



Camp Pemigewassett • 2010 • Pre-Camp Newsletter



FORMS

All forms, found in your online account, are due May 31 (even for second session campers!) Please contact us if you have any questions. On June 1st, we start cabin assignment for the summer.

The Transportation Form must be filled out for every camper, even those residing a few miles from Pemi. This year we will again run a charter bus on Opening Day and Closing Day between New York City and Pemi, with a stop in Darien, CT. There is NO bus on July 20. The cost is \$150 for a one-way trip. We will also meet boys traveling by plane in Manchester and Boston, although the increase in security means that we may not always be able to meet boys at the gate, particularly in Boston. Because of the configuration of the airport in Manchester, we are very comfortable about the safety of meeting boys who fly directly, even without the “unaccompanied minor” designation, and we encourage you to book your son’s travel through Manchester if *at all* possible. There is a charge of \$50 for pickup or drop-off in Manchester, and a charge of \$150 for pickup or drop-off in Boston. Please call with any questions about any aspect of travel. The **Additional Options Form** lets you plan in advance for bus/escort fees, and they will be charged to your son’s expense account. We will have names and cell phone numbers of the bus and airport escorts available for you within a week of your sons’ flights.

Parent and Camper Questionnaires provide great insight in helping us place boys in cabins, so please return them asap. Parents are sometimes hesitant to provide camps with personal information about their child’s behavior or past experience. Some fear that the information will be misused, while others are concerned about their child being labeled, singled out, or treated differently. All parents want to see their child have a strong, fresh start at camp, unencumbered by past problems. As seasoned camp directors who are parents ourselves, we appreciate these concerns. We also know how invaluable such information can be in helping your child make as smooth and as happy an adjustment to camp as possible - something we know all parents want, too. Having prior knowledge about a learning difficulty, ADHD, a bed-wetting problem, or a recent loss or major change in the family or child’s life makes a tremendous difference in helping us be sensitive to your child’s need for patience, understanding and reassurance, especially in the first few days of camp. This is especially true for children who have an attention problem or are nervous about new situations. Children often use their behavior rather than words to tell us something is bothering them. Having advance knowledge of areas that might be difficult for your child helps us understand the message in his actions. Our commitment is to use such information only to help

your child adjust to camp. It will never be used at camp unless necessary, and then only with the greatest of discretion. We encourage you to make us a full partner in planning for your child's summer.

PACKING INFORMATION

Here are some thoughts about items that your sons may find useful at camp, and those that are better left at home:

Don't send too much! - In recent years, we have been inundated with volumes of stuff crammed into the cabins. We have done our best to pare down the list of suggested clothing and equipment, and urge you not to add more than the suggested amounts. Don't skimp on the socks, though, and plan to send a few new pairs at midseason to fulltime campers. Pemi has always eaten socks, and it probably always will. Clothes will be sent to the laundry on Sundays and returned Tuesdays.

Send shin guards and cleats if your son is likely to play soccer and baseball. They are required for playing in actual games, and cleats provide safety when conditions are wet.



Label everything! Every shoe, t-shirt, bathing suit, towel, tennis racket, flashlight! Label, label, label. While we make every effort to encourage campers to be responsible for their belongings, "lost and found" can take on a daunting life of its own. It makes it much easier to reconnect a boy and his belongings when *each and every item* brought to camp is labeled with first and last name. (Tip: colored nail polish is great for labeling flashlights and such). The standard packing list and the special sheet for equipment for trips out of camp are both available on the Pemi website and inside The Camp Spot catalog. Feel free to contact us with any questions.

Blankets – Although the packing list calls for "warm blankets," these certainly do not have to be wool (although the Camp Spot offers these). You may send any sort of blankets, or even substitute a quilt or duvet. Because the beds are small, blankets may work better, however. The bottom line is warmth!

Dress code – Clothing such as t-shirts with any mention of alcoholic or tobacco products is prohibited, as are any other suggestive or inappropriate slogans or designs.

Musical Instruments – We encourage campers to bring musical instruments to camp, and will provide safe storage space. The Silver Cornet Band should be as dynamic as ever, and will be on the road for performances a number of times this summer, including return trips to Warren Old Home Day and Wentworth Market Day. We offer boys a chance to participate, no matter what their level of experience, no matter what their instrument. We also expect to have a number of string players attending camp this summer and hope to form some ensembles. All musicians, including piano players, who wish to work with our music staff are encouraged to bring music with them. There will be many solo and group opportunities for boys who are eager to perform.

