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**SWANES**



*From the Desk of  
 Doug Kading*

*AHHH... Fresh Air!*

Everyone needs a breath of fresh air especially after the long winter. Some days seem like one can never get enough fresh air. You don't have to work in the city...you don't have to be cooped up in an office all day...you don't even have to experience one of life's "Dirtiest Jobs" in order to appreciate a breath of fresh air.

Sometimes the desire for a breath of fresh air comes from the simple little things such as reading the headlines in the daily paper, or the neighbor who leaves his pick-up motor running an hour before leaving for work at 3:00 A.M., or the dog barking down the street in the dead of night, or it is the well meaning friend who stops to bend your ear for an hour and half when you were just about to spend a quiet afternoon watering the flowers and tidying up the yard.

Whatever the daily stress, whatever the inconvenience or concern, there is a very quiet, comfortable, and restful place where one can get a breath of fresh air alone, with family, or with Christian friends.

Check out the wide range of fun, refreshing, and fresh air opportunities at [www.campokoboji.org](http://www.campokoboji.org) which are available at your own Camp Okoboji. It is a wonderful place where children, families, grandparents and friends can gather for a breath of fresh air.

God's Word is filled with examples of people who needed rest and took the opportunities given to them to breathe a breath of fresh air. God rested on the seventh day, after six days of bringing the earth and all of its beauty together (Genesis 2:2). God commands in Exodus 3:12 and 34:21 that following six days of work one should have a day of rest, even during the busy season. The Lord refreshed David through his rest in Psalm 3:5. Jesus even encouraged and provided a means and a place for His disciples to get away from the demanding life which they were leading for a breath of fresh air (Mark 6:31-32).

God has provided a place for you, your children, your grandchildren, and your friends to come away and get a breath of fresh air beside the waters of West Lake

Okoboji at a place called Camp Okoboji. Here in this place, just as at home, your church, and in your community, you can spend time with Jesus. Here "OUR PROMISE OF JESUS AT THE LAKE" is "a friendly, safe, refreshing and relaxing Christian experience – an exceptional value for you and your family" where fresh air is everywhere, and so is Jesus.

*From the Desk of  
 Larry Stille*

*Annual Fund Drive  
 Underway*

By now, most readers should have received a mailing from Camp Okoboji providing the forms and opportunity to participate in the 2009 Annual Fund. This year's letter featured the Davis family whose multiple generations have been coming to Camp for over forty years. In their letter they wrote, "We come to Camp Okoboji to celebrate family, relationships, God and the beautiful outdoors of Camp. We gathered to make true (Grandma Lois' wedding verse: 'And you shall be blessed to be a blessing to many.' May we continue to be a blessing to Camp Okoboji as it has been a blessing to our family!" We certainly give thanks to our Lord for their many years of dedicated service and support!

As implied by its name, the Annual Fund drive is held each year to help offset the cost of Camp operations so that program fees for children, adults, and families may be held at an affordable level. Without the Annual Fund in 2008, program fees would have nearly doubled making Camp not affordable for many to come and benefit from the Christ-centered programs that are offered here. The goal established by the Board of Directors for 2009 is \$115,000 for individuals and \$50,000 in support from congregations. As of this writing, the individual gifts have reached 13% (compared to 20% last year at this time) of the goal established by the Camp Board of Directors and our congregations have reached 27% (compared to 25% last year at this time) of their similarly established goal! This is your opportunity to really make a difference! Performance of the 2009 Annual Fund will directly affect fee setting for the 2010 programs. Gifts to the Annual Fund may be made all year long. Participation in Thrivent's GivingPlus program for supplemental funds to increase the value of your gift is encouraged. Thank you!

*2009 Projects*

Each year, the Camp Management and the Board of Directors identifies and prioritizes selected projects deemed necessary to maintain

the Camp's programs, facilities, and infrastructure in a manner reflecting responsible Christian stewardship. We hope to finance these projects outside of the annual operating budget and thus are seeking supplemental gifts to offset the costs. This year, six projects have been identified. Contact Larry at Camp for more information.

