

STRONG RIVER CAMP & FARM

“The only way to have a friend is to be one.” ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

When Tay, the founder of Strong River, spoke to campers about friendship, she often shared this quote. She wanted everyone to understand that you don't sit around waiting for others to be friendly to you; you have to be kind, loyal, and sincere to others first. This is why the Junior Staff sing “Be a Friend” during the Strong River Way song—it is an essential part of how we live together at camp.

Emerson's friend, Henry David Thoreau, also offered wisdom that resonates with the Strong River Way. Thoreau believed that we often get too caught up in busy lives and we need to return to the woods to slow down and discover who we want to become. This is exactly what Strong River helps you accomplish. Our little green cabins are probably not much larger than Thoreau's cabin at Walden Pond, where he spent two years learning from nature.

Camp is your opportunity to be independent and discover things about yourself and what you enjoy. You can leave your busy schedules behind and explore things you're curious about, like bows and arrows, or horses, or bird-watching, or playing the guitar. You can lie in a hammock and see the sun's rays filtering through the trees or sit at Morning Watch and hear the river running over the rocks.

Emerson and Thoreau lived 200 years ago, but their lessons remain true. We want you to leave camp with a better understanding of what is important to you, what makes you “you.” And, of course, we want you to be the best friend ever!

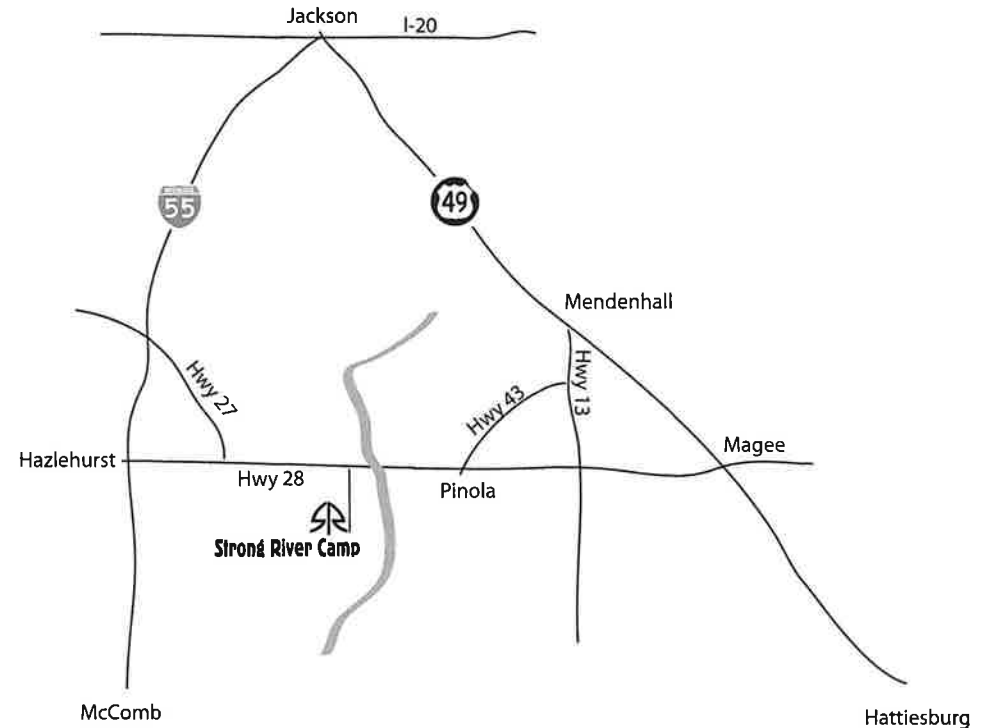
Love, Sarah Dabney



Strong River Camp & Farm – 125 Strong River Camp Drive – Pinola, MS 39149 – Telephone 601.847.4400

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DIRECTIONS



From Jackson: Take Hwy 49 S towards Hattiesburg. After 30 miles take the exit for Hwy 13 S at Mendenhall. After 1.8 miles, turn right onto Hwy 43. After 8 miles, turn right on Hwy 28 W. After 2.5 miles, the camp will be on the left, just after you cross the Strong River bridge. Drive time = 1 Hour.

