



Inside ACA — March 2009

## A Message from the President



Dear Camp Friends:

The season of anticipation is upon us. We have celebrated the end-of-year holidays with our families, and now we anticipate summer experiences with our extended families — campers, staff, and parents. This is the season of interviews, program planning, and facility review and spruce up. This is the season when campers and staff use the vision of camp to carry them through until the magic day arrives. In the midst of all this, it is also the season of camp conferences, offering time to step away from all of this anticipation for a short time to visit with colleagues, learn from experts in related fields, and to share what you know.

Many of us have just returned from the ACA National Conference. We were inspired by four great keynote speakers. Each one spoke to a specific phase of our complex camp experiences. Ned Hallowell gave us words and descriptions to interpret the crucial value of camp experiences to parents and others. Linda Perlstein gave us enchanting insight into the growth and experiences of middle schoolers. Pat Williams of the Orlando Magic shared some positive insights about productive teams. And sending us home, Joe Hubbard challenged us with some inspirational leadership ideas for today's economic times. I have been surprised by the number of folks who are still buzzing about these speakers (to the point of quoting them in conversation).

An incredible range of educational offerings featured everything from a professional seminar for mental health professionals and presentations by some of our camp friends to opportunities to share new techniques and games that engage and teach campers. And in between were inspiring and challenging presentations by our great colleagues, outstanding presentations by first-time presenters, discussions of strategic research findings (which fueled momentum for upcoming research projects), and informative seminars led by folks willing to share what they have learned in camp.

The good news is that there are still [more regional conferences](#) to come this spring. Each of these conferences and local educational events will freshen your approach as this time of sweet anticipation for the new camp season flows through the spring. Take a moment to learn something new, to visit with colleagues and share a tip or two with others — you will return to your preparations with renewed energy and insight. Remember that beyond the excitement of preparations, beyond the excitement of staff training, and beyond the excitement of opening day are the three key developmental gifts that we give to campers and staff. Camp experiences provide participants with the opportunity to **connect with nature**, to **participate in human powered activities**, and to **benefit from personal and primary relationships**. Each of you can continue to tell the story about the lessons learned at your camp (and every camp), which include **teamwork, independence, self-esteem, and leadership**.

Enjoy your preparations as much as you will enjoy the great summer camp experience.

Peter Surgenor  
ACA President

## Learning Resources

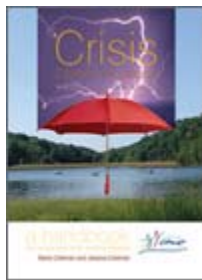
### ACA Bookstore — Featured Products and Resources

Stock up now on resources for [staff training](#), [forms and tools for parent-packets and more!](#)

The [forms you need](#) are available in packages of 100 and include:

- Camper Health History
- Camp Health Record Card
- Camper Health-Care Recommendations by Licensed Medical Personnel
- Camp Staff Application
- Voluntary Disclosure Statement
- Accident Incident Report Form

For every camp director's bookshelf, ***we recommend:***



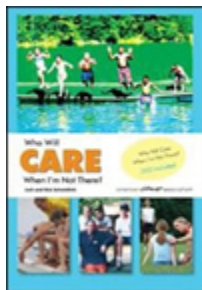
#### [Crisis Communications Weathering the Storm A Handbook for Camps and Other Youth Programs,](#)

*Marla Coleman, Jessica Coleman, \$39.95*

The key to managing a crisis is communication — in prevention, in response, and in recovery. A well-conceived crisis-response communications plan will ensure that everyone has the most up-to-date information to support the varied needs of campers, staff, families, and the larger community. Within *Crisis Communications Weathering the Storm*, you will find resources to create your own customized crisis-response communications plan, as well as suggestions and templates for a complete crisis plan.



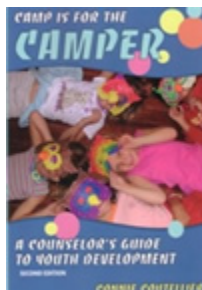
Our most effective ***Staff Training*** tools:



#### [Who Will Care When I'm Not There,](#)

*Second Edition, DVD, Peg Smith, ACA, \$19.95*

Use this emotionally charged video to impress upon your new staff the level of responsibility each member needs to feel. There is no greater responsibility a camp staff member could have than to take someone else's child by the hand and lead them safely through the camp experience. Part 1 offers a number of practices that can be undertaken by camp staff to enhance the safety of those for whom they are most responsible — the campers. Part 2 details how the DVD can be used to increase the awareness of camp staff to relevant risk-management issues at camp.



