

## Calendar of Events

- **Standards Course & Visitor Update 2/21 Camp Mason, Hardwick, NJ**
- **New Associate Visitor Training Course:**
  - Part 1 2/27 or 3/3
  - Part 2 (mock visit) 3/4**Contact the Section Office for an enrollment form**
- **State of the Garden State April 25th, Camp Kiddie Keep Well register at [acacampsnj.org](http://acacampsnj.org)**
- **ACA NJ Board Meetings March 7th and April 17th**
- **2007 Tri-State Camp Conference Wednesday, March 28– Sat. 31st Atlantic City, NJ**
  - **NJ Networking Cocktail Reception Wed. 3/28, 7:30pm Sheraton Ballroom 4**
  - **Complimentary Breakfast Buffet 3/30 Tunn Tavern 7:00 –8:30am. *Reservations required***
  - **S.C.O.P.E. Benefit Dinner 3/29**
  - **NJC - GAP Funding meeting, 3/29 4:30 pm room 321—All NJ Camps encouraged to attend (see page 5)**

## Tri-State 2007 – Highlights and Important Info!

We're less than 50 days away from our favorite off-season destination that doesn't include a beach or ski-lift. It's the Tri-State Camp Conference! As we celebrate our 25<sup>th</sup> year you will soon see how, despite our many past accomplishments, we have continued to forge ahead to create what we modestly yet seriously consider to be ***the greatest possible conference for the largest gathering of camp professionals in the entire world.***

Our conference website, [www.tristatecampconference.com](http://www.tristatecampconference.com), has links to everything you need at this point: Registration, Hotel Reservations (if you haven't booked yet, please don't delay--do it today!), Online Program Itinerary (and Planner--something we urge to check out ASAP!), the Camp Shopping Network (with over 200 of the industry's top vendors), Tri-State Message Boards for Attendees, Speakers and Exhibitors and much more.

The Program is the conference centerpiece as usual, this year led by dynamic keynotes from the famous "FISH!" folks, author Joe Ehrmann and marketing guru Dave Siegel. Workshop favorites like Brandwein, Thurber, Frankel and Leiken are augmented by some of our most respected colleagues, as well as red-hot author Jean Twenge (***Generation Me***). As an added bonus this year, EVERY CAMP IN ATTENDANCE will receive a binder and CD-ROM of every workshop handout/outline to take home with them from the conference. No more scrounging for Cricket's Special Event list, or Noel Corpruel's interview sheet! We're making it easier than ever. These same handouts/worksheets will be available online before the conference, and laptops will be available on-site to print out extra copies.

One of the biggest challenges faced by the Steering Committee has been how to keep a big, successful conference feeling like a small, intimate gathering. As most of us have learned from being camp directors, it's all about connections and relationships, so we have a great game plan for Atlantic City: Right from the start, Pre-Conference Workshops, including EPIC, Veteran Camp Directors (10+ years), and Rick Stryker (Facilities), will create smaller networking groups. Tables in our revamped food court will be designated for specific types of camps. And then (drum roll please) our highly motivated friends from EPIC, led by social chair Laurie "Julie McCoy" Rinke, have put together a slew of pre-planned social gatherings, including vendor-sponsored "milk & cookie breaks" each afternoon in the convention center, Happy Hours at the Sheraton Bar each day from 5-7 PM, and a post-dinner evening destination each night at some of the best destinations in Atlantic City. With 3500 Tri-State attendees staying at a dozen different hotels, we are doing our best to make it easier to network and meet with each other socially. This is something that gets more difficult to do each year that we continue to grow, but is a vital component of the Tri-State Conference.



## ACA NJ Section Board of Directors

<b>Bob Jones</b>	President	908-735-8336
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<b>Sue Goldberg</b>	Complaints Resolution Co-Chair	973-584-0015
<b>Joan Basilotto</b>	Complaints Resolution Co-Chair	732-938-5454

## The State of the Garden State

April 25th 9-3, Camp Kiddie Keep Well, Edison, NJ

Come to the ACA-NJ's spring meeting and get all your questions on current regulations answered by representatives from NJ Department of Health and Senior Services (State Licensing body for all camps), American Red Cross, and the NJ Division of Motor Vehicles.

Our keynote speaker, Claudine Leone, ACA-NJ Govt. Affairs Consultant, will discuss the progress of our Legislative Committee.

