

December 2009



# The Current ACA Great Rivers Newsletter

## ACA Great Rivers Annual Conference A Success!



The ACA Great Rivers Section Education Committee, produced a great conference at the Carol Joy Holling Conference Center near Omaha in early November. Conference highlights included great keynote sessions by Jodi Rudick, Bob Ditter and Dave Sherry, a variety of informative sessions, Standards training, White Elephant Auction, camp tours, and lots of great networking. In addition, the



ACA Great Rivers Annual Meeting was held during the conference. Thanks to the hospitality of the Camp Carol Joy Holling staff and to all the hard work by the Education Committee. The ACA Great Rivers Education Committee Chair is Don Enger, YMCA Camp Wapsie; and committee members Pastor Brad Meyer, Carol Joy Holling; Natalie Roberts, YMCA Camp Kitaki; Nicole Rottinghaus, Girls Scouts of NEKS and NWMO; Amanda Sonnier, Creative Memories Consultant; Jason Villalobos, NE 4H Summer Camps; Tony Wagnitz, YMCA Camp Foster; and Barb Collins, YMCA Camp Kitaki.

### Message from the Education Committee

We would like to send a thank you to everyone for attending this year's ACA Great Rivers Conference. The feedback from our speakers and attendees was very positive. Hopefully you were able to take plenty of great ideas with you, now you just need to put them into place at your camp. Hopefully you have been able to keep in touch with your new or renewed friendships in camping, especially your Train Buddy (Air High 5)!!



If your camp would like to host the 2011 & 2012 ACA Great Rivers Annual Conference please contact Don Enger at [enger@crmetroymca.org](mailto:enger@crmetroymca.org) or go to our Great Rivers Web site for the application.

Thanks again, and make sure to mark your calendar for next year's conference, November 16-18, 2010, once again hosted at Camp Carol Joy Holling. For any questions regarding the conference or any of the attached documents, please contact Don Enger: [enger@crmetroymca.org](mailto:enger@crmetroymca.org) or 319-435-2557

## Cluster Meetings to be Held March 2

The third annual ACA Great Rivers Cluster Meetings will be held, on Tuesday March 2 in Iowa, Nebraska and Missouri or Kansas. Save the date and put it on your calendar. More information will be available soon.

### Host Camps Wanted

If your camp would like to host a Cluster meeting, please e-mail Don Enger, [enger@crmetroymca.org](mailto:enger@crmetroymca.org) by December 22, 2009. ACA Great Rivers will cover the cost of lunch for the host site.

## From the ACA Great Rivers Section President

How far behind are you? How far behind is your camp?

These are not the typical holiday greetings for a December newsletter column. They are questions that may help you get the perspective you need to move your operation forward. And, if you're like me, these next two weeks may be the only quiet time in the office this year! Here's what I will be processing while everyone else is on vacation baking cookies and watching daytime television.

Last month, our ACA Great Rivers conference really made me stop and think about how far behind my organization has fallen. We don't have a blog or even a Facebook page. We have a rudimentary website. Our camps rely on our parent organization for marketing, and after losing two of their three staff positions, marketing has zero time for us. Challenging economic times drove our attention away from our campers and members. We focused exclusively on the budget, the bottom line, and opportunities to cut costs.

Well, here's the thing about cutting costs--it's a short-term strategy, and it doesn't move you forward. So, now we're up to our necks in consequences for our cost savings (deferred maintenance, tired staff, disengaged members). And, we can't keep cutting costs, but we need more revenue--and we need to get back to the core of our mission, or our exhausted staff and our disconnected members are going to leave. We're going to have to increase revenue and rebuild the trust of our campers. But, it seems like we've spent so much time concentrating on what we're not going to do, that it's taking a lot of energy to reverse that downward momentum and start thinking about what we can do.

And that, my friends, is overwhelming.

And when I get overwhelmed, I tend to grumble, vent, and then spend a few hours on tedious detailed tasks that I know I can complete--so at least my day is not a total loss.

That's not helping.

So, back to our ACA conference--one of our keynote speakers, Jodi Rudick, mentioned reading the blog of Seth Godin, author of those small books on lots of leadership/marketing topics. I have read several of his books and liked him. But I had never subscribed to a blog. Wasn't even sure how to do it.

But, I gave it a whirl. Turns out it's easy to subscribe and now I get a little Seth in my inbox almost everyday. It's inspiring, and I can share it with my colleagues who appreciate the positive energy and the idea that maybe there are good things we should be doing. It helps me plant the seeds for positive ideas I can bring up later. Bit by bit, the momentum starts changing direction.