From Baton Rouge: Take I-12 E to Hammond. At Hammond, take exit 38B for I-55 N towards Jackson. At Hazlehurst, take exit 61 for Hwy 28 and go east for 25 miles. Turn right into Strong River Camp just before the Strong River bridge. Drive Time = 2.5 - 3 hours.

From Monroe: Take I-20 to Vicksburg then follow Hwy 27 S through Utica and Crystal Springs to Georgetown. Turn left at the 4 way stop onto Hwy 28 and go 10 miles. Turn right into Strong River Camp just before the Strong River bridge. Drive Time = 2.5 - 3 hours.

From Gulf Coast or Hattiesburg: Go north on Hwy 49. At Magee, turn left onto Hwy 28 W. Go 18 miles and turn left just after the Strong River bridge. Drive Time = 3 Hours from Coast.

From New Orleans: We recommend I-59 to Hattiesburg - then follow directions listed above. Drive Time = 3.5 hours.

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3 Night Sessions

What to Bring

- 3 Shirts
- 2 Shorts
- 1 Jeans/Pants
- 1 White Shirt
- 1 White Shorts
- 5 Pairs Socks
- 2 Sleepwear
- 2 Bathing Suits
- 1 Swim shirt/Rash Guard
- 1 raincoat/poncho
- underwear
- toiletries, hand sanitizer
- laundry bag
- sheets, pillow, blanket
- 2 Towels
- 2 pair tennis shoes
- 1 pair river shoes
- Boat Cushion/Stadium seat (to sit upon)
- Lifejacket
- 1 Water Bottle
- 1 cup, plate and bandanna
- 1 Flashlight with batteries
- 1 Garbage Bag(wet things to go home)

Optional

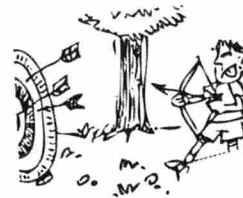
- Tennis Racquet/Balls
- Fishing Equipment
- Riding Boots/Hat
- Insect repellent
- Sunscreen
- Stamped Postcards
- Band-aids
- Battery Powered Fan

What Not to Bring

- X Watches
- X Tablets/iPads/E-readers
- X Plastic Drawers/Shelves
- X Plug in Fans
- X Knives
- X Expensive Jewelry
- X Cell Phones
- X Computers
- X Glitter

Your name should be clearly marked

on all items brought to camp!



Helpful Hints



FOOTLOCKER: Be sure your trunk is not more than 15 ½ inches high so it will fit under your bed. You may also use duffel bags or a suitcase if you prefer. Please do NOT bring plastic drawers or furniture. Footlockers are available from Academy Sports (Plano \$30) and Walmart (Sterlite Large \$63.)

RIVER SHOES: River Shoes need to be tie-on or strap-on shoes which you do not mind wearing in the river. Chaco and Teva sandals are name-brand examples. Flip-flops and Crocs are NOT good river shoes.

SWIM-SHIRT / RASH GUARD: Any shirt with SPF protection for use while tubing and canoeing.

BEDWETTING: All camps with 7 – 12 year old children realize this possibility. Our staff is trained to deal with this situation. If you anticipate this please bring extra linens. Tell your camper to ask their counselor for assistance in discreetly changing their linens if the need arises.

If your camper wears pull-ups, please call us so we can share our strategy for privacy.

CUP AND PLATE: The Cup and Plate should be washable and are used for outdoor picnics. The bandanna is used as a napkin for outdoor meals.

GARBAGE BAGS: For packing wet and sandy things when going home.

RACQUETS, FISHING, & HELMETS: Camp has tennis racquets, fishing poles, and riding helmets but you are welcome to bring your own (with your name on it) if you prefer.

WHITE SHIRT AND SHORTS: The white shirt and white shorts on the what-to-bring list are for the final evening banquet. Light khaki shorts or pants are also acceptable attire for the banquet.

MEDICATIONS: All medications, in original containers, must be turned in to the camp medical staff upon arrival. No medications, other than asthma inhalers, may be kept in the cabin. Please pack medications in a Ziploc-style bag and keep separate from your luggage.

PACKING TIPS: Many campers pack each day's outfit, including socks and underwear, into ziploc-style bags. Bags of extra socks and underwear are helpful, and a few extra t-shirts just loose in the trunk might be handy. Pack your sheets, pillow, and blanket in your laundry bag. This will help your counselor when they get ready to help you make up your bed.



