

Operation Thank You

Share the camp experience with children whose parents or caregivers are serving in the U.S. military. If you have extra room at your camp, why settle for less when you can do more? Consider offering that space to a camper in need. The U.S. Department of Defense is collaborating with camps around the nation to provide camperships for children who are impacted by the war.

For one military family whose child recently attended a camp through this special campership program, the experience was a life-changing event, and the gratitude the family had toward the camp was inspiring: "Our son attended your camp through Operation Purple. He came home and gave us such a wonderful, fantastic, and awesome report of his time at your camp. He has faced so many difficulties growing up," says a camper mom. "He doesn't have any friends here in our neighborhood, but now he proudly states that he has many at your camp. From a mother's heart, I can't express to you how thankful I am that you participated in Operation Purple. I know it was a way to say 'thank you' to our troops, but at this time in my child's life . . . you deserve to be thanked for a life-changing experience that you gave our son"

According to Janice Witte, director, Office of Children and Youth, U.S. Department of Defense, camps can simply send an e-mail to her attention at Janice.witte@osd.mil detailing the following information, and she will direct a liaison to work with the camp and a local Guard/Reserve office:

- validate the number of camperships your camp can offer and specify whether these will be total or partial camperships;
- note the age group of children you can serve; type of camp (residential or day); and whether you serve girls, boys, or a coed audience;
- state what type of transportation is available to your camp, if any;
- list your camp's Web site address;
- describe any additional costs to the parent other than the camp fee; and
- supply the name and phone number of the main point of contact for your camp.

Since 2003, ACA Keystone has placed children of military families in camps using tuition-free scholarships donated by the camps. Matt Stoltz, director of Island Lake Camps was instrumental in spearheading the campership program. This year, twenty-nine children will be placed in eight camps in the area. ACA Keystone camps are donating tuition-free camperships with a combined value of approximately \$55,000 for this summer. For more information about Operation Summer Camp at ACA Keystone, e-mail executive@ACAKeystone.org.

"It's the best way we know to say 'thank you' to those who are serving, to give their children the opportunity to go to camp, to give the soldiers a little peace of mind, and to instill habits of the heart in our own campers," explains Marla Coleman, one of the owner-directors of Coleman Family Camps, which operates Camp Echo and Coleman Country Day Camp, both in New York. "All the same concerns exist for these parents. Only the logistics are a little more global. Instead of arranging a different parental phone call time because of a late meeting at the office, we are planning around patrol shifts in Iraq. For the camps offering these specialized camperships, it is both comforting and gratifying to be able to assure stability and predictability in young lives when the family is so disrupted by war."

SH1 Military Contacts and Resources

SH2 State Joint Force Headquarters Program

The National Guard Family Program Office in each state joint force headquarters (JFHQ) is designed to assist family members of all service members, regardless of military organization or status, with information and/or referrals. For a list of contact information for the Family Program Offices at the state level, please visit:

www.guardfamily.org.

SH2 Local Family Program Office

Each Air National Guard Wing headquarters also maintains a Family Program Office with a family readiness coordinator to provide assistance at the local level. These offices also assist family members of all service members, regardless of the military organization or status, with information and/or referrals. Family readiness coordinator contact information for fifty-four states and territories can be found at:

www.guardfamily.org.

These program office links can also be found on the home page of the National Guard Family Program Web site at www.guardfamily.org.

Should Your Camp Serve as an Evacuation Center?

Evacuation Center Pre-Commitment Questions for Camps

As the United States enters the severe weather season (mainly hurricanes and tornadoes), the American Camp Association reflects on the lessons we learned in 2005 regarding camps serving as evacuation centers for the victims of hurricanes in the Gulf region. Many camps were called upon to serve a variety of needs—including housing evacuees. In preparation for future situations, we share with camps the following list of important questions camps should consider prior to agreeing to serve as an evacuation center.

Do you want to officially pre-register as an evacuation center?

