

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF APPEALS
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

**In the Matter of the Petition of
CALLEVA, INC.
for a Special Exception for a
Child Day Care Facility**

:
:
: Case No.: _____
:

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

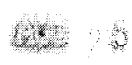
Petitioner, Calleva, Inc., seeks a special exception to operate an outdoor child day care facility on property located on the Calleva Farm in Dickerson, Montgomery County, Maryland.

HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

Calleva has been in operation since 1994 as a mobile program for children that relies on the resources in the Washington area to explore and experience the outdoors. Calleva, which derives from the Latin meaning "the meeting of the roads", strives to teach children the importance of preserving the natural world by immersing them in many aspects of outdoor living. In a challenging and fun-filled atmosphere, they develop a sense of group participation and individual stewardship that instills confidence in each child. Calleva does not own or control a base of operations for the programs; this proposal will allow Calleva to establish a "home" center for its activities.

Calleva is owned and operated by members of the Markoff family, a family that has been involved for decades in all facets of introducing children to the outdoors. Valley Mill Camp for Girls in Silver Spring was started by Markoff family members in 1956; Valley Mill West Camp in Darnestown was founded in 1978, and Valley Mill Away, a sailing program on the Choptank River,

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was established in 1978. Calleva is directed by brothers Nick, Alex and Matt Markoff, who have many years of experience in working with youngsters and introducing them to the outdoors.

At present, as an operator of mobile programs for children, Calleva uses Darnestown Park on Route 28 in Darnestown as its central meeting point. Children are bused to this location and are then transported in groups to various sites in the Washington area to engage in a variety of outdoor activities.

PETITIONER'S CURRENT PROPOSAL

Calleva has leased a 165+/- acre tract of land in Dickerson from members of the Markoff family. Calleva now seeks approval of a special exception in order to grow from an exclusively mobile program to a child day care program with its own "campus". Structures currently on the site include a bank barn, a storage shed, and some outdoor seating areas and training equipment. Equipment will be stored in the existing shed. In addition, Calleva proposes site improvements to include four small activity buildings, a stable building (measuring 80'W x 150'L x 28'H), a swimming pool, bathrooms, a maintenance building, a house for the Calleva, Inc. president, and a new gravel driveway. All new buildings will be constructed with tin roofs and wood siding, and will be painted red for a "rustic" look that blends with existing buildings on the site. A gravel driveway leads from Martinsburg Road to the site entrance where it forks into two one-way roads, so that traffic enters along one fork of the driveway, and exits from the other. It is proposed that a small sign identifying the Calleva site will be installed on Martinsburg Road at the entrance to the gravel driveway, and a larger directional sign at the point where the driveway forks.

Having its own campus will enable Calleva to offer an additional summer program for junior participants, as well as outdoor education/after school programs that are not possible with a

mobile operation. While some children will continue to meet off-site and be transported to different locations when necessary, many of Calleva's activities will take place on the Calleva Farm site. The child day care programs to be offered both on and off site will be highly active, outdoor programs of a varied nature. The programs to be offered are as follows:

PROGRAMS WITH BOTH ON-SITE AND OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES:

Calleva Summer Program: The Calleva Summer Program, currently a mobile operation, enrolls children 9 – 17 years of age for one week sessions from mid-June to mid-August. Approximately 120 children are enrolled in every one week session. Each day's activities take place from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Although Calleva is primarily a day program, on Thursdays participants go on an overnight camp-out in a setting related to the weekly theme. Overnight excursions vary according to activity, skill level, and how well the group functions as a team.

Calleva operates one-week sessions for nine weeks during the summer where participants select a "theme" or activity for the week. Children are grouped according to activity and ability in groups of 12, with a child/staff ratio of 6:1. Each day will begin and end with an all-participant council at Darnestown Park. At the conclusion of the morning council meeting, children will board a Calleva bus to travel to various locations for the particular activity they have chosen, including to Calleva Farm. Children have the option of signing up for one activity for one week, one week of "sampler" activities, nine different activities for the entire summer, the same activity for the entire summer, or any other combination the participant chooses. Participants may choose from such off-site activities as kayaking, canoeing, sailing, rock climbing, caving, hiking, rafting, or swimming. At Calleva Farm activities will include the ropes course, campouts, the climbing wall, horseback

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riding, arts and crafts, or nature study. Some activities, such as mountain biking, hiking, and mountain boarding will be offered both on and off-site.

Calleva Summer Junior Program: The junior program, which will be offered to children 6 – 9 years of age in one week sessions from mid-June to mid-August, will take place almost entirely at the Calleva Farm site from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM each day. There are no overnights scheduled for this age group. Children in the junior program will be placed in groups of 12 according to age, with a child/staff ratio of 6:1. It is anticipated that there will be approximately 50 junior campers enrolled in each one week session. Like the program for older participants, each day will begin and end with an all-participant council at Darnestown Park. Children will then board the Calleva bus to the Calleva Farm in Dickerson, where they will participate in four short morning activities (arts and crafts, nature study, swimming, archery/air rifle) followed by lunch. Afternoons will be spent in activities where more instruction and in-depth concentration is needed, such as taking a canoe or kayak trip, learning to rock climb, or riding a horse. Some of these afternoon activities will take place off-site. The day ends with transportation back to Darnestown and an afternoon council session at Darnestown Park.

Calleva School Program: In addition to the summer programs described above, Calleva also proposes to operate a school program from 7 AM to 7 PM for children from five years old through 12th grade. This program will operate for several months in the fall (Sept. – Nov.) and spring (April – June), and will enable both public and private schools to send groups of 60 – 100 children to spend a day on Calleva's ropes course and/or a day receiving instruction in one or more of Calleva's on or off-site activities. School programs are flexible, and are designed specifically for the needs of each school and class. Schools may choose single-day, multi-day and/or combined

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activity days. Transportation to and from Calleva for these programs will be by bus provided by the participating school.

Calleva After-School Outdoor Education Program: Throughout the school year (September – June), Calleva plans to operate an after-school child care program for students from 5th grade – 12th grade (11 - 18 years old). The program will operate from 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM, Monday – Friday, and will enroll 50 – 100 children, with a child/staff ratio of 9:1. For many of the participants, this program is an activity undertaken in lieu of school sports. During these afternoons, children will engage in a variety of outdoor activities described elsewhere in this Statement, some located at Calleva Farm, and some off-site. The program will be operated in conjunction with Schools in the area, primarily from Montgomery County. Participants will be transported from the sponsoring school to Calleva Farm, then to any off-site activities. At the end of the activity period, children will be brought back to the Farm and then returned to the respective institution by school bus or van.

PROGRAMS WITH EXCLUSIVELY ON-SITE ACTIVITIES:

Calleva Haunted Forest: For approximately three weeks in October, leading up to and including Halloween, Calleva hosts a “Haunted Forest” event on the Dickerson site that serves as an annual fundraiser for the Calleva programs. This event is open to people of all ages, and is a major Halloween attraction in the Washington area. Participants pay a fee to follow a pre-determined route through a wooded area of the site, where Calleva staff members have prepared appropriately “scary” scenes. Before or after walking through the Haunted Forest, participants enjoy a bonfire at the site, and a concession stand selling such items as cider, hot dogs, pizza, and candy. Parking is provided on a grassy field adjoining the wooded area, and Port-a-Johns serve restroom needs.

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Calleva staff members are on hand to direct traffic. Calleva obtains permits issued by Montgomery County for this activity which is authorized to occur as a matter of right.

PROGRAMS WITH EXCLUSIVELY OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES:

Calleva High Adventure Program: The High Adventure Program offers 5-7 day trips to different parts of the country for more adventurous participants. Although the excursions offered vary each year, recent offerings have included rock climbing in West Virginia, mountain biking in West Virginia or Colorado, kayaking in Colorado or Canada, and sailing in the Virgin Islands.

Calleva Potomac Challenge: Children ages 13-18 in good physical condition may choose to participate in the annual "Potomac Challenge", which takes place entirely off-site. The Potomac Challenge is a five-day, four-night race down the Potomac River and the C&O Canal. Teams of 4 youth and 2 adults from several area camps compete by biking, hiking, and paddling a stretch of the river each day and resting at campsites along the towpath each night. The first team with all members across the finish line wins the grand prize.

