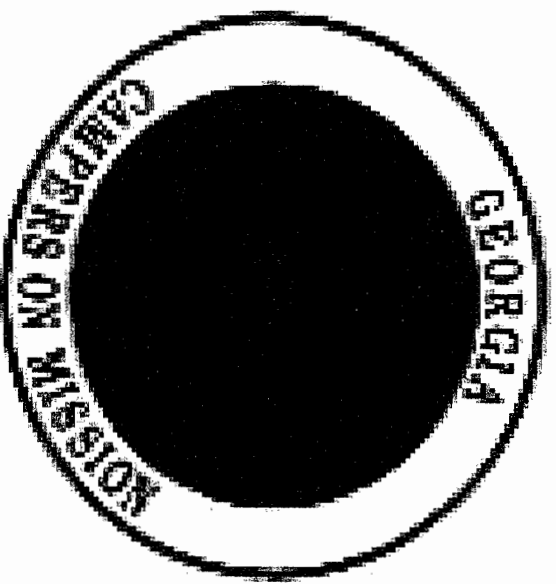
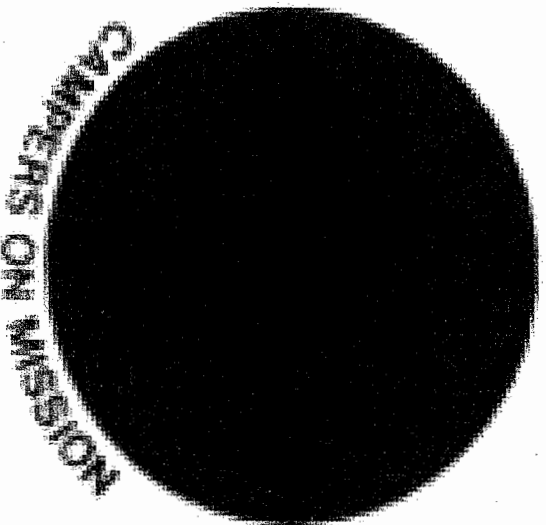


A History of
Georgia Campers on Mission (GACOM)

Sponsored by

The Southern Baptist Convention,
North American Mission Board (NAMB) and
The Georgia Baptist Convention (GBC)



Motto: **"AS YE GO"**
Matthew 28:19

A HISTORY OF GEORGIA CAMPERS ON MISSION

The original concept of an organization to be developed (later given the name “*Campers On Mission*”) was to give inspiration, guidance and assistance to mission minded Christian people seeking ways to “do” mission work while in recreational environments such as campgrounds and resort areas.

Campgrounds and outdoor recreational activities became popular after recovery from World War II. Because it provided relatively inexpensive places for families to relax, play and regroup, the concept gained momentum and wintertime campgrounds in the warmer southern states sprang up rapidly. Winter camping locations abounded in coastal areas including the Carolinas, Florida and states along the northern gulf coast. Campers in these areas soon found themselves being referred to as “snowbirds”. Many of these campers visited local churches, which in turn inspired the churches and denominational volunteer workers to pursue mission-oriented work right in the campgrounds. These types of mission opportunities were caught up throughout the country on a seasonal basis by several Christian denominations. As the camping “bug” increased across the nation throughout all seasons, the need for mission-based activities increased as well.

In 1964, the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board (HMB) recognized the trend and made the decision to help this ministry gain ground. As a result, the HMB designated a ministry section as **Resort and Leisure Time Ministries**. The prevailing goal was to provide encouragement, inspiration, and direction – and to coordinate available resources for the most effective presentation of the gospel, and the message of salvation through Christ to a lost world.

In the late 1960s, many mission-minded campers shared the gospel by providing Bible studies and

worship services in camping communities. These Bible based services and activities enabled campers to participate in these “informal” activities simply because they were able to remain in the campsite in casual dress. As the efforts to reach out to the campers increased, Vacation Bible Schools were included. As the ministry opportunities became more obvious, the idea of formalizing the ministry solidified and was developed. The name “*Campers on Mission*” (COM) was adopted by the sponsoring agencies – the Resort Ministry Department of the Home Mission Board and the Recreation Department of the Sunday School Board. With the support of these boards, state COM Chapters were organized in several states. The state chapters were encouraged to hold statewide rallies at least once each year. Each state chapter was also encouraged to participate in National COM rallies as scheduled during June annually. These rallies offer the channel for COM volunteers to gather together for inspiration, sharing what God is accomplishing through COM ministry, witnessing methods, use of available resources, and coordinating of future events.

By 1970, the Georgia Baptist Convention had recognized COM as a valuable witnessing tool in reaching people for Christ. Mr. Archie Mayo was appointed to lead in organizing a Georgia chapter of COM. It soon became evident that there existed a number of Christian campers in Georgia who were keenly interested in the guidelines and resources provided through COM and to become active in such ministries. The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board Special Missions Ministries Department sponsored a Regional COM Rally at the KOA Campground, Calloway Gardens, Pine Mountain, GA on April 27-29, 1973. Several Georgia campers attended the rally without benefit of a home state chapter. This event plus Home Mission Board publicity influenced the organization of a local COM Chapter in the Atlanta South Metro Association. Very little is known about this chapter, though records indicate that they made a mission trip to Rapid City, South Dakota during June 1978, conducting VBS and Backyard Bible Clubs at the Rapid Valley Church.

Through the effects of attendance at the above cited Regional Rally, personal contact by Archie Mayo and various communications means, the first statewide COM rally was held at Stone Mountain Park on April 15-16, 1977. During this rally, Mr. Mayo appointed an ad hoc committee as follows:

Mr. & Mrs. Ernest McGuire, Perry, Georgia
Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Gilson, East Point, Georgia
Mr. & Mrs. Zane Dutton, Chatsworth, Georgia
Mr. & Mrs. Roy Waters, Chatsworth, Georgia
Mr. & Mrs. George Wells, Waycross, Georgia
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Gilstrap, East Point, Georgia
Mr. & Mrs. Dell Page, Chatsworth, Georgia
Mr. & Mrs. Claude McGavic, College Park, GA

This committee was asked to work closely with Archie Mayo and try to formulate plans and concept for organizing a Georgia chapter of Campers On Mission (COM) at the next statewide rally which was scheduled to be held April 14-16, 1978 resulting in the following recommendations:

