



May, 2011

OREGON EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

1869

Dear Rising Sophomores and Parents,

We are happy to share with you the details of the 2011 Sophomore Backpacking Trip, scheduled for Wednesday, September 7 through Saturday, September 10, 2011. We will start with one day on campus prior to the trip on Tuesday, September 6 from noon to 4 pm to learn about the basics of backpacking and meet the members of your backpack group. This backpacking experience will be a great way to start the new school year.

This packet contains the following information:

**Goals of the Sophomore Backpack Trip**  
**Specifics on the Program**  
**Leadership and Safety**  
**Parent Permission Slip and Medical Information Form**  
**Behavior Agreement Form**  
**Assumption of Risk Form**  
**Clothing and Equipment Checklist**  
**Important Meeting Times**  
**What do you need to do?**

Please read and re-read this information carefully! There are several important dates, meetings and lists you'll need to be aware of.

As you read this packet of information, please note some important dates. **On Thursday, September 1 at 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm there will be a mandatory pack-check for all sophomores on the second floor of the DC Building. Please bring all of your gear (except what you are renting) with you to this meeting so that we can be sure that you will be properly prepared for the trip. There will also be an optional parent information meeting in the DC Building Volunteer Room (second floor) at the same time as the student pack check.**

**For dorm students who will not be arriving until after September 1, we will have a second pack check on September 5 at 7 pm on the second floor of the DC Building. Day students that cannot make it to the September 1 pack check may bring their gear to the dorm pack check, but please let Tom Handel know of your plans ahead of time. ALL STUDENTS MUST HAVE THEIR EQUIPMENT CHECKED AT ONE OF THESE TWO TIMES IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE TRIP.**

**OES has a limited supply of clothing and equipment to lend. If you would like to borrow some items please call or email Tom Handel at 503-416-9359 or [handelt@oes.edu](mailto:handelt@oes.edu) on or after July 1. Students who have called to reserve gear from OES will pick it up at their pack check or may make arrangements to pick it up prior. Additional equipment will be available at each pack check on a first-come basis. All students will leave their equipment at OES (where it will be stored securely) after their pack check. Packs will be at stored in a locked classroom until Wednesday morning when students arrive. This is to ensure that the proper clothing that is checked by OES faculty and our professional instructors all comes with us into the field. If students fail to bring something on the equipment list to the pack check they will leave the pack check with a "shopping list" of items to bring with them Wednesday morning. They must bring these items Wednesday morning or they cannot go on the trip. We attempt to carry the essentials for all kinds of weather; **please don't bring extra clothing, food or gear, but don't bring less either.** If you have any questions about clothing, equipment, or the trip in general, please do not hesitate to call or email Tom Handel at (503) 416-9359 or [handelt@oes.edu](mailto:handelt@oes.edu).**

I hope that you enjoy your summer and that you are looking forward to a great sophomore trip!

Sincerely,  
Tom Handel  
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# Oregon Episcopal School

## Sophomore Backpacking Trip

### Student/Parent Information Packet

#### Goals of the Sophomore Backpacking Trip

The goals for this four-day backpacking trip are as follows:

- to improve decision-making, problem-solving, and leadership skills through involvement with the day to day challenges of group backpacking
- to teach how to properly use all the equipment needed for a backpack trip
- to build cooperation, self-confidence and self-awareness
- to have a fun time meeting new classmates and renewing old friendships
- to teach minimum impact outdoor living and backpacking skills
- to broaden students' understanding and appreciation of the glorious Oregon backcountry

#### Specifics on the Program

This four-day (plus one day on campus) experience will have classmates divided into groups of 8-10 students along with one or two OES teachers and one hired outdoor instructor. All of the groups will hike in the Mt. Jefferson, Indian Heaven, Mt. Adams or Three Sisters Wilderness Areas.

Students will receive instruction in minimum impact camping and hiking, map and compass use, first aid, and outdoor cooking. As skills are taught, students will be guided through the application of what they have learned. Students will sleep under tarps which they erect, cook meals together on lightweight backpacking stoves, and follow a designated route using a map and compass. The main activity on this trip will be hiking.

