



## JUNE LETTER 2018: The Nitty Gritty

Welcome campers!

We at The Nature Place are ready for our 33rd summer camp season. The only thing we're missing is YOU! But that will change very soon! It's almost time for you to join us. . .

We hope that you gleaned some valuable info from our [May Letter](#) about clothing, snacks & lunches, weekly themes, tick/rabies/sun/mosquito information, etc. This June Letter will give you details on everything else that is important to know about the upcoming camp season. Feel free to contact us with ANY question or concern.

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## 1. INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR CAMPER'S GROUP

### Group Calendars

Please click on your child's group letter below, to view the group's calendar for the summer. Please note that the calendar defaults to the current month, so you must click through July and August to see all of the events.

**A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P R Q**

### Counselor Information Sheet

The weekend prior to camp's beginning, you will receive a special email that will contain a "Counselor Information Sheet". This is a colorful page with photos, greetings, and information about your child's counselors. Please show this to your child when it arrives, as it is a great way to get familiarized with our counselors before meeting them.

### Pre-Camp Visit

The Pre-Camp Visit is an opportunity for you and your child(ren) to meet their counselors and see their group's room before the start of camp. **Visiting time takes place on Friday, June 29<sup>th</sup> between 1:15 and 2:15 pm.** **There is also an additional visiting time on Saturday, June 30<sup>th</sup> from 11 am to 12 pm.** Though counselors will not be present on Saturday, a member of our administrative team will be happy to show you your child's room and speak with you about any last-minute questions or concerns. Please email us ahead of time to let us know if you plan on visiting during one of these times.

## 2. IMPORTANT ODDS AND ENDS...

### Medical Needs

If there is any possibility your camper(s) will require prescription medication while at camp and/or on an overnight camping trip, please bring/send the **medication in its original container at least one week before it will need to be dispensed. Please only send the amount needed to dispense.** Any and all medications also need to be indicated and **signed for by your doctor on your child's 'Physician's Over-the Counter & Prescription Medication Form'** (which can be found under 'Forms and Documents' in your camp account).

We have a full-time nurse on staff. If your child comes to the nurse's office for treatment of an illness or an injury (i.e. bee sting, fever) that requires additional medical treatment or observation, you will be contacted by phone. Please call our office if you have any questions.

### Swim Gear

In order to maximize campers' swim time, we recommend that campers, especially younger children, come to camp wearing their swimsuit under their camp clothes. This means less time spent changing clothes and more time in the water. Be sure to send your child with undergarments to change into after swimming. We will provide your child(ren) with a drawstring Nature Place bag to use for transporting bathing suits, towels, and a change of clothes back and forth to the Pond every day.

### Water Shoes

Keeping a pair of water shoes or old sneakers at camp that are OK to get wet and muddy will be handy for mucking in the stream and other water-logged activities. Please make sure these shoes are closed-toe.

### 3. TRAFFIC PROCEDURE FOR ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL BY CAR

In all locations, it is very important to follow the directions of staff members conducting the flow of traffic. This is for everyone's safety!

If for any reason you must park your car and come into camp during arrival time, please enter from Chestnut Ridge Road (right turn only) and follow the parking counselors' instructions.

#### Arrival

**Morning drop-off begins at 8:45 am and ends at 9:00 am.** If you arrive after 9:00 am, please park your car and escort your child(ren) to their rooms or to our Morning Share area. **Children cannot be dropped off before 8:45 am (because of our limited parking, please do not pull into the camp before 8:45 am, unless you are utilizing our Before Care program).**

In the morning, all cars enter and exit using the main camp entrance on Chestnut Ridge Road (Route 45). All cars must make a RIGHT TURN ONLY into the camp and when leaving camp and heading back onto Route 45! **Right turns prevent hazardous traffic tie-ups. We greatly appreciate your cooperation.** Cars follow the one-way loop around the upper parking lot or, if directed, the lower loop around the gym. Counselors are present to meet cars as they pull into camp. Please proceed as far forward in the loop as possible before stopping and releasing your camper(s), and only have them exit the vehicle once a counselor comes up to your car to let your children out. Counselors will then escort your child(ren) into the building.

