

# Badger Tracks – March 2003

## March Message

by President Anne Derber

I now realize how cold it has been in the northwoods, especially after returning from Denver where it was 50 degrees! My first morning back at home it was -30 degrees and it took more time to adjust back to this weather! Spring is coming slowly but surely.

The ACA National Conference was an excellent event. Wisconsin was well represented and the sessions were well attended. We were especially proud of Jen Little who received the first annual Jack Weiner Leadership Award. This was a terrific way to honor Jack and all of his work. We look forward to future awards and recognition of emerging camping professionals. Open hearings, open forums, and Delegate meetings were packed full of information and proposals. As items emerge, these will be shared with you.

Planning for the upcoming summer season is well underway. I wish you continued success as you hire staff and recruit campers. As this world gets more complicated, the role we play as camping professionals becomes ever more important. Thank you for all the hard work you do and for your support of the Wisconsin Section.

## Section Calendar

- April 10-12, 2003: Mid-States Conference
- May 13, 2003: Spring Workshop on Health issues and concerns. Location TBA
- Feb. 24-27, 2004: National Convention, San Francisco
- April 15-17, 2004: Mid-States Conference

## The Jack Weiner Young Leadership Award

President, Anne Derber, announces that the 2003 Award has been given to Jen Little. Jen is a graduate of the UW-Stevens Point program. She majored in Psychology and minored in Youth Programming and Camp Administration. She is one of the creators of the WI Camp Student organization with Sam Steiger. She has also worked at Camp Eagle Ridge for the past 5 years.

Thank you to all who nominated candidates--all were excellent representatives--Jack would be proud!

The Jack Weiner Leadership Fund has passed the \$15,000 mark! But, there is still more work to do to reach our goal of \$25,000! One thousand of our new brochures were passed out at the ACA National Conference in Denver. We have one for every person who will attend the Mid States Conference. If you would like brochures, or have ideas about additional places for distribution, please contact Kate at [acawisconsin@charter.net](mailto:acawisconsin@charter.net).

## Mid-States Conference Just Around the Corner Vision: Bringing Your Camp's Mission to Reality

By now you should have received the packet of information listing all the exciting events planned for the conference, April 10-12. If you haven't, contact Sherwood Forest Camp, Mid States Camping Conference, 2708 Sutton Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63143, or e-mail Michelle Metzler at [zellda2@yahoo.com](mailto:zellda2@yahoo.com).

The following sessions are offered in all day sessions on April 10. Because some are limited in attendance, register as early as you can!

**CampJam Plus JamSchool**, a Staff Training Event Extraordinaire with Faith Evans. A fun interactive workshop that Faith is offering for the first time anywhere. Includes 2 books you can use in your own training.

**Raccoon Circle Activities** presented by Dr. Jim Cain. Knowing Jim, you can expect a fast paced active workshop using very simple materials. Includes a book and webbing.

**Power Tools for Outstanding Camp Leadership** with Michael Brandwein. Michael is a master at presenting fantastic games and activities with little setup that teach campers vital life skills in really fun ways. Buy his new book in the ACA Bookstore.

**Connection is the Coin of the Realm** by Christopher Thurber. Chris will concentrate on helping your staff respond effectively to difficult camper behaviors. Book is included. Note time change.. 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

**Project Wild and Learning Tree Training** with Julie Speck. Learn to discuss environmental issues with children in grades K-12. Three handbooks are included with over 300 environmental activities. DPI credits are available for teachers attending the session.

**Preparing for and Responding to the Death of a Camper or Staff Member**, presented by Dave Opealewski. Effective and appropriate training for camp professionals and staff prior to a tragedy.

**Camp Nurse Symposium** by Linda Erceg and Myra Pravda. Sponsored by the Association of Camp Nurses, it is offered only here, and is a must for your camp nurse. For professionals in the field, CEU's are provided. Please register on the separate registration form in the program booklet, and note different times for the workshop.

Also being offered are these ACA courses: Basic Camp Director Course; ACA New Director Orientation, OLS Instructors Course, ACA Standards Associate Visitors Course, OLS Program Leader Course, ACA Standards Course, Professional Aquatics Safety Seminar.

you can earn a free t-shirt at the Mid-States Conference. Plan to volunteer at least one hour during that weekend, and you go home with a free T-shirt. Stop at the hospitality table and sign up for such things as room hosts, hospitality table helpers, "Pheasant Runners" in the exhibit hall, or, NEW this year, "Bob's Worker Bees" to help at the general sessions to hand out supplies for Bob Ditter's incredible activities.

