

Pioneer Ranch Camps

Pre-Camp Guide – Summer 2010



Pioneer Ranch Camps

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A note from the Executive Director

Spring, 2010

Dear parent(s):

Welcome to Pioneer Ranch Camps! Or, if you're a returning family, welcome back!

It is my privilege to lead the Alberta Pioneer team this summer. I have served in Pioneer ministry across Canada for 30 years, and most recently as the national director of all our Pioneer camp work taking place in six provinces. I am particularly grateful to have the opportunity this year to work more closely with you and others at Alberta Pioneer.

At Pioneer Camp we strive for excellence in all aspects of summer camping for children, youth, and young leaders. We are proud of our almost 60 years of exceptional camping in Alberta. Nationally, this summer marks the 80th anniversary of Inter-Varsity Pioneer Camp ministry. We stand on the side of young people, and strive to serve them well.

If at any time you need information or assistance, or have a suggestion concerning how we might improve our services, please do not hesitate to call our Alberta camp office located at our Pioneer Lodge site near Sundre. Our toll-free number is 1.888.511.2660. Or e-mail us at info@pioneercamps.ab.ca.

I hope that one day I might meet you in person. We value your child's registration with us, and are grateful to add your family to the growing extended Pioneer community in Alberta.

Please plan to attend one of our parent information evenings later this spring. Or drop in to camp anytime for a visit.

Sincerely,

Larry Offner
Executive Director

Our three sites in Alberta

Alberta is the hot spot for Inter-Varsity's Pioneer Camps in Canada. While each of the other provinces have one camp, Alberta boasts three. The first is Pioneer Lodge located 16 kms SW of Sundre. The second is Pioneer Ranch located in Crimson Lake Provincial Park (on Crimson Lake) 16 km NW of Rocky Mountain House, Alberta. And the third is Peace Country Pioneer which operates as a mobile horse tripping camp in the greater Grande Prairie area. Please note which site your child's camp takes place at.

Camps at Pioneer Lodge, Sundre

Discovery, Quest, Breakaway, Jr. Boys, Jr. Girls, and Girls Adventure

Camps at Pioneer Ranch, Rocky Mountain House

Sr. Girls I, Sr. Girls II, Girls LIT, Sr. Boys, Boys LIT and Plunge

Camps at Peace Country Pioneer, Grande Prairie

Jr Ranch Camps I and II, Ridge Riders I and II, Mountain Base I and II, Mountain Extreme, Pack and Ride, and Adult Camp.

Visit us on the web – www.pioneercamps.ab.ca

We have recently re-built our website, and our new site contains in-depth information about Inter-Varsity's Pioneer Ranch Camps, and certainly all the information you need to prepare for camping at Pioneer this summer. So, while this pre-camp guide highlights some key information, you may access everything included in this guide and lots more on our website www.pioneercamps.ab.ca anytime you like. It's all there, and we're hoping our new menu system will help you easily find what you are looking for.

Your child's registration with us

Pioneer's on-line registration system allows you to access your child's registration at any time. If your plans change concerning transportation, if his/her medical condition changes, if a phone number changes, if you'd like to add funds to his/her tuck account, etc. you can simply return to his/her account and make those changes. In the future, when you are registering your child for a weekend camp with us or summer camp next year, all of the data you have entered will remain. So, you'll only have to choose a camp of choice, make one or two updates, and your subsequent registration will be quickly taken care of.

Bringing valuables and other items to camp

We suggest that campers not bring items of value to camp. Expensive items, whether in jewelry or electronics (and everything in between) were not made for the woods or the action of camp, and one way or another they often end up broken or lost. So please don't send ipods, MP3 players, palm pilots, hand-held video games, jewelry, cash, or cell phones. As well, please don't send junk food or candy (they attract mice). Campers are served a well-balanced menu, and receive hearty snacks at least twice each day, and snacks are available in our Tuck Shop. See the following item for a full explanation about our Tuck Shop.

Shopping at camp

Every second day, campers are scheduled to go to our store at camp known as the "Tuck Shop." We carry pop and chocolate bars, and a range of penny candies. Campers are limited to spending \$3 on candy on any one visit to the Tuck Shop. We also sell a wide range of attractive Pioneer "brand" clothing (t-shirts, hoodies, sweat pants, bandanas), books, Bibles, tote bags, hand-made Nepali toques and mitts, water bottles, frisbees, baseball caps, and a variety of mementos and some camp jewelry. If your child is on the younger end, you may want to order some clothing by phone (or purchase it at one of our open houses) prior to camp.

Rather than campers bringing money to camp, we ask that parents send funds to our camp office or allocate them through credit card payment in our on-line registration system. When your child is at camp we will debit his/her account after each purchase. If there are any funds remaining after camp we will allocate them to our "camper bursary program" – or refund them to you – whichever option you chose when registering your child.

