



Illinois Campers On Mission

May 2026

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President's letter

Hi COM family,

This has been a big start to our COM year. There is a lot going on all around the state and at Lake Sallateeska. Check inside to see photos and a report on our work there.

We reached a total of \$3,760.50 from the auction. That is an amazing blessing and sacrifice from everyone who helped raise the money. It is an all time high and I want to thank everyone that brought items to sell, purchased an item or had a part in making it such a blessing. Pattie Noeth, you are on the team forever! You had such a sense of fun. The leadership team is going to take a look at how the auction runs for next year. Everyone was so good about staying and bidding even though we were exhausted from our work day. If you have any ideas about how to do the auction next year, please let one of the officers know.

It is always a blessing to have the COM family back together after our long winter. Nearly everyone made it for at least a little while. We prayed for those not with us and who were struggling with health issues, family responsibilities and cried together in our grief as we missed James and Catherine Rentfrow. That is what family is for—to help each other.

We also gained 3 new members thanks to Jim and Marilyn Diercks doing some recruiting. We love new members and they were a lot of help on our projects. Please remember to invite friends to come join us and see what we do and maybe they will join as well.

As this newsletter goes out, a small team of us are fighting rain the get the church project done at Golconda. More about that next month. Pray for good weather so we can finish what needs to be done.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven.

Fred Riley



COM Officers

President—Fred Riley, 618-508-3917, fred.riley1261@gmail.com

Vice-President (Project Manager) - Richard Evans, 618-218-4546,

akrlevans1@gmail.com

Secretary—Karen Mowers, 309-945-3971, kcc61254@gmail.com

Treasurer—Dick Mowers, 309-945-1477, 728 Cardinal Ct., Geneseo, IL 61254

Chaplain—Jim & Marilyn Diercks, 618-965-9748 or 618-317-2353

Food Supervisor— Francie Lindeman, 618-713-2402

Historian - Irma Burnett, 309-253-8557

National Coordinators—Don & Jan Kragness, campersonmission72@gmail.com

National website: campersonmission.org

Project list for Streator Baptist Camp

1. Put boats in the lake and install water slide
2. Turn on water at the lake pavilion and clean pavilion
3. Paint sidewalk tripping hazards
4. Replace CO2 detectors
5. Door for kitchen pantry that locks
6. Resurface kitchen serving counters and seal
7. Rake gravel
8. Glow in the dark paint in lodge basement on low obstacles
9. Build benches in lodge basement
10. Fence at manager house
11. Power wash lodge (farm house)
12. Clean recreation pavilion
13. Stain lifeguard chair & handrails in pastor apartment
14. Clean/organize lower barn
15. Build carport at manager house
16. Check and fix screens around camp
17. Build benches along the trail (COM supported project)
18. Trail head signs
19. Weed eat around lake
20. Prune/trim trees and bushes
21. Clean lake pavilion
22. Clean air vents & ceiling fans in dining hall
23. Fix or replace the dock
24. Put up building names on office, bunkhouses, Pastor apartment,
Manager office



Project list for Streator Baptist Camp (continued)

- 25. Clean up flower beds around camp & plant flowers (in front of manager house and around sign)
- 26. Clean windows in kitchen and dining hall
- 27. Check and fix roof on old milk house beside barn
- 28. Clean up trails
- 29. Stain back deck by manager's office
- 30. Paint ceilings in the kitchen?
- 31. Install first aid kit in lodge basement
- 32. Deep clean pastor apartment, prairie center and lodge bedrooms

Tentative 2026 schedule

May 17 – 22 – Streator Baptist Camp

June 2 - 4 - National Rally at Amana, Iowa—DON'T MISS THIS EVENT!

June 22 – 26 – FBC Hamilton (joint project with Iowa)

July 19 – 24 – MorningStar Mission – Joliet

August 16 – 21- Baptist Children's Home, Carmi

September 20 – 25 - SICC, Makanda, IL

September ? - Carmi Fall Fest

October 18 – 23 – Lake Sallateeska & Fall Rally

November 12 – 21- Passion Play, Eureka Springs, AR

Dec. 5 – COM Christmas luncheon

Jan. 18 – 30, 2027 – Piney Woods, TX





- 9 Dan Golden
- 14 Don Kragness
- 21 Terry Odum
- 22 Daniel & Jessica Bonnell
- 28 Chloe Page



Thank You

For your generosity!!!