#### [Camp Is For the Camper, A Counselor's Guide to Youth Development,](#)

*Connie Coutellier, ACA, \$9.95*

This time-tested book is designed to help assist camp counselors in working more effectively with their campers, covering many important topics for new and returning counselors. Learn skills and strategies to help you deal with everything from working with individual campers and working with groups to measuring your success. Consider the online course option and help your staff (and volunteers) start their training prior to arriving at camp.

The Must Have for ***Parents and Campers:***



#### [The Secrets of Summer Camp Success,](#)

*DVD, Chris Thurber, ACA, \$9.95*

Everything new campers need to know before they go. Watch this one together, as a family. This DVD helps to make camp more fun than you ever thought possible! CD:

Essential guidance for parents to support their child at camp. Advice to parents by parents. Moms and dads, listen to this one in the car, after opening day drop-off.

## 2009 ACA National Conference — A Powerful Experience for This Year's Participants

This year's national conference was a powerful and meaningful experience for attendees, delegates, volunteers, exhibitors, sponsors, and our special guests, including our keynote presenters. Here's what attendees are saying . . . .

*"Pat Williams was amazing!"*

*"Ned Hollowell did a great job sharing his own experiences and connecting with us"*

*"The ones who are best are those who can link their area of expertise with the camp experience! That made Dr. Hollowell and Linda Perlstein great!"*

*"Thanks for bringing us Joe Hubbard. What an awesome individual!"*

*"This year's breakouts were awesome – there were multiple sessions I wanted to attend in every time slot."*

We were thrilled to have an absolutely packed exhibit hall with 180 companies and organizations offering the latest resources and time-tested products and services essential for camp. You can [check out our exhibitors](#) and visit helpful links to exhibitor's specific Web sites.

### Special Thanks to Our Conference Sponsors!

The National Conference Team would like to offer special thanks to our generous sponsors who helped pave the way to providing a quality educational event through financial support.



[Learn more about these sponsors.](#)

### National Conference Service Project Enjoys Success, Thanks to YOU!

In its second year, Operation Camp T-Shirt happily collected nearly 2,000 camp shirts to benefit the children in the Orlando area, who are served through The Chrysalis Foundation for Children, Inc., and Arnold Palmer Medical Center/The Howard Phillips Center for Children & Families (HPC). We also received generous donations of adult T-shirts, which made their way to the Emergency Department and Level One Trauma Center, the main community hospital — Orlando Regional Medical Center. Special thanks to the camps and exhibitors who contributed so generously and helped us share the power of the camp with the local community.

### Contributors to Success

How does an event like this come together? We know the answer! Countless hours, dedication, ingenuity, creativity, and problem solving by a group of dedicated volunteers, before, during and yes, even after the event, makes this conference what it is. More than 100 volunteers contributed to the success we experienced in Orlando.

## Looking Forward to the 2010 ACA National Conference

February 16-19

Denver Hyatt at Colorado Convention Center

Plans are well underway for our 2010 national conference. We're excited to combine the 2010 meeting with the 100th Anniversary celebration of ACA. Early breaking news . . . two sponsors have signed on to offer support. Please welcome Market Insurance Company and You CAN do The Rubik's Cube. [Mark your calendars now.](#)

## ACA Regional Conferences — Plan to Attend

Excellent regional offerings provide high quality education, access to exhibitors, and effective social networking. Plan to attend one or more, and consider bringing multiple staff. Many regional conferences offer group incentives and great values for registration, hotel accommodations, and networking events. [Check out all the conferences offered.](#)

## Start Your Staff Training NOW!

Improve your staff hiring and training with online courses from ACA:

### [Criminal Background Checks — Dispelling the Myths and Confronting the Realities](#)

Staff and volunteer screening and hiring practices should include thorough criminal background checks. However, there is much confusion about the kinds of background checks (criminal and non-criminal) that are available to youth-serving organizations. This course dispels the myths and makes sense of the realities of what is available to organizations that select staff and volunteers to serve children, youth, and vulnerable adults.



