



Garezers Children's Camp Handbook

2019

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GCC Handbook

This GCC Handbook is intended to familiarize families with the goals and format of Garezers Children's Camp. It defines the GCC activities and includes all guidelines for the summer. After reading this booklet, you as a family will have a better understanding of how to prepare your child to participate in camp, be it for one or two sessions.

GCC Goals

The main goal of GCC is to give children the opportunity to use and strengthen their Latvian language skills, as well as to build respect for Latvian culture and traditions.

Three Main GCC Principles

- **Development:** Campers will learn to live with others, respecting their opinions, thoughts and possessions, as well as controlling their own behavior.
- **Fun:** Campers will have the opportunity to have fun outdoors. They will participate in sports and other activities, including crafts, evening activities and games.
- **Education:** Campers will spend time learning the Latvian language, religion and culture while participating in fun, interactive and interesting activities. They will also enjoy learning Latvian traditions such as folk dancing, singing and a respect and love for nature. The campers acquire skills by cooperating and forming new friendships while spending time in a Latvian atmosphere.

Dances, Campfires and Talent Shows

During all three sessions a dance will be held on the middle Sunday evening. (Based on circumstances we may change the date of the dances.) The campers are encouraged to come to the dance in fun clothes. Campfires are typically Friday evenings. A joint campfire for all programs is being planned for the all sessions. Parents are welcome to attend the campfires and talents shows.

Rules for accepting campers

Campers are accepted:

- If they are 6 to 10 years old and have completed Kindergarten – 4th grade in school
(On a case by case basis we will accept 11 year old campers during the Latvian speaking sessions, if they are not yet ready to attend the middle school program. Children who speak Latvian and are 11 – 13 years old and have completed 5th - 7th grade can attend the middle school program.)
- In the 1st or 2nd session if their Latvian language skills are sufficient. GCC reserves the right not to accept a child in the 1st or 2nd session, or send them home from the 1st or 2nd session, if it is determined that their Latvian language skills are not acceptable.
- For the Gateway session if the child does not speak and/or has a minimal understanding of the Latvian language, but desires to learn about the Latvian language and Latvian culture.

Camp Fees and registration information

Camp fees are as follows

- Gateway session June 23-July 4 \$1000
- 1st session July 8-20 - \$1200
- 2nd session July 21-Aug. 3 - \$1200
- The registration deadline is March 15th. Registrations for all three sessions received after March 15th will be assessed a \$150 late fee. The postmark date will be used as the registration date.
- For all three sessions a \$300 deposit per child is due upon registration; the remainder of the fee is to be paid upon arrival at camp.
- If the registration is canceled **after June 1 the deposit will not be refunded.**
- If there are unpaid camp fees at the end of the camp session, Garezers will add 1½% every month to the remaining balance until it is paid in full.
- No refunds will be given if a camper is expelled from GCC.
- An annual car entry pass is included in the camp fees.

Registration, Opening & Closing Ceremonies

- Registration for Gateway is Sunday, June 23 is from 3:00 pm at Teikas.
- A parent's meeting will be held at 4:00 in Dainas

Registration for Session 1

- Registration for Session 1 is Sunday, July 8 at 3:00 pm at Teikas.
- A parent's meeting will be held at 4:00 in Dainas

Registration for Session 2

- Registration for Session 2 is Sunday, July 21 at 3:00 at Teikas.
- A parent's meeting will be held at 4:00 in Dainas.

General Registration Guidelines for All Sessions

- If you will be delayed and not able to register during the designated time, please inform the Camp Director by email garezers@gbn.org ahead of time.
- Campers move into the cabins **after** registration is completed
- At the registration desk you must:
 - Have completed the Health Form on Campdocs and the camper must appear in person for a quick health screen
 - Turn in all medication; the camper may not keep any medication (prescription or over-the-counter) in his/her possession
 - Make the final camp payment
- It is recommended that you purchase a Camp Store card prior to registration.
- **Counselors will assume responsibility for the children after they have moved in.**

Closing Ceremonies

- **Closing ceremonies for all three sessions will be on the last day at 10:00 am in Sietini.**

Campers can move out and sign out after the Closing Ceremonies. Please stop by Teikas before leaving to notify the Director that you are leaving with your child.

