

Camp Director's report to the Outdoor Ministries Committee

Tuesday, June 19, 2018: revised 6/19/2018



I. Summer Camps:

- A. Our 92nd consecutive summer of camps is currently in Week 2 of 8, (6 regular full on site weeks followed by 2 all-adventure and trip weeks). Our 2018 curriculum is "Boundless Belief: God's Universe."
- B. As of June 18 we have 960 campers/participants registered compared to 1,011 on June 18, 2017 (-51 or -5%). Our goal remains 1,250 campers, and we have aggressively marketed our camps.
- C. We have begun a "camper audit" for who attended in 2017 and has not yet registered for 2018 in order to (A) resend them another brochure/incentive, (B) compare data to search for red flags (*ex: did several non-returners have the same counselor in 2017?*), and (C) conduct phone calls to non-returners and ask, "Is there a reason you are not attending camp in 2018?"
- D. Thus far for 2018, we have granted 63 children with Campership funding totaling \$17,855 (average \$283.42). In summer 2017, 87 received Camperships totaling \$25,715 (average \$295.57).
- E. We are blessed by yet another excellent group of summer staff who are giving these campers a safe and fun experience of living in Christian Community at Camp Bethel.

II. Events and Programs:

- A. Due to lower-than-expected reservations, our 2018 Sow the Seed Banquet was cancelled. Even so, we still received \$3,390 in Sow the Seed gifts for Camperships.
- B. Despite lighter attendance, the 17th annual Sounds of the Mountains Festival at Camp Bethel (April 27-28) was successful due to the extraordinary efforts of dozens of volunteers, our superb committee, and our wonderful food volunteers. 2018 SOTM income is \$35,884.30, and estimated expense is \$17,240.78 (net \$18,643.52). Dates for 2019 are April 12-13; www.SoundsoftheMountains.org.
- C. See Upcoming Events at the end of my report and listed on the agenda. Please recruit Golfers and Sponsors for our August 22 Golf Tournament and Dinner, and please recruit Participants and Sponsors for our August 25 Camp Bethel PEP! 5K.
- D. OMA National Retreat, November 11-15: OMC is invited to attend and VOLUNTEER DURING all or part of the Outdoor Ministries Association of the Church of the Brethren's annual Retreat at Camp Bethel with the theme, "Waters of Grace." Join leaders from across the USA for excellent-and-fun workshops, worship, music, and networking. See CampBethelVirginia.org/OMA for "Event Team Volunteer" discount.

III. Finances:

- A. See the Income and Expense reports for 12/31/2017 and 05/31/2018.
- B. Funds from the "Seed, Scattered and Sown" campaign are now available for use in paying expenses related to the RV Village. By the end of 2018, I will also "back-date" several RV Village expenses out of "Seed" funds.
- C. One of the final actions of the "Seed" campaign is for our Camp Bethel office to mail solicitation letters to our "non-Virlina" supporters and to our known/found Summer Staff Alumni. With the help of extra staff (light week June 24-29) we will send these packets (letter, brochure, info) by June 29.
- D. Please recruit Sponsors, prizes, and (new) sleeves of balls for our August 22 Golf Tournament.

IV. Personnel:

- A. Thank you for your support and patience during the Food Services Coordinator transition in May.
- B. Wesley Shrader is doing excellent work as our Interim Food Services Coordinator. His official start date was June 1. Wes was able to quickly recruit and assemble a strong summer kitchen team including 3 morning shift workers and 4 evenings shift workers.
- C. Beth Heaton's last day is June 29, 2018. As Camp Bethel's first official Guest Services Coordinator, Beth set an excellent precedent for the position, and she has elevated our guest group rentals and customer service. *Well done Beth!* See Beth's final report attached.
- D. I have posted (and promoted) the new Guest Services and Marketing Coordinator position and application at www.CampBethelVirginia.org/GSMC. Please review the information, and let me know of any needed revisions.

V. Property and Facilities:

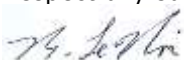
- A. See Beth Heaton's report requesting OMC help with important cleaning Saturdays between guest camps: July 21, July 28, August 4, and August 11.
- B. Site layout and images for Camp Bethel's long-planned "RV Village" camping area are available for view at www.VirlinaFuture.org. Plans include 15 new campsites, each with water, electric, sanitary sewer, a picnic table, campfire ring, and parking for 2-3 cars. Site sizes range from 60'x23' to 65'x28'. *VirlinaFuture.org*
- C. Mickey and his team successfully repaired one-half of the Ark Pond dam and spillway. *Other half soon!*
- D. See Mickey's March 2018 report for other repairs, including the septic system for Pineview and Bethel Lodge. Needless to say, Mickey and his team are always VERY busy, and there is ALWAYS too much to do with too little time and human power. Mickey has 5 part-time helpers right now, 2 of whom are seasonal/summer only.

