

# Pre-Camp Handbook for Staff

Joining a camp staff is not for everyone! Whether you are a counselor, wrangler, kitchen staff, maintenance person, office or medical staff, or nurse, the job requires a definite humanitarian interest, an unselfish attitude, and the sort of "devotion to a cause" that characterizes medicine, the ministry, and teaching. Also necessary are a well-adjusted and outgoing personality, a zest for living, a tolerant attitude toward others' shortcomings, and a strong personal philosophy based on high moral standards and the Golden Rule.

Add to these the necessity for mature judgment, resourcefulness, and unfailing dependability, plus a friendly disposition and a strong sense of humor, and you'll realize why only the finest people are drawn to this work. Friendly Pines through the years has been fortunate in the type of men and women who have formed its staff.

## So, What is Pre-Camp?

"Pre-camp" is the period before campers arrive when we all get better acquainted with each other and with our jobs. Helpful sessions will acquaint you with camp policy, effective counseling techniques, health & safety, and all other aspects. All counselors will be learning about fire building (even under adverse weather conditions of wet or dry!); the fundamentals of camp cooking and how to teach them; how to identify the more familiar trees and kinds of wood, and which to use for cooking; how to organize for a cabin overnight trip; how to find one's way around the area effectively on foot; the basics of first aid, and so on. Both new and returning counselors will be called upon to organize, conduct, or evaluate various phases of this program. It is a fairly strenuous week, and sets the tone for the entire season if used to your advantage.

### IMPORTANT: I-9 EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION - FEDERAL REQUIREMENT

During the Pre-Camp week first-year staff will need to prove both your identity and employment eligibility. If you have a valid US Passport or an unexpired foreign passport, that is all you need to bring. If you don't have one, then you will need to bring one document from List B and one document from List C.

## Personal Contact

Due to the times in which we live, a policy is in place at FPC regarding personal contact **BETWEEN ALL MEMBERS** of the camp community. This covers staff to camper; camper to camper; staff to staff, and is for the protection and well-being of every child and adult. This policy will be carefully explained during Pre-Camp Training week; 100% compliance is required. Meanwhile, please realize that it completely rules out any sort of physical contact for disciplinary or behavior situations, as well as public displays of affection.

## Personal Appearance

In addition to caring for campers, part of our job is to inspire confidence in parents. Today's moms and dads are understandably very interested in the character of the young man or woman with whom they're about to leave their child. When you finally meet the parents of your campers on arrival day, we want them to freely focus on the you the person! We don't want them distracted by unusual hair color, sprawling tattoos, or an abundance of body piercings. We're certainly aware that your personal appearance is not going to determine your ability as a counselor. We've all known plenty of young men and women who would have made outstanding counselors had not some of the particulars of their personal appearance disqualified them as candidates at Friendly Pines. Conversely, we've also hired some clean cut and well-scrubbed men and women only to discover later that their weak character and wholly disagreeable demeanor made them utterly inappropriate counselors. Nevertheless, we've decided that we want our staff to appear in a fashion that the majority of parents will be comfortable with, thus the personal appearance requirements we've detailed in both the application letter and the "Conditions of Employment". Please remember that we take these standards seriously. If you

show up at camp with any "surprises" in appearance, we will have no choice but to ask you to bring yourself into compliance. If you cannot, or refuse to, we will promptly dismiss you. If you have any questions about what is acceptable or unacceptable, please call and ask.

## **Safety First, Safety Always**

First, last, and always we must anticipate the various hazards that might result in accidents, and, thus, prevent their happening. Practices that may be permissible for your own relatives or friends and siblings often have to be ruled out here. Parents aren't interested in the fact that you "didn't think the injury could possibly happen." Camp vehicles are driven **ONLY** by those so authorized, for approved purposes, and with the greatest of caution. Driving speeds in vehicles will be discussed at Pre-Camp and must be strictly followed. Regarding the unpleasant topic of liability in case of accidents, or incidents involving campers, we can only say that all staff must be extremely careful at all times. Today's liberal judges and juries do not look for negligence or dereliction of duty any longer; they are inclined more toward the "deep pocket" pay-offs, no matter who was or wasn't to blame! Let's do ALL we can to avoid ANY sort of unfortunate accident/incident!

