooding and severe storms. Most camps were able to continue operating through creative scheduling and cooperation with community neighbors. Other states in our region were less severely affected.

This summer, volunteer ACA visitors went to 27 camps for accreditation visits. In some cases visits were rescheduled due to weather damage – resulting in a change of visitors. A big thank you is due to all the visitors who stepped up and took on an extra or different visit. A big thank you is also due to all the camps that worked hard to prepare for visits and welcomed the visit teams. Good job!

As of this writing, the section is waiting on the scores from the last of the summer visits. The ACA Great Rivers section board will meet in October to approve accreditation and re-accreditation of camps visited this summer. The section board will also vote to approve continuing accreditation for those camps accredited within the three year cycle. All accredited camps need to be sure to have signed the annual statement of compliance and have your service fees paid. Accreditation letters from the section will go out via e-mail to all eligible camps following the board meeting.

Plan Ahead for 2009

Camps that are due a visit in 2009 should plan now to attend a Basic Standards Training this fall or next spring. Watch for your fall conference flier for the first training in Iowa just prior to the Annual conference. All camps scheduled for a 2009 visit will receive a notification via e-mail with a complete training schedule.

Camp Visits 2009 Need WDP

What is a WDP? This is the Written Document Preview what used to be called the pre-visit. A number of camps asked for this in 2008 and were very pleased with the process. Not only did directors get a chance to make changes or additions to their existing documentation, many of them breezed through their site visit in record time. Visitors heard comments like, "I can't believe how quick the visit is going since we did the preview."

If your camp is due a visit in 2009, plan on setting up a preview. In the Spring, once you know who your visitors are, you can set up a Preview or even e-mail documents to your visitor to review. Another visitor can also look at your paperwork and record the results for the visit team. There are some documents that will need additional review during the onsite visit. For example, at the preview you can show your staff skill verification or evaluation forms. At the onsite visit you will need to show completed forms on your staff. If you have questions, be sure to contact Linda DuBrul, section standards chair, by phone: 417-862-0004 or e-mail: ldubrul@dogwoodtrails.org.

Legislative Monitor Needed

Anyone interested in helping monitor legislative activity in your state ---as it may pertain to camps-- please contact Becky Godfrey at 319-208-9868 home or 319-753-6209 work or e-mail yerfdogs@yahoo.com. The section board could use your help!



Great Rivers Section and Other 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. If you have other trainings to share, please e-mail them to Jim Cherry, executive@acagreatrivers.org.

Wilderness First Aid Training

The American Red Cross Wilderness First Aid Basics program is an outdoor oriented first aid training program. This is a 16-hour first aid course for backcountry situations when EMS is not readily available. The \$115 cost for the course includes all course materials, fees, food, and the facility use. You must be present at all sessions to get certified. For more information contact Diane Kratz at (402)334-1604 or lewisandclark.training@yahoo.com. The course schedule is as follows:

- October 17 – 19, 2008 at Eastern Nebraska 4H Camp, Gretna NE. Indoor sleeping facilities are available. Deadline to register is September 17, 2008.

- November 7 – 9, 2008 at Little Sioux Scout Ranch, Little Sioux IA. Bring your own tent for sleeping. Deadline to register is October 8, 2008.
- February 6 – 8, 2009 at Eastern Nebraska 4H Camp, Gretna NE. Indoor sleeping facilities are available. Deadline to register is January 7, 2009.
- March 13 – 15, 2009 at Eastern Nebraska 4h Camp, Gretna NE. Indoor sleeping facilities are available. Deadline to register is February 11, 2009.
- April 3 – 5, 2009 at Camp Eagle, Cedar Bluffs NE. Bring your own tent for sleeping. Deadline to register is March 4, 2009.

ACA Mid States Camping Conference – March 26-28, 2009 Call For Presentations – Deadline: November 1, 2008

Camp personnel are invited to submit a proposal to provide an educational session at the 17th Annual Mid States Camping Conference, March 26-28, 2009 at Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles, IL. There will be six 75 minute educational sessions: one on Thursday evening, three on Friday and two on Saturday. Potential speakers are welcome to submit multiple proposals. A committee will review and approve the proposals. Please visit the Mid States Web site for the proposal application and conference schedule details. Go to www.acamidstates.org. Or for more information, you can contact Julie Cackler, who is representing the Great Rivers Section on the Mid States committee, at juliec@campfireusaia.com.

