

Outdoor Ministry Association
Steering Committee
March 21 - 23, 2011

March 21st:

Introduction of New Members:

The committee welcomed new members Gene Karn, Director of Outdoor Ministries for the Southern Ohio District, and Dean Wenger, Executive Co-Director Camp Blue Diamond, Middle PA District. Gene will be serving a 3 year term, executive director position. Dean will be serving a 2 year term, executive director position. Jen Crispin switched to a volunteer position.

Steering Committee Positions for 2011:

Chair:	Linetta Ballew
Vice Chair:	Gene Karn
Secretary:	Dean Wenger
Treasurer:	Rex Miller
Membership:	Jen Crispin
Grants & Awards:	Gieta Gresh
YPTT:	Margo Royer-Miller
Theologian:	Debbie Eisenbise
Denomination Rep:	Josh Brockway
D.E. Rep:	Herman Kauffman
Archivist:	Gene Karn
Scholarships:	Linetta Ballew, Rex Miller
To Do List:	Margo Royer-Miller

It was agreed the Archivist's position would be assumed by the Vice Chair. Natasha Stern will need to send her collected materials to Gene. Dean will send a copy of the archivist's responsibilities to Gene.

Minutes:

October minutes approved

Financial Report:

Rex presented the Financial Report. It was approved. Rex noted that individual and church memberships were not done in 2010, which led to a \$7000 shortfall. It was agreed to not try and recoup this loss, but rather proceed immediately with the 2011 membership letters. Rex noted that endowment funds are in the Brethren Foundation's balanced fund.

To Do List:

The To Do List was reviewed

Camp Staffing Changes:

Camp Eder - Alan Patterson. Dean will ask Jerri Heiser Wenger to be his mentor.
Brethren Heights - Randall Westfall. Curt Rowland and Rex Miller will be his mentors.
Shepherd's Spring - Britney Harbaugh. Linetta Ballew will be her mentor.

Mentoring Program:

Reviewed and discussed document. Approved

The evaluation process will be revised. There will be a separate mentor and mentee evaluation form. Linetta will do it and email it to all.

OMA to Z:

It was decided to do two different documents: one condensed and one detailed. The condensed version will be 5 - 10 pages and will be given initially to camps and subsequently to new employees when they join OMA ranks. The condensed version will be called **OMA In a Nutshell**.

The detailed version will be called **OMA to Z**. It will be put on the website, and hard copies in three-ring binders will be distributed to each camp. Each section will have its own page, so when a section is updated it can be easily replaced. Rex and Linetta will decide which information will go in each document. They will then work with Dean to decide where to put the information on the website.

Devotions:

Debbie led evening devotions.

March 22nd:

Devotions:

Debbie led morning devotions.

Staff & Volunteer Awards :

Gieta presented the Staff and Volunteer Award applications. There was one of each.

The Staff Award application was submitted by David Shumate (D.E. Virgina) and Mary Sink St. John. The nominee was Barry Lenoir, the Camp Director at Camp Bethel. Although Barry has not been at Camp Bethel for 10 years, it was agreed with his previous experience at a UM camp, he met the criteria. It was agreed to give Barry the award. Gieta will handle the correspondence.

The Volunteer Award application was submitted by Camp Mardela. The nominee was Steve Frazier. Steve has led the youth camp and youth retreat programming at Camp Mardela for the past twenty years. It was agreed to give Steve the award. Gieta will handle the correspondence.

It was agreed to put information seeking nominees for these awards in the COB newslines in the fall of the year.

Environmental Grants:

There were two Environmental Grant applications:

Gieta Gresh presented an application on behalf of Camp Mardela. The application is for expenses incurred in replacing a hot water boiler at the camp. Wood is burned to make hot water that is used by the camp. Educational sessions on renewable resources have focused on the boiler, and will continue in the future. Cost of the project will be approximately \$1500. Camp Mardela asked for \$500, and will cover the balance of the expense. The proposal was approved. Gieta will write an article about the grant for the newsletter.

Dean Wenger presented an application on behalf of Camp Blue Diamond. CBD has one composter now that is used for Outdoor School. The composter is only big enough for one session of outdoor school, 7 weeks. It would like to purchase two more composters: one for summer camp, and one for the other session of outdoor school. Food scraps, brown material (leaves) and a little dirt are put in the composter, which makes soil in about two - three months. The first composter is a big success. Educational sessions on composting will be done at outdoor school and summer camp. Cost of the composters are about \$210 each. CBD asked for \$210, and will supply the other \$210. The proposal was approved for \$250. Dean will write an article about the composters for the newsletters.

An Environmental Grant program to churches was discussed and approved.