- E. The families of Alton and Mildred Higgs (John Higgs and Carol Higgs Elmore) have requested quotes for metal roofing on Bethel Lodge and Pineview as their chosen priority for the \$9,860 "Alton & Mildred Higgs Memorial Escrow" given to Camp Bethel in 2017. Mickey is securing quotes.
- F. Continued priorities: Final Ark Pond dam repairs; new cottage (David James Homes); tree "replacement" throughout main campus; changing doors at the Ark for handicapped accessibility; replacement windows at 564 Graybill House and Forest Lodge; completion of Willoro Cabin (Cedar Bluff CoB). Continued goals: installing chimney liners at Shelter-by-the-Spring, Front Residence, and Heritage; construction of one or two basic Solar Kilns for lumber; construction of a wood-shop addition to the back of the Maintenance Shop; fire-proof floor in front of hearth in Ark Conference Room; repairs & renewal of 568 Crowder House (plumbing, floors, exterior, roof, rain gutters, basement).

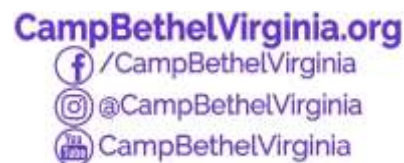
VI. Miscellaneous

- A. Our ongoing Wish List for donations: Chest freezer; refrigerator; Mini-van; chest coolers w/ handles; old smart phone w/ charger; digital cameras; GoPro video camera; portable LCD projector; gas grill; laptop computer (Windows 10); LED light bulbs (75-100 watt equiv); new (in-the-box) bike helmets and horse helmets; brooms w/ dustpans; "Tree Cookies;" picnic tables. Gifts to Camp are tax-deductible!

Respectfully submitted,



Barry LeNoir, Camp Bethel Director, CampBethelOffice@gmail.com



UPCOMING 2018 EVENTS AT CAMP BETHEL

Now through August 3, 2018: Summer Camps & Family Adventures.

July 22-August 18, 2018: Guest Camps & Band Camps.

July 30, 2018 (Mon) 5:30pm: OMEC Dinner & meet with Wes Shrader.

August 22, 2018 (Wed): 24th Benefit Golf Tournament & Banquet.

Aug 24, 2018 (Fri) 6:00pm OMEC & 6:45 OMC, budget mtg at DRC.

August 25, 2018 (Sat): Camp Bethel PEP! 5K Run/Walk.

August 31-Sept 3, 2018: Labor Day Family Weekend.

October 6, 2018 (Sat): 34th annual Heritage Day Festival.

November 3, 2018 (Sat): Fall Volunteer Workday.

November 9-10, 2018: Virlina District Conference, location TBD.

November 11-15, 2018 (Sun-Thu): OMA National Retreat at Camp Bethel.

December 1, 2018 (Sat): Virlina District Board/OMC day at Camp Bethel.

December 6, 2018 (Thu): Christmas TOGETHER Banquet.

December 28, 2018 (Fri): Summer Staff Reunion & Potluck Dinner.

December 29-30, 2018: Winter Camp Children & Youth Retreat.

Camp Bethel campers and fees comparison 2000-2018:

year	# weeks	Camper Days	Total campers	Total +/-	CoB/total who answered	CoB +/-	% CoB to Tot	Subsidized fee available until May 1	cost +/-
2000	8		588		429/588		72.9%	\$183.00	
2001	8		586	-2	432/586	+3	73.7%	\$193.00	+\$10.00
2002	7		580	-6	417/580 (NYC)	-15	71.9%	\$203.00	+\$10.00
2003	7		624	+44	437/624	+20	70.0%	\$205.00	+\$2.00
2004	8		650	+26	413/630	-24	63.5%	\$205.00	\$0.00
2005	8		751	+101	436/751	+23	58.0%	\$210.00	+\$5.00
2006	8		807	+56	413/807 (NYC)	-23	51.2%	\$210.00	\$0.00
2007	8		859	+52	425/859	+12	49.5%	\$215.00	+\$5.00
2008	8		876	+17	416	-9	47.5%	\$215.00	\$0.00
2009	8		887	+11	425	+9	47.9%	\$240.00	+\$25.00
2010	8		861	-26	398 (NYC)	-27	46.2%	\$250.00	+\$10.00
2011	8		826	-35	377	-21	45.6%	\$250.00	\$0.00
2012	8		933	+107	423	+46	45.3%	\$260.00	+\$10.00
2013	8		986	+53	368/767	--	48% who answered	\$270.00	+\$10.00
2014	8	5,490	979	-7	310/689 (NYC)	--	45% who answered	\$280.00	+\$10.00
2015	7	5,811	1,209	+230	395/759	--	52% who answered	\$290.00	+\$10.00
2016	7	5,542	1,159	-50	270/551	--	49% who answered	\$300.00	+\$10.00
2017	7	TBD	1,212	+53	385/785	--	49% who answered	\$310.00	+\$10.00
2018	8		(Goal) 1,250	+38	(NYC)			\$330.00	+\$20.00

