

Luethi-Peterson Camps International

CHRISTMAS CONFERENCE 2017-2018 NEWSLETTER

March, 2018

Dear LPC Friends,

It is my pleasure to report to you about LPC's recent Christmas Conference. We hope that this newsletter will give you a sense of what is happening in LPC right now - not only how camps ran last year and where camps are planned next year but what directions we are heading in, and what we are working hardest on to improve. First, the basics:

The CC opened on December 27, 2017.

Participating this year were: Aina Bisquerra Prohens, Andrea Place, Becky Streit Jiron, Colin Townes-Anderson, Fabienne Abuzanad, Francesca Meme, Gigi Wizowaty, Jesse Smith, Joe Shields, June Vinhateiro, Julia Fiebig, Katia Verrault, Katie Lee Dunbar, Laia Fabre, Mark Jordans, Michiel Blumenthal, Natalie von Tschärner, Nina Horakova, Phil Oeschli, Rose Cowan, Sonia Benenson, Terence McCormack, Thomas Kasebacher, Till Schwantes, Tom Spiers, Travis Fuller, Viola Ciucciomei, and Ylva Skondahl.

Cooking for us were Jesse Clements and Russell Stadler. Francesca Luzzatto was our babysitter for most of the conference, followed by Hemen Saidpur and Nazar Tazir after Francesca had to leave. We also had some great guests, namely, Sayam Jordans, Ona Kasebacher, Alva Kasebacher, Franklin Jiron, Blake Jiron, Consti von Weymarn, and Bruna Melis.

Ylva Skondahl and Jesse Smith were our conference chairs, with other directors taking turns leading some conversations. The Christmas Conference runs by consensus. We never vote on decisions, but instead, every discussion allows for concerns and objections to be heard until all members are either in support or "can live with" every decision. As you can imagine, consensus is more time consuming than voting! But besides making sure we can all comfortably get behind every policy change, consensus is governed by inclusivity. Every voice is heard. (The goal of inclusivity emerged as a running theme during this year's conference.)

As always, we spent time at the beginning of the conference reviewing the past year. We heard reports from all the camps and from the Rosalupi project, and we discussed the impact of policy decisions made last CC. We also heard from all the Support Groups and the US Board who do so much to keep LPC going, and from the ExCom members who are the caretakers of LPC between Christmas Conferences.

Camps, 2017 - We held camps in Kiidi in Estonia, Klino in the Czech Republic, Hensford in England, Freedom and Birch Point in the US, and Hegnes in Norway. Apart from terrible weather in some places and a few minor accidents, all the camps ran well. Four new directors were trained and welcomed to this year's CC: Laia Fabre, Natalie von Tscherner, Rose Cowan and Viola Ciucciomei. Natalie, Rose and Viola have finished their training and Laia will finish her training next summer.

Rosalupi Project: We were all excited to hear about the Rosalupi Project which was not an "official" LPC camp but was run by LPC directors and included refugee, or "newcomer" youth and staff. Also taking part were a number of experienced LPC campers. The project was two weeks long and held in Tuscany. The larger LPC community was wildly enthusiastic about this project and gave money so generously, it was clear that the desire to help with the refugee crisis is dear to the hearts of many. Thank you again to the Support Groups, the US Board of LPC, Inc. and to all the individuals who contributed, and who made this project possible!

During the CC we heard a report from the directors about the experience as well as what did and what didn't work. While they followed a basic LPC structure, there were many adjustments that had to be made. Just for example, it was critical that the newcomers remained accessible to their families, so time was set aside every day for cell phone usage. Providing time and space for prayers was another adjustment in this camp. LPC's influences have been almost entirely European and American, so the sudden inclusion of kids from the Middle East led to many standard traditions being seen in a different light. As Andrea pointed out, "'Country Roads' (John Denver) just didn't resonate with the newcomers."

The project was a huge success, with almost all of the newcomers applying to LPC this year, and the LPC campers reporting that it was a very positive, eye-opening two weeks for them as well. We took time during the CC to hear specific recommendations from the directors about a future "Rosalupi." Mark Jordans and Katia Verrault, two of the camp's directors who work with refugees regularly, also gave a workshop in which we learned important terminology like the difference between refugees, asylum seekers, and displaced persons, the concept of 'Do No Harm,' and other tips for working with this population.

We are very happy to continue the Rosalupi project in 2018 with YLI in Oriolo. This will be a full length LPC camp in Lazio not so far from Viterbo to which we invited all the newcomers from Rosalupi who have applied (6 campers), and have secured a few more spots for other newcomers. Our goal is to expand the experience from Rosalupi and continue building and tightening the relationships and skillsets of the much needed positive young leaders.

There are many many extra costs associated with working with the newcomer population; we offer full financial assistance as well as covered travel expenses. We will need to continue to raise extra funds to make these camps possible. If you are able, please give generously!

Please make your donation to:

Luethi-Peterson Camps International

6085 Hasliberg Goldern

IBAN for USD: CH13 0079 0016 9403 7808 6

IBAN for EUR: CH31 0079 0016 5975 2117 4

IBAN for SWISS FRANCS: CH97 0079 0016 5969 0102 9

BIC/SWIFT or BLZ: KBBECH22XXX

Name and address of the bank: Berner Kantonalbank AG, 3401 Burgdorf

Or with paypal: lpc.bookkeeper@gmail.com or with transferwise

Remember to indicate “Donations” with your payment

In 2018 we will again be holding six camps:

Older Kids' Camps

- Hegnes: Tom Speirs, Director
- Klino: Julia Fiebig, Laia Fabre, Directors
- Birch Point: Rose Cowan, Colin Townes-Anderson, Directors
- YLI in Oriolo: Nina Horakova, Andrea Place, Directors, with two directors in training.