This week, Seth posted about the top ten things your company should do right now if you haven't even used a computer for the last 14 years. Wow. Now, even my office isn't that far behind. So, the list was easy--about 6 of the things we've already done. Yeah! Something to celebrate! And the other 4, a short list I think we can handle. Plus, the major "nay-sayers" in the office will be easier to convince with an authoritative source (Seth) arriving in their inboxes tomorrow!

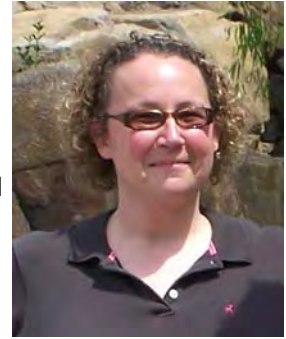
Enjoy your holidays. Spend two hours identifying simple, small steps forward that will impact your clients. Subscribe to a blog (or two). Once you're a little less behind than you were, then it's time to eat cookies.



## Join the ACA Great Rivers Facebook Group

Share camp stories, and resources! Keep updated with local camp news. If you are on Facebook, you know how easy it is to share information and keep informed. Search for "American Camp Association Great Rivers Section", or follow the link below. Join the group and share with fellow camp professionals!

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#/group.php?gid=109368956520>.



## ACA Great Rivers Section Standards by Linda DuBrul

The ACA Standards have changed slightly. All camps should go to [www.ACACamps.org](http://www.ACACamps.org) and click on the latest updates to the standards or type this link into your browser: [http://www.acacamps.org/accreditation/standards\\_revision\\_update.php](http://www.acacamps.org/accreditation/standards_revision_update.php).

These changes are effective in January 2010. Remember that the Standard, HR-4 should be done annually and HR-4A is mandatory. If your camp uses an outside agency/business to do your background checks, you will want to note the section on getting them to give you written documentation that they check the sex offender registry in ALL 50 states.

### Camps to be Visited in 2010

If your camp was visited in 2007 and will be visited again in 2010, you will want to be sure you have all the updates that have taken place since then in your ACA Accreditation Process Guide (APG) as you prepare for your visit. Go to [www.ACACamps.org](http://www.ACACamps.org) and click on accreditation, then click on updates 2007-2007 or type this link into your browser: [http://www.acacamps.org/accreditation/interpretations\\_may07\\_jan08.pdf](http://www.acacamps.org/accreditation/interpretations_may07_jan08.pdf).

Print out the replacement pages and insert them in your APG. Be sure to also make the minor changes listed at the end of this update. There are no replacement pages for these but the standards have changed slightly. You will also want the latest revisions that go into effect in January 2010 listed at [http://www.acacamps.org/accreditation/standards\\_revision\\_update.php](http://www.acacamps.org/accreditation/standards_revision_update.php).

### Information About Standards Trainings

One more **very important note** for you—if your camp has the same director or person responsible for the standards who took training in 2007, you just need to do the online standards update at <http://www.acacamps.org/einstitute/standardsupdate/>. This is an approximately one hour training. Camps that have changed directors or person responsible for the standards will need to attend a Basic Standards Training. These are currently being scheduled. Look for an announcement or e-mail for dates for trainings in Des Moines in January, Lincoln in February, and Kansas City in March. There will be a Basic Standards course in the Des Moines area on January 14, 2010. For more information, contact Linda DuBrul, and watch for more information



### Written Document Previews for 2010

All camps due a visit in 2010 should plan on a Written Document Preview. To facilitate this we will be making visitor assignments earlier in 2010. Previews can be done in person or by electronically sending documents to the visitor. The visitor who does the preview does not need to be the one assigned to your visit but should not be someone from your own camp. This is a great opportunity to have your documentation checked and revised if necessary prior to the day of the visit. Previewing documentation also significantly reduces the time spent on the actual visit day. For more information about the section standards, contact Linda DuBrul at [n0imy@arri.net](mailto:n0imy@arri.net).

## ACA Mid States Conference in March

**Does your camp want to Survive this next year? . . . or Does it want to Thrive?**

Join fellow camp professionals for the 18th annual Mid States Camping conference, where over 1000 camp directors, program directors, frontline summer staff, and other camping enthusiasts gather to learn and grow together. Keynotes will include Scott Arizala who is sponsored by the ACA Ohio Section, and Michael Brandwein, thanks to MAIC's sponsorship. Mid States also includes a pre-conference Leadership Institute, over 90 Educational Sessions and a large Exhibit Hall.

Watch for Mid States registration packet to be mailed out in mid-January, or online registration is available now thanks to UltraCamp at [www.acamidstates.org](http://www.acamidstates.org). Mark your calendars now for March 11-13, 2010 to be at the Pheasant Run Resort in St Charles, Illinois.



Learn Together, Grow Together



March 11 - 13, 2010 — Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles, Illinois

## ACA Great Rivers Annual Awards



Awards were part of the ACA Great Rivers Annual Meeting, held at Camp Carol Joy Holling in November. Those awarded are described below.

**Honor Award:** This award shall be regarded as the highest award the section can bestow upon its members in recognition of long and distinguished service. No more than one award will be given each year. The 2009 recipient is James Cherry, Section Executive.

**Certificate of Appreciation/Friend of Camping Award:** This award shall be bestowed upon an individual, organization, or business that has contributed significantly to the camping/environmental movement through their efforts in allied or auxiliary fields. The 2009 recipients are:  
Challenge Options  
Anne Snyder, Camp Wood YMCA, Secretary of the ACA Great Rivers Board for three years.

In addition, the ACA Great Rivers Section nominated an individual to receive a national ACA award.

**National ACA Award—Special Recognition Award**—Will be awarded at the 2010 ACA National Conference to Jim Cherry. The Special Recognition Award is designed to honor groups, organizations, or individuals for their efforts to promote camp. Jim joined ACA in 1972 and has been a member of the Iowa and Great Rivers Sections. Jim has been an ACA Visitor since 1990 and an ACA Standards Instructor since 1997. Jim was an active section board member of the Iowa and Great Rivers Sections for many years prior to becoming section executive.

Jim has special skills in explaining standards, accreditation and membership to new and potential members. He has spent many hours helping camp staff understand standards compliance and suggesting ways to complete the needed documentation. Jim has also actively sought to provide resources and referrals for camp staff. With his leadership, our volunteer board has achieved superior results: membership growth, stellar educational events (3-day conference held annually), excellent section communications and a very strong standards program.

When he began this position more than nine years ago, Jim was the first paid staff person any of the recently merged sections making up Great Rivers had ever employed. He helped build the identity of the section and worked closely with the board to define the scope of his job and determine appropriate boundaries between staff and board responsibilities. Jim always let the volunteers lead the way—and nine years later, the results of his actions can be seen in the continuously growing volunteer leadership and vital programs of the section.

Jim is an inspirational leader for the camps of Great Rivers. At educational events, young professionals compete to sit at his meal-time table and hear the stories he tells. Ask him about his coffee tables. Auction bidders compete for the honey he generously donates from his own hives.

## ACA National Conference Celebrates 100th Anniversary

The ACA National Conference is February 16-19, 2010 in Denver, Colorado. Special anniversary activities are planned throughout the conference, including a spectacular celebratory luncheon on Thursday, February 18. Join the fun, sample sessions from the educationally rich program network with hundreds of camp and youth development professionals, and take home ideas, resources, innovations, and strategies that you can implement immediately. To register, go to [www.acacamps.org/conference](http://www.acacamps.org/conference).



## From Our Members

### In Sympathy

Linda DuBrul's husband, Bob, passed away December 9 following an illness. If you would like to send her a card or a note, her address is 966 E. Dade 152, Everton, MO 65646 or e-mail her at [n0imy@arri.net](mailto:n0imy@arri.net).

### Going Ga Ga at Great Rivers

Don Enger, YMCA Camp Wapsie, sent a new game idea: "This summer a new game was brought to many camps in the Great Rivers Section called "Ga Ga." If you have not already played it has become all the rage at the camps who installed it at their camp! The game originally from Israel is a form of dodge ball played within an octagon. The objective of the game is to eliminate players by hitting a ball with an open hand at or below your opponents' knees. If you have not played it, it is a 'must do' as most campers are enthusiastic about the game.

### Successful Capital Campaign for Camp Wood

Camp Wood YMCA has completed a \$6.7 million Capital campaign with the dedication of the Ritchie Lodge in November. The camp has spent the last five years constructing a new horse pavilion, health center, renovating the bathhouse, putting in a new camp wide sewer system, covered pavilion, new Director's house, renovating two staff houses. The Ritchie Lodge now houses the administration offices, new dining hall, commercial kitchen and breakout rooms. The staff invite you to come see Camp Wood YMCA and what they have accomplished! For more information, visit their Web site at [www.campwood.org](http://www.campwood.org).