Program Coordinator's Report to the OMC, June 19, 2018

WOAH! Summer is underway and it is amazing. There are moments where I walk outside and am flooded with joy and good vibes that come with working at Camp Bethel.

As of now, we have completed one week of Assistant Program Coordinator Training, one week of Coordinator Training, two weeks of Staff Training, and one week of summer camp. The summer staff are finding their groove of what makes a camp week great and it is beautiful to watch.

For our first week we had 104 resident campers spanning over 10 on-site camp programs and 24 campers at our Botetourt Traveling Day Camp hosted by Cloverdale Church of the Brethren. Our week was full of creek play, hikes, pool time, silly songs, Bible Study, skits, worship, and so much more! At the end of our week I heard multiple campers tell their parents that they wanted to come back for another week. During one worship Christa Craighead, our Spiritual Life Coordinator for the summer, asked me to share how God gives me hope. My immediate answer was "through the campers". During each worship more and more campers are stepping up and asking to lead prayers or read scripture. Witnessing their desire to share God's love most certainly gives me hope. Hopefully (haha) you can see some of that during your visit today!

-Jenna Stacy, Program Coordinator

OMC Report for Guest Services Coordinator – Tuesday, June 19, 2018

This summer, we are having 17 groups using shelters for day events, family reunion, church picnics. Many of these also request pool time. Three band camps will return this year in July and August: Lord Botetourt, William Byrd, and Salem High Schools. Camp Kesem from VCU will be returning for their second year: this is the camp for children of parents with cancer. We could have room for another band camp in 2019. These four camps are a major source of income for Camp Bethel.

A big challenge for hosting the band camps and Camp Kesem is the turn-around time for getting all the buildings cleaned in a very short span of time on those Saturdays between the camp weeks. I have our terrific housekeeper Melissa working those 4 Saturdays in July and August. Her son, Thomas Fitzgerald, has been doing some work here and has signed on for those Saturdays. Karen Williams (mother of our counselor Logan) has agreed to come work those days. And I have a few counselors lined up to help. But we will need more help. In the past I have contracted with professional cleaning services, but this year, none on my preferred list are available, and this is an expensive option anyway, since professional companies charge us more than the \$9 per hour that we pay our extra housecleaners. I would like to solve this staffing dilemma through our Virlina churches network. **Could the OMC help advertise this as a volunteer opportunity, to come clean a cabin or two on any of these four Saturdays?** We need folks who are 18 years or older. The smaller cabins each take one hour to clean, and each volunteer would be given a checklist to follow and cleaning supplies to use. Volunteers can call our office to sign up for a Saturday to help. The four Saturdays when we need help are as follows:

- Saturday, July 21, 2018 –Anytime all day.
- Saturday, July 28, 2018 – Anytime all day.
- Saturday, August 4, 2018 – Only in the hours between 2:00 and 9:00 pm
- Saturday, August 11, 2018 –Only in the hours between 12:30 and 11:00 pm.

Since February, we have hosted 20 paying guest groups overnight. Three of these were Virlina District affiliated groups: Virlina Junior High Retreat, Pilgrimage Retreat, and the Calling the Called Retreat (held in partnership with the Shenandoah District.) One of the overnight groups, Bonsack Baptist, was a service weekend, with some of their youth staying onsite to do projects for Camp Bethel. We have also hosted Sounds of the Mountains volunteers at no charge, and we hosted the Camp Kesem leadership for a courtesy stay for planning their summer camp week. We have had 6 day retreats since February, in addition to the many, many Your Outdoor Classroom and KinderCritters events led by Beth Wiegandt.

Someone asked me recently what a Guest Service Coordinator does in the summer months at Camp Bethel since our outside guests are limited to just renting shelters while summer camp is in session. I am just as busy during summer months as I am the rest of the year. Autumn is our busiest season for guest services and most groups are finalizing their autumn retreat plans in May to August. Guest Services is always booking 1-12 months in advance for events.