### [Camp Is for the Camper](#)

ACA's #1 online course! Give staff a jumpstart in considering their roles and responsibilities before arriving at camp. The program's four interactive modules address counselor responsibilities as role models, stress reduction while working at camp, and demographics of today's campers and behavior management techniques. The program content draws from the popular book, *Camp Is for the Camper* ([link to specific book at bookstore](#)).

### [Creating Positive Youth Outcomes](#)

Design a simple, effective program evaluation process and determine the youth outcomes that you want to target and improve for your camp. Exercises, guiding questions, and camp-specific examples will help you think about, identify, and design your program to meet and achieve positive youth outcomes. The program content draws from the popular book, *Creating Positive Youth Outcomes* ([link to specific book at bookstore](#)). This course will show you how to be intentional in your efforts to make camp a positive developmental experience for children.

These and other courses are available through ACA's e-Institute.

## Register TODAY!

**Pre-order the May/June 2009 Staff Training issue of *Camping Magazine* for your staff today!**

Visit [www.ACAcamps.org/campmag](http://www.ACAcamps.org/campmag) for details.

## The Basic Camp Director Course (BCDC)

The BCDC provides the basics and more for camp directors with fewer than six years of experience or for seasoned program directors and site managers. This is an excellent opportunity for camp professionals to

develop well-rounded knowledge of the core areas and to begin building a personal network of camp professionals.

The course is offered over five days. Courses serve twenty-five to thirty-five participants and are supported by two trainers. Participants receive an extensive course notebook and a copy of the most recent edition of *Basic Camp Management*, Armand and Beverly Ball, and the American Camp Association.

**March 22-26, 2009**

Mid States  
JCYS Camp Henry Horner  
P.O. Box 297  
Ingleside, IL 60041

For more information and to register, visit [www.ACAcamps.org/education/bcdc](http://www.ACAcamps.org/education/bcdc).

## Latest ACA Research

### **ACA Camp Business Operations Report: 2009 Is Hot Off the Press!**

[Access the most recent budget and finance data for camps.](#) Questions this year included scholarship information, discounts, marketing strategies used, revenue sources, weekly fees, expenditures, profitability, and more. For ease of application, there are two sets of findings: one for resident camps and one for day camps. Each set (resident/day) includes:

- Succinct narrative of the summary of findings
- Contents page of all the break-outs for the data tables
- Breakouts that include sponsorship, region, camper days, gross revenue, and profit margin
- Appendix that provides information on the way the data were collected and analyzed

We suggest you start by reading the findings summary to get an overview of the data, then look at the more in-depth information provided in the tables. Coming later this spring will be specific "profiles" based on sponsorship (agency, religiously-affiliated, nonprofit, and private for profit) that will specifically highlight the budget-finance information in a couple of pages for just that type of camp.

The reports are modestly priced with day-only or resident-only reports for members at \$10 (\$75 for non-members). For camps that might want both reports (day *and* resident), the member price is \$20 (\$125 for non-members). [Purchase the reports.](#)

### **Last Chance to Share Your Opinions on the 2009 Camp Emerging Issues Survey!**

The survey is open one more week. [Complete the online survey before Friday, March 6th!!](#) Every opinion is important, so please invest fifteen minutes of your time to help us identify the important issues on the horizon for camp professionals!

### **New Camp Outcomes Measures to Target Decision-Making and Problem Solving**

This summer, the Not-For-Profit Council's generous support will allow ACA to develop and pilot two new outcomes' measures focusing on decision-making and problem-solving. The Council has been instrumental in the development of ACA's Youth Outcomes Battery (YOB) for day and resident camps. Seven outcomes measures and analysis templates were created in 2006 and a new Affinity for Nature measure was developed last summer. All ACA outcomes measures are reliable and valid, age appropriate, and have been tested in camps. For information on the YOB, please visit the research Web page:

[www.ACAcamps.org/research](http://www.ACAcamps.org/research). Any camp interested in serving as a pilot camp this summer for the

development of the problem-solving and decision-making tools, please contact Deb Bialeschki, [dbialeschki@ACAcamps.org](mailto:dbialeschki@ACAcamps.org).

### **Healthy Camp Study Enrollment Now Open**

Want to gain a powerful risk management tool for identifying and assessing injuries and illness at your camp? [Enroll your camp in Year 4 of the Healthy Camp Study today](#). Participation is FREE, confidential, and it's okay if you didn't participate in years 1-3. You'll devote about twenty minutes each week to enter data into an easy online system. Each participating camp receives a detailed camp-specific report analyzing the injuries and illnesses of that camp, along with a national report for comparison. Become one of the hundreds of camps benefitting from this important study.

