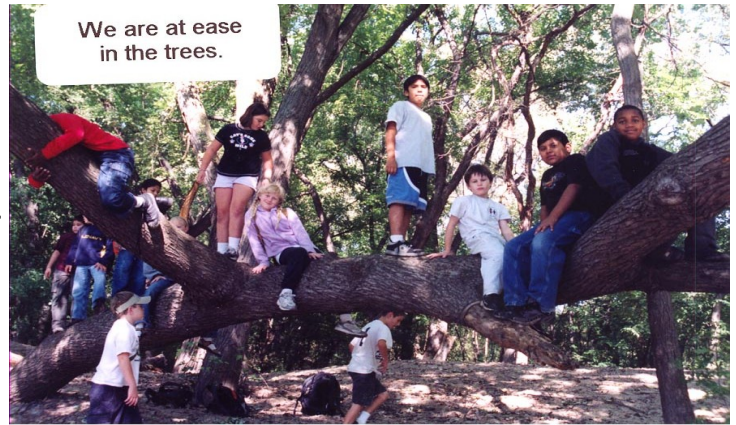


Dear Parent of a 4th, 5th or 6th Grader,

God created the birds of the air, the fish of the sea and the beasts of the field. So why do kids gravitate towards the things that climb trees or creep along the ground? But they do, and the critters are calling again! It is time for another Hike for kids from Junior Church, Stockade, Adventure Club and Spanish Bible Studies. This is a semi-annual event, with a string of consecutive reoccurrences stretching back to time immemorial.



After a year of trying to contain a group of semi-civilized children in a semi-civilized setting for short times, it only seems fitting that we release them into their natural environment for the better part of a day. Can the natural environment handle it? Well, it handles floods on a regular basis and occasional fires. Earthquakes are rare in this area, and plagues of locusts are untested in recent memory. But, reassuringly, each time we return to the rivers, swamps and woods, they seem to have recovered.



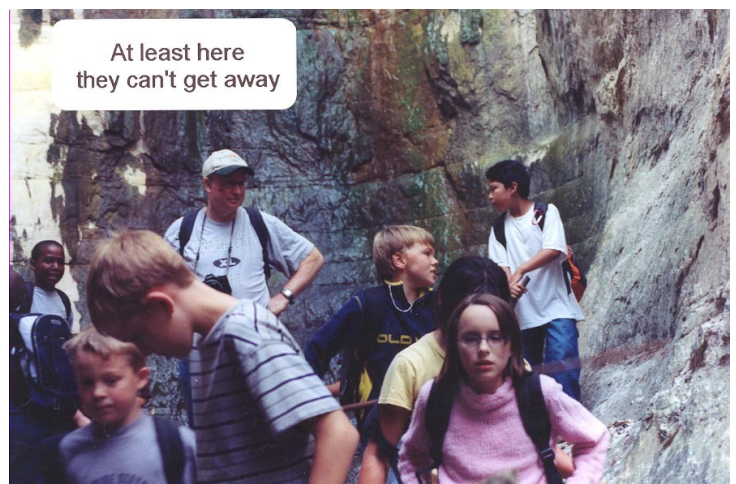
Saturday, June 4, please bring the kids to the church parking lot before 9:00 am. We can arrange rides to church for those who need it. Guests are allowed if they are of the 4th, 5th and 6th grade age group and/or shorter than Mary (not much more than 5'). Volunteer parents are welcome (and some of you have been asked.) We will transport everyone home at the end of the day (or other destination of your choosing.*) This is usually between 5:00 and 6:30 pm. We hike at one of three locations along the Mississippi and Minnesota River junction and are due to visit Pike Island, water level permitting.

The kids should dress for the weather. Long pants are preferable because nettles can cause a terrible itch for 15 minutes and poison ivy for 15 days, and because mosquitoes, flies and ticks will be looking for suitable targets. And don't forget sun screen plus bug repellent. (We will have some along as well.) Be sure shoes can tolerate mud as we will be hiking where water meets the land and both inevitably meet the feet.

We will provide snacks and lunch, although if your young eating machine wants to carry additional sustenance, that is fine. We will also take pictures for a poster, the duplicates of which will be distributed the following week. For these expenses we ask a voluntary donation of \$8.00. (How much is a day of peace and quiet worth to you?)

If you need to contact the group during the day (and are unable to get the required information from the Strategic Air Command or the CIA global tracking center), call Ross' beeper, 612-538-8179 or cell phone, 612-719-6165.

Which brings us to the flora and fauna question. In addition to toxins from noxious flora and involuntary attachment of small arthropods to the skin, collections of living or recently living plant and animal specimens often find their way into the van for the ride home. If they are unwelcome at YOUR house, please make that clear to your intrepid explorer. ("But he's cute, Mom, and I promise to feed him. Ross says they eat small rodents.")



Mark the day on your calendar. You can call Ross or Mary at the numbers listed below, especially if you are reading this over the internet or found it on your windshield. We will be calling all on the mailing list for an exact count during the week before the event.

Mary Anderson 612-824-5573
Ross Olson 612-824-7691

* Federal regulations normally prohibit crossing state lines, and you must agree to take your children back in whatever condition they finish the day.