EMAIL Blast – July 27, 2018

From everything I hear around the network, it seems like it’s been safe summer for most. A couple of our sites have been “through the wringer” so to speak. Shetek (MN) had some flooding that closed down summer camp for a few days. Vermilion (MN), one of the Voyageurs camps, had a violent storm with strong winds that took down some huge trees. Thanks be to God, nobody was injured in either of these events. For the most part, it’s been a summer filled only with the life-enriching, faith-nurturing, fun-loving experiences that nobody’s better at providing than you! There’s nothing more important for people, especially children, youth, and young adults, to experience than the ministry you are providing. Thank you for your ministry!

Looking ahead beyond the summer –

- It’s not too early to get signed up for the most significant event all year for networking, learning, inspiration, and renewal among friends whose work is most like our own – The LOM Annual Conference, November 5-9, in Texas. “Good Works in Grace Spurred by Love” promises to be the best LOM Conference ever. You can sign up now at: https://www.lomnetwork.org/conference/
- This is the year for the Leadership Training Event (LTE) to have the Program Track. It immediately precedes the Conference, November 1-5, same place as the Conference: T Bar M Conference Center, New Braunfels, TX. Sign up now while there’s still space available: https://www.lomnetwork.org/lte/
- The Innovative Program Award will be presented at the Conference awards ceremony on Thursday, November 8. The deadline for submitting an application for your outdoor ministry to be considered for this award is October 1. More information at: https://www.lomnetwork.org/awards/innovative-program-award/
- A new initiative for this year is the possibility for your outdoor ministry organization to receive the Diversity Grant, also to be presented at the Conference awards ceremony on November 8. LOM will award a $2,000 grant for an outdoor ministry organization to complete a project that promotes diversity within the ministry and the community. The application deadline is October 1. More information at: https://www.lomnetwork.org/diversity-grant/
Also for your calendar –

- **October 1-3**: West Midwest Territory Gathering at Green Lake (MN). More information coming soon.
- **October 2-4**: South Central Territory Gathering. More information coming soon.
- **October 14-17**: Compass Points – Non Profit Business Management [http://www.compasspointsprogram.org/upcoming-courses-fall2018/#NPBM](http://www.compasspointsprogram.org/upcoming-courses-fall2018/#NPBM)
- **October 17-20**: Compass Points - Articulating Our Mission, Role and Value (co-instructor LOM’s own Randy Younquist-Thurow) [http://www.compasspointsprogram.org/upcoming-courses-fall2018/#NPBM](http://www.compasspointsprogram.org/upcoming-courses-fall2018/#NPBM)
- **December 3-5**: East Midwest Territory Gathering. More information coming soon.
- **May 13-17, 2019**: Interim Executive Director Training Event, Briarwood, TX. This is an event under the auspices of the Outdoor Ministry Connection (OMC) spearheaded by LOM.
- **November 10-15, 2019**: The Great Gathering – a gathering of all the outdoor ministry associations of the mainline Protestant denominations.

**You might get lucky and make it less expensive to participate in the LOM Conference this September** –

Augsburg University is the newest Ministry Partner Member of LOM. All of the Seminaries of the ELCA are collectively a Ministry Partner Member of LOM. You can help them with this project and maybe get lucky at the same time –

Augsburg University, in partnership with Luther Seminary, is developing an innovative new program to prepare people for leadership in faith communities by providing the education (BA and MDiv), training and ministry experience needed to become an ordained (ELCA) pastor, all in only five years! If you're willing to take a brief survey by August 10th, you will provide them with valuable feedback about the important role camp plays in cultivating young leaders and enter yourself in a drawing for one of four $200 scholarships to this year's LOM Annual Conference. [Here's the survey](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf9Wfobo0SYEnfltHNlkQtYIFMy9rRRO0rZDUQnj0gRXyzTlg/viewform)

**And here’s a colleague you can help with a project he’s undertaking that has the potential of being a valuable resource for all of us** –

Paul Little serves as the Food Service and Hospitality Manager at Good Earth Village (MN). He notes that just about every LOM organization he knows about subscribes to the ideal that providing hospitality is an incredibly important part of what we do. In fact, for most of us, it’s one of the core values of our organization. Paul has also noted that as much as we talk about it, that’s about as far as it goes; there’s very little elaboration on what it actually means, boots on the ground, to provide hospitality to our guests and campers. So he wants to do something about it. Paul wants to develop a template for, say, an
LOM organization’s staff manual, of best practices for delivering on our promise to provide guests and campers with outstanding hospitality. He requests your help. Do you already have such statement of giving guidance to staff regarding what’s specifically expected of them when we tell them we want them to provide outstanding hospitality? If so, please send it to Paul. Do you have your own personal ideas on what specifically we need to do to provide wonderful hospitality? Please take a few minutes to write your thoughts and send to Paul. You can contact Paul: paul@goodearthvillage.org