Really the only "slow" time is a few short weeks in January, when there are only a handful of groups willing to risk the chance of snow to book a January weekend retreat. And even at that slow time of year, there are always the tasks of housekeeping supervision and long range projects and on-going coordination of events for future months. It has definitely been one of those jobs where one is busy every day and the list of things to do never ends.

In other news, I have just finished planting the 14 new baby trees for 2018, and checking on the 50+ trees planted in 2017. 42 trees are thriving. This makes a survival rate of 63%, which is a decent rate for seedlings of this size. Ideally, 10 new seedlings could be purchased and planted each year from the Va. Department of Forestry. Small seedlings are available in packs of 10, at \$2 per tree. This year's crop were 10 river birch trees plus 4 red maples donated by Maile Armstrong, a friend of camp. This year, I tried keeping some of these tiny saplings in flowerpots to grow them to a larger size before planting in the ground, and those trees are doing well. New trees in the ground need to be watered (by rain or bucket) at least every 10 days for the first year after in ground planting. (Trees in flowerpots must be watered more frequently.) Drying out of root systems is the chief cause of death for these tiny saplings.

To remind us all WHY we are planting trees at Camp Bethel, here are some good reasons:

1. To keep an age-diverse population of trees at Camp. Right now too many of our trees in the open spaces are of the same age generation and if they all die around the same decade of time, we will have a barren camp landscape.
2. When you mow under trees (as we do in most areas of main camp) then the only way you will have new trees grow, is to intentionally plant and protect them with tree tubes in their early years.
3. Trees provide shade, atmosphere, visual aesthetics. Trees next to a parking lot can diminish the tremendous heat gain by pavement. Deciduous trees can shade a building in the growing season, and allow heat gain in a building during the winter.
4. Trees help protect our water by controlling erosion and floodwaters and filtering toxins. Planting trees in Botetourt County helps in the effort to keep our streams, rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic Ocean clean and healthy.
5. Trees encourage diversity of plants and wildlife, making the ecosystem (in which we all live) healthier and more sustainable.

This summer, two of our counselors (Daniel Naff and Spencer Knox) have taken on the Nature Fun activities for summer camp. During my previous 5 summers, I have enjoyed helping lead hiking and nature activities. I think this is an important part of a summer program which intends to build relationships with God, each other, and Creation. I am encouraged to think that maybe future summer staffs will have someone designated to plan and lead nature activities.

There, that's my parting shot as resident Lorax of Camp Bethel.

I have enjoyed working and living at Camp Bethel since 2013 and I will certainly miss Camp Bethel when I move to Charlottesville in July, where my husband Gary has been appointed to First United Methodist Church of Charlottesville.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Heaton

Program Coordinator's Report to the OMC

March 24, 2018

Life has been extremely full since the last meeting of the OMC. It seems there is always work to be done and not enough time. But the ministry is good and joy is found. Last fall was packed with conferences and learning opportunities, as well as planning for the 2018 summer! Enjoy a glance at my schedule and the work that has been completed.

The beginning of October brought Camp Bethel's 33rd annual Heritage Day. Where once again the staff stirred through the night and created another batch of apple butter. It was made with love through the laughter and fellowship that the summer staff shared as they took turns stirring. October also brings Roanoke's Go Outside Festival where Camp Bethel sponsored an information booth, a photo booth, and an idea/drawing chalkboard for the Roanoke community to see what we have to offer. I, Barry, and a handful of summer staff took turns at our booth. We made great contact with families and shared the joy of Camp Bethel.

November brought the Outdoor Ministry Association Annual Gathering at Camp Blue Diamond in Pennsylvania. This is a beautiful opportunity for Brethren camps across the nation to come together and share. This is always a professional growth opportunity as well as a time of constant worship and fellowship.

December started with a professional growth conference, Virginia Camp and Retreat Leaders Gathering at Brethren Woods. And then Winter Camp came, which is always a favorite of mine! To kick off the positive excitement for camp we started with a Staff Reunion and potluck on Friday, December 29 where the alumni staff enjoyed fellowship, games, and a plug about working at camp again for the 2018 summer! We had over 35 staff come together for the reunion and 28 of those stayed to help with Winter Camp. In my time at Camp Bethel, I experienced the best Winter Camp ever in 2017. The campers and counselors were engaged and even though we were limited with our outside activity due to high winds and freezing temperatures, we received raving reviews. We even had a parent whose camper cried through the entire check-in process on Saturday (but he did stay) email us after explaining what a great time he had and how he is excited for the 2018 summer! We had 59 campers! Woohoo!

