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Registration begins for Parks and Recreation summer camps

Registration for Sarasota County Parks and Recreation summer camps begins March 9. There are 11 weeks of Summer Vacation in the Parks summer camp programs lasting from 3 days to 4 weeks. Camps are available for children who will be entering 1st through 9th grade. Program and registration information is available on-line at parksonline.scgov.net or the printed Summer Camp Guide is available at any Sarasota County recreation center, library or county building. Financial assistance is available to qualifying Sarasota County residents for day and adventure camps.

Traditional day camps are offered in two 4-week sessions from June 8-July 2 and July 6-31 at Arlington Park, Bee Ridge Park, Colonial Oaks Park and Longwood Park in Sarasota and Woodmere Park in Venice. Elementary schoolers enjoy three field trips every week, plus on-site activities that follow a weekly theme and relaxed curriculum offering physical activity, creative arts, science and nature, values, safety and wellness, unstructured playtime and reading in a secure and fun environment. Children attend from as early as 7:15 a.m. to as late as 5:45 p.m. The fee of \$320 includes all field trips and onsite activities. Field trips differ per session and include water parks, MOTE Marine, South Florida Museum, Bishop Planetarium, roller skating, bowling, Roaring 20's Pizza and Pipes, Chuck E. Cheese, G-WIZ, putt putt golf and more!

Adventure Camp for youth entering 6th through 9th grade is offered in the same two 4-week sessions at Colonial Oaks Park in Sarasota and Woodmere Park in Venice. Adventure campers enjoy challenging activities and four weekly field trips. The \$500 fee includes all field trips and onsite activities. Field trip locations differ per session and include theme parks, Tampa Bay Rays games, Lowry Park Zoo, MOSI, Gameworks, MOTE Marine, beach trips, bowling, roller skating, ice skating, fishing, Frisbee golf, canoeing and more.

Specialty Camp allows children to focus on a favorite activity or to try something different. New this year is Nature Videography Camp, providing hands-on experience in videotaping nature and basic editing concepts under the direction of award-winning videographer, Darryl Saffer. Additional new Specialty Camps include Advanced Environmental Camp at Turtle Beach, Chess Wizard Camp, Mad Science Camp with two new programs; Detective Science – CSI and Survival, Predators and Prey, Theme Park Camp, Advanced Video Gamer Camp, Let's Go Camping Camp, Bowling Camp and Dodgeball Camp.

Specialty camps returning from previous years include Beach camp, Arts and Crafts Camp, beginner and advanced Chef Camp, Environmental Camp, Games Camp, Gymnastics Camp, Jr. Tennis/Swim Camp, Model Building Camp, Sculpting Camp, Skateboard Camp, beginner Video Gamer Camp, Water Sports Camp and WSLR Radio Camp.

One-week mini camps are available in three weekly sessions, June 1-5, Aug. 3-7 and Aug. 10-14 at various locations. All activities take place on-site and are included in the \$80 fee. Open gym programs are offered free of charge at Newtown Estates and Robert L. Taylor Community Complex in Sarasota and Laurel Park in Laurel.

Therapeutic Camp for special kids is offered at Oak Park School and runs from June 8 to July 31 in conjunction with the summer school schedule. Parents need to supply all personal care items. The fee of \$420 includes all activities. There is also a one-week mini camp from August 3-7 at a cost of \$80.

Volunteer opportunities are available for youth entering 10th grade to complete service hours needed for school while assisting counselors and enjoying camp activities. Following an interview, a limited number of volunteers will be utilized at locations throughout the county.

For more information visit parksonline.scgov.net, call the camp office at 941-861-9870 or pick up a summer camp brochure at any recreation center, library or government building.

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