



# BR Guide

## CAMP INFORMATION

### **MOTTO:**

Be Safe & Have Fun!

### **MISSION:**

The mission of the Black River Farm and Ranch is to provide a safe atmosphere where young girls ages 7-15 can come and have a great time riding horses and enjoying the other activities provided in a stress free environment.

### **HISTORY OF THE BR:**

Since Childhood, Lois Donovan “Mrs. D” had a dream where she would have a place where girls could come to learn to ride and to be around horses and farm animals. Her dream became a reality in 1962 when Mr. & Mrs. D purchased an old potato farm in Croswell, MI. They were living in Birmingham at the time and choose the location because it was within driving distance from the Detroit area and still secluded from the hustle and bustle of the city.

That summer Black River Farm and Ranch opened their doors. The D’s had managed to build in very short time 2 cabins (now part of Virginia City) and a dining hall (What we now know as Silver City). The first two cabin names were Pioneers and Trailblazers. That first year the BR had 16 campers, 4 staff members, and 7 horses.

For more than 40 years the BR has continued to expand and improve our program and facilities. Working under the leadership of the Donovan and Ciferri families, our staff continues to pass on the joy of camping and horsemanship to girls and our camp and program evolve as we near the half century mark.

Black River is licensed by the State of MI  
Inspected by the Sanilac County Health Department  
Accredited by Camp Horsemanship Association  
Accredited by American Camping Association

Black River Farm and Ranch  
5040 Sheridan Line  
Croswell, MI 48422

810-679-2505

## ALL THE INFORMATION A PARENT NEEDS TO KNOW!!

### Parents:

We have put together this guide for you as a helpful tool in while preparing for camp and while your camper is away. Please read it in its entirety because it has been updated. The polices and program are updated and this is our means to communicate those changes to you.

For campers and parents there is a lot of anxiety and excitement about going to summer camp, therefore, it is important to have realistic expectations. Campers should be involved in the preparations for camp like packing and picking out items for camp. Camp is going to be a special time for your camper. She will meet new people, learn new things, be more independent and have a blast! So make sure you talk about all the positive aspects of camp. Most important is the information about preparing for camp. Please read over this information thoroughly with your camper so that you know what to expect on these busy days.

The staff at the BR are here to help you. If you have any question while you are preparing for camp do not hesitate to call us. Once your camper is at camp remember that our most important job is to ensure she is safe and having fun. To do that we need to be supervising the program. You may need to leave a message in the office and we will return your call ASAP. We care about your camper!

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CAMP INFORMATION.....	1
INCOMING & HORSESHOW DAYS.....	2
MAP TO CAMP.....	4
ACCOMMODATIONS NEAR CAMP.....	5
CABIN PLACEMENTS.....	5
PREPARING FOR CAMP.....	2
COMMUNICATING WITH CAMP.....	6
CAMPER CONDUCT.....	9
CAMP POLICIES.....	10
MEDICAL CARE.....	11
FOOD SERVICE.....	14
HORSEBACK RIDING PROGRAM.....	15
AFTERNOON PROGRAM.....	16
TYPICAL DAY AT CAMP.....	17
STAFF & CIT PROGRAM.....	18
DIRECTORS AND HEAD STAFF.....	19
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS -- FAQ'S.....	22
APPLICATION & FORMS.....	23

## INCOMING DAY

### **SUNDAY – 1:30pm to 4pm**

This day is a wonderful opportunity to see your camper's cabin and meet their counselors.

However, we need everyone to abide by the same guidelines.

- Gates for parking will be opened at 1pm (Please try not to arrive before 1pm)
- Starting at 1:15pm staff will be in the parking lot to assist with baggage.
- Check-in begins at 1:30pm
- Camper must be present for check-in, it is State Law. For this reason, cabin assignments are given at Check-in. Bunks can not be reserved in advance, nor can they be chosen until after you have checked in. **We cannot reserve bunks.**

### **Forms & Items needed at Check-in:**

- Your copy of the **Medical Health Form**, signed by a Doctor once, parents in three places, and camper once. This form should be sent in advance (1 month) and we ask you to keep a copy for your records, just in case.
- **All Medications** – Prescription and OTC must be with you at check-in. Medication must be in its original container or packaging, labeled with your name, and dosage information. Please refer to the Medication Section on Page 14 if you are bring Medication to camp.
- **Medication Schedule** – All campers must complete this form. It helps the infirmary know how to treat campers when needed.

Activities will be open throughout the day.

Only registered campers will be able to use the waterfront activities.

Parents are responsible for any children (non-campers) they bring with them. Please supervise them carefully.

Parents and families are responsible for any dogs they bring with them. Friendly, well-behaved, and leashed dogs are welcome - supervise them carefully. Please know that BR has dogs on property. These dogs live here and may be running around. Dogs are not permitted in the Dining Hall.

## HORSESHOW DAY

### **SATURDAY – 1:30pm to 4pm**

The Horseshow is a wonderful opportunity to see what your camper has learned at camp, meet her cabin and riding group friends, and talk with her counselors.

However, we need everyone to abide by the same guidelines.

- Gates for parking will be opened at 1pm
- **The Parade will begin at 2pm. All campers are in the parade.**
- The show will last about 1 1/2 hours
- Check-out will be immediately following the show – In the Central Park area.
- Please do not try to gather luggage until after the show with your camper. When unloading be respectful of other campers things. Remember bags will not come home as neatly as they arrived. You may have more items like laundry bags – ask your campers to look and make sure you have everything.

Parents or authorized persons must be at Check-out:

- **All Medications** – are picked up at checkout
- **Cash or Check** only to pay Treat Store Bills

There is a short walk to the show ring. We are able to transport family members that need assistance to the show ring. Please find a BR staff person and ask for assistance.

Parents are responsible for any children (non- campers) they bring with them. Please supervise them carefully. Playground and small animals area require extra supervision.

Parents and families are responsible for any dogs they bring with them. Friendly, well-behaved, and leashed dogs are welcome - supervise them carefully. Dogs are not welcome near the horseshow ring. Barking may disturb the girls or horses during the show and cause an accident. Please keep dogs away from the show area.

Please know that BR has dogs on property. These dogs live here and may be running around.

