

# Camp Director's report to the Outdoor Ministries Committee

March 26, 2016: revised 3/24/2016



## I. Summer Camps:

- A. In addition to male summer camp counselors, we are seeking a seasonal (mid-may through July) Administrative Assistant to help with data entry and all the paperwork of summer camps.
- B. As of March 23 we have 121 campers registered compared to 135 on March 23, 2015. I attribute this difference to the delay in getting the new website (and registration pages) completed. Our goal is 1,250 campers, and we will begin pushing our marketing information more aggressively now that the website is ready.
- C. Our summer camp marketing push will include: E-News blasts, a second brochure mailing, posters around Roanoke/Botetourt businesses, a few paid on-line listings and magazine ads, Instagram and Facebook posts and boosted campaigns, newspaper ads coming soon, the Roanoke Camp Fair on April 9, a Roanoke Times postcard mailing (3/25), direct calls to past camper families, and sponsorship/involvement with local events including the Botetourt Children's Fishing Carnival and Troutville Trail Days (both on June 4) and the Botetourt Youth With Character Academy "Caring" Pillar activities on June 8.
- D. Reminder that families receiving Good-as-Gold funding from Virlina congregations can now register on-line (paperless!) at [www.CampBethelVirginia.org/GAG.html](http://www.CampBethelVirginia.org/GAG.html).
- E. This summer we hope to institute a system of communicating with families and pastors/camp reps to follow up with campers who express interest in making a commitment to Christ or who are interested in connecting with a congregation. (See the enclosed "How are YOU willing to Connect?" camper form.)
- F. **Summer Staff:** We need LOTS of 18+-year-old MALE applicants, with approximately 10 counseling positions for males. Jenna has been busy recruiting and interviewing new and returning staff.

## II. Personnel:

- G. In addition to male summer camp counselors, we are seeking a seasonal (mid-may through July) Administrative Assistant to help with data entry and all the paperwork of summer camps.
- H. I spoke at the Southern Area Ministers' meeting on January 18, the Virlina Christian Education Training on March 12, the Northern Area Ministers' meeting on March 14, and I will present on behalf of OMC at Ministry and Mission in Virlina ("Behavior Management for Leaders") on May 7.
- I. Beginning April 3, **Jenna Stacy** and I begin speaking at several Virlina congregations on Sundays through May, and **Beth Heaton** will speak to Cloverdale CoB's Women's Lunch on April 19. Requests for speaking engagements on Sundays have outpaced our availability.
- J. Written reports from **Brigitte Burton**, **Beth Heaton**, **Mickey Nichols**, and **Jenna Stacy** are attached to this report. I commend our full-time and part-time staff team for continued excellence.
- K. We will host and house an Outdoor Education Intern (from Brevard College) during May. She will work with Beth Wiegandt to provide daily KinderCrittters and Your Outdoor Classroom programs.
- L. Website reconstruction is mostly complete, with only a few additional pages needed for upcoming events (Memorial Day & Labor Day weekends; Golf Tournament; Heritage Day; etc).

## III. Events and Programs:

- A. 50 guests attended our **March 3 Sow the Seed Scholarship Banquet** which has raised \$8,586.70 thus far.
- B. On March 19, we hosted a memorial service and lunch for family and friends of **Stephanie Woods Richfield**, a former summer staffer from the early 1980s and the daughter of Charlie and Carlie Woods of the Lakeside Church of the Brethren. Camper scholarship gifts received in her memory now exceed \$1,150.
- C. The **Sounds of the Mountains Festival** committee met on February 8 and March 21. 613 seats are reserved for our April 15 school performances (about \$3,100), and over 130 tickets have been "pre-sold" for the full event (about \$3,300) with guests from IA, KY, MD, NC, NY, PA, SC and VA. Sponsors have given \$21,050 thus far, and Mary Wilson expects another \$1,750. Special THANK YOU to Mary Brogan Wilson for securing sponsorships, lots of work and help, and for personally buying 1/2 page ads in the Roanoke Times. *Allison Mullins seeks OMC volunteers to work a 2-hour shift at the ticket table on April 16.*
- D. KinderCrittters and Spring Your Outdoor Classroom programs begin on April 1 and run through June 2. Beth Wiegandt coordinates these programs and schedules volunteer teachers/leaders.
- E. On May 18 we are offering a FREE day of "Youth Mental Health First Aid Training" 8:00am-4:00pm.
- F. See Upcoming Events at the end of my report. Please help at **Spring Volunteer Workday** on April 2.