1. It is recommended that a state (COM) organization be formed.
2. That an Executive Committee be formed, made up of the following officers who shall serve as officers of the state COM organization; President, Vice-President, Secretary/Treasurer, Chaplain and two representatives from each district.
3. For organizational purposes, the state shall be divided into four geographical districts. The purpose being for better communication, district rallies, local fellowship. The districts shall be formed by drawing a line bisecting the state north to south from Morganton to Statesville. The east-west line shall go from West Point through Sylva. The districts of the state thus formed shall be designated: District I - the Northwest quarter; District II - the Northeast quarter; District III - the Southwest quarter; and District IV - the Southeast quarter.
4. The Executive Committee shall meet at least once annually and at such other times as they deem necessary, for planning activities for the year, including the State Rally(s).
5. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the selection of location(s), pre-planning, developing the program, establishment of a hospitality committee from the local district for all rallies.
6. It is suggested that each district elect their own officers to establish and promote local chapters, and meet as they desire.
7. It is recommended that each district elect their own representatives tonight (4-15-78) to be included in the 1978-1979 slate of officers. (This was done. Representatives are listed at the end of recommendation with the officers.)
8. Any vacancies occurring among the officers during the interim between state rallies shall be filled by the Executive Committee.
9. The President shall appoint a nominating committee at least three (3) months prior to the statewide rally. They shall report next year's slate of officers at the state rally.
10. The ad hoc committee suggested the following slate of officers for 1978-1979;

The recommendations were accepted and the following were elected:

President

Mr. George Wells

409 Bibb Street

Waycross, GA 31501 (Dist. III)

Vice President

Mr. Claude McGavie

2300 Sheriff Road

College Park, GA 30349 (Dist. I)

Secretary/Treasurer
Mrs. Lois Dutton
Route 4, Box 9C
Chatsworth, GA 30705 (Dist. I)

Chaplain
Mr. Ben Owen
925 Bud Street
Blackshear, GA 31516 (Dist. IV)

Representatives from District I
Mr. Ralph Gilson
1395 Vesta Terrace
East Point, GA 30344

Mr. Zane Dutton
Route 4, Box 9C
Chatsworth, GA 30705

Representatives from District II
Mr. R.J. Houghton
3508 Rainbow Street
Martinez, GA 30907

Mr. L. B. McKeller
4422 Old Waynesboro Road
Hephzibah, GA 30815

Representatives from District III
Mrs. Evora McGuire
408 Gordy Street
Perry, GA 31069

LTC W. W. Rush
1725 Milton Way
Perry, GA 31069

Representatives from District IV
Mrs. Liberty Wells
409 Bibb Street
Waycross, GA 31501

Mrs. Frances Owen
925 Bud Street
Blackshear, GA 31516

(The above were the very first elected officers of Georgia Campers On Mission herein designated as GACOM).

Please see Appendix G for a complete listing of all those who have served as President of Georgia Campers On Mission.

It should be noted that the first constitution and bylaws as such, was the directive type write-up by the original ad hoc committee and adopted at the 1979 rally. In 1982 the GACOM Executive Committee along with Georgia Baptist Convention representation, developed a new and separate Constitution and Bylaws. This was mailed out to the GACOM membership for information and consideration. The constitution was approved at the Tobesofkee Recreation Center Spring Rally in April 1983, and attached hereto as Appendix A.

The GACOM District configuration showing four separate districts as outlined in the write-up by the original ad hoc committee remained in effect through the years 1979-1989. A map showing the districts

is attached hereto as Appendix B. The District configuration was changed to two districts thereafter referred to as the GACOM Northern District and the GACOM Southern District, the dividing line remaining as it was originally placed running from West Point on the west through Sylvania on the eastern end. This action was taken during the Spring Rally at the Interstate Camping Center in April 1990. A map showing the districts is attached hereto as Appendix C.

EVOLUTION OF CONCEPTS: At the inception of GACOM, the basic premise of COM nationwide was that it would be an organization, or channel, through which Christians could continue their witness for Christ while in a vacationing or camping situation. In the hectic, fast pace work-a-day world, recreational and leisure time activities are viewed as necessary ingredients to relieve stress and restore both physical and mental aspects of life. The spiritual aspect was different; we should never schedule a “vacation” from God. Hence the idea of witnessing while vacationing was a natural progression for believers who wanted to share Christ in any and all situations.

As membership grew, it became evident that there were talents available that, if used, had tremendous potential outside of the normal recreational setting. This concept was especially appealing to Christians who were retired from the regular “work” world, but still enjoyed good health and were willing to be active in mission activities.

As that idea took hold, the concept of COM changed from *camping* with ministry as a byproduct, to *ministry* with camping as a byproduct. Life-long friendships have been forged as a result of COM volunteers working hard in the ministry services during the day, and gathering together in the evenings to eat, relax and enjoy the campsites.

The Georgia Baptist Convention hosted an Eastern Regional COM rally at Stone Mountain Park on April 25-27, 1980. COMers were in attendance from nine eastern states including Georgia. This rally resulted in COMers becoming more involved in activities related to the “Bold Mission Thrust” concept and goals, and in “Sister States” mission emphasis. Seeds were planted resulting in numerous cases of GACOMers accomplishing meaningful mission activities in sister state New York, including pastoral leadership on an extended basis by several prominent leaders of GACOM.

During the mid 1980's, the concept of forming GACOM Survey and Revival teams came into being. GACOM membership included a number of retired ministers, choir directors and people capable of doing survey and revival type ministry. GACOM was involved in pioneering in this field of ministry. Attached hereto as Appendix D is an outline and guideline directive to be used by these teams. During the late 1980's through 1995 a total of more than twenty such events were conducted. Such events were always at the invitation of the church and therefore the depth of involvement was also at the discretion of the church involved. Survey and Revival activities have diminished somewhat in later years due to seeming emphasis on other mission type activities, some of which are enumerated herein.

GACOM RALLIES: During the years 1977 through 1980 only one rally per year was scheduled. These rallies were held in April and at different locations within the state. In 1981 GACOM started having a spring and fall rally. During most years, spring rallies were held in the Northern Part of the state so as to provide mission service opportunities with a minimum of extra travel at Camp Pinnacle, the Georgia Baptist WNU/GA retreat center, as well as at the Toccoa Baptist Assembly. These sites needed spring cleanup and preparation for summer activities. The fall rallies were scheduled in the southern part of the state so as to coincide with the schedule of the Georgia National Fair at Perry and the Sunbelt Agricultural Exposition at Moultrie during October. At both of these annual events GACOM operated religious booths using all manner of activities to open doors for witnessing to the lost, such as distributing Christian literature, tracts, ice water, balloon art, face painting where permitted and operation of Bible knowledge boards. Many people of all ages have been won to the Lord through these efforts.

At the turn of the century GACOM purchased a towed RV, a tent and awnings so as to provide access to restrooms, refrigeration, weather protection and storage capacity at religious booth sites. Prior to 2000 a GACOM member provided an RV on a voluntary basis to provide for the above amenities. Space rental charges were for the most part covered by the Georgia Baptist Convention (GBC).