## MAP TO CAMP



### **Directions from Port Huron, MI to Black River Farm and Ranch:**

1. I-94 to Port Huron (94 dead ends in Port Huron- do worry about exit #)
2. Follow signs for Lexington
3. Take a Left (north) at the first light onto M25 or Lakeshore (same road)
4. Continue North through Port Huron heading towards Lexington
5. Take a Left (west) at the first stop light in Lexington onto M90 or Peck Rd (same road)
6. Travel 3 miles take a Left (south) onto Wildcat Road
7. Travel 1 mile take a Right (west) onto Sheridan Line Road
8. Travel approx. 1.5 miles straight ahead to BR

**More directions are available on the web site.**

**Do not rely on GPS or Mapping programs. They will take you to the wrong side of the Black River. If this happens to you go to the McDonalds in Croswell. Head east on M90. Turn right onto Wildcat Road and follow direction above.**

## ACCOMMODATIONS NEAR CAMP

Parents driving from around the Thumb Area can easily make the round trip to camp in one day. For visitors traveling from out of the area that wish to stay locally this is a partial list of nearby hotels. Reservations should be in advance, since availability is very limited during the summer.

The Croswell Lexington Chamber of Commerce is also a helpful source  
<http://www.cros-lex-chamber.com/>

Lakeview Hills Golf  
and Conference Center  
6560 E. Peck Rd.  
Lexington, MI 48450  
Phone: 810-359-7333  
Fax: 810-359-2130

Website URL: [www.lakeviewhills.com](http://www.lakeviewhills.com)

Powell House B & B  
5076 Lakeshore Rd.  
Lexington, MI 48450  
Phone: 810-359-5533  
Website URL: [www.powellhouselex.com](http://www.powellhouselex.com)

## CABIN PLACEMENTS

### City Name

Cabin Name

### Silver City

Trail riders  
Trailblazers  
Wranglers

### Virginia City

Settlers  
Drovers  
Rangers  
Cowpokes

### Carson City

Rustlers  
Prospectors  
Broncbusters  
Homesteaders

### Dodge City

Buckaroos  
Pioneers  
Roughriders  
Golddiggers

We have 4 bunkhouses and inside the bunkhouses are cabins of 8-12 girls. All the cabins in the bunkhouse share bathroom facilities.

Campers are assigned to cabins by age, cabin requests, and grade.

We do our best to accommodate all cabin requests (each camper is allowed 2 requests). However, we can not guarantee the requests.

Your cabin ages will depend on the session. We start with the youngest and work our way up. You will not necessarily move up a cabin every year. During your years at BR you may go up, stay the same, or go down, but whatever cabin you are in you will be with other girls or friends your age.

We do our best to honor as many requests as possible, within reason. Please remember, we have each individual camper's best interest in mind and are committed to providing every camper a "good fit" and positive cabin experience.

Cabin placements are not given out prior to camp.

## PREPARING FOR CAMP

Black River Farm and Ranch is A LOT of FUN!!! However, for some campers, spending time away from home is a major step.

“The cornerstone of homesickness prevention is parents’ attitudes. When parents express confidence, optimism, and a positive attitude about camp, children follow their lead.

It’s normal for children to ask, in the months prior to opening day, “What if I feel homesick at camp?” Sadly, many well-intentioned parents provide an answer that virtually guarantees intense homesickness. “If you feel homesick,” they say, “I’ll come and get you.” This is what camp professionals regretfully refer to as “The Pick-Up Deal.”

The tragedy of “The Pick-Up Deal” is how it undermines children’s confidence in themselves and gives them something about which to be preoccupied. When you think about it, the subtext of the promise “If you feel homesick, I’ll come and get you” is basically “I have so little confidence in your ability to cope with these feelings that I think the only solution is for me to come and rescue you.” In *The Secret Ingredients of Summer Camp Success*, you’ll learn the best way to respond to children’s questions and concerns about staying at camp. You’ll also learn the best ways to reply to a homesick letter, the best homesickness preparation tips, and the best ways to provide parenting from afar.”

*Chris Thurber www.CampSpirit.com 2008*

**The key to success is preparation! Here are some suggestions to help your camper adjust to the camp experience:**

- **Start early preparing you child for the idea of being away from home.** Find out what their expectations are from camp and what seems a bit scary. Teach coping strategies for when they are away. Provide reassurance and encouragement. Ensure you are not projecting your anxiety on them.
- **Stress the positive aspects of the upcoming session.** Remember, children learn about coping skills related to separation from home through experiences such as camp.
- **Practice away from home skills.** Such as letter writing, talking with other adults, hugging a teddy bear at night, and using a flashlight. Nothing builds confidence and teaches a child how to cope with time away from home better than...(you guessed it)...time away from home. That weekend at your folks’ will do wonders for their adjustment. If possible, practice spending the night away from home with no phone contact in smaller increments of time.

- **Allow your child time to adjust to the new situation.** The first letter or two you receive (which may have been written the very first evening) may sound hesitant about the camp experience. We find that campers are quickly consumed by the activities and opportunities and forget their first and second day worries.

- **Send your child mail.** Mail is delivered daily and it is very exciting for camper to receive a letter or postcard from home. Be positive in your message for example; try not to mention how lonesome you are without them, instead writing about how exciting camp must be.

- **Don’t make a “pick-up deal.”**

- **Pack for camp together.** Allow your camper to help you pack her own things. Campers need to have a perceived level of control when entering into a new situation. Simple things like picking out her clothes and going to the drug store to buy soap and goodies for camp can help her feel comfortable with the transition.

- **Double-check the opening and closing dates and times.** Start camp off on a smooth note by arriving on time and on the right day. Use a wall calendar in the months prior to opening day to make an exciting count-down to the big day.

*These ideas are gathered from many different sources including the teachings of Bob Ditter and Chris Thurber both talented psychologists who specialize in children and camping. Chris Thurber has a great DVD titled The Secret Ingredients of Summer Camp Success you can purchase it at [CampSpirit.com](http://CampSpirit.com).*

## TIPS FOR CAMPERS

- **Talk to your parents and friends about camp.** Share your ideas about what you expect from camp and ask them about their experiences at camp.

