

Greetings prospective volunteer,

You are receiving this packet because you have expressed an interest in an opportunity to serve at the Teaching Drum. We are grateful that you are interested in merging the flow of your days with ours and in lending your energy and talents as together we serve the greater community.

While here, you will be a part of the community at Nad'mad'ewining (the technical center, staff residences, and support camp for the Wilderness Guide Program). This community is comprised of people (human and other) involved in the life-long program (an informal continuation of the return to the old ways begun in the Year-long program).

As a volunteer member of this support team, it is vital that you be well informed, prepared and ready to participate fully in the daily activities. For these reasons we ask that you read **every item** in this mailing carefully and thoroughly. Please call or e-mail us with any questions or concerns that you may have before returning your volunteer agreement/liability waiver.

We ask volunteers to cover their food costs, which amount to \$11/day. We accept check, money order, and credit card (Visa and MasterCard).

Once you have reviewed the entire packet and scheduled your visit, please fill out the General Information form, sign the Liability Waiver/Agreement Form on the back of this page, attach your payment, and mail them to:

Teaching Drum Outdoor School
7124 Military Road
Three Lakes WI 54562

General Information

Name _____ Email _____
Mailing Address: _____ Phone # _____
_____ Social Security _____
_____ DOB _____
Emergency contact info. _____

Use a separate piece of paper to answer the following questions:

Why would you like to volunteer here? What do we offer that is of value to you?

What are your interests, talents and energy level? _

_

Dates when you would like to visit: 1st Choice: ___ / ___ to ___ / ___

2nd Choice: ___ / ___ to ___ / ___

Mode of transportation you intend to travel by: _____

Payment information: make check or money order payable to Teaching Drum Outdoor School

Visa ___ MasterCard ___ Card # _____ exp. _____

Name on card _____ signature _____

Liability Waiver and Agreement

I understand that the Teaching Drum Outdoor School does not provide health or liability insurance for its volunteers/visitors.

In consideration of my acceptance as a volunteer/visitor of the Teaching Drum Outdoor School, I, the undersigned, intending to be legally bound, hereby, for myself, my heirs, executors, and administrators, contractually waive and release any and all rights and claims for damages I may have against the Teaching Drum Outdoor School, Inc., its representatives, employees, successors, and assigns, the United States Forest Service, and any other legal entity with which the School has a contractual relationship, for any and all claims of damages suffered by me during my visit.

Further, I attest and verify that I am physically fit and have sufficient physical capacity to participate in ongoing activities, and a licensed medical doctor has verified such physical condition.

Further, I understand that alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and firearms are not compatible with the methodology of the Teaching Drum Outdoor School, and I will not harbor them during the period of my visit.

I _____, have carefully read the above liability waiver, as well as all of the enclosed materials in this volunteer/visitor information packet and agree to abide by all stipulations.

.....

Signature

.....

Date

Important Information

There is much happening at any given moment here at the Teaching Drum, because we fan the fires of four hearths:

- Nishnajida, our wilderness camp, home of the Wilderness Guide Program
- Mashkodens, our budding living-learning native life way camp
- Nad'mad'ewining, our main support camp -- site of the office, library, staff quarters
- SnowWolf Publishing, our self-publishing arm.

The staff acts as a bridge, facilitating the flow among these four hearths, and between them and the modern world. Volunteers work with staff and interns to support the four hearths. The main involvement for volunteers is at these Nad'mad'ewining:

- Nad'mad'ewining -- doing what various maintenance and improvement projects (such as carpentry, splitting wood, cleanup) along with perhaps gathering wild edibles, binding self-published books, invasive plant eradication, salting hides, etc.

It is important for us that your time here is rewarding -- we want there to be a good fit between volunteers and staff so that everyone will grow and heal, along with accomplishing tasks that serve the return of the Old Ways. To help us with that fit, please be sure to do a good job of answering the "What are your interests, talents, and energy level?" question under General Information.

