

March 2010



# The Current ACA Great Rivers Newsletter

## ACA Great Rivers Cluster Meetings Held March 2

The third annual ACA Great Rivers Cluster Meetings were held, in early March in Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas. The Cluster Meetings were well attended and provided great opportunities for sharing resources and networking.

- The Kansas/Missouri event was held at Tall Oaks Camp and Conference Center, near Linwood. Anne Snyder was the facilitator and 20 people attended the meeting. They were treated to a plated dinner at lunch, as the cook was experimenting with menus.
- The Nebraska event was held at the Eastern 4-H Camp, near Gretna. Barb Collins was the facilitator and 10 people attended the meeting. Staff development and transitions were a hot topic.
- The Iowa event was held at Camp Hantesa, in central Iowa. There were 23 who attended the event facilitated by Robyn Ratcliff. They participated in some community building activities in addition to their camp discussions.



A special thanks to each host camp! The Cluster Meetings are 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. The Cluster Meetings are held the first Tuesday of March each year.

## Host Camp Needed for ACA Great Rivers 2011 Annual Conference

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 the ACA Great Rivers Web site for the application, [www.acagreatrivers.org](http://www.acagreatrivers.org).

## Conference Dates Set for ACA Great Rivers 2010 Annual Conference

Be sure to mark your calendar for the ACA Great Rivers 2010 Annual Conference, November 16-18, 2010. The conference will once again be hosted at Camp Carol Joy Holling, in Nebraska. For any questions regarding the conference or if you would like to suggest session topics or speakers, please contact Don Enger at [enger@crmetroymca.org](mailto:enger@crmetroymca.org) or 319-435-2557.



## ACA National Conference Highlights

There were 20 ACA Great Rivers members who attended the ACA national conference which was filled with great education sessions.

Anne Snyder, Barb Collins and Robyn Ratcliff pose with Olympic gymnast Carrie Stroud, at the ACA National Conference. Carrie spoke to at a lunch banquet about how camp helped her prepare for the Olympics.

Jim Cherry was awarded the National ACA Special Recognition Award at the conference. Jim was unable to attend, but his award was announced, and ACA Great Rivers members cheered for Jim!

## From the ACA Great Rivers Section President By Robyn Ratcliff

ACA has been busy these last few months! In January, I attended a 20/20 Vision discussion in Chicago with other presidents and executives from the Midwest ACA sections. February brought the ACA 20/20 Leadership Summit and National Conference in Denver, CO. Then, March 2 I had the opportunity to travel to Boone, IA to share networking and ACA info with our Iowa camp directors and staff. Everywhere I go, I've been reminded what an exciting time this is to be involved with CAMP (and with ACA).

Here are a few of the things that I am really excited about:

1. Expanding our definition of CAMP: We have great products and services in ACA that will benefit staff and campers at day camp, sports camp, nature centers, outdoor education facilities, parks and recreation, day cares, and lots of other groups who haven't traditionally been included in our communications. ACA will focus on welcoming everyone who cares about the development of children, youth and families and the great outdoors!
2. Reaching new populations of campers: How is your camp retooling to benefit the changing demographics in our world? As populations shift and parent expectations and needs change, ACA will help us stay on the cusp of what's happening and learn from the experiments and successes of each other.
3. ACA's NEW Professional Development Center: Coming soon—camp staff and directors will be eligible to earn Continuing Education Credits for national and local professional development workshops. The breadth and depth of these opportunities is exciting. These offerings will help increase the quality of camp for everyone involved.
4. School Reform: ACA is committed to advocating for you in Washington, D.C. While President Obama and his administration review educational policy, camp has a vital place in teaching kids about healthy behaviors, increasing positive youth development, and decreasing summer learning loss.



Stay tuned and watch your e-mail for more information about these great initiatives that are taking place both locally and nationally. AND—mark your calendar today to join your peers from Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska and Missouri for our fall educational event Nov. 16-18 at Carol Joy Holling Camp in Ashland, NE. We'll be talking about best practices---and NEXT practices. Join us!

