



2016 – '17 Overnight Season

Thank you for reserving a scout overnight at Mystic Aquarium. This letter contains information which I am asking you to please share with all the adults involved in the event. This will help to ensure that everyone understands our rules and knows what to expect for the evening. It is required that you send your roster of who will be attending to Becky Hirsh [bhirsh@mysticaquarium.org](mailto:bhirsh@mysticaquarium.org) at least 1 week prior to your overnight.

This program is designed for Girl Scouts or Boy Scouts, and their chaperones. Overnights are held on designated Friday and Saturday nights as well as a few Sunday nights. We do **not** hold Girl Scout and Boy Scout events on the same night. The maximum number of participants for an evening is 150 people.

The aquarium closes at 6:00 PM, giving the staff 1 hour to set up. Early entry is not permitted. Participants are allowed into the aquarium at 7:00 PM on their assigned evening. Each participant will attend 5 classes held during the evening in rotation. The classes for 2016-2017 will include a special Outdoor Tour, Squid Dissection, a Touch and Learn, a Scavenger Hunt and Amphibian Fun.

The aquarium will assign sleeping areas on the main floor. The participants will be allowed to set up their areas **after** the final wrap up meeting as we use the floor space during the evening. Assignments are based on the size of the group and the ages involved. I do not accept special requests for certain areas. Space is limited so please be prepared to sleep next to another person.

Departure from the Aquarium is at 8:30am (9:30am December – February). If a change occurs, the individual responsible for booking the event will be notified. The Aquarium reopens at 9:00am (10:00 December – February).

Attendees for the overnight will be given free complimentary admission to the aquarium on the day following the overnight.

**INFORMATION INCLUDED BELOW :**

- Registration information
- How to find us
- Inclement weather information
- Overnight expectations for chaperones and leaders
- Schedule for the evening
- What to bring with you and what **not** to bring



## REGISTRATION - FEES – REFUNDS

- Participants will register online at [www.mysticaquarium.org/scouts](http://www.mysticaquarium.org/scouts).
- The fee is \$65 a person (scout or chaperone)
- Full payment is due at the time of registration.
- Need a refund or help with a reservation? Contact reservations at [reservations@mysticaquarium.org](mailto:reservations@mysticaquarium.org) . Becky does not have the ability to make/alter reservations or provide a refund.
- Refund Policy: 30 days or more before the event, a full refund will be issued if requested. Inside 30 days of the event, a 20% cancellation fee will be charged for any requested cancellation. There will be no refunds for cancellations 14 days or less for the given event. Refunds will not be given for individuals who do not attend on their assigned evening. We suggest that replacements are found for people not attending.
- Refunds are processed only through the reservations dept. 860-572-5955 ext 520.

## CHAPERONE RATIOS

- Required minimum chaperone ratios are as follows: children ages 6 –12 require a 1:5 adult to child ratio, children ages 13-17 require a 1:8 adult to child ratio. Scouts must have a registered adult attend the event as well.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROGRAM

- Contact Becky Hirsh [bhirsh@mysticaquarium.org](mailto:bhirsh@mysticaquarium.org)

## IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOUR VISIT

- Have your group eat dinner prior to their arrival. We will provide a light evening snack between 7:00pm – 7:30pm and a continental breakfast in the morning.
- During your stay, guests will use the indoor public restrooms. Sorry – no showers in the morning.
- Should an emergency occur, Mystic Aquarium Staff are well-practiced with the facility's medical and evacuation plan and procedures.
- Groups must remove all belongings from the aquarium by 8:30am (9:30am in Dec - Feb) following the overnight, in order for the facility to open to the public at 9:00am ( 10:00am in Dec - Feb). Times are subject to change.
- Upon leaving at 8:30am (9:30am), overnight members will receive a hand stamp that entitles them to free re-entry that day. This is only good for the individuals who stay the night. It is a courtesy on the part of the aquarium and cannot be applied to another day or person.
- Additional Fee Activities: The Mystic Aquarium Gift Shop will be open at 8:30am (9:30am Dec-Feb) the following morning. Times are subject to change.
- **You do NOT need to print out your tickets.** We already have a copy and we have your name from the roster provided by the leader.



## **HOW TO FIND US**

We are conveniently located off of Interstate 95 at Exit 90 (Mystic).

Our address for GPS use is:

55 Coogan Boulevard, Mystic, CT 06355

## **WHEN YOU ARRIVE AT THE AQUARIUM**

**Reminder:** Eat dinner before arrival.

- Park your vehicles in the main parking lot located on Coogan Boulevard. Please park in the rows closest to the aquarium main entrance. Parking is free.
- **Doors will open at 7:00 pm.** Your entire group should arrive prior to this time in order to facilitate the check in process. Please have everyone enter together if possible.
- **No exchange of money will take place at the door.**
- Aquarium doors are locked at night. Early-birds and late comers will find themselves locked out in the cold. If you arrive after check-in time, please call 860-572-5955 ext 425. We will come let you in as soon as someone is available. No answer – please call 860-625-8784

## **IN THE EVENT OF INCLEMENT WEATHER...2016-2017**

If the weather on the day or evening of your overnight seems questionable, call our Education Program Information Line at **(860) 572-5955 ext 218** for a recorded message regarding the status of your program. The message will include the time it was recorded, and a brief explanation as to our decision regarding the program. We understand that the weather varies throughout the region. We do make our ultimate decision based on the surrounding area forecast and the consideration for the safety of our guests. In the event that we cancel your program, your program fee will be refunded in full. We apologize, but at this time we are unable to offer an alternate date for a weather cancellation.

