



Fall Calendar of Events

- > **Ben Applebaum Day Camp Conference**
Wed., Oct 7th - Harbor Hills Day Camp, NJ www.aca-ny.org

- > **Standards Training**
Wed., Oct 7th Baptist Camp Lebanon
Tues., Nov. 10th YMCA Camp Mason
Register: www.acacampsnj.org

- > **New Visitor Training**
Friday, Oct. 23rd - Sat., 24th at YMCA Camp Bernie
Register: www.acacampsnj.org

- > **New Director Orientation**
Wed., Oct 21st Joseph Kushner Hebrew Academy, Livingston
Register: www.acacampsnj.org

- > **Student Camp Leadership Academy**
November 6-8th Ingleside, IL
<http://acacamp.org/scla>
*more information on page 5

- > **ACA-NJ Board Meetings**
Tues., Oct., 22nd Jamesburg
Thurs., Dec 10th Edison

- > **ACA Annual Holiday Meeting**
Tues., Dec. 8th 6:30 pm
Bridgewater Marriot
More info to follow soon

Is Your Camp on this List?

Before anything else, we must first give our sincere thanks to the following camps:

Baptist Camp Lebanon, Black Bear Lake Day Camp, Breene's Camp Riverbend, Camp Neveda, Camp Oakhurst, Camp Shalom, Campus Kids – NJ, Eagle River Day Camp, Fairview Lake YMCA, Frost Valley YMCA, Gesher Summer Program, Happiness Is Camping, Ivy League Day Camp, Johnsonburg Presbyterian Center, Kiddie Keep Well Camp, Koinonia Community, Liberty Lake Day Camp, Lou Henry Hoover, Meadowbrook Country Day Camp, Watershed, Willow Lake Day Camp, Winnewald Day Camp, YMCA Camp Bernie, YMCA Camp Carr, YMCA Camp Mason, YMCA Camps Ockanickon for Boys & Matollionequay for Girls.

Now, just *why* are we passing along these sincere, important and well-deserved thanks to 26 camps of our 106 NJ member camps? Why do they deserve an extra special dose of respect at this time from the entire camp community and the families that rely on ACA to provide safe, healthy, quality programs for their children?

Because from among their own busy staff members, these 26 camps provided standards visitors to conduct accreditation visits this past summer. It is often a sacrifice for camps to do without valuable staffers for a day, but these camps recognize that the Accreditation process can only work—can only accomplish what it needs to accomplish—with volunteer support.

Every summer ACA-NJ conducts an average of 40-45 accreditation visits, each with two visitors. This requires multiple visitors from many member camps.

If your camp is not on the list above, wouldn't you now like to the opportunity to begin to fulfill that essential obligation?

Two New Visitor Training courses are currently being offered:

- > Fri. Oct. 23 - Sat. Oct. 24th at YMCA Camp Bernie in Port Murray, NJ
or
- > Sat. Nov. 14 - Sun. Nov. 15th at the Dorothy P. Flint Nassau County 4-H Camp, Riverhead, New York

To register, for either course please visit www.acacampsnj.org or give the section office a call at 877-488-2267.

There is no cost for the training, materials, meals or overnight accommodations (if needed). All visitors benefit from professional development and see first-hand how other camps accomplish their mission. Useful tips, ideas and suggestion to use back home are plentiful during the two-day event.

Now is the time to make the commitment to register yourself or one of your staff members as part of our dynamic group of standards volunteers. We all believe that quality camp standards benefit the entire camp community. Please be part of that effort.

President's Message

It's ironic that during the busiest camp time of the year for most of us – summer camp – that our ACA volunteer activities seem to go on hiatus. However, ACA itself is as active as ever.

Our volunteer Standards Visitors donate their time not only during the “off season”, but also during that time of the year when many of us can't imagine taking even a few minutes away from camp, much less the better part of a day. Thank goodness for each of them, without whom our accreditation program wouldn't exist.

Our Section office is also extremely busy during the summer. Thanks to Mary Ellen, our executive, an amazing amount of ACA progress takes place during the summer, including lots of public relations, accreditation support, legislative work, Tri-State, outreach to our camps, and lots more.

ACA-NJ is in great shape and now it's time for all of us to get busy! Together, as ACA volunteers, we can bring more youth and families into the camp experience and continue to raise the bar of excellence for ourselves.

It's easy to get involved. Please say “yes” when we call you . . . or don't wait! Let us know that you have some time and we'll help find the perfect volunteer job for you. Some of the jobs are ongoing, others are short, one-time tasks. It's all important and we'd love to include you among our wonderful ACA volunteers.