We recommend name labels from camps.mabelslabels.com 1-866-306-2235

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2026 Arrival Information

This summer we will have staggered arrival times. Please calculate your driving time to arrive at your appointed time.

2:30 pm Junior Staff arrival	3:00 pm 10 and 11 year old campers
2:30 pm 12 and 13 year old campers	3:30 7, 8 & 9 year old campers

If you have more than one age group of campers, choose the best time for you.

The “circular drive” in the woods outside of the camp gate will now be the exit for camper drop-off, so come straight through the main gate when you turn off the highway, and then turn right just past the pool as if you are going to the Raintree House. The camp directors, medical staff and counselors will all be there to greet you. We'll take your trunk and your laundry bag with your bed linens, out of your vehicle, and deliver it to your cabin. Counselors will help their campers make up their beds, but parents may help too!

- Any pre-written letters may be handed off to staff. No packages, please!
- The camp medical staff will receive your medications.
- Stop by the Lemonade table to get a cool drink when you arrive.

Express Drop-off, where only the camper gets out of the car, is available. For new campers, or anyone who needs to get out of their vehicle, there will be limited parking by the tennis courts. A bathroom will be available to families in the Raintree House.

Come to the parking pavilion to purchase camp t-shirts, water bottles, etc.. Cash and checks are preferred payment methods but Venmo is available.

Thank You

STRONG RIVER CAMP & FARM

2026 Departure Information

Pick up times will also be staggered but in a different way.

8:15 am Pick up for those that live one hour's drive from Camp
8:45 am Pick up for those that live two hour's drive from Camp
9:15 am Pick up for those that live three hour's drive from Camp
9:45 am Pick up for those that live further away from Camp

Counselors will help campers pack and all camper belongings will be placed just outside the cabin and kept in cabin groups. You may drive directly to the cabin to collect their things. Be aware that you may have more than a footlocker and laundry bag to take home.

We will try to put wet and sandy items in the garbage bag you bring to camp. All garbage bags look alike, so please take a peek to make sure you are getting the right bag. Also look for extra items like tennis racquets and fishing poles.

All medications may be collected from the medical staff, who will be set up on the porch of Twin Oaks. The Lost and Found table is nearby, so please stop by there as well.

Please schedule enough time for your camper to show you around camp and introduce you to their camp friends. A brief video review will be showing in the International pavilion.

Camp t-shirts and souvenirs will be available to purchase on departure days. For those who wish to reserve a spot for summer of 2027, you may leave a deposit check at the t-shirt table.

If you have requested early pick up, at 9 pm on the last night of camp, we will have your camper's things in the parking lot on the left before you reach the pool. Please discuss this with us in advance if it would be helpful to you.

Making good choices is something we want you to learn how to do at Strong River!
We will give you many opportunities to practice making choices.

If you wake up early in the morning, you may participate in lots of optional activities. Listen for the announcements each evening to hear what will be happening the next morning. You may be able to choose from:

Soccer	Fishing
Birdwatching	Blueberry picking (or tomatoes or melons...)
Yoga	Aerobics
Running/Walking	

Later in the day you will have more choices to make. Camp is not like school where you are given a class schedule. At Strong River, you choose your activities and you can stay at them as long as you're having fun. When you are ready to try something new, you can move on to the next thing.

The counselors will invite you to their activities and tell you where to find them.



Arts and Crafts
Archery
Canoeing
Horseback Riding
Ropes Course
Swimming Pool
Tennis



Are you making your list of things you want to try? That is great! And guess what? If you don't get around to shooting bows and arrows on the first day, you'll have another chance to try that on another day.

Some of the time you will be doing things with your whole cabin, like hiking into the woods and building a fire and cooking your own supper! When we go to the farm there are different activities to choose from but we don't want to tell you everything now because we LOVE SURPRISES at camp!



The choices just keep coming! When you come to Magnolia's, our Dining Room, you will have more choices to make.

At breakfast, we serve a first breakfast and a second breakfast. First breakfast involves lots of choices: Several kinds of regular Cereal or hot Oatmeal with about 10 toppings to choose from, plus at least three choices of Fruit Juice and usually some fresh Fruit and/or Yoghurt as well. Second breakfast is different every day but it will be something like:

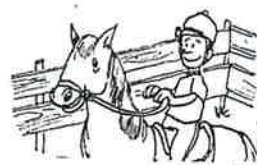
Scrambled Eggs, Bacon, Grits, Toast and Jelly,
or Pancakes and Sausage, with our own fresh honey or Blueberry Syrup.