- **Help pack your things for camp.** Make sure you remembered everything on the list.

- **Label all your belongings it’s the best way to avoid losing things.** Leave the expensive things at home.

- **Leave your electronics at home.** Not only are they not allowed at camp... it’s time to unplug and make new friends.

- **Tell your parents you will be fine.** Sometimes parents worry a lot. Remember to give them a big hug on the first day of camp and remind them that you will write.

- **Pack some pre-stamped, pre-addressed envelopes, along with paper and pens.** Parents and family love to get mail and the more you write, the more you’ll get back. Put all your stationery stuff in a zippered bag so it stays together.

- **Visit the camp website** it may have all the answers to your questions.

## THINGS TO BRING AND CLOTHING LIST:

### Required Items:

1. **Riding Helmet** ASTM/ SEI certified (available at BR for purchase or rent the day of arrival)
2. **Riding Boots required** - Western or English – Arizona Saddlery offers a BR discount
3. **Tennis shoes for vaulting**

## THIS LIST IS BASED ON A 1 WEEK STAY

### CLOTHING

#### Riding Wear:

- 7 pr. tall socks for boots
- 7 T-shirts or tops for riding
- 4 pr. jeans or pants for riding

#### Non Barn Wear:

- 7 pr. underwear
- 5-7 pr. socks
- 4-7 pajamas
- 5 pr. shorts
- 3 pr. pants
- 7 T-shirts or tops
- 1 disposable outfit for messy games
- 2 sweatshirts
- 1 long sleeve T-shirt
- 2 bathing suits
- 1 raincoat or poncho
- caps or hat for sun
- 1 pr. sneakers
- 1 pr. thongs or sandals
- Optional- rain boots
- Casual Dress outfit for “Dress up dinner”

### MICELLANEOUS

- 1 large laundry bag (label clearly)
- 1 pool towel
- 1 flashlight
- disposable camera, optional
- stationery, stamps, pens
- Pre-addressed stamped envelopes

### TOILETRIES (Please label clearly)

- 1 toiletry bag or box
- toothbrush
- toothpaste
- deodorant
- 1 plastic drinking cup
- soap
- shampoo
- comb or brush
- bug spray
- sunscreen
- tissues

### LINENS

- 1 Pillow
- 2 pillowcases
- 1 light blanket
- 1 sleeping bag
- 2 flat sheets
- 2 fitted sheets
- 1 mattress pad, optional
- 4 bath towels
- 2 wash cloths

### NOT PERMITTED

- **Cell Phones**
- **DVD, TV, Video Games**
- **Food and Candy**

- **LABEL ALL BELONGINGS:** things will be lost at camp. That is the nature of group living. We can eliminate much of this if ALL items are labeled.
- **DO NOT PACK MEDICATION:** It must be turned in at check in
- **DO NOT SEND EXPENSIVE ITEMS:** Clothing and items such as stereos or MP3's can be damaged or lost.

Items that are not permitted will be taken to the office and returned at check-out. Campers will be asked to turn them in the first night and after that it will be considered a violation of the conduct code.

## LABELING BELONGINGS

Please ensure that your camper's name (first and last) is on everything they bring to camp - clothing, shoes, towels, sports equipment, sleeping bags, cameras, flashlights, etc. Use either a permanent marker or name tapes.

*Please contact these companies directly for ordering information and current pricing.*

Stuck on You – (888) 236-2800 - <https://www.stuckonyou.biz/>

Sterling Name Tape Co. - (800) 654-5210 – [www.sterlingtape.com](http://www.sterlingtape.com)

\*Mabel's Labels – (905) 297-0522 – [www.mabel.ca](http://www.mabel.ca)

\* This is a Canadian Company- Prices are listed in Canadian \$

## LUGGAGE

Trunks, Suitcases, and Duffel Bags are acceptable for packing your camper's belongings. Please pack everything into bags and label. She must be able to repack her belongings on the last day into the same bags. Each camper will have a large drawer under her bed for storing clothes and a shelf for bathroom items.

Campers are limited to a maximum of 2 bags, which will easily accommodate the required amount of clothing.

## EXPENSIVE GEAR

Expensive clothing, cameras and musical instruments are brought to camp at parent's and camper's own risk. We suggest that you arrange insurance coverage on a “Floater Policy” on any costly items. The camp, though taking all reasonable precautions, cannot be held responsible for loss, damage or theft of any camper's belongings in transit or while at camp.

## LAUNDRY SERVICE

Laundry service is only provided for campers staying more than one session. Camp laundry is completed by an outside contracted service and will be billed to your treat store account. This service includes washing, drying, folding and returning all articles to camp the next day. Please do not send any clothing that requires delicate laundering as they may not stand up to camp laundering. Send old clothes and keep your purchases of new items to a minimum. Be sure that all items are pre-washed prior to camp to avoid shrinkage or dye leakage in our laundry.

## LOST AND FOUND

Due to the group living experience, fast paced nature of camp and constantly changing clothes for different activities, clothing and personal belongings will be misplaced. Every activity area has a “lost and found bin” and clothing is regularly collected by our staff and distributed back to the appropriate persons. Every effort is made to ensure campers go home with everything they came with, but this is often an unrealistic goal.

Greater emphasis on routines cabin cleanliness and camper responsibilities has reduced this problem and we will continue to fight the battle of missing socks, towels and t-shirts. However, while reasonable care is taken by the camp to keep track of camper clothing, the nature of group living and the rugged active lifestyle at camp makes it certain that clothing **WILL BE LOST OR DAMAGED**. Parents please expect this loss and send items that are disposable if possible. For the reasons stated above, the camp **CANNOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE** for the loss, disappearance or damage of campers clothing or belongings.

Clothing and personal belongings (that are labeled) and found at camp after campers leave will be collected, laundered and sent to your home within two weeks of the end of the camp season. The Items will include a receipt for the shipping fees which we ask that you repay. Your understanding in this matter is appreciated.

### **SPENDING MONEY**

Spending money is not needed at camp. The camp will not be responsible for the loss of any money or valuables not brought to the office for safe keeping.