### **2003 Spring Workshop**

You asked for it! Mark your calendars for Tuesday, May 13, 2003. We will be offering a spring workshop focusing on health issues and concerns facing our camps. Along with this, we will be conducting an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) training for those camps who have been awarded an AED machine through the Project ADAM program. Keep your eyes open for a BT Bulletin announcing the location and times for this workshop.

### **Reports from the National Conference**

*From Kim Shafer*

### **Emergency & Disaster Planning: Responding to Camp Needs Using Updated Disaster Planning Paradigms**

*Presented by Linda Erceg*

How long has it been since you have looked at your risk management and disaster plans? If you are like many of us, our plans get reviewed on an annual basis, but changes are not made as often as they should be. The goals of emergency and disaster planning are to protect life, property, assure safety, keep

the appropriate people informed, and maintain day-to-day operations.

Both emergencies and disasters happen unexpectedly, have negative effects, and need to be dealt with immediately. There are also differences when dealing with an emergency or disaster. The resources that you use may not be the same, the response that you have may be different, and the impact that each has will be different.

The first step that needs to be taken is to ask yourself, what things might happen that would threaten my camp? Then make a list of all the things that you can think of. Don't leave anything out, even if you think it is something small or if the chances of it happening at your camp are slim. For example, terrorism. If your camp is located in a rural area, the likelihood of a terrorist attack is pretty small, but what if your campers come from an area that has a greater likelihood of being attacked. Once you have made your list, rate each item as to its potential frequency and its severity or impact on your camp. You will then be able to see what type of risks are the biggest concern for you when revising your risk management and disaster plans.

It is important for you to have a redundancy plan built in to your risk management plans. What happens if your camp has a fire and all your health forms are burned up? Try to make sure that you have a backup copy of all your paperwork located some place other than your camp, maybe your home office if it is located outside your camp, or a safe deposit box or even at another camp. Don't forget to back up your computer system as well, and have a back up plan of how to access your computer if your camp loses power or you cannot get to your computer.

When looking at your plans don't take them on yourself. It is important to share your thoughts and ideas with a group of people. Putting a planning

team together will help the plans become a part of your entire camp community vs. something that only the people at camp know and understand. The people on your committee should come from various backgrounds to offer different perspectives. Some suggestions are: camp director, health care provider or physician, someone who will be supportive of the plans but also smooth any political rough spots (i.e. a board member) property manager or site manager, and a very detailed oriented person who can capture and shape the message effectively.

Once your group is assembled, it is time to get to work and make sure that everyone is ready to do their homework. The "task master" is the person who keeps that group focused and on task. This person can give the committee or group the following questions to go over: where is the operation's center(s), who can initiate the disaster plan, what communication options exist, what redundancies need to be created, what training is necessary, what non-camp groups have a vested interest, and what documentation is needed? You can also include other questions or ideas that you feel would be relevant to your camp.

The process is not necessarily an easy one or one that is fun to deal with. But, it is very important that it be done. Each of our camps are different and what works for one camp may not work for another. This article gives you some suggestions and ideas, but is not the only approach to take. A list of resources was provided by Linda Erceg to help us in our planning process.

Fink, s. (2000) Crisis Management: Plan for the inevitable. Lincoln, NE: iUniverse.com Written from the perspective of the crisis manager.

Grief Recovery (1995) Crises response planning for camps & conference centers. Saginaw,

MI: Grief Recovery. Focuses on death, personal injury, and recovery process.

Vulpitta. R (2002) Onsite emergency response planning guide. Chicago: National Safety Council. Approaches incidents from a site specific perspective; a good camp director's perspective.

### **From Sarah Resch Not-For-Profit Council of the ACA**

The ACA has a subsidiary called the Not-For-Profit Council that has been providing a voice and assistance to Not-For-Profit ACA accredited camps for the past 6 years. The NFP Council met in Denver, and I had the opportunity to attend with Melanie Carter of Camp Gray, while representing the Wisconsin Section.

66% of camps accredited by the ACA are not-for-profit camps. I did not realize this percentage was so high. The NFP Council is not a replacement for another organization, but a form of support to all NFP camps regardless of agency or affiliation. In providing assistance to NFP camps, the NFP Council does the following: promotes and supports issues affecting NFP camps, sponsors speakers for NFP topics at the national conference, and is offering grants to ACA sections to assist in providing educational opportunities for NFP camps and staff.

