

## **“Best practices”**

### **for Camp Coordinators concerning Conference Camperships**

*Unraveling the mystery of Conference Camperships!*

#### **Who funds the "Conference Camperships"?**

In some ways "Conference Camperships" is a misnomer because there is no money that comes to Camp & Retreat Ministries from local churches through apportionments. (There used to be an apportioned pool of \$10,000 that we could draw on, but no longer). SO, now Camp & Retreat Ministries has to raise through donations all the money that we offer as campership assistance. Generally the Executive Director, Lisa Jean Hoefner, does that by speaking in churches or with individuals about needs of families requesting our help. She also researches and applies for grants for our specialized ministries like Creation Vacation and Strength for the Journey where we know the campership needs are great every year.

We have tried to make it easy for people to add contributions to the "Joy Fund" (our general campership fund) to their registrations and to donate online. We send out an annual appeal letter and newsletters with return envelopes for people to use to send in gifts. We also have been encouraging people to consider being sustaining donors by signing up for monthly contributions from their bank acct or credit card. We have 23 such supporters! We've been fortunate to have good response with many people selecting to designate their giving to "where needed most."

#### **How does the Camp & Retreat Office staff handle requests?**

The way we handle families in need now is by offering tiered pricing. Rate A in effect, gives a \$50 campership or subsidy to everyone who chooses that option rather than B or C. That way we don't have to process every single request, and only handle individually the situations that require much more beyond that. (By the way, even after May 5, when people need financial aid we start with the Rate A figure.) Our campership application is on the [gocamping.org](http://gocamping.org) website under "forms."

It is not helpful to ask everyone coming to camp to ask for a Conference Campership. Please turn to us for help if you are aware of needs that exceed what your local support can meet.

#### **How does the Camp & Retreat Office staff determine need?**

Conference campership funds are generally reserved for children and families who qualify for free/reduced meals at schools. This is the least intrusive way of assessing basic financial need in families. There are also other circumstances that cause sudden or temporary financial stress in families. Those you'll have to alert us to. We want to help campers get to camp who would otherwise be unable to attend. Helping as many campers as possible means stretching the funds to go as far as possible.

#### **What happens when the money runs out?**

We want to keep our policy of never turning someone away because of lack of financial resources so when we run out of actual dollars to support the camps, the camps (i.e. Magruder, Suttle, Sawtooth) must take it as a loss of income and make up for it by cutting expenses in the all the ways we're used to these days – cutting employees, cutting services, cutting maintenance. So far, we're holding up fairly well in being able to include everyone! Thanks for your assistance in all of these efforts.

#### **Contacts:**

To answer general questions, policy questions, and to discuss special circumstances:  
Call **Lisa Jean Hoefner, 503-802-9211**

To answer general questions and/or request campership assistance:  
Call **Geneva Cook 503-802-9213**

To find out more about donating to the Campership Fund (the Joy Fund)  
Call **Susan Delaney 503-802-9212**