When you drop off your child(ren) in the morning on the first day of camp (July 2<sup>nd</sup>,) you will be given a reminder of the dismissal information.

#### Dismissal

Afternoon dismissal begins at 3:55 pm. **Please do not come onto the camp property before 3:50 pm.** If you wish to arrange an earlier pick-up, call the office ahead of time to arrange this.

**Prior to the beginning of dismissal, all campers with younger siblings will be escorted by their counselor to their youngest sibling's group and wait to be picked up with them. This is important to note, as we have different dismissal locations for our different groups.** Please remember your youngest camper's group letter! Please also remind your children that the older child(ren) will be waiting with the youngest sibling's group.

**Please submit a Permission to Dismiss form via your camp account online if there is any possibility you will not be personally picking up your child every day.**

*Cars picking up campers (and older siblings) from Groups A, B, and C:*

Enter camp (RIGHT TURN ONLY) from Chestnut Ridge Road (Route 45) and then be directed to turn RIGHT again to enter the *upper driveway* loop. **Please stay in your car!** A counselor will ask for your child(ren)'s name(s) and bring your child(ren) to you. Remember, there is a RIGHT TURN ONLY when leaving the camp.

*Cars picking up campers (and older siblings) from groups D, E, F, and G:*

Enter camp (RIGHT TURN ONLY) from Chestnut Ridge Road (Route 45) and then will be directed to turn LEFT to go around the gym for pick-up behind the gym. Follow the counselors' directions. **Please stay in your car!** Counselors will ask for your child(ren)'s name(s) and bring your child(ren) to you. Remember, there is a RIGHT TURN ONLY when leaving the camp.

*Cars picking up campers and their older siblings in Groups H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, R, or Q:*

Traveling from Chestnut Ridge Road (Route 45), turn onto Hungry Hollow Road and then turn left onto Orchard Lane and follow the instructions of the parking counselors. **Please stay in your car!** A counselor will ask for your child(ren)'s name(s) and bring your child(ren) to you. **It is important to remember your child's group letter.**

Several staff members are stationed in key locations to direct traffic. Please follow the instructions of the staff directing traffic.

**SEVERE WEATHER at pick-up time** – If there is a strong thunderstorm or torrential downpour at dismissal, we will close off the Route 45 entrance for a 10-minute period and keep all campers inside. Safety is our #1 priority at all times. You will not be able to bring your car into camp until staff at the entrance give their OK. Please do NOT wait or 'stand' on the side of Route 45.

*Thanks for your cooperation with camp's Arrival and Dismissal Procedures!*

#### **4. GETTING THE MOST OUT OF CAMP**

##### **Our Electronic Device Policy**

So as not to get in the way of meeting new friends and connecting with ourselves, others, and the natural world, we ask **that electronics such as smart phones, cell phones, iPods, handheld gaming consoles and all other such devices be kept at home** and NOT brought to camp. **This applies to the bus ride as well.** Six weeks of camp go by mighty quickly. We don't want these potentially isolating devices to get in the way of your camper possibly having the best summer of his/her life!

##### **Behavior Guidelines**

Our standards at The Nature Place Day Camp have always been very high, which is probably one of the reasons you have chosen to be with us for the summer of 2018. Safety is always our first priority, and this includes both the emotional and physical aspects of safety. Campers need to be and feel safe throughout all parts of the camp day, whether they are in camp or away on trips. They need to know that they will not be the subjects of bullying, teasing, harassment, exclusion, belittling or name-calling.