The trip will emphasize working together, problem solving, personal challenge, and developing self-confidence. Individuals will be challenged by different elements of the trip; for one person it may be hiking with a heavy pack, for another it may be reaching group consensus. We anticipate that all students will discover new qualities within themselves and their classmates. Our goal is to provide a safe, exhilarating wilderness experience that will set a positive tone for the new school year. What we ask of the students is to be open to new experiences, to strive to work together, help each other and to embrace a spirit of adventure.

#### Leadership and Safety

While backpacking can be a very challenging experience, it is also a very safe activity. This trip has been specifically designed to meet the needs of the sophomore class. Activities will be conducted with the utmost care to ensure educationally sound and safe experiences for the students.

Each group will have 2-3 adult leaders; one or two OES faculty members, and one skilled wilderness instructor. All leaders will have first aid and CPR training, and at least one adult will be certified as a Wilderness First Responder or EMT. A thorough emergency plan has been put together for the area, and each group will carry a satellite phone for use in the event of an extreme emergency.

#### Parent Permission Slip and Medical Information Forms

Please read, fill out, and sign the enclosed Permission/Behavior form(double-sided) and Assumption of Risk Waiver and return these forms to the Upper School office by **August 26<sup>th</sup>**. Also, please be sure that the school has your child's general emergency information on file. (You will enter this information on the Electronic School Forms website starting in June). **Students who do not submit these completed forms will not be allowed to go on the trip.**

**Please go out of your way to inform us of any allergies your child may have, especially to bee stings.** Previous sophomore backpacking trips have generated a fair number of bee stings. While we carry injectable epinephrine (for severe allergic reactions) and are trained to use it, we need to know if any student has had a past allergic reaction to bee stings.

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**Also remember, if your child is taking prescription medication, he or she must bring two sets of the medication needed for the trip. Both sets must be in original containers, and sealed in separate Ziploc bags with the student's name on it. The instructor will carry one set of the medication as a "back up".**

### **Weather**

Early September in the Northwest Wilderness areas can be the most glorious time of the year. It can also rain, sleet, hail and blow! We have experienced all kinds of weather on this trip. **Having the proper clothing and equipment is the key to having a safe and enjoyable experience. Please follow the enclosed Clothing and Equipment list carefully;** the items on this list will allow us to cope with any weather conditions.

### **Personal Clothing and Equipment List and Other Helpful Hints**

Please remember that you will have to carry everything you bring. In addition to your personal clothing, you will also need to carry a share of the group gear (tarps, fuel bottles, stoves, pots and pans, first aid kit, and food for 4 days which will be an extra 5-10 lbs. approximately). **Bring only those items that are on the list, and be sure that your pack is large enough to accommodate your share of group gear as well as your personal gear.**

**If you don't have some of the equipment on the list, be resourceful. Please do not rush out and buy a lot of new things.** Call friends or other Upper School students and see what you can borrow. OES also has a limited supply of clothing and equipment to lend; what we have will be given to the first people who inquire starting July 1st. Please refer to the clothing/equipment list for specific places to buy or rent clothing and equipment. If backpacking is something new to you, we strongly recommend renting or borrowing as much clothing and equipment as possible. If you have any questions or wish to borrow something, please call or email Tom Handel at (503) 416-9359 or [handelt@oes.edu](mailto:handelt@oes.edu).

If you have any extra gear that you are willing to loan out, or gear that you would like to donate, please call Tom Handel at (503) 416-9359. Any gear loaned out will be returned to you after it has been washed, and gear donated will be used by the outdoor program year round. We can use: sleeping bags, backpacking sleeping pads (closed cell), backpacks, fleece clothing, rain gear, and long underwear.

### **Some frequently asked questions about the Sophomore Backpacking Trip:**

***What is a tarp? Why don't you use tents?*** Our tarps are created by Mountain Hardwear, a respected outdoor gear manufacturer. They are designed so that all sides of the tarp are touching the ground creating a five sided structure that is completely enclosed, except for the floor which is open to the ground. We provide all students with a plastic groundsheet to keep them dry and protect their sleeping gear. The two primary reasons we, like many outdoor programs, use tarps instead of tents is because they are much lighter, and they accommodate more people (generally about 4) which helps to strengthen the "community" feel of the group.

***Won't my child get wet if it rains and all they have is a tarp?*** No. If a tarp is erected correctly (and we will teach students how to do this), you can be quite cozy in a tarp. Each student is also issued a plastic groundsheet, which prevents his or her pad and sleeping bag from getting wet from the ground.

