



Shannon Cueva, 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 1950s, fifth and sixth grade students have had the opportunity to study natural sciences as well as creative writing, art, and social sciences during a week-long field trip to Sutter County's Outdoor School. In June of 2008 we relocated the program, previously located at Woodleaf, to Shady Creek Outdoor School, near Nevada City, CA. Located 45 miles northeast of Marysville at an elevation on 2000' in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, Shady Creek is an ideal spot for outdoor learning.

The Shady Creek facility provides comfortable and safe housing for student use. The natural environment around Shady Creek is rich and diverse. Students 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, study the stars, 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 studied 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 3:45 p.m. each day. Following classes, a great variety of recreational programs are offered including swimming (during the warmer weeks), field sports, hiking, arts and crafts, and many special Shady Creek games such as "Gaga 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 cabin leaders, 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

students 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 foothills 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 the 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 in 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.

Shady Creek Outdoor School participates in the National School Lunch Program as well as the School Breakfast Program. All meals served at Shady Creek meet the nutritional requirements to participate in this program.

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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	5:00 p.m.	To cabins, clean up
9:00 a.m.	Classes start		for dinner, showers
11:30 a.m.	Classes end	6:15 p.m.	Dinner
11:30 a.m.	Lunch		
12:45 p.m.	Music	7:30 p.m.	Evening Program
1:15 p.m.	Classes start	8:30 p.m.	To cabins, prepare
3:45 p.m.	Classes end		for bed
3:45 p.m.	Snack	9:15 p.m.	Lights out

REFUNDS

Shady Creek does not issue reimbursements or credit schools for students who are sent home because of illness, disciplinary issues, or any other situation that may require your child to leave Shady Creek early.

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 prior to your child's visit and during the time our school program is operational (Monday through Thursday) and arrange the visit ahead of time with their school principal. Parents may not visit while their child is 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.

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 form 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 them, 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 reusable water bottle
- ___ 1 toothbrush
- ___ 1 tube of toothpaste; chapstick
- ___ 1 bar of soap, shampoo
- ___ 1 comb
- ___ 1 small package of tissues
- ___ **HEAVY & WARM** jacket or coat
- ___ Sweater (wool or fleece 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
- ___ Non-Chemical Mosquito Repellent

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:

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|---------|-------------|------------|--------------------|
| Books | Hand lotion | Sunscreen | |
| Cameras | Hair brush | Binoculars | Musical instrument |

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.

PACKING FOR PREVENTION

Outdoor School & Bed Bugs: Packing for Prevention

Attending outdoor school is an exciting time for children. Making new friends, exploring nature, and trying new things are all part of the outdoor school experience and create memories that will last a lifetime. However, along with all the good parts of outdoor school, a pesky little bug can also be part of the experience. In recent years, bed bugs have increased greatly in North America. They are often found in hotels, multi-unit dwellings, and other structures that house people for short periods of time. While bed bugs may be a nuisance, they do not transmit disease to people. The good news is that there are simple steps that can be taken to help ensure that children do not bring bed bugs to outdoor school or back home. Although we only have a few cases a year among the more than 5000 students attending, we want to suggest some steps you can take to reduce that number to zero. We're doing our part to eliminate this pest here; please help us by following the packing advice given below:

PACKING FOR OUTDOOR SCHOOL

- ✓ **Visually inspect items for bugs.** Take sleeping bags, blankets, and luggage out of storage, place them outdoors, and inspect them carefully for any signs of bugs or eggs.
- ✓ **Tumble bedding and luggage in clothes dryer.** Place bedding or luggage in the clothes dryer and tumble them on a high heat setting for 30 minutes. The heat from the dryer kills bed bugs and eggs. For items that cannot be placed in a dryer, vacuuming or cleaning with soap and water or alcohol based cleaning products will kill bed bugs.
- ✓ **Use a heavy gauge garbage bag as a liner in luggage.** Place all clothing inside the liner and tightly twist a knot to seal. This will help keep bed bugs out of clothing. In addition, place bedding in a separate garbage bag. Duffle bags are recommended as they can be placed in a dryer, unlike suitcases.
- ✓ **Pack extra garbage bags.** Be sure to pack two extra garbage bags for your child. One bag will be used for all dirty clothing and the other will be used for dirty bedding. **Label these** with your child's name.
- ✓ **Repellents.** Children may use insect repellent during the day to protect against mosquitoes and ticks. Repellents should not be used while sleeping. To protect a child's belongs from bed bugs, products containing permethrin which are labeled for use on fabrics can be applied to backpacks, duffle bags, and the outside of sleeping bags. Always follow the label directions when applying permethrin products. These products should be used prior to sending your child to Outdoor School.

COMING HOME FROM OUTDOOR SCHOOL

- ✓ **Inspect items before you bring them indoors.** Inspect items that cannot be placed in a washer/dryer for evidence of bed bugs outdoors and clean if necessary before bringing them indoors. Place bedding and clothes stored in garbage bags directly into the washer/dryer. Dispose of the plastic garbage bag outdoors.
- ✓ **Clean all items returned from outdoor school.** For items that can be laundered, use a hot water setting and tumble dry on high heat for at least 30 minutes. For items that cannot be laundered, such as suitcases, vacuuming or cleaning with soap and water or alcohol based cleaning products are other options.
- ✓ **Wipe off shoes.** Use rubbing alcohol or soap and water to wipe off the bottoms of shoes.