If you are volunteering for more than one week, your first week will be a trial period, at the end of which we can mutually decide if any adjustments need to be made in terms of lodging, project involvements, and workmates.

During your visit, you will be staying in the staff cabin at Nad'mad'ewining. You will be living with some of the staff and cooking some meals together in the staff cabin. You will have the opportunity to participate fully in daily activities. Everybody, including volunteers, helps with food preparation, cabin up-keep, and other daily chores.

Because you will be leaving most of your familiar comforts behind and learning new ways of being comfortable outdoors and embracing all that Earth Mother provides, we suggest you prepare for this experience in these ways:

- Begin sleeping cooler at night, starting two weeks before arriving. If you sleep with 3 blankets, use only 2. This will stimulate your metabolism to function more efficiently, which will keep you more comfortable outdoors, whether it is warm or cool.
- We eat a native diet, which is based on fruit and vegetables, nuts and wild meat. It is low in starch, sugar and dairy. To best prepare yourself, gradually cut down on your sugar and starch (bread, pasta, rice, potatoes and sweets) consumption. If you are a big eater, start eating less, beginning three weeks prior to your arrival. Cook without spices and salt so you may enjoy the natural flavors of camp cooking.

Read the Equipment and Clothing List carefully, and **make sure you come with everything that is on the list, and nothing more**. A breach of this requisite will jeopardize your welcome. If you have trouble acquiring anything on the list, call us immediately and perhaps we can help, as we have some items here that we may be able to loan or rent to you. When you arrive, we will check out your equipment to make sure you have everything needed for a safe and fulfilling visit.

Wash all the clothes you intend to bring with you without detergent at least once before you leave, so you will attract fewer mosquitoes and other critters. For the same reason, do not use scented personal care products (aftershave / perfume, soap, deodorants, etc.). You will not be using any soap during your visit, instead you will be learning natural hygiene methods.

Below are the common ways to travel to the Teaching Drum. Please let us know which one you will use. If you need to be picked up, give us your date and time of arrival as soon as possible, so we can schedule your pickup.

- **Air.** The closest airport is Rhinelander, WI, which is 30 miles away. Two airlines serve Rhinelander---Northwest and Midwest Express. We can pick you up from the airport for \$25. We can drop you off for another \$25.

- **Bus.** The closest Greyhound bus stop is in Iron River, MI, 60 miles away. Be aware that there is no bus terminal there, just a street stop where you get dropped off at 3 a.m. (this is the only in-bound bus per day). We can pick you up the following morning for \$50. There is only one out-bound bus per day, which leaves at 10 p.m. .

- **Auto.** From Three Lakes, drive east on Hwy 32. Just outside of Three Lakes, Hwy 32 splits off of Hwy 45 to the left; pay attention so that you are not following 45. Proceed roughly 4 miles on 32, to Military Rd. (Rd. # 2178). Turn left on Military Rd, (with extreme caution, because it is a blind curve. Come to a full stop and make sure there is no approaching traffic before turning.) Drive 1 mile up Military Rd and you will see The Teaching Drum sign on the right. We're 7124 Military Rd.

Lastly it is important for you to understand the camp and the hygiene guidelines. The time you spend making yourself familiar with the information in this packet, and your adherence to it, could determine whether your experience here is enjoyable and relaxed or uncomfortable and health threatening. Please bring this information packet along with you so that you can refer to it during your stay.

Please contact us with any questions.

The Teaching Drum staff

The Teaching Drum Outdoor School
7124 Military Road
Three Lakes WI 54562
715 546-2944
balance@teachingdrum.org

Equipment and Clothing List

Weather in the North woods can vary greatly, with green season temperatures ranging from 30 to 90 degrees above zero, and white season temperatures fluctuating between -30 to +40 degrees. Therefore it is important that you come properly equipped for a safe and enjoyable visit. Clothing made of natural fibers is best, with wool being most preferred (merino wool, lambs wool and others are very soft and comfortable to wear next to skin), followed by silk. Cotton is appropriate only for green season shirts and pants. **No camouflage please.** Choose tight-woven rather than loose-woven clothing (for example, avoid knitted sweaters).