- ◆ As with camps, the churches would have to match the grant
- ◆ OMA would give one grant the first year(s)
- ◆ We would need to add a Congregational Level (\$75), to the membership letter
- ◆ Maximum \$1000 for member churches, \$500 for non-member churches

It was agreed to put information about this new Environmental Grant program in the spring newsletter. The program will be announced at the annual conference luncheon, and we will have applications available at that time. The grant program could be tied to the 20th anniversary of the "**Creation: Called to Care**" paper. We

could make bookmarks drawing attention to the grant and the "**Creation: Called to Care**" paper. In the fall when letters are sent to camps about the grant program, we will distribute information to the churches. This could be done through the CoB's Newline, Source Packet etc...

Youth Peace Travel Team:

Margo distributed the summer schedule for the YPTT. She noted the team will be trained at Inspiration Hills. Typically in exchange for providing a place of training, the team spends a week at that camp. Since Inspiration Hills could not fit into this year's schedule, they will receive a voucher for another year. Camps are asked to contribute \$250 to YPTT for their service.

2011 is the twentieth anniversary of the YPTT. There will be a celebration in honor of the anniversary at a park near the Grand Rapids convention center during annual conference. It was suggested to have a banner to draw people from the convention to the park. Buttons (for everyone) and ribbons (for past YPTT members) honoring the anniversary will be distributed at the OMA, BVS, OEP and CLM booths at annual conference. Also at the booths, people will be encouraged to write postcards to past and present YPTT members. These postcards should be delivered to the OMA booth.

National OMA Conference and the Annual OMA Retreat:

It was decided to do away with the national conference, held every three years. The next national conference was planned for Camp Harmony in 2012. Discussion concurred the annual Director/Manager Retreat had evolved over the past ten years into a national style conference with better speakers, to which all camp staff and other interested people were invited, and that coupling the national conference with the D/M Retreat made for a long, redundant event. Eliminating the national conference may exclude those who could attend only on the weekend. To remedy this possibility the Annual OMA Retreat could possibly be held occasionally over a weekend. Other supported ideas concerning the Annual OMA Retreat included: CEU's should be offered to attendees as was done at the 2009 event, there should be set-aside time when directors can meet with other directors, and program staff can meet with other program staff.

The name of the annual OMA Director/Manager Retreat was officially changed to the Annual OMA Retreat. The annual retreat will take place this year at Inspiration Hills in northern Ohio. The date set is Nov. 13th-17th, 2011. Members on the planning committee are Shannon Kaylor, (host), Janice Kaltenbaugh (future host), Alan Paterson (past host) and Linetta Ballew (elected rep.). The retreat in 2012 will be at Camp Harmony in western PA. The 2013 retreat will be at Camp Mack, Indiana, and the 2014 retreat will be at Camp Koinonia in Washington. Rex Miller will contact the O'Cains at Koinonia to get the event on the calendar.

Annual Conference:

OMA will have a double booth at annual conference in Grand Rapids, MI. The focus of the booth will be the 20th anniversary of the Youth Peace Travel Team. Buttons commemorating YPTT, as well as bookmarks drawing attention to the 20th anniversary of the "**Creation: Called to Care**" paper and the new environmental grant program for churches will be distributed at the booth. At the OMA booth conference attendees can write cards of thanks or remembrance to past and present YPTT members. These cards will also be available at the BVS, OEP and CLM booths. There will need to be a method for delivery of cards to the OMA booth for distribution. Margo will create a YPTT banner for the booth. Rex will oversee the construction of a new OMA map and display. The old were burned in the Camp Mack fire. There will also be a large display of the 2011 OMA messenger ad, which was created by Barry Lenoir.

The insight session will be a panel discussion, **Camping & Discipleship**. Linetta and Josh are overseeing the session, which will be on July 4th, Monday evening. There will be approximately four people on the panel. Each person will have about five minutes to share, then there will be group sharing. Josh will facilitate. Names for the panel were shared by the committee.

The luncheon will also be on July 4th. At the luncheon there will be a celebration of the YPTT's 20th anniversary. Two of the 2011 members will be at the meeting. Past YPTT members attending the dinner will be honored. The new OMA environmental grant program for churches will be announced. The aforementioned bookmarks will be distributed. At the luncheon the OMA staff and volunteer award recipients will be honored.

Tickets (6) will be purchased for the two award recipients, the two speakers presenting the awards and the two YPTT members.

Annual Conference has asked OMA to put together the children's packet for an evening worship. The Committee agreed and brainstormed ideas for the packet's pages. Rex will do a color the OMA logo page, and a curriculum page. Debbie will do a word search. Gieta will do a Four Horsemen page and Linetta will do a map page. Margo will do a hidden items search, and a YPTT page. Josh will compile the pages and must receive them by April 20th. It was agreed that extra copies of the pages should be made available at the OMA booth.

Summer Curriculum:

Currently there are a lot of changes occurring with the New Earth summer camp curriculum created through the NCCC Committee on Outdoor Ministry. The 2012 curriculum has undergone a title change since it was drafted last year, and the 2013 curriculum has not been circulated yet to the COM. There is a new editor and there will most likely be changes in format and maybe in design and presentation.