Bring along an idea for a camp activity and have fun participating in our lunchtime Activity Idea Swap. Other round robin topics to be announced. You'll be able to select the sessions that will provide **you** with the information **you** need. Program sponsored by Markel Insurance. You can register on-line at [www.acacampnj.org](http://www.acacampnj.org) or contact the NJ section office at 877-488-2267 /executive@acacampsnj.org.

## President's Message

Have you ever been asked what services you receive as a member of ACA? During a cold day in February I thought about this once again as I was renewing my membership.

We are one of the few ACA sections to employ a fulltime Executive Director. Mary Ellen wears many hats as she maintains the section office operations. As a section we contract with a private firm, Sensational Summers, headed by Barbara Rubin, to conduct camp fairs on our behalf. This has been a good way to promote and publicize the camp profession, as well as an opportunity to recruit new members.

During the year the section schedules three professional improvement programs during which we bring in nationally-known speakers and representatives from the state. A new initiative this year has been to expand the responsibilities of the section's legislative committee. Iris Communications has been contracted to serve as a governmental affairs 'watchdog' to monitor legislation that would affect the camp industry.

One of the cornerstones of the section is the implementation and monitoring of the national standards program. With the rollout of the revised standards the section is providing new materials and training for member camps and visitors.

Also, the section publishes a quarterly newsletter to keep members informed of current events at the National and State levels. We can't forget that the NJ section is also a 'partner' with Keystone and NY in sponsoring Tri-State, which is now located in NJ. We have come a long way technologically in the many functions, events and activities for which the section office and national are responsible.

Are you taking advantage of your Section and National membership? Doesn't it seem as if that's a good idea?

*Bob Jones*

*President*



Partnering to create a better camp experience

## Standards Update

By Michael Peterson, ACA-NJ Chairperson

2007 is a bench mark year for us in the New Jersey Section as we will be switching over to the a newly revised set of accreditation standards. This is never an easy task, especially for some of us “old dogs,” – but it is a necessary one. Every ten to twelve years ACA, mostly through the input and with the participation of its members, works at a total revision of the full set of standards and the program. In the interim there are often adjustments or minor revisions. But we do not change just for change’s sake, but because the reality of the market changes, expectations of families and regulatory agencies evolve, and new issues emerge. Twenty years ago, who cared about skate boards? Playground safety was a quiet little secret. And, kids wearing helmets to protect against brain injury – ha! But today, they are very much with us – and so standards evolve – or “move on” as Stephen King puts it.

The good news is that it (the book and the list) is no thicker then before. Realizing visits were already stretched to the limit – an effort was made to move items out of the main body of standards on an equal basis to moving in the new ones. Also, the main structure remains the same – even if the book is more colorful and hopefully easier to use. Mandatory’s, written standards, modes, specialized activities, etc. all already exist with little change. If you run a good camp and already know the standards – the process of moving on will be a very easy one – if you are new to standards, this will be a smoother and easier introduction.

As we go to press, visitors for our New Jersey Camps are being notified of their assignments so they may get in touch with their camps and get the process going smooth and early. Camps will be notified of whom their visitors will be in the next few weeks. If you need help, have questions or just want to talk about the process, please give Mary Ellen a call at the Section office – or feel free to call on me, at 908-362-8217 - [mikep@campmason.org](mailto:mikep@campmason.org) Remember – it is ACA’s number one priority not to judge your camp – BUT TO HELP YOU SUCCEED AND TO EARN ACCREDITATION. This is foremost and always an educational program. Accredited camps mean we all win – you, your fellow ACA members, the families who use our camps and especially the kids!

And by the way – talking about educational – if you have long time staff members what better way to move them to the next level, and provide them with meaningful and practical training and education – then sending them to a course to become new Associate Visitors? Our next class is scheduled for March 3-4, just contact Mary Ellen in the Section office for an enrollment form.

## Standards Tid Bits

**Foundational Practices** are an important basis for the best practices ascribed to ACA accredited camps. Most of these are simply no brainers'. Others are standards from the past that were so universally accepted they were moved into this section to make room for the new issues of the day. **You are not scored on FPs.** However, a new twist – you are scored in one standard (OM-1) on your written verification every year (not just the visit year). This is educational and designed so that director’s will continue to pay attention to FPs, even when not scored individually. Written evidence can be a chart, a memo from a staff member assigned the task, or even your initials on the master list with a date.