Welcome back from summer. I look forward to working with you.

Tom Riddleberger
 President, ACA-NJ Section
tom@campuskids.com
 973-845-9260



Don't wait, book your hotel now at,
www.tristatecampconference.com

ACA NJ Section Board of Directors

Tom Riddleberger	President	973-845-9260
Bob Jones	Past President	908-735-8336
Scott Lantzman	Vice President	973-597-3699
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Douglas Fullman	Legislative Chair	609-655-6317
Joan Basilotto	Complaints Resolution	732-938-5454
Mary Ellen Folsom	Section Executive Dir.	908-238-9900

AWARDS

Without a doubt, you know of a hard working, talented, outstanding individual at your camp. Should you consider nominating them for an ACA-NJ award? Absolutely! The process is very easy to complete and will only take a few moments of your time. Just visit www.acacamps.org/nj/awards.php to find award descriptions and nomination forms. Please submit your nomination form by October 16th for the candidate you feel is deserving of an award for camp leadership, youth development or service to the ACA-NJ Section. The Board Development Committee will consider all nominations and after careful consideration select the recipients. Awards will be presented at the Annual Holiday Party and Membership Meeting in December.

Summer Legislative Visits

For the fourth consecutive summer, ACA-NJ continued its successful Legislative Site Visit Program. Of the 40 districts in New Jersey, ACA-NJ camps are located in 23, and since the program's inception we have introduced ourselves—and our most important issues—to 19 state legislators.

"Each year we are able to increase the number of legislators who are familiar with the ACA and the many state and local issues impacting youth camps in New Jersey," explains Claudine Leone, ACA's Government Affairs Consultant. "Our Advocacy Agenda is always positively impacted by these legislative visits."

This season we visited five ACA-NJ camps: Jefferson Lakes Day Camp in Stanhope, Hopewell Valley YMCA Day Camp in Hopewell, Tall Pines Day Camp in Williamstown, Camp by the Sea in Margate, and Camp Sacajawea in Farmingdale.

- At Jefferson Lakes, Ira Fish and Sue Rynar hosted Senator Oroho and Chief of Staff Jeff Spatola as they discussed the impact youth camps have on local employment. "We employ several of the Senator's young constituents and he was pleased to see them working in such a positive environment," Ira shares. The Senator had been a camper and a counselor himself, and has a daughter working as a counselor. This level of familiarity helped ACA-NJ discussions of key issues, such as amusements, labor and health inspections.

- At Hopewell Valley YMCA, Assemblyman Reed Gusciora and Chief of Staff Mike Deloreto joined Doug Pszczolkowski for a tour and a chat. The Assemblyman serves as Chair of the Assembly Commerce and Economic Development and was particularly interested in ACA-NJ's work with the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs on the amusement regulations.

- At Tall Pines, Senator Fred Madden and legislative aid Jenna Lehvarcik visited with Andrew Yankowitz. The Senator, who is chair of the Senate Labor Committee and vice chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, was interested in learning more about the camp's experience with the NJ Department of Labor on break times for minors, overtime, transportation issues and more. "It was great to be able to share with Senator Madden how current regulations and legislation are actually applied to our industry," Andrew says.

- At Camp by the Sea, Assemblyman Vince Polistina was hosted by Program Director Josh Cutler, who was able to show what the camp offers year-round and seasonal families. "After an extensive tour, I believe the Assemblyman now has an understanding of how specific regulations directly affect youth camps

in New Jersey," Josh explains. "The visit was very productive for our camp staff, too. It gave us a greater understanding of how the ACA-NJ Section works to make camps in New Jersey better for everyone."

- At Camp Sacajawea, Senator Bob Singer and three of his staff members joined Joan Basilotto, Outdoor Program Director with the Girls Scouts of the Jersey Shore. Joan provided a history of the camp property and its program. The Senator, whose children attend an ACA-NJ camp, encouraged Joan to invite local and county officials next season and offered to facilitate those visits.

Overall, the summer legislative visits were a great success, and we thank all involved.

See photos of Legislative camp visits on page 5

Yes, We Can ...

We can, and we will, continue to deliver excellent services to ACA members and unwavering support of the camp movement—but it will be an infinitely easier endeavor if you would consider serving in one of the following roles:

2 Members at Large: Term January 2010 – Dec. 2012

President Elect: Jan. 2010 – Dec. 2010 (then you become the Pres!)

Secretary: January 2010-2012

Four Delegates and one Alternate: One year term.