Transportation

Pioneer is one of few camps that provide curb-to-cabin and cabin-to-curb transportation by chartered highway coaches from Edmonton, Red Deer, and Calgary. Parents have mentioned many times over the years what a great feature this service is. Please note that the following camps do not offer transportation: Discovery, Family Camp, and Boys and Girls LIT.

Bussing information

Bus information for camps at **Pioneer Lodge/Sundre** is as follows:

	Edmonton	Red Deer	Calgary
Meet the bus at	12:30 pm	2:00 pm	2:00 pm
Last day returns at	1:15 pm	11:45 pm	12:00pm

Bus information for camps at **Pioneer Ranch/Rocky Mountain House** is as follows:

	Edmonton	Red Deer	Calgary
Meet the bus at	1:00 pm	2:30 pm	1:00 pm
Last day returns at	1:00 pm	11:45 pm	1:00pm

Busses meet campers at the following locations:

- Edmonton: **Gateway Park Visitor Information Centre (2404 Gateway Blvd SW – south of Ellerslie Rd. between North and South QE 2.)**
- Calgary: Deerfoot Mall (901 64 Ave. NE – north of the Sears store)
- Red Deer: UFA (take 67 St. /Hwy 11 overpass west across #2. Turn right onto Burnt Lake Trail (at Fas Gas.) Straight until you reach a stop sign. Right at the next stop sign onto Poplar Ridge Rd. UFA is on your left.)

Meeting the bus

Please plan to arrive half an hour before departure to allow time for heavy, unexpected traffic and to load baggage onto the bus, and have your child signed onto the bus. Feel free to send snacks along for the bus ride as the bus does not make any “pit stops” along the way.

Driving your child to camp:

If you are driving your child to camp, it is important that you arrive when the bus arrives. Most camps put together a surprise welcome for campers, so please plan to arrive at camp at 3:30 pm. (Pioneer Lodge is about 1 ½ hours from Calgary and Red Deer, and three hours from Edmonton. Pioneer Ranch is about 2 ½ hours from Edmonton and Calgary and one hour from Red Deer.)

If you leave home in good time and make it to camp much earlier than you expected, please drive back to Sundre or Rocky Mountain House for a snack and some sightseeing to pass some time. Camp staff and volunteers undertake an intensive orientation prior to campers arriving, and are not equipped to host guests early. Thanks for your understanding.

Picking up your child at camp: If you are planning to pick up your child from camp, please plan to arrive at 10:30 am.

Directions to camp: Detailed maps and directions are found on our website.

Have you chosen your transportation of choice?

If you did not indicate when registering your child on-line whether you would be using our bussing services, please do so soon. And, if you change your mind concerning bussing to or from camp, please notify our camp office. We compile detailed lists of campers who will be on each bus, and when a camper is not present as scheduled a great deal of work ensues for our staff and volunteers. So, please help us serve you and your child (ren) by noting your plan concerning busing and notifying us if your plans change.

Authorization for camper pick-up

Campers will be released only to the custody of a parent or legal guardian unless written authorization signed by the parent or legal guardian is received at camp advising us to release your child to the individual noted.

Sending mail to camp

A letter to a camper from home means a lot to campers. We encourage parents to send mail, and to take the opportunity to express love and affection, and to encourage and confirm, as well as sending some news from home. We also encourage parents to have grandparents, aunts or uncles, a coach or favorite teacher write a letter ahead of time, collect them up and send to camp on their behalf. If you send multiple letters in the same envelope, we'll distribute them on a daily basis rather than providing them all at once. Please know that it seems to take a few days longer for mail to reach our camps than other destinations. We suggest you plan for a week – so for camps at The Lodge, you would need to mail your letters before your child goes to camp.

Please address your letter to your child, but include the name of the camp and the camp address:

Child's name

Name of specific camp (Jr Boys, Sr. Girls I, etc.)

c/o Pioneer Lodge

or c/o Pioneer Ranch Camp

Box 660

Box 600

Sundre, AB

Rocky Mountain House, AB

T0M 1X0

T4T 1A4

It is possible to send e-mails to your child as well. Please do so in the following manner:

If your child is a camper at

Rocky: ranch@pioneercamps.ab.ca (Sr. Girls 1 & 2, Sr. Boys, Plunge)

If your child is a camper at

Sundre: lodge@pioneercamps.ab.ca (Breakaway, Jr. Boys, Discovery, Jr. Girls, Girls Adventure)

Luggage and items for camp

We recommend that you pack your child's clothing and supplies into a duffel bag of some kind – perhaps a backpack or rough-usage soft bag. It is exceedingly helpful for us (and for your child especially) if all clothing, equipment, and shoes are well marked with your child's name. Please do not leave boots or other items dangling outside of the luggage. A list of items packed may assist campers when they are collecting articles before heading home. We do not take responsibility for lost clothing. Please note that laundry facilities are not available at camp, so campers need to be sent with enough clothes to the entire camp session. Supply lists for each camp are available on our website. Each individual camp has its own list, and our two week camps (Sr. Girls and Sr. Boys) have a list of supplies for camp and a separate supply list for the outtrip in which your child will participate. Choose "Summer Camps" on the menu bar of our website, and click on the outtrip your child is registered for.

