

BECAUSE OF THEM: US ANCIENT TRAILS: LIVING LEGENDS

8/9 GRADE RITE OF THE WHEEL

9th Grade: 7:30am Sunday, May 28 – 4pm Friday, June 9

8th Grade: 7:30am Tuesday, May 30 – 8:30pm Thursday, June 8

Dear 8th and 9th Grade Families,

Our Upper School end-of-year expedition has always been referred to as "The Rite of The Wheel" in honor of a Native American practice known as the Rite of Passage. We take our young adults away from their families at home and have them travel, explore and learn with their SBMS family. They live with different adult mentors in unfamiliar surroundings. They experience new challenges, new goals, and ultimately a new appreciation of themselves as their ability to reach farther out and deeper within begins to unfold.

Our trip name, *Because of Them: Us, Ancient Trails - Living Legends*, speaks of our journey. As we consciously follow in the footsteps of past SBMS students and the native cultures of the Four Corners region, we honor those who came before us. We become aware of how our present actions affect the future – of each of us, of SBMS and of our planet. We will go to the heartland of the American Southwest and tap into the insight of the Native American culture from which we can learn so much. We will cross the Colorado River, the source of life for many, both past and present. We will pass by the Hopi Mesas on our journey across the land of the Ancient Ones, where a community in the town of Walpi has existed continuously for 800 years. We will spend a day taking in the vast beauty of the Grand Canyon. To complete our journey, we will end with a dip in the cool waters of Sedona's Oak Creek as we wash off the road dust and celebrate the reward of a trip well-traveled. Your children will return with a different perspective as they take in the air, the sky, the land, and the people of the Great American Southwest.

We have been to the Four Corners on our end-of-year trip nineteen times since 1980. Even though the route has changed in many ways, the magic of this trip is just as powerful. The 8th grade will leave from SBMS and journey by bus to the Grand Canyon where they will have the opportunity to hike into the canyon together before the 9th grade arrives. The 9th grade will travel via SBMS vans to Canyon de Chelly. They will do a jeep tour of the canyon and have the distinct honor of two evenings of native stories from Adam Teller, one of the finest Navajo storytellers in the area, while camping on his family's land inside the canyon. The 8th and 9th grades will then reconnect at the Grand Canyon where we will have a day together to explore before heading out on our cycling adventure. Our first ride will take us along the rim of the Grand Canyon before

turning south for a 3-day ride across the Coconino Plateau following the historic route of the Grand Canyon Stage Coach Line from the late 1800s. After passing the San Francisco Peaks and the town of Flagstaff, AZ, we will continue south through the pinyon pines riding dirt roads, single track and pavement to our bike journey's end amongst the beautiful red rock formations of Sedona.

This trip is sure to be an enriching and memorable journey. We feel fortunate that we have been able to offer this opportunity to so many over the years. Thank you for your continued support. See you at the 8/9 grade Rite of the Wheel video in June!

Erin Finnegan and the SBMS staff

Pre-Trip Checklist

ALL OF MAY

Friday, May 12

RIDE YOUR BIKE!!!!

Authorization for Dispensing Medication form due in office

Trip waiver – you will log into the SBMS Hub to sign electronically.

\$85.00 trip fee (9th grade only) payable via the SBMS Hub

Tuesday, May 23

Bring bikes to school to be loaded. You may keep your rack and rack pack on your bike for loading.

Trip Itinerary

Sunday, May 28

9th GRADE: Be at SBMS at 7:30am with your gear and sack lunch.

Drive to Williams, AZ

Monday, May 29

9th GRADE: Drive to Canyon De Chelly.

Tuesday, May 30

8th GRADE: Be at the East Beach parking lot at 7:00am with your gear and sack lunch. Drive to Grand Canyon.

9th GRADE: Jeep tour of Canyon de Chelly.

Wednesday, May 31

9TH GRADE: Drive to the Grand Canyon via Hopi Mesas.

Thursday, June 1

Day at Grand Canyon.

Friday, June 2

Ride to Lookout Tower Camp.

Saturday, June 3

Ride to Babbit Ranch Camp.

Sunday, June 4

Ride to Antelope Hill Camp.

Monday, June 5

Ride to Centennial Forest Camp.

Tuesday, June 6

Ride to Dairy Springs.

Wednesday, June 7

Ride to Sedona.

Thursday, June 8

8th GRADE: Charter bus home. Arrive at the East Beach parking lot at 8:30pm.

9th GRADE: Drive to Mojave.

Friday, June 9

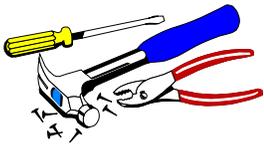
9th GRADE: Arrive at SBMS at 4pm. Take bikes and gear home with you!

TRIP DETAILS AND REMINDERS

Everyone will be driving to Arizona this year. The 8th grade will be in a charter bus and the 9th grade will be in the SBMS vans. Please bring a backpack with everything you will need for the drive (sack lunch, snacks, book, comfy clothes, spending money, etc.)

No electronic devices are allowed. Please leave iPod's, music players, computers, game players, DVD players, etc. at home. This gives everyone a chance to unplug and connect with each other.

This is a wonderful opportunity for the students to be away from their families in a caring and supportive, yet challenging environment. **Therefore, no cell phones are allowed.** We want the students to learn to rely on us and each other to help them through any discomforts or homesickness they may experience. To ensure a safe environment we will have satellite phones and all necessary safety and communication equipment.



We strongly recommend you have your mountain bike tuned up before we leave. Plan ahead for this as local bike shops get swamped when we all try to get this done the week before the trip. The SBMS Bike Monkeys will also have a limited number of bike tune-ups available. Email Jesse Kasehagen at jesse@sbms.org to schedule an appointment if you are interested.



We will be packing the bikes into large trailers for transport to Arizona.

IMPORTANT: All students, please bring your bikes to school on **Tuesday, May 23**, so that they can be packed up and loaded. **You may leave your rack and rack pack on your bike.**



Students will need quarters to use the shower and laundry facilities. It might be helpful for them to bring a roll of quarters so they aren't scraping around for them at the last minute. You may want to consider purchasing a solar shower as showers are scarce on this trip.

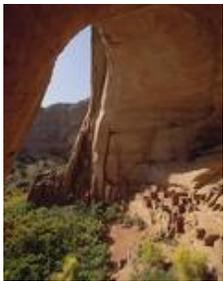


We always take a copy of each child's **Medical Release Form** on the trips with us. If anything has changed, please call the office to update your child's Medical Release Form by Friday, May 12. If your child will be taking any medication on the trip, please fill out the enclosed **Authorization for Dispensing Medication** form and return to the office by Friday, May 12. Also, if you will be out of town during the trip, please let the office know who to contact in case of an emergency.

Trip Waiver – You will be logging into the SBMS Hub to electronically sign the trip waiver.



Please be reminded that the maximum tent size is a four-man tent (three students max per tent) and that all of the students' gear must be able to fit in the tent with them. Remember, the tent needs to be carried in their 28"x15.7"x15.7" / 6000 cubic inches duffel bag.



In the past we have asked families to assist SBMS with the cost of special additions to the trip. This year we are asking **the 9th grade families to contribute \$85** each to help pay for the 9th grade visit into Canyon de Chelly. For your convenience, you will be able to pay the fee online when you sign the waiver in the SBMS Hub. Thank you!