



## **2015 Parent Handbook**

*Please read over the enclosed information thoroughly and carefully. There are some forms to complete, guidelines to follow and important times to note. We look forward to seeing you – and your child – this summer!*

**River Valley Ranch  
4443 Grave Run Rd.  
Manchester, MD 21102**

**Phone: 443-712-1010**

**Fax: 443-712-1015**

**Email: [info@rivervalleyranch.com](mailto:info@rivervalleyranch.com)**

**Website: [www.rivervalleyranch.com](http://www.rivervalleyranch.com)**

## Welcome to RVR!

Since being established by Scottish brothers Peter and John Bisset in 1952, River Valley Ranch has provided an exciting and life-changing camp experience for thousands of young people from all over America. Over the years, experience has been our most-valued teacher. We believe it is imperative to have an excellent, trained staff (certified medical personnel, certified lifeguards, certified ropes and climbing instructors, certified horsemen and well-trained and dedicated counselors) alert to the needs and safety of the camper. At River Valley Ranch you will find carefully prepared food and clean accommodations approved by the county health and fire departments.



A daily program is prepared with each group of campers in mind. We strive to provide an exciting camp experience, combined with an emphasis on the spiritual needs of youth. River Valley Ranch is a non-denominational Christian camp sponsored by the Peter & John Radio Fellowship, Inc., a registered non-profit religious organization. Everyone is welcome to attend.

### *2015 Message from the Director:*

*As a parent, I'm always trying to find the balance between answering all my kids questions and helping them to discover the answers on their own. More often than not I err on the side of doing the thinking for them but while that's certainly easier it may not always be the best. Jesus said "seek and you will find". The answers don't usually just come to you. If you really want to find truth, you have to be inspired to seek it yourself. At RVR we are passionate about creating unique and challenging experiences that inspire students to seek the truth themselves. Our hope is that your camper will have an experience where they can discover their full God given potential through an encounter with Christ. We look forward to serving you this summer!*

*Jon Bisset Executive Director*

RVR exists to provide a genuine Christian experience that evangelizes, disciples, and encourages all who come to be more like Jesus Christ. All of our programs are designed to revolve around the following core truths:

1. That God loves us and gave His Son to die for us.
2. That loving God also means loving others.
3. That we are accountable to God and must live under His authority.
4. That being a Christian is the most exciting and fulfilling experience that anyone can ever have.

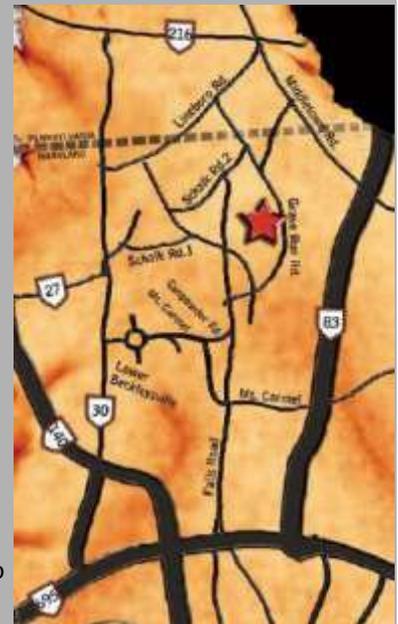
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## Directions

### From the North:

From Lancaster or York, Pennsylvania on Interstate 83 south, take exit 8. Follow Route 216 west through Glen-Rock to Route 516. Turn left onto Route 516. Go one block, turn right (still 516), proceed to the next road (Grave Run Road.) and turn left. Continue on Grave Run Road 3.2 miles to the Ranch.



### From Baltimore - East:

Take I-695 to I-83 north. I-83 to exit 27, Hereford. Turn left onto Mount Carmel Road, proceed to Falls Road (Rt. 25) where you will see blinking red lights and turn right. Take Falls Road 4.5 miles to Grave Run Road. Turn right and continue 3.2 miles to Ranch.

### From Baltimore - West:

Take I-695 to I-795 to Route 30. Follow Route 30 to Hampstead and turn right at LOWER Beckleysville Road (traffic light). Stay straight on Lower Beckleysville road, which subsequently turns into Mt Carmel Road and Gunpowder Road. At the next stop, turn left onto Falls Road. Proceed for a few minutes on Falls Road, then turn right onto Grave Run Road. Turn right and continue 3.2 miles to Ranch.