Suggestions and explanations:

- To successfully participate in camp, campers must know how to:
 - independently dress and wash themselves
 - make their own bed and help to keep the cabin tidy
 - place dirty clothes in a laundry bag
- We recommend using a suitcase or plastic bin because they are easier to open and keep neat than duffle bags.
- **Pocket money:** Campers do not need extra cash. Prior to registration it is recommended that purchase punch cards for use in the Camp Store. Campers are given time once each day to buy ice cream or candy from the Camp Store. **To avoid potentially unpleasant situations, campers ABSOLUTELY MAY NOT keep cash in their cabins.**
- Please do not bring any jewelry, shoes, clothes or sports equipment that is expensive, irreplaceable or would require any special care or protection.
- Campers may call home from the office telephone only if needed and approved by the Director. Please note that talking on the phone to parents may cause children to be homesick even when they haven't been homesick earlier.
- **The camp office telephone number is 269-244-8448.** If you have an emergency and must contact your child, call the camp office phone.
- Campers **do not** have access to the **internet**.
- An **annual car entry pass** is included in the camp fees.
- Please write your child's name or initials on all clothing items, including undergarments, and on any other personal items.
- Parents, please do not spend time in Sprīdīši or Indrāni (unless necessary), especially in the evenings, because all too often your children or their peers may cry after you leave. For the same reasons, please do not come into the Dining hall during meals. Although it has been tradition please

make an informed decision if it is helpful to see your child at lunch near Kantine. Some children are OK with this time and others become sad and homesick. If you need support, please see the Camp Director.

Items to definitely bring along to camp:

- Simple and comfortable, yet appropriate everyday clothes, enough for one week. (*Typically, parents launder clothing on the weekend between week one and week two. Counselors will not wash camper's clothes.*) Please write your child's name on everything if possible.
- A warm jacket or sweatshirt - mornings and evenings can be chilly
- Several pairs of long pants
- Appropriate clothing for church services, the dance and concerts, if scheduled
- A rain jacket or poncho
- Sneakers, socks and sandals
- Sports equipment, such as tennis rackets, balls, frisbees, etc.
- Swimsuit and beach towel
- Sleeping bag or a blanket, pillow and sheets, a towel
- Toiletries: soap, shampoo, toothpaste and toothbrush, hairbrush; girls: hair bands
- Sunscreen and bug spray
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Laundry bag for dirty laundry
- Plastic clothes hangers
- Musical instrument and music, shoes for dancing, anything else that might be used for a talent show
- Books and games for free time or rainy days
- Latvian folk costume. If one is not available, please bring a khacki colored bottom (skirt or pants) and a nice white shirt/blouse.
- Carefully read and completed health forms and other campdoc forms (doctors signature required)

What NOT to bring:

- Weapons, fireworks or any other similar items
- Candles or matches
- Bikes, skateboards, or rollerblades
- TVs, cell phones, walkie-talkies, radios, MP3 players, CD players, tape players, earphones
- *Game boys* or other electronic games
- Alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco or any smoking paraphernalia. **NO PARTICIPANT OF ANY OF THE GAREZERS PROGRAMS MAY USE OR BE IN POSSESSION OF ALCOHOL, NARCOTICS OR TOBACCO IN ANY FORM.**
- **Food** (including snacks, candy, juice or other drinks)
- Head lice. All campers will undergo a head check at registration. Any camper found to have lice or louse eggs will be required to leave the camp premises until completely cured. (girls will be required to take out any braids or pony tails when checking for lice)

Health Form

The state of Michigan requires that a Health Form is completed and submitted to Garezers **BEFORE** a child can participate in camp. **Both the parent and the camper's physician must sign** the Health Form and it must be renewed each year. A copy of both sides of the camper's Health Insurance card and a list of all immunizations must be attached to the Health Form. **All forms are found on the CampDocs site online.**

Garezers Children's Camp Rules

No set of rules can account for every situation. Therefore, GBN guidelines follow principles of friendly respect for peers, Garezers and one's culture.

Camper Responsibilities:

- Speak, read and write at all times and everywhere in Garezers only in Latvian (sessions 1 & 2).
- Respect the rights of the individual and of Garezers property and facilities.
- Set a good example: behave in a helpful and polite manner.