***I see that students are supposed to bring their water bottles full. Is this the only water they will have throughout the trip?*** No. Each group will camp at a water source (lake, stream or spring) each night. There is no water at the trailheads, though, and that is why we ask students to begin the trip with full water bottles. Many of the routes do not pass much water during the day, which is why we ask that all students have a water bottle capacity of at least two quarts, in two separate bottles. We will make sure that everyone starts each day with full water bottles.

***Will the water you find be safe to drink?*** We will make the water is safe to drink either by boiling it, filtering it or by using iodine tablets.

***What about bears?*** This is the wilderness and yes, there are bears, although we have never seen one on the sophomore trip. (Probably because we're too noisy!) We take precautions against unwanted encounters by hanging our food at night and making sure that no one goes to bed with snacks stuffed in their sleeping bag.

***Will my child get enough to eat? S/he eats a lot!*** We pack our food with teenage appetites in mind, and we have never had a group return without extra food.

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## **Important Times and Dates for the 2011 Sophomore Backpacking Trip**

Please jot down the following meeting dates and times. Please be prompt to these meetings, as they are an important part of getting ready for this experience.

### **Tuesday May 24, 7:30 p.m. in Room 60**

Parent Informational Meeting, Room 60 in Upper School

Please join us and learn more about the sophomore trip. This meeting is not required, although all parents are encouraged to attend. We will answer questions and explain the trip in more detail.

### **Friday August 26**

**Trip forms are due.** Please send to OES c/o Upper School Office. Two forms: OES Permission/Behavior form (double-sided) and Assumption of Risk Waiver.

### **Thursday September 1, 5:30 p.m.**

Student Pack Check, Second Floor DC Building

Bring your backpack, sleeping bag and all clothing and equipment that you're planning to take on the trip (except rental gear.) Be prepared to leave your equipment at OES until the morning we leave. **All day students are expected to attend this meeting. If you cannot attend, you must contact Tom Handel in advance.**

### **Thursday September 1, 5:30 p.m.**

Parent Information Meeting, Second Floor DC Building in the Volunteer Room

Please join us and learn more about the sophomore trip. This meeting is not required, although all parents are encouraged to attend. We will answer questions and explain the trip in more detail.

### **Monday, September 5, 7:00 p.m.**

Pack Check for Dorm Students, Second Floor DC Building

Bring your backpack, sleeping bag and all clothing and equipment that you are planning to take on the trip. Be prepared to leave your equipment at OES until the morning we leave.

### **Tuesday, September 6, 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

Backpack 101 with your backpack group (bring your rented equipment)

Have lunch with the entire class in the cafeteria

Learn how to pack a backpack (Please arrive with the items on your "I still need to get" sheet)

Learn the basics of map and compass and look at your route

Learn how to set up a tarp tent and how to use a backpacking stove

Get used to walking with your pack loaded

### **Wednesday, September 7, 8:30 a.m.**

Meet at SPARC with your group ready to depart directly after OES Opening Belltower Ceremony

Please arrive with the items on your "I still need to get" sheet, full water bottles, and a small snack if you would like. Working in our small groups we will distribute group gear and food, make sure that everyone's packs are packed correctly, and generally get ready to hit the trail.

### **Saturday afternoon, September 10, 2:00 p.m.**

Trip returns to OES Bell Tower.

We'll provide lunch. Upon arrival at OES we will spend some time cleaning our group gear.

**Parents should plan on picking up their children at 3:00 p.m.**

### **What do you need to do?**

- **Head off possible equipment shortcomings by putting together your clothing and gear now!**
- **Send your permission, behavior agreement, and assumption of risk forms to OES attn: Upper School Office by August 26.**
- **Make sure you attend the pre-trip meeting and pack check on September 1 at 5:30 p.m. (if you did not attend the May 24 parent meeting). Bring all of your clothing and equipment with you so we can look it over and make any last minute recommendations.**
- **If you are a dorm student, make sure you attend the pack check on September 5 at 7:00 p.m. upstairs in DC.**
- **Contact Tom Handel at (503) 416-9359 or email at [handelt@oes.edu](mailto:handelt@oes.edu) as soon as possible with any questions, concerns, or problems.**