## IV. Finances:

- A. See the document "**Expense Comparison 2012-2016, revised 03.23.2016...**" for our current financial position (as of 03.22.2016) compared to budget and previous years. We closed 2015 with net \$15,081.51, and we begin 2016 with a (positive) Reserve of \$7,514.75.
- B. On December 31, we transferred \$7,986 from our Reserve to the Vehicle Escrow, zeroing the outstanding Vehicle Escrow account. In 2016, we are accounting our Vehicle Escrow accounts from staff "travel" accounts and "summer camp mileage" account, per the Virlina District vehicle procedures which, as of this report, charges ourselves \$0.15 per mile.
- C. The **Mission Resource Campaign Committee** met on January 5, February 23, and March 15. *All OMC members are requested to attend at least one upcoming Lead Gift Visitor Training at the District Resource*

Center: April 5 at 7:00pm or April 9 at 10:00am or 1:00pm. See Tabitha Rudy if you have not yet made a commitment and would like to do so.

## V. Property and Facilities:

- A. The addition of our new (bottom bunk) mattresses to Heritage, Cottages and A-frames will be followed by a year-long push to "fix all the little things" in each of these facilities. We will pair this effort with re-reaching out to congregations that have, or might, Adopt-a-facility.
- B. Christiansburg CoB and Laurel Branch CoB have offered to partner and adopt a facility at camp. We are considering asking them to adopt the Ark Conference Room, and possibly add new screen and ceiling-mounted LCD projector in the Ark Dining Room for use during Summer Camps for singing, announcements, etc.
- C. Continued priorities: Ark Pond & dam repairs; new cottage (David James Homes); tree "replacement" throughout main campus; completion of new HOP ceiling; 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 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; replacing our 14-year-old mower; repairs & renewal of 568 Crowder House (plumbing, floors, exterior, roof, rain gutters, basement).

Respectfully submitted,

**BARRY**

Barry LeNoir, camp director  
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April 2, 7:30am Spring Workday & 1:00pm Vol Appreciation Luncheon.  
 April 9 (Sat), 9:30am-3:00pm: Roanoke Camp Fair at Valley View Mall.  
 April 15-16, 2016 (Fri-Sat): 15th Sounds of the Mountains Festival.  
 April 30 (Sat), 11:00am-4:00pm: Booth at Healthy Kids Day at VT  
 May 7 (Sat): "Behavior Management for Leaders" at Ministry & Mission at Brick CoB.  
 May 18, (Wed) 8:00am, FREE Youth Mental Health First Aid Training; \$9 lunch; RSVP.  
 May 19-20 (Thu-Fri): RMMS Field Trips at Camp Bethel.  
 Mar 22 (Sun): Several summer staff to CampCon in Falls Church.  
 May 24-26, 2016 (Tues-Thurs): Summer Leadership Team Training.  
 May 27-30, 2016: Memorial Day Family Weekend & Concerts, RSVP meals.  
 May 28, 2016 (Sat), Family Day/Summer Camp Open House, 1:00-4:00pm.  
 May 30-June 11, 2016: Summer Staff Training.  
 June 3-4: Parent-Child Overnight Camp  
 June 4 (Sat): Booth at Fishing Carnival in Buchanan AND booth at T'ville Trail Days.  
 June 8 (Wed) 1:00-2:00: "Caring" activity at Character Counts Academy Camp.

June 10, 2016 (Fri) 5:30: Summer Staff Commissioning Service/Dinner.  
 June 10-11 (Fri-Sat): Special Family activities and overnight availability.  
 June 11, 2016 (Sat): Virilina District Celebrates 150 Years, event at Camp Bethel.  
 June 12-July 29: Summer Camps & Family Adventures: "Not Afraid, Not Alone!"  
 June 14-17, 2016 (Tues-Fri): CIT Training and Practicum.  
 August 24, 2016: 22nd Annual Benefit Golf Tournament.  
 September 2-5, 2016: Labor Day Family Weekend, RSVP meals.  
 October 1, 2016 (Sat): 32nd Brethren Heritage Day Festival.  
 November 5, 2016 (Sat), 7:30am: Fall Workday, RSVP meals.  
 December 1, 2016 (Thurs): Christmas TOGETHER Banquet.  
 December 3, 2016 (Sat): Virilina District Board & OMC Retreat.  
 December 4-21, 2016: Schedule your Christmas Banquet at Camp Bethel!  
 December 30, 2016 (Fri): Summer Staff & CIT Reunion.  
 Dec 31, 2016-January 1, 2017 (Sat-Sun): Winter Camp New Year Party & Program.

