

Camp Director's report to the Outdoor Ministries Committee

August 22, 2015: revised 8/21/2015



I. Summer Camps:

July 31 ended 7 weeks of excellent, authentic and Spirit-filled summer camp programs with the theme "*Power Up! Live in the Holy Spirit!*" We registered 1,209 campers in 72 program choices (compared to 2014 with 979 campers in 75 programs), with 230 participants in our new Traveling Day Camps and 65 participants in our new Family Fun nights. We were blessed by an excellent Summer Staff, helpful partner organizations, and dedicated volunteers who served as Chaplains, counselors and general helpers. Other data:

- We had 5,829 camper days in 2015 compared to 5,490 in 2014 (increase by 339 camper days).
- 222 campers received Good-As-Gold funding from Virginia congregations totaling \$49,127.
- 118 campers received "Campership" funds totaling \$29,370, which exceeds available funds by over \$8,000.
- 622 campers registered on-line.
- 49 campers "pre-registered" in 2014 for 2015 camps, and 60 campers "pre-registered" in 2015 for 2016.
- 633 campers either registered before the May 1 "Early Bird" discount ended or chose a program "on sale."
- 395 identified as Church of the Brethren (52% who answered), 370 as other denomination (48%).
- 48 campers attended our partner program, Carilion's Camp Too Sweet, and 78 campers attended one of three Kevin Jones Performing Arts Camps.
- Camper families gave summer offering of \$3,913.17 (50% for scholarships & 50% for New Cabin Fund).

II. Personnel:

- Jenna Stacy** will continue her role as resident volunteer intern through the fall-winter-spring, serving as our 2016 interim Program Coordinator in order to organize our 2016 Summer Camps.
- Hannah Oakes** has served as our part-time Administrative Assistant/Registrar from March 2013 through September 2015. Hannah has also served on our summer camp staff since 2011, most recently as one of our Summer Program Coordinators for 2014 and 2015. On Sunday, September 6 at 5:30pm at our Labor Day Weekend Pot-Luck Dinner, we will recognize and thank Hannah for her excellent service.
- Written reports from **Brigitte Burton**, **Beth Heaton**, and **Mickey Nichols** are attached to this report. I commend our full-time staff team for working so hard and so diligently this year. Each has gone above and beyond expectation (and hours) to make our ministry possible.

III. Events and Programs:

- The 21st annual Camp Bethel Benefit **Golf Tournament and Banquet** was held Wednesday, August 19. 92 golfers and dozens of sponsors and donors raised \$15,240 for the camp's ministries! Big THANKS to OMC members and spouses and friends who helped serve at the banquet!
- The 15th annual Sounds of the Mountains committee will meet Monday, September 21, 5:30pm at Brogan Insurance. April 15-16, 2016, and web site is revised at www.SoundsoftheMountains.org.
- The **Mission Resource Campaign Committee** has met several times in 2015. Lead visits have begun, and congregational visits begin after District Conference. OMC commitment is today.
- Heritage Day** is October 3. We need dozens of Parking Volunteers to work 2 hour shifts on October 3 from 6:00am-12:00noon. Please encourage all congregations to participate as vendors, shoppers or volunteers. Heritage Day Packets were included in our February 14 Camp Rep Packets and were mailed again to all congregations and Camp Reps on August 21.
- Camp Bethel will host the annual **Virginia Ecumenical Camp & Retreat Leaders' Gathering** (VECRLG) on December 1-3, and OMC members are encouraged to attend at least for the day on December 2.

IV. Finances:

- See the document "**Camp Bethel 2016 Proposed Budget and July 31 Income & Expense Comparisons...**" for our current financial position and my proposed 2016 budget.
- Non-Brethren summer camps in 2015 included: Carilion Camp Too Sweet July 19-24 = \$18,865 (due Sept 20); Lord Botetourt High School Band July 26-31 = \$18,469 (due Sept 20); and William Byrd High School Band August 9-15 = \$14,372.50 (due Sept 20).

