

VENTURE FREE

WELCOME!

.... To our first ever quarterly newsletter! This newsletter is meant to provide updates on the programs that operate throughout the year. We will highlight camper's successes and tell you about upcoming events. Before we begin, lets recap our core values:

- Conscientiousness
- Responsibility
- Positivity
- Team Work
- Respect for Mother Nature
- Always have fun!



As you'll see in our program updates, we have been enjoying winter but are anxious to see the sun this spring! And as we gear up for summer 2023, we wonder what weather lies ahead. Whether we face snowed-in trails, smokey fires, or anything in between, know that we'll be ready and eager to face whatever nature serves up to us as we embark on a new season of FUN! See you on the trails everyone!

Happy Adventures,

Emily P-Dellinger
Executive Director

UPCOMING EVENTS

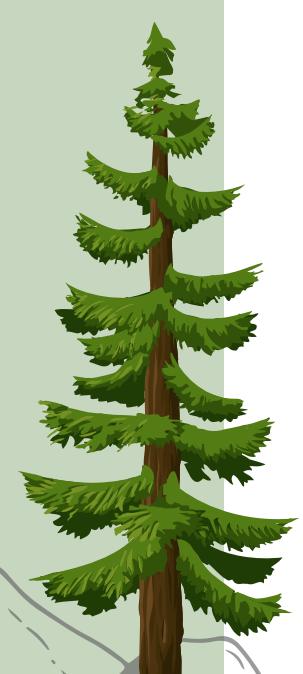
Outdoor Ed

Middle School Camping Trip

Summer Camps

Art Fair Craft Days

Stargazing Fundraiser



CHILDREN'S CENTER

As you all know, it's been a WILD few months! The relentless storms have tested our creative juices as we were forced to keep kids inside more often than not, on the days school actually operated. We've been enjoying our indoor time with chess and checkers tournaments, spring creature crafts, new activities like our robotics building kit, and sewing! A whole lot of sewing. Doughnuts, monsters, and pillows... Oh my! When there is no fear of a child blowing away, or large branches falling from the sky, the kids want to be outside. We all do! Football, basketball, silly craft stores, and of course, the MUD! Many days have been spent making mud houses, mud dams, and tricky mud holes meant to capture counselors ;) Of course snack is always a highlight at VF and this quarter some of the favorites have been; zucchini (zoo) bread, fresh made french fries and our hand rolled spring rolls!

What are we really looking forward to? Clearing out our dig pit and focusing on treasure hunting! Watching the seeds we're starting indoors, sprout! Draining our fishless fish tank and starting fresh! Yay for Spring! -Julie (VFACR)



ADVENTURE CAMP

It has been an awesome year with our Fernando Rivera (FR) group! In the Fall we covered Ocean Safety and Fire Safety. Our campers started fires with flint and steel relating it to the chemistry behind matches, and perfected the art of building good coals. In the past few months, we've taken advantage of any day without rain to go for a hike and we even spent an afternoon collecting mussels! Other than that, we've been working on water and rocks. We covered safe wilderness water sources and how to use different purification techniques. We are looking forward to Spring and getting back to our geology unit related to rock climbing!

-Alyssa (VFAC)





OUTDOOR EDUCATION

We are currently preparing for our third Outdoor Education trip since beginning this program in Spring 2022. The upcoming trip will take place in Pinnacles National Park where we are excited to introduce our incoming group of 4th grade campers to the interesting wildlife and ecosystem of the area. This incredible area also allows us to provide our campers with new experiences like rock climbing, wood splitting, camp cooking, and so much more! We feel extremely fortunate to provide these trips, allowing us the opportunity to reach more children with our adventure focused, place-based learning approach!



TERRA TEENS

The Terra Teens hit 2023 running - In the past three months they have run three successful events to raise funds for their adventure trips and program planning; had to replan two cancelled trips due to the winter weather; camped on Mt Diablo; and are finalizing the details of their weeklong summer backpacking trip in the sierras assisting the BLM with trail maintenance! All of these events have provided them with incredible opportunities to focus on the development of their adventure management skills.

As we preface summer, we will revisit counselor skill building in the areas of social emotional development and conflict management.



SUMMER CAMP

We are SO EXCITED for summer! This year we are offering 4 weeks of day camp and 3 separate week-long adventure trips! Enrollment opened early February and is currently 93% full! We are finalizing campground reservations, scheduling trainings, inventorying gear, inventorying more gear, prepping to place orders, writing lesson plans and prepping weekly itineraries. Yes, we do this, even though it without-a-doubt changes. YAY for SUMMER! YAY for FUN!

HOW DO YOU FEEL WHEN YOU'RE OUTSIDE IN NATURE?

This is what our campers had to say!