DISTRICT RALLIES: The author did not have access to any detailed records concerning district rallies prior to 1990. In April of 1990 at the Spring Rally in Washington, GA, GACOM action changed the district configuration from the four to a two district configuration. The record shows that Mrs. Frankie Farquhar was elected as the first Northern GACOM District Director. From that time forward, the Northern District did not schedule district rallies with regularity. Rally type activities (fellowship time,

conduct of business and inspirational activities) were accomplished during scheduled work sessions such as at the two Georgia Baptist Children's Homes supported by the district, and at such other mission support locations as the need arose. In almost all cases the work day began with a devotional time and prayer.

Records indicate that Josh Cartee was the first elected Southern District Director. During the years since 1990, the southern district routinely held a rally in January and in July under the direction of the district director. Normal rally activities prevailed, however many of these rallies were associated with nearby mission service opportunities and work sessions such as the Baxley Children's Home and at the Norman Park Assembly.

It is to be noted that ideas and information were often generated which needed to be dealt with by GACOM state level action. Such action items were forwarded through the proper channels for information and action. District activities are always conducted under the guidance of the GACOM constitution and by-laws, and forwarded through the proper channels for information and action.

GACOM SCHEDULED MISSION SERVICE ACTIVITIES: Voluntary commitments were made with the three Georgia Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministry locations for GACOM support. In all three locations space was provided, and in two locations, material as well, for installation of RV campsites. The Baxley and Meansville sites have full hookups and Palmetto campsite has electricity and water only, along with a dump station. All of these sites were initially installed by GACOM labor. During 2004 and 2005 the Palmetto campsite was moved via a commercial construction contract when the Baptist Inn was moved to the Palmetto Campus resulting in extensive new construction. The campsite amenities were not changed.

Work sessions are scheduled at the children's homes at least quarterly. This work schedule was interrupted at the Palmetto campus during the heavy construction period noted above. Work at the campuses includes sorting, sizing and arranging of donated clothing and household items to be sold yard sale style, providing funds to benefit resident children for items not included in the budgeting process - such as attendance at ball games or sporting events, purchase of athletic equipment and Christmas expenditures. This type of work is mostly deferred to the ladies. Site volunteer coordinators have in most cases prepared lists of projects that need to be taken care of such as door or window repair and maintenance, painting, minor construction and building renovation. These type activities keep the men occupied during the work sessions.

Facilitators or project coordinators are elected by GACOM on an annual basis to coordinate and schedule events for the following:

- Each of the three Georgia Baptist Children's Home locations
- The Baptist Conference Center and Assembly, Toccoa, GA
- Camp Pinnacle, WMU/GA Camp, Clayton, GA
- Norman Park College and Baptist Assembly, Norman Park, GA
- Georgia National Fair, Perry, GA
- Sunbelt Agricultural Exposition, Moultrie, GA
- Camp Hawkins, Mt. Airey, GA
- Brewton Parker College, Mt. Vernon, GA
- Truett-McConnell College, Cleveland, GA

Scheduled work sessions as well as Mission Service Opportunities are published in advance in the quarterly GACOM Newsletter.

GACOM INVOLVEMENT IN CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES: Numerous church additions and alterations have been accomplished through Georgia and other states as well, ranging from Wasilla, Alaska to southern Florida. Some members have given considerable time and energy to such activities in what was viewed as "frontier" states such as Ohio, Illinois, Iowa, the Dakotas, Wyoming, and others. GACOM volunteer construction involvement may be considered seasonal in that northern state work was prevalent in summer months, the emphasis seeming to shift to southern climes in the winter months. Major construction projects in general involve working alongside or in cooperation with other agencies or activities such as Baptist Builders, other state COM chapters or a professional (salaried) leader.

Following is a partial listing of major construction involvement by GACOM:

- 1990 Rehoboth Baptist Chapel (new sanctuary), Perry, GA
- 1991 Henderson Baptist Church (new sanctuary), Henderson, GA
- 1997 Raysville Baptist Church (new sanctuary), Raysville (near Thomson) GA
- 2000 Alapaha Baptist Church (education/fellowship center), Alapaha, GA
- 2001 Rebecca Baptist Church (fellowship hall), Rebecca, GA
- 2002 Pine Grove Baptist Church (fellowship hall), Blackshear, GA
- 2002 Shiloh Baptist Church (church addition), near Forsyth, GA
- 2004 First Baptist Church (educational building and other work), Ludowici, GA
- 2005 Ellabelle Baptist Church (new sanctuary), Ellabelle, GA

There has been major participation in church construction in neighboring states including Anderson, South Carolina, Leesburg, Florida, Primero Bautista (Spanish speaking) church near Ocala, Florida, Trinity Baptist Church, Lakeland, Florida and others. With all the emphasis on construction activities it should be noted that the spiritual needs within the area of the North American Mission Board (NAMMB) were not totally overlooked or forgotten. Many mission projects were initiated through NAMMB publications listing mission needs.

DISASTER RELIEF: During the latter 1980s the Baptist Men Department of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) negotiated with the American Red Cross (ARC) and agreements were signed for the SBC to provide volunteer manpower to be trained for disaster relief type work by or under the guidance of the ARC. Personnel were to be trained to serve as individual or unit entities in Disaster Evaluation, Cleanup and Recovery, Communications, Feeding Units, Water Purification Units and other aspects of disaster relief as needed. Training sessions were scheduled and conducted annually at Camp Kaleo, near Forsyth, Norman Park College and Assembly and other designated areas as needed. The SBC Baptist Men's Department had soon assembled equipment as necessary for disaster relief teams to be organized and trained as "on call units" when required by the ARC. GACOM volunteers were included in all types of units as mentioned. At least three feeding units, several cleanup and recovery units, communications, water purification units, etc., were located in Georgia, and to a large degree were staffed by GACOM personnel. Due to the frequency of hurricanes, floods, tornadoes and plane crashes, there was a seeming continued emphasis on recruitment, training and refresher training of volunteers to fulfill the needs of disaster services. It should be noted that all of the major emphasis for use of GACOM volunteers are considered to be noble and worthwhile. While working on church type construction and disaster relief activities does not preclude being an active witness for the Lord to the lost, it does detract from witnessing as a primary mission and may be a rather significant reason for a seeming decreased emphasis on serving on Survey and Revival teams and other actions relating directly to the spread of the Gospel.