## **PR Press Box**

### **Reinventing the Tip Sheet**

As part of the national PR plan, media tip sheets are sent out on a regular basis to over 3,000 media outlets. These tip sheets are one page nuggets, designed to help a reporter with the backbone of a camp related story. Sometimes, tip sheets are quick and easy lists for the media, [Five Ways to Prepare a First-Time Camper](#) or [Six Ways Camp Encourages Kids to Explore Healthy Behaviors](#). Other times, the tip sheets are a bit meatier — like the recent [Camp is Essential for All Children](#).

How can this help with your PR efforts? There's no rule that says only members of the media are allowed to take the tip sheets and make them their own. Take, for example, the efforts recently of ACA, Northern California. They took the [Camp is Essential for All Children](#) tip sheet, and turned it into [a very nice article that appeared in several places](#), including on MSNBC.com.

This can be done by any camp at any time. If a tip sheet speaks to a program or initiative that you are doing, for example [Green Spoken Here: Children and Nature Belong Together](#), or to an issue that you know your community is interested in, such as [Keeping Camp Costs Budget-Friendly](#), please feel free to use as the basis for your own press release or story pitch to your local media.

Often local media want to know why the local community should care or how something really affects their readership or broadcast area. By adding your information, the tip sheet becomes more relevant and interesting.

For more information or assistance adapting a tip sheet or to be included on the tip sheet distribution list, contact Dawn Swindle, Public Relations Specialist, at 765-349-3317 or [dswindle@ACAcamps.org](mailto:dswindle@ACAcamps.org).

### **Hot Topic: Camp and the Economy**

You may be aware that the economy is a media hot topic. It has colored almost every aspect of the media, including the discussion about camp. You may be approached by local media and asked to address how the economy has influenced enrollment, financial assistance, etc. To assist you with interviews, ACA has developed [general key messages](#) (PDF) to bridge to the positive messages that camp is for every child, regardless of the economy. No matter what the reporter's final story looks like, we should all make the commitment to ensure that no interview discusses only the economy without also highlighting that camp is essential for all children.

We also suggest that everyone committed to the camp experience use these messages to write letters to the editor and op-eds in local and regional papers. Additionally, these key messages can be used to respond to blog postings or online news stories that have a negative slant. By working together, we can speak loud enough to be heard.

For assistance with interviews, letters to the editor, op-ed pieces, or blog responses, contact Dawn Swindle at 765-349-3317 or [dswindle@ACAacamps.org](mailto:dswindle@ACAacamps.org).

### **It's Not Too Late to Join the Media Resource Team!**

Do you enjoy speaking to the media? Do you have particular expertise or skills that could serve as a beneficial resource to ACA? If so, it's not too late to join the ACA Media Resource Team. The last year, ACA received over 300 media requests. We would like to expand our media resource list to include more camps and more voices who can share with the media the depth, breadth, and importance of the camp experience.

For more information on the Media Resource Team, contact [Dawn Swindle](#) at 765-349-3317.

## **Standards News**

### **2009 Annual SOC Available Online**

One of the requirements of American Camp Association Accreditation is to read, sign, and submit the Annual Statement of Compliance. We strongly encourage camps to submit this document online early in the year. While we will continue to do this, we will also be enclosing a reminder in each camp renewal packet. This reminder will provide the camp the Web link to be used to read and submit this critical form. Basically, the steps to be taken include:

- Visit the ACA Web site at: [www.ACAacamps.org/soc](http://www.ACAacamps.org/soc).
- You will need to have your ACA member number and password available.
- By clicking on the "Agree" tab and submit, you are agreeing to this document.
- This action will record the name of the user and the date the Statement of Compliance was read and submitted.
- You will receive a confirmation e-mail immediately after submitting the SOC.
- Should someone else from your camp attempt to submit the SOC at a later date, it will let them know it has already been completed.

Should you prefer to submit a paper copy, you have the option of printing a copy of the Statement of Compliance from this Web page. As always, you may also contact the ACA office for a copy to be sent you.

Remember, submission of the Statement of Compliance is required yearly!

