

**Outdoor Ministries Association
Board of Directors Meeting
November 3 - 7, 2013
Blowing Rock Camp and Conference Center**

Meeting was called to order by President Glenn Svetnicka, followed by an opening prayer.

Members Present: Bill Bourdon, Jeremy Force, Ryan Gackenheimer, Kim Harris, Anne Hughes, Mollie Landers, Kaila Russell, Glenn Svetnicka, and Neal Washburn.

Agenda was reviewed. Minutes from our last meeting were reviewed. M/S/P to accept these minutes. *Neal will post them on the website.*

We were reminded of our Mission Statement: Working together as a significant partner in the ministry and future of the church, OMA seeks to advise, connect and advocate on behalf of the network of persons responsible for Outdoor Ministries in the UCC.

Glenn reminded the board that we are currently working under the proposed bylaws.

Site Reports: Due to the full nature of this agenda, site reports were not given. I have included a reminder of the agreed process for presenting these reports from our January 2013 Board meeting. *In the future, site reports will be submitted in written form prior to Board Meetings for review. Kaila will create Family News that will be sent to membership.*

Glenn gave us an update on Ohio conference. A decision has been made to put Temple Hills on sabbatical as they discern how best to move forward. Joyce Oyler is not present at our board meeting as it was requested that she stay and help in the office. She will be missed at our board meetings as well as the Consult event.

Outdoor Ministry Connection: Glenn Svetnicka, Whendi Cook, and Kaila Russell represented the UCC as the group formally known as the National Council of Churches Outdoor Ministry Committee gathered in Baltimore, Maryland at Pecometh Camp in September. The bottom line is that the NCC has decided to disband the Outdoor Ministry Committee, and gave them their \$13,000 budget to work with. A big piece to figure out was what to do with the curriculum. Chalice Press has decided to carry the 3-year cycle to fruition. What a blessing that they will not only hold this project, but do what is necessary to secure writers and readers from the various denominations. Once the curriculum piece was solved, the rest of the gathering was spent discussing, "Where do we go from here?" "Do we want to continue as an ecumenical group?" While we have relationships with RAC – Religiously Affiliated Camps, it was discussed that these are not necessarily Christian Camps, and it was important to everyone sitting around the table to hold on to their denominational identity. After much discussion, the

group decided to move forward as the Outdoor Ministry Connection. Each denomination was asked to do the following:

1. Go back to their site and report on the meeting. Ask each denomination what they were willing to give up, and what they were willing to bring to the table.
2. Select a point communication person to be part of a google group.
3. Post links for ecumenical events.
4. Meet again as a group in March 2014

Glenn then introduced Joel Winchip, Executive Director of PCCCA(Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association). Joel was a part of the NCC gathering in Baltimore, and was invited to meet with the OMA-UCC Board to discuss possibilities of ecumenical partnership.

Joel began with a brief history of the PCCCA and his role as executive director. He informed the board of some of the programs and events of the PCCCA. The Lutherans and Presbyterians are meeting together in Lake Tahoe mid-November for their second combined yearly event. Joel said that the biggest ecumenical challenge is working through the differences.

He spent time talking about 6 programs PCCCA is excited about:

1. **Compass Points** – This is a certification program created by the Presbyterians. It is a 2-year cycle, with 8 classes. This event is open to the Episcopalians and the UCC. The invitation is to send someone from the UCC to attend classes offered in March, and someone to represent the UCC as they gather at the table for planning in April so the UCC has a voice in the program.
2. **PCCCA Connection Programs** – Kitchen, Hospitality, and Maintenance. Currently the Maintenance Connection is working...but the Kitchen and Hospitality Events need some work. The invitation is for OMA-UCC to help plan these events and send people to participate.
3. **Member Benefit Program** – This program offers a variety of vendors (about 25) that offer desirable discounts to members. The cost is \$20/year. This program is up and running, and OMA-UCC would be invited to participate. We are invited to provide a secure method of sharing discount codes with members and provide a liaison from OMA to contact PCCCA. OMA will make payment to PCCCA by November 15 of each year for the individual camp's membership.
4. **Focus Event**- This is a gathering held for those interested in the call to Outdoor Ministry. This is a yearly gathering, which is strong. OMA-UCC is invited to attend this event and then give feedback. Kaila Russell and Mark Boyd will be attending this event since it is being held in Washington State this year.
5. **Sustainable Pathways** – Again this event is planned and well attended. OMA-UCC is invited to attend and then offer feedback to PCCCA.
6. **Phone App** – This was so cool! This is a great resource available to us if we choose to participate.