Lost and found

When your child returns home from camp you may realize some items of note have been left at camp. As soon as possible send us an e-mail or give us a call. Plan to provide as much description a possible – including the name of the camp. It is best if you are able to contact us within a day or two of your child's camp ending. All items will be returned home by mail, and will be sent COD. All items unclaimed by September 5 will be disposed of at the site manager's discretion.

Phone calls

As we have just one phone line into camp, we try to keep it as free as possible in the event of an emergency and for incoming business calls. For these reasons, we ask that unnecessary calls not be made to campers. If a camper would like to call home, s/he can speak to the camp director about doing so. If you try to call camp and have difficulty getting through, please know that the phone line is tied up with other calls. Simply keep trying every few moments. If you leave a message we will respond to you as soon as possible. Should you not be able to reach us in the case of an **extreme emergency** please call the appropriate site manager on his cell phone. Fred Tyrer, Pioneer Lodge/Sundre: 403.559.6057. Jerry Marx, Pioneer Ranch/Rocky Mountain House: 403.844.1626.

Nut policy

Pioneer Ranch Camps do not guarantee a nut-free environment. To reduce the risk of exposure we do not use, serve, or sell peanuts, peanut products, or tree nuts. However, the foods we purchase and serve, or sell in our tuck shops, may contain traces of nut or peanut products. Camp staff will take from campers any food or snacks containing nuts or nut products they may have inadvertently brought to camp.

Medical information

Please note that if your child's health condition has changed in any way since completing the registration form, it is important that the camp office be informed. If your child is coming to camp with a cold or other treatable illness, please send the appropriate medication and care instructions. We have a health professional at each camp who will collect all medication when campers arrive, and who will administer all meds as required. In the event of an accident or illness requiring x-rays, special drugs, the service of a hospital, ambulance, doctor, dentist, or other related service, parents will be notified immediately. It is the responsibility of parents to bear the costs incurred.

Smoking, alcohol, and illicit drugs

Alcohol, illicit drugs, and smoking are prohibited at camp. Pioneer Ranch Camps reserves the right to send any camper home should they not comply with camp regulations. Under such circumstances, camper fees will not be refunded, and parents will be responsible for transporting their child home.

Cancellation and refund policy

Should a camper's registration for a camp be cancelled more than 30 days prior to the start of camp, a full refund is provided -- less an administrative fee of \$100. If the cancellation happens within 30 days of the camp, a refund of 50% of the camp fee is provided. If the cancellation is within a week of camp, no refund is provided. No refunds are made for dismissals due to discipline issues, or for late arrivals or early departures.

Fitness tax credit

Children attending Pioneer Camps qualify for the federal Government of Canada fitness tax credit – implemented to promote physical fitness among children and youth. Parents with children under 16 years of age may apply for the tax credit which provides up to \$500 for eligible programs involving physical activity. You will be mailed an official receipt noting eligible fees by the end of the calendar year for income tax purposes.

'Bring a Friend' rebate program

Have you considered accessing our "bring a friend" rebate program? For every child who has never been at a Pioneer summer camp before whom your child brings to camp, you will receive a rebate of \$40 for a one-week camp and \$80 for a two-week camp. Rebates are paid after the completion of the camp your child's friend attends. The rebate program does not apply to immediate family members. Activate the rebate program by completing a rebate form available on our website by June 15, 2010.

Parent Information Evenings

We will have two parent information evenings. We will be in Edmonton at the Riverbend Community Centre- 258 Rhatigan Road East in the social room at 7pm on

Wednesday May 12, 2010. We will also be in Calgary at Lakeview Community Centre-6110 34 Street Southwest at 7pm on Wednesday May 19th.

Other information you might find interesting...

Donate to Pioneer

Pioneer Ranch Camps operate as a not-for-profit organization. A large part of our operating funds come from people who support us in our endeavor to offer first-rate camping experiences for children, youth, and young leaders. We are a registered charity, so every donation receives an official tax receipt. As well, this year your donation is doubled through a matching grant program we are able to access. You may designate your financial gift to any of the following areas: General fund, horse fund, leadership development, Sundre projects, Rocky projects, camper bursaries, or toward the support of any of our year-round staff listed on our web site. Thank you for your gifts. Please mail them to our camp office at Box 660, Sundre, AB, T0M 1X0 or call us at 1.888.511.2660 to make a donation by credit card.