Radios, CD players, iPods, cameras, Kindles, etc. – Boys who want to bring radios, CD players, or iPod Shuffles *without a display screen* may do so, although the opportunities to use these are limited, and we discourage bringing expensive equipment or large numbers of CDs. Though some of this is outdated technology, we cannot allow iPods other than Shuffles without a display screen, since so many now have video capability, and we cannot spend time being video police. (Nor do we think you want your boys spending their valuable time at Pemi watching an LCD screen.) Mp3 players, cell phones, and laptops are *forbidden*. (Boys who fly to/from camp may have their cell phone while traveling, but it must be kept in the office during camp). We heartily encourage campers to read, but Kindles should *not* come to camp. We have a fully-stocked library. Digital cameras are fine, and as with other belongings, should be labeled. Digital Photography is a popular occupation, and while we can't guarantee space in the occupation, a simple (aka not expensive) digital camera is handy, though loaners will be available. CDs must be marked with the camper's name. Boys may not use portable music players outside of the cabins, and only with headphones during rest hour. Boys may not bring music with inappropriate lyrics. Please note: iPod Shuffles will need an adaptor for charging via an electrical outlet.

Video games – Campers should not bring hand-held video games to camp. This specifically includes DS and PSP, but also covers any hand-held electronic gaming devices. We encourage boys to bring books, art supplies, cards, chess sets and similar items to occupy rest hours and quiet times. Remember, though, our library is fully stocked with books and games!

Sport and Game cards – We do not allow boys to bring any sort of trading cards to camp, or have them sent during the season. These are considered by some to have value, and since there is no way to mark them, they are sadly subject to theft or misplacement, and can become the center of more disputes than we care to mediate. In addition to baseball cards and the like, this includes Yu-Gi-Oh! Cards, Magic cards, and other collectible card games.

Other toys – Campers are not allowed to have squirt guns, water balloons, or Silly String. While these objects are rightly associated with summer fun, they unfortunately don't work well in a camp setting. Please contact us if you are uncertain as to whether an item is appropriate to pack or to send in a package.

Drugs and Alcohol – Campers are obviously forbidden to possess or use tobacco, alcohol, or any controlled substances. Violation of this rule is grounds for immediate dismissal.

Tips on Toiletries – Here are some suggestions as to what each boy should bring:

- **Biodegradable soap** (in a watertight container) **and shampoo**. There are many biodegradable options; please read the label (Dr. Bronner's and Burt's Bees are two options). Soap baths take place in our beautiful lake, and we need to take care of it!
- Wash cloth
- Toothbrush (in a carrying case)
- Toothpaste
- Dental Floss
- Fingernail Clippers/Nail File
- Facial Tissues
- Personal grooming items as needed (Hair Brush, Comb, Deodorant)
- Chapstick/Lip Balm
- Sunscreen (20 SPF or higher)
- Mosquito Repellant (DEET percentage at your discretion)

One of the best ways to carry these items to the bathroom/shower is in a small plastic bucket, or a shower caddy with the capacity to drain. Some standard toilet kits aren't quite waterproof enough for the rigors of camp.

We are very aware of the need to help all of the boys protect themselves from overexposure to the sun. If you pack sunscreen for them, we'll make sure to nag them about using it several times every day, and limit their exposure in every other appropriate way, including wearing hats and keeping their shirts on all the time when they are not in the water. Please note that at our suggestion the Camp Spot supplies a full-brimmed cotton hat that is ideal for sun protection.

OPENING DAY

Arrival on Opening day – If you plan to drive your son to camp on June 26th or July 20th, please arrive *no earlier than 2:00 p.m.!!!* Arrival prior to that time will interfere with crucial final preparations involving all staff members. Despite what your sons may tell you, an early arrival will not enhance their chances of selecting the "best bunk." We instruct staff members to assign beds by lottery with no premium for early arrival. When you reach camp, you will be met by smiling senior staff members holding clipboards who will direct you to your son's cabin. When you arrive at the cabin, you may take as much time as you like to meet your son's counselor and speak with him. We ask, however, that you depart quickly once your son's baggage has been delivered to the cabin, and we request specifically that you do not help him unpack and make his bed. His counselor is prepared to do this, and it will greatly enhance your son's initial adjustment to let this occur, as the first opportunity to bond with his counselor and cabin mates is while unpacking. Difficult though this may be, a short, unemotional

farewell is recommended. The best place to say goodbye is in the cabin. Try to avoid the last walk back to the car!