Messenger Ad:

The committee gave many thanks to Barry Lenoir for making the **Messenger** ad. It will be in the May issue. The ad features the OMA camps locations superimposed on a contiguous USA map. Surrounding the map are photos of various camps. All camps and photos are identified.

Newsletter:

Steering Committee members need to get their articles to Barry by April 1st. If you have any **Around the Campfire** tidbits for the newsletter, send them to Barry too. The idea of a traveling 'goose' who visits OMA camps and writes letters for the newsletter was discussed. No action was taken.

OMA Presence at National Events:

YAC: Young Adult Conference May, 2011, Inspiration Hills
Linetta will ask Shannon Kaylor to make a 'non cheesy plug' for camps at YAC
NJHC: Nat'l Jr. High Conference June 17-19, 2011, Elizabethtown College
YPTT will be our presence there. Josh will work on getting the OMA display to the NJHC, then to annual conference.

NOAC: Nat'l Older Adults Conference Sept. 5-9, 2011
We may have an exhibit space. Perhaps we can collect stories at the exhibit space. OMA does not have an insight session.

NYAC: Nat'l Young Adult Conference June 18-22, 2012, UT, Knoxville, TN
It was noted this date will coincide with many camp's staff training or first weeks of camp. A few committee members stated they could not encourage attendance because of the conflict. It was noted that the last time this conference was held Chris Douglas did move the event to August to avoid the timing conflict. Attendance at the August event was down, so the event was moved back to June. There was no discussion about OMA participation at this event.

NYC Nat'l Youth Conference 2014 - This event does not have a home yet.
The YPTT typically does a workshop for OMA. OMA may be able to have an exhibit.

Website:

Dean agreed to put together a website for OMA. He will ask Juniata College if they will host the site. The committee looked at two proposed content set-ups and chose the second with a few amendments. Dean will find a URL for the website. COBOMA was suggested. Once the website is constructed it will be linked with the brethren.org and cobnet.org sites.

Membership:

Jenn will send out individual membership letters and camp membership letters this spring. The camp membership level was .1%, minimum \$100, maximum \$500. Noting that the minimum fee of \$100 may be prohibitive to very small camps the committee amended the \$100 minimum to a 'suggested minimum'. This

gives camps the option of sending less than \$100 if they need to. Gieta will do the camp certificates. Linetta will give Gieta an electronic image of her name to use on the certificate. Dean will email Gieta a copy of the camp certificate. A new church membership level, \$75, was established and will be put on the individual membership letter. Also materials about the church membership level will be sent to churches in the fall via the CoB's Newslite, the Source Packet, or some other means.

Dean will send to each lifetime member a copy of **Kum Bay Yah**. He will get a list of the lifetime members from Barry Lenoir.

Denomination:

Jonathan Shively has agreed to fund a redesign of the OMA brochure.

Josh presented the CoB's Mission and Ministry Board's Strategic Plan 2011- 2019. As camps we are referred to in the plan as 'related institutions'. As related institutions, it was agreed camps need to actively help the strategic plan come to fruition. It was suggested we ask denominational leaders to meet with us at our Annual OMA Retreat in November. Perhaps they could provide the keynote session and break-out sessions. The break-out sessions could focus on the areas of the strategic plan with which camps could be an asset: creating a Brethren voice, congregational vitality, service and sustainability.

Josh invited a member of the OMA Steering Committee to the Oct. 15th - 17th Mission and Ministry Meetings in Elgin, IL. Rex will attend.

Josh reminded OMA that the denomination can underwrite spiritual direction retreats at camps. These retreats could be overnight pastors' retreats, special Lenten retreats, or some other type of spiritual retreat.

ACMNP:

Marlin is still OMA's representative to **A Christian Ministry in the National Parks**. He will attend this year's event.

District Executives:

Herman reported that D.E.'s have two meetings a year: one at annual conference and a winter one in Florida. Some year's they have a professional growth event, but this is often with their winter event. In 2011 the professional growth event is in May at New Windsor, MD. Because of this schedule, they often do not use camps for their events.

Herman will take back to the D.E.'s information about what OMA is doing concerning the 20th anniversary of the "**Creation: Called to Care**" paper. He will challenge them to see how churches in their districts are enacting challenges proposed in this paper. Herman will also remind D.E.'s that most camps offer a pastor's retreat center at no charge to pastors.

Items Left for the October Meeting:

OMA Mascot: The idea of the traveling 'goose', who does reports for the newsletter
Fundraising Project for the Four Horsemen and Environmental Grant Funds

Next Meetings:

Camp Emmaus: Sept. 26 - 28, 2011. Start w/5:30 dinner. End 1p.m. Wed. in Elgin, IL.

Rex will check with Camp Emmaus about availability.

Camp Mack: March 20 - 22, 2012