

ROPES summer program available for grades 4-12

With a summer quickly approaching, parents have the opportunity to enroll their student(s) in the 15th annual Summer ROPES (Reality Oriented Physical ExperienceS) program, an outdoor educational program that includes low-ground and off-ground activities geared toward students in grades 4-12.

According to Desi McKinney, program coordinator, ROPES is designed to provide adventure and exploration where students learn to work together rather than against others, accept others and look at problems and people in a different way.

“Students experience how to contribute their own skills to the larger group as they take safe risks,” McKinney said. “They learn valuable lessons in believing in themselves and in what they can do.”

The program, which is led by trained facilitators, teaches students skills in problem solving, personal/social development and fun/fair play skills through warm-up games and initiatives, and low/high challenge course elements.

The warm-up games promote teamwork, communication and trust. The initiatives are problem-solving tasks that require the whole group to make decisions together in order to accomplish the task. Leadership skills are developed as each person gives and receives input. The low-element activities require participants to employ their sense of balance, fair play, cooperation, trust and teamwork off the ground, but not too high up. These partner- or group-oriented activities teach participants how to make a plan, organize themselves according to the plan and then execute the plan. The high elements are constructed of cables and wood 30 to 40 feet off the ground.

Each participant is hooked to a belay rope for safety at all times.

Although the level of participation in the program is strictly voluntary by the student, “challenge by choice” is the motto for ROPES.

“In past experiences, some participants have chosen to experience all elements offered, while others chose to support the group with encouraging words and physical support when needed,” McKinney said. “Whatever level is accomplished, self-esteem, confidence and trust are boosted as each element is conquered.”

Two camp options will be offered this summer: Camp I scheduled for June 8-10 or Camp II set for June 15-17. If one of the camp days is canceled due to heavy rain, a rain date has been arranged for a make-up day. The rain date for Camp I is Thursday, June 11, and the rain date for Camp II is Thursday, June 18.

“It is important for parents to be prepared to bring their child to the rain date if necessary,” McKinney said. “We don’t cancel camp unless the rain is a hard, cold rain and lightning is present. Usually, we can wait out a summer storm under the pavilion and continue the day.”

Camp times will include a morning session from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. or an afternoon session from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. In addition to choosing a morning or afternoon session, three location options are available:

- (1) **Millsap Course**, located behind Millsap Elementary School at 12424 Huffmeister Road;
- (2) **Moore Course**, located behind Moore Elementary School at 13734 Lakewood Forest Drive; and
- (3) **Sheridan Course** (morning session only), located behind Sheridan Elementary School at 19790 Kieth Harrow Blvd.



On the registration form, students/parents must indicate the week, session and course they prefer to attend. However, there is a limit to the number of participants at each course and time. Courses and times will be offered on a first-come, first-serve basis. Once the limit is reached, parents will be notified and asked to choose another course, time or week.

The cost of the camp is \$65 per student, which includes a ROPES t-shirt. Registration forms and fees are due by May 8, 2009. Go to www.cfid.net to download a registration form. The annual camp is the primary fundraising event for the ROPES program. All proceeds

from this camp go into ROPES course construction and maintenance and other program needs such as harnesses, ladders and helmets.

For more information, contact Desi McKinney, coordinator for ROPES, at desiree.mckinney@cfisd.net or 281-897-1365.

The mission of the district’s ROPES program is to provide an outdoor educational environment in which learning opportunities for all participants are presented to develop the skills of an effective communicator, competent problem-solver, self-directed learner, and responsible citizen through Reality Oriented Physical ExperienceS.

A Taste for Cy-Fair

The CFISD Food Service Department held its annual Product Cutting at the Berry Center on Tuesday, Feb. 24.

At the Product Cutting, vendors and brokers presented their newest items for attendees to test and evaluate. School lunch menus are selected based on the results of the evaluations.



(picture above) A Product Cutting participant receives a serving of quesadillas from one of the event’s vendors.

(picture left) Food Service Worker Diosaris Guevara and Birkes ES student Ashley Woodley evaluate the different samples of food that were portioned on a lunch tray during the annual Product Cutting.