When writing a proposal, please keep in mind this year's theme and the mission of this Conference. 2009 Theme: Learn Together, Grow Together; Sowing the Seeds of Sustainability. The ACA Mid States Camping Conference Mission Statement: *The Mid States Camping Conference, empowered by the American Camp Association, Mid America, is an inclusive community educational opportunity, allowing camps to bring multiple staff at a reasonable cost, offering quality programs geared to all registrants in an easily accessible and environmentally appropriate location.*

Star Search 2008 – ACA Great Rivers Section Award Nominations Wanted

Now is the time to say thanks, wow or hooray to a volunteer, staff or organization in the ACA Great Rivers Section! Please look over the categories below and think of whom we need to celebrate or recognize. Please submit your nomination to Becky Godfrey by October 15, at yerferdogs@yahoo.com. Let's make our Annual Meeting a real celebration of our Shining Stars!

Honor Award: This award shall be regarded as the highest award the section can bestow upon it's members in recognition of long and distinguished service. No more than one award will be given each year. The recipient shall:

1. Be the type of person whose contributions could inspire youth to live vigorously, courageously, and freely as citizens in a free society.
2. Be clearly outstanding in the camping field; in service, programming, teaching or administration.
3. Be highly regarded by his/her professional peers.
4. Currently, (or within the last year) be a member or retiree of the section and have held membership in the National Organization for at least 10 years.

Meritorious Service Award: No more than two awards may be given each year. The recipient shall:

1. Currently, (or within the last year) be a member of the ACA Great Rivers Section.
2. Have demonstrated distinguished service to the Great Rivers Section directly, or represented the Great Rivers Section at the regional or national level.

Distinguished Service Award: This award will be bestowed upon an individual who has given outstanding and extensive service to a particular camp for at least 10 years. A camp may nominate an individual for this honor to recognize them for lifetime contributions to the camp or camping movement. This award may be presented at the ACA Great Rivers Section Annual Meeting or at a special camp event.

The Fish Award: In the spirit of the Pike Place Fish Market, made famous by their unrelenting commitment to the experience of their customers, this award recognizes a spectacular camp program serving youth or adults in our 3.5 state section. Has your camp or a neighbor camp created something truly unique that changes campers' lives?

Certificate of Appreciation/Friend of Camping Award: This award shall be bestowed upon an individual, organization, or business that may or may not be a member of ACA, but has contributed significantly to the camping/environmental movement through their efforts in allied or auxiliary fields. No more than two awards shall be given each year. The recipient shall have made important contributions to the camping/environmental movement from the vantage point of his/her profession. For example: media, legislation, education, architecture, land science, interest groups, service and others.

From Our Members

Tragedy at NLOM Carol Joy Holling Camp: Eric Meissner from Nebraska's Camp Carol Joy Holling shared a tragedy that struck their camp staff in August. Julius Kiptum Kosgei was a counselor on the 2008 summer ministry team at Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries. He was killed in a car accident on Monday, August 4. A memorial service was held at Carol Joy Holling Camp on August 13. There was also a memorial service at Cloud Community College in Concordia, KS where Julius was a student and a runner on the track team. Julius is originally from Kenya. Although the camp season had ended, many camp staff returned for the memorial service.

Moving Home: Barb Collins returns to the home of the Huskers! Barb Collins is returning to the great state of Nebraska following a six year stint as the Director of Outdoor Program and Property for the Girl Scouts of NE KS & NW MO. She will be missed by all the Kansas Sunflowers and Show-Me Missourians who have come to cherish her careful, sensitive approach to camp leadership. We wish her well in her new journey!

New Camper: Camp Hantesa Director, Sarah Winfrey waited until the last day of summer day camp to add to her family. Ruth Tempest Winfrey was born at 4:35 am on August 20, 2008. She was 8 lbs, 2 oz., and 21 inches long, with a full head of hair! Mother and baby are both doing great. Ruth has two big brothers who love living at Camp Hantesa, located in central Iowa.

Congratulations: David Sherry, Des Moines YMCA Camp Executive Director is now a member of the ACA National Standards Commission. Congratulations Dave!

And, Robyn Ratcliff is now the Director of Outdoor Program and Property for the Girl Scouts of NE KS & NW MO. Congratulations Robyn!

And, Suz Welch, former director of Camp Hantesa, received an award from the University of Northern Iowa at a special ceremony in early September. Congratulations Suz! Suz is currently interim executive director, with the Camp Fire USA Georgia Council, and is working with a Camp Fire Camp in northeast Georgia.