ITEMS OF INTEREST: GACOM membership has at all times been extended without cost or dues, to anyone having made a profession of faith in Christ as Lord, and shared a desire to be engaged in voluntary service to the Lord and the needy as espoused by GACOM activities. Although sponsorship of GACOM is by the SBC and the various state Baptist Conventions, being a Baptist is not a requirement. Age, sex or national origin are not considerations for membership. Members are encouraged to wear items of apparel which distinctly identify them as members of GACOM, such as hats and outer clothing bearing the COM emblem as well as the distinctive Georgia state shaped orange nametag. GACOM type clothing items are on display and sold at state and national rallies. Nametags may be ordered through the state Secretary/Treasurer at cost.

Members must provide their own means of support while in the Lord's service through GACCOM. Soliciting or accepting of monetary support from any source for personal use is not considered in keeping with "giving of self" in service to God. All actions for personal recognition or gain are considered improper for GACCOM members. While in an actual service project it is considered proper to accept a meal or meals as may be offered by church or activity being served. Members in disaster relief type work may have their meals supplied by volunteer cooking units with food supplied by the ARC. In certain disaster relief situations, the ARC has assisted in transportation costs, shelter and meals.

GACCOM MOTTO: After considerable debate and discussion, "As Ye Go" was adopted as the GACCOM motto. It was noted that some state chapters used the motto "As We Go". GACCOM, however, agreed that the word "Ye" more nearly conforms to the wording in Matthew 28:19, on which the motto is based.

EMBLEM or LOGO: The members agreed that GACCOM would use and display the national COM logo, but adding "GEORGIA" just above the fixed circle. The logo, as it appears on the cover of this history is described in SBC literature as follows: The circle, which has neither beginning nor end, is symbolic of God's eternal existence and His bountiful love for all people. The compass star is symbolic of the expanse of God's creation. It reminds campers that whether they are north, east, south or west, God is always there to speak to them as they seek Him in recreation. The fish is one of the earliest Christian symbols and denotes personal acceptance of Jesus as Christ, the Son of God and Savior.

CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF COM EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES:

1972

- The FIRST National COM Rally was held at the campground Between the Lakes, at Kentucky Lakes, KY.

1977

- The first Georgia statewide COM Rally held April 15-16 at Stone Mountain Park. An ad hoc committee was appointed and instructed to develop plans for an organizational rally to be held the following year.

1978

- The second Georgia statewide Rally was held at Indian Springs State Park near Lake Jackson on April 15-16. There was a unanimous vote that a Georgia State Chapter of COM be organized, COM districts outlined, and the original slate of officers to serve for the year 1978 and 1979. The ad hoc committee had also included guidelines for conduct of COM Chapter activities.

1979

- GACOM Rally - Bald Mountain
- National Rally - Pigeon Forge, Tennessee
- August 25-September 7 - Hurricane David ravaged from the Caribbean to New England
- August 29-September 15 - Hurricane Frederick devastated Mobile, Alabama

1980

- April 25-27 - GACOM Rally along with a Southeastern Regional Rally held at Stone Mountain Park, Stone Mountain, GA
- National COM Rally - Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
- August 3-10 - Hurricane Allen; Gulf Coast into Texas; 28 killed in the U.S.

1981

- GACOM Spring Rally, Lake Tobesofkee, near Macon, GA

1982

- A constitution and bylaws committee was appointed at the spring rally. A GACOM Constitution was drawn up and mailed to the membership for review and consideration for adoption.
- National COM Rally - Knoxville, Tennessee
- December 3-4 - Special “think tank” meeting sponsored by the Special Mission Ministries Department was held in Atlanta and attended by most states with active COM Chapters. Several innovative items came out of this meeting with special emphasis on the spiritual aspects of COM service.

1983

- The GACOM Spring Rally was held at Lake Tobesofkee. The proposed Constitution and Bylaws were adopted. See Appendix A.
- National COM Rally - Jemison, Alabama
- August 15-21 - Hurricane Alicia hit Galveston and Houston, Texas; 21 deaths in the U.S.

- 1984
- National COM Rally - Waco, Texas
 - This was the first year of involvement by GACOM at the Sunbelt Exposition, Moultrie, Georgia
- 1985
- National COM Rally - Kosciusko, Mississippi
 - October-November - Hurricane Juan hit Louisiana and Gulf Coast; 63 U.S. deaths.
- 1986
- National COM Rally - Mountain Home, Arkansas
- 1987
- GACOM Spring Rally, Ponderosa Park, Perry, Georgia. This was the first mention and use of the hymn "Campers On Mission for Jesus" by Alice Greenwood, from Texas. See Appendix E.
- 1988
- June 24-26 - National COM Rally held at Stone Mountain Park, Stone Mountain, Georgia. This was the first National Rally sponsored by the Georgia Campers On Mission Chapter. Under the direction and leadership of W/W (Woodie) Rush, GACOM President, with assistance from the GBC, this was widely acclaimed as a very good national rally.
- 1989
- National COM Rally - Guthrie, Oklahoma. GACOM was awarded the National Honor Chapter for 1989. GACOM presented the award to Archie Mayo.
 - September 10-22 - Hurricane Hugo struck the Caribbean and North Carolina, killing 57 in the U.S. with a damage estimate of \$7 billion.
- 1990
- April 8-15 - Survey and revival at Washington, Georgia with a concurrent Northern District Organizational Rally at which new district boundaries were defined. The records show Frankie Farquahar was elected the first Northern District Director.
 - Beginning in June, Rehobeth Baptist Chapel, Perry, Georgia was constructed by GACOM, Baptist Builders and other volunteers.
 - National Com Rally - Broussard, Louisiana

1991

- Survey and revival, Thunderbolt Baptist Church near Savannah, Georgia
- Beginning in April, a complete new sanctuary was constructed for the Henderson Baptist Church, Henderson, Georgia. Principle leadership and labor for this project was provided by GACOM and local church membership.
- August 22-September 2 - GACOM involved in GBC sponsored assistance to New York Baptist Convention in Religious Booth operation at the New York State Fair, Syracuse, New York. GBC representative - Elmer Goble.
- October 30-November 1 - An unnamed hurricane caused extensive damage along the Atlantic seaboard, by erosion and flooding.
- National COM Rally - Cherokee, North Carolina
- November marked the retirement of the much revered Brother Archie Mayo.

1992

- During May, an elaborate picnic shelter was constructed at the lake for use by residents of the Baptist Village in Waycross, Georgia
- National COM Rally, Lincoln, Illinois. At the end of this rally, Carl and Mary Reagan, National COM Volunteer Coordinators, led a group of 29 RV's from Lincoln, Illinois to North Pole, Alaska for the purpose of doing mission service work under the direction of MR David Baldwin, Dom of Alaska. Most RV rigs returned in August after serving a number of churches as needed.
- August 22-26 - Hurricane Andrew crossed south Florida and also hit Louisiana; 26 U.S. deaths. Damage estimates over \$26.5 billion. 100,000 homes were destroyed.

