

## ***MOUNT ST. HELENS INSTITUTE: Volcano Venture***

### **Dear Parent or Guardian,**

Welcome to summer camp at Mount St. Helens! We are excited that your child will be joining us for adventuresome learning on the volcano.



### **OVERVIEW OF CAMP**

Volcano Venture is a 2-day, 1-night exploration into volcanic eruptions and the volcanic landscape. We learn about plate tectonics, magma, lava, the 1980 eruption and the life that has returned to the once desolate land. Activities are fun, educational, reflective and exploratory. We play games, create art, study rocks, investigate pond life and hike.

### **DROP OFF TIME AND LOCATION**

Meet at the [Lions Pride Park](#) in Castle Rock, WA on Wednesday July 19 at 8:00 am. See [here](#) for a map. Please contact Sonja (716) 471-2215 on July 19 if there are any delays or issues.

### **PICK UP TIME AND LOCATION**

Meet at the [Lions Pride Park](#) in Castle Rock, WA on Thursday July 20 at 5:00 pm to pick up your child. We will only release your child to the adult(s) listed on the camper's Volcano Venture Registration Form. Please contact Sonja (716) 471-2215 on July 20 if there are any delays or issues.

### **VOLCANO VENTURE LOCATION**

The Science and Learning Center is perched on Coldwater Ridge (3,200 feet above sea level) overlooking Coldwater Lake and the Hummocks and will be our base-camp for Volcano Venture. The Science and Learning Center is a re-purposed visitor center (Coldwater Ridge Visitor Center). We will be *camping in-doors* in former exhibit rooms. We will eat our meals on the balcony with a fantastic view of the mountain and walk right out the door into the heart of the blast zone. There is tons of room in the building for crafts, games, experiments, and other activities. Here is a [map](#).



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### **PACKING LIST**

Please label your child's belongings with his or her name prior to arriving at camp. Submit medication to MSHI staff in a labeled bag at check-in.

#### ***Clothing***

- ☐ **Hat:** Mount St. Helens does not provide a lot of shade and a hat will protect your child from UV rays. A wide-brimmed hat that shades the shoulders and upper back is best for kids who sunburn easily.
- ☐ **Sturdy shoes or tennis shoes** (No open-toed shoes, no Keds/Converse) (bring an extra pair if able): We will be hiking and sturdy thick soled shoes are necessary. Do not bring open toed shoes to Mount St. Helens. Do not send flimsy street shoes (such as Keds, Converse, Vans); outdoor shoes are welcome but not necessary but athletic shoes with arch support and sturdy sole are important.
- ☐ **Indoor Shoes:** tennis shoes or slip-ons for spending time in the center.
- ☐ **Long pants:** We will be playing outside, so pack pants that can get dirty. Bring at least 1 pair of pants for each day. Even if your child wears shorts, send multiple pairs of pants. Avoid tight-fitting pants.
- ☐ **Shorts**
- ☐ **Shirts:** 1-3 t-shirts and include 1 long-sleeve shirt for layering. Don't pack shirts that might offend people, such as those with sexual humor, alcohol or tobacco advertisements, marijuana leaves, or profanity.
- ☐ **Undergarmets and socks:** Bring 2-4 pairs.
- ☐ **Sweater/sweatshirt (2)\*:** Bring at least one. We suggest wool or synthetic because they hold the heat and keep you warm even if they get wet.
- ☐ **Rain jackets:** We usually don't get a lot of rain in July and August but mountain weather can be dynamic and staying dry is essential to staying warm when the weather changes
- ☐ **Jacket / Windbreaker:** Mount St. Helens has dynamic weather and temperatures can range from 40 to 80 degrees. When we leave the Science and Learning Center, students will be asked to pack a jacket.
- ☐ **Pajamas:** Campers will be allowed to wear their pajamas around the building in the evening so please pack accordingly.
- ☐ **Warm hat** (in case of unexpected cold weather)
- ☐ **Gloves & scarf** (in case of unexpected cold weather)

#### ***Bedding***

- ☐ **Sleeping bag** or blankets to sleep under
- ☐ **Sleeping pad** or blankets to sleep on (The Science and Learning Center is equipped with 2 separate sleeping areas with enough beds and mattresses to sleep 26. Your child may also bring a sleeping pad.)
- ☐ **Pillow**

#### ***Gear***

- ☐ **Day backpack or book bag:** Day pack or school pack size. We will be hiking and children will need to carry their own water and extra layers.
- ☐ **Water bottles.** Please bring water bottles that can hold a total of 2 liters.
- ☐ **Toiletries** Tooth brush, hand towel/wash cloth, toothpaste, floss, brush, deodorant. Showers will not be available during this camp.
- ☐ **Sunscreen**
- ☐ **Prescription Lenses:** If your child wears glasses or contacts, send an extra pair in case one gets lost or damaged. Leave the spare pair with the staff.