It's a Small World: Since retiring from working with Girl Scout Camp L-Kee-Ta, Becky Godfrey has moved on to working with a private foundation to reduce the number of unplanned pregnancies in the state of Iowa. This is part of a national model for legislation to be proposed, and Iowa and Colorado are part of these initiatives. The "Iowa Initiative" is being coordinated by executive director Christie Vilsack, wife of former Iowa governor, Tom Vilsack. Christie is a long time camper of Girl Scout Camp L-Kee-Ta, where Becky was a director. Small world!

Wilderness Escape: Linda DuBrul spent two weeks in New Mexico in July teaching archery. The event was called the Women's Wilderness Escape and was sponsored by the National Rifle Association. It was essentially high adventure camp for adults. Since this was the first time the event took place, all the equipment was brand new. The instructors came in early and put everything together and set up the activities. The 50 women participants came from all over the U.S. and spent a whole day at each of five activities, including archery, shotguns, and rifles. Special sessions were offered in the evening on topics such as turkey calling and outdoor survival. After the five days, everyone went on a campout at a wilderness canyon where they learned geocaching, tree stand safety, and participated in a Native American sisters' ceremony. According to Linda, the archery sessions were amazing. "Anyone who teaches archery at camp usually sees the campers for an hour or two and usually only a few times during the week. Having participants for a whole day seemed overwhelming at first but worked out to be wonderful. The first day everyone had at least one bulls eye. By the fifth group, the ladies were shooting 10 out of 12 arrows in the bull." As a side note— Linda noted that her campers at Girl Scout camp complain about walking to the dining hall which is maybe a quarter mile from their cabins. At the Whittington Center in New Mexico it was three miles from the cabins to the dining hall and no one walked.

Jim Cherry reports on his summer: "I had a great summer. In May I went to the BWCAW in NE Minnesota and planted 2000 trees at the camp I once directed. Their two islands had been largely burned off the previous year and they lost 40 of their 60 buildings. I was able to hand plant about 100 trees/hour. It took me about 2 ½ days to get them all planted. (Had to rest once in a while.) When finished I went to Grand Marais, MN and took part in a week of learning how to build timber frame structures. With a group of other volunteers we built 2 timber frame structures that were later assembled at the camp and will become replacement buildings for a couple of the camper cabins that had been lost in the fire."

"In June I went to Montana (a little trout fishing on the Big Horn River) and then to Idaho (a National Smokejumper Association board meeting and a jumper base reunion) and then to S.W. Colorado for a week of volunteer work of restoring a historic forest service guard station in the San Juan Mountains. In July it was back to Stanley, Idaho to build log worm fence around a historic ranger station that is now a museum and then back to Montana for two weeks of restoring a historic lookout tower and a forest service bunk house. In September I will head back to the BWCAW for another week of volunteer work where we will rebuild the Stairway Portage between Duncan Lake and Rose Lake. I will also put in a week of volunteering at the camp I once directed where I will help with cabin construction. To cap off September my son and I will do a little more backpacking on Isle Royale National Park."

Camp Finbrooke Participates in Linus Project: This summer, Girl Scouts attending the Treasure Seekers and Robin Hood Adventure at Camp Finbrooke made fleece blankets as a service project (give to the poor like Robin Hood). They had a great time creating their blankets which were donated to the Child Advocacy Center in Springfield, MO. Later this summer the Advocacy Center served two brothers and their sister. The children were able to choose a blanket to take with them. The three blankets chosen were those made by the Finbrooke campers. All the campers in this program are being notified that they have made a difference in the life of a child.

Student Camp Leadership Academy Dates Announced

The Student Camp Leadership Academy (SCLA) is a weekend retreat that brings together students, camp professionals, national American Camp Association (ACA) staff and leadership to explore, learn, and understand what the camp professional of the future must be and the leadership opportunities within the ACA structure at the local and national levels to impact the development of youth and others.

The next SCLA will take place November 7-9, 2008, at Camp White Eagle in Leaf River, Illinois (thirty miles from Rockford, Illinois). College students wanting to attend SCLA must apply and be approved to participate through their ACA section offices regardless of where the funding for the students' SCLA fee is coming from (even if the student is paying for himself or herself). The section offices and education/scholarship committees serve as a critical screening tool for ensuring that students attending SCLA have demonstrated a keen interest in the camp profession, as well as the maturity to attend an advanced collegiate training event. For further information, application deadlines, or application packets for the 2008 SCLA, please visit the SCLA Web site: www.ACACamps.org/scla/. Please, note that all application packets for ACA Great Rivers students should be submitted to Jim Cherry, the ACA Great Rivers executive director. All attendees must be a member of ACA.