### **COMMUNICATING WITH CAMP**

#### **Mailing Address**

Black River Farm and Ranch  
5040 Sheridan Line  
Croswell, MI 48422

(810) 679-2505 Phone

**Business Email** – [info@blackriverfarmandranch.com](mailto:info@blackriverfarmandranch.com)

**Website** - [www.blackriverfarmandranch.com](http://www.blackriverfarmandranch.com)

### **MAIL**

Communication between parents and their children is an important part of camp. Who doesn't love getting mail? Campers are encouraged to write to parents.

Occasionally letters from camp may seem sad, which may concern you. Parents are encouraged to keep in mind that most campers have a settling in period to camp or may have brief moments of missing home. This while upsetting, can be a natural part of camp for some children. Many campers, even those that attend each summer, may experience homesickness. Our staff members are aware of this and work at ensuring each child's adjustment to and memories of camp are positive. Most temporarily unhappy campers bounce back within an hour of mailing the letter and we encourage parents to recognize this. If there is something contained in your child's letter that is of concern to you and you wish to follow up, please call the camp office we are more than happy to look in on your camper.

### **MAIL (continued...)**

Mail is dropped off and picked up in Croswell every business day. Mail between Detroit and camp can take 2 to 4 days to reach its destination. Parents are encouraged to write to their children before their arrival at camp to ensure they receive a letter within the first day or two.

Our camp mailing address is:

Black River Farm and Ranch  
**Your Child's First and Last Name**  
**Cabin Name**  
5040 Sheridan Line  
Croswell, MI 48422

Once you Check-in at camp we will give you your campers Cabin assignment. Once you know this, please include it with your child's name on mail. Cabin assignments are not given out prior to the start of camp, we will label packages sent before assignments are given.

**We recommended that you send pre-addressed pre-stamped envelopes with your child.** Although helpful for all ages, campers under 10 particularly benefit from this. We try and check outgoing mail, but often cannot tell who it is going to and who it is from if the address is incomplete. Provide envelopes for yourselves, grandparents, aunts and uncles, friends and anyone else you want your child to write to throughout the session. Camper's do get busy with activities and forget to write – busy having fun is good! We remind them to write home but do not force them.

### **PACKAGES**

Packages are distributed daily. If service is late in the day delivery may not happen until the next day.

Please **do not include food or candy** in packages. Campers must consume all food or candy when it is received, we ask that they share. What can not be consumed must be thrown away.

**All of the main couriers deliver to camp, including FedEx and UPS.** Please do not send FedEx or UPS packages for Saturday Delivery, as it is not delivered to us on weekends.

### **TELEPHONE**

It is a strict camp policy that campers may not call home or receive telephone calls at camp. In addition to being disruptive to the daily routine, our experience has shown that telephone conversations, however well intentioned, tend to bring sadness, tears, and homesickness. The only exception is in the event of a family emergency. Concerned parents of first time campers are welcome to call and find

## TELEPHONE (continued...)

out how their child is doing, but continual updates take time away from what the primary focus is for our staff - we want our counselors to focus their time and energy relating directly with their campers. We will always notify you if we feel there are issues you should be aware of.

If the camp feels it is necessary to contact you, one of our Program Directors or Managers, will call you. As always, our camp office staff will be happy to help you. Also, any contact information you can provide us before camp will help us reach you in a timely manner if necessary.

## Camp Phone Number (810) 679-2505

## FAX

Our fax line is strictly dedicated for business purposes during the summer. It can not be used as a means to communicate with your children, if you have to send us a travel itinerary, completed health form or other business related documents throughout the summer, please call our office and we will provide you with the number.

## EMAIL

We are continuing to offer email service once again for the coming summer.

Parents should think of this service as a fast, effective method of writing letters to their campers (In addition to mail sent by regular post). Emails will be downloaded once a day and delivered to your camper at meal time. **There is no substitute for a handwritten letter or card!**

There is a fee for email service. The fees charged help cover the cost of the service. We do not make money from the email. If you want to avoid the fees send letters kids like them more.

Please go to [www.Blackriverfarmandranch.com](http://www.Blackriverfarmandranch.com) for a link to the camper email. Look for the "Camper Email" link at the bottom of the home page.

## GET STARTED TODAY!

To set up a new account:

1. Go to the BR website at [www.blackriverfarmandranch.com](http://www.blackriverfarmandranch.com)
2. Click on the "Camper Email" button at the bottom of the page
3. Click "Register Now" button
4. Enter your Pre-Approved Registration Code, which is in the Bunk1 letter at the front of this BR Guide folder.
5. Fill out the required information
6. Choose the free credits option or purchase Bunk Note Credits (You will need a credit card to purchase credits)
7. View camper pictures and send an email to your camper

\* For your safety please do not share the Pre-Approved Registration Code.

\* We cannot help with technical difficulties. Please call Bunk1 directly.

## CAMPER CONDUCT

General behavior of Campers and Staff is expected to be in keeping with the ideals upon which BR was founded. Our mandate includes protecting campers from verbal, mental, sexual and physical abuse from anyone. Any behavior that compromises the well being of any child is not tolerated. Our policies are designed to reinforce these ideals and campers must adhere to the following "Code of Behavior":

- Bullying and teasing other campers is NOT permitted.
- Swearing is an inappropriate way to communicate and not acceptable.
- All campers must remain in their cabins from camper bedtime until scheduled wake up.
- Campers will attend all scheduled activities.
- Campers are expected to contribute to the cabin community and do what they can to make everyone feel welcome, comfortable, and included.
- Respect for all camp equipment, facilities and property is required of all campers.
- Respect for each other's property and belonging's is common courtesy and also required.
- Use your counselors or director's to help resolve any issues or problems you may have.
- Respect and abide by the no food policy at camp.
- Campers and Staff may not possess, consume or be under the influence of any drugs or alcohol. Smoking is not permitted on camp grounds, by anyone.

Campers that do not respect this code shall receive a warning, after which if the behavior does not improve parents will be notified. If the camper continues to prove to be a disruption to camp and the enjoyment of camp by others, they may be asked to leave.

Campers that breach our policy regarding drugs, alcohol and smoking will be asked to leave camp immediately.

Black River Farm and Ranch reserves the right to dismiss from camp any camper whose conduct proves to be detrimental to the welfare of others.