**Easy Resource For Written Policies** The new CD Rom that comes with the new Standards book makes Accreditation and compliance is easier then ever before. Need a written policy, form, check list? Its all there, and passed legal review. You no longer have to reinvent the wheel. Just copy the applicable written policy you need, personalize it for you camp, make minor adjustments to fit your operation, and wa-la, it's almost done! Although these policies have passed ACA review it is always a good idea to pass it by your own legal counsel.

**Revisions** – yes there are already revisions to the new standards, mostly in interpretations and language. Anything new is difficult.(a colicky newborn never sleep through the night!) and requires some adjustment. If you have not done so already, please, see the ACA website, click on “accreditation” then, “revisions” print it, and make the adjustments in the columns of your book.

**Updates** – as of this point in time – 90% of our visitors and camps have registered for training. However, we need every last one of you this year. If you haven't signed up contact Mary Ellen in the Section office, today. And thanks for being a part of the process.

**Some Important Answers** – Below are answers to questions that arose during recent classes.

**Pedal Bikes** – no you do not need a helmet.

**Bumper Boats** – do not need to be scored under PA-29B

Continued on next page

**OM-5** Each year camps are now required to verify that they have reviewed and are continuing to comply with the standards during the off years when not visited. The question arose, what about camps not yet due for a visit under the new standards? The answer – they still must do this, but do so under the old standards under which they were last visited. They do not switch over to the new in OM-5 until they receive a visit under the new standards. But they still do it with the old.

Michael Peterson  
NJ Standards Chair

## Tri-State 2007 continued from page 1

After serving as the Tri-State Chair for the past three years, I will be passing the torch after this year's Tri-State to my friend Steve Baskin. A camp owner/director at Camp Champions in Texas, Steve will notably become the first Tri-State Chair from a non-Tri-State state. While this may appear to have tremendous logistical implications, in the past three years most of my Tri-State leadership has been done via emails and phone calls. In addition, Steve will bring a tremendous jolt of new, creative energy that will without question take Tri-State to the next level. His work on the Program Committee for many years, coupled with his experiences at ACA-National, his experiences outside of the camp industry, and as a Camp Professional with a southwest perspective, have already shown to provide dividends for the past two Tri-States. Steve is one of the smartest, funniest, nicest people I have ever met, and I am extremely pleased for Tri-State that he has accepted the chairmanship.

One major component of Tri-State that remains just as vital today as it did 25 years ago is volunteerism. Last year we assembled the greatest army of volunteers in Tri-State history, and we hope to do so again. If you are interested in being a part of the hospitality team, simply e-mail Matt Brown (NY) [matt@campwaynegirls.com](mailto:matt@campwaynegirls.com), Andrew Yankowitz (NJ) [andrew@tallpinesdaycamp.com](mailto:andrew@tallpinesdaycamp.com), or Michael Chaveau (Keystone) [acakeystone@verizon.net](mailto:acakeystone@verizon.net), who will contact you shortly. Volunteering is a great way to meet some great people, while contributing to a wonderful cause--the professional development of people dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of others.

Check out the [www.tristatecampconference.com](http://www.tristatecampconference.com) for more info. See you in AC!

Andy Pritikin  
Tri-State Chair

## Election Results for New Jersey Board of Directors



President Elect - Tom Riddleberger

Secretary - Gina Stravic

Member-at-Large - Wendy Saiff

Member-at Large - Herb Tannenbaum

3 Delegates to the National Convention in Austin, TX  
February 13-16, 2007  
Colleen Rountree, Scott Lantzman & Sue Goldberg  
Peggy Mellors will serve an alternate

**Congratulations and we thank you for serving!**

## Be Our Guest ...

**New Jersey Tri-State attendees please be our guest at 2 FREE ACA board sponsored events:**

**NJ Networking Cocktail Reception** - Wed. 7:30 - 9:00 pm (after the Grand Opening of the Exhibit Hall) in the Sheraton Crown Ballroom 4. Come and enjoy conversation with fellow NJ camp professionals. The only place to pick up your FREE NJ GIFT GIVEAWAY! Complimentary hors d'oeuvres and cash bar.

**Free Breakfast Buffet** - Friday, March 30th from 7:00 - 8:30am. Reservations required. Please contact Mary Ellen Folsom at [executive@acacampsnj.org](mailto:executive@acacampsnj.org) or call 908-238-9900 by March 23rd.