## **Bells and Fire Gong**

It is more than possible not to hear the bells unless you are consciously listening for them. For that reason, you should check the bell schedule as posted, check your watch daily with the clock in the dining room and **BE RESPONSIBLE** for watching the time. The bell, fire drill, and evacuation systems will be explained during pre-camp, but remember that a bell always means something; if unscheduled, it means a general rallying.

The fire gong or siren, plus the big bell means FIRE or fire drill. A "red alert" means to evacuate camp at once. A "blue alert" means to stand by, prepared for possible evacuation.

## **Your Car At Camp**

Please park your car in the area designated. We request that you do not lend it to anyone else to drive. Use it only on your scheduled day off, unless previously cleared with administrative staff. **IF YOUR CAR BATTERY GETS FLAT OR GOES DEAD, PLEASE PUT IN A MAINTENANCE REQUEST SLIP 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE, TO HAVE IT RE-CHARGED FOR YOU.**

## **Visitors To Camp**

One day of each session will be designated as an "Open House" day for campers' families, with a flexible program that will keep all hands busy much of the day. Staff should plan to have no visitors on those days, nor any other time that has not been previously cleared with the office. You are responsible for NOT having visitors drop in unexpectedly when you're on the job, but they are most welcome to tour camp with you on your day off. As for persons driving or walking into camp on anything but official business, please ask them promptly "May I help you?" and walk with them to the office if they ask about seeing a camper or appear to be just looking around. We must be extra careful about this!

Staff members are welcome to have family and friends visit on days off. Just let the administrative staff know so that we're prepared. While visiting, please be mindful that you (and your friends) are still expected to behave like the role models you were hired to be

## Speaking Of Time Off

Camping is a seasonal activity, rather than a year-round occupation, and like all similar care of people on a 24-hours-a-day basis, it does not permit the same type of "time off" as do other types of employment. In accepting a job for several weeks of the summer, staff should recognize that their real "time-off" comes before the job starts and after it is finished!

Your immediate supervisor will be responsible for scheduling "time off." He or she will also inform you of the length of that "time off". Just as you expect to be off at precisely the time indicated, you are expected to be back on duty at precisely the time indicated. You may request a specific day off (i.e. for an important appointment or meeting), and though your supervisor will work with you, the overall camp schedule must dictate work schedules. Because we have such a short season, it's difficult to arrange more than one specially-requested day off during the summer; we ask for your cooperation in going along with whatever day is given to you each week. If a great need for one certain day should arise, do make your request, in writing, at least one week prior to the start of the new work week. You can make this request to the Program Director. Please do not expect more than one such request to be granted in the short summer season, unless a bona fide urgency exists. Moreover, the counselor having time off bears the responsibility for determining that his or her scheduled replacement is ready to take over.

In case of real necessity, the camp must reserve the right to waive some time off, with no obligation for making it up later, including in-camp free time missed because of scheduled activities. Conversely, in case of illness or tragedy befalling a staff member or his/her immediate family, we will make every effort to cover his/her necessary absence from camp. (Our "sick-leave" policy will be explained in writing at Pre-Camp). Please do not contemplate other time-off ideas than those listed above, during such a brief season as ours; especially no "accumulation" of time to permit extended periods of time off. If in any doubt, please talk with the camp directors. You are welcome to stay in or around camp during your day off should you wish to, making sure not to interfere with the program or with the on-duty staff. You're most welcome to have any meals you wish, without obligation of "table duty."

Once in a while, you may be scheduled for some "free time," which may consist of an hour or two. Unless your direct supervisor has said otherwise, scheduled "free time" should be spent in camp, so we can contact you in case of an emergency. (See TIME OFF FOR COUNSELORS for more details.)

## More About Time Off

Our policy for time off is based on the assumption that good counselors are better counselors if they have some change of pace each week - a time when, for a few hours, they can feel free of their burden of responsibility. We expect counselors to use the free time which is given them in such ways as will result in their being more rested, more alert, and more enthusiastic following their time off! Evidence of an opposite result may lead to revoking of time-off privileges in individual cases. All lights in camp are to be out at 11:00 p.m. and all staff in their living areas, in bed.

Time off for counselors is always according to schedule (if it's not scheduled, you are on duty) and consists of:

1. A weekly "day off" usually beginning when morning activities start at 9:20 AM until 10:55 PM SHARP. Days and times off must be subject to change, since the welfare of our campers must come first. It is VITAL that you return ON TIME from "time off," as it otherwise causes a hardship for those taking your duties in camp. Lateness is subject to being made up.