Dismissal from camp due to camper conduct will not receive a refund of any fees.

\*Black River Farm & Ranch is an invitation only camp. Your invitation is based on your behavior at camp the previous year(s). Poor conduct could result in no invitation.

## **CAMP POLICIES**

### **FIRE SAFETY**

As a safety precaution we must limit the amount of electrical devices and appliances campers bring to camp. Our rule is that each cabin may have only three electrical devices plugged in at a time. Fans are permitted but only those that are battery powered. Hair dryers, flat irons, and other hair styling devices can only be used in the bathrooms. Stereos can be plugged-in in the cabin.

Each cabin at camp is equipped with a smoke detector and a fire extinguisher. Both of these must be respected as safety devices and never considered as toys to be played with. Therefore fire extinguishers cannot be touched and batteries cannot be removed from smoke detectors.

Finally, the buildings at camp are also equipped with a sophisticated fire safety system linked directly to 911 and the alarm company. These fire alarms are not to be played with. Pulling the fire alarm as a form of misbehavior is cause for automatic dismissal.

### **EMERGENCY CONTACT POLICY**

In the event of an incident or medical emergency at camp concerning your child we will try to contact you in the following order:

1. One or both parents at home and/or work
2. Any cell, pager, cottage or weekend number for parents.
3. Person listed as emergency contact home/business.

We will make every effort to contact you or your alternate contact person but if we are unable to reach you, the Camp Director will act on your behalf. If we are contacting you and it is NOT an emergency (i.e. behavioral concerns, medical update) we will leave a message or call again. Please don't be alarmed if you see our phone number on your call display or hear our voices on your answering machine. Sometimes phone calls are made for non-emergency issues such as more socks are needed.

### **LEAVING CAMP**

Campers may NOT leave camp for any reason without permission from the Camp Director. "Special Occasions" must be arranged prior to the start of camp and are subject to the Director's approval. Fees will not be adjusted for any time spent away from camp during the session.

Campers leaving camp must have a parent pick them up and sign them out when leaving camp. This will take place in the office. Parents are not allowed on camp property during a session without checking in at the office.

### **VISITORS**

Our camp entrance and grounds are monitored by security personnel and staff 24 hours a day. No unauthorized visits are permitted. Please, be sure all family and friends are aware of this policy. It is for our camper's and staff's safety. All visitors must sign-in at the office.

First time campers, appointments can be made to see the camp during the summer, prior to your session. Please call the office to arrange.

### **NO FOOD POLICY**

Black River Farm and Ranch has a no food policy in the cabins for all campers as a resolution for significant problems we found it caused. They include attraction of bugs and animals in the cabin, allergy concerns, and cabin cleanliness.

Do not send food of any kind. In addition to three meals a day (all you can eat!), campers receive a daily mid-afternoon snack, and afternoon and bedtime treats at the Treat Store. We request that parents support this important policy.

### **GENERAL STORE POLICIES**

The BR has a General Store on property. It has items for sale such as: snacks, drinks, t-shirts, sweatshirts, novelty items, travel size toiletries, and more.

As for food, we limit the campers to 1 food item and 1 drink item per visit. We ask you to go through the novelty section with them on incoming day so that they are aware of what they can and cannot buy.

Each camper has an account in the General Store and they can charge items as they go. Campers are responsible for making the choices as to what they can have when they are in the store. Accounts are paid in full with cash or check when you check her out. Therefore, campers must practice making choices and being responsible. If you have certain rules you would like her to follow please go over those with her on incoming day.

### **CANCELATION POLICY**

Once a camper has registered for camp at Black River, if they need to cancel for any reason, we will refund the entire deposit and tuition paid until the refundable dates listed on the application.

After the refundable date the deposit and tuition are non refundable.

The Black River Farm and Ranch recommends insuring your camp tuition. Although there are many options, we recommend insuretuition.com.

## **MEDICAL CARE**

### **PERSONNEL**

The BR Infirmary or Health Center is staffed around the clock by Certified Health Officers and our camp doctor is available at all times and located one mile from camp. We use Port Huron's General Hospital when possible and if necessary Sandusky Hospital.

Please know that the staff at Black River Farm and Ranch is not trained to deal with severe medical or behavioral issues. For your camper's safety, you must call the camp office prior to camp to discuss any medical or behavioral issues they may require special attention to ensure that we will be able to properly care for her.

### **MEDICATION**

All medication (prescriptions, inhalers, allergy serums, OTC medicine, etc.) must be brought with you to check-in and given to our camp Health Director. Special medications must be supplied in adequate quantities. All medication must be provided in its original bottle or package - our infirmary staff cannot dispense it otherwise. Please put all medicines in a zippered baggie or container labeled with campers first and last name. \_

Any medication brought to camp must be kept in the infirmary. The only exception to this rule applies to campers that have medications that require immediate, possibly life saving dispensing including asthma inhalers and Epi-pens. These campers must bring a "hip pack" or other means to enable them to carry their meds at all times on their person.

If your child is on medication that requires strict observance, any breach of which would have serious health consequences, you must discuss the details with the Health Directors prior to arrival.

### **MEDICATION DISPENSED IN THE INFIRMARY**

Our Infirmary stocks the following OTC (over the counter) medications and remedies. The health care staff has standing orders from the camp physician which direct the use of these medications for common or routine health problems.

Medication Administered by the infirmary Health Officer in the Standing Orders from Physician:

Ibuprofen	Triple Antibiotic Cream	Imodium	Cough drops
Acetaminophen	Water-Jel Burn spray	Milk of Magnesia	Throat lozenges
Benadryl	Fels Naptha	Robutissin	
Ibuprofen Cold & Sinus	CalaGel or Ivarest	Tums	
Pseudoephedrine	Mylanta	Gold Bond Powder	
Midol	Kaopectate	Flex- All	

These are the only Medications the infirmary can dispense other than medication brought from home. We are authorized to use the brand name or generic versions of these medications.

You may bring to camp different medications that you would like us to administer.

### **HEALTH FORM**

The camper Health Form must be fully completed every year (this is in compliance with State of Michigan and ACA regulations). Don't forget to indicate your health insurance information (all numbers on the card are relevant). Please attach a copy of your health insurance card to the health form.