**Congratulations** to Claudine Leone, and her family on the birth of Eric Charles, 8 pounds, 15oz born on Friday, January 26th. Mom and baby are doing well.



## ACA-NJ Camps now EXEMPT from inspection of Rock Climbing Walls

As we have previously shared with you, the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) regulates and inspects the use of 'amusements' across the state, and includes every conceivable entertainment and amusement venue, including day and residential camps, in its scope of responsibilities.

As a reminder, the current regulations give the DCA the authority to issue permits and inspect certain mechanical and non-mechanical amusement-related devices used at many camp locations. Member camps that have already worked with the DCA know that reaching and maintaining compliance with all regulations can be a time consuming and expensive process.

The amusement regulations were cited as a high priority in ACA-NJ's original membership survey in June 2006, so we re-surveyed our membership this fall to find out what type of amusements camps are operating and how these regulations are impacting their operations. Just over 88 percent of our respondents currently feature rock climbing walls, while 42.3 percent include inflatables in their camp program. However, only 20 percent have actually been visited by DCA Amusement inspectors since the regulations were put in place. However, with the DCA becoming more aggressive in promoting its responsibilities via advertisements and the web, we expect more of our member camps to be visited by inspectors this year.

Based upon these survey results and the feedback our Legislative Committee has received, we are now working closely with the DCA on several issues to address the impact of the amusement regulations on ACA accredited camps. As a result of our recent lobbying on our members' behalf, the DCA has provided ACA *accredited* member camps with a letter authorizing the exemption from its 'permitting and inspections' process for certain equipment discussed in the ACA Accreditation Process Guide – Section PC (Program/Adventure Challenge). These include:

1. Challenge and rope courses
2. Spelunking and caving
3. Rock wall climbing (natural or manmade)
4. Rappelling (from natural or manmade sites)  
Zip lines

This exemption is applicable only to ACA *accredited* camps when the equipment is used as part of a larger educational program. In order to qualify for this exemption the camp must (1) have the exemption letter available at the camp for DCA inspectors, (2) show evidence of its ACA accreditation (ACA Certificate), and (3) maintain all pertinent documents on site for DCA inspectors,

to show your camp's compliance with the Section Program/Adventure Challenge (annual inspection by the Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) is one example of such documentation). For additional resources on this topic insert the CD-ROM that comes with the Accreditation Process Guide (the new Standards book) go to the PC Section and select "Web Resources"

The DCA exemption letter is available for download on [www.acacampsnj.org](http://www.acacampsnj.org). Please contact ACA with any feedback you may have had in the past, or that you have in the coming months, with regard to the application of this exemption. It is a new concept for both the ACA and the DCA inspectors, and we'd like to get a good idea on how it's going over with everyone.

Claudine M. Leone, Esq.  
Government Affairs Consultant

## NJCAMPS-GAP Funding our Success

During the past year the NJ Section of the ACA has secured the services of a Government Affairs Consultant, Claudine Leone. Claudine monitors the legislative and regulatory issues facing camping in New Jersey, advises the legislative committee on appropriate actions to take, and represents the camping community to state agencies in order to serve our camping constituency. Several articles in our newsletters, and other communications to the ACA membership have described the positive and important impact this has made for us (see insert in this issue).

In order to properly fund this service in the future the New Jersey Camps Government Affairs Project (NJC-GAP), is being organized to solicit funds for this sole purpose.

All camps in New Jersey will be provided the opportunity to be a part of this project and be a member of NJC-GAP. An informational meeting will be held at the ACA Tristate at 4:30 pm on Thursday, March 29 immediately following the session **What's Going on in Trenton?** in Room 321 – Third Level. All New Jersey Camps and especially NJ ACA members are invited and encouraged to attend this very important organizational meeting. For information call Wendy Saiff (732 846-3811) or Andy Pritikin (609 499-7820)

Douglas Fullman  
ACA-NJ Legislative Committee Chair

# 2006 New Jersey Section Awards

**Nancy Walters** accepts **Recognition Award**

Not pictured (due to a dark photo)

**Peggy Mellors** was also honored with this award



**Sandy Leiser** accepts The **Howard Patton Award** from Nominating Committee Chair, **Len Yacullo**



Accepting our new **Harold Breene Youth Education Award** are **Tom Riddleberger**, Campus Kids, NJ and **Kim Denne**, Winnewald CIT Program.

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American Camp Association  
New Jersey Section  
P.O. Box 672  
Pittstown, NJ 08867