**OPTIONAL ITEMS:** sunglasses, headlamp/flashlight, camera (optional; phone cameras will be allowed at specific times), bag for dirty clothes, slippers, binoculars, paper, journal, pencil, books, quiet games

**DO NOT BRING:** guns, knives, any other weapon, alcohol or drugs, radio, music players, electronic games or equipment including cell phones, aerosol products, animals, open-toed shoes

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### **WEATHER**

Weather at Mount St. Helens is highly variable. The Science & Learning Center is located on a ridge at 3000 feet elevation. Typical July weather is hot during the day and cool at night! A 7-day weather forecast is available at [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov).

Mount St. Helens Institute staff may alter programs at any time based on variables such as safety, weather, fitness level, ability level, behavior and energy and resources.

### **MEALS AND SNACKS**

Meals and snacks will be provided. We will accommodate for dietary needs as best as possible. Lots of fresh fruit and vegetables will be provided. If your child has a difficult time eating in new situations or very specific dietary needs, please contact a staff member to discuss solutions.

### **LODGING**

- Bathrooms and hot running water are available inside the SLC, but showers are not.
- Our two bunkrooms (with a total of 26 total beds), as well as numerous large rooms, accommodate separate male and female sleeping arrangements. Nine (9) cots are available to increase the sleeping capacity of either bunkroom.
- Beds include camp mattresses but campers will need to bring their own bedding or sleeping bag.



*Bunk Room #1: 8 bunk beds (sleeps 16)*



*Bunk Room #2: 10 beds (sleeps 10)*



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### **TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES**

*Activities and schedules are subject to change at the discretion of the Mount St. Helens Institute and their staff, without the notification of parents.*

#### **Wednesday**

- 8:00am** Meet in Castle Rock, WA: Check-in, Introduction and Icebreaker Activities, Leave for Science and Learning Center (SLC)
- 9:30am** Arrive at SLC, Settle in, Outdoor Activities
- 12:00pm** Lunch
- 12:30pm** Feet-on-bed time with quiet activities (nap, journaling, reading, etc.)
- 1:30pm** Go to Johnston Ridge Observatory
- 3:30pm** Choose Your Own Adventure (crafts, science, activity, hike)
- 5:30pm** Dinner & Clean Up
- 6:00pm** Structured Free Time
- 7:30pm** Large Group Game
- 8:00pm** Evening Circle: Songs and Stories/short hike
- 9:00pm** Final Evening Activity

#### **Thursday**

- 7:00am** Wake Up
- 7:30am** Breakfast
- 8:00am** Group Activity
- 9:00am** Outdoor Activity
- 11:30am** Lunch
- 12:00pm** Feet-on-bed time with quiet activities (nap, journaling, reading, etc.)
- 1:00pm** Choose Your Own Adventure (crafts, science, activity, hike)
- 2:30pm** Clean and Pack
- 3:00pm** Final Activities
- 3:45pm** Depart for Castle Rock
- 5:00pm** Arrive at Castle Rock for Pick Up



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### **CAMPER PARTICIPATION**

It is the child's responsibility to participate in the program including work, play, values sharing and living together. Please inform your child of their responsibility to participate and contribute to a safe environment for learning and adventuring. There will be time built into each day for independent and individual time. If a child is struggling to participate, an instructor and the child will decide together on the best appropriate action, which may include a break, a separate activity or the confidence building needed to rejoin the group.



### **OUR EXPECTATIONS OF CAMPERS**

While at the Volcano Venture we expect your child to:

- Actively participate in activities
- Follow instructions of adults
- Respect other campers, staff, themselves, the building and the landscape
- Behave in a safe and responsible manner
- Come prepared for a range of activities both indoors and outdoors
- Come with open and curious mind

Please review the Participant Waiver and the Participant Code of Conduct (below) for grounds of dismissal.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Mount St. Helens Institute wants you to have a great time at Mount St. Helens! To make sure everyone's visit is a safe and enjoyable one, we expect all participants to honor the following:

#### **1. Let's keep this a safe place where no one gets injured.**

- Turn in all medications to your teachers.
- Wear proper footwear (tennis shoes or hiking boots) while outside.
- Abide by all safety instructions given by MSHI staff.
- Wear shoes at all times in the dining area.
- Do not run indoors or on the Science & Learning Center deck.
- Do not climb onto structures or lean over the railing on the Science & Learning Center deck.
- Please wash your hands before all meals. Use hot water and soap.

#### **2. Let's treat this amazing place with respect and practice the principles of Leave No Trace.**

- Stay on the established trails unless your instructor indicates otherwise.
- Pick up your trash and put it in the proper container.
- Leave sticks, stones, and plants in nature where they belong.
- Return all animals we are studying to their proper homes.
- Respect all living things.