If you have any questions regarding this policy **prior to the day of the event**, please email Becky Hirsh at [bhirsh@mysticaquarium.org](mailto:bhirsh@mysticaquarium.org).

## **IN THE EVENT OF A LATE ARRIVAL ...**

If you will be arriving at the Aquarium after 7:30pm on the night of your event, please do not worry. At 7:30pm we do shut and lock the doors to the facility. Once you arrive, please call **(860) 572-5955 ext 425** and a staff member will be out as soon as possible to let you in. If there is no answer, please call 860-625-8784.



## 2016-2017 Mystic Aquarium Overnight Expectations

**AS A CHAPERONE**, we ask for your assistance in enforcing the following guidelines during the overnight. While our staff is responsible for providing an unforgettable overnight experience, **you** are responsible for insuring appropriate behavior and involvement from your participants. We appreciate your commitment to this educational event.

### Overnight Guidelines – Please inform groups of these “rules” prior to their event.

- Follow staff instructions at all times
- Turn phone ringers to silent out of respect for the program
- Ask your youth to please not run. The floor is concrete and they may be injured should they fall
- As a chaperone, you must remain with your youth at all times.
- When inside the facility –please do not put hands or objects into any exhibits or tap on the glass.
- Please use indoor voices
- Please respect the benches as seats
- Do not climb on any of the rock walls
- Provide assistance with clean up
- Explain that “lights Out” means that you are to go to bed
- **Do not leave the aquarium main building or front gates without a staff member – YOU WILL BE LOCKED OUT**
- Have an enjoyable evening

### Do Not Bring List

- **Air Mattresses and cots are not allowed due to space limitations and for safety reasons.** We request your cooperation with this matter. If an air mattress is necessary for medical reasons, please contact Becky before the date of your event. My email is [bhirsh@mysticaquarium.org](mailto:bhirsh@mysticaquarium.org) . If an air mattress is required I request that it be no larger than a twin size. These items take up a great deal of space and reduce the number of participants we can accept. I am typically NOT in the office the day of the overnight so please contact me well in advance. Same day requests are rarely granted.
- We ask that no one bring their own food into the Aquarium. A light evening snack and continental breakfast will be provided. **You may bring a water bottle into the facility.** *Participants with specific food allergies or food requirements - please feel free to bring what you will need. We do have a fridge.*
- Do not bring video games, Ipads or any other distracting devices – we are not responsible if they are lost. Leave them in the car.
- Do not bring chewing gum into the facility.
- The use of alcohol during the evening is prohibited. Do not bring any in.
- This is a no smoking facility. Smoking is allowed outside the front gates after all of the activities have been completed. Staff will escort you to the front gates.
- Please ask the youth to not wear the roller sneakers.



## 2016-2017 OVERNIGHT SCHEDULE

Modifications will be made as needed by aquarium staff

### EVENING

**6:45 PM** – Groups should arrive at the Aquarium.

**7:00 PM** – Groups are allowed to enter the Aquarium. Tell staff of any people not attending/ or substituting upon entry. Please have your entire pack/troop enter as one. **Snack is provided at this time. You may either eat snack now, or later, after the classes are completed.** Late arrivals will receive snack at the end of the evening. Snack items may include: fruit snacks, Regular Goldfish, Cheezit crackers, pretzels, granola bars, juice and water.

**7:30 PM** – Opening meeting

**7:45 PM** – Activity sessions: Squid Dissection ⇨ Outdoor/Behind the Scenes Tour ⇨ Amphibian Fun ⇨ Scavenger Hunt ⇨ Touch and Learn. Each session lasts about 30 minutes.

**10:15 PM** – Wrap – up meeting – locate your sleeping area.

**10:30 PM** – Get ready for bed

**11:00 PM** – Lights Out – Sleep

### Morning

**6:30 AM** – Rise and Shine. Pack all of your belongings

**7:00 AM** – Move belongings to your car. You will then be escorted on a morning observation tour of the outdoor exhibits. This is a great photo opportunity for you.

**7:30 AM** – Breakfast is served after your morning tour. This allows us to space out our guests and reduce the wait time for breakfast. Breakfast may include: bacon and eggs, toast, cereal, muffins, danish, milk and juice. Selection is decided by the Penguin Café. Morning coffee is provided with breakfast.

**8:15 AM** – Morning meeting. Participants' hands are stamped for same day re-entry, and participants receive a patch. Make to make sure that you have your hand stamped.

**8:30 AM (9:30am Dec-Feb)** – Gift shop opens – The gift shop is independent from the Aquarium. We do not have any control over their hours. All participants must either exit the aquarium or visit the shop. The main floor is cleared at this time.



## WHAT TO BRING ON YOUR 2016-2017 MYSTIC AQUARIUM OVERNIGHT

**Please be sure to label all of your belongings. Items left behind will be kept for 3 days.**

\*\*\*The Aquarium is not responsible for the loss of items.

- Sleeping Bag and pillow
- Sleeping mat or pad. Camp pad or exercise mats are acceptable as well – SEE ABOVE IN REGARDS TO AN AIR MATTRESS OR COT under the DO NOT BRING listing
- Flashlight
- Pajamas and a change of clothes
- Outer clothing for the **nighttime outdoor tour** (Depending on the time of year, this may mean hat, gloves, rain coat, or even boots. Please dress accordingly, you will be outside for part of the evening, rain or shine.)
- Toiletries
- Face Towel/Wash cloth ( large towels are not needed, as showers are not available)
- Water bottle. - Must be able to be closed tightly. There are also water fountains available.
- Camera and money (for store)