Consensus of the OMA Board was to give each site the first year of Benefit Program, building \$600 into the 2014 Budget, then perhaps increase membership dues by \$20/year to include program. The rest of these invitations will be brought to the General Membership meeting.

Financial Report: Bill Bourdon

The goal of the board is to be fiducially responsible. We intentionally ran a deficit budget to support national events this year such as NYE and Synod. About 4 years ago, there was a concern that we had too much money in the bank. We have listened to the membership and have raised the brand of OM to a level it has never been before. We are moving forward, and it is probably time to make some investments in program.

The question was asked, "Do we want to rethink our fee/due structure? We will continue to talk about this with the general membership and future board meetings. The goal is to have a transparent Board that leads the membership.

Bill will work on 2014-2015 to present to the Board.

Nominations: Kaila Russell's and Jeremy Force's terms have come to an end, and nominations will be accepted during the week of Consult. Ryan Gackenheimer's, Mollie Lander's and Kim Harris's first terms have come to an end, and the three of them would like to continue on the board for a second term. Mollie will chair the Nominating Committee moving forward. Kaila Russell will assist as past board member per bylaws.

There was discussion if a 10-member board is still a good working plan. Consensus was yes, if the board continues similar work and yearly events.

Neal Washburn will take care of Deering Grants moving forward. There is need for a board secretary, and consideration of future board president so that Glenn will be able to work with new president for a year.

Deering Grants: Jeremy and Neal will go through applications and award grants at the final General Membership meeting of Consult XIX. There was a question as to whether parameters need to be set on accepting applications after the deadline. There were 8 applications this year, and 13 available grants. Decision was to give 5 bonus grants next year instead of letting people apply for grants at Consult/PG events.

ACA/RAC Report: Jeremy reported that RAC board is looking for ways to get more members in RAC. Jeremy is willing to stay on the board for UCC representation.

PG: After some discussion, Board consensus is to have PG 2014 and encourage participation in the ecumenical connections, and not have PG 2016, but encourage more participation in Maintenance, Hospitality, and Kitchen Connections. Input for PG 2014 will be included in Consult evaluation.

Mollie and Kim will produce Survey Monkey Evaluation for Consult XIX to be presented at final general membership meeting.

Board will break until Tuesday evening.

Tuesday, November 5th

Everything seems to be going well with Consult....so far, so good!

Reviewed Agenda for Second General Membership Meeting on November 7.

Glenn brought up the idea of possible chaplain position for OMA. Currently, there are about 12 clergy attending Consult, and 2 clergy serving on our OMA Board. Do we want to have a chaplain available to minister to Camp Directors and others involved in OM? How can we have clergy involved?

Do we want to consider having an alumni group? Also discussed possible database for volunteers on the website.

These possibilities will be further discussed at future meetings.

Board will reconvene following worship on Thursday, November 7th.

Nominations: 7 names were submitted to the Board for consideration. After discussion and consideration of diversity, including site representation, geographic location, gender, and age, the board decided to contact the following and ask for bios to submit to the general membership for vote: Gigi Nauer, Natalie Becker, Whendi Cook, and Mark Boyd. The remaining 3 names will be kept on file for future consideration. Kaila will contact these three and let them know of the process.

Kaila will contact the 4 to request bio to be sent to her by November 30.

Next meeting will be January 23-25. Looking for accommodations in Orlando, FL. Arrive by 5 PM on Thursday, Jan. 23, and fly out after noon on January 25.

Closing circle included a time of recognizing outgoing board members Jeremy and Kaila.

Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Kaila Russell – OMA Secretary

**General Membership Meeting
Outdoor Ministries Association**

**Blowing Rock Conference Center
November 5, 2013**

Mollie Landers opened the meeting with prayer.
Call to order by OMA President – Glenn Svetnicka

Ryan Gackenheimer reminded membership that what OMA does is truly living the UCC faith and exploring the call of ecumenical partnership.

Greetings from the UCC: Glenn gave a report on behalf of Waltrina Middleton, our UCC liaison from the National Church Office. There is transition within the national church, including a Faith Formation team, which Waltrina is a part of. OM is still in her portfolio.

Report on Mission 4:1 Earth: Ryan reported on the success of this project, and also gratitude for OMA's involvement. For more info on this mission, check out UCC.org.

Report on National Youth Event (NYE): Kim reported on the success and strong presence of OMA at the exhibit booth, flash mob and the making of OMA video 1.0. Thanks to everyone for their help!