Camp may be one of the last bastions of 'community', especially the kind of community in which we celebrate tolerance, acceptance and peace. From day one, our goal is to make The Nature Place Day Camp a healthy, vibrant, nurturing and safe community, in which campers can be themselves, have fun, be challenged, connect with others and with the earth, develop new life skills, and be supported throughout. Therefore, we expect all campers will:

1. Always stay with their group
2. Participate in camp activities
3. Deal with other campers and staff members in respectful ways
4. Be supportive of other campers' needs and efforts
5. Always act in ways that are safe for the camper him/herself as well as for all other campers
6. Treat other campers' (and the camp's) property and belongings with respect and consideration
7. Never hit, throw something at, or in any way physically hurt anyone else
8. Never threaten, imply a threat or "get in the face" of another camper
9. Not engage in put-downs of any type or make "fun" of another camper

10. Not purposefully and with ill intent exclude another camper

**Our goal is to help each camper have a successful summer and positive camp experience. If a camper's behavior is negatively affecting the rest of the group and/or if there is any kind of safety concern, the following consequences will be implemented. Of course, each incident will be looked at individually and in terms of degree of seriousness.**

1. First Time – Camp administration will talk to the child as well as make a call home to discuss the incident with the child's parents.
2. Second Time – Parents will be called in to camp to discuss the matter.
3. Third time – The camper will miss one day of camp in order to understand that there were better behavioral choices to be made relative to the incident.
4. Fourth time – a discussion and decision-making meeting with parents in order to look at the real possibility that perhaps The Nature Place Day Camp is not a good match for the camper and his/her needs.

**It goes without saying (but we're saying it anyway):**

### **Smoking**

Smoking is prohibited anywhere at camp as well as on hikes and overnights.

### **Narcotics, Drugs, and Weapons**

Any staff member or camper possessing a weapon, drugs or narcotics or under the influence of drugs (including alcohol) at camp or at any camp function throughout the year will be asked to leave camp immediately and proper law enforcement will be contacted if necessary.

**Please go over our behavior policy and expectations with your camper(s), including the consequences for not following them. Clarity and consistency, at camp and at home, are important for making our camp a healthy, nurturing environment for children.**

## **5. HIKES AND CAMPING TRIPS**

### **Day Hikes**

All hikes are geared to the age and ability of the campers in terms of interest, mileage and terrain. All hikes have been scouted out beforehand. Each hike offers a bit of adventure, some challenges, plenty of rest stops, a new awareness of our environment and a chance to explore nature in various areas. As with all Nature Place activities, our goals are safety, fun, and education. At the end of a hike, campers will feel tired, but that good kind of tired that comes from excitement, exercise and a sense of accomplishment. During the hikes we will learn proper hiking techniques, safety, natural and human history, the importance of eating and hydrating (drinking water) during a hike, how to least disturb the natural areas through which we travel, tick awareness, trail etiquette and more.

On the day of the hike, we will cancel the trip if the weather is too hot, raining heavily or there is a serious threat of thunderstorms. There have been occasions when a trip was canceled in the morning due to thunderstorm predictions and the day turned out to be beautiful. Needless to say, we were all disappointed, but we will always err on the side of safety. If possible, all canceled hikes are rescheduled. If a hike is canceled, your camper will be scheduled for a full day of activities at camp, **so be sure he/she brings a swimsuit to camp every day, even on hike days.** Please see the [May Letter](#) about dressing appropriately and packing lunches for hikes.

## **Camping Trips**

The camping program at The Nature Place is designed to enhance the whole day camp experience. It is based on the philosophy of living gently and purposefully on the earth.

Trip participants practice minimal-impact camping skills and learn techniques for living and traveling outdoors in comfort and safety. Being aware of our environment is one of our important goals. Trips include environmental education activities as well as opportunities to discover the natural and human history of the areas being visited.

All trips have been scouted beforehand. Members of our full-time professional camping staff carry a phone (in case of emergencies), a first aid kit, and are certified in Wilderness First Aid and CPR.

Each camper will receive a packing list prior to each trip. [Packing lists](#) are also available on our website, as well as listed in your group's calendar next to each trip. Each camper group will have a pre-trip meeting with a member of our camping department to go over the list and give additional information about the trip.

### ***Almost Overnight***

When the camp day ends, our adventure begins! A short walk will bring us to our campsite where we will set up tents and cook dinner outdoors. The evening will end with a twilight hike in search of bug-hunting bats, fireflies beginning to 'fire' and other previews of the coming nighttime. After a dusk campfire, parents will pick up their almost overnights in front of the main camp building – the Lower School of Green Meadow. Pick up time for groups A and B is at 6:30 pm, for groups C and D at 7 pm, and E and F at 7:30 pm.