Younger Kids' Camps

- Kiidi: Natalie von Tscherner, Viola Cucciomei, Directors
- Freedom: Travis Fuller, Director

SUPPORTERS OF LPC

LPC is supported in so many different ways in many different countries. In Switzerland, the Swiss Support Group raises funds every year for scholarships. In Britain, the Support group has been a huge help to the Hensford camp and with background checks. Holland's support group helped with funding the Rosalupi project and with background checks. Sweden's Support Group pushed us to think more about the refugee crisis two years ago. And in Italy a new group is now forming. In the US, the Board of LPC, Inc continues to care for the Freedom house, to host campers in their homes and to help with the many, many details that go into running the US camps. They, too, contribute generously to LPC's financial assistance, and were an

enormous help raising funds for Rosalupi as well. On the West Coast, LPCers gather twice a year in the San Francisco area.

There are others who should also be mentioned here for their enormous commitment to keeping LPC running smoothly: The Piho family in Kiidi. Judy Sanford for her work with Hensford. Letty Roberts and Pete Moorhouse for managing background checks. Mo Tunney for her labor in visas. Barthold Vonen, Tim and Gail Moorhouse and Marie and Viktor Chladovi for Hegnes, Birch Point, and Klino. There are so many more - we are so very appreciative of all you do for us!

FINANCES

We moved on to LPC Finances. In general, LPC finances are in good shape. One change this year is that we decided to no longer apply for Swiss tax-exempt status. We received advice on this from several different sources and reached the conclusion that any benefits (namely, allowing donors to get a tax deduction on their donation) were far outweighed by the many cumbersome restrictions. We remain a not-for-profit organization. With this new information, we revisited director compensation (last increased 12 or more years ago) and made a new, cleaner policy. We made changes (hopefully, improvements) to how parents can pay tuition, or donate. We also are doing away with the camper envelopes for pocket money, excursions, emergencies and travel, realizing that they represent hidden costs to parents who may be unprepared for them, and that they are a nuisance for both parents and directors. Starting next year, those costs will be added to tuition so that parents will know exactly what they need to pay and will be able to request financial assistance if needed. The need for greater transparency emerged as another theme of the conference. (LPC's financial reports are available from the central office, if you are interested.)

GROWING LPC We try to make sure that the Christmas Conference is always a time for us to grow, not in numbers, but in our thinking. So, in between the very necessary conversations of finances and the logistics of next summer's camps, we held discussions on what could generally be considered "Things to Think About." These ranged from, "How might we be an organization whose gender inclusivity is inspirational" to "What happens if the Ecole can or will no longer support LPC's central office?" Talking, but not making decisions, was ultimately frustrating to some, but it was a first step in addressing some important concerns.

Many other decisions were made though! One project we are all excited about is the **LPC/Ecole Sculpture Project**. At the last World Gathering, five years ago, we started talking about creating a piece of art that would honor Natalie and Armin's contributions to LPC and the Ecole, and celebrate this connection. Pete Moorhouse, a renowned artist, collected ideas from us at the CC last year, and also from a couple of camps last summer. We saw some very preliminary sketches of what such an art piece might look like. We have set aside funds and are committed to working with the Ecole to raise any additional funds necessary and to find the

perfect spot for it to live at the Ecole. Great ideas like this are one of the reasons why the World Gatherings are so important! Which brings us to...

World Gathering, 2018! KC Hill and Tomek Chilarski are organizing this wonderful event, which is taking place July 5-8 at the Ecole in Goldern. We got an update from KC on their plans and spent time ironing out some details about discounted registrations for current counsellors. And thank you to KC, Tomek and Sue, who is also helping. The World Gathering is always a wonderful LPC event and a chance to give your input to LPC, besides, of course, seeing wonderful old friends!

We picked a **new ExCom member**. Gigi's three year term is up, so joining current members Nina Horakova and Michiel Blumenthal will be Francesca Meme. Francesca was nominated "for general reasons of being awesome" besides her extensive LPC experience, her attention to detail, her excellent communication skills, and her commitment to make time available for this critical job. Welcome, Francesca!!!

I will just list some **other CC points** we discussed:

- Updating the LPC Website
- Creating a sound policy on Sexual Consent and Sexual Harassment
- Establishing clearer ways to evaluate ourselves and our work
- Finding ways for campers and counsellors to participate at the CC - a proposal brought by Sayam Jordans
- Using Paypal vs. Transferwise

Rounding out the CC, we welcomed **Katja Braun, who is the new director of the Ecole d'Humanite**. The connection between the Ecole and LPC is strong with more than half of the participants at the CC having taken part in both. We appreciate Katja making the time to get to know LPC. I would also be remiss if I did not mention that we ate extraordinarily well, thanks to our two cooks, Russell and Jesse. The wonderful food was mentioned as a highlight of the conference many times! And, of course, we held a fabulous New Year's Eve party, with our traditional fondue dinner, talent show and Auld Lang Syne bonfire. The Hasliberg was very snowy this year, and in that time of singing in the LPC circle around the fire, it just may be the most beautiful place on earth.

Thank you for reading! Serving on the ExCom was an honor and I am so very grateful to have had the opportunity. Long Live LPC!

Warmly,

Gigi Wizowaty