V. Property and Facilities:

- Deer Field Lights and leveling:** See Mickey's report about field repairs. Lights were installed in time for band camps and worked well. NRE donated labor, and now our invoice for supplies and rentals is \$6,134.30.
- See Mickey's report about repairing the **Ark Pond**. After cleaning, we may still apply Western Bentonite.
- David Heckman, of David James Homes, has provided drawings for a new cabin, (see enclosure). We have \$25,000 in "Anonymous Memorial Escrow" given for this purpose, and \$1,956.58 of our Summer Offering is for the new cabin. We will add requested gifts for furnishings (beds, microwave, etc.) to our upcoming Wish Lists and News.
- Mickey and team will complete new HOP interior/ceiling over winter 2015-2016.
- Continued priorities: 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 Hearthstone, Front Residence, Shelter-by-the-Spring and Heritage; completing the new road

up Vesper Hill (culverts, trees, grading, seeding); construction of one or two basic Solar Kilns for lumber; construction of a wood-shop addition to the back of the Maintenance Shop; repairs & renewal of 568 Crowder House (plumbing, floors, exterior, roof, rain gutters, basement).

Respectfully submitted,

BARRY

Barry LeNoir, camp director
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Sept 4-7: Labor Day Weekend, RSVP meals.
Sept 5 (Sat) 6:45: Country Barn Dance in Gym.
Oct 3 (Sat): 31st Heritage Day Festival.

Nov 7 (Sat) 7:30am: Fall Workday, RSVP meals.
Dec 1-3 (Tue-Thur): VA Ecumenical Camp & Retreat Leaders' Gathering at Camp Bethel.

Dec 3 (Thurs): Christmas TOGETHER Banquet.
Dec 5 (Sat): Virilina District Board OMC Retreat.
Jan 2-3 (Sat-Sun), 2016: Winter Camp Program

Camp Bethel campers and fees comparison 2000-2015:

year	# weeks	Camper Days	Total campers	Total +/-	CoB campers	CoB +/-	% CoB to Tot	Subsidized fee available until May 1	cost +/-
2000	8		588		429		72.9%	\$183.00	
2001	8		586	-2	432	+3	73.7%	\$193.00	+\$10.00
2002	7		580	-6	417 (NYC)	-15	71.9%	\$203.00	+\$10.00
2003	7		624	+44	437	+20	70.0%	\$205.00	+\$2.00
2004	8		650	+26	413	-24	63.5%	\$205.00	\$0.00
2005	8		751	+101	436	+23	58.0%	\$210.00	+\$5.00
2006	8		807	+56	413 (NYC)	-23	51.2%	\$210.00	\$0.00
2007	8		859	+52	425	+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*	*	*48% who answered	\$270.00	+\$10.00
2014	8		979	-7	310* (NYC)	*	*45% who answered	\$280.00	+\$10.00
2015	7		1,209	+230	395	--	52% who answered	\$290.00	+\$10.00
2016	7	Goal: ????	Goal: ????						

Guest Services Coordinator Report to the OMC, August 22, 2015:

My apologies for missing this current meeting. I am at a beach family reunion this week.

Since my last report in June, eleven groups have used Shelter by the Spring for weekend events, and four groups have used Cave Trail Shelter. Several weekends had small overnight family guests, using the inexpensive cabins by the Gym or camping. We had one large family rent Heritage and Cave Shelter for a reunion. Again this year, we did not offer food service on weekends in the summer, and we open camp to guest groups only from 7:30pm Friday to Sunday afternoon while summer camp program is in session.

This weekend, with seven guest groups, marks the start of our busiest season. As soon as Week 7 of summer camp ended, I began receiving many, many requests for lodging and meeting spaces for the autumn months. Of course, our returning customers know to choose their preferred weekend early -- many of these large retreats were already planned before summer camp started. Retreat Center has only two available spots left before Thanksgiving, and Heritage has four available weekends. There are no completely empty weekends until November 20.

I will highlight one of our newer guests. The Blue Ridge Council of Boy Scouts requested space to hold large Cub Scout recruitment events. For two weekends in October, the Cub Scouts will fill Cave Field with information booths and activities. Many families are expected to attend for the Saturday events, and a substantial number will camp out in Right Field for two nights. The leaders are supportive of our Camp Bethel summer camp program and have offered us space to have our camp information available to all these families with young children.

Since I have no trouble filling Retreat Center with adult groups, one of my goals continues to be to market to youth groups who don't mind sleeping in the bunk beds and the charming rustic atmosphere of our other buildings. Also, this past week, I have started re-contacting the high schools in our 6 county region for the possibility of adding a third band camp to our August 2016 line-up.

