



Summer Staff Manual

2026 Edition

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SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION



A Brief History of Camp Conquest

In 1959 two men from the Northern Atlantic District of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, set out to fulfill two different visions of ministry. One, to start a ranch for troubled boys. Another, to provide a summer camp experience for youth within the district. Both men began walking their separate roads, neither realizing that one day God planned to merge those dreams to create a unique ministry of evangelism and discipleship.

Bob Sprecher, who attended the Grace Brethren Church of Lancaster, purchased a farm in 1959 on what is now Forest Road in Denver, PA. He moved his wife, Josie, and their four boys out to the farm to provide a place free from the distractions and troubles they seemed to find at every turn. Bob's dream was bigger than just his own boys; he wanted to start a ranch for troubled boys.

Over the next 8 years, Bob built a lodge containing two dorms with bathrooms, a kitchen and dining room. He hosted many families on the farm in his own home, a cottage by the pond, and this new lodge. However, before his dream of a ranch could be realized tragedy struck. The family was in a terrible car accident. Josie was severely injured and his son Davey died. The family needed to sell the property and move back to New Holland in order to provide care for Josie and the other boys while Bob worked.

Meanwhile, in Philadelphia, Pastor Bob Kern arrived at Third Brethren Church in 1959 and was given the charge to start a youth summer camp program. In 1960, Pastor Kern began hosting camp programs for the children and teens of the district. The Youth Committee of the Northern Atlantic District organized the program calling it "Camp Conquest".

In those early years, Camp Conquest gained popularity and changed locations as it grew. In 1966 a search for a permanent location began. The Sprecher Farm was purchased by the churches in February 1968, and full summer camp programs started in June 1970.

When God merged the plans of those two men, He need a caretaker to develop the fledgling camp into a year-round ministry. Bob Lutz was hired in 1981 and filled that role until a car accident took his life in 2001. God then brought Michael Gehlert along with his wife, Yara, and their four children to Camp Conquest in 2002.

God has continued to bless and direct the ministry of Camp Conquest through the years. Camp Conquest now has around one dozen year-round employees, up to 30 seasonal staff, and regularly records over 30,000 volunteer hours per year.

Why We Exist

Mission Statement: Camp Conquest seeks:

- *To Maintain:* A year-round camp, retreat, and activity center
- *To Promote:* The Good News of Jesus Christ, personal spiritual growth in Christ, encouragement, and prayer for believers in Christ, physical well-being through exercise in a quality environment, opportunities for building relational experiences and development of social skills
- *To Provide:* Summer camp experiences, year-round retreat experiences, educational programs, recreational activities
- *To Focus:* On organizations in agreement with the Charis Fellowship statement of faith, on reaching and serving primarily children and teens within the Northern Atlantic District of the Charis Fellowship as well as in the Cocalico area of Northern Lancaster County and surrounding regions

Why Summer Camp?

It is part of our mission to provide summer camp experiences. We believe that a week of summer camp is one of the most effective tools for evangelism and discipleship available to the church today.