### From Westminster:

Take 27 East towards Manchester. Right onto Route 30. Left onto York St. (at light) 1.3 miles from the light, the road bears left. Bear right onto Schalk Road #1. Proceed to stop sign at Lineboro Road. Left onto Alesia to Lineboro Road, then immediate right to continue on Schalk Road #1. Proceed to stop sign at Grave Run. Road and turn right. Proceed 1 mile to the Ranch.

*Please read over the enclosed information carefully.  
You are responsible for all the information in the parent handbook.*

# Before Camp Begins

## Payment Policy

The balance of your camp fee must be received in our office by May 15, 2015. If you have extenuating circumstances, please contact us prior to May 15th. We will attempt to work out a solution. **A \$20 fee will be assessed for all late payments.** Checks should be made out to River Valley Ranch with your camper's name in the memo line. There is a \$25 returned check fee for any check returned to RVR. You can access your child's account, view balances and make payments online anytime from our website [www.rivervalleyranch.com](http://www.rivervalleyranch.com).

## Changing Sessions

We can make changes to your registration week or program if space allows. **All change requests must be done in writing (letter, fax or email).** Changes made after May 15th, 2013 will result in a \$20 fee. Neither deposits nor registrations are transferable to another camper.

## Cancellation Policy

Should it be necessary to cancel your registration, **you must contact RVR in writing (letter, fax or email).** We do not take any changes or cancellations over the phone.

### If written cancellation is received:

- Prior to May 15th, 2015 (\$100 Fee)
- Between May 15th and 14 days prior to the beginning of registered session (\$150 Fee)
- Less than 14 days, but more than 7 days before start of registered session (\$200 Fee)
- Within 7 days of registered session (\$250 Fee)

*Payments exceeding these fees will be returned.*

\*There will be no exceptions except for verified medical reasons: only after RVR has received written notice from a qualified physician verifying the camper's inability to attend due to illness or injury, will all but the non-refundable \$100 deposit will be returned.

## Required Forms

**Campers must bring all Health Forms with them to Check-In.** We will not accept any health forms in the mail or through fax. If your camper is attending more than one session, please note additional sessions on the form for the first session. A physician's visit is not necessary to complete your child's Health Information Form. If Asthma or Diabetes have been diagnosed, you will need to have your physician complete the appropriate form. The Medication Authorization form must be completed by your physician and accompany any medication brought to camp.



# Before Camp Begins

## **What to Bring: (All camps)**

*Please see camper dress code (page 6)*

- Sleeping Bag\*
- Pillow
- Jacket or Sweatshirt
- T-shirts, Shorts
- Clothes that can get dirty/wet
- Raincoat or Poncho
- Swimsuits (girls, one piece only)
- Pajamas
- Bath & Pool Towel
- 1 pair of long pants
- Laundry Bag
- Tennis shoes
- Extra shoes
- Shower Shoes (flip flops)
- Toiletries
- Hat
- Sunscreen, Chapstick, Bug spray
- Notepad & Pen or Pencil
- Bible (if you have one)
- Water Bottle\*

\*= Required

## **Special Equipment for Camps:**

***Adventure camp:*** Hiking shoes/boots, backpack, toiletry bag, flashlight.

***Horsemanship, Trailriding Extreme Rancher:*** Long pants, Boots with a heel (1/2 to 1 inch) long-sleeved shirts.

***Theatre Camp:*** Packing lists will be e- mailed prior to arrival.

**X-Camp:** Skateboard, spare parts, helmet, knee & elbow pads , backpack, toiletry bag.

**Paintball Camp:** Extra clothing to play paintball in, personal water bottle. Bank money for extra Paintballs purchased\*.

**Provided:** Paintball Mask- Vforce Vantage, Paintball Marker (gun)- Tippmann 98 Custom, filled Co2 tanks, 400 Paintballs per day

**Optional:** Cleats (non-Metal), Paintball Mask, Paintball gun, Compressed Air or Anti-siphon Co2 tanks, Paintball pants, jerseys, pod-packs, squeegee/ barrel swab, pads.