[Almost Overnight Packing List](#)

### ***Onsite Overnight Camp Out***

This onsite camping experience is the perfect way to teach first-timers (and remind more experienced campers) about the finer points of camping, backpacking and outdoor living. Under the guidance of our veteran trip leaders, campers learn the skills of cooking, clean up, tent pitching, safe fire-building and outdoor etiquette. And, because this campout happens right in our backyard, it's the perfect warm up for campers anticipating longer excursions. [Onsite Overnight Packing List](#)

### ***Backpacking Adventures***

Into the forest we go! These backpacking trips will familiarize campers with the ways of backcountry camping and how to enjoy the wilderness in comfort and safety. Campers will learn proper hiking techniques and will practice outdoor living skills (fire-building, tents, leave-no-trace) that care for people and the earth at the same time.

[1 Night Backpacking Overnight Packing List](#)

[2 Night Backpacking Overnight Packing List](#)

[4 Night Backpacking Overnight Packing List](#)

### ***Cedar Pond Canoe Campout***

This one-night (two nights for group Q) canoeing/camping trip will introduce participants to the basics of flat-water canoeing. Campers will paddle the waters of Lake Tiorati in Harriman State Park. We will teach proper paddling techniques as well as watercraft safety. Groups will set up camp at the Cedar Pond camping area, located on a beautiful and secluded peninsula. [1 Night Cedar Pond Canoe Campout Packing List](#)

### ***River Canoe/Camping***

Campers will paddle along the Delaware River, which is the longest free flowing river east of the Mississippi! The next step beyond the flat-water of Lake Tiorati, this trip will provide opportunities for campers to learn how to read a river and navigate its changing current. Keen observers are rewarded with sightings of bald eagles, herons, eels and perhaps even black bears!

#### **1 Night River Canoeing Packing List**

### ***Whitewater River Canoe/Camping***

Our oldest campers paddle the most challenging and scenic white-water section of the Delaware River. Advanced canoeing skills, along with river navigation skills, will be refined on this four-day excursion.

#### **3 Night River Canoeing Packing List**

### ***Rock Climbing Adventure (plus two-night Onsite Overnight)***

After a summer of practicing their climbing skills at camp, our oldest group will travel to New Paltz, NY and the Shawangunk Mountains to climb real rock face!

#### **2 Night Onsite with Rock Climbing Packing List**

## **6. REPELLENT USE AND TICK TIPS**

In our [May Letter](#), there is information about mosquito and tick concerns.

Bugs and bug bites happen at camp! On camping trips, we'll certainly be using bug repellent when the day begins to turn to dusk. We also put on long-sleeved shirts and pants at dusk and make sure that our tent zippers are zipped up tight! On day hikes, we will also use repellent to deter ticks and mosquitos when conditions deem it necessary.

The repellents we will be using this summer are:

For mosquitoes, we have chosen Repel Plant-Based Lemon Eucalyptus Insect Repellent by WCP Brands. It contains 30% of oil of lemon eucalyptus and is listed in the EPA's database as effective against mosquitos for 6 hours. This DEET-free repellent will be applied and re-applied only when necessary and is for use on skin.

For tick protection, we have chosen Repel Sportsman Insect Repellent. The active ingredient is DEET (40%). This spray repellent will be used only on a camper's footwear and pant legs—not on skin—and will be applied only by counselors. **Please let us know if you do not want your child's clothing to be sprayed.**

The Center for Disease Control recommends the following tips for ensuring that ticks are removed from clothing. We recommend following this protocol on your child(ren)'s clothing when they return from a hike or overnight:

- Tumble dry clothes in a dryer on high heat for 10 minutes to kill ticks on dry clothing after you come indoors.
- If the clothes are damp, additional time may be needed.
- If the clothes require washing first, hot water is recommended. Cold and medium temperature water will not kill ticks effectively. If the clothes cannot be washed in hot water, tumble dry on low heat for 90 minutes or high heat for 60 minutes after washing. The clothes should be warm and completely dry.