Opening Day Reception – Once parents have delivered their son to his cabin, they are invited for a Reception in the Lodge, where Danny, Tom, and Dottie and a number of senior staff very much look forward to saying hello and chatting. Coffee, soft drinks, and cookies will be served. Tissues will be provided. We will also have a similar reception on the afternoon of July 20 for parents of arriving second-half campers.

Notification of Arrival – If you are not driving or accompanying your son to camp, we will notify you of his safe arrival by telephone (if your son is flying) or email (if your son is taking the bus) on the evening of that day. We will use the contact information that you provided on the application, unless you tell us otherwise.

COMMUNICATION DURING CAMP

We do not allow boys to telephone home from camp, and strongly advise parents not to call their sons at camp except in cases of extreme urgency. We do urge you to contact the directors, the Office staff, or any of the Middle Managers at any time if you have a concern or would like an update on your son's progress. We will routinely contact the parents of first-time campers early in the season if requested. Boys are not allowed to send or receive fax messages unless their parents are out of the country, and there is no camper access to e-mail. As veteran parents know, we are available to you via e-mail on a daily basis, and are happy to be in touch as regularly as you like.



Each boy will have his own mailbox at camp, or share one with his brother(s). Boys love to receive mail, and receiving even a short letter or postcard is a happy event. We encourage parents to begin the process of mailing letters to their son even prior to his arrival at camp, so there will be a letter waiting when he arrives. **Our Package Policy states that a boy is allowed to receive no more than one flat-envelope style package per week.** Magazines, a deck of cards, books, and other items that a boy can use during rest hour are appropriate to send. “Random stuff and silly toys” can honestly distract your son from living in the moment and making the most of his limited time at Pemi. Sending any sort of food, candy, or gum to a camper is unacceptable as it attracts wildlife to the cabins, and we take this quite seriously. Please do not slip “just one piece” of gum or candy into your standard mail. Your son will open his package (and lumpy envelopes!)

in the presence of office staff, and it can be disappointing to have candy and silly toys confiscated. **Please inform family and friends** of the no-food and limited-package rule. Do encourage family and friends to write letters! Instructions for proper mailing addresses (US Mail, UPS, FedEx, etc) can be found at <http://www.camppemi.com/contact/>. **Check out suggestions on what to write in your letters by going to: <http://www.camppemi.com/parents/links-and-tips/>.** Many parents have found this advice extremely valuable.

All campers are required to write a letter home once weekly, and we do our best to enforce this. Please let us know if you are not receiving this minimum (and usually minimal) missal. In addition to these, you will receive a letter from your son's counselor at the end of July (for first-session and full-time campers), and a final report from the Director and Middle Managers (for full-time and second-session campers). Younger campers benefit from coming to camp with pre-stamped and pre-addressed envelopes, and some practice in the art of writing letters. Once again, be sure to start your letter-writing a few days before your son comes to camp. That way, he will receive mail during those important first few days of adjustment.

VISITING WEEKENDS

Visiting Weekends will take place on July 17-18 and July 31-August 1 and are designed *specifically* for parents of full-season campers *only*. Each of those families is asked to select one of the two weekends. Except in the case of an emergency, parents are asked not to visit at any other time, except to see their son perform in the Gilbert & Sullivan operetta during Pemi Week, an event to which they are warmly welcomed. All visiting parents are invited to share a meal with us during camp, and may take their sons out of camp for a meal as well. Overnight trips out of camp during a visiting weekend, however, are not permitted. Boys may leave camp only with parents or grandparents. If you are unable to visit your son, it is possible to designate another adult with whom he may leave camp during a visiting weekend, via a Permission Form that will be available in your online account in advance of the visiting weekend(s). The sole exception to allowing each full-season camper to have one and only one out-of-camp trip involves situations of joint parental custody.

Ideally, a typical parental visit begins sometime on Saturday morning, following the end of Inspection at 9:20. All boys will begin their normal morning routines, and visiting parents may find them at their assigned occupation. It's possible that we will have an athletic day scheduled with another camp, and if that's the case, the schedule will be posted at the office. Boys may choose to participate in occupations and/or sports, and have parents observe. The competing camps in this instance would be located nearby. One of the reasons for adhering to a normal Saturday routine is to allow parents to see camp in action. We also encourage families to join us in the Mess Hall at mealtime. As many of you know, the Pemi dining experience is nourishing, entertaining, and is the best way for you to learn about how we operate. Parents may take their son(s) (and no guests) out to Hanover or Plymouth for lunch and/or supper, and to indulge in shopping/movies/local tourist attractions. We are happy to help with suggestions.