### Updates from Wilderness Retreat and Development Center

Dennis Hisek reports that progress continues on their Treehouse village in the wood. The camp staff have been blessed with a variety of volunteer work groups that have helped clear areas for two more tree houses and helped finish work on the second tree house. They have had many people express interest in using the treehouses so are excited about this new adventure. The camp is also in the process of securing funding for a chair lift for their oldest lodge that has multiple steps to maneuver to get from one level to another. Some of their guests have expressed concern about the ease of movement from the main level to the dining area and thus prompted them to seek a solution to help solve this mobility issue. They hope to have all this finished before the summer of 2010.

### Iowa Camp Director Positions Open

Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois is accepting applications for three Camp Director Positions: Camp L-Keeta near Burlington, IA., Camp Conestoga west of Davenport, Iowa and Camp Tahigwa near Dorchester, Iowa. These positions are full time residential during their summer season and part time (varies 5-20 hrs. per week) in the off-season. Camp Director will direct, coordinate, and supervise all camp activities. They will also perform all personnel functions for seasonal employees including recruiting, hiring, training and supervision. More information can be found at <http://www.gseiwi.org/>. Inquiries may be directed to: Debby Stork, [debbs@gseiwi.org](mailto:debbs@gseiwi.org).

### Missouri Camp Has Staff Interested In Camp Positions

Katherine Patterson-Paronto from the Kansas City area is trying to help place former camp staff for the coming summer. Camp Shawnee will be resting for the 2010 season. There were several staff members slated to return. They include several who would have been in leadership positions, excellent general counselors, and staff with lifeguard certification. The staff were a diverse group from many backgrounds, including male and female staff members. Many of the staff have expressed interest in finding another camp. Please contact Katherine Patterson-Paronto if you are interested in finding out more about these experienced staff members. Call 816-521-0420 for more information.

### Message from Traci

Traci Haselhuhn sends a message: "Iowa 4-H has gone through a lot of budget cuts, personnel changes, and restructuring - so in addition to that and personally finding it difficult to be both the kind of Mom and Camp Director I want to be - I have decided to leave the Iowa 4-H Center at the end of November and focus my energy on being a full-time mom. I will greatly miss attending the conference and reconnecting with so many wonderful Great Rivers Section camp staff and friends I have made over the last 8 years! I do plan to at least keep my foot in the door, so to speak, by keeping up my Standards training so I can still help with accreditations each summer. Hopefully our paths will cross again someday!"

## More From Our Members

### Camp Coordinates Exhibit at National Youth Conference

Over 22,000 high schoolers and chaperones invaded downtown Kansas City, Missouri in mid November for the National Catholic Youth Conference. The event included general sessions that were held in both the Sprint Center and a satellite location; workshops; concerts, a thematic park and a Eucharistic Procession of 22,000 people through downtown Kansas City.



In the middle of the Thematic Park (an area of interactive booths, vendors, ministries, art, sports, coffee house, and much more to engage the youth in their faith) the Prairie Star Ranch of the Archdiocese of Kansas City ran "Quest for the Reign: An Adventure in Catechesis". Quest for the Reign was a 7,600 square foot challenge course that was set up to do experiential education for intentionally and intensely faith formation purposes. Adventure Catechesis is not just simple reflection on faith, but challenges that are designed specifically to teach the truths of faith in dynamic and life-impacting ways.

Activities that are old favorites and ones that were created specifically for this event were all framed in the lives of saints, Scripture, and salvation history to bring about specific faith formation objectives from evangelization to social justice, from asking who the guides are in our lives to what the role of the Eucharist is. Youth from around the country and beyond came to engage in these adventures and got more than they were hoping for. Each group was led by an experienced staff member from the Prairie Star Ranch as well as a member from one of the over 75 religious orders that participated. This gave the youth an opportunity to hang out and spend time with a priest or nun, a brother or sister while they were working through their challenge on the course. Many youth have never spent much time—especially informally—with someone who has taken up religious life. Being able to be silly have fun, and all at the same time be working with them toward spiritual development was fulfilling to both the youth and those from the religious orders. The groups would gather and pray, then work through their challenge. After the challenge they would gather at one of the two large tree houses that were constructed for the event to process the adventure and pray about their experience. If you want more information on Adventure Catechesis or some of the activities in particular you can check out our website [www.archkck.org](http://www.archkck.org) or e-mail Shawn Madden at [PrarieStarRanch@gmail.com](mailto:PrarieStarRanch@gmail.com).



### Diabetes Passion: An Article from Vivian Murray

Do you have a family member or close friend with diabetes? I am passionate about helping children who have diabetes - especially those in Iowa and western Illinois. I'm continually energized by making all of the plans for our diabetes camp each summer. The part I don't like is the fund raising! But unfortunately, it's a necessary part to "keep our doors open".