Delegates must travel to the National ACA Convention, Feb 15-16 in Denver, CO. (Airfare and hotel paid by the section.)

As an organization we face tremendous challenges as we attempt to reach our "20/20 Vision" of 20 million children in camp by the year 2020. That's a goal that can only be reached with solid teamwork. The success of ACA-NJ does not rest with any one individual, but with the collective voice and talents of many—every individual voice *is* of tremendous and invaluable importance.

Every member is eligible and welcome to run for one of the listed spots, and that indeed is one of the best and most effective ways of making individual voices heard.

Nominations are now being accepted. Any member may nominate him- or herself or a colleague (with prior approval). It is easy to start the process by completing a brief online "Prospective Board Member/Delegate Information Sheet" at http://www.acacampsnj.org/election_form.php. Or if you prefer, contact our board development chair, Scott Lantzman, at 973-597-3699 or at director@GesherFun.org. The deadline for submissions is Oct. 16th. We look forward to hearing from you!

For more information on the "20/20 Vision" please visit <http://www.acacamps.org/2020>.

Legislative Update

ACA NJ Section continues to move forward on its advocacy agenda working with several state departments, monitoring and testifying on legislation in Trenton, and actively introducing ACA NJ Section to key decision makers in the state. Please find updates below highlighting our work with the Departments of Health and Community Affairs.

New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services

As you are aware, New Jersey State, in an unprecedented move, now accepts ACA accreditation in lieu of a state or local health inspections as they relate to the enforcement of the New Jersey Youth Camp Safety Act ("NJYCSA"). If you have an experience to share about this season's implementation of the ACA exemption by your local health officer, please email me at claudine@acacampsnj.org. It is important for us to have this information in order to work with the Department over the winter to preempt any problems for the 2010 camp season.

What's new for 2010? We are expecting the NJ Department of Health and Senior Services to publish their final regulations on staff screening requirements under the NJYCSA, which will be in effect for the 2010 camp season. The final regulations, while not yet released, will require all youth camps in New Jersey to use certain screening tools to determine whether staff's conduct disqualifies them from employment at the youth camp. These screening tools include (1) Review of prior employment history; (2) Three character reference checks for each new staff member; (3) Criminal history check for each new adult staff member; and (4) Annual sex offender registry check.

Prior Employment/Character References. The only change to the first two screening requirements already required by the Department is an increase in character references from two to three. ACA-NJ Section did oppose this increase, but was not successful convincing the Department of its lack of usefulness in the hiring process.

Criminal History Checks. Effective for the 2010 season New Jersey is now requiring criminal history checks on all adult staff members employed at youth camps. The Department is recommending youth camps use the New Jersey State Police website to obtain Criminal History Record Information ("CHRI") as part of this staff screening requirement or (based on ACA-NJ's recommendation) use an alternative vendor with comparable screening information. You will need to obtain a criminal history check on all adult staff at your camp by June 15, 2010.

Recognizing the rush and cost to comply with the regulation's initial year, the Department will accept

criminal history checks previously obtained by the camp for adult staff members on or after June 15, 2009. For criminal history checks obtained prior to June 15, 2009, the Department will accept a notarized statement from that staff member indicating that nothing has changed since the last criminal history check by the camp.

Remember, once you get beyond the 2010 camp season, this requirement is for "new" adult staff only. For year-round staff or staff returning season to season (without a break in employment greater than 12 months) this is a one time requirement and expense. Each year, however, the Department will require your year-round or returning staff – where you have previously obtained a criminal history check – to submit an annual notarized statement stating that there have been no changes to their criminal history since the youth camps last check.

Sex Offender Registry Checks. For the 2010 camp season, New Jersey is now requiring an annual sex offender registry check for each staff member (minor or adult). The Department's regulation allows the use of any national sex offender registry or a vendor that can retrieve sex offender registry information. A separate New Jersey Sex Offender Registry check would be required only where the national registry did not include New Jersey-specific information. While this may be new to New Jersey, this requirement reflects ACA Standards on staff screening already in place.

ACA-NJ Section will post the final adoption of the staff screening regulations on the Advocacy Section of the website for your review to help you prepare for these new requirements for the 2010 season.

New Jersey Department of Community Affairs

ACA-NJ spends a lot of time each summer 'putting out fires' as the state's amusement inspectors work their way around from camp to camp. To put a positive spin on it, these visits have allowed us to get the Department to truly focus on the application of amusement regulations at our camps.