**Do NOT bring:** Paintballs\*, Paint grenades, Standard Co2 tanks, Modified Masks not meeting ASTM standards.

Your camper may bring his/her own paintball marker. Please provide your own barrel bag. Bring the manufacturer's tools included when the gun was purchased. Bring any repair parts/O-rings that were provided when the gun was produced. If you have none, it would be well advised to buy some (specific to your child's marker) at a local or online paintball store. RVR does not have any on hand and will not be able to make repairs unless parts are brought with the camper.

RVR Paintball staff will attempt repairs at the camper's consent, if the gun malfunctions, however, we are not trained gun techs and will not guarantee to fix any malfunctions.

If your camper has an electronic marker, please note RVRs rules regarding them.

1. It must have a capped rate of fire at 10bps (balls per second). The manufacturer's manual provided with the gun should contain directions in accomplishing this.
2. Only semi-auto firing modes are allowed. This excludes ramping, full-auto and any mode that allows the gun to shoot more than one ball for one trigger pull.
3. Failure to follow the rules will result in your camper not being allowed to play with his/her own paintball marker.

\*Each Camper is provided with 400 Paint- balls each day as part of the cost of camp; if additional paint is desired, it may be purchased at the cost of \$4 per 140 additional paintballs, \$15 for 500 paintballs, or\$50 for a case of 2,000 paintballs. 300-600 paintballs per day sustains most campers. If your camper will need more, leave extra bank money is left in your camper's bank account to allow for this.

*Please mark all of your camper's belongings before coming to camp!*

# Before Camp Begins

## Camper Dress Code

We require campers to wear modest clothing while at camp. In some cases, we may ask campers who are wearing questionably immodest clothing to change. We expect parents to help us by making sure campers pack appropriately. ***Clothing should not display any offensive language/message or drug/alcohol related graphics.***

### Shirts must:

- Cover the entire back (i.e., no cutout backs, no shirts that tie in back).
- Cover the midriff area (bottom of the shirt must meet the top of the lower attire at all times).
- Cover undergarments. Not be see-through.
- Fit modestly so that chest area is covered.
- Have two straps, one on each shoulder (no tube tops, halter tops or spaghetti straps). Tank top straps must be 2-4 inches wide and must completely cover undergarments.

### Shorts/Skirts/Pants:

- Skirts, and shorts should not be excessively short. It is expected that skirts/shorts will cover mid-thigh when sitting down.
- Pants must cover undergarments at all times .

### Swimsuits:

- Girls should wear a modest, **one-piece swimsuit** that covers the upper chest and is not high cut. (*Tankinis that completely cover the belly are fine.*)

## What NOT to Bring

Campers should NOT bring any of the following items: cash, cell phones, electronic games, food, pets, fireworks, computers, DVD players, water guns, lighters, matches, tobacco products, drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, or weapons of any type. If a camper brings any of the above items to camp, the item will be confiscated and either sent home or held until the end of the session. Campers found in possession of weapons, drugs, alcohol or drug paraphernalia will immediately be dismissed from camp and the item(s) will not be returned.

*Please do not bring any valuable items to camp, as campers tend to forget, lose track of, or misplace things.*

## Bringing Your Own Food

In order to prevent pests we do not allow campers to bring their own food. However, if your child has certain food allergies or conditions that would prohibit them from eating our meals, please call our office at 443-712-1010 to discuss your options with our Food Service Director.

# While Your Child is at Camp

## Camper Check- In

Camper Check– In begins Sunday at 2 pm and ends at 4 pm. If you are going to be late please call our office at 443.712.1010. If you arrive after 4 pm, come to the Ranch Office to check-in (located in Frontier Town).

### Check In Locations:

#### Frontier Town: (Grades 7-11)

- Teen Classic
- Paintball Camp
- Horsemanship
- Trail Riding
- Extreme Rancher
- Theatre Camp
- X-Camp
- Adventure Camp
- Week 7 Middle School Camps

#### Fort Roller: (Grades 2-6)

- Arrowhead Woods
- Jr.Classic
- Jr.Trail
- Jr.Paintball
- Jr. Adventure
- Jr. X-Camp
- Cowboy Camp
- Super Sleuth
- Outdoor Sportsman
- Junior Drama Camp

***Remember to label your child's luggage and personal items!***

## Weekly Schedule

If you are interested in the activities that are available to your camper, we have posted an approximate schedule in the FAQ section on our Website.

