Summer YAC 2011

First half of notes based on Andrew and Kristen's

-Youth and adults attending arrive at YAC meeting on Friday, August 19th for the 2011 Summer YAC meeting

10:23pm Friday-Actual meeting starts

*Nathan Staples, an attending adult, graciously helped run the meeting and provide inspiration, organization, and ideas for the YAC to build from and begin its revision. Thank you so much, Nathan!

- Discussion begins with revising how things are run, organized, ect. begins
 - Ideas are separated into three categories for discussion and adults split off to go have their own private discussion on how the adult part of YAC is organized. Youth discussion led to the following lists of opportunities to better our organization or areas to work on being compiled for discussion on Saturday

❖ YAC

- Attendees are here to work, plan, and contribute to the inner workings of the YAC community, not to socialize and see friends.
- YAC members make a commitment just by attending these meetings to be the role models of the OMD UU Youth community. They should act responsibly and intelligently during con activities, and even outside them, setting examples by respecting and upholding the rules and willfully helping everyone in the con community.
- Clear job descriptions of the YAC leadership positions should be made open for public access so all con attendees can easily make themselves aware of who the people are that run these events and so YAC members can be completely aware of what they're getting into when they volunteer for jobs or run for positions.
- Leadership trainings for jobs would be wonderful to have so members wanting to apply to run will already know what will be required of them, and be ready to go through with all of said requirements. Enough leaders that base their leading on lots of yelling as overcompensation for actual ability to get stuff done have gone through for us to realize this does not work out well or keep con relations healthy.
- Having a regularly updated and properly regulated website would be very nice, as well as having someone to run said site. This website, which we already have only it needs revising, should be a source of information about YAC so that OMD Youth can make themselves aware of what is going on with YAC, even outside of cons and YAC meetings.
- Leadership positions, already existing and new ideas
- A 'tri-chair' position for three could easily replace the 'Con Dean' and 'Communications Co-chair' positions, and operate YAC much more smoothly. The Tri-chair would allow for the fact that if one person had a lot going on or issues arose and they could not attend con, all the work would

not be settled on one person's shoulders, but two that could still maintain order relatively easily.

- To help avoid miserable first cons for newcomers, or bad cons for youth in general, the YAC could organize a 'Welcoming Committee' of sorts to help integrate all new people joining the YAC/con community, giving a special focus on seeking out these 'wallflowers' and giving them a place among friends. No one wants to have a bad first con, and measures like this could be taken to help avoid that happening to new or introverted youth.
- Just as there is a 'Bridging Out' of the con community when one reaches a certain age, a
 'Bridging In' of sorts could be instated for newcomers and welcoming them into our community, similar to the 'Bridging In' at Summer Institute.
- Communications and correspondence within YAC is lacking in areas, and we'd like to look into improving that so that events aren't missed be people who wish to contribute or problems like having people unaware of the fact they're running a workshop won't occur.
- Age limits need to be put on events and enforced, so that people aren't attending a YAC meeting, SAC YAC, or SpringCon without first having attended a Junior or Senior High con, respectively. In respect to the first timer's attending a YAC meeting before an actual con, the philosophy, 'You can't build a table if you don't know what one looks like,' was offered by a YAC member.
- Issues have arisen about Touch Groups multiple times about various different parts of them, thus a revamp to Touch Groups is being suggested and widely approved of as to improve con experience in general, as Touch Groups do constitute a good portion of time in the duration of a con.
- When a youth signs the YAC book, that itself is putting them in a leadership position by merely being a YAC member. These youth need to start realizing more that they are this communities role models, and need to step up into that leadership and help in enforcing changes to be made and already written rules.
- Not only do youth need to step up more in leadership, but they could use a clear understanding
 of what they're getting into when they volunteer or sign the YAC book.
- Rules and leadership needs to be set in place for everyone so youth and adults can be more clear on many things, like how much is a youth allowed to step forward, what all do these rules entail, and the like.
- Respect has been an issue also brought to attention through various things. Respect from youth to youth, youth to adult, adult to adult, to rules, the host churches, everything in general could use some improving upon.
- Issues pertaining to Adults
- The democratic process in which adults are put into leading positions is lacking in the YAC community, with little to no input from the youth.
- A larger emphasis is general could be put on youth or intergenerational empowerment. The
 main point of YAC is to put youth into leadership as it organizes these amazing cons for all of the
 OMD UU Youth. This is not just a one way street though. While the cons are run by the youth, its