ACA-NJ is currently working with the Department on what we've identified as the 'catch all' application of amusement regulations: that's when a camp has a single amusement (such as an inflatable or go-cart) currently regulated by the Department which then allows the Department to identify and regulate every gravity-propelled activity at the camp that wouldn't otherwise require type certification and inspection.

Under this "catch all" rule, some inspectors are now requiring inspections and certifications of basic playground equipment, soft play structures, all pool slides under 15 feet and so on. Obviously, that can have a negative impact on many camps and the Department is in agreement. We

-article continued on bottom of next page-

Thoughts from an ACA Visitor

Editor's Note: We thank Gina, one of our dedicated standards visitors, for submitting the following essay and we invite our members to share their thoughts and opinions in future issues.

Integrity is defined in Webster's dictionary as "a firm adherence to a code of especially moral or artistic values." When we become part of the accreditation system we put our integrity on the line.

If a visitor showed up unexpected would you score the same as if it was a scheduled visit? If you were dragged through a nasty court case, would you be exposed to inconsistencies in operational policy and procedures? Does your camp really follow the written procedures you put before your ACA visitors on a daily basis? Do you really review the foundational practices every year or do you just check them off and sign them?

Does your camp sign the ACA paperwork with integrity and commitment to the process? Are you sincere in keeping to the standards? Does all staff exhibit the characteristics we teach to our campers? Is there honesty, truthfulness, and a respect for ethics among us? Do we assume our responsibility seriously as a camp director, camp owner, or camping professional?

We are human and subject to failure at keeping operation 100% to standards. The only question is where does one draw the line? As visitors, do we serve with the same commitment and integrity? The accreditation system brings to us many benefits, especially now as accreditation provides exemption to state inspection. Are we worthy of that?

In reviewing Webster's definition of integrity again, the second and third definitions compliment the first: "2. an unimpaired condition; 3. the quality or state of being complete or undivided." Is our system complete or undivided? Are visitors in synch with being consistent to reviewing the standards with camps? Are the camps committed to maintaining the standards when no one is checking? "What is right is often forgotten by what is convenient" ~Bodie Thoene, *Warsaw Requiem*. In interpreting the third dictionary definition, do we have an unimpaired condition?

-Legislative article continued from previous page-

are anticipating new regulations to be proposed by the Department exempting camps from the 'catch all' application of amusement regulations. ACA-NJ is currently working with the Department on the language of the proposal to ensure that it is resolved to everyone's satisfaction.

If you have any questions about any of this information, please visit the advocacy section of the ACA-NJ website for specific regulatory language or contact me at Claudine@njafp.org.



Senator Steve Oroho visits Jeff Lake campers and Director, Ira Fish at Jeff Lakes.

Josh Cutler, Director of Camp By the Sea, JCC Margate, with Assemblyman Vince Polistina.



Senator Robert W. Singer visits campers at Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore, Camp Sacajawea.

Andrew Yankowitz, Owner/Director of Tall Pines Day Camp with Senator Fred Madden and campers.



Student Leadership Academy

Do you have staff member, currently enrolled in college and considering a career in the camp profession? If so, please share with them this amazing leadership opportunity. The SCLA is a weekend retreat that brings together students, camp professionals and National ACA staff. The SCLA curriculum addresses critical professional development topics such as, current trends and issues in American camps, camp accreditation, post-college professional training opportunities, and the future of the camp profession. For a qualified applicant, ACA-NJ will provide a stipend that will cover the cost of registration, room and board, and help defray the cost of travel.

Please do not delay in reaching out to a hard working, deserving college student on your staff!

The next SCLA will take place Friday, November 6, 2009 starting at 4:00 p.m. and ending on Sunday, November 8, 2009 at 1:30 p.m. The location is [Camp Henry Horner](#) in Ingleside, IL. **Application deadline, Oct. 2nd**. You can download the application and learn more at www.acacamps.org/scla

Save The Date to Celebrate!

Our ACA-NJ Section Annual Meeting and Holiday dinner will be held on Tuesday, December 8th starting at 6:30pm at the **beautiful Bridgewater Marriott**. (Rt. 202/206, Bridgewater Mall).

Please join us in welcoming new board members; congratulating newly accredited camps; and recognizing individuals for outstanding contributions to our section. This evening is a great opportunity to enjoy the fellowship of other camp professionals and thank your own camp staff for an extraordinary summer season!

Bring your loose change and items for the silent auction – dig a little deeper for the live auction! All funds raised will be donated to the S.C.O.P.E. scholarship fund, to provide the summer camp experience to children in need.

Invitations will be mailed to all camps and on-line registration will be posted in November. Please plan to join us!

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