Do not pack health forms or medications in your camper's bags – you will need them at check-in.

Children coming to camp without completed health forms will not be permitted to check-in until the forms are received.

### **CAMPER ILLNESS AND NOTIFYING PARENTS**

Campers with any routine complaints go to the Infirmary to be checked after breakfast, lunch, or dinner every day during Infirmary hours. Campers with mild fever, upset stomach or persistent colds will be admitted to the Infirmary to rest and recuperate. When the camper rests and returns to activity, we do not normally advise parents of the "illness".

However, parents will be notified (via telephone) by the attending Health Officer regarding the health of a camper in the following circumstances:

If the camper is transported off camp property for special diagnostic tests/services (i.e. x-rays, dental appointments) or therapeutic management of injuries/illness requiring emergency treatment (i.e. Doctor's Office, Hospital & dental emergencies).

If the camper is admitted to the Infirmary for longer than 48 hours or a protracted illness is evident.

In any of the situations listed above, if the parent cannot be contacted initially, attempts will continue to be made to notify parents/emergency contacts of the clinical situation (refer to our Emergency Policy for further details).

Campers must be sent home for contagious illnesses such as:

- Lice • Conjunctivitis (pink eye or pinkeye)
- Any other illnesses, rashes, viruses, etc. that are contagious

Campers can return to camp when well. As long as their doctor and our camp doctor feel it is safe for them to return to the program. To return to camp they must have a doctor's note allowing them to return to the program.

### **HEALTH INSURANCE**

Black River Farm and Ranch requires that campers have health insurance. Please attach a copy of insurance card to health form.

Campers who do not have Health Insurance will need to contact the office prior to arriving at camp.

### **DENTIST AND ORTHODONTIST PRE-CAMP VISIT**

A visit to the dentist or orthodontist by campers is advised to take care of last minute fillings and avoid teeth troubles during the session. Please make sure braces and retainers are in good shape. In most cases the orthodontist in Port Huron will only do temporary work to make your camper comfortable until they return home and can see their own orthodontist. Note as well that the dentists and orthodontists in Port Huron require payment that will be charged back to your account.

## SUN SAFETY

We are always concerned about the harmful affects of the sun. We instruct our staff to encourage their campers and themselves to apply waterproof sunscreen before leaving the cabin each morning and reapply as required.

## FOOD SERVICE

### OUR MENU AND SPECIAL DIETS

We are proud of our long standing reputation of being the camp where the food is great! BR plans it's menus in accordance with the USDA Food Pyramid and approved by a dietician, keeping in mind camper appetites and tastes. The camp cannot accommodate individual taste and food preferences - we serve two hundred people at every meal!

Soy milk is provided to accommodate lactose-free persons. Vegetarian options are available at every meal.

Campers with other dietary restrictions (allergies, diabetes, etc) especially where modifications are required to prevent adverse physical reactions, should call to discuss menus.

## SAMPLE MENU

	<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Dinner</b>
<b>Day 1</b>	Fruit Juice Milk Hot Chocolate Cold Cereal Hot Cereal Fruit Muffins	Tomato Soup Grilled Cheese Sandwiches Calzones Pudding Fruit Salad Cookies Punch & Water	Lasagna Veggie Lasagna Meatloaf Italian Veggies Mashed Potatoes Garlic Bread Chocolate Cake Milk & Water
<b>Day 2</b>	Fruit Juice Milk Hot Chocolate Cold Cereal Hot Cereal Pancakes	Vegetable Soup Pita Sandwiches (Meat or Veggie) Tuna Salad Croissants Pretzels Pudding • Fruit Milk & Water	*Carnival Cookout* Hamburgers Hotdogs Corn on the Cob Baked Beans Cupcakes Punch & Water
<b>Day 3</b>	Fruit Juice Milk Hot Chocolate Cold Cereal Hot Cereal Coffee Cake	Chicken Noodle Soup Asst. Pizza Beans & Weenies Pudding Fruit Cookies Punch & Water	Baked Ham Scalloped Potatoes Mixed Vegetable Cinnamon Swirl Bread Salad Bar Apple Pie Milk & Water
		<b>*PB&amp;J and salad bar available</b>	<b>*PB&amp;J and salad bar available</b>

## HORSEBACK RIDING PROGRAM

The Mission of our riding program is to provide a safe and fun atmosphere where girls can come to learn horsemanship and riding skills. Skills will be learned at whatever pace they are comfortable.

### Goals of the Horse Program:

1. To teach girls to be knowledgeable horsewomen
2. To teach girls to be skilled riders
3. To foster the love and appreciation of animals

### STAFFING

Our Equine Manager must have the following training, experience, and qualifications: Current CHA certification as a riding instructor, previous experience as a riding instructor for at least 30 weeks, and a minimum of 6 years experience riding and caring for horses.

Riding Instructors must have the following training, experience, and qualifications: Current CHA certification (or the equivalent) as a riding instructor and previous experience as an assistant riding instructor or a minimum of 3 years experience riding and caring for horses.

Assistant Riding Instructor must have Minimum of 1 year experience riding and caring for horses.

### PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The riding program will begin at 8:30 each morning except Sunday and the last Sat. of each session. Riding groups will begin their lessons at 9:00 AM and ride until 10:30 AM. The other six groups will begin at 10:30 AM and ride until 12:00 noon. The groups will alternate each day. Opposite the group's lesson, they will have Vaulting and Horse Talk daily and either Small Animals, Barn Chores or Free Riding.

Groups will be taught a set curriculum based on their skill level. The group will move through the skills at a pace which is safe yet challenging for the riders. The pace will be set by the average rider in the group; less skilled riders will be given the instruction and practice needed to move ahead, if they are not ready to advance they may switch groups. More advanced riders will be challenged in different ways, including more challenging horses and drills; if they are excelling too quickly for the average rider they may switch groups. We try to keep a balance in each group that allows the lessons to be beneficial to all riders this way riders continue to have fun and learn without pressure to advance from the instructor or other riders. It's intended to be a fun stress free environment.

## RIDING GROUP PLACEMENT

- First Year campers will be placed in a group based on the placement sheet parent's fill-out at check-in.
- All campers will be passively evaluated on the first day of riding and they will be given levels.
- If necessary, they will then be reassigned to a new group based on the new level.