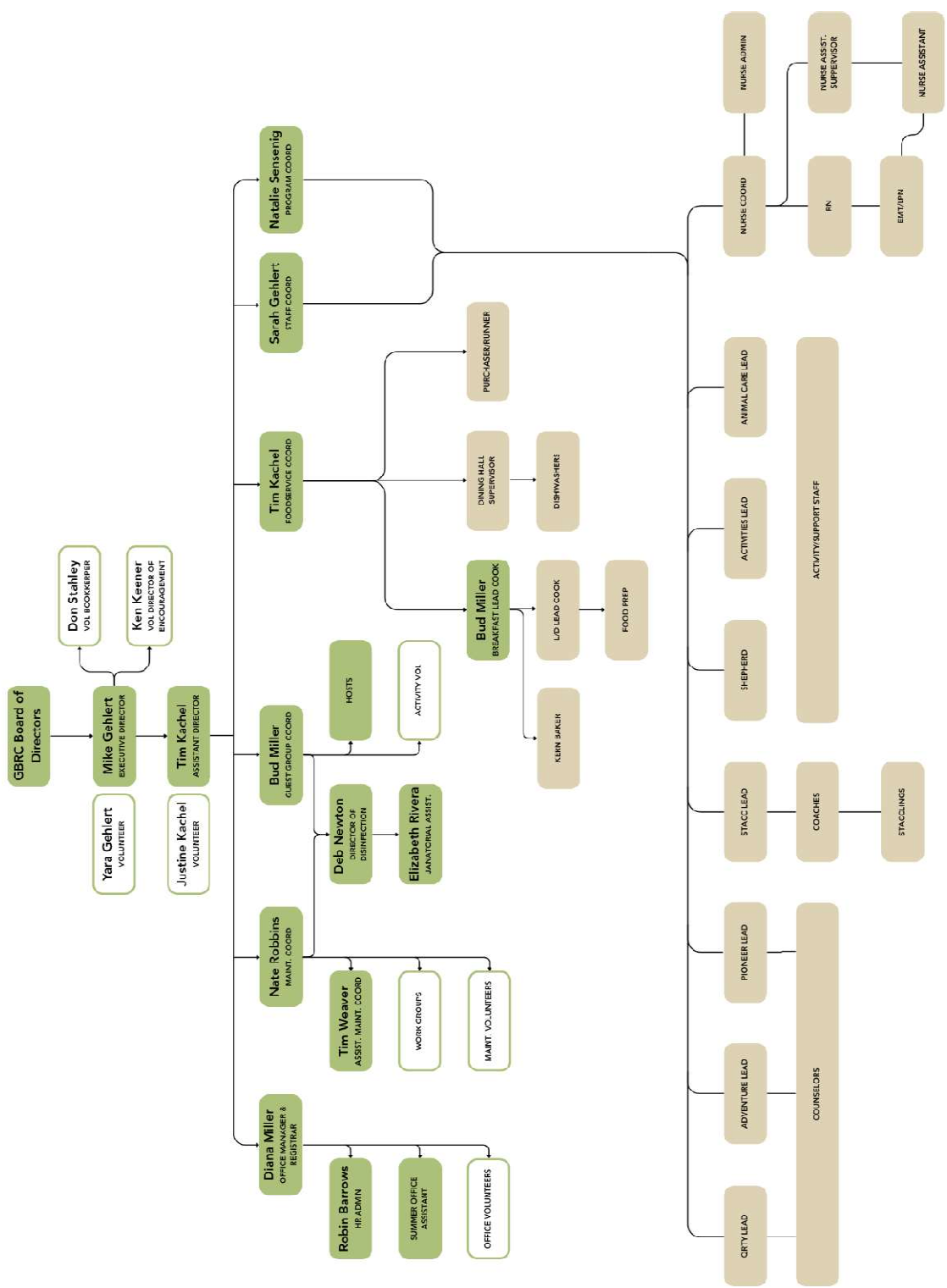
Theme Verse: At Camp Conquest we are passionate about **Ephesians 4:12** "For the equipping of the saints, for the works of service, to the building up of the body of Christ." Camp is a place where we get to learn how God has equipped each of us in order that we might serve others and grow His Kingdom!

Motto: Our camp motto is **Change lives, Be Changed.** By the genuine love of our Father God, we cultivate relationships with one another that change lives forever. Evangelism to the campers is where change starts, discipleship of believers is where change continues, and in the coming of our Lord is where our change is made complete.

SECTION 2 – CAMP STAFF

Organizational Staff Flowchart

Camp Conquest Organizational Chart
Year-Round and Seasonal Staff



God's Co-Missioned

We are all Missionaries at Camp! We live unified in Christ as co-laborers for the Gospel. This is the primary role for each of us. Our individual technical jobs are our secondary roles.

- **General Function:** To promote the Good News of Jesus Christ to campers and guests by both word and deed through the performance of a technical job as well as the fulfillment of the applicable responsibilities listed below.
- **Qualifications:** Individual must have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and be able to articulate at a basic level the meaning of that relationship. Each individual should live their life in an attempt to be consistent with the teachings of the Word of God.
- **Focus of Ministry:** To consistently become more like Christ with a focus on Evangelism via Personal Relationships and Outdoor Experiences as well as Discipleship via Mentoring and Coaching in the Camp Setting.
- **Responsibilities:**
 - To be a constructive member of the staff, contributing in every way possible to the camp's health, harmony, and happiness.
 - To be loyal to the aims, policies, and regulations of the camp.
 - To willingly comply with any reasonable request made by the administration.
 - To personalize and relate to the campers and other staff members the focus of ministry as listed above.
 - To interact with the campers as a companion and guide, and assume a level of responsibility for their spiritual and physical welfare.
 - To pray for each camper in one's care.
 - To seek to lead unconverted campers to the Savior.
 - To help each Christian camper grow in the Lord.
 - To be a source of encouragement and help to other staff members.
 - To perform well the duties of one's technical job description.
 - To understand that you are a missionary first and the duties of the technical job are secondary but vital to the fulfillment of your missionary responsibilities and the mission of the camp.