## More About Time Off (continued)

2. We endeavor to give counselors two hours away from the supervision of campers each day. In most cases, this time will be a nighttime relief from your cabin beginning at "Lights Out" for campers at 9:00 PM until 10:55 PM, with the exception of when you are scheduled for "Night Duty." "Night Duty" consists of standing post, watching over 2 to 4 cabins from 9:00 PM to 10:55 PM. This is a system to fairly distribute the responsibility of watching over all cabins and thus means that someone is always with the campers. While on duty, counselors may ask to have a snack brought from the "Log House," while remaining at designated post. After dropping off some munchies, that counselor is asked to leave promptly and quietly. Counselors scheduled for "Night Duty" will be scheduled two hours of rest and relaxation, "R&R," at some point during the daytime hours.

## The Friendly Pines Program

Concerning programming, every child selects eight hours of activity (plus some alternate activities) along the lines of his/her own interests. He/she will then follow this program for the session, with an opportunity to make changes at an announced time. (The details will be explained to you more during Pre-Camp).

There is considerable flexibility in our free-choice type of program offered to campers, yet it requires careful scheduling of time; vehicles; horses; teams and pack animals; wagons; outcamp equipment, and outcamp sites. Hence, during each session, every cabin group will have scheduled at least one overnight, and weekly evening cookouts. Additional outcamping experiences may be arranged, by groups who desire them, through the Program Director.

## What Activity Will You Instruct?

The old idea of a staff composed of experts, lettermen/women and "all stars" is now embraced by very few camps. Our ideal counselor is a well-rounded person, interested and reasonably capable in a variety of the camp's activities, and proficient enough in at least one or two to lead them for a group of youngsters. Obviously, those persons hired to "head" an activity can expect to spend a **VERY LARGE PERCENTAGE OF THEIR TIME IN THIS PURSUIT, BUT EFFORTS WILL BE MADE, WHEN POSSIBLE, TO OFFER A "CHANGE IN SCENERY" FOR OCCASIONAL VARIETY** WITHOUT working a hardship on the program itself. Actual assignments are usually determined during Pre-Camp, taking into account skill, experience, availability of others in the same field, and staff preference, whenever possible. No assignment should be considered one's personal possession, and if occasion warrants, staff members should expect to undertake any assignment asked of them even if it is outside their usual sphere. Where several people request the same assignment, or are qualified to handle it, the decision of who will handle it will be made on the basis of the best utilization of other abilities. Accepting your assignments cheerfully and carrying them out enthusiastically will add immensely to your own enjoyment of the program.

## Roughing It

Like all other camp activities, outcamping and overnights can be as successful as your leadership makes them. A counselor's upbeat positive attitude is the key to an enjoyable, memorable outcamp experience. Let the campers be involved. Be sure they are included in the decision making and all aspects of the outing (i.e. wood gathering, cooking, cleaning, etc).

Every cabin, as well as some of the activities, will have a scheduled overnight every session. Make plans well ahead of time for when, where, what to take, and how to travel, as well as clearing with all proper persons on food, equipment, and

## Roughing It (continued)

transportation. (A late food requisition will result in your receiving a pre-designated menu). Have camper committees designated to divide the responsibility and let group pressure work to see that jobs are carried out. The work must win approbation and be satisfying to the campers or we defeat our purpose in outcamping.

Beware of old mine shafts and tunnels. "Case" your campsite; set boundaries for free play and exploring to avoid the possibility of a camper becoming lost; watch rock rolling and throwing; "PROTECT ALL PROPERTY" is our camp tradition, including trees, mine markers, water sources, etc. (It goes without saying that we also protect all forms of our natural environment...plants, animals, etc!) SLEEP WITH YOUR CAMPERS! To preclude hazing, off-color conversation and horseplay, not to mention accidents, counselors should always plan to bed down with their group. Avoid at all costs staff sticking together; rather, each counselor should be sleeping in the midst of his/her own campers in a well-concentrated group.

## Supervision of Campers

A good counselor will shun the type of "supervision" that is so apparent on school playgrounds...an adult with a whistle watching youngsters play. One of the principal reasons for the success of this camp is that whatever campers are doing, the adults of the staff are doing it with them. For example, there is a vast difference, for the counselors and for the camper, between organizing a game of volleyball for campers, and playing volleyball with the campers, and from the latter come some of the strongest ties of leadership.

