**DISTRICT CAMP NEWS**

The Outdoor Ministries Team (OMT) looks forward to fun, well-led, and spirit-filled camps for the children of Western Plains district in 2015. We have some changes this year that parents and campers alike will want to know about:

**Reconfiguration**

Two age groups are reconfigured at both Camp Colorado and Camp Mt. Hermon. Junior camp is now made up of campers who have completed third, fourth, and fifth grades. Junior High camp is for campers completing sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. Come Along with Me and Senior High Camps remain the same age groups. (Holding Pre-Junior camp is not necessary.) Why, you ask, has this rearrangement been made? There are several benefits:

1. Fewer camp directors and counselors are required. For the past two years, the OMT has had difficulty finding leadership for our camps. This year, we know long ahead of time who the directors are going to be. These directors will have more time to recruit counselors, nurses, and cooks. About 30 fewer leaders and staff will be required.

2. The effort of preparation will be utilized more. Curriculum activities, nature study, Bible study, recreation, and crafts are prepared for the maximum number of campers expected anyway, so more campers will experience these activities for the same amount of preparation by fewer leaders.

3. The camp facilities will be available for an extra week of rental groups. This could benefit the income of the camps.

4. Less financial cost. One of the highest costs of the camping program is mileage paid to leaders and staff. By having about 30 fewer adults (formerly required for Pre-Junior sessions at both camps), the camps together will save at least $600 in mileage (30 cents/mile) and $900 in food ($2 per meal).

5. Peace of mind. There is no doubt that these camps will be held.

*Please sign up your camper in his or her age/grade appropriate camp session. If your summer schedule conflicts with your designated week, please consider having your child attend camp at our other camp location.*

**FAQs about Reconfiguration:**

**Is this re-grouping of campers happening at both Camp Mt. Hermon and Camp Colorado?**

Yes. Having them the same makes it easier to evaluate the change and prevents confusion for parents and leaders.

**How long is Junior Camp going to be?**

At Camp Colorado, Junior Camp will be held for the full week, and at Camp Mt. Hermon, Junior Camp will be held for five days—a slightly shorter week. The OMT made this decision at the request of one of the Junior camp co-directors at Camp Mt. Hermon and by a request of the Camp Colorado board.

**How will we know if it is successful?**

The OMT’s criteria for judging the success of this arrangement include satisfaction of campers and parents, approval of leaders and staff, approval of camp boards and managers, and financial savings.

**Is this a permanent change?**

Not necessarily. The OMT’s intention is that we will try this arrangement for two summers and will solicit district-wide opinions on its success. If our surveys indicate that the district campers and parents prefer to go back to the old configuration, we will do so and expect more leaders to volunteer in the camp program.

**Will this configuration change the counselor-to-camper ratio?**

No. The OMT requires that directors recruit counselors in ratios of *at least* 1 to 6 for Junior Camp, 1 to 8 for Junior High, and 1 to 10 for Youth Camp. These ratios meet requirements by the states and the American Camp Association and help to keep counselors from being overburdened. Besides counselors, other adults also contribute supervision: two co-directors, one spiritual advisor, and one nurse per camp session. Junior camps usually have counselors-in-training as well. If leaders bring their own children (not registered campers), they are required to also bring a childcare person to care for them.

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**Camp Schedule for 2015**

(Sr. High 1st @ Camp Mt. Hermon) Memorial Day: May 25, 2015

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| **Colorado** | **Camp Session (grade completed)** | **Mt. Hermon** |
|  | Saturday April 25 – at McPherson CoB Training for All Camp Directors and Counselors |  |
| June 7–June 13 | Sr. High - grades 9–12 | May 31–June 6 |
| June 14–June 20 | Jr. High - grades 6–8 | June 7–June 13 |
| May 31–June 6 (full week) | Junior - grades 3–5 | June 14–June 18 (short week) |
|  | Come Along with Me - grades K–2 + adult | May 29–May 31 (long weekend) |
|  | NEW! Younger Youth Specialty — “On the Edge” Survival Camp  limited to 12 campers, grades 7–10 | August 2–7 |
|  | Sr. High Weekend – Grades 9–12 | August 7–9 |
| August 21–23 | Family Camp | September 25–27 |