Note: This job description is linked to a separate technical job description for each employee and ministry volunteer.

Staff Position Descriptions

- **Your Role as a Camp Team Leader:** As the Team Leader for one of our programs or summer teams, you will oversee the staff within your program, manage the schedule and transitions, lead gatherings/meetings for your program, communicate activity needs, and aid in disciplinary issues. You report to the Program and Staff Coordinators.
- **Your Role as a Counselor:** As a Counselor you will lead campers through the daily schedule, lead small groups, care for the campers, and participate in camp activities. You report to your program's Team Leader.
- **Your Role as Activity Staff:** As Activity Staff you sustain camp programs all summer long. You get to use your specific skill sets to keep camp facilities, programs, and activities running smoothly. You report to the Activity Staff Team Leader.
- **Your Role as Support Staff:** As Support Staff you are most likely a weekly volunteer who aids in kitchen, office, maintenance, or janitorial. You add support to the summer long camp ministry through your specific skills. You report to either the Food Service, Maintenance, or Staff Coordinator.

Staff Category Descriptions

- **Summer Weekly Volunteer:** You come to serve for one or more weeks in the summer. You come with fresh energy and enthusiasm. We want you to invest your full energy and attention into your role. Displaying the passionate love of Christ. We also hope you get to reconnect with old friends and make new ones!
- **Summer Paid Staff:** You are here all summer. We want you to work hard and play hard for the sake of God's Kingdom. We know we will all get tired, so we encourage you to manage your time off with wisdom and maturity. We are excited to see how God works in your lives over the whole summer!
- **Off-Season Volunteers:** You engage year-round. Camp doesn't just happen in the summer; there are weekend retreats, guest groups, and service opportunities. We want you to be able to use your gifts to serve all year long.
- **Sr. Staff:** You are at least 18 and graduated from high school. You get more freedom of choice and also more responsibility. We hope that you will use your experience to nurture positive relationships with campers and invest in the next generation of staff.
- **Jr. Staff:** You are 18 or younger and have not graduated from high school. You are growing and maturing in Christ. We are helping you do that within safe boundaries and a nurturing environment. You will be challenged to do more than you thought you could. We hope that you will grow closer to Jesus and share Him with others.

SECTION 3 – LIVING IN COMMUNITY

Camp Rules

At Camp Conquest we have a fun history of having only two rules:

1. "You can do anything you want as long as it doesn't cause a problem for anyone else on the face of the earth."
2. "If you do something that causes a problem for someone else on the face of the earth, you have to fix it in a way that doesn't create another problem for anyone else on the face of the earth."

In reality, we have a lot more rules than just these two. So, what do they mean? At Camp there are three categories of rules. Each category of rules helps us to establish a safe and fun environment for everyone who comes to camp.

- **Policies** are laws that we must follow as an organization. They are enforced by outside organizations, like federal, state, and local governments.
- **Procedures** are rules that Camp Conquest has set in order to maintain our own culture.
- **Principles** are cultural practices that are flexible to varying opportunities and situations.

All our rules fit within these three categories. The following is a sample of the most important things you need to know while here at camp. To get more information please read our full-sized Camp Manual.

Care of Campers

Clearances

- All staff and volunteers must have all the necessary clearances.
- Clearances must be submitted to the office prior to your arrival at camp.
- Paid seasonal staff must submit completed clearances to receive paycheck.

Mandatory Reporting.

- By PA law, all camp staff are considered mandatory reporters and must follow the state guidelines. **If you are concerned about a minor's welfare and/or suspect abuse, talk to the Program Coordinator or Staff Coordinator.**

Behavior Management.