### Free Time Options

Each afternoon, campers have supervised Free Time to participate in a wide variety of activities. Campers can swim in the pool , play in streams, skate at the skate park or X-Barn, play games in the Gym or game room, visit our stores, craft shop, or grill, or spend some time hanging out with new friends. *Paintball is a free time option for Teen Classic campers with a small fee.*



### Camp Store

The Trading Post camp store, Snack Shop, Grill, Snowball Stand and Craft Shop are open every day during Free Time, from 1pm-3pm. You can find cowboy hats, T-shirts and books along with many other items in our Camp Store. The Snack Shop serves a variety of candy, beverages and ice cream. Our Snowball Stand serves snowballs in many different flavors to help cool campers off. The Craft Shop has many different crafts; some are free and some are available to be purchased.

# While Your Child is at Camp

## Camp Rules and Guidelines

When campers arrive at camp, they will be given an orientation about the procedures and guidelines they will be expected to follow through the week. Below are the behavioral expectations for campers at RVR. Please review these with your camper to help prepare them for a great camp experience!

### General Guidelines:

- Campers are expected to treat other campers with respect.
- Campers are expected to follow the instructions of counselors and lifeguards.
- Campers must follow the RVR Dress Code.
- No food is allowed in cabins, Buffalo Lodge, Gym or Old Town Meeting House.
- We do not allow physical contact between boys and girls.
- Campers are only to enter their own dorm. All others are off limits.
- Campers may not leave their cabin after curfew.
- Campers are expected to refrain from inappropriate language (cursing, sexual comments, racist remarks, etc...).

### The following actions may result in campers being sent home immediately:

- Fighting
- Stealing
- Curfew violation
- Going into the cabin of the opposite sex
- Vandalism of any kind – including any kind of graffiti
- Inappropriate male/female contact
- Ruining another camper's week (harassment, bullying, etc...)

### Property and Equipment Damage

Parents are financially responsible for intentional damage to equipment and facilities caused by their camper.

### Discipline

While the majority of campers at River Valley Ranch have no problems fitting into the camp structure, there are a few isolated cases where disciplinary problems arise. In most situations, campers are given at least 2 warnings to correct their behavior. These warnings often involve the camper having to take time-out from the program. If the camper does not respond to the first 2 warnings then River Valley Ranch may send the camper home. In some instances warnings are not an option and immediate dismissal may be in order.

River Valley Ranch reserves the right to request withdrawal of a camper if one or more of the following conditions exist:

- The camper is continually not participating in or benefiting from the camp program.
- The staff cannot provide adequate or safe care for the camper
- The staff cannot provide adequate or safe care to other enrolled campers due to the care needs of this camper.

\*Withdrawal of a camper for any of the above reasons will result in the forfeiture of your entire camp fee. We strongly suggest that parents sit down with their children prior to camp and discuss these matters in detail.

# While Your Child is at Camp

## Homesickness

If your camper becomes homesick we will do our best to try and keep them at camp. Most cases of homesickness pass within a day or two. However, if they become unduly homesick we will contact you. We encourage you to remain enthusiastic about your child being at camp, even if we have to call you. Most children remain at camp and have a great time with the proper support from their parents.

If you are concerned that your child may experience homesickness there are a number of wonderful resources on the internet to help your camper prepare for camp. Here are a few:

- <http://www.acacamps.org/media-center/how-to-choose/homesickness>
- [www.webmd.com/parenting/news/20070103/14-ways-to-prevent-kids-homesickness](http://www.webmd.com/parenting/news/20070103/14-ways-to-prevent-kids-homesickness)

## RVR's Lice Policy

We strongly encourage you to check your campers' heads for signs of lice or nits **before** you bring them to camp. Our staff will conduct preventive lice checks on campers when they arrive to check-in. RVR has a strict no-nit policy, and in accordance with that policy we will not allow campers to attend camp if our staff finds even one nit in your camper's hair. This is for the safety & consideration of all campers & staff at RVR. If our staff does find a nit or lice in your camper's hair, they will be sent home with instructions for you to treat them and their belongings. Your camper is welcome to return 24 hours after treatment. They will be re-checked by our Health Services Staff upon arrival, and must be nit-free to return to camp. We do not prorate for missed days due to lice.