STAFF:

During the summer season, Calleva employs a staff of approximately 40-50. This total includes 12 head instructors (age 18 or older and preferably over 21), 12-15 counselors (age 17 or older), 12-15 junior counselors (age 16 or older), and 15 year old counselors-in-training. During the school year (September-October and May-June), there is a staff of 15-20 part-time adult professional employees. The Haunted Forest event is staffed by approximately 60-70 young people, many of whom have been campers or counselors at Calleva. In addition, there is one year-round maintenance employee, and an additional maintenance worker during the summer.

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Calleva is licensed as a Youth Camp by the Maryland State Department of Health, and all Calleva staff are certified in Basic First Aid and CPR through the Red Cross. All drivers are required to have a commercial driver's license through the state in which their license is issued, and instructors and activity heads for some types of activities are certified by organizations specific to the activity they direct. These organizations include the American Mountain Guide Association, the American Canoe Association, the National Cave Rescue Committee, and the American Red Cross. In addition, Calleva provides in-house certification for directors of other activities such as the ropes course, hiking, environmental studies, pioneering, and arts and crafts.

TRANSPORTATION:

Transportation for all the Calleva programs other than "Haunted Forest" will be provided by Calleva, Inc. Calleva maintains a fleet of 15 buses of various sizes that transport children to Darnestown Park for opening council sessions, and then from Darnestown Park to both Calleva Farm and various specific activity locations. During the summer, children are picked up at "pickup points" on eight different routes throughout the Washington, DC area and bused to Darnestown Park. During fall and spring, students are bused to Calleva from participating schools to engage in school and after-school programs. A small number of children who live in the vicinity of Darnestown Park are transported to the park by their parents.

CONCLUSION

Calleva provides a wide range of outdoor oriented activities for children of different ages, interests and abilities. The program not only cares for children but introduces them to the attractions of nature, the joys of the outdoors and the benefits of physical activity. This petition for

special exception will allow Calleva to improve the content of its programs and the level of care that it devotes to children placed in its control.

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TREATMENT OF "SUMMER CAMPS" OR "DAY CAMPS" FOR WHICH THE ORIGINAL SPECIAL EXCEPTION WAS GRANTED BY THE COUNTY BOARD OF APPEALS PRIOR TO MARCH, 1989

Case No./Petitioner	Granted/Ordinance Sec.	Modified/Ordinance Sec.
CBA-1202. Thomas E. Barton (Bar-T Ranch)	Granted 2/9/62 under Sec. 107-28i(1)(e) ("Child Care Homes", definition of which included "day camp" and "summer camp")	CBA-1202-A granted 1/7/02 under Sec. 59-G-2.13.1 ("Child Day Care Facility")
S-132, Mary M. Markoff (Valley Mill Camp)	Granted 10/5/72 under Sec. 111-37.h.(1)(e) ("Child Care Homes", definition of which included "day camp" and "summer camp")	S-587 granted 11/16/77 under Sec. 59-141-A(b) ("Child or Elderly Day Care Facilities or Centers", definition of which included "day camp" and "summer camp") S-132-A, 3/30/94 granted under Sec. 59-G-2.13.1 ("Child Day Care Facility")

TREATMENT OF "SUMMER CAMPS" OR "DAY CAMPS" FOR WHICH THE ORIGINAL SPECIAL EXCEPTION WAS GRANTED BY THE COUNTY BOARD OF APPEALS AFTER MARCH, 1989

Case No./Petitioner	Granted/Ordinance Sec.	Modified/Ordinance Sec.
S-2463, Bar-T, Inc. (Bar-T at Waredaca)	Granted 1/17/2002 under Sec. 59-G-2.13.1 ("Child Day Care Facility")	N/A
S-2503. The Holton-Arms School, Inc.	Granted 6/20/02 under Sec. 59-G-2.13.1 ("Child Day Care Facility")	N/A

AFFIDAVIT OF COMPLIANCE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that I will comply with and satisfy all applicable State and County requirements, correct any deficiencies found in any government inspection, and be bound by this affidavit as a condition of approval for the special exception.

I understand that if I fail to meet State or County requirements, this special exception may be declared invalid.


CALLEVA, INC.

By: 

ALEX MARKOFF, PRESIDENT

Petitioner

Subscribed and sworn to before me, a Notary Public for Montgomery County, Maryland, this 15th day of December, 2003.


Notary Public

My Commission expires: 3/1/07