### Camp Bethel campers and fees comparison 2002-2015:

year	# weeks	Camper Days	Total campers	Total +/-	CoB campers	CoB +/-	% CoB to Tot	Subsidized fee available until May 1	cost +/-
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	5,490	979	-7	310 (NYC)	--	45% who answered	\$280.00	+\$10.00
2015	7	5,829	1,209	+230	395	--	52% who answered	\$290.00	+\$10.00
2016	7		Goal: 1,250	+41				\$300.00	+\$10.00

### Guest Services Coordinator's Report to the OMC, March 26, 2016:

Snowy weather only caused one group to cancel their event this winter and they were able to reschedule within the season. New Testament Baptist youth moved their event from Jan. 22 to Feb. 19 weekend, because of the big snowstorm in January.

2016 income from paying guest groups through March 21, 2016 has been \$26,299. This includes payments for guests who stayed during that time period, as well as invoices paid from past events, and reservation deposits for future events, received during that time period.

For 2016, I have started to chart "guest-nights". (If a group of 10 people spent two nights here, that would mean 20 guest-nights.) From January 1 to March 21, 2016, there have been 674 guest-nights and 1247 guest meals. These figures do not include our own winter camp or any or fundraising events such as the Sow the Seed Banquet. There were also 6 "guest-days": a group of six people who rented a meeting space just for a day. Charting guest-nights will be another way to gauge if camp use is increasing year to year.

We have new six-inch thick nylon-covered foam mattresses in all the lower bunks of Heritage Lodge and the cottages and A-frames. (Exception is Forest Lodge, which already had some six inch mattresses, so that building only got 3 new ones.) This will be a big improvement, especially for our adult groups. The Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and ISUL guests have already made good reports on them. I have been contacting the handful of guest groups who left us for other retreat centers in recent years because of the old mattresses. At least one of these groups is considering returning to Camp Bethel. These new mattresses were purchased with funds from the Bishop estate legacy.

So many of our guests comment on the beauty of this camp setting. I credit our streams, ponds, forests, fields, views, quiet, and dark skies as part of the reason guests choose Bethel for their retreats. I can remember visiting a camp once which had the skies, the views, the water, the quiet, the fields... but very few trees. It was stark looking, unappealing, and I imagine it was pretty hot in the summer. Even if they do not overhang a building or parking lot directly, our trees at Camp Bethel are absorbing the heat of the summer sun and keeping that heat from collecting in the area. A tree on the northern or eastern side of a parking lot or buildings still contributes to shielding that area, such as how the white pines on the edge of the Ark parking lot contribute to heat protection of that area. And of course, every standing tree adds to the oxygen release and carbon dioxide uptake in our environment. Our trees are great... but they are mostly of the same age. When Barry asked me for other priorities for use of the Bishop estate funds, my biggest vote was for planting trees around camp that can be in place when our current trees begin to die off in numbers in about 30 years.

Beth Heaton  
Guest Services Coordinator

### **Food Services Coordinator's Report to the OMC, 26 March 2016**

As is typical for this time of year, I spent most of the time since our last report on tasks directly related to foodservice for groups: menu planning and ordering, food preparation, and cleaning the Ark between guest groups. This February and March we served several new retreat groups, including youth groups from New Testament Baptist Church in Vinton and the Episcopal Diocese of Southwest Virginia. I took the opportunity of having young retreat guests to explore the question: Do Children Like Cheesesteak? (answer: inconclusive). We also served a number of returning guests, including two Presbytery of the Peaks retreats, International Christian Resources (a medical missions group), a group of scrapbookers led by Linda Crumpacker and her sister Sue Kirylyuk, and ISUL, a group with many individuals with dietary needs who were, I think, fully satisfied with food service for the first time this year.

I have also dedicated time this month to looking for summer kitchen staff. This is a big turnover year for seasonal kitchen staff as well as for counselors, and I will need to fill most if not all of my non-Steve positions with new hires. As of this week have made my first official hire: Angie LeNoir! We are in negotiations with a few others, including Colton Walls, a former counselor who had verbally committed to filling the new second shift supervisor position, but so far no one else has completed the application process. If you know anyone looking for a summer job... This year for the first time we printed kitchen staff recruitment flyers, which we have hung around camp and handed out at several camp fairs this spring. I also plan to hang some around town in the coming weeks if I do not get more applications. This week I ventured to Liberty University with Jenna to recruit and met a number of students who expressed what appeared to be genuine interest. No applications yet though. Thanks to this trip I learned that Kroger cupcakes with day-glo icing are an effective way to lure students into our orbit and, according to a lecture I overheard in the room next to us, that one can apparently overcome racism using a Chuck Norris roundhouse kick to the face.