- Camp Conquest advocates positive guidance and discipline with an emphasis on positive reinforcement, redirection, prevention, and the development of self-control.
- Follow the rules yourself and help the campers follow the rules.
- Clarify rules, state consequences, enforce rules, enforce consequences, seek assistance if needed.

Supervision.

- Campers are never alone, and staff are never alone with a single camper.
- One-on-one conversations should happen in view of other staff members.
- The typical ratio of counselors to campers is 1:4.

Post-Camp Staff/Camper Interaction.

- Get Parent/Guardian's **consent for all** forms of communication.
- Social Media:
 - Staff may not post pictures or videos of campers on personal accounts without parent permission.

Getting a Group's Attention

- **Raise Your Hand/Shut Your Mouth:** When a Coordinator/Team Leader needs to get the attention of a group, they will raise their hand and shut their mouth. As staff and campers notice, they will do the same until the whole group is quiet and ready to listen.
- **If You can Hear Me Clap Once/ Twice/ Three Times:** Get people clapping until everyone is paying attention.

Staff Experience

Electronics

- We are maintaining an environment free from the distractions of everyday life.
- You may have cellphones, computers, headphones, etc. for personal use but they should not be used in front of campers except for the sake of the program.
- Camp Directors and Coordinators reserve the right to remove rights to electronics on a personal and group basis if they are deemed a sufficient distraction.

Entertainment

- Music, movies, videos, social media, etc. should be above reproach.
- Practice discernment and be considerate of others.
- Please note that some staff, especially younger staff, are more limited in what they consume for entertainment. Please be conscientious of others when choosing media.

Hammocking

- You may hammock at camp.
- Guys and girls who are not related should not sit in the same hammock.
- When hammocking overnight, guys and girls must be in separate locations on the camp property.

Staff Lounge (changes coming for summer 2026)

- Sprecher Lodge is the designated Staff Lounge.
- Cleanliness: Hey listen. Nobody wants to walk on crumbs or sit in sticky lollipop slime. And nobody wants to clean your dirty dishes or pick up your trash. So please just clean up after yourself, thanks 😊
- Food
 - You can keep your non-refrigerated food in the kitchen.
 - One Staff Fridge is designated as "Personal Use." Keep your stuff in the personal use fridge.
 - One Fridge is labeled "Kitchen Leftovers." You can eat these.
 - Anything that is not labeled by name is free game for anyone to eat.

Relationships

- Don't start a new dating relationship during summer camp.
- Honor each other as brothers and sisters in Christ.
- Some people end up getting married.
- We do our best to help those in previously existing relationships maintain a healthy relationship. We understand that the camp schedule and community is very demanding. If you have a need support in regards to your relationship, please share this with the Staff Coordinator.

Curfew

- Curfew is 11:00pm. This means in your cabins with the cabin lights turned off.

Time Off

- Time off is from Friday after the closing staff meeting and all turnover chores are completed through Sunday at the designated arrival time.
- Any mid-week time off must be cleared by the Staff Coordinator.

Friday Evening Expectations

- Times
 - Dinner: 5:00pm
 - Team Leaders and Overnight Counselors will eat in Kern with the campers.
 - Activity Staff, Support Staff, and Day Camp Counselors eat in the dining hall.
 - Closing Program: 6:00pm in the pavilion
 - Staff Meeting: 6:45pm in the pavilion
- Cleaning
 - Throughout the day, various staff will be cleaning camp.
 - If you are activity/support staff you may choose to attend Closing Program or continue cleaning.
 - Every staff member is responsible for cleaning their cabin.
 - Activity staff are responsible for cleaning their activity areas.
 - All staff are expected to help clean the whole camp.
 - Dinner: Activity Staff and Support staff will receive job assignments for tasks not completed throughout the day.
- Departure
 - Every Friday, each seasonal staff member is assigned to a cleaning zone under the supervision of a Team Leader.
 - Staff are responsible to clean their zone and then check-out with their Team Leader.
 - Team Leaders check out with the Program Coordinator or Staff Coordinator.

General Expectations

Doctrine

- We ask all staff to affirm and respect the Charis Commitment to Common Identity (Statement of Faith) and not teach or behave in any way contrary to these beliefs while on site.
- This document is found on our website and in the application.