- The American Red Cross (ARC) has a program that pre-selects facilities as evacuation centers and trains volunteers. This may be an option for you to consider. The ARC has detailed information on their Web Site, www.redcross.org/pubs/dspubs/cde.html. Contact your local chapter of the ARC for more information: www.redcross.org/where/where.html.
- In addition, FEMA is preparing for the severe weather season—including setting up “Logistical Centers.” If your camp would like to become involved pre-emergency in the FEMA preparation efforts, visit www.fema.gov for details.

What if you are called upon unexpectedly in a time of crisis?

As happened in 2005, camps may be called upon in times of emergency to serve as evacuation centers. Camps learned some important lessons when they were asked to serve quickly. Following is a list of important considerations:

Receiving Guests and Ensuring Safety:

- **Length of Time:** How long will guests be staying? Consider whether you even can accommodate guests—is camp in session—is camp not in session—will camp be in session soon? What about rental groups already booked at camp?
- **Permanent Housing:** Who is securing permanent housing for your guests? How will guests be transported to new housing? What if permanent housing is not located quickly—what will you be able to do?

- **Liability Issues:** Have you spoken to your insurance company about coverage? Can you get certificates of insurance from other responsible organizations (e.g., FEMA)? How will you orient guests to your rules, procedures, and safety issues? (What do you do if rules are broken?)
- **Security:** Who will provide security and law enforcement for the camp? How will you monitor the coming/going of guests?
- **Registering Guests:** You need to know who is at your camp. How will you “register” them?

Guest Services:

- **Sleeping Quarters:** How will you provide accommodation? Will you separate males and females? What about married couples? What about children?
- **Food:** How will you provide three meals a day to your guests? Who will prepare the food? Who will provide the food stuffs? Who will provide clean-up? How will you meet health department requirements for food safety and handling?
- **Laundry:** How will you provide laundry services to your guests? How will you handle camp laundry—such as tablecloths and dishtowels?
- **Medical Assistance:** Who will provide medical services to guests?
- **Counseling/Guidance:** Who can provide counseling—spiritual, mental health, etc.?
- **Transportation:** Who will provide transportation for guests to do errands, interview for jobs, seek housing, etc?
- **Daily Program:** Will you provide daily activities for guests? Who/how will you do it?

Facility Issues:

- **Housekeeping:** Who will keep the facility clean everyday? Who will supply cleaning supplies?
- **Telephones:** Guests will need to have access to telephones frequently to connect with family and friends, and aid organizations. What is your phone capacity? Can you quickly get additional phone service (land lines and cell phones)? Who will pay for phone service?
- **Technology:** Consider the need for computers, Internet access, printers, etc. Who can provide these things? How will appropriate use be monitored?

Other Important Issues:

- **Donations:** Once word is out that you are serving as an evacuation center, how will you manage the donations that will arrive? What will you do with donations you cannot use?
- **Community Involvement:** Do you have people in your community who can assist your camp in this effort? How will you recruit and manage them?
- **Reimbursement:** If you are supposed to receive financial support from FEMA, the American Red Cross, or some other entity, how will you get the funds? When will you get the funds? Can you provide support before getting funds?

The American Camp Association provides a 24-hour-a-day Crisis Hotline for camps. The hotline is available to any ACA camp and can help you talk through any crisis situation. The hotline is neither a medical nor a legal advice service, but serves as a third-party to talk through situations with camps and discuss potential options for next steps. The hotline is available any time at 800-573-9019.

ACA Partners With Healthy Learning in a New Publishing Venture

Healthy Learning, a Monterey, California, based company will be the exclusive publisher of ACA educational materials. All materials published for ACA by Healthy Learning (HL) will carry the ACA logo, and all ACA-authored titles will be copyrighted to ACA and remain our exclusive intellectual property.

Healthy Learning has produced over 2,000 titles and has similar relationships with other nonprofit national organizations with compatible missions to ACA, including the American College of Sports Medicine, the American Council on Exercise, and the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association, among others. Their books and videos represent the cutting edge of information for health, fitness, and recreational professionals and organizations. HL uses studio and video production facilities and in-house book editing, design, and production staff to create quality resources as soon as the need is recognized.

How Will This New Partnership Affect You?

- A new 800 number to call for ACA book orders! **888-229-5745**
- Members can continue to order ACA titles online at www.ACABookstore.org
- All forms will be available through the online bookstore for download (charged as now).

Other Improvements:

- Inventory will be in Healthy Learning's warehouse, not ACA's;
- Shipment of orders will be the same day or next day;
- Any calls to the national office will be transferred directly to Healthy Learning;
- Pricing of all books and materials through HL will reflect a new valued pricing structure;
- Additional books published by Healthy Learning will be available; and
- ACA members will continue to receive a discount, which will be reflected at "check out."

New Business Affiliates, New Buying Opportunities!

Visit the [Business Affiliate Web page](#) for a listing of new Business Affiliates who have joined ACA recently. Discounts and benefits are available to ACA members through many ACA Business Affiliates and [Partners](#).

New Business Affiliates

March 18 through May 31, 2006

Corporate Image Promotions - www.corpimagepromo.com

Etiquette Etc. L.L.C. - www.tannersmanners.com

Midwest Products Co. Inc. - www.midwestproducts.com

Ozark Delight Candy - www.ozarkdelight.com

Science Kit and Boreal Lab - sciencekit.com

SePRO Corporation - www.pondpak.com

The Fay School - www.fayschool.org

The Lumber Yard - www.thelumberyard.com

Tradewind Aviation - www.tradewindaviation.com

Staff Training and Staff Hiring Resources

Check Out ACA's Staff Training Resources Online

Helpful [staff training tool sheets available to download](#) include exercises and examples on the topics of facilitating training, debriefing, returning staff expectations, and more. Feel free to print the tool sheets and copy as needed. And, look for more tool sheets for directors and counselors coming soon!

Staff Hiring Just Got a Little Easier

Access ACA's latest [staff hiring resources](#): job description templates, important links for personnel policies, interviewing strategies, background check information, as well as links to human resources and governmental agencies.

ACA National Office Welcomes New Staff Members

Kathryn "Kat" Shreve

The American Camp Association is pleased to announce the addition of Kathryn "Kat" Shreve in her new position as the director of education working with the Education Team in the National Office. In her most recent position she served as director of Camp Meriwether. Prior to her work with the Girl Scout Council of Northwest Georgia, Kat served Project Adventure, Inc. as a trainer and program manager. In this role, Kat developed and implemented training related to adventure education. Her ACA membership spans twenty years of service, including work as a Standards Trainer and Visitor and an active leadership role in the ACA Southeast Section. In her new position, Kat will work closely with the National Education Council, Section educators, the staff education team, and other key stakeholders to develop a dynamic education program. Kat joins the national staff in mid-August (after camp!).

Kim Brosnan

Kim Brosnan will serve as the accreditation manager. Brosnan comes to ACA with an extensive background in the camp profession. She was the director of CYO Camping Programs for the Catholic Charities Health and Human Services—Youth and Young Adult Ministry and CYO Office in Cleveland, Ohio, for the past seventeen years. She has been a member of ACA since 1990, an ACA Ohio Board of Directors standards co-chair since 2004, and the ACA Mid-States Conference Steering Committee chair since 2003. She has also been a speaker at many ACA section conferences.

Share the Message

To better serve you, the American Camp Association accreditation logo usage guidelines have been updated. For your records, download pages 13 and 14 of the [Graphic Identity Standards manual](#).

We encourage you to take advantage of all the [online ACA-Accreditation Marketing Tools](#)—display your camp's ACA-accreditation logo proudly.

Free BoatU.S. Online Boating Course

A free, online boating safety course conducted by the BoatU.S. Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water is available at <http://www.BoatUS.org/onlinecourse>. The course covers a broad range of topics for both power and sailboaters and is an excellent training resource for camps to use as part of staff training. The course is not a certification course that will meet ACA standards, however, it is an excellent refresher on boating rules and regulations.

Camps in the News

Falling Creek Camp in Tuxedo, North Carolina, was recently featured in the Spring 2006 issue of Ballantyne Magazine. [Read all about it!](#) (PDF - 1.5MB)

If your camp has been in the news, contact magazine@ACAcamps.org and share the news with ACA. Include in your e-mail, a PDF or link to the news piece, along with reprint permission allowing ACA to post the news article. We will include the article in this new column in Inside ACA.