**Please take 8 minutes to view our new Camp Video - just click the link at the bottom of our camp's home page at [www.CampHertkoHollow.com](http://www.CampHertkoHollow.com).** We took 11 hours of video taping from last summer's camp sessions to try to show persons "what we do" to help children with diabetes live long and healthy lives. Education is the key! If you have the time - also check out our Fall 2009 Newsletter online. To the left of the link for the video is a "Donate now" button and it's quick and easy to make a donation to Camp Hertko Hollow online. Perhaps you know some persons who have family members with diabetes and would like to make a donation. Every donation is greatly appreciated. It costs \$1,000 for each child and most parents can't afford it....so we do lots of fund raising! These children NEED to attend diabetes camp to learn how to manage their diabetes today and in the future.

We are an independent non-profit organization and don't receiving any funding from the American Diabetes Association or the Juvenile Diabetes Research Association (which can only raise funds for research). We need to help these kids today so that they will be alive and ready for the cure whenever it comes. I was told in 1965 when I developed diabetes that a cure was on the horizon within 10 years. Well....that was 44 years ago and I'm still waiting! Vivian Murray can be reached at [VivchrisMurray@aol.com](mailto:VivchrisMurray@aol.com).

## Update Your ACA Information!

When was the last time you checked to see if ACA's database has correct information about your contact information or the correct information for your camp? Did you know that you can go into your database and make corrections?

The webpage for doing this is [www.acacamps.org/login/logindetails.php](http://www.acacamps.org/login/logindetails.php). You will find instructions for how to access your personal information. It is very important that this information is kept up-to-date. More and more communication is dependent upon having an accurate email address.

It is important to have the correct contact person listed for your camp, so that critical communications regarding standards and accreditation do not go astray. Take a couple of minutes today to check the accuracy of your database information.

## Share Your Training Dates

If you are planning training events that could be attended by other camp professionals, please send your information to our Section Executive, Jim Cherry. Jim sends out regular communications with members and the information will also appear in future newsletters. E-mail your information to [executive@acagreatrivers.org](mailto:executive@acagreatrivers.org).



## ACA Great Rivers Section Board

ACA Great Rivers Section Web Site:  
[www.acagreatrivers.org](http://www.acagreatrivers.org)

Section Executive: Rev. Jim Cherry:  
E-mail: [executive@acagreatrivers.org](mailto:executive@acagreatrivers.org)  
Telephone: 641-927-4428

President: Robyn Ratcliff, Girl Scouts  
E-mail: [robynratclif@girlscoutsksmo.org](mailto:robynratclif@girlscoutsksmo.org)

Vice President of Development: H. Lee Walz, United Methodist  
E-mail: [lwalz@moumethodist.org](mailto:lwalz@moumethodist.org)

Vice President of Program: Barb Collins, YMCA Camp Kitaki  
E-mail: [bcollins@ymcalincoln.org](mailto:bcollins@ymcalincoln.org)

Secretary: Anne Snyder, YMCA Camp Wood  
E-mail: [aws1155@yahoo.com](mailto:aws1155@yahoo.com)

Treasurer: Tom Nepl  
E-mail: [tom@nepplandscapearchitecture.com](mailto:tom@nepplandscapearchitecture.com)

Standards Chair: Linda DuBrul, retired  
E-mail: [n0imy@arri.net](mailto:n0imy@arri.net)

Education Chair: Don Enger, YMCA Camp Wapsie  
E-mail: [enger@crmetroymca.org](mailto:enger@crmetroymca.org)

Membership Chair: Jennifer Kreifels, Woodmen Camps  
E-mail: [jkreifels@woodmen.org](mailto:jkreifels@woodmen.org)

Legislation: Brad North  
E-mail: [director@campgalileemo.org](mailto:director@campgalileemo.org)

Complaint Resolution: David Sherry, YMCA  
E-mail: [david.sherry@dmymca.org](mailto:david.sherry@dmymca.org)

Public Relations: DD Gass, Camp Fire USA  
E-mail: [dd.gass@campfireusa.org](mailto:dd.gass@campfireusa.org)

Member At Large:

Nominating: Becky Godfrey  
E-mail: [yerfdogs@yahoo.com](mailto:yerfdogs@yahoo.com)

Mid States Representative: Paul Denowski, YMCA Camp Wapsie  
E-mail: [Denowski@crmetroymca.org](mailto:Denowski@crmetroymca.org)