The following is not allowed:

- Leaving the campsite without permission
- Being in the opposite gender's room/cabin
- Stealing
- Smoking

The following are grounds for expulsion from GBN:

- Heavy vandalism of Garezers or other property.
- Heavy injury or harm caused to other people anywhere in Garezers.
- Leaving GBN premises without permission.
- Criminal indictment for theft.
- Smoking, alcohol or drug use or possession.

The GCC Director has the right to look through a camper's personal belongings in their presence, if it is suspected that the camper has items which are forbidden. The GCC Director has the right to confiscate such items. The GCC Director has the right to confiscate forbidden items from a camper's room without the camper present.

Approved by the Garezers Board of Directors on January 12, 2002

Disrespect

Disrespect is **any** look gesture, work or action that hurts another person's body, feelings, friendships, status, or belongings. In the summer of 2004 all of the Garezers programs adopted an anti-bullying, anti-disrespect policy. Students, employees, guests - everyone who has contact with a student or camper - may not behave disrespectfully to another, nor may they accept disrespect from another at Garezers. Such behavior is unacceptable in Garezers. There are prescribed consequences for disrespectful actions. The definition of disrespect and the potential consequences for such actions are reviewed with all campers during an orientation session, the first day of camp.

Sample Daily Schedules*

Weekdays:

8:00	Wake-up and morning stretches
8:20	Flag ceremony
8:30	Breakfast
9:00	Housekeeping
9:20	Ceramics/jewelry making/art
11:45	Singing
12:15	Swimming
1:30	Rest and games
2:50	Snack
3:00	Camper's Choice Activity
5:20	Dinner
6:00	Flag ceremony
7:00	Evening activities
8:45	Snack
9:00	Lights out for the youngest campers (6-8 year olds)
9:30	Lights out for the older campers (9+ year olds)

Saturdays: Schedule is similar to weekdays. Campers may be signed out after morning activities, from about 11:45 am – 6:00 pm.

Sundays:

8:45	Wake up and morning stretches
9:10	Flag ceremony
9:15	Breakfast
9:45	Housekeeping
10:15	Flag ceremony at Karogkalns
10:30	Church service
11:45-6:00	Sign-out
5:20	Dinner
6:15	Flag ceremony
7:00	Evening activities/dance
8:45	Snack
9:00	Lights out for the youngest campers (6-8 year olds)
9:30	Lights out for the older campers (9+ year olds)

* Times are approximate. Exact schedules will be finalized at the start of the summer.