We ask all families who leave camp with their sons to have them back at camp no later than 7:15 p.m. on Saturday, and hope that everyone can join us for our Weekly Campfire, which begins at 7:45. (Coming back after Campfire starts is unavoidably disruptive - you will know what we mean if you have ever had 250 sets of eyes glaring at you as your SUV rumbles across the nearby bridge during a quiet guitar solo). Whether you are visiting for one day or two, all Saturday goodbyes should occur directly after Campfire, and at the Campfire Circle. We reclaim everyone for bedtime.

We also follow our normal routine on Sundays. Many families extend their visit through the end of Sunday morning, and are welcome at camp any time after 9:30. Again, families may stay in camp or take their sons out for the noon meal. (There is nothing quite like brunch at Fat Bob's Ice Cream. Ask your sons.) We again welcome families to join us for the noon meal at Pemi. Visits should begin winding down after lunch, and departure must take place prior to the end of rest hour, 2:30pm (NOTE: THIS IS A NEW DEPARTURE TIME). There seems to be a proportional relationship between the length of a Sunday visit and the difficulty of saying goodbye. We hope that these suggestions will help you plan a productive visit. Please let us know if we can be of further help in this process.

THE CAMP STORE

Pemi has a Camp Store stocked with toiletries, stationery, and other sundries boys may need in their day-to-day living. Although we would prefer to have your son come to Pemi with every incidental item he needs, he will always be able to replenish such items as soap, shampoo, sunscreen, toothpaste, batteries, stamps, writing paper and so on if he runs out or misplaces them. We also have a limited number of mosquito nets, water bottles, and flashlights. Please tell your son about the existence of the store, and describe to him how he will be able to charge items to his account. We'll do the same, and guard against too much impulse buying. (Perhaps you can strike a deal with him to split the remainder of his account balance if he's frugal within reason.)

ODDS AND ENDS

Final Invoices and Camper Expense Accounts – Unless otherwise arranged, tuition is due by May 31, and the final invoice for tuitions will come out this week. (Thanks very much to those of you who have already paid the remainder of your balance!) Please note that funds for deposit in camper expense accounts may be included **in the same check** as tuition payments, as was explained in Dottie's email. If your tuition has already been paid, please mail your check for funds for deposit in your son's expense account **before** camp starts. (See below for mailing addresses).

Remember to enroll with CampMeds if your son will take medications in pill form on a daily or "as-needed" basis. This includes vitamins as well as Zyrtec and Claritin (but not standard supplies like Tylenol, Advil, Tums, etc., which are stocked in the Health Center). Avoid a late charge by **enrolling and providing prescriptions** by the deadline (full-season and first-session campers: May 26th; June 20th for second-session campers).

Notification of Illness – You will be informed at once by telephone or email if your son sustains an injury requiring medical treatment or an illness requiring a stay in the infirmary. Pemi has two Registered Nurses who live in the infirmary and are on 24-hour call. If a boy requires the attention of a physician, he will be taken to nearby Bradford, Vermont, to the office of Dr. Mark Harris, the camp pediatrician. He is affiliated with the renowned Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon, New Hampshire.

Tipping – Pemi staff members are not allowed to receive tips, gratuities, gift cards, or gifts of any kind. Please do not place them in an awkward position by offering these. A well-written letter of thanks will mean more to a counselor than you might imagine.

Rental Bedding – As a convenience to campers from outside the continental United States or who are flying from a distance, camp will rent them three warm blankets, four sheets, two pillow cases and a pillow. The charge is \$30.00 per half season, and \$60.00 for the full season. Please inform camp by June 15 if you wish to take advantage of this service. The best procedure is to select “Rental Bedding” on the Additional Options Form found in your online account.

Emergency Notification – If you will be difficult to reach at times during the camp season, or plan to travel, please make sure that we have your itinerary, and the address and telephone number of an alternate adult to contact in the event of an emergency. These can be updated at any time during the season.



Birthdays – If your son’s birthday occurs when he is at camp, it will be duly recognized on that day, and he will be the guest of honor at our annual midseason Birthday Banquet if he is a full season or first session camper. Cards are appropriate for you to send, but remember the package policy! Your written word will mean much more than receiving “things” that clutter a cabin and are better saved to open at home. Sorry, but telephone calls are not permitted.

HOW TO REACH US

Before June 12:
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Tel.: 717-243-2826

After June 12:
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