Equipment

- Bowl, cup, and spoon
- Liter/quart water bottle
- Small flashlight
- Non folding woods/craft knife*
- Warm sleeping bag with mat & pad
- Small tent (mosquito proof) with rain fly (Green season only)
- Ground tarp (Green season only)
- Towel, washcloth, toothbrush, toothpaste

Green Season Clothing

- Two cotton, silk or very light wool long-sleeved shirts
- Two pair of cotton or very light wool pants
- Two pair of wool or wool blend socks (med. wt.)
- One pair of long johns (top and bottom)
- Light jacket
- One pair of light mittens (optional)
- Rain gear
- One light wool or fur cap
- One pair of shorts and t-shirt
- Potent bug repellent
- Two pairs of footwear, preferably moccasins or light canvas shoes without heels or deep treads. NO CLOGS or SANDALS.

White Season Clothing

- Heavy coat for winter
- Two light wool shirts
- Two pair of heavy wool shirts*
- One pair of light wool pants
- One pair of heavy winter pants (to fit over light pants)*
- One light face scarf or neck tube
- One extra sleeping bag or 2 wool blankets*
- One heavy wool or fur cap with ear flaps
- Pack boot (Sorel type)
- Two pair light wool socks
- One pair of leather choppers with wool mitten inserts*
- Two pair of heavy wool blend socks
- Two pair of warm long johns (top and bottoms)

Items listed with an * are sold here at the school. Call us for size and availability if you are interested in purchasing these items from us. Also, many of these clothing items can be found in your nearest used clothing store at much reduced prices, we recommend that you look there first before buying new clothing. Another option is to borrow items from friends and family.

CAMP GUIDELINES

We dwell on the living skin of our Mother; in gratitude we show honor and respect in these ways:

- We prearrange our visits so that we are expected and welcome.
- In order to keep our camp a place of trust and Balance we keep it free of domestic animals ("pets"), weapons, alcohol, tobacco and psychoactive substances (inc. 'pot', caffeine and sugar). We pack out whatever we brought in that is inorganic or not quickly biodegradable.
- We use no soaps and shampoos
- We gather firewood and Birch bark from dead and down trees, leaving standing deadwood untouched. This helps preserve the pristine character of this land and to leave undisturbed the feeding and denning/nesting sites that these old trees afford. Any living plants or animals are gathered only with staff approval.
- In order not to alter the life ways of the non-Human people who live here, we do not feed them. We keep the camp area scrupulously free of food scraps, and we hang all food not sealed in glass or metal containers. So as not to send out unintentional invitations to others, such as Bear and Chipmunk, we meticulously clean up food spills.
- We have much respect for the power of fire. We ask the sharing of his gifts only in designated areas.
- When gathering anything from firewood to berries, we are careful to leave enough in a given area for others.
- Our footwear has shallow treads and no heels so as not to erode the trails.
- We get staff approval for our tent sites, and leave them in better shape than we found them.
- We swim, canoe, and go on extensive hikes with a buddy, and inform a third person of our plans and anticipated return time.
- We chip in on camp chores, such as firewood and edibles gathering, cooking, and cleaning up.
- We pee off the trail and away from camp, **in a different spot each time** so that plants are not burned. Porcupines will chew the bark off of trees that have been peed on. We only take dumps at our Da'i spots or in pit latrines.
- We keep craft debris in one place by doing our craftwork in a designated craft area.
- We keep cars and bicycles out of camp environs. Visitors' cars are parked at Nad'mad'ewining (the support center) for the duration of their visits.
- We are respectful of the space and life way of our animal, plant, and mineral relations.

HYGIENE GUIDELINES

Forest Flu, Montezuma's Revenge, and Drum Disease (as it is affectionately known here) – are a few of the many colloquialisms for the gastrointestinal affliction that besets some who camp or travel abroad. There have been a number of cases here at the Teaching Drum and many of us will be exposed elsewhere, so the School offers these guidelines to help keep us from getting infected or spreading it, here or elsewhere.