Some days our big meal of the day is at lunch and some days it is at supper. We can't give you the whole menu because it changes for 3-day sessions and one-week sessions, and it also changes according to what is growing fresh in the garden. But here are some examples of the choices you can make.

- Chicken Tenders, Macaroni & Cheese, Green beans, Squash, Carrots cooked in OJ, sliced Tomatoes, Watermelon, Mississippi biscuits
- Italian Night: Spaghetti, Pizza, Salad Bar, French Bread
- Fried Chicken, Rice and Gravy, Ratatouille, Green beans, Corn on the cob, Squash and Zucchini, pickled Cucumbers, Cantaloupe, homemade yeast rolls
- Hamburgers, supper-hike Potatoes, S'mores

We have gluten-free, vegan, vegetarian and lactose-free options available as well. If you are GF or lactose-intolerant and have a particular brand of pasta, bread, cookies, soy milk or anything else that you would like to bring to camp, we can keep it in the kitchen for you, in a bag with your name on it. This is especially helpful for dessert choices.

If you don't see anything you like on the menu, simply let your counselor know and we will find you something else.



We also have some fabulous desserts so make sure to save some room!



important info

HAND-WASHING AND HYDRATION : These are the tools we have to stay healthy and we take them very seriously at camp. But we can have some fun with it as well, as your creative counselors have a way of putting a fun spin on everything.

MEDICATIONS: All medications must be turned in to the camp medical staff upon arrival. No medications, other than asthma inhalers, may be kept in the cabin. Please bring all medications in their original Prescription or over-the-counter containers.

BIRTHDAYS: We celebrate birthdays by singing to the camper and recognizing them with a special ceremony. If you would like to order a giant cookie for your camper's cabin, the cost is \$25. We only celebrate birthdays on the actual day.

www.StrongRiver.com - Strong River Camp & Farm reserves the right to photograph, video and/or record campers, staff and parents and use these recordings, without compensation, in broadcasts or for sale, reproduction or display via any media - including social media. These recordings are the Camp's property and may be used for informational, educational, promotional or other uses deemed appropriate by the Camp. We will not identify campers by name without parental consent.

MAIL: No Packages! Letters only, please. Please share this information with grandparents as well. Letters may be left at camp on arrival day for delivery during the session.

Your camper's mailing address at camp is:

Camper's name
125 Strong River Camp Drive
Pinola, MS 39149



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Social Media

There are many ways that Strong River Camp & Farm is old-fashioned. Our cabins are not carpeted and air-conditioned. Ceiling fans and rain on the tin roof lull us to sleep. Birdsong and the sun wake us in the morning. We eat vegetables and fruits grown on our farm and we make Mississippi Biscuits and rolls from scratch...

And our campers don't have smart phones and email available at camp. We don't Tweet or Instagram or have an official Facebook page. Strong River does have a website - but we want prospective campers to hear about us from former happy campers. That is the way we've operated since 1973 and "word of mouth" has been very good to us.

We are not anti-social media - it is a very handy tool for staying in touch with newly made friends - but we want your camper to learn how to write a real letter and experience the joy of receiving one. We want them to notice nature all around them when they walk from archery to canoeing instead of having their head down looking at a device. And we want them to learn how to be a friend - face to face - and have real conversations.

Best Practices

- Camp Staff are strongly advised not to "friend" campers on social media or communicate with campers outside of camp without parents' knowledge and consent.
- The Camp name and logo are trademarked and should not be used by others without permission.
- Even if you are not intending to speak for the Camp, what you portray about camp online is a reflection on Strong River Camp & Farm. Please keep this in mind.

We ask that you respect Strong River Camp & Farm by:

- Not identifying anyone under the age of 18 by name, and not tagging photographs online, without that person's parents' consent,
 - Not representing yourself online as an official Camp spokesperson,
 - Moderating any postings related to Camp that your child puts online,
 - Not posting online any derogatory, humiliating or demeaning comments about people, our Camp or other camps,
 - Agreeing to remove any online postings which the Camp or others find offensive, embarrassing or which don't reflect the "Strong River Way."
- Finally, we ask that you report to the Camp any inappropriate social media postings.