Recent LOM collaboration –

- Thank you, Andrea Scofield, executive director of Lutherwood (OR) for representing LOM at the LuMin (our counterpart network of Lutheran campus ministries) Conference in Portland, OR, during the last week of June.
- Also in June, I had the opportunity, arranged by Laurie Wilkinson, interim executive director of Crossways (WI) to meet with Mark Wilhelm, Executive Director of the Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities. Because the meeting was at Lutherdale (WI), we had the added benefit of the Lutherdale executive director, Jeff Bluhm, joining us in our exploratory conversation. The focus of our meeting was the potential of building a win/win program for both camps and colleges related to gap year experiences. In the process, we have confidence that such a program can also develop better pathways for undergrads to serve as summer camp staff. Mark is hopeful that he will find a willing, and perhaps even enthusiastic, response from some of our ELCA colleges. We are starting with a broad and open definition of gap year programming: a year before college, during college, or after college. The basic concept is that colleges will identify young adults who could benefit from a gap year and that the year would occur in residence at an LOM camp or retreat center. Our goal is to convene a one-day meeting of college personnel and outdoor ministry personnel to establish a work plan for developing a gap year program. The meeting will occur in late November or December 2018, most likely at the Lutheran Center in Chicago, and funded by the ELCA. Scheduling the meeting will occur in late August. If you are interested in being part of such a planning meeting, please contact me, Don Johnson: director@lomnetwork.org
- LOM was at the Youth Gathering! We had a space in the Interactive Learning Center that we shared with ELCA Advocacy. We met literally thousands of kids who told us we were “preaching to the choir” when we talked to them about the value of participating in the outdoor ministry closest to them. We met lots more kids who love going to camp than those who don’t go to camp. So we were really in a good spot to focus on talking with kids about working at an outdoor ministry in future summers. And we talked with their youth leaders about encouraging kids to work at summer camp. And we emphasized to everyone the best kept secret in the ELCA – the resource LOM provides them with Journeys – adventure trips and servant camps that are listed on the LOM Journeys page on our website. We can all be grateful to Heather Lutz, former Baord member and interim executive director at Carline Furnace (VA). She gave up a week of her time and donated her airfare in order to staff our space during that whole time, as well as planning the design of our space and hand-making just about everything that was in our space. Thank you, Heather. And we were so fortunate to have four summer staff “on loan” from Cross Roads Outdoor Ministries (NJ) who were the rock stars for our space. Good thing, because not too many of the kids at the Youth Gathering would refer to me as a rock star. Thank you, Sam
Peebles, Haley Bunting, Deborah Oravbiere, and Jonathan Sterling.
A new addition for Journeys –

Journeys has long been a resource for congregations, especially their youth groups to find camps throughout the ELCA that can do an expert job of hosting adventure camp trips and servant events. Now, we are making it possible for LOM member organizations to list programs that they can host for adult and senior adult groups. That way, a congregation or another camp can have an easy way of finding destinations for their adult bus trips and similar programs. Now is the time to list your adventure camp trips, servant events, and programs that you can host for adults and senior adults. http://journeys.lomnetwork.org/about/

Prayers of–

- Sympathy to the family of Marlys Lefever and everyone at Outlaw Ranch (SD) and indeed the whole organization of Lutherans Outdoors in South Dakota. For over 20 years, Marlys was the cook at Outlaw Ranch. She passed away earlier this week. May God comfort all those who mourn.
- Concern for Randy Younquist-Thurow, executive director, and Mir Youngquist-Thurow, environmental education director of Agape-Kure Beach Ministries (NC) as they give support and encouragement to their daughter, Kyra, who is dealing with a health issue.
- Congratulations for Idalia Negron, recently elected bishop of the Caribbean Synod. Idalia has been the lead contact person for Camp Roig (Puerto Rico), an especially demanding task during these days of recovery from Hurricane Maria. Camp Roig is currently serving as the staging facility for recovery work of Lutheran Disaster Response. The new contact person for Camp Roig is Rev. David Guadalupe, Director of Lutheran Disaster Response-Puerto Rico. David is making plans to be at the LOM Conference in November.
- Celebration for Badlands Ministries (ND) upon the recent celebration of their 90th Anniversary. That’s 90 years for Badlands, not Brent Seaks, executive director!