## Camp Registration Test

For many camps, this is the height of the summer camp registration. How would you answer these questions?

- Can people easily find your summer camp information on the Internet?
- Can someone who does not know much about your camp, find information, and register over the lunch hour?
- How easy is it to find information on your website about what a participant will experience at camp?
- If you are an ACA camp, is your correct website a link on the ACA's Find A Camp search engine?
- What does someone find when they Google your camp?

## New ACA Membership Rates

Individuals will now be able to select from seven membership options. See the ACA website for more information, [www.acacamps.org/membership](http://www.acacamps.org/membership).

- Individual Member – \$200
- Individual Member – ACA Visitor: I am a trained visitor with the ACA standards program. \$95
- Individual Member – Volunteer: I volunteer for a youth-serving program. \$95
- Individual Member – Educator: I work professionally as a faculty/staff member at an academic institution. \$95
- Individual Member – Expanded Learning Staff: I work for a program that provides expanded learning opportunities (e.g., after-school, out-of-school time, or summer learning enrichment programs). \$95
- Individual Member – Retiree: I have retired from my full-time camp or youth work but still work part time in camp OR I am 65 years old. \$60
- Individual Member – Student: I am a full-time student. \$35

## 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 Executive Notes By Barb Collins

From my first overnight experience at Camp Prairie Schooner in Kansas City, Missouri, I knew camp was the place for me. Two weeks in a platform tent, cold showers, friendship rocks, campfires and copperheads; I could be me and I loved it. Merle Neal, Executive Director of the Girl Scouts at that time also loved camp. The platform tent across from the camp office belonged to Merle, wow. Just imagine being at camp all the time and getting paid! Merle was my inspiration and strongly influenced my career choice.

So I worked at camp each summer, received a degree in Recreation from Central Missouri State University, and returned to working at camp each summer. One of the greatest pleasures in my career was returning to Camp Prairie Schooner as the Director of Outdoor Program and Property for the Girl Scouts of Mid-Continent Council. I was home again. Each summer I still spend time at camp. The time is shorter and the responsibilities have changed and I still love it.

I now have the opportunity to work with the most outstanding group of camp professionals in the mid-west as the ACA Great Rivers Section Executive. The section executive role is to support and be a primary resource for all aspects of the work of the ACA Great Rivers Section board of directors, to manage communications with camps and the public and maintain relationships with section members, the national office, other sections and organizations.

I need you to keep me informed. Let me know of happenings at your camp, training, educational opportunities, your concerns and successes. I look forward to working with all of you and visiting your camp soon.

### Great Resources for you at ACA—Check it out!

Camp Parents — [www.CampParents.org](http://www.CampParents.org) is a comprehensive summer camp resource for families—offering expert advice from camp professionals on camp selection, readiness, child and youth development, and issues of importance to families.

### Celebrate the 100th Anniversary of American Camp Association Video

This seven minute video debuted at the ACA National Conference in Denver, Colorado, and celebrates the history of ACA. This video can be viewed at [www.ACACamps.org](http://www.ACACamps.org). Share the video through your favorite social media sites, or post it on your camp website. ACA national staff will assist you if need additional support. Contact Dawn Swindle at 765-349-3317 or [dswindle@ACACamps.org](mailto:dswindle@ACACamps.org) with any questions.

### Online Training on ACA Web Site

ACA's e-Institute is an online learning center providing self-directed and group learning experiences. Designed for child and youth development audiences, from camp professionals to after-school staff to community based program leaders, the e-Institute provides a mechanism for personal professional development and for training large groups of paid and volunteer staff. Certificates of completion are available for all courses and CEUs are available for selected courses. Check it out at [www.ACACamps.org/einstitute](http://www.ACACamps.org/einstitute).