There are other areas, however, where counselors must be alert to see that lack of an adult's presence (as on overnights, at the Quiet Place, and/or evening activities) doesn't open the way for the development of "feudin' and fightin'," destruction of property or, in rare cases, undesirable conduct between boy and girl campers. A counselor on duty will be where his or her cabin or activity group is. Counselors must be with their cabin group, exercising good CIS (Constant Intelligent Supervision), during wash-up times before meals; during free time before both lunch and dinner; when campers go to siesta after lunch; during and following evening activities, and always until the rising bell rings, unless the entire cabin is getting up early for an approved activity.

The basic rule for "siesta" is that every camper must spend it on his or her own bunk, keeping quiet enough so that anyone who wants to sleep is able to do so. One noisy cabin can disturb the entire camp. Stay with your group throughout siesta and attend to any errands or personal needs after siesta is over. "Hammock Siestas" are a delightful outdoor feature for cabins who are picked daily at random from a pool of those who passed their morning cabin clean-up.

## Cell Phones At Camp

If you bring a cell phone or any other electronic device to camp, please do not keep it in the cabin. Keep the phone locked in your car, in the Post Office, or locked in the lockers we provide for staff. You're more than welcome to use your phone on time off up at the Log House, but don't use cell phones in camp, even at night when the campers are in bed. (Keep in mind that cell phone services can be unpredictable in our mountainous area but generally work well in Prescott. As of this writing, Verizon and Nextel seem to work whereas others don't.) As you will read in the enclosed green Parent Letter, campers are not allowed to make phone calls, so we **MUST** keep all cell phones (and other electronic devices) completely out of sight, and (hopefully) out of mind.

## Contraband And Other No-No's

- Anticipate emergencies before they occur; know exactly what you would do if a camper (a) woke you up in the night complaining of various ailments, (b) needed CPR, (c) had a bad fall or broken bone, (d) had a cut that bled seriously, (e) a case of shock, (f) a rattlesnake bite (none has ever been known among the thousands of campers here during the past sixty-plus years), (g) an acute attack of appendicitis on a horseback trip, and/or various other emergency-type scenarios.

Plan your out-of-camp activities so that, if possible, one counselor will never be left alone to face an emergency. Then, if one should arise, you and the other counselor can decide who should stay, who should go for help, whether the rest of the campers should go into camp or wait until help arrives, etc.

True leadership reveals itself in times of crisis. No matter what happens, your handling of the emergency must be exemplary. Youngsters almost invariably over-emphasize any untoward incident, so your approach might well be patterned after that of a good physician: Cool, efficient, matter-of-fact, cheerfully reassuring. NEVER should the counselor discuss any such incident with outsiders, but refer them to the office for all information.

## In The Event Of An Emergency

Each day after breakfast the group goes directly to the cabin cleanup and work project task. Cabins are swept, beds made, trash emptied, shelves straightened, and all towels, swimsuits, etc., hung up. Emphasize the reasons for wanting to do these jobs. Once a week, sleeping bags are turned inside out, brushed or shaken clean, and sunned for a few hours. Encourage your rock hounds and specimen collectors, but do not allow any extraneous materials to be kept in the cabin. A box or can outside the cabin, plainly marked, works well and should be respected as private property. Try to keep shelf tops neat and tidy. The designated staff member will inspect each cabin daily and give it a rating. Every cabin can earn a top rating, and generally does!

"Nothing is work unless you'd rather be doing something else." The philosophy of the work period rests on the fact that any sort of good time involves work by someone - parents, servants, or one's self. We owe it to these campers to reveal to them the joy and satisfaction of doing a hard job well. Nowhere does a good counselor show up to a better advantage than in the way he/she handles the 45-minute-a-day work period of his or her cabin group. Many times it would be easier to do the job themselves - but with no benefit to the camper! Conversely, they are out of step with the purpose of the work project if they become a top sergeant and merely boss their squad. Excellent results (often with unpromising candidates) have been accomplished by letting natural leadership among the group have some effect here, with organization, planning, democratic choices, good motivation and a firm but gentle attitude revealing the really superior counselor.

## Cleaning Up

First of all, BE ON TIME! When the bell for a meal rings, that means the meal is ready. You and all your group should be ready too, with clean faces and freshly washed hands — arms too, if necessary! Good hygiene is crucial to wellness!