## 7. SPECIAL EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

You can also find all the events below and their details in our [summer calendars!](#)

### Day Programs

**Bill and Brian Robinson** – Monday, July 9 and Monday, July 30

Bill and his son, Brian, are Nature Place favorites because of their warm way of relating to children as well as the interesting animals they share with us each summer. Bill is a wildlife specialist who helps injured and orphaned wild animals return to their natural habitats. We will enjoy meeting animals such as owls, large reptiles, eagles and hawks that will actually fly just above our heads!

**Clearwater Sail** – Wednesday, July 18 and Thursday, July 19

Four groups each summer will set sail on this 3-hour outing on the Hudson River's Clearwater sloop, made famous by Pete Seeger. Groups I, J, K, and L will partake in this fun and educational experience as we hoist the sails, learn about river navigation, discover first-hand what lives in the Hudson and begin to understand the importance of the river "that flows both ways".

**Full Camp Harvest Day** – Thursday, August 9

This is a down-to-earth day for everyone! The entire camp hikes to the Fellowship fields to harvest crops such as potatoes, carrots, onions, beets and other bio-dynamically grown vegetables. A community of two hundred plus people of all shapes and sizes, young and old, harvesting and singing under a beautiful summer sky, is certainly a sight to behold. And better yet, one to experience first-hand!

### Evening Programs

**Family Program: Songs Around the Campfire** – Thursday, July 12 at 7:15 pm

Singing, especially around a blazing fire, is a camp tradition. Join Scott Dunn and others for some sing-along favorites. We encourage families to bring their friends, too!

**Family Program: Story Time with Chuck Stead! (for ages 8 and up)** – Thursday, July 26 at 7:15 pm

We're pretty sure that after his or her first week of camp, your camper will already be regaling you with some of Chuck's stories. (Chuck visits camp every Friday morning.) Come back to camp this Thursday evening and listen to Chuck and his tales of growing up in the Ramapo Mountains. Everyone loves Chuck! Just come and you'll know why. This story evening is best for campers ages 8 and older.

**Family Program: Remembering Summer** – Wednesday, August 8 (rain-date August 9) at 7:15 pm

A slide show for campers and their families to celebrate the ending of a great camp season! Before the show, there will be live musical performances by campers and staff, playing the sweetest tunes to be heard this side of the Fairy Stream.

### Pond Membership!

All enrolled camp families can become members of the Threefold Pond, our camp swimming facility. If you would like to be part of a swim community where there are no radios, no smoking, no crowds on weekends, but where you'll find plenty of kids, shade, sun, grass, more nature than concrete, and like-minded families, then contact Chela Crane, Pond Manager, at [chela.crane@yahoo.com](mailto:chela.crane@yahoo.com) for more information and a pond application form.



## 8. ADDITIONAL SUMMER CAMP PROGRAMS

### Farm and Garden Days – August 13th – 17th

This small, specialized camp program for children ages 5-13 focuses on connecting with nature, the earth, and each other. We explore the Duryea Farm and the Pfeiffer Center’s biodynamic gardens on our campus.

### Art and Earth – August 13th – 17th

Fine art and nature unite! Art & Earth is an art & nature-based program for young people ages 9-14 who have a passion for visual art and who find inspiration in nature. Campers in this program learn to work with a variety of art mediums and techniques, including (but not limited to) watercolor, charcoal, and clay.

### Passages – August 12th – 17th

Passages is a week-long overnight wilderness experience that provides a nurturing and meaningful rite-of-passage experience for adolescents ages 13-16. This program guides and supports young adult campers through an immersive week of exploring their relationship to self, to community, and to the earth.

And with that, our June Letter concludes. All of us at The Nature Place Day Camp look forward to seeing you soon!

Sincerely,  
Ed, Scott, Ayla, Daniel, and Emily

*“That beautiful season, the summer! Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light: and the landscape lay as if newly created in all the freshness of childhood.”*

- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow