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THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 7, SEPTEMBER 2009

WHY NOT A KING?

*When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.
John 6:15 (NRSV)*

Very interesting story. Jesus could have been king, a very popular king at that. People were quite willing to make him king whether he wanted to be or not! They had just been to his banquet and eaten their fill, even when it appeared that Jesus had little more to offer than a prayer and a blessing. That kind of guy should be in charge!

Makes you wonder, though. Did Jesus miss the boat here? What an opportunity! He could have taken charge of the whole nation without a drop of blood shed or any campaign money spent. Surely, considering who he really was, he could have made massive changes, if only he had consented to be king, instead of heading for the hills to be alone.

Those surrounding Jesus certainly wanted him to change things. Clearly, there

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was so much that needed changing. The main hope for government is that it brings justice and peace. Who would doubt that King Jesus could have fulfilled that hope? And, taking that office would certainly have been a more glorious way Jesus to conclude his life than how it actually ended.

What those hoping for a Messiah/King like Jesus did not fully realize was that the main impediment to justice and peace is not government. The main barrier is the selfish orientation of us human beings. No amount of power, money, or law can change that. Jesus did not come to rule us, but to save us. From ourselves, we might add.

In story after story Jesus taught that we live in the kingdom of God, not by having a divinely appointed ruler, but by doing what God wants. Loving our neighbor as ourselves is the key to peace and justice. The reign of God is at hand, not because Jesus was ready to become King, but because now is the time to begin loving our neighbor from the heart, doing justice and loving mercy.

Jesus walked away from kingly authority to die, not as one who took advantage of his position, but as the Man for others. His disciples live out of that Spirit.

⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, ⁷but emptied himself ... ⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ...
Philippians 2:5-7, 9 (NRSV)

Robert W. Dell

Church of the Brethren Western Plains District Office

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Mon 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. (Closed 12-1)
Tues 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
Wed Closed
Thurs 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
Fri 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

District Executive Ministers
Ken & Elsie Holderread
Home: (620) 241-6930
Home: elsieken@sbcglobal.net

The answering machine will be on during hours when the office is closed.

Please e-mail articles and address changes to the District Office at wpdcb@sbcglobal.net

The Shepherd's Voice is published monthly with the exception of June/July and December/January combined issues. Deadline for material is the 15th of the previous month. It is published for church leaders, ministers, church board chairs, christian education directors, youth leaders, church commission chairs, and many others. We encourage your contributions. Unless otherwise noted, permission is granted to reprint articles for congregational newsletters and bulletins. If someone you know who is not receiving the newsletter, let us know. **Notify the District Office if you wish to receive the newsletter via email.**

2009 AUCTION



Projects Unlimited has become a part of the Witness Commission and Lois Grummett has taken on the responsibility of organizing the volunteers and keeping everyone informed. She is very excited about the responsibility and is looking forward to serving in this way. If someone in the District would like to help with next year's auction by working on the quilt for 2010, making something for the auction or volunteering to help in any way, Lois's email address is sythra_82@hotmail.com.

We had a fantastic auction again this year with many in attendance. The District Quilt brought \$900.00 and we were able to disperse \$3278.50 to the following organizations;

Trees for life	55.00
On Earth Peace	55.00
Camp Colorado	359.75
Camp Mt Hermon	1,907.00
Camp Mt. Hermon Special Project	316.25
BVS	55.00
Western Plains District Disaster	50.00
Western Plains District Budget	55.00
McPherson College	55.00
Lybrook Mission	228.00
Heifer Project	<u>142.50</u>
Total	3,278.50



The Witness Commission would like to thank everyone that helped in any way with this year's auction and we look forward to continuing this outreach in the future. God's Blessings to all.

Darrell Barr

Witness Commission Chair



BVS



LISA'S LINES: LEARNINGS AND LEADINGS IN WESTERN PLAINS DISTRICT

Fresh off District Conference, the new 2009-2010 District Board is preparing for the coming year, even as we embrace God's call to pay attention to the One who says, "...Behold, I make all things new." (Revelation 21:5).

The District Board will be attending to a number of things that are new. As the Inspired Future Team (aka, IF Team) sunsets, they turn over to the Executive Committee and/or Board projects they were carrying: 1) The District Structure vision which was presented to and explored during the business session at District Conference. The feedback you provided is already compiled, and the IF Team and Executive Committee will meet in August to begin to shape a plan for an open process in Western Plains District (WPD) to consider how we best structure our organization to reflect our vision of ministry and mission.

The Executive Committee and Board will be attending to the process of transition of District Executives (DEs), as we move from the faithful ministry and transformative vision Elsie and Ken Holderread have shared with WPD for seven years. A Service of Celebration and a reception for the Holderreads will be held at The Gathering V in Salina at the Webster Conference Center on Saturday evening (8:30 - 9:30 PM) October 24. Please join us as we rejoice in the ministry the Holderreads have shared with us.

I have been in conversation with many leaders in WPD so that we may begin to plan for an open and healthy process as we transition from the leadership of the Holderreads through December 31, 2009, to the leadership of Sonja Griffith as DE beginning January 1, 2010. Meetings are scheduled for late August to sharpen our priorities and processes in this time of transition, so that we provide open and healthy communication, and a near-seamless change of personnel.

As I step into the role of Board Chair for this year to learn from you and with you. I am open to leading as the Spirit moves among us to "...make all things new." I welcome conversation with you about God's vision for the Western Plains. If you have questions about the work of the District Board in this year, please contact me by email (pastorlisahazen@mac.com) or phone (316.680.1191).

Peace and prayers,

Lisa Hazen

DENOMINATIONAL NEWS

Stephen Breck Reid has been appointed by the Church of the Brethren's Mission and Ministry Board to the denomination's Committee on Interchurch Relations. Reid is a former academic dean at Bethany Theological Seminary, and currently is professor of Hebrew Bible at George W. Truett Theological Seminary in Waco, Texas.

Dana Weaver resigned as conference assistant for the Church of the Brethren, as of July 31. **Jon Kobel** is the new conference assistant.

Lerry Fogle retires from the Conference Office this year. He will work with incoming director **Chris Douglas** for several months to help provide orientation, through his retirement in December

Becky Ullom has been called to serve as the Church of the Brethren's director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry, effective Aug. 31. She currently is director of Identity and Relations, with responsibility for the denominational website and a range of other communication tasks.

Stephen E. Abe concluded his service as district executive of West Marva District on June 30, rather than Sept. 30 as previously announced.

John R. Moyers has been called to serve as interim district executive for West Marva District, in a part-time position that begins immediately.

The position of director of the Church of the Brethren's Sudan mission initiative is being eliminated, as part of a re-evaluation of the needs of Global Mission Partnerships. **Bradley Bohrer** left the position on July 31. The Sudan mission was initiated by a decision of the former Church of the Brethren General Board in Oct. 2005. It will continue as a program of the church's Global Mission Partnerships, under the leadership of executive director **Jay Wittmeyer**.

PASTORAL UPDATES

Roger Cooper has resigned as Interim Pastor of Eden Valley effective August 16.

The District Board upon the recommendation of the District Ministry Commission approved the licensing of **Von Hunn** (Garden City).

ANNUAL CONFERENCE POLITY AND SURVEY

The Church of the Brethren Annual Conference has made two new resources available online--the new polity document titled "A Structural Framework for Dealing with Strongly Controversial Issues," and a survey about the Conference. This polity on dealing with controversial issues was adopted by the 2009 Annual Conference in June in San Diego, Calif., and will help guide the Church of the Brethren as it enters into two years of intentional church-wide conversation about issues of sexuality. The new polity document has been posted at the Conference website, go to http://www.cobannualconference.org/ac_statements/controversial_issues-final.pdf.

A second new online resource is an "Annual Conference Survey" being conducted by the Program and Arrangements Committee to gauge preferences and attendance patterns for Annual Conferences. The survey was made available in printed form at the 2009 Annual Conference and is now available online at www.cobannualconference.org/forms/survey.html. Executive Director Lerry Fogle invites you to register your thoughts about Annual Conference, its value to the denomination, and assist Program and Arrangements Committee in charting future direction of the annual meeting, its frequency and content.

Also announced was a fee increase for the 2010 Conference. Beginning with the 2010 Annual Conference, advance registration for delegates will cost \$275 (or \$300 for onsite registration); advance registration for non-delegates will cost \$95 (or \$120 onsite), with discounts for those registering for the weekend or single days of the Conference only, and a discount for Brethren Volunteer Service workers; advance registration for children ages 12-21 will cost \$30 (or \$50 onsite), with discounts for those registering for the weekend or single days; and children under 12 will be registered for free.

Excerpted from August 13 Newslines

PRAYERS FOR LYBROOK COMMUNITY MINISTRIES

September: A prayer for the children who attend the nearby Lybrook School, where Maria is a substitute teacher. These are often the children with the most need. May we know how to serve them truly and well in order that they can learn and grow in wisdom and stature and love.

Plains District, neighboring districts, Sustaining Pastoral Excellence agreements, and some individual participants. The anticipated cost per person is about \$110. Helping to pay your costs is not expected but would help depleting district funds last longer and would be accepted with appreciation.

Please register your plans to attend with the district office (wpdcb@sbcglobal.net) giving your arrival and departure plans by September 25.

I am convinced that this experience with Jane Creswell will be a significant influence for our districts as well as for those who attend. I encourage you to read the book and be there.

Ken Holderread

District Co-Executive/Minister

CHILDREN'S DISASTER SERVICES WORKSHOP

October 9-10

Children's Disaster Services (CDS) from New Windsor, MD, will provide specialized training for volunteers at the McPherson Church of the Brethren.

Children's Disaster Services is a ministry of the Church of the Brethren that works cooperatively with the American Red Cross. Volunteers are trained to provide a calm, safe, and reassuring presence in the midst of the chaos that follows disasters by setting up and operating child care centers in disaster locations. The workshop trains participants to understand and respond to children who have experienced a disaster, helping them recognize and understand fear and other emotions children experience and how child-led play and various art mediums can start the healing process. Participants will sleep on cots and eat simple meals to experience similar living conditions to those typically provided for victims of disasters. Once training is completed, participants may become certified Children's Disaster Services volunteers.

Class size is limited to 20 persons so early registration is encouraged. For additional information, contact the Children's Disaster Services office at 1-800-451-4407 ext. 5, or contact local coordinator, Elva Jean Naylor (620-241-3123).

TRANSFORMED BY JESUS TO MAKE DISCIPLES

Coaching Training Revisited

Jane Cresswell is returning to us for her third and final time to enrich the coaching experience of Western Plains District. She is coming to our Transformation Leadership Training Workshop in Great Bend October 11-12. She, along with Mike Burr, has helped us develop a fine group of coaches for our transformation movement.

I am hoping that her two days of training can help new persons in our district and neighboring districts get started on the use of coaching in their ministries. I am also hoping that our present coaches can improve their coaching skills and strengthen their understanding of the value of coaching as ministry.

What we have learned up until now is that coaching is a surprisingly effective way to facilitate the transformation process with individuals and congregations. This prompted our initial interest in coaching. We have been fully satisfied with the result.

A delightful discovery is that the coaching mindset is at the heart of effective pastoral ministry. This viewpoint does not assume to know what is best for others. It merely walks alongside exploring with the other what their hopes, dreams, truth is. It is exploring together how to understand and accomplish these. The coaching mindset is continually looking for God's presence with the other person. For me this is pastoral ministry at its best. It helps me to understand the live into II Cor. 5:16: "From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view even though we once regarded Christ that way."

Jane is an outstanding, internationally known coach and coaching trainer. In the past year she has become the managing director of Purdue University's Organizational Leadership Development Lab. Her recent book, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Coaching for Excellence* can be ordered from Amazon (www.amazon.com). I still have five copies available for \$15 each. It is strongly recommended that you read this book before the training event.

This training event starts at noon on Monday and finishes at 5 p.m. on Tuesday. It is part of the Transformation Leadership Training Workshop that ends at noon on Wednesday.

Those invited to come are: all Western Plains pastors, all licensed and other ministers in training, district leaders, persons interested in coaching, and delegations from neighboring districts.

The cost for meals, lodging, and trainer fees is being underwritten by Western

A WEEKEND RETREAT FOR YOU AND A COMPANION OCTOBER 9 -10, 2009

Friday, October 9, 7 pm - Saturday, October 10, 4pm

Cost: \$50.00 per person (includes registration, meals & lodging)

Directed by Connie Burkholder, MD
Heartland Center, Great Bend, Kan.