We Thank You for your understanding and support of these policies.

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Dear Parents of Strong River Campers,

The Fine Print

For some of you this is the first time your child will be away from you. To make this a wonderful experience, we would like to offer a few suggestions. Most campers are very excited about coming to camp and begin with a positive attitude. Your attitude and preparation can reassure them. Support them by telling them you have confidence they will adapt quickly.

Please tell your camper there is no problem too small for him/her to talk to us about.

One "homesick time" at Camp is just after mail call. The homesick camper is often the one who has just received an endearing letter from home. Rather than tell them how much you miss them, consider telling them how proud you are of them for going on this adventure.

Please don't let your camper bring any expensive toys, tablets, games, watches, jewelry, knives, cell phones or anything we would need to keep for them. Remember --- NO FOOD! A package of candy, gum, or any food that has to be turned in is a terrific disappointment to them .

Campers' clothes should be comfortable and well marked with name-tags. Although campers need to learn responsibility for keeping up with their things, some are devastated when an item is lost, misplaced, or damaged. Prepare them for this responsibility but also for equanimity (a good "Strong River word") in case this happens.

Our medical staff at Strong River is eager to make this a safe, healthy experience. Please bring all medications (including vitamins) in their original containers and placed in a Ziploc bag to be turned in to medical staff on arrival.

We try to make the camper's arrival the best possible introduction to camp. For staggered arrival times, please see the Arrival and Departure instruction page.

Your camper should know, in writing, your plans for picking him/her up. Some campers become upset when they see other campers leaving and are uncertain about their own plans. A postcard received in the mail with written information is very reassuring to them.

We celebrate birthdays at Strong River by singing to the camper and recognizing them with a special camp ceremony. If you want to order a giant cookie for your camper's cabin, send a check for \$25 to the camp office several days in advance. We can only celebrate actual birthdays.

If there is any information you feel would help make this a better camping experience, please let us know. We are interested in your camper. We enjoy so much our first year campers!... and the campers who return summer after summer truly gain confidence in themselves as they help new campers enjoy the "Strong River Way".

CANCELLATION POLICY In case of cancellation, if we are notified, in writing, by April 1, the cancellation fee is \$100. The remainder of payments made will be refunded. If cancellation occurs between April 1 and June 1, the cancellation fee is the full deposit (\$300 for 3-night sessions and \$600 for all other sessions.) Cancellation after June 1 will result in the forfeiture of fees paid. For last-minute medical cancellations fees cannot be refunded but may be applied to an alternate 2026 or 2027 session. For cancellations please email sdg@strongriver.com.

EARLY PICK-UP POLICY Every summer we have several requests for campers to either leave camp for a ballgame or a swim-meet or a play rehearsal and then return, or to leave camp early to participate in some other activity or a family trip, etc. We have found this "breaks the spell" of this brief but intensive camping experience, so that the intangible benefits of camp are virtually destroyed, not only for the camper who leaves but for the others in the cabin, and even for the other campers in camp. We feel strongly about this and ask campers to choose to attend camp or the other activity, not both. If necessary, you may pick up your camper after the campfire ceremony, around 9 pm on the last night. Please discuss this with us in advance if this would be helpful.

WWW.STRONGRIVER.COM We reserve the right to use photographic images of campers in action. We will not identify campers by name without your consent.

SOCIAL MEDIA Out of respect for the privacy of all our camp families, we ask campers not to identify anyone by name if posting camp photos.

MEDICAL DISMISSAL If a camper develops any medical symptoms at camp, our camp medical staff may make the decision that such a camper be sent home. We reserve the right to dismiss campers for medical reasons.

DISMISSAL Strong River Camp & Farm depends on a spirit of enthusiasm and cooperation from our campers to produce a camp experience that is wholesome, fun and constructive. Most of our campers are eager to contribute to this spirit with a positive attitude. If we have a camper so determined not to cooperate that it threatens the camp experience for others we reserve the right to ask that camper to leave. We sincerely hope all campers and parents are aware of and understand this policy. This will be done only when absolutely necessary and with deep regret.

We do appreciate your interest in Strong River Camp & Farm and we look forward to happy times together. Let us know if there is anything that we can do to make this a better experience for you and your camper.