#### **3. Let's treat one another with care and respect.**

- Encourage your peers and do not use "put downs" or inappropriate words, or tease others.
- Respect other people's belongings, materials, and personal space.
- Respect each other's privacy. Do not enter the bunkroom of the opposite gender.

#### **4. Let's make this a fun and exciting learning experience.**

- Follow all program schedules and do your best to be on time.

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- If you brought something you should not have, give it to MSHI staff right away.
- Do not use electronics at Volcano Venture except to take photos.
- Be curious! Mount St. Helens rocks!

### **5. Let's treat the Science & Learning Center with care and respect.**

- Food is not allowed in the SLC bunkrooms. If your group or individuals brings snacks, they may store them in the kitchen area. Ask a MSHI staff member for assistance.
- Help us to keep the place neat and clean by picking up after yourself.
- Treat exhibits at the Science & Learning Center gently and with respect.
- MSHI staff will let you know which parts of the building are off-limits. Stay out of these areas to respect others that use and share space at the Science & Learning Center.

## **HOMESICKNESS**

- Homesickness is natural, but please help prepare your child for camp by discussing homesickness, especially if he or she has not been to an overnight camp before. Express confidence in your child for his/her courage to explore and to leave home. Let your child know that camp staff are here to support them and talk with them about their sadness.
- Due to the short length of the camp and the importance of children exploring and developing their individual sense of self, we will not permit phone calls home for minor situations or check-ins.
- If you are concerned about your child becoming homesick, please contact us.
- Homesickness, minor illness and change of family plans, dismissal from program due to behavior and personal schedules conflict/ changes are not sufficient grounds for a refund.

## **SAFETY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Safety ensures fun, so we make safety our priority. All our staff are first aid/CPR certified and trained on Institute protocols and policies. Each field site has an emergency response plan and each day staff review the risks and preventative measures inherent in the day's activities. Students also participate during daily safety talks. Because risks are part of life, we also ask that students take small risks to develop their confidence and to learn to trust their judgment during designated activities. A volcanic eruption is highly unlikely without significant warning. If warning signals occur, the Mount St. Helens Institute will safely evacuate the mountain and contact parents/guardians. Staff leads carry US Forest Service radios during outdoor activities and have instant access to Dispatch even when there is no cell coverage.

## **EMERGENCIES**

If there is an emergency at home, parents/ guardians may call (360) 274-2114. This is the landline on-site at the Science and Learning Center. You may also call Abi at (414) 617-3114, who will be offsite but available via cellphone. **Only call these numbers in an emergency.**

If there is a minor injury on the mountain, Mount St. Helens Institute staff will provide minor first aid treatment and will notify the parent/ guardian. In an emergency, Mount St. Helens Institute will first contact emergency medical professionals. Per the liability waiver, any physicians, hospital, and/or health provider will provide medical treatment promptly. Mount St. Helens Institute staff shall notify the parent/ guardian as quickly as possible.

## **STAFF SELECTION AND TRAINING**

Our staff are carefully selected for their experience and passion for working with youth. Permanent staff are professional and compassionate educators. Seasonal staff range from early career

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professionals to undergraduate students seeking a degree in education. All staff receive a rigorous criminal background check before they are hired and references are thoroughly examined. All staff receive approximately 48 hours of training including educational content, safety and risk procedures and policies, defensive driving, wilderness first aid and managing group dynamics.

### **LODGING FOR PARENTS**

If you are coming from far away and would like to stay in the area during the camp here are some ideas and options for lodging. Parents are not allowed to stay at the Science and Learning Center.

#### *Camping/RV:*

- The nearest public camp ground is Seaquest State Park.
- There is also a private (RV type) campground in Kid Valley.
- There are also lodging options at EcoPark and Silver Lake Resort.

#### *Bed and Breakfasts:*

- On Highway 12, Shepherd's Inn B&B
- In Castle Rock, Blue Heron Chateau

#### *Hotels and Motels:*

- Mt. St. Helens Motel
- Timberland Inn and Suites

There are also many other options in the Kelso/Longview area.

### **CONTACT NAMES AND NUMBERS**

Pre-Camp Questions | Call Sonja at (360) 891-5107 or email [learn@mshinstitute.org](mailto:learn@mshinstitute.org)

Drop off Day | Call Sonja at (716) 471-2215

Emergency during Camp | Science and Learning Center (360) 274-2114

Offsite Staff for Emergency during Camp | Abi at (414) 617-3114.

Pick up Day | Sonja at (716) 471-2215

Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

**We look forward to meeting your child and having a wonderful learning adventure at Mount St. Helens!**

**Sincerely,**

**Sonja Melander**

Science Education Coordinator

[smelander@mshinstitute.org](mailto:smelander@mshinstitute.org)

**Abigail Groskopf**

Science Education Director

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