### Because of Camp...™

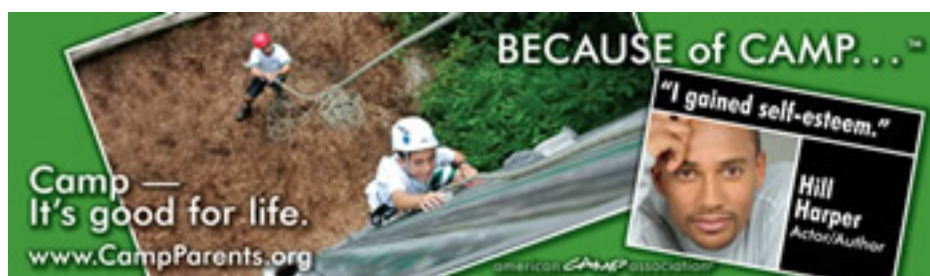
Celebrities share how camp changed their lives

*"I developed lasting friendships..." "I learned self-esteem..."*

*"I became a team player..." "I learned how to care..."*

*"I became a counselor..." "We Went to Camp. Shouldn't You?"*

*Emma Roberts, Hill Harper, Lisa Loeb, Kerri Strug, Michael DeLorenzo, Justin Chambers, Paul Adelstein, James Pickens, Blair Underwood, Sharon Lawrence, Frank Sesno, Glynn Turman, Ashlan Gorse, and Lisa Raye* share how their lives have changed **Because of Camp...™**. The Because of Camp... PSA can be seen at [www.ACACamps.org](http://www.ACACamps.org). This PSA Campaign is made possible, in part, by generous funding from the Legacy Fund sponsored by the Association of Independent Camps and the Lilly Endowment Inc.



## ACA Great Rivers Section Standards by Linda DuBrul

**Welcome, New Visitors:** Great Rivers is please to announce the appointment of 11 new Associate Visitors. These people completed training in February and will be visiting camps this summer along with experienced lead visitors. Our new visitors are Sue Ballard, Julia Cira, Don Enger, Eric Hoffman, James Martinson, Simon Mitchell, BJ Murray, Katherine Patterson-Paronto, Nicole Rottinghaus, Mandy Shew, and Tony Watnitz.

**Visitor Advancement:** Brad North and Andie Strong have been approved for full Visitor status. They were previously Associate Visitors.

**New Forms for Standard OM-5:** If your camp was visited in 2007, 2008, or 2009, you were able to DNA the standard OM-5. This is a written document on how your camp reviews standards in years you are not visited. Now, for your 2010, 2011, and 2012 visits you will need to document your review for the years between visits. Some camps have shared how they do this and these sample forms are posted on the ACA website. Take a look at these and see if one will work for you. Here are the links: [www.acacamps.org/accreditation/OM-5\\_annual\\_assessment.pdf](http://www.acacamps.org/accreditation/OM-5_annual_assessment.pdf) and [www.acacamps.org/accreditation/OM-5\\_camp\\_assessment.pdf](http://www.acacamps.org/accreditation/OM-5_camp_assessment.pdf). These were e-mailed to camps earlier this year but there was some confusion on how to use the form or if you had to do one or both. The national office has advised us that these are suggestions to get you started.

**Written Document Previews:** The national ACA office is requesting that all camps due a visit this summer complete a WDP (Written Document Preview) prior to the visit. While this can be done electronically, your section strongly recommends an in person review if this is the director or camp's first visit. The WDP allows camps to revise documentation prior to the visit or to just check off that the document meets the standards. Either way, the time spent on the day of the visit is usually reduced. Visitors should contact their assigned camps. Camps can contact visitors if they prefer.

**Standards Training:** The Great Rivers section conducted three Basic Standards Courses this past fall and winter. If your camp is due a visit and the director/contact person has attended an in person standards course in the past 3 years, there is an online update. Several camps have taken advantage of this. New directors or new camps should have attended an in person training. If your camp or director still needs training, please contact Linda DuBrul, at [n0imy@arrr.net](mailto:n0imy@arrr.net) (the second character is a zero). All camps due a visit in 2010 are required to complete one of these trainings prior to your visit.