The Student Camp Leadership Academy (SCLA) team has put together an article about SCLA which is published on the ACA's website at the following address, www.acacamps.org/scla/next_generation.php. Tom Neppel has been the ACA Great Rivers section representative to this committee.

ACA Camping Magazine Goes Digital

The American Camp Association has announced that *Camping Magazine* is now available on the Internet, at www.ACACamps.org/campingmag/digital. The digital version has the same content as the printed version, with advantages such as the ability to print and e-mail articles, send an e-mail to the editor, and click to go right to an advertiser's Web site.

Take a Child Outside Week

Take A Child Outside Week, September 24–30, 2008, is an international program designed to help break down obstacles that keep children from discovering the natural world. By arming parents, teachers, and other caregivers with resources on outdoor activities, the program's goal is to help children throughout the country develop a better understanding and appreciation of the environment in which they live and a burgeoning

enthusiasm for its exploration. For more information, visit www.takeachildoutside.org.

New ACA Video Promotes "Change A Life Today" Message

Campers, staff, and parents tell the story of camp and the value it brings to children and youth in a new video produced by ACA. Moving interviews with children describing their favorite things and camp activities brings home the message about how camp changes lives. Filled with action and from-the-heart monologues, children and parents describe the significance of camp in their own words.

ACA will use this powerful video on YouTube®, on the ACA Web site, and through individual camp Web sites to promote awareness of the benefits of the camp experience and the importance of donating to the greater cause of sending a child in need to camp. Go to the ACA Web site to learn how to download a copy of this video to your camp's Web site.

ACA Hotline Number

The American Camp Association has a hotline number that can be called if camp directors 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 Great Rivers Section Board Roster 2008

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

Section Executive:

Rev. Jim Cherry, 2335 300th St., Ventura, IA 50482
Voice Mail: 888-748-3783, Home: 641-927-4428
Email: executive@acagreatrivers.org or jjcherry@peconet.net

President:

Robyn Ratcliff, Girl Scouts of NE Kansas and NW Missouri, 8383 Blue Parkway Dr., Kansas City, MO 64133
Phone: 816-358-8755, ext. 3068 E-mail: robynratcliff@girlscoutsksmo.org

Vice President Development:

Lee Walz, United Methodist Camps, 4800 Santana Circle, Columbia, MO 65203
Phone: 573-814-1999 E-mail: LWalz@moumethodist.org

Vice President Program, Nominating and Awards:

Lisa Nichols, Kansas City MO, Parks and Rec. 4600 E. 63rd St, Kansas City, MO 64130
Phone: 816-513-7532 E-mail: lisa_nichols@kcmo.org

Treasurer:

Chris Klingenberg, YMCA Camp Kitaki, 6000 Cornhusker Way, Lincoln, NE 68507
Phone: 402-434-9225 E-mail: CKlingenberg@ymcalincoln.org

Secretary:

Anne Snyder, YMCA Camp Wood, RR 1, Box 78, Elmdale, KS 66850
Phone: 620-273-8641 E-mail: ymca@campwood.org

Standards Chair:

Linda DuBrul, Girl Scouts of Dogwood Trails Council, 210 S. Ingram Mill Rd., Springfield, MO 65802
Phone: 417-862-0004 E-mail: ldubrul@dogwoodtrails.org

Education Chair:

Traci Haselhuhn, Iowa 4-H Center, 1991 Peach Avenue, Madrid, IA 50156
Phone: 515-795-3338 E-mail: tracidh@iastate.edu

Legislation Chair: Position available.

Public Relations Chair:

DD Gass, Camp Fire USA, 1100 Walnut, Suite 1900, Kansas City, MO 64106
Phone: 816-285-2004 E-mail: dd.gass@campfireusa.org

Membership Chair:

Tom Nepl, Nepl Landscape Architecture, PO Box 906, Ames, IA 50010
Phone 515-232-6530 E-mail: Tom@NeplLandscapeArchitecture.com

Complaints Resolution Chair:

Dave Sherry, Des Moines YMCA Camp, 1192 166th Dr., Boone, IA 50036
Phone: 515-432-7558 E-mail: david.sherry@dmymca.org

Board Member-At-Large:

Lynn Steinkamp, Girl Scouts of the Great Plains Council, 2121 S. 44th St., Omaha, NE 68105
Phone 402-558-8189 ext. 215 E-Mail: lsteinkamp@gpgirlscouts.org.

Nominating and Awards Chair:

Becky Godfrey, Burlington, Iowa 52655
Phone: 319-753-6209 E-mail: verfdogs@yahoo.com.

Happy Fall!