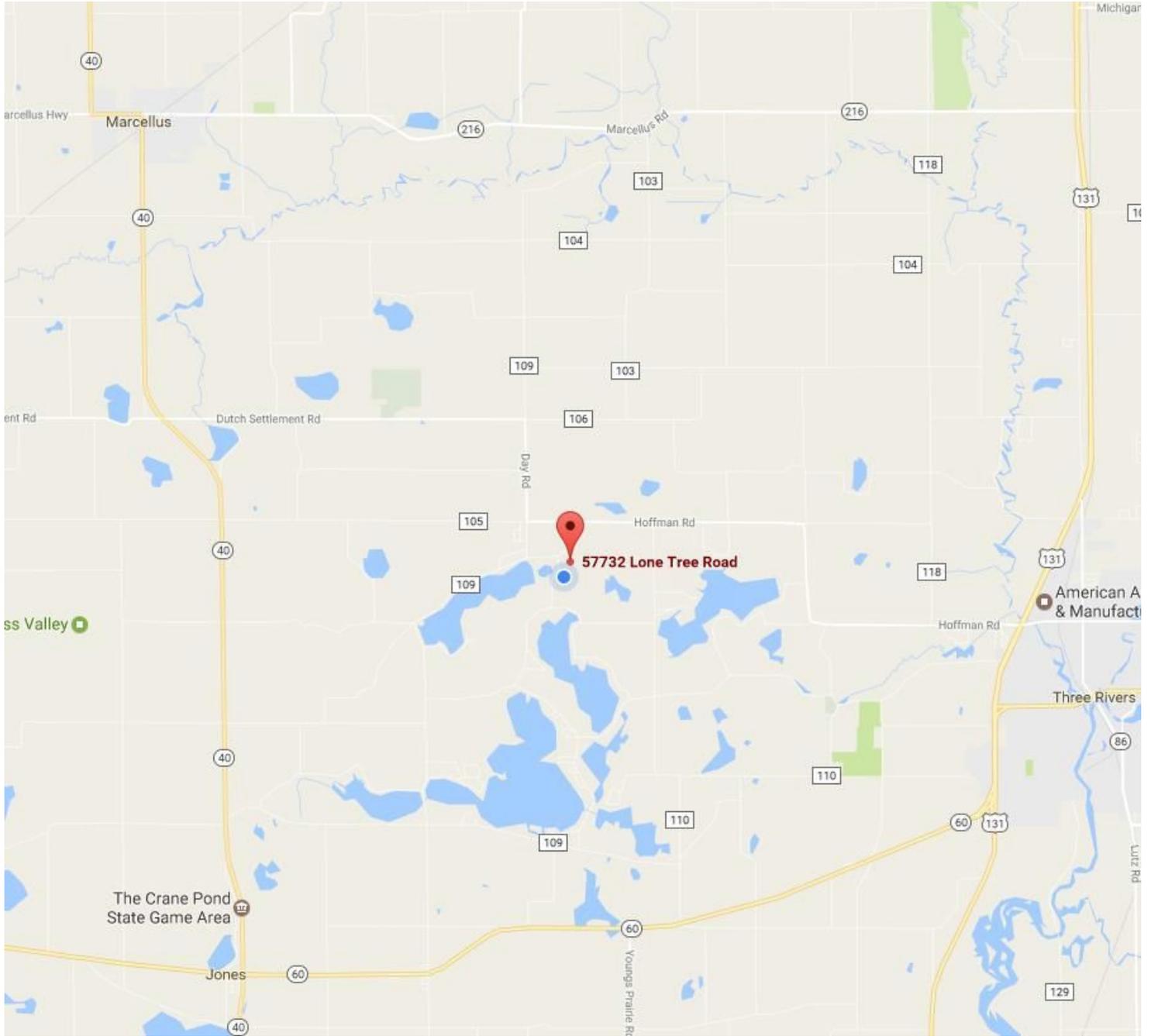
Guidelines for Weekend Sign-Out:

The GCC campers have the opportunity to be signed out of camp on the weekends by their parent(s) or an adult designated by the parents. During this time, the campers typically spend time with their parents resting or enjoying their free time. Sign out is not mandatory. However, most, often all, campers are signed out on both Saturday and Sunday. Those who are not signed out remain under the supervision of the counselors. Organized activities are not planned for this time.

1. Sign-out times are Saturdays after morning activities until after dinner and Sundays after the church service until after dinner (from approximately 11:45 am until 6:00 pm).
2. If the camper is signed out until 6:00 pm, it is expected that before returning to camp, the child will have eaten dinner. If you wish your child eat dinner at camp, they must return by 5:00 pm.
3. When a camper is signed out, he/she must at all times remain under the direct supervision of the adult who signed him/her out.
4. A camper can only be signed out by his or her parent(s) or an adult designee of the parent(s). The designee must be at least 21 years old, trustworthy, responsible, and well known to the parent(s). The designees must understand and agree to follow the sign-out rules.
5. The camper must be present at Teikas to be signed out and again to be signed back in to camp.
6. Sign-out at times other than those designated above is allowed ONLY with the prior knowledge of the Camp Director. Acceptable reasons to be signed out at other times include: American /Canadian school obligations, special family events, or medical appointments.
7. While a camper is signed out of camp during regular camp hours, he or she may not remain anywhere in Garezers territory and may not participate in any camp activities.

Parents will sign a sign-out sheet on the porch of Teikas to sign out their children. The sign-out sheet will indicate who is signing the camper out, at what time, and when will the camper return to camp.

Map of the Three Rivers Area



Lodging near Garezers and in Three Rivers:

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| Atbalsis (Echo lodge) | 269-244-5141 |
| Dzintari (cabins on Garezers property) | 269-244-8291 |

Reservations for Dzintari and Atbalsis can be made through the Garezers office (269-244-5441 / garezers@garezers.org)

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Super Eight | 269-279-8888 |
| Holiday Inn Express | 269-278-7766 |

Map of Garezers