The NFP Council has a section of the ACA web site, which posts projects and opportunities offered by the NFP Council. A few topics they will be adding in the near future is grant-writing assistance and information on products that will assist NFP camps.

Two topics that have a great impact on NFP camps that the Council is currently working on are Forest Land use and background checks. The Council is pushing to limit appraisal at rural land values, not developed values and to put a cap on the percentage of appraised rate.

This issue affects approximately 320 camps nationwide. The Council is also advocating with our national and state leaders to provide a way to do criminal background checks at a low cost, which are accurate and as timely as possible. This issue affects all camps, but particularly NFP camps which utilize a large number of volunteers.

The NFP Council is seeking topics on which to create educational curriculum guides for sections and camps to use in training. A few topics mentioned at the meeting are 15 passenger van driver training and food safety.

If you have any topics you would like to see educational curriculum on, please e-mail me at [sarah\\_resch@msn.com](mailto:sarah_resch@msn.com).

If you are interested in joining the NFP Council, the registration fee is \$25, and can be paid at the same time as accreditation and membership fees. If you have already paid membership fees, you can print an additional form from the ACA web site.

### **Reverse 911, What Does It Mean?**

The Rocky Mountain Section led an excellent session on Crisis Management and evacuation. Unfortunately, many camps in the Rocky Mountain Section were hit hard by the Colorado fires last summer, but the camp directors turned it into a wonderful learning experience for their fellow directors. Here is some of the information they shared.

The fire that affected many camps started 2-3 days prior to opening day. Cheley Colorado Camps were given 10 hours notice of evacuation, whereas the Flying "G" Girl Scouts were given 4 hours (however, they did not have children on site yet, only parents.)

1. Know where you will be taking the campers and staff in advance and develop a relationship with that site. Good places are

another camp, town hall, school building, or Boys and Girls Club, to name a few.

2. Arrange for transportation in advance. Do you have a contract with a bus company? If so, do you have a number 24 hours a day? Would you use staff cars to transport campers? Do you have written permission from the owners of each car? Do you keep the keys in a central area?
3. Have a list of people on premises at all times. The Flying "G" only had staff members on site because it was a weekend. Would you know exactly who you had to evacuate on a weekend?
4. Make a list of what files need to be taken with in the event of an evacuation. One camp has all critical files kept in red file folders so the business manager can notice them quickly and grab them.
5. Determine who will contact parents and/or arrange for pickup. Onsite camp staff will be busy working with the campers, or loading necessary equipment to take with during an evacuation. Is there somebody offsite who has contact information and can begin making phone calls?
6. Ensure that staff members are contacting home as well. Their families will be worried, too
7. Who will write the telephone script for use by people contacting parents? Who will change the outgoing voice mail message leaving emergency information?
8. Who will the media contact? Does your entire staff know they are not to talk to the media? "Dude, it's pretty bad up there" is not what parents want to hear!
9. Do you have a procedure for contacting offsite groups

or groups hiking on grounds?

Girl Scouts of Mile Hi Council provided an excellent resource titled Emergency Procedures: Fire or Evacuation Administrative Staff Supplement that I can e-mail to anybody who is interested in it. Please send your request to [sarah\\_resch@msn.com](mailto:sarah_resch@msn.com) and I would be happy to send it back to you. Good luck in crisis planning for this summer. Plan for the worst and hope for the best!

### **Special Note INS Transitions Into DHS; All Customer Services Remain in Place**

*Susan Yoder, ACA National*

On March 1, INS enforcement and service functions and responsibilities transitioned into the Department of Homeland Security. INS customers are advised that all familiar immigration customer services have been retained through this transition. Service and benefit features of the main INS web site are available on their Web site. In addition, all INS enforcement-related information will be easily accessible from the BCIS and main DHS web sites.

For additional information, see [www.immigration.gov](http://www.immigration.gov).

### **Staff Background Checks**

National Background Investigations, Inc., an ACA business member, specializes in direct, personal access to criminal court records. Internet access is available at [www.nationalbackground.com](http://www.nationalbackground.com). There is no registration fee, or minimum number of applicants required. You may have seen their booth at Denver. If not, and are interested in learning more, call Nilsa Marin, 877-667-0090, or write to them at P.O. Box 996, Stevensville, MD 21666.