**The Latest Standards Update:** All camps are responsible for meeting the current standards. This includes revisions that have been made since the original printing of the Accreditation Process Guide (standards notebook). Camps that are due a visit in 2010 should have received a new notebook in the mail. It contained two packets—the original book and the revisions. These need to be collated. There are additional changes that were not included in the new books and should also be added to the older books. Go to the ACA website and download these changes which affect AED's and background checks. Here is the link: [www.acacamps.org/accreditation/2010\\_revisions.pdf](http://www.acacamps.org/accreditation/2010_revisions.pdf).

## Top 10 Lists Wanted

Camp Business magazine is having a contest for Top 10 lists. Send them your Top 10:

- Camp Songs
- Recipes
- Facilities
- Green Ideas

And you can win a t-shirt if your list is selected for publication! Send ideas to [editor@northstarpubs.com](mailto:editor@northstarpubs.com).



## From Our Members

### Camp Receives Groundwater Award

YMCA Camp Kitaki, in central Nebraska, was recently named a 2009 Groundwater Guardian Green Site by the Groundwater Foundation in recognition of the site's groundwater and environmental stewardship. Camp Kitaki earned this exclusive designation based on its current practices related to water use, pesticide and fertilizer management, and pollution prevention. Groundwater Guardian Green Sites are essentially places with a lot of green space – that implement groundwater and surface water-friendly practices to maintain the site. To earn the exclusive Groundwater Guardian Green Site designation, site managers complete a simple application that evaluates and documents their site's groundwater-friendly practices. For more information, go to [www.groundwater.org](http://www.groundwater.org).



### Aquatic Conference in Nebraska

Nebraska Recreation & Park Association 8th. Annual Aquatic Conference — April 10th & 11th, 2010  
Brownell-Talbot, 400 N Happy Hollow Blvd., Omaha, NE 68132  
Contact: Levin Collins, Recreation Supervisor, Omaha Parks and Recreation  
Office: 402-289-0451 E-mail: [Levin.Collins@ci.omaha.ne.us](mailto:Levin.Collins@ci.omaha.ne.us)

### New Camp Programs Noted on the Internet

Using the ACA *Find A Camp* search engine, the following 2010 summer camp programs were found. Part of the descriptions of the sessions are included.

**Presbyterian Camp On Okoboji** in northwest Iowa lists a **Grand's Camp**. "This camp is designed for Grandparents and their Grandchild/Grandchildren (ages K-6). It is 4 days, 3 nights full of camp activities and bonding time for the grands."

**Iowa 4-H Center** in central Iowa lists a resident camp theme week—**Techomania**. "Make and launch rockets, build robots, and use GPS units on scavenger hunts (lots of other gadgets and experiments). All this fun and more while learning about science and technology! Enjoy swimming, campfires, and other camp activities, too."

**Camp Heritage** in Missouri describes **Oasis Camp**. This camp is designed for families, single parents and children, adult singles, and couples of all ages who would like to enjoy some time in nature. Besides time in nature enjoy activities such as archery, ceramics, crafts, horseback riding, swimming, water sports, and canoeing. There is also day care available for 2-6 year olds. Enjoy our Hill Billies banquet on Thursday night!"

**Blue Mountain United Methodist Camp**, in Missouri lists an **Xtreme Camp**. "Can you handle an extreme camp experience? If you're craving off-the-chain music, hyper sports activities, crazy events and radical love that challenges your faith to grow, then this is the camp for you! Feel the rush! Don't just crave it – live it @ X-treme camp!"

**Girl Scout Camp Oakledge** in Missouri lists the theme week **Kickin' Around in a Kayak**. "*Back by popular demand!* Prepare yourself for a wet and adventurous week as we take to our kayaks and explore the wonders of

the Lake of the Ozarks! Paddle to Bat's Cave, explore the many coves that stretch along the shoreline, practice a rescue, maybe even pack a lunch to eat while floating on the lake with your new friends! Don't worry, you won't spend all of your time in the kayak; join us on land for games, hikes, swimming and more!"