Health

- *Nurses:* Nurses are onsite for all medical care. Staff are allowed to care for small scrapes with a band aid.
- *Medication:*
 - Minors must give their medication to the nurse.
 - Adult staff lodging with minor staff may keep their medications as long as they can be securely locked up.
 - All Staff lodging with campers must turn in their medications to the camp nurse.
- *Infirmary:*
 - Only use the infirmary under the care of the onsite nursing staff.
 - The camp infirmary is not for ongoing sickness. Sick staff members should seek outside medical care and take time off to get well.
 - Staff should inform the nursing staff when they are sick, so they can track the global community. This includes but is not limited to: throwing-up, colds, nausea, etc.

Inappropriate Conduct

- Substance abuse, abuse of campers, swearing or inappropriate language, sexual immorality, and harassment will not be tolerated.

Safety of Persons

- *Communication Hierarchy:* The chain of report is listed on page 6.
- *Strangers at Camp:* Approach people that are on camp property whom you don't know and are not wearing a visitor tag. Find out what they need. Direct them to the office.
- *Armed Intruder:* Take campers and walk/run in direction away from the location of the intruder.
- *Missing Person:* Alert leadership to start a search effort.
- *Person Abuse:* Alert leadership to any kind of verbal/spiritual/emotional/social/physical abuse between any persons.
- *Substance Abuse:* Alert leadership, substance (drugs, alcohol, vape, etc.) will be confiscated, and offender will meet with leadership.
- *Weapons Abuse:* Any item brandished as a weapon will be confiscated and the one wielding the weapon will meet with leadership. Items, such as knives and guns, in the camp setting have a proper place as a *tool*. Campers and staff may have small pocketknives. Some staff may possess larger knives and guns, etc.
- *Natural Emergencies:* Shelter in place. The dining hall and cabin bathrooms of Sprecher and Lutz are the safest places to hide.

Bunk Matters

- Cabin Cleanliness:
 - There is no food allowed in the cabin (except if a camper gets a package).
- Cabins will be cleaned at the end of the week by the counselors of the cabin except in the case that the weekly counselors are all volunteers; then the cabin will be cleaned by seasonal staff.
- Laundry: Soiled sheets or clothes can be taken to the nurse to be washed.

Personal Appearance Policy

- We have a clothing procedure (pg.8) of modesty (not drawing attention to the body) and safety. Suggestive clothing (i.e. see thru styles, low cut blouses, halter or spaghetti straps, tight clothes, or fashions with exposed midriffs are not acceptable).
- *Shoes*: Shoes must be close-toed and have a strap around the back except inside the pool fence and bathroom facilities.
- *Shirts*: Need to be worn and cover the mid-drift.
- *Shorts*: Need to meet fist length.
- *Girls Bathing Suits*: Need to cover the mid-drift.
- *Pre/Post Pool*: Everyone must wear shoes, and clothing or wrap in a towel, no one is permitted in only a bathing suit.
- *Covering/Changing*: Camp leadership reserves the right to ask participants to cover/change if their attire does not meet expectations.
- *Staff Shirts*: It is expected for staff to wear their current-year staff shirt during camper check-in, and pick-up.
- *Tattoos & Piercings*: Questions, comments, or concerns about tattoos and piercings can be directed to camp leadership.

Lost and Found

- Locations
 - In the pavilion, in a bin or on the table near the water coolers.
 - By the fireplace in Kern pavilion in a bin.
- Procedures
 - Lost and found for overnight camp is handed out during assembly.
 - Lost and found from day camp is handed out during closing program.
 - Lost and found goes to the barn at the end of the week.
 - Lost and found not claimed within one month is donated.

Activities

- *General Guidelines*:
 - Everyone is responsible for the general care cleanliness of activity areas.
 - Example: Put balls and games away, and pick up trash
- *Technical Activities*:
 - Areas such as the Giant Swing, Target Sport Ranges, Aquatic Activities, and Equine activities always require the presence of a trained Activity Staff member during use.
- *Camp Store*:
 - Campers are given a store card and enter the store 3-5 people at a time.
 - Counselors get a free item(s) (valued up to \$1.25) at the store each weekday.

- *Craft Cabin*
 - Campers may use the craft cabin as a scheduled activity.
 - Staff may go to the craft cabin in their free time.
- *The GOAT*
 - Campers may play on the GOAT as a scheduled activity, or with their counselors.
 - Staff may play on the GOAT and should steward the expensive equipment.
- *Aquatic Activities*
 - Staff must follow the same procedures as campers when participating in aquatic activities.