Bring a companion - friend, mother, daughter, spouse, brother, sister, etc. - and enjoy a quiet weekend of reflection and sharing. There will be time for individual prayer, journaling, or resting as well as options for sharing with your companion and the group.

NEWS FROM CONGREGATIONS...

The Buckeye Church of the Brethren hosted an annual community ice cream social in Abilene, Kan. on July 12. Freewill donations were accepted for the Buckeye Disaster Relief Fund.

The McPherson Church of the Brethren sent nine members on a one-week mission trip to Lybrook, New Mexico, our Navajo outreach ministry. They renovated one of the buildings for staff housing and replaced windows in the community building. They did an amazing amount of work that is much appreciated!

The Independence Church of the Brethren has built a new fellowship hall building and then opened a day care in the basement of their church to fill a need in the community.

The Eden Valley Church of the Brethren hosted their second annual "Rally in the Valley" motorcycle rally on August 15-16. Last year's one day event drew hundreds from around the area, across the state and as far away as Texas, Nebraska, Colorado, Missouri and Oklahoma. It was a huge success. We go to press before we hear the results of this year.

SPIRITLIFE SPIRITUAL FORMATION PROCESS

The Heartland Center for Spirituality in Great Bend, Kan., begins another year of SpiritLife, a spiritual formation process for adults, with registration open to anyone who wishes to attend. A former participant reflects, "SpiritLife offered a unique opportunity for lay men and women to come together to more fully integrate real life experiences with one's own spiritual journey through sharing, silence, prayer and study."

The goals are to deepen faith theologically and experientially, experience supportive faith community and develop coworkers for God's vineyard.

The curriculum includes Christian spirituality, contemporary issues, spiritual formation group, tools for inner exploration, history of Christian spirituality, spiritual development, and discernment and lifestyle. Opportunities for prayer, quiet reflection and group discussion are provided.

The first semester classes are on Aug. 29; Sept. 19; Oct. 17; Nov. 7; Dec. 5

The second semester classes are Jan. 9, 30; Feb. 27; Mar. 20; Apr. 17.

The fee schedule is \$225 for commuters; \$325 per semester including overnight accommodations. Single session rates are available.

For more details, go to <http://heartlandspirituality.org/spiritlife>

Phone: 620-792-1232 or office@heartlandspirituality.org.

DISTRICT BOARD REORGANIZATION

Following election of new board members by conference delegates, the District Board reorganized Sunday morning as follows:

Board Chair – Lisa Hazen

Vice Chair – Emilie Dell

Church Development and Renewal

George Hinton, Chair; Joe McFadden, Rita Suiter, Les Shenefelt.

Ministry

Phil Adams, Chair; Lyall Sherred, Laura Snyder, June Switzer

Nurture

Beverly Minnich, Chair; Marge Brubaker, Kip Coulter, Emilie Dell, Cathy Price

Outdoor Ministry

Andy Ullom, Chair; Lowell Dell, Silas Dell, Jen Jensen

DENOMINATIONAL POSITION OPENINGS

The Church of the Brethren seeks candidates for the position of *director of Identity and Relations*. The Director of Identity and Relations communicates the mission and ministry of the Church of the Brethren to those affiliated with the church and to those outside who seek information about the church. A major responsibility is oversight of the denominational website. This person is also responsible for annual reports, connections with district conferences, and meeting other communication needs. To request a position description and an application, contact **Karin Krog**, Office of Human Resources, at kkrog@brethren.org or 800-323-8039, ext. 258.

Brethren Benefit Trust (BBT) seeks a *manager of Publications* to fill a full-time salaried position based at the Church of the Brethren General Offices in Elgin, Ill. The manager of Publications provides oversight of BBT's publications--newsletters, press releases, website, and other special projects--and serves as a senior writer and copy editor. To apply send a letter of interest, a resume, three references (one supervisor, one colleague, one friend), and salary-range expectations to **Donna March**, Brethren Benefit Trust, 1505 Dundee Ave., Elgin IL 60120; dmarch_bbt@brethren.org. For questions or clarification about the position, call 847-622-3371. Interviews will begin as soon as possible.