The upcoming weeks will be full with all the usual Spring events: Spring Work Day, Pilgrimage, Sounds of the Mountains, and guest groups, and before we know it summer camp will be upon us!

In personal news, this weekend we are venturing to Pennsylvania to visit my parents, attend my cousin's baby's first birthday party, and spend time with my 92 year-old grandfather ☺

Brigitte Burton  
Food Services Coordinator

## **Facilities Manager's Report to the OMC, 26 March 2016**

Not a lot to report since February the main focus has been on the House of Pillars. The new ceiling is near complete and looking great about 5 more days of work may finish this lengthy project. Thank you Hollins Road and Cedar Bluff for your many hours of labor. The maintenance staff is now focusing on the removal of numerous small dead trees throughout camp and getting ready for workday.

Mickey Nichols  
Facilities Manager

## **Program Coordinator's Report to the OMC, March 26, 2016**

With Sounds of the Mountains less than a month away ticket sales and sponsors have increased. I am constantly documenting ticket sales and emailing/post mailing ticket receipts for Sounds of the Mountains. For sponsorships I have been taking in the money and documenting how the sponsor would like to be listed so that we can properly label our Sounds of the Mountains programs with our sponsors' information. For the field trip I have emailed schools that have attended in the past to give them the opportunity to reserve space for their schools first. I have also emailed other schools and taken in new schools for the field trip. Once a school gives me their information I email them a confirmation packet with sufficient information and expectations for their day with the tellers. As of today we have 130+ festival tickets sold, 9 schools attending the field trip with 498 students (613 seats reserved), and \$21,050.00 in sponsorships. Beginning April 1 the ticket prices will go up so I expect an increase of ticket sales between now and then.

Staff hiring has been a very busy process within the past month. There are still opportunities for me to attend colleges/universities for staff recruitment. On Wednesday, March 2, 2016 I went to Radford University to set up a Camp Bethel table in their student center. It was a very successful day and I was able to interact with multiple students. Unfortunately I have not received any applicants from that visit but there is still time. On Tuesday, March 22 Brigitte Burton and I set up a table at Liberty University outside of their Career Center. This recruitment opportunity was also successful. We interacted with multiple students who were very interested and excited that a camp was still hiring. I received an application from a student the night of this visit. I waited until after March 1, 2016 to review Junior Counselor and Counselor in Training applicants. I have started to be in contact with all of those that have applied and worked toward setting up interviews to continue hiring for those positions. I have interviewed and hired 9 support staff, 6 Adventure Counselors, 7 Senior Counselors, 3 Day Camp Counselors, and 1 Junior Counselor. I have many interviews set up for the next few weeks and a few more applicants to get in contact with.

On Wednesday, March 16 I was able to attend the Blacksburg Camp Fair which is set up in the gym of Blacksburg Recreation Center. This camp fair is geared towards parents and campers. Many parents were interested in day camps only and since we are at least an hour from Blacksburg they were not eager about Camp Bethel but many parents did show interest in our overnight camps. I received quite a few contacts from there and am eager to continue to be in contact with those parents.

A few other events that I have been involved in are Mission Resource meetings, a district Jr. High event, and the Sow the Seed banquet. I have continued to attend Mission Resource meetings as an observer and I continue to learn more with each meeting. On Saturday, February 27 I went to Williamson Road Church of the Brethren to lead an hour of activities with the Jr. High. I led a session on what a week of camp looks like so I was able to be very active with the Jr. High kids. We played games, looked at crafts, talked about a little scripture, and even did a mini skit day. Beth also provided us with a snake skin and turtle shell to look at. On Thursday, March 3 I served at the Sow the Seed banquet. The banquets are great for building the camp community in many ways.

Since the last meeting I have also kept up with my office duties as well such as answering the phone, retrieving the mail, and taking in and processing donations. I also mailed all of the camp representative packets that were not picked up at our camp rep luncheon.

The summer is quickly approaching and I am getting very excited. As June gets closer I look forward to completing my staff hiring, taking in hundreds of registrations, and planning the best summer yet!

Jenna Stacy  
Program Coordinator