### *Bridge Replacement*

After nearly fifty years of service at Camp Okoboji, the bridge has been replaced. The supports at either end were deteriorating as was the steel structure itself. Within the last year, a bridge inspection resulted in the load rating being reduced from 23 tons to 7 tons. Later this year the rating would have been further reduced to 3 tons and then to "condemned." Many of the trucks that service Camp and the buses that bring groups easily exceed these lower limits. A large steel culvert that meets the approval of all regulatory bodies has been installed to provide a wider and safer two lane entrance into Camp Okoboji. The crushed rock roadway will be paved in the spring of 2010. We are seeking your designated contributions to help defray these costs.

### *Grace Place Retreat*

Grace Place Retreats were founded in 1999 to provide a retreat experience for professional church workers and their spouses through education, restoration and recreation. The couple will walk away from the week renewed in body, mind, and spirit. This program was developed by top pastoral care professionals nationwide in conjunction with Lutheran leaders to sustain church worker excellence through an intentional retreat focused on the physical, relational (marriage), financial, emotional, and spiritual health of worker and spouse. Retreats are held across the country. A successful retreat was held at Camp Okoboji in 2007. We are seeking sponsors for the October 2009 retreat and beyond to make this caring and supportive program an annual event for our Iowa District West pastors, other professional church workers, and their spouses.

### *Ecology Bus*

The Ecology Bus is based out of Lakefield, Minnesota and has been a long featured part of our Outdoor Education program for the 5th and 6th grade students in our Lutheran schools. The bus is a well equipped biology laboratory on wheels that comes to Camp and provides students with a hands-on opportunity to study God's wonderful and intricate creation. We are looking for an individual or small group that is willing to sponsor the bus for one or more years. Please help us continue to provide our

Lutheran students with this high quality learning experience in a Christian setting.

### *Fish Shack*

The Fish Shack is a year round fish cleaning facility currently under construction. It is designed to promote cleanliness, safety, odor control, and to keep this activity out of the family cabins. The décor will emphasize Christ's interaction with fishermen and the importance of being fishers-of-men. On-going operating expenses will be offset by user donations. We are seeking contributions from sportsmen, interested individuals, and groups to complete the construction of this facility.

### *Camp Wide Wireless Internet*

Wireless internet connections are now limited to the Christian Life Center and immediate area. We have a growing number of requests for wireless internet access throughout the Camp. This is especially important for those attending workshops, conventions, and continuing education programs. Purchase of special equipment will be required to deliver a quality signal to all facilities. Can you help us expand this requested service?

### *Expanded Web-site Development*

Our web-site continues to evolve with exciting new features, expanded information, and functionality. Although we can do much of this work ourselves, technical features and interaction are better and more efficiently programmed by the professional web-site development company that we are working with—a local group with Lutheran leadership. We are seeking sponsorships from interested individuals and/or small groups to help defray further development costs.

Thank You!

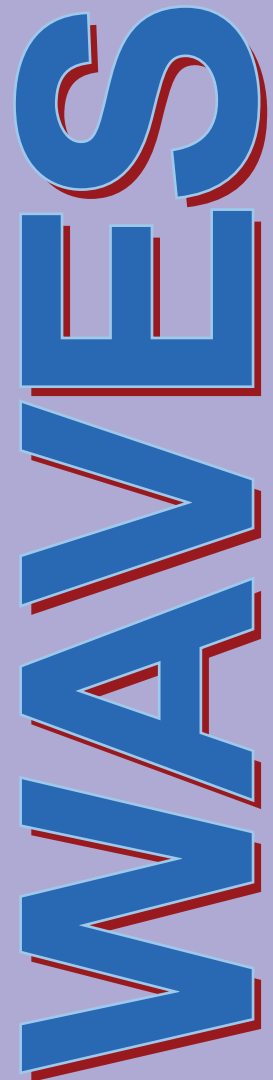
### *A Challenge, Simple Math, and an Object Lesson*

Earlier this year, the Board of Stewardship and Evangelism of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Sac City issued an invitation on behalf of their congregation directed to their sister churches in Iowa District West to "join in a challenge" to donate \$4.00 per communicant member to Camp Okoboji. These gifts are to be designated for the purpose of debt reduction. The challenge is to run from March 31 through December 31, 2009 with a progress report due in September.