### **Important Information Regarding Standards HR 4A (MANDATORY!)**

We have recently been informed that the Web site which is REQUIRED to be checked in Standard HR-4A (National Sex Offender Public Registry) has both changed its name and Web address. The NEW name is: Dju Sjodin National Sex Offender Public Web Site, the NEW Web address is: [www.nsopw.gov](http://www.nsopw.gov).

As stated above, checking this very specific Web site is a requirement of Standard HR-4A. If you use a background screening company that says they complete a "National Background Check," please verify they check this very specific site!

### **Camp Accreditation Signs and Certificates**

All camps/programs re-accredited and newly accredited in 2008 (those visited this past summer) will be receiving a new, metal camp-accreditation sign for display. These signs are slightly larger and more durable than the previous accreditation sign and will be shipped in early 2009.

All ACA-Accredited® camps will be sent their yearly accreditation certificate in winter of 2009.

## Is Your Camp Being Visited in 2009?

If so, it is not too early to be reviewing your written documentation, your hiring policies, policies regarding staff and camper possessions, etc. Also, make sure someone who will be involved in the preparation of your materials and on site the day of the visits attends a Standards Course. More than one person from a camp may attend a course for no charge. Please make sure you have [reviewed the revised Standards and Interpretations](#). Contact your local Section for the dates of a Standards Course in your area and if you have additional questions.

## Association News

### Camp2Grow: New Environmental Leadership Program

ACA is pleased to announce a new Environmental Leadership Program available through the Lilly Endowment Inc. funded Camp 2 Grow Project.

The Environmental Leadership Program is a leadership course that teaches middle and high-school aged youth fundamental leadership knowledge and skills in a nature-based setting. The nucleus of the course is the LifeKnowledge® program, a cutting-edge leadership curriculum designed to be integrated into a typical camp schedule and completed within a two-week period. Camps can customize the Environmental Leadership Program by selecting lessons most appropriate to achieve camp-specific goals.

[Download more information](#) (PDF)

Thirty-five camps will be selected to participate in the pilot during the summer of 2009. If your camp meets the criteria for involvement, and you'd like to be considered as a pilot site, then please contact Andrea Stearley at [astearley@ACAcamps.org](mailto:astearley@ACAcamps.org) or call (765) 349-3305.

### 2009 ACA National Award Winners

During the 2009 ACA National Conference, ACA proudly bestowed honors to numerous outstanding individuals and programs who lead the way — in exemplary leadership, in service, and in passionate commitment to the value of the camp experience.

Marla Coleman of Coleman Country Day Camp and Coleman Cross Country in Merrick, New York, and former president of ACA, received the Distinguished Service Award, ACA's highest honor. "Thank you for this honor, but it is not mine – it is ours." [Read more](#).

[View all of the award winners](#) and their achievements as living examples of the ACA mission.

### What Can I Do to Get Involved?

Each of the following ideas offers a way to become involved. By becoming involved, you are giving a very important donation of yourself. You're supporting the work of the Association.

Children are our future, and the skills learned and relationships fostered at camp are often life-changing stepping stones on the road to adulthood. With your involvement, we spread the message that camp is an essential part of healthy human development. [Read More](#).

### Several ACA Members Receive Top Honors from the International Camping Fellowship

Armand Ball, Dick Chamberlain, Connie Coutellier, and Jack Murdock received the [2008 ICF Letter Award of Merit](#), which recognizes a significant contribution made by an individual, camp, or organization to the cause of world understanding and peace through camping. For more information about the International Camping Fellowship and this prestigious award, visit [www.campingfellowship.org](http://www.campingfellowship.org).

### **ACA Economic Resources: Being Proactive in a Tough Economy**

ACA has provided a number of camp-specific resources to assist camps in dealing with current economic times. Visit [www.ACAcamps.org/economics](http://www.ACAcamps.org/economics) for more information.

### **The March/April Digital Issue of Camping Magazine Now Available**

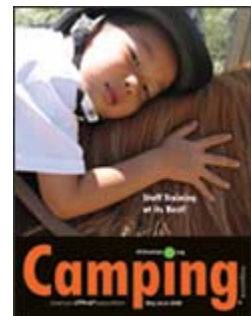
[Check out the digital March/April issue](#) of *Camping Magazine*. This issue features important industry research including an overview of the latest Healthy Camp Study results and enrollment trends. Plus, engaging articles about staff training activities, embracing diversity, and more.