Each camper's riding skills will be evaluated by an instructor at the beginning and end of a session to determine what their group placement will be. Campers may choose any group up to the level they have been placed.

Each riding instructor must complete an evaluation for each rider in their group at the end of the session. If a camper returns the following year a much better rider than the previous year, maybe they took lessons in between, they will have the opportunity to move up levels after the initial placement. The Equine Manger will decide at what level they can move up to. We will not place a camper in a riding group that we believe to be beyond her capabilities. This is for the safety of your camper.

### **AFTERNOON PROGRAM**

Afternoon activities are open during "free time" 2:00 – 4:30pm daily. All activities will be staffed and campers can move from one activity to another.

**SWIMMING** the pool is Open Daily (weather permitting) during free time and is staffed by Certified Lifeguards and assistants to watch the swimmers.

**BOATING** at Lake Lorely is great fun. We have kayaks and paddle boats you can take out for a spin. The Lake is staffed by Certified Lifeguards and assistants to watch the boaters.

**CRAFTS** are always a hit! The Craft barn has a different craft everyday, from beads and lanyard to bird feeders and picture frames. It is a great place to be creative and meet new people.

**SMALL ANIMALS** are provided for the campers to gain knowledge through direct contact with the small animals. The animals may be handled with supervision. It is important that staff and campers remain aware that the animals are not toys and must be treated with care and respect. The Small animal's area is open during free time in the afternoons and during the mornings when scheduled. If the Small Animal Barn is open at any other time campers must be accompanied by a staff member.

**ARCHERY** is a great way for girls to learn precision and discipline. **Girls learn the equipment, safety and techniques used in archery.**

### **FIELD ACTIVITIES**

**Trampolines** are a fun way to exercise and unwind. They are open at free time or whenever a staff person is present.

**Soccer, Volleyball, Tennis, Basketball, Softball**, and any other games we can think up are played during free time. Pick-up games, tournaments, or just for fun.

**Nature walks and activities** are also a fun way to get involved and enjoy the outdoors.

### **BARN ACTIVITIES**

**Trail rides** are offered daily. Each camper will be offered at least one trail ride a week. Trail rides are always optional.

**Halter Class** is a great way for girls to learn about caring for horses. Each day the class learns a new lesson about routine care and first aid for the horse. On the last day they show their horse to the judges to decide who has taken the best care of their horse. That person wins the Halter Class.

**Vaulting** is used to increase confidence and develop balance and rhythm in riders. It is often compared to gymnastics or ballet on horseback. Vaulting Club is optional.

**Free Riding** is supervised riding without instruction. Campers can come to play games, practice what they learned in class, or just relax in the saddle.

### **TYPICAL DAY AT CAMP**

If you are wondering how your child will spend their day at camp here is a schedule of a camper's typical day. The day begins at flagpole followed by breakfast and riding activities (riding lessons, ground lessons, barn chores, small animals, and Vaulting), Lunch -delicious food (mmmm), Rest Time (ahhh), Then, after noon activities (Barn, Pool, Boats, Crafts, Field activities, Trampolines, Ropes course, Trail rides) Dinner (yum), the day finishes with an evening program (Skits, Games, Treasure hunts, Talent show, etc.) and treat store before sleepy campers return to their cabins for bedtime.

#### Typical Day at BR

8:00	Flag Raising
8:05	Breakfast
9:00	Riding Begins
10:30	Riding groups switch
12:15	Lunch
1:00	Rest Hour
2:00	Free Time
5:25	Flag Lowering
5:30	Dinner
7:00	Night Activity
8:00	Treat Store
8:30-10:00	Bedtime depending on age

## **STAFF & CIT PROGRAM**

We at BR feel that we have the best staff of any camp around. The majority of our staff is BR girls who were campers and came up through our training program. They know the BR's mission, camp activities, are excellent horsewomen, enjoy working with children, and most of all know what it is like to be a camper and how important the role of a counselor is in the campers life.

### **Counselors**

18 years of age by June 1st of the season for which you are hired  
Must attend or have graduated from College or University  
Experience with children  
Experience with horses or a certified lifeguard  
You must complete an application and interview in order to be considered for the position. Or, your evaluations as an AC will be considered your interview.

### **Assistant Counselors**

17 years of age by June 1st of the season for which you are hired  
Must attend or have graduated from High School  
You must have completed our CIT program successfully.  
Your evaluations as a CIT will be considered your interview.

### **Counselors in Training or CIT**

16 years of age by June 1st of the season for which you are hired  
Must attend or have graduated from High School  
You must have completed your time as a camper at Black River successfully.  
Your evaluations as a last year camper will be considered your interview

*\* Being on Staff at Black River is a very special opportunity and can only be extended to those campers who prove to be ready for the position. It is a serious job that requires responsibility, quick thinking, positive personality, willingness to lead, horsemanship, and desire to learn.*

## **DIRECTORS AND HEAD STAFF**

Black River counselors and instructors are competent, well-qualified women, 18 years of age and older, who view campers as peers and friends. Many of the counselors are former Black River campers and there are usually some international staff members as well. The camp director is assisted by the program manager, who oversees the riding, activity, waterfront, and barn management programs.

Lois Donovan -River Farm and Ranch is Mrs. D's lifelong dream. Along with her husband Mr. D (who passed away in 2000), she has held every position that the ranch offers. Mrs. D's love of children and horses has kept her active in the day to day operations of the ranch since 1962.