Now for the simple math! There are about 50,000 communicant members in Iowa District West. A \$4.00 contribution from



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# WAVES

each would generate a whopping \$200,000 which would retire Camp's operating debt. A second year of a similar contribution could come very close to leaving your Camp nearly free of all debt! With God's help this is certainly possible!

Kirk Warnke, Camp Board of Directors Treasurer, referred to these facts following his financial report to delegates and guests at the Annual Meeting at Camp Okoboji on April 18, 2009. By God's Grace, Camp Okoboji continues to show positive development and he expressed the hope that attendees would feel that excitement. Kirk noted that the Board has chosen to invest in the programs and facilities and are excited about where we are headed at a time when less fortunate camps are forced to cut back or are failing. He noted recent changes noticeable at all corners of the Camp: the new Entrance, Prayer Chapel, Weber Units, Maintenance Building expansion, Judges Cabin, Ruth Cabin, Leviticus Cabin, and others.

Kirk then referred to the St. Paul challenge letter. He held up several items including a fast food coffee cup, a pop bottle, a lottery ticket, a quarter-pounder certificate, a candy bar, and a fruit pie treat. Just one or two less of those indulgences during the year – a sacrifice of a little more than a penny a day and the money sent to Camp – in his words, "WOW!"

Having made the choice to be congregational delegates to the Annual Meeting, Kirk exhorted attendees not to choose to let the end of the meeting be the end of their service but rather just the beginning! He asked the delegates and guests to go back to their congregations and to encourage others to attend and participate in the programs and opportunities available at their camp. He encouraged financial support and a positive response to the St. Paul challenge opportunity. Finally, Kirk asked that knowledge and awareness of your Camp take a prominent place in the ministry of each congregation.

Can you feel the excitement? WE DO!

## *From the Desk of Lori Gamble*

### *I Am Afraid!*

As I sit writing this, the air is chilled, the sky is cloudy, there has been rain for days and there is much planning happening all around me for the upcoming summer. There is excitement and I am afraid! I continually hear things like – "Gosh, I didn't even hear about that event at camp!" And I say, the information was sent to all the churches, it was in the District Monthly Newsletter,

it was in The Harvest on our WAVES page, it is on our website! Why don't people know about this stuff!

Oh, I know in Scripture God says over and over again – "Fear NOT," but I am afraid! I am afraid that "the economy is going to keep campers from coming to the programs, camps, and retreats that are being planned and prepared for. BUT FEAR NOT! Iowa District West has financial assistance available for Cub Week, Jr. High Week, and Youth Week. Individuals should contact their pastor to get the forms necessary to apply. AND Camp Okoboji also has Campership funds available for ALL CAMPS – youth and family camps! I just told a group of students recently that if their parents said there wasn't enough money to go to camp – they were wrong! We never want anyone to miss the opportunity to experience Jesus at the Lake because there isn't enough money! You can get more information for all financial assistance by calling Lori Gamble.

### *S.P.A. Retreat 2009*

I am also just coming off a wonderful weekend with a group of ladies who attended the 2nd Annual S.P.A. (Spiritual and Physical Alignment) Retreat for women! The ladies enjoyed an awesome Bible study presented by Peggy Wunschel from Ida Grove, massages and facials provided by Design Masters Spa and Salon in Spencer, a concert by Tangled Blue, relaxing in a hot tub, and of course the chocolate fountain with lots of yummy fruit to dip!



The 3rd Annual S.P.A. Retreat will be held on April 23-25, 2010. Our Bible study leader for this retreat will be Jan Struck of Struck with Laughter Ministry! Mark your calendars now. We also continue to have all the other amenities that the ladies have come to enjoy.

### *NEW ADULT RETREAT*

Mark your Calendars NOW! On September 25-27, 2009 Camp Okoboji is hosting a new weekend get away for the Boomers! The topic leader for this weekend event will be The Reverend Terry K. Dittmer, director of the Department of Youth Ministry for The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. He will be sharing with the Boomer Generation their role in the future of the church. This retreat will include relaxation, golf, social time, and special music

with musician Don Wharton. Please check our website and watch for announcements in your church bulletins as more details are released about this exciting new retreat!