- organized by the Youth *Adult* Committee for a reason. Adults could do to get involved a bit more as well.
- Adults new to YAC or cons in general face the same problems new youth do, without much clue
 as to what to do with themselves in this often somewhat overwhelming setting. Not only is it
 important to welcome UU Youth, but the adults that are so generous as to drive their kids to
 these event or offer to help out deserve just as warm welcome.
- Youth to youth relationships aren't the only important thing in YAC and con. As already said, it's the Youth Adult Committee for a reason. Youth and adults could do to develop healthier and closer relations, creating lasting friendships with not only other UU Youths, but the amazing adults that work with the youth to create this community.
- Communication between the often segregated adults and clustered youth could stand to be addressed. As its important for the adults to understand what goes on with the youth and witness their process, it would also be nice for the youth to know what in the world goes on with the adults and to have better correspondence with their older counterparts.
- Often, youth in power are unsure how much that power extends, usually sitting back where an adult would usually step in. This needs to be addressed as YAC is a youth empowering organization, and youth shouldn't be afraid to follow through with the duties entailed.

Cons

- As earlier addressed, cons can be overwhelming, and the youth community could stand to be more welcoming to its newcomers, rather than splitting into cliques and becoming absorbed in catching up with friends. The first timers need more attention given in the respect of welcoming and integrating them.
- No one likes rules, but they're important. Opening circle and the rules presented at that time to con-goers are no longer being taken seriously. Opening Circle rules presentation has taken up to three hours before, and the entire thing become so redundant no one wants to listen. This needs addressing, ASAP, as not only does it needlessly cut into con time with a dragged on speech for the rules, the rules are important and need to be followed.
- As earlier stated, Touch Groups have fallen from their old roost of being a highlight activity.
 People now treat Touch Groups as a bother now, and it shouldn't be that way, but it is due to so many issues arising from them.
- Once again, this is a restatement. Workshops are supposed to be planned events that leaders
 are ready to follow through with, not a mish mash of conversation and lazing about because he
 or she forgot or didn't do his or her part in preparing material for his or her workshop.
- Enforcement of rules needs more attention as well. Just laying down rules doesn't do anything.
 People need to follow rules, and help others remember to follow them, not just ignoring rule breaking when it's in front of them. We're all responsible for cons and what goes on, we need to act like it.
- Once more, rules. Con attendees aren't taking rules as seriously as they should, and the idea of being responsible and listening to the rules needs reinforced in some way to make sure everyone understands, only without drama or dragging it on so long someone wants to break a rule just out of spite.

- Policies pertaining to cons, YAC, and OMD in general are widely unknown among the youth, thus
 probably leading to misunderstandings about consequences of rule breaking or other
 community breaking actions.
- If you're not going to put in the time or effort to do something, don't volunteer to do it because it not only waste's your time, but everyone else's too. This is important pertaining to all areas of con, and in a more eloquent way, is merely asking that if you're not going to do something, or can't, please don't commit to it, because you're not the only one that suffers if you can't follow through. Cons can't afford to have this type of thing occurring and interfering.

Leadership

- Rules are rules, simple and clear. We cannot have youth in leadership positions playing favorites
 and letting people off the hook simply because they're your friend. A leader must act
 responsibly and smartly for the good of all youths attending cons and looking up to them, not in
 your own personal interest in a friendship.
- Once more, youth need to know what they're getting into, be ready for, and be held accountable for it. If you can't be trusted to do something, please don't ask or volunteer to. It causes problems for everyone.
- Youth need to know exactly what their role is when they have a leadership position, and what is expected of them.
- The less drama from leaders, the better. They set the precedent, and need to use good judgment in all situations. We can't afford to have leaders who aren't willing to use common sense and god judgment.
- YAC is a youth empowering organization, and youth should feel willing, inspired eve, to step up and help take charge, not sit back and watch problems cultivate from a mole hill into a mountain. If you can do something about it, do it. Delegation and the willingness to step forward are important qualities YAC want to help nurture, but if youths are unwilling to try, we can't do much.
- It is desired that someone have some kind of experience prior to being elected into an important leadership position. No one want someone thrown into something they're not ready for and can't do, and no one want to be that person either, with that much pressure and nothing in the past to fall back on as a guide.
- Prior leaders, those with experience, just because you're not in that position anymore doesn't mean you aren't still responsible. You have a fresh youth taking your spot, and you should be helping guide.