### **New This Year--Mini Camp Job Fairs**

The Mini Camp Job Fairs sponsored by ACA-Wisconsin Section at eight colleges had generally favorable reviews. The mini job fair concept is to have only five camps set up booths in a high traffic student area and nab the students as they go by. As of this writing, we haven't finished the mini camp job fair rotation, but Cardinal Stritch University and Beloit College received rave reviews for their hosting, publicity, and preparation of students. Lakeland College, UW-Milwaukee and UW-Whitewater received good reviews on the student traffic. Marquette University was slow. We will also visit Ripon College and UW-Parkside this year.

We hope to add another ten Wisconsin colleges to the rotation next year. Key to the success of adding more colleges is volunteers to act as ACA hosts during the fair. Let Val Wright know if you are interested in volunteering to host next year. Other changes planned will be more publicity at the colleges and more attention to location of the college so that camps do not need to travel across the state. The dates for Summer 2004 Mini Camp Job Fairs should be set by November 2003. This year's fairs were advertised through the BT Bulletin, so if you didn't hear about them, make sure that Jerry Carman has your correct e-mail. The fairs are only open to ACA accredited camps located in Wisconsin.

And, on the subject of job fairs...ACA Wisconsin representatives will be approaching UW-Madison to ask them to reinstate their Summer Camp Job Fair. We also hope to get the other UW schools that have summer job fairs to set more favorable dates so they don't force camps to crisscross the state or miss them entirely because they are on the same day.

### **New! Do You Rent Your**

### **Camp?**

The ACA-Wisconsin Section web site will soon upload a new "Retreat & Conference Center" page for ACA accredited camps that rent out their facilities. So, take a look at the roster of members book where it lists camps for rent, and see if you like what it says in the roster about your camp. If not, please contact Val Wright by e-mail with the changes. You will receive a BT Bulletin when we have uploaded the pages so that you can proofread your entry.

### **Kate's Corner**

*by Kate Mace, Section Executive*  
More than 30 of your Wisconsin colleagues attended the ACA National Conference, and we're back with heaps of information to share with you.

ACA Wisconsin has joined the Not-for-Profit Council. Over 2/3 of the camps that belong to ACA are NFP. In the Wisconsin Section, it's over 80%. The NFP Council is ACA affiliated and is organized to facilitate communication among NFP camps. As you know, the NFP Council led the way in the recent, successful passage of the National Forest Organizational Camp Fee Improvement Act of 2003. This act provides relief to over 300 camps around the country, many of whom did not know about planned huge fee increases that were to be imposed by the Forest Service. In addition, the Council hopes to become a resource center for camps which are looking for help in identifying fund raising and grant opportunities.

The Scholarship Program is a service set up for camps which are for profit (FP). A system is in place at the ACA National Office, so FP camps can solicit contributions that will be held in a fund to be used for camperships to their own camps. Contributions made into this fund are tax deductible. For more information, contact Kim Bruno at [bruno@ACAcamps.org](mailto:bruno@ACAcamps.org)

A Student Membership Category is now a reality! ACA membership for anyone who is a

full or part-time student is just \$35. For more information and an application form, contact me at [acawisconsin@charter.net](mailto:acawisconsin@charter.net), or go to the ACA site at [www.ACAcamps.org/membership](http://www.ACAcamps.org/membership).

### **Thank You, Thank You, Thank You**

Kate Mace, Section Executive, sends kudos of appreciation to Camp Whitcomb/Mason and the Boys and Girls Club of Milwaukee for the photocopier, and to George Mills for the fax machine.

### **Is Your Camp Unique?**

Beginning in the next issue of Badger Tracks, we're going to kick off a new feature. We all know that Wisconsin camps are tops! Here's a chance for us to share our successes with each other.

The column will be called One of a Kind Camp (O.K. Camp)! In every issue, we will feature one of our section camps, and something that is unique and wonderful about it. Here's your chance to let the world know about a great idea you've had, or a special characteristic that sets your camp apart from all others.

Just e-mail [acawisconsin@charter.net](mailto:acawisconsin@charter.net), or mail to 3217 Sandwood Way, Madison, WI 53713. Describe the special feature or idea you've had that makes yours an O.K. Camp!

### **Sending Information for Badger Tracks?**

To have material included in Badger Tracks, please fax it to Jerry Carman at 920-994-8100, mail to 535 Lake Drive, Random Lake, WI 53075, or e-mail to [jcarman@execpc.com](mailto:jcarman@execpc.com). If you e-mail, please make it a part of the e-mail, do not send as an attachment.

Your stories of camp, special poems, articles of general interest, etc., are welcome.