

Number of changes in store for science camps next June.

By Jan Schultz

The Imperial Republican

Science Camps Offer Rewarding Experiences, better known as SCORE in this area, is returning for its 14th year in June, 2011.

Camp Director Marla Smith of Imperial said one of the major changes includes camper attendance for three days instead of five during the week of June 13-17, 2011.

Smith said, “SCORE camp has been modified over the years as organizers strive to improve the overall camp curriculum, instruction and meet the growing demands of increased attendance and cost.”

The camp moved to an every-other-year schedule several years ago, with the last one in 2009. More than 350 youths attended last year.

While students in 2011 will attend three days versus five, Smith noted they will have longer days, with a total of 18 camp hours during the week instead of 17.5 when they attended five half-days.

Here is the 2011 schedule:

June 13, 14 and 15—Grades 1 and 2, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

June 15, 16 and 17—Grades 3 and 4, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

June 14, 15 and 16—Grades 5 and 6, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Smith said some of the other changes will be camp staff, organization, students bringing lunches and public programs. Camp cost has not been set at this time, she said.

The 2011 SCORE theme will be “Days of Discovery,” emphasizing physics and chemistry.

The official SCORE website—www.scorecamp.com—is now under construction, but Smith expects by Dec. 1 that parents and students will be able to log on for camp information. Online registrations will start March 1.

Another new feature for next year’s camp is the option of camp payment by credit/debit card.

Camp brochures will be distributed to all grade 1-6 students in the three counties (Chase, Perkins, Dundy) served by the Upper Republican NRD.

One of the other changes is name of the sponsoring organization. Formerly known as the Imperial Grade School Foundation, it is now known as Chase County Schools Education Foundation after a vote earlier this year by the CCS board of education.

Kim Spady will return for a fifth year as assistant camp director.

Smith or Spady can be contacted now by those interested in volunteering at mrsmith@chase3000.com, phone 308-882-4859, or kispady@esu15.org, phone 308-882-8566.

In 2009, more than 500 volunteers were needed for the five days of camp alone, Smith noted. Many others baked cookies, provided meals and guest homes, helped set up equipment and prepared supplies.

“The hundreds of volunteers make the camp possible and are essential to keeping campers’ costs down,” Smith said.

As in past years, camp participants and volunteers will receive a 2011 SCORE t-shirt, water bottle and other take-home projects and supplies.

Over the years, campers have attended from across Nebraska, as well as 16 other states.

Bit of History

SCORE was founded in 1989 by Smith and Sue Renken, and for the first five years, was held every year over a three-week period.

From there, it evolved into the recent schedule of grades 1-6 all attending the same week on alternating years. As attendance numbers grew, students attended either morning or afternoon sessions.

For several years grade 7-8 students took a five-day field trip around the state or to the Astronaut Training Camp in Kansas.

There was no camp for grades 7-8 in 2009, but Smith said the junior high students took part in a team camp for three days at the Swinging Bridge Ranch.

Because of the strong community support, Smith said there are outreach programs for the community to attend each camp year, and “payback projects” have also been completed by SCORE students.

Some of the “paybacks” have included tree trails, nature trails, building wildlife habitat, tree, shrub and flower plantings, two butterfly gardens and incorporating storm sewer and water testing programs. SCORE also had a hand in starting Imperial’s recycling program.

A free Family Night is again planned during 2011 SCORE on Wednesday, June 15, when personnel from the Edgerton Explorit Center’s “Science Zone” are here for an evening science show titled “Capow.”