



George Stratman, Director

970 Klamath Lane • Yuba City, CA • 95993 • Phone (530) 822-2949 • Fax (530) 822-3039

To: Parents of Fifth and Sixth Grade Students Attending Shady Creek Outdoor School

Re: Shady Creek Program

Since the late 1960's, fifth and sixth grade students from this area have had the opportunity to study natural sciences as well as creative writing, art, and social sciences during a week-long field trip to Woodleaf Outdoor School, beginning with the 2008/2009 school year, we will now be calling the outdoor program Shady Creek Outdoor School. Located 45 miles northeast of Marysville at an elevation on 2300' in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, Shady Creek is an ideal spot for outdoor education.

The Shady Creek facility is in excellent condition, providing comfortable and safe housing for our use. The natural environment around Shady Creek is rich and diverse. Students will have the opportunity to study in a forest, visit bird blinds to watch wildlife undetected, investigate aquatic life at the creek, meet Shady Creek's resident injured hawks and owls, explore many beautiful scenic areas, look at plant and animal life under a microscope, study the stars, the weather, and many other subjects. The natural environment of Shady Creek Outdoor School provides a different kind of classroom. Students learn not only from instruction, but also through direct experience and observation. Conservation, ecology, environmental relationships, and natural resources are some of the subjects taught at Shady Creek. Our "hands on" approach to natural sciences enables students to not only study the natural world, but also experience that world and hopefully feel their own presence within this "web of life".

In addition to their science classes, each student will take part in a unit on outdoor safety and wilderness survival. We hope to teach all students how to be wise and safe as they enjoy natural areas in the future. This joint thrust toward a study of the environment and of outdoor safety makes the Shady Creek Program unique even among other outdoor education programs in California.

Shady Creek is not all class work! Classes are conducted by teachers with the help of Shady Creek's naturalists from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. each day. Following classes, a great variety of recreational programs are offered including swimming (during the warmer weeks), orienteering, field sports, hiking, arts and crafts, and many special Shady Creek games such as "Black Bart Ball".

Beyond the academic learning, a week at Shady Creek away from home in a new environment provides a unique opportunity for students to learn about themselves and human relationships. As the students live and work together, guided by their teachers and counselors, they are responsible for their behavior, making friends, helping to keep their cabin neat and clean, making their beds, setting tables, and other chores. These daily chores and challenges have proven to be a valuable educational experience for attending pupils. Year after year, our evaluations from pupils and teachers indicate their trip to Shady Creek is one of the high points of their entire school experience.

Attached you will find several forms. Look these over carefully and use them to help your child prepare.

- Program Details
- Clothing Checklist
- Goals and Objectives

On the Clothing Checklist, particular attention is called to the need for warm and waterproof clothing such as boots, raincoats and hats. The weather in the mountains is unpredictable. One day the sun shines and the next day it rains! We are well equipped with warm cabins and indoor meeting rooms for this year's program, but pupils should all be well prepared to walk to dinner in the rain and not end up soaked! Some families prefer to borrow such clothing rather than buy it. We also have had some reports that practically new boots and coats have been found in rummage sales, flea markets, garage sales, etc. Some of the stores that deal in used clothing like Goodwill and the YMCA Shop can also help equip children very reasonably. Families who do not ordinarily need clothes such as this for living in the valley should start early acquiring the needed items for their boys and girls.

All of us at Shady Creek are looking forward to having your child's class with us for a wonderful week studying nature. If you have any questions about the program, feel free to contact your child's teacher or principal.

Writing to your child while he/she is at camp:

Please write to your child at Shady Creek. The kids love to get mail! You must mail your letters by Tuesday to be sure they are received by Thursday. Students leave before the mail arrives on Friday. Letters arriving late will **not** be returned to the senders. Don't mail your letter too early. Letters that arrive the week before your child attends Shady Creek might be sent home by mistake. In most cases it only takes 2 days for mail to reach Shady Creek.

**ADDRESS: Student Name
c/o Teacher's Name, Student's School
Shady Creek Outdoor School
18601 Pathfinder Way
Nevada City, CA 95959**

Please do not send letters to our Yuba City office. They will not reach Shady Creek in time to give to students and will not be returned to sender. If sending items express mail – please waive the signature.