“ I like that I get to see new areas, explore new places, do fascinating activities like fire... I'm now looking off my screen for once!”
-Alvan



“It's like going through a digital detox, I like seeing different new animals and touching grass, doing fun adventures!!”
-Hans



"GREAT! It makes me sort of calm. My favorite part of the storms was wearing cozy clothes and eating popcorn. And walking my dog in the rain!"
-Izzy



"We love to play outside in the mud and puddles. Basketball and kickball are also a lot of fun. Collecting pine cones, dirt, leaves and rocks to make ice cream stores and then sell ice cream cones for leaves."
-group of vfcR kids



“I like looking forward to new things to do in fun areas without my phone. I like nature because it smells different, 'fresher' you know!?”
-Jocelyne

COUNSELOR HIGHLIGHT MEET QUINN!



Position:

VFCR counselor, Summer Camp Counselor

VF participation:

Summer Camper 2015 - 2020; After School Adventure Camp 2015 - 2017 ; Terra Teen since 2021

About Quinn:

Quinn is a Junior in High School with a passion for surfing! She enjoys camping with her family, music and learning more about our environment

Why Quinn is awesome!:

Quinn spreads easy-going vibes, loves playing basket ball with the kids, and is a a great homework helper!

She is a leader in the Terra Teens group, respected for her outdoor experience and consideration of risks.

As an employee, Quinn is comfortable adapting to new activities and responsibilities at VF. She is eager to learn and picks up new skills quickly.

The kids have really grown to like and respect her as a friend and a counselor!

RECAPS Events from Spring 2023

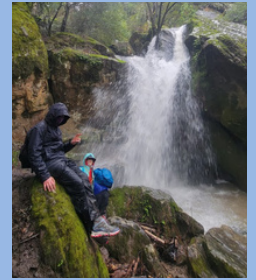
TT DIABLO TRIP

After canceling and rescheduling multiple trips since January, our Terra Teens were determined to make their February trip to Mount Diablo happen. We rolled into camp in the late afternoon on the 23rd, and set up while considering the storm that was forecasted to reach us late that night. What ensued was a more valuable learning experience than the teens ever expected; a 2 am snow collapsed tent, snow chains be put on in the night blizzard, soaked gear, and the threat of falling trees was an incredible reminder that nothing can teach preparedness better than experience!



SEARCHING FOR WATERFALLS!

A Spring Day Camp planned and led by our Terra Teen group; it was quite an adventure, tromping through the rain and mud in search of waterfalls! The many obstacles from recent storms and the non-stop rain, made for challenging conditions with the young age group. That being said, we were stoked on the group's perseverance as well as the opportunity for our young Terra Teens to practice their leadership and group management skills!



CAMPOVER

Another event planned by our Terra Teen group specifically for our young, first time overnight campers. They practiced setting up tents, they helped us cook and build fires, and built confidence sleeping outside! We explored the fruit trees in season and the kids picked avocados, lemons, grapefruits and pomelos! They even made fresh squeezed lemonade! Not only was this trip a great success in preparing the young ones for our summer campouts, but it was an awesome, much desired weekend full of beautiful weather and outdoor activity!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Outdoor Ed
April, 2023

Middle School Camping Trip
May, 2023

Summer Camps
June 5th - Aug 6th

Art Fair Craft Days
August 2023- TBD

Stargazing Fundraiser
October 14th, 2023
6:30 pm

Art Fair Grant Update -

We are pleased to announce we have been awarded \$10,000 from the KM art fair which will help us support scholarships for students attending the children's program at Kings Mountain Elementary School

Preschool -

We are collaborating with KMES and CUSD to open a preschool on the KMES campus

Art Fair Booth -

We have been approved for a booth at the KM Art Fair! We will sell natural art to support our Children's Programs at Kings Mountain Elementary School

Sponsorships -

We are seeking Business Sponsorships to help us kick start our 2023 Fundraising plan

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Our top priorities...

1

Art Fair Craft Supply Collection

Please see our craft wish list below!

2

Business Sponsorships

Help us gather sponsorships from businesses you know!

3

Art Fair Crafting Volunteers

Stay tuned for Art Fair craft days, we will need help to make it a success!

OUR WISH LIST

Art Fair craft supply needs:

- 4-8 oz glass jars
- candles (new or used)
- Brown or white cupcake papers
- Twine
- Leather Scraps

Email: info@VentureFreeFoundation.org for supply pick up or drop off!

And of course donations are always welcome and appreciated!!

[DONATE ON OUR WEBSITE!](#)

About the VFF Newsletter:

The VFF Newsletter is published quarterly. It is emailed to school staff and parents, newsletter subscribers, and posted online at www.venturefreefoundation.org. The deadline for submitting articles is 2 weeks preceding the publication. Send submissions or comments to the publisher Emily Dellinger Emily88.VFF@gmail.com.

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