January was a month to dive into getting summer camp registration ready and the website ready to receive registrations! We were able to simplify our registration process for parents and get registration open on time! As of March 22, we have received 157 summer camp registrations! My Sounds of the Mountains meetings for the 2018 festival have also started. I continue to take in ticket sales and sponsorships. January also opened up traveling opportunities for camper and staff recruitment. Here is a glance at places I have already been and places I plan to attend:

- Wednesday, January 24 Bluefield College (Staff Recruitment)
- Tuesday, February 6 Bridgewater College (Staff Recruitment)
- Wednesday, February 7 Eastern Mennonite University (Staff Recruitment)
- Tuesday, February 13 Radford University (Staff Recruitment)
- Wednesday, February 21 Virginia Commonwealth University (Staff Recruitment)
- Wednesday, February 28 Shenandoah University (Staff Recruitment)
- Tuesday, March 13 Sweet Briar College (Staff Recruitment)
- Wednesday, March 14 Blacksburg Camp Fair (Camper Recruitment)
- Wednesday, April 4 Washington and Lee (Camper Recruitment)
- Saturday, April 7 Virginia Family Expo (Camper Recruitment)
- Saturday, April 28 Health Kids Day at Virginia Tech (Camper Recruitment)

I continuously work to interview and screen applicants for Camp Bethel's 2018 summer staff. I have already interviewed and hired 21 counselors and 7 coordinator staff.

In the midst of it all I continue to work on other projects. I was able to plan and lead the Virginia District Junior High Retreat at Camp Bethel with 53 Junior High youth and advisors. Camp Bethel will be hosting the Second Annual "Camp Bethel PEP! 5K" on August 25. Barry and I have already updated the website, opened registration, and created a post card. Look for one in your mail box soon! During the 2017 fall OMA retreat I was nominated and voted onto the OMA board. I recently attended our first board meeting at Camp Mack in Indiana from March 19-21.

As I said before, life is full. There is so much more that I do from day to day but this is a highlight of the exciting things. Thank you for the opportunity to continue as the Program Coordinator at Camp Bethel.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenna Stacy

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Facilities Manager's report to OMC March 24, 2018

Camp Maintenance was busy with lots of projects this past summer 2017. One of our biggest was working on the Crowder House (Barry's house). We replaced the siding on the laundry porch. We also repaired some guttering and had on section replaced, also adding snow guards in places. We plan to be back on it this summer for more improvements.

We found lots of rotten siding and wall studs on Bluebirds' Nest. We managed to get that all replaced without a lot of trouble.

We replaced the worst hazardous boards on the road bridge near the spring pond and beside the House of Pillars. We plan to finish the rest of them later this year.

The House of Pillars ceiling is finally complete thanks to great help from the team from Cedar Bluf CoB. Thank you! In December 2017 we put a new ceiling in Hearthstone with help from the guys from Mount Hermon CoB. A big thanks to those guys for another job well done. Also some new wiring and a new breaker box was installed in Hearthstone before Jenna moved in.

Finally, six new drain field lines were installed and the septic problem at the A-frames is now fixed.

Thank you,

Mickey Nichols,
Facilities Manager

Guest Services Coordinator Report to the OMC

March 24, 2018

In 2017, there were 49 weekends with at least one guest group using the facilities at Camp Bethel. The empty weekends were January 6-8, Feb. 10-12, and December 29-31 (Winter Camp). So far, in 2018, we have reservations (some pending) made for groups on 41 weekends.

By my tally, guest services groups brought in \$185,810 in fees. This includes Brethren and non-Brethren lodging, meals, and rentals, as well as the non-Brethren summer camp weeks for 3 band camps and Camp Kesem.

In late July and August, we will again host band camps for the Lord Botetourt High School, William Byrd High School, and Salem High School. Virginia Commonwealth University will again bring Camp Kesem to Camp Bethel in August. Camp Kesem is a weeklong camp for children whose parents have cancer.

Melissa Browning continues to be an efficient and dependable housekeeper, working about 30 hours per week. Michael Washburn of Lexington, Virginia has been coming one day per week to help with cleaning tasks, maintenance tasks, and some office tasks. Michael will be returning for a second summer as a counselor in the Camp Bethel summer camp.

As of autumn 2017, about two-thirds of the planted tree saplings had survived, which is a typical rate. Ten river birch tree saplings have been ordered for April, as replacements.

For the summer camp nature program, we will have two summer staff, Spencer Knox and Daniel Naff, who will be designing and leading nature activities. Both are studying biological science in college, and are glad for the chance to get this experience in environmental education.

There will be guest groups using Camp facilities every weekend in March, April, and May, except for Easter weekend.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Heaton