PROGRAM DETAILS

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Pupils arrive at Shady Creek between 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. on Monday of their week. They will leave to return home at 10:30 a.m. on Friday. There will be approximately 180 pupils at Shady Creek each week. Your child's school principal will give you the exact departure and return times.

TYPICAL SCHEDULE

6:30 a.m.	Everybody up, clean cabins	4:00 p.m.	Recreation
8:00 a.m.	Breakfast	5:30 p.m.	To cabins, clean up
9:00 a.m.	Classes start		for dinner, showers
11:30 a.m.	Classes end	6:00 p.m.	Dinner
12:00 noon	Lunch	7:30 p.m.	Evening Program
1:00 p.m.	Classes start	9:00 p.m.	To cabins, prepare
3:30 p.m.	Classes end		for bed
3:30 p.m.	Snack	9:45 p.m.	Lights out

MONEY

Pupils are asked NOT to bring any money with them. There is nothing to buy and those that do bring money sometimes lose it.

VISITS

If parents want to visit Shady Creek, such arrangements can be made. Parents must visit during the time our school program is operational (Monday through Thursday) and arrange the visit ahead of time with their school principal. It is best to visit during a week when your child is not in residence. We have a small problem of homesickness that, although it affects only a few children, is difficult for those children to handle. If parents visit while their pupils are in residence, homesickness may occur and be difficult to overcome.

SHADY CREEK STUDENT INSURANCE PROGRAM

Part of your student's Shady Creek fees covers the cost of our accident/illness insurance program. This is an excess policy, which means this insurance pays the first \$1,000 of medical and the first \$3,500 for accident expense. The student's own insurance pays all the other costs over and above those amounts.

PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Specific goals and objectives have been written for each class activity offered at Shady Creek. These are given to all classroom teachers to help them prepare students for a successful learning experience. If you would like to see a copy of these detailed goals and objectives, contact your school.

Primary program goals and learning concepts are summarized below to help give parents an accurate overall picture of the Shady Creek Program. It might be fun to review and discuss some of these concepts with your child after she/he returns from Shady Creek.

PROGRAM GOALS

1. To develop in each individual heightened observation skills to more fully observe and appreciate the beauty and diversity of the natural environment.
2. To develop in each individual a feeling of personal responsibility to help preserve, conserve, and enhance our environment.
3. To develop in each individual a feeling of self-confidence and self-acceptance. To promote cooperation among all students and appreciation for the uniqueness of others.

SUB-GOALS

1. To facilitate interaction between pupils, teachers, and professional naturalists.
2. To provide guidance and understanding as the pupil is placed in a new social environment and adjusts to: (a) living with new friends, (b) being away from home, (c) relating to school connected adults as friends and guests, (d) eating food other than what may be usual at the family table, and (e) getting information first hand by doing.
3. To heighten appreciation for all living things and for the beauty of our environment; to provide the opportunity to become absorbed in learning without rushing to another learning.
4. To stimulate the pupil to learn from the model set by adults in the dining room, on hikes, in classes, at campfires, at study areas, and in recreation. Models include adults showing kindness, tolerance, eagerness to learn, unselfishness and other valued behavior traits we wish children to adopt.

LEARNING CONCEPTS (OBJECTIVES)

1. **Wilderness Survival:** Students learn the basics essential to surviving in the wilderness if they were ever lost or injured: (a) Tell someone where you are going before you leave, (b) if lost, don't panic, stay calm and stay put, (c) Purify water and don't worry about food, (d) Find or build shelter, (e) Start to signal for help, (f) Carry a survival kit.
2. **Changes:** All things are constantly changing. Students learn to recognize natural changes and changes caused by people and understand their consequences and importance. Seasonal change, erosion, plant succession, decomposition, geologic history, and people's past and present use and affect on the environment are examples of changes.
3. **Adaptations:** All living plants and animals have structures and behaviors that help them survive in their environment. For example, animals have adaptations to help protect themselves, obtain food, water and air, stay warm, move around, and reproduce. When a change happens in an environment, the organisms best adapted to the new change will be the most likely to survive.
4. **Relationships:** The interdependence of all things within an environment, food webs and chains, and basic ecology are taught. Students learn how organisms depend on, affect, or compete with other organisms and how an environment functions as a cohesive whole.
5. **Cycles and Recycling:** All natural things are part of a cycle. Water cycles, rocks and soil cycles, and energy flows and cycles are used as examples to teach this concept. Recycling our natural resources is also discussed and demonstrated.
6. **Conservation:** The wise use and management of our natural resources is emphasized and taught.
7. **Observation Skills:** Noticing similarities and differences, learning how to identify plants and animals, and increasing the use of all the senses to heighten awareness are all parts of teaching the concept of observation.
8. **Appreciation:** Developing a respect for life and taking the time to notice and appreciate our surroundings is emphasized.
9. **Ecological Responsibility:** Personal choices do make an impact on our environment. Ideas and actions are shared to help students realize what they can individually do to make a positive impact on the environment.