2026 COM Auction results

\$3,760.50

Our gift to Lake Sallateeska

\$496



Both ISBA camps (Streator Baptist Camp and Lake Sallateeska) still need camp volunteers and helpers during the summer. Come for a few days, for a few weeks, or special projects— - what ever the Lord calls you to do!!!! You can serve as individuals, groups or teams—just come.

Please call **Jacob Kimbrough (815-992-5947)** to volunteer at Lake Sallateesak or **Anthony Heathcoat (618-438-9162)** to volunteer at Streator Baptist Camp.

Any amount of time you can spare—mowing, kitchen, recreation, maintenance, cleaning—you come and the camp managers will find you a job!

COME JOYFULLY SERVE THE LORD!

Faith Focus—

A few months ago, my girls wanted to listen to one of their favorite songs, “Dusty Bibles,” by Josiah Queen. It is quickly becoming a well known contemporary Christian song.

As I was searching the internet for it, I came across a song by the same artist I had never heard. It was called “Shut Your Mouth, Boy.” I was intrigued by the name and had to listen to it. I love the words, but you really need to look it up and listen to Josiah Queen sing it.

Watch your mouth, boy, don't you talk like that. The holes inside my hands show you have all my love.

I know I'm not good enough Know I will never measure up

My hands are about to fold It's hard to get out of bed

I look up to the sky and I say “I'm done, I'm done” And He said

Watch your mouth boy, don't you talk like that The holes inside my side show you have all my love

So why wouldn't you live like you weren't worth me dying for?

And my dearest of apologies The finding of the death of me

I found the Lord I give up giving in to lies

I'm trading all my deaths for life I remember what you said to me

Watch your mouth boy, don't you talk like that The holes inside my hands show you have all my love

You're my child, the apple of my eye The holes inside my side show you have all my love,

So why wouldn't you live life like you weren't worth me dying for?

Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28. He doesn't want us to work ourselves to exhaustion, trying to be good enough for salvation. He wants to give us rest and assurance. He wants us to accept the gift of eternal life He offers.

For people with mature faith, this is a simple review. But it is also a reminder that there are people, maybe people you know, who believe they are not good enough, not worthy of God, not worthy to enter His Kingdom. You can point them to Jesus' love and grace. And His ultimate sacrifice—the gift of God that makes salvation possible.

The question is, Will You?

Jim & Marilyn Diercks

IL COM chaplains



Project Report—Lake Sallateeska
April 26— May 1

Projects completed

Power wash Ford cabin back porch
Remove old doors off the log cabin
Build new gift shop in the recreation building – framed wall, ran new lights, put up drywall, installed trim, installed door, applied mud and sanded, paint walls
Build wall in old gift shop to turn it into an office and a coffee bar – install cabinets, install countertop, add ceiling beams, took down a ceiling fan, run new water line
Build coffee bar
Build fence at manager’s house – mark out fence location, dig holes, set posts, install fence panels, install gates
Build small deck attached to floating dock
Move floating dock
Move life jacket building
Move canoes to new dock
Wash out air conditioners around camp
Paint walls in new office in dining hall
Power wash Ford back porch
Blow out leaves from under manager’s house deck
Cut the copper pipes hanging from the back of the dining hall
Anchor gutter in corner of the dining hall to the wall
Tighten up kitchen sink faucet in Wilma
Build new cross by new dock
Replace wax ring in Wilma back bathroom
Clean and organize camp kitchen – 2 dry pantries, food pantry, dry good pantry
Set up and organize nurse’s closet
Put shelving unit together in recreation room
Zip tie lights to the goat fence
Prep the propane tank for painting
Move the wooden shelving and merchandise to new gift shop
Prepared 175 meals plus 2 snacks per day
Mission sewing – 100 As You Go Bears, 10 sling back bags, 34 drawstring bags, 20 dolls
Prepared, served and cleaned up – 175 meals plus rally potluck dinner
Cleaned up work areas – put back tools, supplies and equipment
Washed windows in dining hall
Conducted Spring Rally Executive Business Meeting
Conducted Spring Rally general business meeting and auction
Worked on putting on siding on front staff house
Power washed deck chairs for manager house and other deck
Power washed mud from front sidewalk under roof at worship center
Auction - Set up and organize, hold auction, clean up after auction
Discussed and finalized National Rally meal IL COM will help to serve
Gained 3 new members—Don Hoppe, Arkansas; Steve & Tina Keim
Passed out Background Check forms to be filled out
Passed out Medical Information Sheets for Members to fill out and leave with President
And more

General Business Meeting Spring Rally April 29, 2026

6:30 pm Lake Sallateeska Dining Hall

Present

Debbie & Terry Odum	John & Francie Lindeman	Fred & Paula Riley
Cathryn St. Dennis	Richard & Anita Evans	Gary & Karen Watson
Leroy & Irma Burnett	Sonny McKenzie	Don & Jan Kragness
Randy McClellan	Randy & Sand Tedford	Suzy & Doug Kingsbury
Dick & Karen Mowers	Jim & Marilyn Diercks	Jessica Bonnell
Patti Noeth		

The meeting opened in prayer by Jim Diercks.