If you need to move your camper to another week, we will be happy to accommodate you based on availability. If we don't have room in another week, or your schedule does not permit switching weeks, your camp fees can be applied to next year's registration. There will be no refunds for cancelled registrations due to lice. For more info on head lice & its treatment, please visit: [www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/parents.html](http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/parents.html)

## Spending Money

RVR uses a computerized camp bank where money is deposited prior to camp to use for purchasing items in the stores, craft shop, etc. This eliminates the problem of campers misplacing their spending money while at camp. Spending money usually ranges from \$20 - \$75. *To speed things up on check-in day, you can visit our website to deposit money online anytime prior to the Friday before your camper's Sunday arrival.* Unused bank money not donated to RVR will be sent back to you within a few weeks of your child returning from camp. *(Balances under \$5.00 will only be returned upon request..)*

*(Unused Referral Money is not sent to you after camp.)*

## Camper Care Packages

RVR offers a care package that can be purchased ahead of time by parents as a gift for their campers. Packages are delivered to campers on Monday or Tuesday during mail call, insuring that your camper receives their package while they are at camp.

Care Packages can be purchased online at the time when you are registering for camp or when you are checking in on the first day of camp.

Please visit: [rivervalleyranch.com/carepackages](http://rivervalleyranch.com/carepackages) for a full list of the contents of the kit.

# While Your Child is at Camp

## Food Allergies:

We understand that some children who come to the Ranch have food allergies. We will do our best to assist your camper in this area. The following are our guidelines for food allergies: Your child must be able to determine what it is they are allergic to. If they have a question about what is in a certain meal we have prepared, they should ask and the counselor will find out. At the time of check-in, please notify Health Services about your child's allergy to make sure it's on their health form.

## Illness

In the event the camper becomes ill or has an accident, the camp nurse will notify the parent or guardian. In some circumstances the parent will be asked to pick up the child early from camp. These situations include a camper who is sick or injured and not able to participate in the camp programs, or a camper who is running a fever of 100 degrees or more. If your child is suffering from any contagious illness (such as pink eye) please alert the nurse staff on the child's health form. For minor accidents/illness, the camp staff will provide appropriate first aid and provide the parent/guardian with a copy of the accident/injury report form.

Be sure to read the entire Health Services Instructions before attending camp. They will tell you our all our health policies and what forms need to be completed before attending camp. They can be found on our camp forms page: [www.rivervalleyranch.com/forms](http://www.rivervalleyranch.com/forms)

## A note about injury/illness:

If your child becomes ill or is injured while at camp and needs to be sent home, you may be eligible for a partial refund of your camp fees. If you provide a written notice from a doctor or medical professional, you will receive a refund according to the following scale:

If Camper leaves on	Monday	80%	Of total camp fees will be refunded
If Camper leaves on	Tuesday	60%	Of total camp fees will be refunded
If Camper leaves on	Wednesday	40%	Of total camp fees will be refunded
If Camper leaves on	Thursday	20%	Of total camp fees will be refunded
If Camper leaves on	Friday	0%	Of total camp fees will be refunded

# While Your Child is at Camp

## Contacting Campers

We request that you do not visit your child while they are at camp. We do, however, encourage you to write to your camper. Both regular mail and e-mail are delivered to campers at daily "Mail Call", usually around dinner time.

### Send camper mail to:

Camper Name  
Specific Camp (eg- Teen Classic)  
4443 Grave Run Rd  
Manchester, MD 21102

## Calling Home

Although you cannot contact your camper directly, campers will have limited access to use the phones during afternoon hours. Prior to camp, parents should discuss with their child(ren) their wishes or expectations regarding calls to home. They will need a pre-paid phone card, which can be purchased nearly anywhere and will be available for purchase in our camp store. We do not require campers to call home; the camper must take the initiative. Phones will not be available Sunday evening or Monday.