1993

- Excessive rainfall in the central U.S. from May through early summer caused flooding in the Mississippi river basin which has been described as the “’93 Mid-Continent Flood” and the “Mississippi Flood of the Century”. There were 48 deaths attributed to the flood as well as in excess of \$20 billion in damages. The extent of help afforded by GACOM has not been enumerated.
- National COM Rally - Glen Rose, Texas

1994

- May 4-8 - Survey and revival, Mount Ed Baptist Church, Batesville, Virginia
- June-July - Assistance rendered to Noonday Association in construction of New Hope Baptist Church, Roberta, Georgia
- National Rally - Tallahassee, Florida
- August 15-27 - Building modification, renovation and painting of Streator, Illinois Baptist Camp and

assistance in local church revival.

- November 8-21 - Hurricane Gordon hit the Caribbean and south Florida; 8 U.S. deaths. No estimate of damage available.

1995

- National COM Rally - Hope, Arkansas
- November 29 (and following) - Hurricane Opal hit the Florida panhandle and the resulting tropical storm went up the Georgia/Alabama line, and hovered over the Flint River basin. The Flint River Flood resulted. Total fatalities: 9, estimated damages of \$3 billion.

1996

- Summer Olympics were held in Atlanta, Georgia and its environs. There was extensive volunteer assistance rendered by GACOM.
- National COM Rally - Greenwood, Mississippi
- September 5 - Hurricane Fran hit North Carolina and Virginia taking 37 lives and causing \$3.2 billion in damage.

1997

- Extensive GACOM work in North and South Dakota including construction, renovation as well as assistance in revivals.
- National COM Rally - Hutchinson, Kansas

1998

- National COM Rally - Sedalia, Missouri

1999

- June 8-10 - National COM Rally, Georgia National Fairgrounds, Perry, Georgia. This was the second National COM Rally sponsored by GACOM and was under the direction and leadership of GACOM President Lamar Salter. This was a highly acclaimed rally by all who attended. Valuable assistance and support was rendered by the GBC.
- This year marked the retirement of Carl and Mary Reagan and the start of the service of Wintford and Martha Haynes as Volunteer National Campers On Mission Coordinators.
- November 16 - The World Missions Conference was held at Cape Girardeau and our own Woodie Rush spoke featuring Campers on Mission.
- September 14-18 - Hurricane Floyd went from the Bahamas through New England taking 57 lives and causing estimated damages of \$4.5 billion.

2000

- National COM Rally - Shawnee, Oklahoma

2001

- June 8-15 - Tropical Storm Allison hit the gulf coast to New England causing 41 deaths in the U.S. and an estimated damage assessment of \$5 billion.
- National COM Rally - Rayne, Louisiana
- September 11 - The World Trade Center destruction by two terrorist controlled aircraft and serious loss of life and damage to the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. plus the loss of a commercial aircraft loaded with passengers downed in Pennsylvania was the worst terrorist disaster in U.S. history. The resulting aftermath has seemingly no end in sight. May God be our helper and our Guide!

2002

- National COM Rally, Myrtle Beach, North Carolina

2003

- September 18 - Hurricane Isabel hit North Carolina and Virginia. 50 lives lost and more than \$3.7 billion in damages.

2004

- August 13-September 26 - The southern U.S. coastal states were hit by four major hurricanes in a six week period as follows:
 - August 13 - Hurricane Charlie; 34 killed
 - September 5 - Hurricane Frances; 48 killed
 - September 16 - Hurricane Ivan; 57 killed
 - September 25 - Hurricane Jeanne; 28 killed
- National COM Rally, Dothan, Alabama

2005

- GACOM Spring Rally - Twin Oaks Campground, Elko, Georgia. A motion was made that 'Until further action is taken by this body, all GACOM Rallies will be scheduled and held at Twin Oaks Campground, Elko, Georgia.' After considerable discussion, the motion carried. The basic reasoning for this action was that this campground is centrally located and with the soaring fuel costs it would be economical as well as better stewardship of the resources God blesses us with.

- August 25 - Hurricane Katrina hit south Florida and on August 29 made landfall along the gulf coast from New Orleans eastward into Mississippi causing massive flooding from Louisiana to Alabama. Levee failure in New Orleans caused flooding and destruction of towns and cities along the gulf coast contributing to the total death toll of 1323. 1075 of these deaths were in Louisiana. Total damage estimate: \$100 billion.
- September 18-30 - Hurricane Rita hit the Texas/Louisiana border resulting in 119 deaths and \$8 billion in damages.
- October 24 - Hurricane Wilma hit the Caribbean, Mexico and Florida resulting in 35 deaths and an estimated \$10 billion in damages.
- National COM Rally - Waco, Texas

2006

- National COM Rally - Winston-Salem, North Carolina
- Throughout the year, GACCOM members continued service along the Gulf Coast in many varied disaster relief activities to assist those having suffered loss due to Hurricane Katrina.

The above chronological data is not intended to represent an all-inclusive record of GACCOM accomplishments. It is intended to highlight most of the more “significant” items and events toward which GACCOM efforts were directed and expended. Most hurricanes occurring during GACCOM history are listed, however, there is no way to accurately record GACCOM time and energy expended in relief and assistance.

Be assured that although space precludes mentioning many, many other events that have taken place through the years - our Lord knows.

An effort has been made to draw attention to what God has and will accomplish as a result of spiritually motivated volunteerism rather than to individual volunteers. However, as in most movements and actions resulting in significant accomplishments, such as those noted by the records of Campers On Mission, there are always “movers and shakers” who inspire and motivate people to get moving toward “doing” God’s will. A few of them should be noted:

- Archie Mayo, appointed by the Georgia Baptist Convention to organize a Georgia COM Chapter. His untiring efforts were obviously motivated by his God-given personal vision of the need to present the Gospel message to all and to relieve human need and suffering wherever it is found.
- Claude McGavie - A charter member of GACCOM. He is a “can do” motivator who believes in leading by example, not his own, but rather as God directs.
- National Volunteer COM Coordinator teams Carl and Mary Reagan and Winford and Martha

Haynes, who served so faithfully, never losing the vision of the mandate “as ye go” and impressing it upon all volunteers.

- W. W. (Woodie) Rush and Eloise, charter members of GACCOM. This couple served so faithfully for so many years, exemplifying Godly motivation and leading with tact and diligence and in later years as liaison and coordinator between the Georgia Baptist Convention and GACCOM.