12:18am Saturday- YAC meeting takes a break to allow for sleep

9:06am Saturday-YAC meeting restarts and discussion begins over chosen topics and the issues or 'opportunities for improvement' are pointed out.

Discussions points made by closed YAC meeting post overall discussion are brought into open. Topics were the following:

- The 'Tri-chair' position had been talked out and put out in the open for general discussion and opinion
- Adult co-chair terms were discussed, and the decision to stagger them was reached. A term will
 last two years, and an adult may only be in for two 2 year terms before they must take a break.
- The position of 'lead chaplain' was taken down.
- An old activity was brought back to the surface for consideration that would help with creating a
 connection with possible host churches. Having a traveling youth service run the Sunday service
 for various UU churches of the district may help soften them towards the YAC.
- The thought of 'mini-districts' or 'clusters' is brought up so a YAC representative could be chosen in each 'cluster' to help keep relations smooth between churches and keep the YAC updated on church goings.
- Some churches are actually unaware of the existence for YAC. Perhaps if we started work in public relations, we could get our name spread around a bit more. Not only would it draw more UU Youth into a nurturing, welcoming environment, but it would help spread the concept of youth empowerment.
- Discussion lists from Friday are reviewed, discussed, and extrapolated upon by the now awake YAC members.
- Most of the discussion is a repeat of the problems pointed out on Friday, although some new
 thoughts such as an Adult-run Con Game Night or other intergenerational bonding workshop, better
 defined adult and youth roles, reinstating a registrar, and establishing equity in the hierarchy are
 brought up.
- Most issues had obvious solutions, they just better enforcement, thus the YAC will be looking into doing such.
- During this discussion, Nathan led an energy break with 'Father Abraham,' apparently an old favorite.
- The decision to split into groups and individually address each problem is reached

Smaller Group Discussion Topics are divided as follows:

Communications/PR

- Who do we communicate with?
- What forms of communication are being used, are they efficient, what changes to this system need to be made, ct.
- Roles within the community need to be properly defined and communicated to the UU Youth community as a whole.
- Youth-Adult communication is found to be lacking, what can the YAC do to help resolve this lack of correspondence?
- How is the YAC currently perceived by the OMD and churches therein as a whole, and how is it we wish to be perceived?

- There is an unfortunate lack of correspondence between those in leadership positions, often leading to misunderstandings or unplanned occurrences. What can we as YAC do to resolve this?
- The YAC need to communicate to the community as a whole on better terms, how might we go about looking into this matter?

Defining OMD/YAC Policy

- As many youth are unaware of what the YAC policies are, the idea of instating a position specified towards knowing them is to be discussed. This 'Policy Coordinator' would know what the YAC policies are, what they consist of, parameters of said policies, what courses of action that the policies dictate, ect.
- Talk over the framework the policies set for YAC and how to better apply and abide that structure.
- A curfew for YAC meetings should be instated. Youth come to these meetings to do the
 work needed for running cons, and you don't go to work running on one or two hours of
 sleep if you don't want to crash. Youth can't treat YAC meetings that way.

Welcoming Newcomers

- Discuss what positions should be made/reinstated to help run this aspect more smoothly.
 The suggestion of a welcoming committee has been made multiple times, this should be talked over.
- The idea of 'bridging in' and how to approach a new program such as that, including when, who, how, ect.
- Having a 'Morale Chair' to help keep a constant friendly air at cons and draw the introverts into the community.
- Welcoming newcomers' doesn't just mean the junior higher. It means all youth and adults, the YAC just needs a better way to go about doing this, seeing the separation between he adults and youth.
- The con community can be quite overpowering, especially to newcomers. How could we go about easing them into the community better?
- There are certain times adults are not welcome in a space due to private matters and deep discussions preferred to be kept private by the youth. But there are workshops and occurrences where adults would be more than welcomed. These situations need talked over and defined.