The minutes from the Fall Rally and the special meeting held at the February Fling were read. There was a motion to accept the minutes as read by Sonny, Randy second, motion passed.

The Treasurer Report was given by Dick Mowers. He presented an End of Year 2025 and year to date on 2026. The budget for 2026 was corrected to add \$1,000 for National Rally Food expenses so total should be \$7,878. Dick also reported that COM received \$2,000 in memorial funds for James and Catherine Rentfrow. The Rentfrow family has donated the scaffolding that James had at his house to COM and a group is looking into using the memorial money to purchase an enclosed trailer to store it. Dick also asked for a motion to roll the maturing CD's over with interest for another 6 months. There was a motion by Cathryn S., Sonny second, motion passed.

There was a motion to accept the treasurer report by Karen W., Randy second, motion passed.

Richard gave the project report. He talked about the project from Texas and the Great Passion Play. There were 17 in Texas and they got a lot done. At the Great Passion Play there was also a lot accomplished and several other states also joined in the project. The team got the saw mill ready to go, metal shop cleaned, and lots of building done, sewing and decorating.

Fred reported that the Strong Tower church is in need of help. They need a roof and gym doors. Fred is trying to help them find material, donations and a loan to cover expenses.

Dick talked about the request for help at Island City BC in Wilmington. They have a ceiling repair and work in the basement. They will probably not be ready until 2027.

Karen Mowers gave a report on serving meals at noon at the National Rally. We will be working with Missouri. Jim Diercks has volunteered to donate venison meat for one meal and we only have to serve Tuesday and Thursday. So far, approximately 200 people have registered. IL COM is also going to be conducting bear and bag seminars during the week. Florida has volunteered to have the cards translated in Spanish for bears.

(Minutes continued from page 7)

Don and Jan gave a National Coordinator Report. Don gave a summary on plans for National Rally 2027 since no state has offered to host. The regional Reps are working together on this. 2027 will tentatively be held at Hannibal-LaGrange University and use their facilities. Marty Verwey also has been checking with Hutchison KS and they are willing to work with us so may host 2028. Springfield, MO may host it in 2029. 2030 would be back to Illinois in DuQuoin. Don asked for prayer for health, for the motor home to keep running, for region reps as they are working hard but need a few region reps to step up. Several states are doing very well and several others are not doing well.

Don and Jan also talked about a ministry close to Quincy in Missouri. They are asking for help. Don also shared his thoughts on spring and fall rallies in the past and work day schedules.

Old Business – Karen asked everyone to get their background checks up to date since most have expired. If you have done them somewhere else and they are still good, please let us know. She also asked everyone to update medical papers for our protection. We are urged to keep a copy in your camper and the president will keep a copy. This is very important as we age and have more health problems.

Sara Hunley and the Rentfrow family has invited us to come to Christmas dinner at Farina again this year. We have also been invited to the Oblong church. It was decided we will be at Farina one more year.

There was a discussion about the IBSA offer to help IL COM with whatever we might need. It was discussed that we give stress balls and Frisbees and more evangelism tools. We also need to have more brochures. We would like to have a nice COM tent as we hope to host more block parties and be more visible at conventions.

There was a discussion about it is time to appoint a nominating committee for fall rally 2026. Karen Watson, Anita Evans, Sonny McKenzie volunteered to serve. We need to elect a President, VP & project manager, Food chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Chaplain, and Social Committee consisting of 3 – 5 people. The election will be held at the fall rally.

Don moved to adjourned, Randy second, motion passed. Jim Diercks closed the meeting in prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Mowers, Secretary





IL COM worked hard At Lake Sallateeska— building walls, fences, washing outdoor furniture, moving docks across the lake, building shelves, washing mud off of sidewalks, - making memories, cleaning up the camp for the summer. Preparing a place to spread the love of Jesus.





Sewing bears, painting, creating a new office, enjoying some food and fellowship, putting in a new fence, putting siding on a house, just being together—all part of a great work week at Lake Sallateeska.