Mike Ciferri - BR's Executive Director Mr. C is originally from Millbrook, NY and a 1971 graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point. He has been an active part of the BR since 1977. He owns and operates Donovan Enterprises, Inc. and puts his vast business experience to use at the BR.  
mrc@blackriverfarmandranch.com

Renee Ciferri - Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. D, Renee has grown up at the BR. She is a 1973 graduate of the University of North Carolina at Pembroke with a degree in home economics education. The mother of four has spent her summers at the BR and is proud that her daughters are joining the family in running the ranch.  
mrsc@blackriverfarmandranch.com

Pam Todd - Has lived in Croswell, MI most of her life. Our Business Manager has been married for 31 years and is the mother of two, one of who is a long time BR girl. She has been at the BR since 1989.  
misspam@blackriverfarmandranch.com

Tara Bricker - BR's Equine Manager is originally from Ithaca, NY and is a graduate of Cornell University. During the school year she manages an after school program. She has been at the BR since 1974. She has been a camper, CIT, AC, counselor, and director. She lives in Ithaca with her dog and horses.  
misstara@blackriverfarmandranch.com

## STAFF (continued...)

Danielle Meira – BR's Staff Manger and a graduate of the University of Florida with a Degree in Recreation Programming. Daughter of Mike and Renee Ciferri has spent all her summers at the ranch. During the winter she resides in Florida with her husband Hank and son's Troy, Jake and Luke.  
missdanielle@blackriverfarmandranch.com

Katy Scott – BR's Camper Parent Liaison is a graduate of the College of Charleston with a BS in Business Administration. She was a camper for 11 years, and has been on staff since 1998. She has grown up at the BR and now resides in Palm City, Florida with her husband Brian and son's Davis and Bennett. misskaty@blackriverfarmandranch.com

Gina Ciferri – Graduate of Florida Atlantic University. Works in the office at the BR. She has been a part of the BR since 1999. She now resides in Port St. Lucie, Florida with her husband Michael and son Michael III.

Jessica Ciferri -BR's Activity Director is a graduate of the College of Charleston with a BS in Business Administration. She was a camper for 12 years, and has been on staff since 1995. She has grown up at the BR and now resides in Palm City, Florida where she teaches Middle School Social Studies.

## CAMP SONGS

An integral part of the camp experience is sharing the songs that have become part of our tradition. Whether around the campfire, in the Dining Hall or throughout the program day, music and song convey the reasons why camp means so much to us - the activities we do, the friendships we form and the sense of family and community that stays with us always.

### Rufus Rafus

C – that's where it begins  
H – that's the second letter in  
I – I am the third and  
C – I'm the forth letter in that word oh  
K – I'm near the end  
E – I'm almost there oh  
C- H -I -C -K- E -N  
That's the way you spell chicken

Rufus Rafus Johnson Brown what  
ya gonna do when the rent comes  
'round what ya gonna say, how ya  
gonna pay, what ya gonna do on  
judgment day.

Oh, you know I know red means no.  
Landlord throws you out in the snow,  
oh Rufus Rafus Johnson Brown,  
what ya gonna do when the rent  
come 'round.

### Washington Waddle

Let's all go down to Washington DC,  
baboom baboom  
that's where they play the sweetest  
ragtime melody baboom baboom  
Let's all begin with lesson number  
one  
where you waddle and you waddle  
'til you weigh a ton  
It's the Washington Waddle  
get the tune in your noddle  
let's all go have fun, hey!  
Waddle with me my honey  
waddle with me  
Like a ragtime ship on a ragtime sea  
Waddle, waddle, waddle, waddle,  
come on and waddle with me

### Prunie

No matter how young a prune may be  
he's always getting wrinkles.  
A baby prune is like his dad but only wrin-  
kled half as bad  
Now we have wrinkles on our face, but  
prunies have them every place.  
No matter how young a prune may be  
he's always getting stewed.  
Stewed prunes

### You are My Friend

You are my friend, you are my friend,  
you're a very special person, you are my  
friend.  
And every day, I like to say,  
you are my friend in every way.  
I'm so proud to be your friend;  
I hope our friendship never ends.  
Black River Born  
I was Black River born and Black River  
bred and when I die I'll be Black River  
dead  
Rah rah Black River River  
Rah rah Black River River  
Rah rah Black River Ranch! RAH!

### A Camp called BR

I may never March in the army, ride in  
the Calvary, shoot the artillery, but I'm at  
a camp called BR.  
We are, We are, We are, We are,  
We are the BR girls  
We can, We can, We can, We can,  
We can, Ride any horse  
Have fun, Have fun, Have fun, Have fun,  
And come along with us, for we ride ev-  
eryday in everyway and love every single  
horse! HEY!

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS -- FAQ'S**

- What time do the kids get up? Just in time to get to the flagpole on time! Usually between 7:30 and 7:45am.
- Do you have email where I can write my camper? Yes, but the campers must use regular mail to write back. Check the Communicating with Camp section for numbers and addresses. Campers really do prefer a handwritten card or letter.
- Do you have visiting days? No, we do not have visiting days at the BR. Due to the length of our sessions we do not feel it necessary to have visiting days in the middle of a session. Also, many campers come from a great distance away and it would not be possible for their parents to visit, but mostly parents visiting contributes to and creates campers feelings of missing home.
- May my daughter make or receive a telephone call? No, the girls may not call you and you may not talk with them during their stay. You may check with the office staff if you have concerns about your daughter. They will be happy to talk with you about your daughter.
- May my daughter bring her cell phone to camp? No, they are not permitted.
- Do you have laundry facilities? No, please send enough clothes to last your entire stay at camp.
- Does my daughter need riding boots? Yes. We suggest a slip on western riding boot (cowboy boot), but there are many different types of riding boots available. We do require a flat-soled riding boot with at least a one-inch heel. These requirements have been made for your child's safety.
- Does my daughter need a riding helmet? Riding helmets are a must. They are to be worn while riding. You may bring your own, you can rent one upon check-in, or you may purchase one upon check-in. All helmets sold or rented are ASTM & SEI certified, as this is what we suggest you bring.
- Does my daughter need money while she is there? No, she will have an account to charge anything that she needs or wants. You pay her account when you check out. Black River does not accept credit cards. Cash or Check only.

• What government authority supervises camps? The State of Michigan licenses the BR and we are inspected and approved by the Michigan Health Department. We are also an accredited camp by the American Camping Association and the Camp Horsemanship Association.

• Is there any camp security? BR is assessable by only one road, at which a security guard is on post nightly from 11pm until 7am, the guard also makes hourly rounds of the camp to ensure every person's safety. Each bunkhouse is equipped with a phone system that can dial 911 in an emergency. However, we have never had a security issue at BR.

## **APPLICATION & FORMS**

All forms are all available on the web at [www.blackriverfarmandranch.com](http://www.blackriverfarmandranch.com) in the parents section.