BETHANY'S EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES NOW LISTED ONLINE

Bethany Theological Seminary's Educational Opportunities Brochure has a new look for the 2009-2010 academic year. Instead of a paper brochure as in previous years, the information is now available as an online resource at www.bethanyseminary.edu/educational-opportunities. The listing will receive regular updates so that the information is always current. The online pages include an expansion of the types of classes included.

The educational opportunities information serves current occasional students as they plan their next classes or the prospective student who wishes to review some of the courses that the Seminary offers. The listing also includes courses that meet the ministry credentialing requirements of several districts. For more information about admissions and enrollment, contact Elizabeth Keller, director of admissions (kelleel@bethanyseminary.edu or 765-983-1832) or Amy Gall Ritchie, director of student development (ritcham@bethanyseminary.edu or 765-983-1806).

DISTRICT CALENDAR

2009

Sept. 7-11	National Older Adult Conference, Lake Junaluska, N.C.
Sept. 18-19	District Board Retreat, Holmesville, Neb.
Oct. 9-10	Disaster child care training, McPherson, Kan.
Oct. 12-14	Pastor/Leader Training, Great Bend
Oct. 23	Final Ethics Training, Salina, Kan.
Oct. 23-25	Gathering V, Webster Conference Center, Salina, Kan.
November 1	National Junior High Sunday
Nov. 6-7	Executive Committee (6) & District Board (7), Wiley Colo.

Future Dates

2010

Feb. 8-10	Pastor/Leader Training, Great Bend, Kan.
March 12-13	Men's Retreat, Heartland Center, Great Bend, Kan.
March 19-20	Women's Retreat, Crosswind Conference Center, Hesston Kan
May 20-22	Church Plant Conference, Bethany Theological Seminary, Richmond, Ind.
July 29 – Aug. 1	District Conference, McPherson, Kan.
Sept. 27-29	Pastor/Leader Training, Great Bend, Kan.
Oct. 22-24	Gathering VI
Oct. 21-23	Gathering VII (tentative date)

E**B**RETHREN

The Church of the Brethren recently began publishing a new, electronic newsletter called eBrethren. The newsletter is formatted in an easy-to-read style and will contain a photo and a link to more information on each topic. We hope the newsletter will help you stay connected and engaged with the ministries of the church. You can sign up to automatically receive the email newsletter on the second and fourth Thursday of each month by going to www.brethren.org



Stewards

Lauren Worley, Chair; Eldon Luker, David Sampson, Rich Schmalzreid

Witness

Darrell Barr, Chair; Becki Bowman, Hayley Funk, Lois Grummert,
Joanna Smith

DISTRICT BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS FROM AUGUST 1, 2009

The Executive Committee voted to unanimously give the District car to the Holderreads at the end of their term. The car is a 2001 Buick Park Avenue with 118,000 miles on it. The Board supported the motion with an "AMEN!"

Dale Minnich, chair of the Search Committee for a half-time Administrative Assistant, reported the Search Committee received letters of interest and resumes from eight persons. The Search Committee will make a recommendation to the Executive Committee for action.

Von Hunn, of Garden City Church of the Brethren, was approved to be licensed to ministry.

The Ministry Commission opened a conversation with the Board about if/when to extend monetary support to Western Plains students at Bethany Theological Seminary who are taking classes, but are not pursuing ministry at this time. Bethany requests 8.5% tuition from the district as an investment in future pastors and ministers. Discussion included a variety of perspectives, so the formal motion was tabled for further conversation in the Ministry Commission who will bring a recommendation back to the Board.

The Nurture Commission named the reality of diminishing funds to pay for the salary of the District Youth Minister (the present funds come from the closure of the Rocky Ford church). Nurture recommended that a Pledge Campaign for Youth Ministry Salary be presented to conference. The Board approved the presentation of the Pledge Campaign.

Chris Stover-Brown, on behalf of the IF Team, presented the recommendation to work on a new logo for our district identity and vision. A motion was made to consider investing up to \$1,000 to work on a new logo for the district. Because of time constraints and desire for more information, the board tabled the motion.