## In Case of Emergency

You can contact our Office: 443.712.1010 between the hours of 8:45 am - 4:30 pm (M-F). After business hours, there will be someone in the office from 5:30 pm until 11:00 pm. If you have an emergency after 11:00 pm you can call our emergency phone number, which will be posted on our website and our voicemail recording. **The emergency number should only be used for emergencies requiring immediate attention!!**

## Email and Photos

We offer an email and photo service for parents that lets you stay in touch with your camper while at camp! You can view pictures of your camper for free and purchase pictures and one-way emails that you can send to your camper!

### To send e-mails to your child or view pictures:

1. Login to your account on our site
2. You may login using your email address & password created during online registration
3. Select the email or photo menu option
4. Follow the instructions on the site



# After Camp Ends

## Departure from Camp

Camp ends Friday evening with our “Ranch Rally.” Parents are encouraged to come and attend the Rally with the campers. Each camper must be signed out. Counselors will be available at the end of the Rally. If you are unable to attend the Rally, you must pick up your campers by no later than 7:00 pm. If your child is picked up after the Rally, the parent must find the counselor and sign out. If someone other than the person designated on the camp application is going to be picking up the camper, please email or fax notification by noon on Friday.

***\*If you are planning to pick up your child earlier than 4:00 you must schedule an early pickup by e-mailing [info@rivervalleyranch.com](mailto:info@rivervalleyranch.com)***

### Check-Out Schedule:

#### Fort Roller: (Grades 2-6)

3:00-4:00 Demos\*  
5:00- 5:30 Rally  
5:30 Optional Cook-out  
7:00– All Campers Must Be Picked Up

\*Cowboy Camp, Jr. Paintball & Jr.  
X Camp

#### Frontier Town: (Grades 7-11)

4:00 to 5:00- Demos\*  
5:30-6:00- Rally  
6:00- Optional Cook-out  
7:00-All Campers Must Be Picked Up

\*Horse Camps, Theatre Camp, Paintball  
Camp & X-Camp.

**\*At pickup, please check your child’s bags carefully to make sure they are actually your child’s bags!**

## Parents’ Evaluation

We appreciate your immediate comments and feedback about our programs and staff. If you see or hear of a problem with any part of our camp program or staff, please contact the River Valley Ranch office as soon as possible. You can also leave your comments by filling out our Summer Camp Survey on our web page.

## Go Back to Camp Online!

OK, camp is over but the fun doesn’t have to stop! Your camper can go online and visit our site for photos of all the fun they had during the week. Your camper can also access some great devotionals and reference materials to help them apply what they learned at camp. Go to our website and click on the “**Back from Camp?**” Link.

## Lost and Found

Be sure your children take home all that they brought with them to camp. We also suggest you check the bunkhouse, clothesline, and pool before leaving. Also, check with the counselor for any items that may have been turned in to the counselor or held by the counselor for the week. If some of your child's items you packed for him/her have taken a hike, call us at the office during business hours (8:45 am - 4:30 pm, M-F) 443.712.1010 or email us at [rivervalleyranch.com](mailto:rivervalleyranch.com) and let us know what you have lost. We will do our best to find the item(s), at which time you may pick them up from the Ranch. All items unclaimed at the end of each summer are donated to a local mission.

# After Camp Ends

## Upcoming Events!



### January& February- Winter Meltdown

An exciting, action-packed, spiritually challenging, all- inclusive adventure for youth groups of ANY size!

**March-May-** Spring Retreats, Outdoor Ed, Horse Lessons  
Nestled in the rolling hillside of Carroll County, RVR provides a peaceful setting to relax and get away as well as a place to challenge your group both physically and spiritually.



### June through August– Summer Camp

RVR offers campers three different (age appropriate) summer camps with many exciting options including horseback riding, skate- boarding, adventure camps, paintball, drama camp and more!

### August 15th, 2015 River Valley Run

On August 11th RVR will host our incredible scenic 10k and 5k trail runs! All proceeds go to camp scholarships for needy kids!



### Sept & Oct- Fall Retreats,Outdoor Ed, Horse Lessons

RVR has a lot to offer students of all ages. Our delicious food, challenging activities and professional staff make for a fabulous place to hold your youth retreat.



### November & December-Winter Retreats

At RVR we do our best to make your stay as comfortable as possible. The peaceful atmosphere, homemade food, and our attention to detail will make your retreat everything you could want it to be.