Elections and Leadership

- Sure, the YAC elects people for leadership positions, but half the time, the youth are unaware of what traits better suits a person for a job and what that job entails that would make someone better for said job. We need more clearly defined positions and we need people to actually be aware of what these leaders do.
- Not everyone that would be good for a job is willing to volunteer. The idea of nominating people is a good one, to help others step forward, but nominations can also be declined, as to not force anyone into anything.

- The adults sometimes have issues with their leaders as well. The idea of nominating people who could do these jobs would be good, scouting out if they'd be able to complete a job well or not before they're flung into the position.
- When during the Summer YAC meetings will elections take place? This needs a set time and better organized process, not only so it's made sure that elections happen at a decent time, but also so people won't keep asking when they'll happen.
- With all the misunderstanding and lack of awareness over what each person in leadership does, should we look at creating a position dedicated to knowing what all of these jobs are?
- The YAC wants people with experience going into these leadership positions, but also fresh blood, new people. A way to work this out would to have a mentoring program of sorts going so that if someone who wanted to run for a position in the future could gain some insight into what it entails and learn how to do it, like internships. Besides mentoring, it should be a given that the person previously in a position needs to be available to offer guidance and advice for their successor, but not do their job for them.
- Leaders are the delegates for the rest of YAC and the whole OMD UU Youth community.
 Leaders need to act responsibly and reasonably, which needs more emphasis.
- There need to be staggered terms for multiple person jobs so that there will always be someone in office that knows the job and can lead the other(s) coming into that job. How to go about this and keep it going needs to be worked out.

12:00pm Saturday- A break for lunch is taken so people can think on what has been discussed and get some food.

1:15pm Saturday- YAC meeting resumed.

 Over lunch, some adults and youth talked over the leadership positions, slightly adjusting their parameters, getting a better, more clear definition of what they entail. Caitlin and Sophia presented these to the YAC community.

Leadership Job Descriptions

Tri-Chairs

A three person positions replacing and combining that of Con Dean and Communications Cochair. The Tri-chairs will be left to split up responsibilities amongst themselves. Said responsibilities include running, setting up, and organizing cons and YAC meetings, working with the youth, contacting host churches, sending out YAC newsletters, determining con dates, requisitioning/distributing con funds, ect.

Touch Group Coordinator(s)

Enforces the jobs given to Touch Groups, runs Touch Group Leader training workshops at every other con or so, organizes leaders for Touch Groups from volunteers, provides ice breaker games

and ideas for Touch Groups, visits Touch Groups while in session to help keep things running smoothly and to offer advice when asked, and any other extra tasks involving Touch Groups.

Food Dude

Takes care of dietary needs/organizing food and involved matters with host church and sends out food money, getting a more diverse meal regiment set up, and making sure there is always some kind of snack available for anyone that wants it at cons and YAC meetings.

District Liaison/OMD Board Youth Representative

Shows up at the OMD meetings and delegates for the UU Youth and YAC community amongst the adults.

Junior High/Morale Liaison(s)

> Seeks out newcomers and involves them, measures atmosphere at con, and tries explicitly to make con enjoyable for newcomers and con goers in general.

Webmaster

Takes care of YAC website management, facebook group management, registration set up on site, editing contact information, posting bylaw revisions, and putting files up on the website.

Policy Coordinator

Defines terms, roles, ideas, ect. at YAC meetings for the reference or need of others.

Adult Co-chair

> Takes care of internal affairs/any legal issues that may arise, take calls from parents and youth, act as consultants, work with the youth leaders to coordinate cons, take care of rule infractions at all hours, ect.

Adult Chaplain

Confidential consultants at con for emotional support or generally venting to and act as mediators, much like the youth chaplains.

Registrar

Deletes accidental doubles of people signing up to avoid capping off registration before everyone that can come has actually registered, checks ages to make sure no one that shouldn't be at a con or YAC meeting attends, offer information and other events to the people who have to be denied, alerts the Food Dude to the dietary needs of people and how many are attending a con, contacts the District Administrator, and organizes who will be at the door taking money and marking people down as arrived.

Social Action Coordinators

- Expected to run a social action workshop at every con, set up the TRA with the Tri-chairs at SAC YAC, and keep the UU Youth community aware of what we can be doing for social action
- After going over the job descriptions, the YAC splits into groups to discuss the four larger points listed earlier and get solutions. Before this is done though, a 'covenant' is taken amongst the YAC for this work.