### **Available for Pre-Order: May/June Staff Training Issue of Camping Magazine!**

Imagine being able to have the best camp trainers and consultants available for your staff orientation.

***Now you can . . . With the May/June issue of Camping Magazine!*** The ever-popular staff training edition of *Camping Magazine* is now available for pre-ordering.

Kim Aycock, Jessica Coleman, Greg Cronin, Bob Ditter, Jeffrey Leiken, Ethan Schafer, Michael Thompson, Christopher Thurber, Stephen Wallace, and more offer their expertise and professional strategies in this special staff training issue created exclusively for staff and for trainers. Last year, we tripled our orders of this issue, which is widely used by camps for staff orientation and training. We expect even more orders this year . . . that's why it's critical for you to pre-order early to guarantee the quantity you want for your staff training programs.



Reserve your copies today online at [www.ACAcamps.org/campmag](http://www.ACAcamps.org/campmag) to ensure your staff members each get a copy of this must-have training issue!

### **Need Staff? Check Out ACA's Staff Recruitment Solutions!**

#### Year-Round Jobs at Camp

This e-mail listing of year-round jobs is distributed twice monthly to thousands of job seekers in the youth development and camp field. Currently, more than 27,500 year-round job seekers will see your ad in their inbox because they subscribed to this list. We also post each issue on ACA's Web site. [Place your ad today!](#)

#### Summer Jobs at Camp

This interactive online employment center allows you to post individual jobs, search resumes, and connect with job seekers directly. [Start looking for summer staff now!](#)

### **Online Centennial Tribute for Camps**

Is your camp one hundred years old? Celebrate your camp's one hundred-year anniversary with ACA's Web-based tribute to member camps. Your camp's centennial story can be shared with thousands of Web visitors every day. [Complete the Historical Profile form](#). ACA will proudly add your camp's story to the running tribute of outstanding camps that have reached the centennial milestone.

## **Public Policy**

### **Illinois Private Day Camps Exempt From Illinois Minimum Wage Law**

As of January 1, 2009, Private "for-profit" day camps are exempt from the Illinois minimum wage laws. Bradley Schwartz a member of the Board of Directors for the Association of Independent Camps, successfully

passed an amendment to the existing laws which provided "nonprofit camps" to be exempt from paying minimum wage.

Brad Schwartz says "This was a team effort; Peg Smith pulled together Jane Sanborn and Rhonda Begley to coach me through the legal process, sharing their experience from previous successes."

The new law reads: *"A camp counselor employed at a day camp is not subject to the adult minimum wage if the camp counselor is paid a stipend on a one time or periodic basis and, if the camp counselor is a minor the minor's parent, guardian or other custodian has consented in writing to the terms of payment before commencement of such employment."* [Read more.](#)

Brad has volunteered to share his experience assisting others in their process of communicating with their state legislatures and obtaining support for their regions. Contact Brad at [Brad@BannerDayCamp.com](mailto:Brad@BannerDayCamp.com).

## Business Resources

### Consorta

With camps keeping a close eye on their bottom line more than ever this year, ACA would like to remind you of the ACA Group Purchasing Program that will save your camp money. This program has special contracts negotiated just for you with FedEx, SYSCO, Gordon Foods, Sherwin Williams, Home Depot Supply, Ecolab, and hundreds of other companies. Never before have camps had this buying power.

[Learn more.](#)

FREE REGISTRATION! [Request Passkey for PurchasingPoint Web Portal](#)

Questions? Contact [Kim Bruno](#), 765-349-3309 or [Paula McCarns](#), 765-349-3319.

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*"We have been delighted with the Consorta Program! We have saved a significant amount (20% or more) on our food purchases from SYSCO! As a nonprofit in a tightening economy, Consorta was just what we needed to make our dollar go farther! We are grateful to ACA for offering such a valuable resource. It has more than paid for our ACA Membership!"*

*Dan Mathews, M.Ed., CTRS, Camp Director*

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### New Look for the ACA Buyer's Guide

The online ACA Buyer's Guide, the place to find resources for your camp from action games to yurts, has been recently updated with new search features to help you find resources quickly and easily. [Check it out!](#)

### Welcome New Business Affiliates

[New ACA Business Affiliates](#) continue to expand opportunities for business development for your camp. Increasing numbers of Business Affiliates means additional value-added resources and savings for you.