



PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

NATURE ADVENTURES- PRIVATE PARTIES AT JACK'S POND NATURE CENTER

ALL GUESTS MUST THOROUGHLY READ THROUGH THIS FORM BEFORE RESERVING A PARTY

WHAT IS A NATURE ADVENTURE?

Nature Adventures are private parties at Jack's Pond Nature Center designed for children ages 6 to 12 years old. During the party, guests will have the opportunity to explore 10 themed rooms in the Nature Center, participate in a craft (either decorating canvas tote bags or making beaded lizard keychains), go on a hike to the pond, and make "dirt and worms" pudding cups.

WHAT IS JACK'S POND NATURE CENTER?

Situated near California State University San Marcos, Jack's Pond Nature Center is a repurposed barn within a 23-acre park. Former horse stalls were transformed into themed rooms reflecting San Marcos' biodiversity and conservation efforts.

CAN GUESTS PLAY IN THE PARK DURING THE PARTY?

From 10 am-1 pm, guests will remain inside the Nature Center. To ensure that your party is private, the barn doors will be closed, and the party will be held indoors. The park, however, is open to the public so families are encouraged to stay after the allotted time (after 1 pm) to play on the playground, open presents, serve food or cake, and more outside.

ARE PARK SHELTERS INCLUDED IN THE NATURE ADVENTURE RESERVATIONS?

No, park shelters are not included in your private party reservation. You will spend the entirety of the party inside the Nature Center. If you wish to reserve a picnic shelter in the park after your Nature Adventure (after 1 pm), you can do so by making a park reservation. This is a separate cost and reservation.

ARE WE ALLOWED TO MAKE CHANGES TO NATURE ADVENTURES' TIMELINE OR ACTIVITIES?

To keep our program consistent and inclusive, we cannot accommodate changes to the Nature Adventures timeline or activities. Guests who attend one party should receive the same experience when reserving/participating in their party. That being said, if changes need to be made to the dirt and worms cups recipe due to allergies or intolerances, we can discuss accommodation.

WHAT IS THE COST OF A NATURE ADVENTURES PARTY?

The cost is a \$300 flat fee. Nature Adventures are non-refundable, and any changes must be requested 30 days before the original date. It is not guaranteed that dates can be modified.



WHERE DO NATURE ADVENTURES TAKE PLACE?

Nature Adventures take place at Jack's Pond Nature Center, located at 986 La Moree Rd, San Marcos, CA 92078. The party will take place inside the barn since the park is open to the public. The Nature Center is located in the large red barn on the lower level.

WHAT DAYS AND TIMES ARE AVAILABLE TO BOOK PARTIES?

Parties are available to be booked on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

HOW LONG IS A NATURE ADVENTURE PARTY?

Nature Adventure parties run from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. (3 hours). This is your allotted time, but you may leave earlier if you desire to spend time in the park. If the party chooses to leave before 1 pm to serve food outside, they will not be allowed back in. Please make sure to plan to serve food at the end of the party or after the allotted time.

IS THERE A MINIMUM OR MAXIMUM NUMBER OF GUESTS?

Yes, the minimum number of children needed to book a party is 6 and the maximum number of children is 15. Adults are not included in these numbers. Please note there is limited seating inside and parents will be standing for the majority of the party.

HOW DO I BOOK A PARTY?

Email Erin Rimmereid, the Program Coordinator, at erimmereid@san-marcos.net, to check party date availability. Once you have a date in mind, complete a reservation form and email it back to the Program Coordinator. The Nature Adventure fee can be paid over the phone (760-744-9000) or in person at the San Marcos Community Center (3 Civic Center Drive, San Marcos, CA 92069). Your party is not booked until the reservation form has been returned and the fee paid. You may make a reservation up to six months in advance!

WHAT FOOD IS SERVED AND CAN I BRING ADDITIONAL FOOD?

The party participants will create a “dirt and worms” pudding cup consisting of chocolate pudding, crushed Oreos, and gummy worms. This is the only food that will be provided during the party and there will not be any beverages served (there is a drinking fountain outside in the park that you are welcome to use). Parents may bring additional food and drinks for their guests (excluding alcoholic beverages), but they must be consumed outside during the final hour of the party or after the allotted time has concluded. All food and drinks can be served and enjoyed under the covered shade shelter attached to the barn. This is an attempt to keep the Nature Center clean and rodent-free!



IF IT IS MY CHILD’S BIRTHDAY, CAN I BRING A CAKE OR CUPCAKES?

Of course! Cake and/or cupcakes are permitted, just must be served and consumed outside. There is a refrigerator in the Nature Center that can be used to store food or sweets until the end of the party.

ARE DECORATIONS PROVIDED? CAN I BRING ADDITIONAL DECORATIONS?

The craft and pudding cup table will be decorated with floral centerpieces and hanging plant decorations. In addition, there will be a felt “happy birthday _____ or welcome _____” board in front of a photo backdrop. Families are welcome to bring additional decorations but if anything is going to be hung up, it must be hung with blue painter’s tape only, provided by the family. The Nature Center will not provide blue painter tape. Staples, tacks, scotch tape, packing tape, and duct tape are not permitted.

IS THERE A RESTROOM ON SITE?

There is a restroom available inside the office that party guests can use. Please note that it is a single-stall restroom. Alternatively, there are additional restrooms located at the top of the parking lot which are accessible for both party guests and the general public.

HOW EARLY CAN I ARRIVE TO SET UP?

Staff will arrive 1 hour before party time to begin setting up. The party parents (only) are allowed to enter the facility at 9:30 a.m. to add any additional decorations. The barn doors farthest away from the playground will be open and accessible to the party guests until everyone arrives.

WHERE CAN PARTY GUESTS PARK THEIR VEHICLES?

Parking is permitted in the general parking lot of the park. Please be advised that the park is open to the public so encourage guests to arrive early and carpool. If the parking lot fills up, guests can park along the main road on La Moree. Parking is not permitted near the barn- there is a sign stating authorized vehicles and disabled parking spaces only. If the party parents need to drop off items, they can pull up to the barn but must find a designated parking space after unloading.

ARE ADDITIONAL TABLES AND CHAIRS AVAILABLE?

No, there are no additional tables and chairs in the facility to use as the center is limited in space. The only seating available will be at the craft table for the participants.

WHAT IF IT RAINS ON THE DAY OF OUR NATURE ADVENTURE?

Nature Adventures take place rain or shine, with just a minor modification! Instead of completing a hike down to the pond, staff will conduct a “rainy day scavenger hunt” inside the Nature Center where participants will be encouraged to find an item in each of the 10 rooms and will earn a prize if completed. If it is only lightly raining and the parent still wants to conduct the hike down to the pond, it is up to the staff’s



discretion to make that call. Staff must consider how muddy and safe the trail is before making their decision.

For additional questions, please reach out to Erin Rimmereid at erimmereid@san-marcos.net. We look forward to celebrating with you!