Covenant

- Assumed goodwill.
- Step up, step back.
- Don't be a spaz.
- Do not endorse redundancy, please.
- One person at a time.
- Raise your hand if you wish to speak.
- Once more, many of the problems presented are easily solved through obvious solutions, and each individual group wrote down its solutions which are in the ownership of the YAC.
- To help get more done, get matters straightened out, and assess progress, the idea of a mid-year
 YAC meeting is brought up.
- The group that focused on policy went over YAC and OMD policy, made some changes, and those
 were turned in to the Tri-chair who will refine them and then have the secretary edit them into the
 bylaw file which will be sent to the webmaster so they can post the revised version on the OMD YAC
 website.
- Obviously, considering the issues with communication, we need to communicate more. Thus, a page made specifically for YAC updates is being set up on Facebook and the webmaster position is reinstated to maintain the OMD YAC site to keep updated info available at all times.
- Tri-chair position is agreed upon unanimously.
- Some of these problems are also solved by positions being reinstated/brought back to attention/created.

Elections

- Touch Group coordinators
 - 1 year term
 - Volunteer(s)- Amihan and Caitlin Campbell, Hannah Bowie and Rowan Winder
 - Position filled by Hannah and Rowan
- Spirituality Coordinator(s)

- Staggered terms being instated; one 1 year term and one 2 year term
- Volunteer(s)- Oliver Evans and Alex Loverich Bernard
- Two year position filled by Alex, one year filled by Oliver

Secretary

- 1 year term
- Volunteer(s)- None
- Position put on hold until volunteer is found- Filled by Shannara Stetson

Registrar

Position reinstated.

- 1 year term
- Volunteer(s)- Jack Decker
- Position filled by Jack

❖ DJ

- 1 year term
- Volunteer(s)- Sydney Dunnet, Henry McNabb
- Position filled by Henry

6:00pm Saturday- Dinner break is taken

Shannara takes over note taking for the rest of the YAC meeting

6:37pm Saturday-YAC elections resume after dinner

Food Dude

Position new/reinstated.

- 1 year term
- Volunteer(s)- David Wilson(needs parental consent)
- Position on hold
- District Liaison/OMD Board Youth Representative
 - 2 year term
 - Position already filled by Chloe Lawson; still one more year in term

Webmaster

Position reinstated. Paid.

- 2 year term
- Position filled by Ryan Rowe
- Junior High/Morale Liaison(s)

Position brought back to attention.

- 1 year term
- Volunteer(s)- Chloe Piper, Rain Maxwell, Maddy Prestridge, Bella Zingerelli
- All volunteers accepted into the position; now acting as a liaison 'committee' of sorts

Policy Coordinator

New position.

Indefinite term

- Volunteer(s)- Dalan Frantz
- Position filled by Dalan

Adult Co-Chair

- Staggered terms being instated; 2 year terms, can run two 2 year terms before having to take a one/two year break(break period being determined between one or two years)
- Nominee- Scott Evans
- Current Adult Co-chairs are now Linda McNabb, Dave Strickler, and Scott Evans

Tri-chairs

Replacing positions of Con Dean and Co-chair.

- Staggered terms being instated; one 1 year term and two 2 year terms
- 2 year term Volunteer(s)- Sophia Strickler, Tommy Suliven
- 1 year term Volunteer(s)- Henry McNabb, Caitlin Ballinger
- Positions filled by Sophia Strickler, Tommy Suliven, and Caitlin Ballinger

Adult Chaplains

- Term-???
- Volunteer(s)- Claire Ramsay
- Position filled by Claire

7:29pm Saturday- Energy break is taken with a 'Super Awesome Delegation Activity' for the Trichairs is led by Nathan

7:52pm Saturday- Con planning begins

General ideas/themes

- ButterCon-TRA of checking cholesterol and baking with Paula Dean
- FantastiCon-TRA of con friendly fantasy improv con battle
- DoctorWhoCon- Merged with FancyBritishCon
- SpaceCon-TRA of UU planet creation and such works; merged with FantastiCon
- MedievalCon-TRA of UU kingdom creations and conflict
- .CON/TechCONlogical
- NeoneCon- TRA is rave preparation
- BabyCon-TRA of identifying attendee baby pictures; merged with CONdoms
- FancyBritishCon-TRA of tea and pie
- MontyPyCon- TRA of questing for 'the Holy Flaming Grail' (the great UU symbol, the chalice); merged with MedievalCon
- Occult/SupernaturalCon
- TwilightZoneCon- merged with SupernatralCon
- MySecondCon-TRA of My Second Heart concert
- CONdoms-SAC YAC; TRA of protest in favor of gay rights
- CONsino- TRA of a casino
- NerfCon

• EnchantaCon- Merged with FantastiCon

Final ideas

- FantastiCon
- MedievalCon
- NeonCon
- .CON

Themes for Sr. and Jr. High cons determined as **NeonCon** and **FantastiCon** respectively

Senior High Con—NeonCon

TRA-Preparing for the RAVE dance Saturday evening w/ making glow sticks & art, body art, clothes customization, and tie dye- *Tri-chairs to be assisted by Shannara, Caitlin C., Maddy, and Abbi in idea process*

Workshops

- Duct Tape/Wire Working- Shannara and Sydney
- Candy Making/Working-Jack and Sam
- Synthesizer/Techno Music Making-Torin
- Drug Discussion- Rain, Leona, and SAC coordinators
- Music/Pop Culture Discussion- Scott Evans
- Worship Planning- Spiritual Coordinators
- Outdoor Games- Caz and Rowan
- TG Leader Training- Rowan and Hannah
- Night Ultimate/ Night games- Henry- Independent Workshop

TouchGroup Leaders- Devon, Sully, Judah, Caitlin C., Abbi, Rain, Sky, Lenny, Ryan, Frankie, Amihan, Maddy, Henry, Dalan, Shannara, and Jack

Chaplains- Oliver and Andrew; Back up- Rain

Night Angeling

Friday

1-3am Sydney and Torin

3-5am Rain and Chloe

5-7am Dalin and Jack

Saturday

- 1-3am Amihan and Kristin
- 3-5am Allie and Nasya
- 5-7am Devon and Frankie

MC(s)- Todd; can recruit backup at Con

Saturday Morning Story- Kelsey and Maddy

Sr. High planning finished and a surprise cleanup occurs during energy break

Nathan leaves with parting advice on how to have an Opening Circle of less than two hours; planning resumes

Junior High Con—FantastiCon

TRA- Improvised Fantasy War/Battle between touch groups using various con safe and approved methods of combat; Will have set rules and goals as determined by the tri-chairs with ideas contributed by Hannah and Shannara

Workshops

- Pokemon Pop Culture/Influence Discussion- Shannara and Abbi
- Making Faerie Wings- Rain and Chloe
- Makin' a Man (Discussion of Mulan related Con tradition)- Tommy
- Dungeons and Dragons/Magic the Gathering-Judah and Nick
- Duct Tape Armor Construction- Amihan and Sydney
- Folklore and Philosophy(subject may change)- Chi, Kima, and Amihan
- Story Telling/Creating- Maddy
- Outdoor Games- Jack and Ryan
- Worship Planning- Spiritual Coordinators
- Social Action workshop yet to be determined by Social Action Coordinators

Touch Group Leaders- Shannara, Devon, Dalan, Jack, Lenny, Ryan, Torin, Nasya, Caitlin, sky, Rain, Maddy, sully, Oliver, Chi, Kima

Chaplains- Caz, Andrew, and Devon (if needed, female chaplain can be recruited at con)

Night Angeling

Friday

- 1-3am Monica and Torin
- 3-5am Chi and Kima

5-7am Rain and Jack

Saturday

1-3am Kristin and Amihan

3-5am Dalan and Maddy

5-7am Devon and Tanner

MC(s)- Will be recruited at con; most likely Todd

Saturday Morning Story- Kelsey and Kristen

- Being FantastiCon and centered on fantasy and its different themes, a large poster board with art supplies will be brought and made available for all youth and adults to decorate, as long as it's appropriate; will most likely be gifted to hosting church as a thank you
- Tri-chairs request contact information of all youth that have been instated into a leadership position

10:40pm Saturday- YAC planning for Junior and Senior High Cons adjourn