Cases vary from quick onset (a couple of hours) and a few hours duration at one extreme, to slow onset and a duration of one or more weeks at the other extreme, with a few cases having chronic symptoms that linger for months. Lab tests haven't been able to identify the cause of the Teaching Drum cases. The range of duration and symptoms suggest the likelihood of two or more organisms being involved.

Anyone with a compromised immune system (HIV positive, CFS, etc.), or who has a physical illness that could be aggravated by Forest Flu, is advised to seriously consider the risks before visiting. Bringing your own food and boiling all eating utensils may reduce this risk. People with AIDS, unless clear on the need for such an experience, ought not to expose themselves. Young children seem to be at greatest risk, yet they recover quickly. A couple of adult cases here, and cases elsewhere, have been initially quite debilitating and return to normalcy was slow.

The following guidelines are based on input from health professionals and our own research and experience. They are intended for our camps as well as for other appropriate applications. Following them religiously will greatly reduce, if not eliminate the incidence of Forest Flu.

EAT SIMPLY AND LIGHTLY, one-half to two-thirds of normal. This point cannot be overemphasized. Overeating dilutes stomach acids, which would normally destroy harmful bacteria. Additionally, overeating does not allow time to adjust gradually to the local microbes. The severity of bacterial disorders is determined by the amount of bacteria ingested. One could eat small amounts of contaminated food on an empty stomach and be unaffected, while another who consumes a larger amount on a full stomach could become quite ill.

- Boil or treat all lake water used for drinking or preparing food.
- Boil or fire-sterilize common cooking utensils.
- All cooked food, including leftovers and that which is precooked and packed in, needs to be heated thoroughly by being brought to a boil immediately prior to serving.
- Use seamless metal cooking utensils, not wooden ones.
- One person per meal serves food.
- Use only the common cooking or serving utensils to dish out food, not personal ones.
- Do not eat from the common cooking or serving utensils.
- Do not eat directly from cooking or food storage containers, or put your personal utensils into them.
- Use only your own knife, spoon, bowl, cup, and canteen. Do not share them with others.
- Plan for NO leftovers and do not return unfinished personal portions to the cook pot.
- Store water containers and all pots and utensils up high so that they are not contaminated by the soil or rain splash.
- Do not share towels or rags.

- Because long fingernails, along with finger, ear, nose, tongue and body rings or 'studs' become havens for microorganisms, consider eliminating them.
- Do not use common washing or "slop" buckets.
- Personal metal bowls and utensils are safe to wash in lake water if allowed to dry thoroughly and then set out in the sun or sterilized by fire.
- The ideal food cooking and preparation area is dry, acidic, and open to sun and the elements. Cook under shelter only when necessary. The more acidic an environment, the more sterile it is. Natural acidifiers, such as pine needles, make good ground cover in food areas.

If you develop Forest Flu, you will want to fast for one or two days to allow your body to eliminate the offending organism(s). Be sure to drink plenty of pure water to replace losses from diarrhea and to help flush your system.

The physical manifestations of illness are often the voices of our natural wisdom, calling us to a deeper awareness of the source of illness and our personal path of balance and healing. Many of us who contract Forest Flu do so because we are already out of balance.

Let others know of your predicament - it may be that there is someone who can share their wisdom, knowledge, and presence with you. Some persons here may be versed in healing methods that could help in restoring balance. Listen to your body's wisdom; you may be given guidance that will be helpful to you (and not necessarily to another, as everyone's metabolism and state of health is different).

Those who have had Forest Flu may continue to harbor the organism(s), so out of respect for others please continue to follow these guidelines. Symptoms may persist in some beyond normal recovery time because food sensitivities keep aggravating the intestinal tract. Experiment by eliminating a suspected food from your diet for a few days. And of course, consult a physician if you feel the need to, or if your symptoms persist.