Anyone want to adopt a garden spot at camp? Having blooming flowers and tidy garden beds adds to the attractiveness of our camp, and things look fine until June and July hit, and then all of the staff simply are so busy that pulling weeds falls to the bottom of the to-do list. The gardens at Heritage Lodge and near the Ark kitchen are the largest areas, and there are also the garden boxes at the Ark bridge, and the small area just outside our entrance. I'm thinking of just transplanting peppermint plants from the Ark pond to Heritage's garden as a ground cover for next year: once we do that, we've got peppermint there forever since it takes over....

Beth Heaton
Guest Services Coordinator

Food Services Coordinator Report to the OMC, 22 Aug 2015

Saturday, August 15 marked the end of another successful summer in food service. Between the beginning of leadership staff training on May 26 and the end of the William Byrd High School band camp on August 15 we:

- Served 165 hot meals
- Sent out over 1,000 out meals and Home in the Woods meals.
- Served between 2,000 and 3,500 individual meals each week
- Served a total of 23,700 individual meals in the Ark (we served 27,700 in 2014)
- Prepared food for between 200 and 500 people each week at the Friday night closing picnic.

This summer we spent approximately:

- \$40,200 with US Foods for food
 - \$1,850 with US Food for non-food supplies such a paper products and chemicals
 - \$420 for dishwasher rental fees
 - \$1,000 on food purchased retail
 - \$50 on non-food supplies purchased retail
 - \$9,230 on summer staff salaries, including two resident kitchen/program staff
 - \$9,340 on my salary and benefits
- \$62,090 total**

Dividing this total by the number of hot meals we served this summer gives us a cost of \$1.74 per meal for the cost of food (both US Foods and retail), \$0.08 for supplies (both US Foods and retail), \$0.78 for salaries (my own and summer staff's), and about \$0.02 to cover dishwasher rental, giving us a total per-meal cost of \$2.62. Actual per-meal cost is slightly lower as the meal total does not include meals eaten outside the Ark, i.e. out meals and Home in the Woods. This year we saw an increase in the per-meal cost of food, mainly due to an overall increase in the price of food, particularly chicken and egg products. A severe outbreak of avian flu affected (and continues to affect) a very large portion of the poultry and egg industry. Many of our regular products became unavailable and we were forced to use substitutes, and some of those that were available increased in price. The increase in summer staff salaries from 2014 to 2015 is due entirely to our including the salaries of the two resident kitchen/program staff among kitchen staff salaries and not among the program staff as we did last year. The per-meal cost of supplies and dishwasher rental remained the same between 2014 and 2015. The per-meal cost of my salary increased slightly, from \$0.34 to \$0.39 due to the fact that we served fewer meals in 2015 than in 2014 and my salary stayed the same. The decrease in the number of hot meals we served in 2015 (4,000 fewer than 2014) I believe has to do with the decrease in the number of on-site campers but also is a result of a decrease in the number of staff hired this year. For instance this year we served more than 400 fewer individual meals during staff training than we did in 2014.

Brigitte Burton
Food Services Coordinator

Facilities Manager Report to the OMC, 22 Aug 2015

The maintenance staff had only one large task this summer. This was to fill in the large dips in Deer Field. After a late start due to rain delays we got our fifth load of clay, and then the right front brake locked up on the dump truck. This took three days to repair. After getting started again the backhoe lost a cylinder which delayed us another week. We finally got fifteen more loads of clay dumped and spread on the field, this did not make the field level but made it much better to walk on. The delay put us sowing grass on July 9th, but the new and very young grass did not survive the first week of band camp.

Our goal now is to have grass that will make it through Heritage Day. After getting ready for Labor Day our next task is repairing the Ark Pond. We have made arrangements to have it cleaned (track hoe with long boom arm) in October. This will allow us to fix the leak at the spillway. We also will build a retainer pond upstream from the Ark Pond to catch the leaves and debris from heavy rain. We will be able to maintain the retainer pond with the backhoe, and this will keep the Ark Pond clean looking good for a long time. In December we plan to get back on the HOP and finish the ceiling this winter.

Mickey Nichols
Facilities Manager