Administrative

- *Office*
 - Mindfulness: Many people work in the office. Please be conscientious of your noise level, music, cleanliness, etc.
 - Tools: Computers, copiers, cutters, paper, laminator, etc. are to be used for camp purposes (not personal use).
 - Keys: Camp keys such as maintenance, activity, vehicle keys should be returned to their proper location in the office or barn. Keys that are stored in the office must be signed in and out on the key clipboard. Return keys at end of use.
- *Guests*
 - All guests must check-in at the office on arrival.
 - All guests must wear a Visitor nametag.
 - Staff need to ask the Staff Coordinator for clearance to invite a guest onto camp property.
- *Gratuities and Reimbursements*
 - Gratuities
 - Tips should not be accepted by staff
 - After first refusing, if the donor is insistent, accept the tip and give it to office staff
 - Reimbursements
 - Purchases you wish to be reimbursed for must be pre-approved by the Executive Director or Assistant Director
 - Receipts must be submitted to the office

Transportation

- *Personal Vehicles*
 - Should be parked on the range parking lot for the duration of the week.
- *Camp Vehicles*
 - Must have a valid driver's license.
 - Must be 21 years old to drive vehicles off property.
 - Must be 18 years old to drive vehicles on property.
 - Only drive a camp vehicle if you are the designated driver or have received permission specific to the task.
 - Only seat as many people in a vehicle as there are factory made seats.

- Mind the Speed Limit (10MPH)

Dining

- *Kitchens*
 - Avoid entering one hour before and after a meal.
 - No unapproved access or activity.
- *Dish Room/Dinning Hall*
 - Avoid entering one hour before and after a meal.
 - Ice Machine: use the scoop.
- *Line-Up*
 - Campers and Counselors line up outside the dining hall before meals.
 - Pray for the meal with campers before entering the dining hall.
 - Listen to announcements and receive instructions pertaining to the meal.
- *Eating*
 - A minimum of one, if not two, counselors must sit at each table.
 - Start with water.
 - Discuss Allergy and dietary needs with head cook at the beginning of the session.
- *Clean Up*
 - Kitchen staff will bring out slop buckets to indicate when to start cleaning up.
 - Only one person up from a table at a time.

Maintenance

- *Trash Disposal*
 - All trash (cardboard, cans, glass, plastic, etc.) is taken to the dumpsters located behind the barn. Nothing is recycled.
 - Do not block dumpsters. Trash collectors will not empty them if they are blocked.
- *Building Thermostats*
 - Those with locking covers should only be adjusted by host or maintenance.
 - Thermostat controllers in bunk cabins should be only adjusted by staff.
- *Pool*
 - Pool should be cleared of all toys at the end of the day for cleaning and maintenance.
 - No unprogrammed swimming without prior OK from maintenance.
- *Pond Usage*
 - No unprogrammed usage without prior ok from Maintenance.
 - Water fountain **must** be turned off prior to pond usage.
 - Avoid swimming in the pond.
- *Waterslide*
 - Limit trains to 3 people.
 - Do not climb out over sides of waterslide, continue to bottom exit location.
 - Do not climb over the rocks at the launch.

- Remove all jewelry that could rip sliding surface.
- Riders should remain in their chosen starting position during the duration of their ride
- Riders must wait for the “safe signal” from the staff member at the bottom of the slide before starting ride
- *Barn Tool Usage*
 - Communicate with Maintenance Coordinator and Work crew Coordinator to confirm availability of tools.
 - Clean tools before returning them.
 - If you don't know where a tool belongs place it on or against the table inside barn.
 - If a tool breaks, label it as “broken” placed on table inside barn.
 - Fuel equipment outside barn. Note type of gas; not sure? Ask Maintenance.
- *Laundry*
 - Laundry machines are reserved for official camp use. Staff may ask to use them but are encouraged to wash laundry during time off.
- *Campfires*
 - All campfires are to be made in designated areas under supervision of camp staff.
 - Fires should not be left unattended.
- *Maintenance Work Order Requests*
 - Notice something that needs repaired or replaced? Contact Maintenance by texting Nate at 717-917-9194.