SHADY CREEK CHECKLIST

BE SURE YOUR NAME AND SCHOOL NAME ARE ON ALL IMPORTANT ITEMS

EVERYONE SHOULD BE WELL PREPARED FOR COLD, WET WEATHER, JUST IN CASE.

YOU ARE ALLOWED TO TAKE ONE SUITCASE AND ONE BEDROLL

If you do not own adequate shoes, boots or other waterproof clothing, you may be able to borrow some for this week. Proper clothing is extremely important! A well-prepared student will not be a cold, sorry one! You must know how to pack your suitcase and roll your bedroll. You will have to do this for yourself on the return trip.

PUPILS: YOU MAY USE THIS LIST TO INVENTORY THE ITEMS YOU TAKE TO SHADY CREEK. CHECK AGAINST THE LIST WHEN YOU LEAVE SHADY CREEK TO RETURN HOME.

ESSENTIAL ITEMS

- ___ 1 sleeping bag or 2 warm blankets
- ___ 1 pillow and pillow case
- ___ 2 towels, 1 wash cloth
- ___ 1 cup for drinking water in the cabin
- ___ 1 toothbrush
- ___ 1 tube of toothpaste; chapstick
- ___ 1 bar of soap, shampoo
- ___ 1 comb
- ___ 1 box of Kleenex or 4 handkerchiefs
- ___ **HEAVY & WARM** jacket or coat
- ___ Sweater (wool if possible--it's warmer than anything else, even when wet!)
- ___ Boots (Important--break shoes and boots in and waterproof* them)
- ___ Shoes (tennis shoes or everyday comfortable walking shoes)
- ___ Warm shirts
- ___ Undershirts or T-shirts
- ___ Underpants
- ___ Socks (2 wool pairs if possible, plus regular socks)
- ___ Head covering (wool hat, cap, rain hat, hood--something to keep head dry)
- ___ Sleeping garment
- ___ Tough trousers (jeans, Levis), shorts (for hot weather months)
- ___ Swim suit (cut-offs are not allowed in the pool--the pool opens in May)
- ___ Gloves or mittens (waterproof if possible and/or wool)
- ___ Pencils, notebooks, envelopes, stamps
- ___ Waterproof raincoat or poncho (or a large plastic garbage bag with holes cut for arms & head can be used)
- ___ Flashlight
- ___ Canteen or water bottle

THIS IS AN OUTDOOR PROGRAM. COME PREPARED FOR WET, COLD WEATHER EVEN THOUGH IT IS NICE IN THE VALLEY. THE WEATHER CHANGES QUICKLY IN THE MOUNTAINS.

Please do not feel that these articles of clothing must be new. Old clothes will be ideal. We do stress cleanliness so it will be necessary to take enough to allow for changes.

The following items may be taken, but are not required:

Books	Hand lotion	Film	Canteen
Musical instrument	Cameras	Hair brush	Binoculars

The following items are **NOT** to be taken to Shady Creek:

Money	Knives	Mess Kits	iPods or other electronic devices
Firearms (guns)	Hair Spray or Make-up	Hatchets	Sports Equipment (gloves, rackets)

Note: If you only have tennis shoes, bring 2 pairs and bring several plastic produce bags. You can wear the produce bags between socks to keep your feet dry.

*To Waterproof Boots: **Sno-seal** works best. Heat Sno-seal and boots next to the stove; when warm, rub boots liberally with Sno-seal. Place next to heater so Sno-seal can soak in. Repeat at least two more times.