Lisa Hazen, Board chair

CAMP MT. HERMON REORGANIZATION MEETING OCTOBER 10, 2009

Trustees (both past and present), campers (bring your parents too!), camp staff, and friends of Camp Mt. Hermon, please make plans to attend the Camp Mt. Hermon reorganization meeting on October 10, 2009 at Camp Mt. Hermon: 23800 Parallel Rd, PO Box 817, Tonganoxie, KS 66086. The meeting will begin at noon with a meal sponsored by OMC, with a meeting following to select the new members of the Camp Mt. Hermon board of trustees.

Over the past 18 months, OMC and the current Camp Mt. Hermon trustees have worked together to create a new structure for the Camp Mt. Hermon trustees group as well as create an operations agreement.

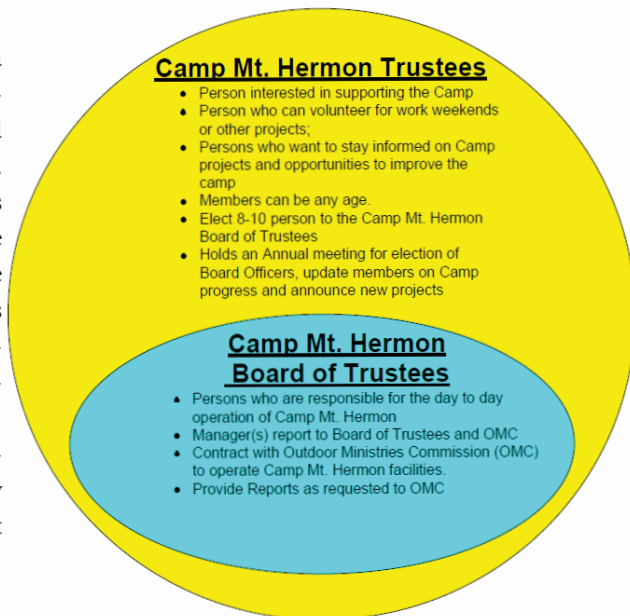
The operations agreement will be between the Camp Mt. Hermon trustees and OMC (and WPD Board). This document spells out the responsibilities of the operator – the Camp Mt. Hermon trustees and the owner – OMC, working on behalf of the WPD Board.

The re-structuring has included the creation of Articles of Organization for the Camp Mt. Hermon trustees. The current trustees and OMC have worked hard to create an organizational structure that provides a working group of Trustees who are responsible for the day to day operation of the Camp Mt. Hermon facilities; while also providing opportunity for other volunteers to support the camp as they are able. The graphic to the right provides an overview of the selected structure.

During the meeting, a Gifts Survey will be available for anyone interested in becoming a Camp Mt. Hermon Trustee. This Gifts Survey will be used by the Board of Trustees to utilize the wide range of skills-sets that exist in our denomination to support the operation of Camp Mt. Hermon.

If you have any questions, please contact Andy Ullom, Chair of OMC at uts_mac@yahoo.com.

Proposed Organizational Structure for Camp Mt. Hermon Trustees



WESTERN PLAINS DISTRICT SUMMER CAMPS 2009

This year has been a very successful for our Camping program. Both Camp Mt. Hermon and Camp Colorado have seen good attendance by both campers and staff.

Attendance for the camps completed to date is listed below:

Camp	Campers	Staff	Total Attendance
Mt Hermon – Pre Jr	28	16	44
Mt Hermon – Jr	30	20	50
Mt Hermon – Jr. High	9	8	17
Mt Hermon – Sr. High	28	11	39
Mt Hermon – Come Along with Me	42	5	47
Mt Hermon – Sr. High Weekend	17		
Year To Date Totals	154	60	197

Camp	Campers	Staff	Total Attendance
Camp Colorado – Pre Jr	16	15	31
Camp Colorado – Jr	30	13	43
Camp Colorado – Jr. High	24	14	38
Camp Colorado – Sr. High	41	20	61
Year To Date Totals	111	62	173

OMC would like to thank the 122 wonderful people in our district who volunteered this year. Your dedication to the camping program in the Western Plains District provided a positive experience for the 265 campers who attended camp this year.

OMC would also like to remind everyone that there is **still one more camping opportunity available this summer**: Family Camp at Camp Mt. Hermon. Family Camp will occur on September 4 – 6, 2009. Registrations for Family Camp are available on the Camp Mt. Hermon website listed below: http://www.campmthermon.org/docs/Family_Camp_Registration.pdf