We disagree with those who think diet doesn't matter, allowing children to fill up on things they like and shun those they don't. To that end, each person at the table is served at least a tiny helping of each menu item; however, we do not demand that children have a "clean plate." Food allergies are handled by the medical staff, and the kitchen manager makes suitable substitutions. Remind campers of the "First Help" rule, which will be explained to you during Pre-Camp along with other Dining Room procedures. Please watch your own table manners as well

## Cleaning Up (continued)

## In The Dining Lodge

as those of your campers (elbows on table, etc.) The fact that many come to camp deficient in this area emphasizes the importance of your example. ALL STAFF PLEASE NOTE: If you have negative comments/criticisms re: meals, please speak to Bebe or Kevin directly. If you have compliments, direct them ASAP to the kitchen crew!

For those whose assigned eating area is the staff dining room, a few guidelines:

- 1) Please comply with posted meal times, and please fill "farthest-in" seats first.
- 2) Do your best to help keep this small room a pleasant, relatively tranquil place to eat. Overly loud or raucous voices really belong outdoors!
- 3) Realize that assigned duties occasionally require some staff members to arrive a bit late, so be sure that there's plenty for them to eat, and comply with the system involving platter refills.
- 4) Realize that the cooks' first responsibility is to the 250+ in the main dining room; therefore, there may be brief delays for certain food items. Kindly refrain from actually going into the kitchen area.
- 5) Bus your own dishes, scrape off scraps, empty liquids, wipe down tables, push chairs in, and help keep the place clean.

The office force deeply appreciates having reports handed in on schedule. We try to keep counselors' paper work at a minimum, and ask only for essential reports. For this reason we expect you to give serious thought and adequate time to the preparation of those requested.

During Camp:

- 1) prompt "Morning Reports" and "First Week Reports" on campers at the beginning of each session.
- 2) accurate attendance and progress reports on all your activities.
- 3) evaluation of Pre-Camp and suggestions for its improvement.
- 4) camper evaluations, once each session.
- 5) incident and accident reports (hope you won't have any!).
- 6) "Out of Camp List" with camper and staff names turned in at Program Office before leaving on any out-of-camp hikes, trips, climbs, etc.
- 7) accurate camper shower documentation.
- 8) tally campers' clothing when unpacking them on arrival day and prior to their departure, on packing day; note missing items on form provided.

## About Reports

Before Close of Camp:

- 1) inventory of your cabin and activity area.
- 2) your recommendations for next season.
- 3) a listing of any needed repairs to your living quarters and/or activity area/s.
- 4) an Activity Report covering all your activities, explaining ways by which you most effectively accomplished your objectives.

All counselors should:

## About Reports (continued)

- 1) Be prepared to teach and lead at least two of your favorite camp songs. Clean ones only and no TV/movie stuff, please.
- 2) Be prepared to teach and lead at least one quiet, indoor team building type game and one outdoor group game.
- 3) Be prepared to teach, lead, and assist in the activities you marked on your application.
- 4) Bring or send copies of all relevant certificates you might have, namely first aid, EMT, lifesaving, WSI, NRA, CHA, etc. If you bring the originals, ask the office staff to make copies for your personnel file.
- 5) For your I-9 EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION - FEDERAL REQUIREMENT During the Pre-Camp week first-year staff will need to prove both your identity and employment eligibility. If you have a valid US Passport or an unexpired foreign passport, that is all you need to bring. If you don't have one, then you will need to bring one document from List B and one document from List C.

## Before Coming To Camp

• PLEASE BRING ALL THE INFORMATION THAT WE HAVE SENT YOU WHEN YOU COME TO CAMP. WE WILL EXPECT YOU TO HAVE READ IT CAREFULLY.

• ALSO CHECK THAT YOU HAVE COMPLIED WITH ALL ITEMS LISTED ON YOUR CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT, ATTACHED TO YOUR STAFF AGREEMENT FORM.

Please especially note items 13 through 17 and plan accordingly.

A couple of optional items:

A) A small to medium size padlock and key (or combination lock) for personal lockers available to all counselors. Please bring a minimum of valuables.

B) If you're apt to like a cup of hot or cold beverage in the evening please bring along a cup or mug well marked with your name.

You're bound to have more questions so please call or email us. If your questions are not time-sensitive, make a note of them and we will answer them during Pre-Camp. At Pre-Camp we will also be going into your specific duties with greater detail. We would also appreciate your allowing us to make copies of certain pictures you might take this summer, for our camp photo album, slide show, or brochures, so please do share them!!

**Other Stuff** All of us at Friendly Pines are mighty eager to welcome you! See you soon.