### *Grace Place 2009*

Looking for a great way to honor your pastor, his wife and family or your DCE, their spouse and family? The dates for the 2009 Grace Place retreat have been set for September 27 – October 1, 2009! The event will begin late on Sunday afternoon and conclude late on Thursday afternoon. Camp Okoboji will be hosting and is looking for financial contributions in order to keep the costs for these professional church workers at a minimum. If you'd like to contribute to the spiritual and physical well-being of the dedicated workers in Iowa District West please contact Doug Kading, Larry Stille or Lori Gamble.

### *From the Desk of Lorene Unrau*

#### *Theme Basket Auction*

The Auxiliary would like to thank everyone who donated a basket or purchased a basket at our Theme Basket Auction at the Annual Meeting. We would also like to thank the individuals who gave donations of \$150 which is the cost of one set of tables and benches. The total amount received from the sale of the baskets and donations was \$5,596. There were 39 baskets on the silent auction and 10 baskets were auctioned off. The money received this year will be used for the new tables and benches which will be placed on the deck of the Ginny DeWall Dining Hall and the extra money will be used to complete our mattress project. Ron Stolle has built 20 sets the tables and benches for us at a total cost of \$2,863.15. If you would like to contribute to the project, money can be sent to Camp Okoboji Auxiliary, Attention Lorene Unrau, 1531 Edgewood Dr, Milford, IA 51351.

#### *Quilt Auction*

The Annual Quilt Auction will be held Saturday, June 13, 12:30 pm at Camp Okoboji in the Christian Life Center. Viewing will be Friday evening from 5:00 to 7:00 pm and Saturday from 9:30 am until the start of the auction. Lunch will be served from 11:00 until 12:30 and there will be crafts and baked goods on sale in the Christian Life Center. We have two wonderful auctioneers who make the afternoon fun and exciting. Plan now to attend this annual event. Monies from the auction

will be used to re-side Joppa Hall. This year pictures of all the quilts with a brief description can be viewed on our website ([www.campokoboji.org](http://www.campokoboji.org).) Click on the quilt pin on the homepage and it will take you to the quilt booklet. If you cannot attend the auction and would like to place a bid on one or more of the quilts you can call the camp office at 712-337-3325 and leave a bid with one of the ladies in the office.

#### *Summer Facilities*

With the economy the way it is this year, are you looking for a relaxing vacation spot close to home? Camp Okoboji is the answer. We have openings in the following family (housekeeping) cabins for this summer. They will be filled on a first-come first-serve basis. June 7-14 – Exodus, Numbers, Proverbs; June 14-21 – Ezra; June 24-28 – Immanuel; August 9-16 – Immanuel, Joshua; August 16-23 – Deuteronomy, Exodus, Ezra, Joshua, Meyer, Nehemiah, Numbers, Samuel; August 23-30 – Chronicles, Exodus, Ezra, Immanuel, Judges, Kings, Meyer, Nehemiah, Numbers, Proverbs, Samuel; Sept 4-7 (Labor Day) – Numbers. If you are interested in any of these openings, call Lorene at 712-337-3325. The openings are listed on our website ([www.campokoboji.org](http://www.campokoboji.org)). Check it out in case there are cancellations.

#### *Retreat Center Openings*

We still have the following openings in family cabins and the retreat centers. These openings will be filled on a first come first served basis. Family Cabins June 7-14 – Proverbs; June 14-21 Ezra; August 9-16 – Exodus; August 16-23 – Deuteronomy, Exodus, Ezra, Joshua, Numbers, and Samuel; August 23-30 – Chronicles, Exodus, Ezra, Immanuel, Joshua, Kings, Meyer, Nehemiah, Numbers, Proverbs, and Samuel. Retreat Center Openings: Bethel Retreat Center: Sun July 26 to Thurs July 30, Sat Aug 15 to Fri Aug 21, Sun Aug 23 to Fri Aug 28 and Sun Aug 30 to Fri Sept 4; Joppa Hall: Wed Aug 19 to Fri Aug 21, Sun Aug 23 to Fri Aug 28 and Sun Aug 30 to Fri Sept 4. If any of these openings work for you and your family, call Lorene at 712-337-3325.

*“Teaching, Living,  
Sharing, Serving  
Jesus Christ, God’s Son,  
Our Savior”*



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