It is felt that all of these leaders had the desire to serve in such a way as to “give God the glory” and that the Apostle Paul had it right when he quoted scripture in stating “let him who boasts, boast in the Lord”. (1 Cor. 1:31).

All volunteers who serve faithfully may look forward with joy to facing the Savior and hearing the words “Inasmuch as ye have done unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me”. (Matt. 25:40)

Compiled and arranged by
Howard Cramer, Member GACCOM

It is the hope of the author that future GACCOM Historians will update this history on an annual basis as events of interest unfold. GACCOM newsletters may be added for detailed record keeping.

Credits:

Resort Leisure Articles; NAMB.net. A History of Resort and Leisure Ministry by Pete Owen.
Personal letter response by Claude and Martha McGavic
Personally generated records and files by W. W. Rush
Quarterly GACCOM Newsletters
The World Wide Web on Hurricanes and Floods

Attachments:

- Appendix A: The first GACCOM Constitution and Bylaws
- Appendix B: Map showing original GACCOM district configuration
- Appendix C: Map showing current GAGOM district configuration
- Appendix D: Survey and Revival Team guidelines
- Appendix E: *Campers On Mission for Jesus* hymn
- Appendix F: Current GACCOM Constitution and Bylaws
- Appendix G: Complete listing of GACCOM presidents

CONSTITUTION
GEORGIA CAMPERS ON MISSION

I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Georgia Campers on Mission.

II. OBJECTIVES

To relate our Christian faith to the lives of fellowmen wherever we camp; to bear witness of the saving power of Jesus Christ; to communicate through word and deed the good life in Christ; to be genuine and sensitive in our relations to other people; and to use our camping equipment and skills in the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ.

III. MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be free and open to Christian campers of all denominations. No membership fees, dues, or subscriptions shall be requested of members. Participation shall be the basis for determining the active membership.

IV. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

1. Each member is entitled to an equal voice in the affairs of the organization and each is eligible for consideration as a candidate for the elective officers of the organization. Each member who is present at a meeting may vote on any business conducted at that meeting.
2. Members are responsible to conduct themselves in a way that reflects favorably on their Christian witness. They should identify themselves to one another and display the Campers on Mission (COM) emblem whenever possible.

V. POLICY AND RELATIONSHIPS

1. As part of the national fellowship of Campers on Mission sponsored by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, and within Georgia by the Evangelism and Missions Division of the Georgia Baptist Convention, Georgia Campers on Mission shall be receptive to recommendations and guidance from these sponsoring bodies. In all other respects, this organization is a self-governing body with the government vested in its members. Decisions affecting the organization shall be made in a democratic manner under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.
2. This organization recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation with other Christian bodies and organizations. It shall not establish or maintain affiliation with any body or organization whose faith or practices violate the principle of faith and practice found in the Bible or this Constitution.

VI. OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

1. The officers shall be a president, a vice-president, a secretary/treasurer, a chaplain, a public relations officer and such others as may be deemed necessary by the membership. These officers shall compose the Executive Committee.
 - a. The Director of the Department of Special Missions, Georgia Baptist Convention, or such other person as the Convention designates to work with Georgia Campers on Mission, shall be an Ex-officio member of the Executive Committee.
 2. Officers shall be elected annually at the first state-wide rally of the calendar year unless determined otherwise by the membership. Nominations shall be made by a nominating committee appointed by the president and/or by individual member from the floor in accordance with normally accepted parliamentary procedures. Terms of office shall begin upon completion of the rally at which the election is conducted.
 3. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the selection of locations for the state-wide rallies, and for planning and developing the programs for such rallies. The committee shall also present such recommendations and suggestions to the membership at the state-wide rallies as considered appropriate.
- VII. RALLIES AND MEETINGS
1. Georgia Campers on Mission normally will conduct two state-wide rallies each year, one in the Spring and one in the Fall. Other rallies may be conducted when desired by the membership.
 2. Local rallies of Georgia Campers on Mission, such as church groups and associational groups, are encouraged whenever possible.
 3. The Executive Committee shall meet at least once annually for planning activities for the year, including the state rallies.
 4. Camping caravans to mission points inside and outside of Georgia are encouraged. Such activities should be coordinated with the Executive Committee, the Home Mission Board, and the Evangelism and Missions Division of the Georgia Baptist Convention.
 5. The National rally of Campers on Mission is normally conducted in the early summer at a time and place announced by the Home Mission Board. Georgia Campers on Mission are urged to attend the inspiring and enjoyable rally as often as possible.