Volunteer at Pioneer

Because of the size and number of our camps in Alberta, we require hundreds of volunteers in every capacity every week of the summer. Volunteers must fill in an application form, have a police check completed, and sign our statement of Christian faith. Apply on-line, call our office, or speak with one of our many volunteer camp directors who have the Herculean task of pulling a summer camp together.

Some of the volunteer positions we require for each camp this summer include:

- ✓ Bus greeters
- ✓ Bus chaperones
- ✓ Drivers
- ✓ Cook's helpers
- ✓ Dish pit coordinator
- ✓ Wranglers
- ✓ Cabin leaders
- ✓ Doctor, nurse, or medic
- ✓ Program people
- ✓ Work crew/maintenance
- ✓ Shopper

Volunteer at one of our upcoming work camps

Both Pioneer Lodge and Pioneer Ranch host work camps where volunteers gather to tackle projects at camp, help with general maintenance, and generally spiff-up each camp. See our website under "weekend camps and events" for further details, or call the office at 1.888.511.2660.

Attend one of our ladies camps

Twice each year Pioneer hosts a weekend for women – come to camp with a plan to be pampered and spoiled. Ladies choose either scrap booking or quilting as activities. Enjoy being at camp as a camper. There will be wonderful meals you didn't have to shop for or prepare. Snacks and coffee. Friends. Time to dive into your hobby with no distractions for a whole weekend. Camp information can be found on-line under “weekends and events” on the menu bar on our web site.

We're open year round!

Recommend Pioneer to your child's teacher or school

Or bring a group you are part of to Pioneer for a weekend retreat or conference

Our facilities are perfect for retreats and conferences for up to 120 guests. We offer competitive rates, and have everything you need from flip-charts and digital projectors to sports equipment and meeting rooms. Our fine string of horses is always ready for rides for all ability levels. We have a new heavy-horse team for hayrides.

Our year-round program staff will organize your stay with us, ad plan, teach, and supervise all of the program activities your group would like to participate in. Our cooks will serve up the finest meals and snacks.

See our website for more details. Call our office for a quote – we do offer a low season rate from December 1 to April 1. Call 1.888.511.2660.

We're part of a national franchise

Did you know Pioneer Ranch Camps are part of a national organization of Pioneer Camps across Canada? We are part of an international youth organization known as Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. If you move to a different province, or have friends or relatives who live elsewhere, please be sure to look up the Pioneer Camp nearest you.

B.C.	Pioneer Pacific Camp
Manitoba	Manitoba Pioneer Camp
Ontario	Ontario Pioneer Camp
Nova Scotia	Atlantic Pioneer

What to bring to camp this summer

Each of our 25 camps in Alberta this summer have a unique supply list of clothing and gear required – depending on the number of days of camp, day trips planned, special activities, and the out-trip your child will be part of if s/he is attending one of our senior camps.

Therefore, we cannot publish a generic supply list. However, we do publish a supply list with each camp listed on our website. To access the supply list posted for your child's camp, simply go to our website (www.pioneercamps.ab.ca) and choose "summer camps" on the menu bar. Then choose the camp your child is registered for. Mid-way down the page you'll notice our "Quick Facts" box which includes a "gear list" option. One last click and you'll be viewing the supply list for your child's camp.

If your child is attending one of our senior camps, you'll notice that there are two separate lists. The first is a general supply list for the time spent in camp. The second is a list of supplies needed for the particular out-trip your child has chosen (white water canoeing, backpacking, riding, mountain biking, etc.).

Please note that we recommend you borrow or rent many of the items related to the out-trip your child has chosen. (Mountain Equipment Co-op (MEC) in both Calgary and Edmonton rents a wide range of outdoor supplies and equipment. In Calgary the U of C Outdoor Program Centre rents a wide selection of items as well.) Or, visit some thrift shops in your city – you'll be amazed what you can find there. Check with friends as well to see what they might be able to loan you. Please note that as a general rule old clothes are fine for camp. If you are shopping for some clothes for camp, we recommend you start out at thrift shops. It is our hope that you will be able to keep the cost of supplies to a minimum.

If you decide to purchase some of the listed items so that your child and/or family have them available in the future, we recommend that you consider Mountain Equipment Co-op because of their commitment to high quality outdoor equipment and to offering the best prices possible. Of course many retail outlets carry excellent items at great prices. It's always worth shopping to compare quality, warranty, and prices.

Calgary Mountain Equipment Co-op – 403.269.2420
Edmonton Mountain Equipment Co-op – 780.488.6614

U of C Outdoor Program Centre – 403.220.5038