**Camp Fontanelle** in Nebraska boasts 32 treeboats (like hammocks but more stable) for sleeping under the stars. The treeboats are available for groups throughout the year and during "**Tree**" **Frog week**. "Go climb a tree! Yep, come and check out the best view at Fontanelle from the treetops! When you're not in the trees, you'll enjoy swimming, games, hiking and sleeping in treeboats under the trees."



## New ACA Professional Development Service Center

ACA has long recognized that it is vital for all camp professionals to have easy access to top-notch professional development opportunities. Now there is a plan in place to create professional development options for camp professionals.

Plans for the launch of a new ACA Professional Development Service Center were revealed at the National Conference in February. It will involve the following three components.

- An on-line “dashboard”.
- Certificates of added qualification (CCAQ) and/or Continuing Education Credits (CECs).
- On-line individual member educational portfolios.

The online “dashboard” will include tools, resources, job services, calendars, course catalogs, certificate requirements and an online bookstore, as well as access to a directory of college and university programs related to camp and youth development. The service center will embrace change as a principle, and offerings will be updated as needs in the profession evolve.

Interested members will also have the opportunity to earn certificates of added qualification (CCAQs) and/or continuing education credits (CECs) simply by attending or completing ACA programs. While the number of hours required to obtain certificates is still in development, some examples of hours awarded were described. Attending an ACA Regional Conference, for example, will accrue 6.5-20 hours or CECs; the In-person Standards Course will provide 5 hours or CECs; and ACA selected Title Book Review will equal 4 hours or CECs. More information will be described as the program develops.

Another valuable tool currently being designed is called the Individual Online Portfolio. This individualized record will serve as a collection point for courses, conferences attended and other continuing education activities, enabling members to set personal goals and track credits toward completion of certificates or other self-guided paths of learning. In addition, camp and program directors will be able to use this tool to guide and direct the professional development growth of their staff.

These are exciting times for professional development throughout ACA. Watch the ACA website for updates.

## H1N1 Preparedness Tips and Facts for the Upcoming Camp Season

Influenza is generally not a summer ailment. Last summer's experience was atypical. Camp staff need to review health protocols for all camp programs. It is critical to know the facts about H1N1 and know the resources to access for up-to-date information. Go to the ACA national website for updated information at

[http://www.acacamps.org/acanow/news/H1N1\\_preparedness\\_tips.php](http://www.acacamps.org/acanow/news/H1N1_preparedness_tips.php)

## April is Children & Nature Awareness Month

The Children & Nature Network has designated April as Children & Nature Awareness Month. April 2010 is the third annual awareness month. This year, C&NN has two goals:

1. To encourage parents to form their own Nature Clubs for Families.
2. To invite grandparents and older outdoor enthusiasts to do their part to reconnect children and nature.

As part of this effort, they are encouraging agencies to list their April programs and share their strategies for building public awareness about encouraging nature activities. For more details, go to [www.childrenandnature.org](http://www.childrenandnature.org).

## Five Trends Reshaping the Social Sector

A paper just released by the James Irvine Foundation discusses trends. Research has identified five key trends converging to reshape the social sector. According to the research these trends include:

- Demographic Shifts Redefine Participation.
- Technological Advances Abound.
- Networks Enable Work to Be Organized in New Ways.
- Interest in Civic Engagement and Volunteerism Is Rising.
- Sector Boundaries Are Blurring.

Successful organizations will quickly move beyond traditional assumptions about how those goals are attempted and think creatively about structural forms, recognizing that different goals demand new solutions. View the full paper at [http://www.lapiana.org/downloads/Convergence\\_Report\\_2009.pdf](http://www.lapiana.org/downloads/Convergence_Report_2009.pdf).

## 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, Barb Collins. Barb 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)

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Nominating: Becky Godfrey, Great River Hospice  
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Mid States Representative: Paul Denowski,  
YMCA Camp Wapsie  
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