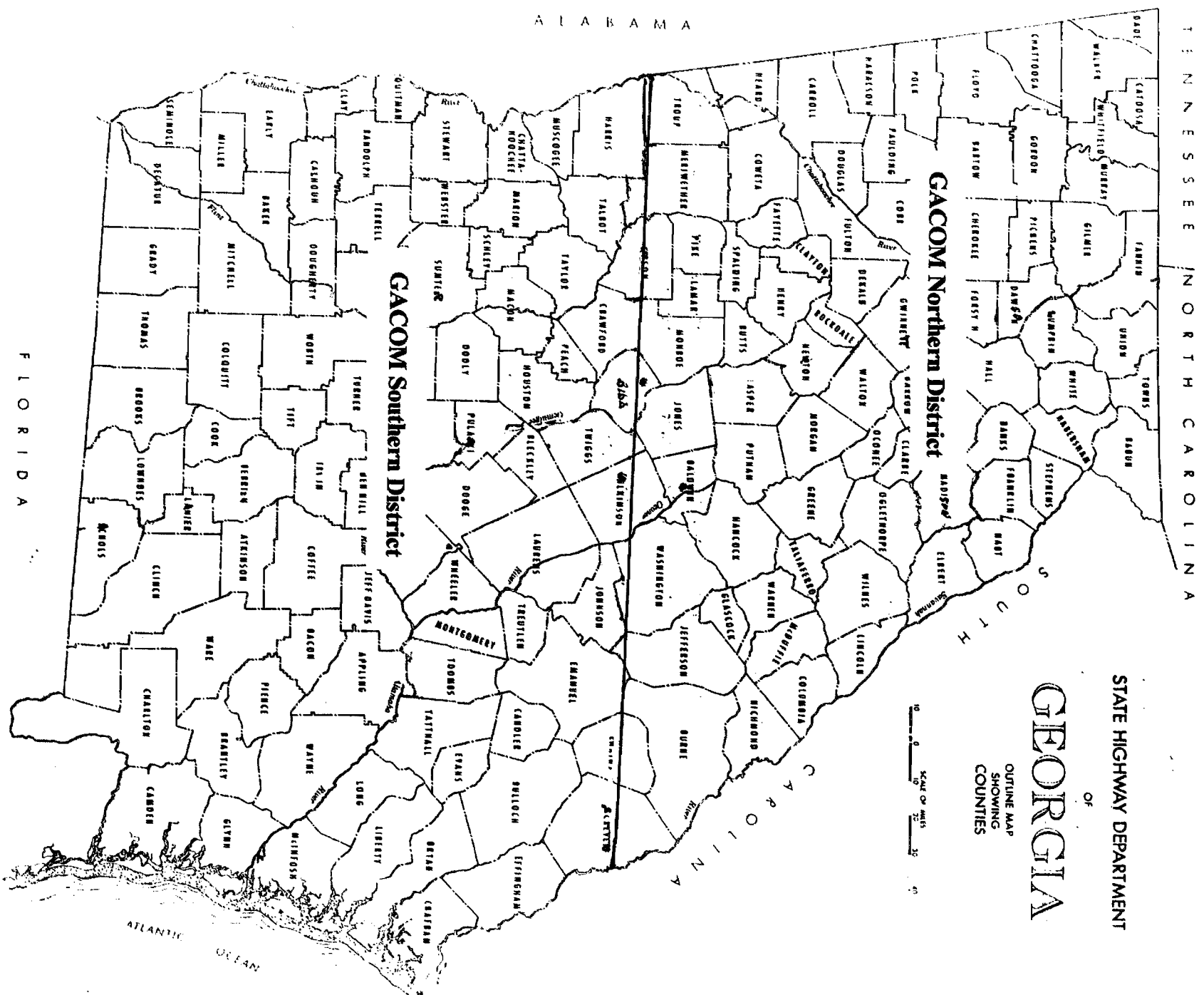
VIII. EMBLEM

The emblem for Georgia Campers on Mission shall be the emblem of the national Campers on Mission, as illustrated and explained in the pamphlet, Campers on Mission, published by the Home Mission Board, SBC.

IX. AMENDMENTS

X. Proposed changes to this Constitution and any bylaws thereto shall be presented to the Executive Committee at least two months before the first statewide rally of the calendar year. The Executive Committee will then present such changes for adoption or rejection by the membership at the rally. Amendments to the Constitution shall be adopted by the favorable vote two-thirds of the members present. Amendments to bylaws shall have the concurrence of a majority of the members present and voting.

Appendix A



STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
 OF
GEORGIA
 OUTLINE MAP
 SHOWING
 COUNTIES

Scale of Miles
 0 5 10 15 20 25 30

Appendix C

COM SURVEY & REVIVAL TEAMS

1. Introduction
2. Prayer
3. Brief history of COM revival teams in Georgia
4. What is a revival team?
 - Purpose: To lead or support church revivals
 - To provide an avenue of service to Comers.
- Composition: As required to accomplish the work requested by the local church, including:
 - Preacher(s)
 - Song leaders(s)
 - Instrumentalist(s)
 - Sunday School teacher(s)
 - Visitation teams
 - Support personnel
- Equipment & Supplies:
 - Loudspeaker system if needed
 - Song books if needed
 - Musical instruments as needed
 - Other: Handouts, maps, cards, etc.
5. Planning and coordination:
 - Coordinator/Mission Chairman duties and responsibilities
 - Rules and policies:
 - COM works for the church
 - Church identity
 - Policies regarding surveys, census, & geographical areas
 - Offerings and reimbursements
 - Church member involvement
 - Sunday School
 - Fellowship and meals
 - Camping arrangements:
 - On church property or other campground?
 - Hookups: Electrical (don't exceed), water, sewer, cost
 - Restrooms, showers, telephones?
 - Pre-revival publicity
6. On-site procedures:
 - Meeting with local pastor and leaders
 - COM apparel
 - Testimonies
 - Meeting the people
 - Meals
 - Church maintenance work
7. Evaluation and records

Appendix D

Campers on Mission for Jesus

A. G.

Alice Greenwood

1. As we travel the high-ways and by-ways;
2. With the talents God gave us we'll serve Him;
3. We will be a bold witness for Je-sus;

Thru the fields white with har-vest we'll
We will la-bor be-fore it is
Ev-'ty day we'll pro-claim His great

Musical notation for the first system, including vocal line and piano accompaniment.

go,
night
love;

In the strength of the Lord we will
And what-ev-er our hands find to
We will tell of His mer-cy and

share His Word, and let
do for God, we will
grace so free, and the

Musical notation for the second system, including vocal line and piano accompaniment.

glo-ry to God o-ver-flow.
do it with all of our might
home He's pre-par-ing a-bove.

We are cam-pers on mis-sion for

Musical notation for the third system, including vocal line and piano accompaniment.

Je-sus,

We are la-borers with God here be-low,

and what-

Musical notation for the fourth system, including vocal line and piano accompaniment.

ev-er He leads we will fol-

low, shar-ing Christ, shar-ing Christ as we go.

Musical notation for the fifth system, including vocal line and piano accompaniment.

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CONSTITUTION GEORGIA CAMPERS ON MISSION

I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be GEORGIA CAMPERS ON MISSION (GACOM)

II. PURPOSE

It is the purpose of Georgia Campers on Mission to relate our Christian faith to the lives of fellow men wherever we camp; to bear witness of the saving power of Jesus Christ; to communicate in word and deed the good life in Christ; to be genuine and sensitive in our relations to other people; and to use our camping equipment and skills in furtherance of the Gospel of Christ.

III. MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be free and open to Christian campers of all denominations. No membership fees, dues, or subscriptions shall be required. Membership in Campers on Mission shall not preclude concurrent membership in other volunteer organizations such as disaster relief teams, construction teams, and Mission Service Corps. Participation shall be the basis for determining active membership.

IV. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

1. Each active member is entitled to an equal voice in the affairs of the organization and each is eligible for consideration as a candidate to the elective offices of the organization. Each member who is present at a meeting may vote on any business conducted at that meeting.
2. Members are responsible to conduct themselves in a way that reflects favorably on their Christian witness. They should identify themselves to one another and display the Campers on Mission (COM) emblem whenever possible.

V. POLICY AND RELATIONSHIPS

1. Campers on Mission is an informal fellowship of Christian campers, sponsored at the national level by the North American Mission Board of the Souther Baptist Convention, and within Georgia by the Special Missions Department of the Georgia Baptist Convention. As part of that fellowship, Georgia Campers on Mission shall be receptive to recommendations and guidance from those sponsoring bodies. In all other respects, this organization is a self-governing body with the government vested in its members. Decisions affecting the organization shall be made in a democratic manner under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.
2. This organization recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation with other Christina Bodies and organizations. It shall not establish or maintain affiliation with any body or organization whose faith or practice violates the principle of faith and practice found in the Holy Bible or this Constitution.
3. Subordinate geographical districts may be established to provide additional opportunities for fellowship and service, and to encourage an equitable distribution of mission projects throughout Georgia.