Report on General Synod: Anne reported transitions at our camps including Mensch Mill, Templd Hills, Iron Homestead and White Memorial. She also reported about the huge presence at Synod and the long awaited acceptance of the resolution. Kim reported on OMA's involvement with hosting the opening youth event, the after hour's room, the exhibit booth/giveaways, and the OMA video 2.0. Huge, huge thanks to all who helped make this a success!

Waltrina Middleton was skyped in at this point. She thanked the general membership for hard work and commitment to the ministry. She is grateful for the vision of OMA-UCC and looks forward to the future with us.

Financial Update: Bill reported on Fiscal 2012 Audit, and gave a Fiscal 2013 report. He will work on creating a 2-year budget for 2014-2015. Membership was reminded that Consult years cost us a bit more than Non-Consult Years.

National Council of Churches Update: Glenn informed the General Membership that the National Council of Churches Outdoor Ministry Committee has been dissolved. Group was given the remaining \$13,000 to use as they wish. Chalice Press has agreed to move forward with the curriculum and finish the 2014-2016 plan. They will seek writers and readers for the curriculum. Wendhi Cook will serve as a contact person for keeping connected with the curriculum process.

Glenn also reported on the birth of a new group – the Outdoor Ministry Connections which came out of a gathering of ecumenical OM folks during a September meeting at

Pecometh Camp in Baltimore, Maryland. While the NCC-OM is no longer functioning, there was a strong sense of retaining ecumenical partnerships. The group will meet again in March 2014, and work on plans for moving forward. OMA-UCC was delighted to meet Joel Winchip, Executive Director of Presbyterian Camps and Conference Centers at the September meeting. Joel has met with his denomination, seeking ways to move forward in ecumenical partnerships. Joel met with the OMA board of directors on Monday, November 4 to invite the OMA membership into partnership in the following areas: Member Benefit Program, Compass Points, and Connections. Glenn briefly described these opportunities to the membership and asked them to consider possible future involvement. We will revisit these at our general membership meeting on November 7.

Nominating Committee Report: Kaila reported that there will be 2 vacancies on the board beginning January 1, 2014, and extended an invitation for nominations for these. Nominations will be accepted through Thursday, November 7th, and submitted to the OMA Board.

Mollie Landers closed the meeting in prayer.

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Ryan Gackenheimer opened the meeting in prayer.

Group was called to order by Board President – Glenn Svetnicka

What Do You Get for Your OMA Membership?

1. Program/Professional Development

An annual event – Consult/PG, A community of people, Deering Grant Opportunities

2. Advocacy

Voice at the National Office

Representation at National Gatherings

3. Letter of Witness of Justice and Peace (available on website)

4. A New Member Benefit Plan

Deering Grants Awarded to: Blowing Rock, Horton Center, Pilgrim Cove, Slumber Falls, Franklinton Center, Pilgrim Center, Covenant Hills, Pilgrim Lodge, Pilgrim Pines

What Else Do We Support / Pulse of Priorities Glenn asked general membership to consider how we move forward holding our UCC identity and embracing ecumenical opportunities in partnership. While we can't perfectly predict costs, we are using these as a guesstimate. Please express your willingness to move forward by using thumbs up/thumbs down vote.

1. Going Forward with Outdoor Ministry Connection (OMC) - \$2,000 *Thumbs up*

2. Compass Points - Spend \$1,000 to Check it Out, \$1,000 to help shape it. *Thumbs up*

3. Connections Programs - Plug into current Maintenance Connection and spend \$2,000 to help shape Hospitality and Kitchen Connections. *Thumbs up*

4. Creating Volunteer Involvement Opportunities *Thumbs up*

5. OMA Chaplain and involving Clergy *Thumbs up*

How Do You Get Involved in OMA? General Membership is encouraged to be involved in the wider OMA family by considering Board Nominations, Wider Church Opportunities, Regional Youth Events in 2014, Synod 2015 in Cleveland, NYE 2016, and the Curriculum Writing Team .

Consult Evaluation: Kim encouraged everyone to respond via email to the Consult evaluation using Survey Monkey.

A Time of Recognition:

Bill and Jan Bourdon, along with the team at Blowing Rock were thanked for their generous hospitality and efforts in making Consult XIX at huge success! Curly Stumb was thanked for working along with Bill and the Consult planning team, and for lining up our Consult Worship and Music leaders.

Kim Harris was thanked for her leadership of the Consult planning team.

Jeremy Force and Kaila Russell were thanked for serving on the OMA Board.

Ryan closed the meeting in prayer.

Meeting Adjourned.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted,
Kaila Russell, OMA Board Secretary