VI. OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

1. Officers shall include a president, vice-president, secretary/treasurer, chaplain, public relations officer, and missions coordinator. These along with the district directors shall compose the Executive Committee. Additional officers and leaders, including a music director and accompanist, may be elected as deemed appropriate by the membership.

The director of the Department of Special Missions, Georgia Baptist Convention, or such person as the Convention designates, shall be an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee.

Standing committees shall include a food committee to be responsible for the planning of meals and refreshments; a site committee responsible for recommending the places and making necessary arrangements with campgrounds where rallies are to be held. Other standing committees may be elected as deemed appropriate by the membership. Special committees may be appointed by the president.
2. Officers and committees shall be elected annually at the first statewide rally of the calendar year to take office at the beginning of the next statewide rally. Nominations shall be made by a nominating committee appointed by the president and/or by individual members from the floor in accordance with normally accepted parliamentary procedures. Vacant offices may be filled at the next statewide rally after the vacancy occurs.
3. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the final selection of locations for statewide rallies, and for planning and developing the program for such rallies. The committee shall also present such reports and recommendations at statewide rallies as considered appropriate or as requested by members.
4. Executive officers of Georgia Campers on Mission shall not serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

VII. RALLIES AND MEETINGS

1. Georgia Campers on Mission normally will conduct two statewide rallies each calendar year, one during the spring and one during the fall. District rallies may be held at other times, such as during the summer and winter. Local rallies of COM members, such as church and associational groups, are encouraged when possible and not in conflict with statewide and district COM activities.
2. Campers are encouraged to use their camping equipment and skills in responding to mission needs inside and outside Gdorgia. Both group projects and individual projects provide continuing opportunities for service.
3. The National Rally of Campers on Mission is normally held during the early summer at a time and place announced by the North American Mission Board. Georgia campers are urged to attend this inspiring and enjoyable rally as often as possible.

VIII. AMENDMENTS

Proposed changes to this Constitution and the Bylaws thereto shall be presented to the Executive Committee for study at least two months before the first statewide rally of the calendar year. The Executive Committee will then present such changes for adoption or rejection by the membership at the rally. Amendments to the Constitution shall be adopted by a favorable vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting. Amendments to Bylaws may be adopted by the favorable vote of a majority of the members present and voting.

BYLAWS

GEORGIA CAMPERS ON MISSION

I. DISTRICTS

1. For administrative and other purposes, Georgia Campers on Mission shall have two subordinate districts. One shall be the Northern District, defined as that part of Georgia lying northward of a line from Columbus to Macon to Waynesboro, and the other the Southern District, lying southward of that line. District membership is not necessarily determined by or limited to the geographical district in which a member living in one district may choose to participate with and be a member of the other district.
2. Members of each district shall annually elect a District Director and a Secretary/Treasurer, plus such other officers and committees as may be needed. These officers and committees shall be nominated by a nominating committee appointed by the director and elected by the membership. They shall make every effort possible to attend the statewide rallies and coordinate activities with the GA COM counterparts.

II. FINANCIAL MATTERS

1. As a charitable, non-profit organization, Georgia Campers on Mission shall not engage in income producing activities through selling or providing services of any kind.
2. All officers, leaders and committee members will serve without pay. However, if available funds permit, it shall be the practice that they be reimbursed for the extra organizational expenses they incur in carrying out their duties.
3. Limited funding will be available from Georgia Baptist Convention to help meet operating expenses. All other expenses shall be met through voluntary contributions from members and non-members. Contributions may be made directly to Georgia Campers on Mission or to the Georgia Baptist Convention, designated for Georgia Campers on Mission.
4. The president and/or the secretary/treasurer shall make a financial report at least annually during a statewide rally. The report will show income received and disbursements made during the reporting period, and the beginning and ending balances. Neither of these officers shall be required to be bonded.
5. Georgia Campers on missions shall share available surplus funds with the Northern and Southern Districts. Districts should be prepared to make a financial report at statewide rallies when requested to do so.

III. MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATIONS

1. Active - Participation, as used in the Constitution Sections III and IV to describe active members, shall be demonstrated by the regular submission of Mission Activity Reports to the Georgia Campers on Mission Secretary/Treasurer or attendance at statewide rallies. Anyone who fails to submit a Mission Activity Report or attend a statewide rally for 2 consecutive calendar years will become an Associate member.
2. Associate - Associate members are those who have indicated a desire to remain on the Georgia Campers on Mission roll and receive newsletters, but are unable for whatever reason to participate. Associate members may become active members at any time by participating in a Georgia Campers on Mission activity.

IV. POLICY

Actions, procedures and customs followed over time and as a matter of course in the business and activities of Georgia Campers on Mission shall be viewed as Policies of the organization. These policies shall be published in a Policy Manual, which shall be made available to all members.

Policies may be adopted, changed and/or rescinded as follows: The proposal must first be submitted to the Executive Committee, which will consider the proposal at its next meeting then bring it with recommendations to the next statewide business session. The person proposing the change shall be invited to attend the Executive Committee meeting at which the proposal will be considered. Adoption will be by a simple majority vote of the membership present.

Revised April 1995 – Amended April 2001

The following is a listing of all GACOM Presidents showing terms of service:

- 1978 - 1979 George Wells, Waycross, GA**
- 1979 - 1980 Claude McGavie, College Park, GA**
- 1980 - 1981 W.W. Rush (Woodie), Perry, GA**
- 1981 - 1982 Claude McGavie, College Park, GA**
- 1982 - 1984 W.W. Rush, Perry, GA**
- 1984 - 1985 Carlton Mullis, Macon, GA**
- 1985 - 1994 W.W. Rush, Perry, GA**
- 1994 - 1996 Charles Edenfield, Statesboro. GA**
- 1996 - August 1997 Don Martin. Deceased August 24, 1997, Camilla, Ga**
- 1997 - 1998 Thomas Mayo, Perry, GA (Was VP, completed term of Don Martin)**
- 1998 - 2000 Lamar Salter, Port Wentworth, GA**
- 2000 - 2002 Dean McDaris, Fairmont, GA**
- 2002 - 2004 Tom Lapczynski, Colbert, GA**
- 2004 - 2006 Bobby Sloan, Hawkinsville, GA**
- 2006 - Paul Day, Cairo, GA**

In most cases since 1980, the wife of the President was elected and served as

Secretary/Treasurer for the same term as the President.