

NC Transportation Museum Girl Scout Rail Camp FAQ

1. What is Girl Scout Rail Camp, and where does it happen?

The N.C. Transportation Museum Girl Scout Rail Camp is an event specifically designed for Girl Scouts and leaders who desire to earn the Historic Spencer Shops Railroad Heritage Patch, and have a fun weekend camping out at a historic 57-acre railroad facility. Girl Scout Troops will be on site for three days, camping at the museum Friday and Saturday, and will be exposed to a full day of interesting classes and interactive railroad-oriented activities. Flag-raising, train rides, and a large campfire gathering are just a small sampling of the fun that scouts will have while camping on site.

The N.C. Transportation Museum, located on the grounds of historic Spencer Shops, the former Southern Railway steam locomotive repair facility is located just five minutes off I-85 at Exit 79 in Spencer, N.C., and about an hour from Charlotte, Greensboro or Winston-Salem. The museum is part of the Division of Historic Sites and the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

2. How much does this event cost?

The cost for participation in Rail Camp is \$25 plus tax for the entire weekend. This applies to both scouts and leaders. However, an “Early Bird” discount will be applied to troops who register in advance. This discount will be \$20 plus tax for scouts and leaders. The Early Bird discount will be applied for Camp registrations submitted before February 25th. Any troop registering after the deadline will pay the standard \$25 plus tax fee.

3. What is included in the fee?

The participation fee includes numerous things that will make the weekend most enjoyable for scouts and leaders. This includes a camping fee, admission to the museum, a train ride, turntable ride, five learning stations to assist scouts in earning the Railroading Merit Badge, and interactive exhibits and hands-on activities offered throughout the weekend.

4. Why should we attend Rail Camp? What do Scouts do?

Rail Camp was established with the purpose of assisting Girl Scouts in earning the Historic Spencer Shops Heritage Patch, while having fun in the process learning about railroad safety, how locomotives work, the history of railroading, and much more. Over the course of the weekend, Scouts will be able to experience some of the coolest

aspects that railroading has to offer, and enjoy it all in a summer camp setting. In addition to learning about railroading during the day, scouts will have the opportunity to celebrate the closing of Girl Scout Rail Camp by acting out skits and songs at a campfire ceremony held on Saturday night. This is only one of two events at the museum that invites participants to spend the on the museum's historic 57-acre facility for two consecutive nights, the other being the NCTM's Boy Scout Rail Camp.

5. Where do we go to check in?

When troops arrive Friday night, they will be greeted at the main parking lot and directed to the Information/Check-In booth. An NCTM employee will provide the troop leader(s) with necessary materials and will then be directed to the campsite.

6. Do we have to “backpack” our gear in?

Due to the fact that all campsites will be within walking distance to the parking lot, it is NOT required for troops to pack in all of their materials. However, we know that some troops prefer to “pack in” and practice camping from a backpack, therefore it is in no way prohibited.

7. Can we keep trucks/cars/trailers in the campsite?

It is suggested that vehicles and trailers should not remain within the campsite area during the weekend. However, troops are allowed to have one vehicle and one trailer in the campsite area to set up camp Friday night until 11pm. A vehicle and trailer will be allowed in the campsite area for pack up beginning at 7am Sunday morning. With campsites well within walking distance to the parking lot, troops will still be able to easily access vehicles and trailers.

8. Is there a schedule/itinerary for us to follow?

Upon arrival and check-in at Girl Scout Rail Camp, troop leaders will be provided with a detailed itinerary as a part of a larger packet of information. Additionally, the itinerary will be reviewed by the Campmaster at the Cracker Barrel meeting Friday evening.

9. Is there access to water?

Absolutely. Water can be obtained through a spigot at the Power Distribution Building (this will be highlighted on the map troops will receive upon arrival). It is highly recommended that troops/patrols bring their own water coolers to keep at the campsite in order to minimize trips to the water source. Note: The Power Distribution Building will be well within walking distance to each campsite.

10. Is food provided?

Due to the lack of a “dining hall” setting, the NCTM does not provide food to scouts or leaders during the event. It is expected that troops bring their own food, kitchen areas, etc. This has proven to be beneficial, as scouts are able to design their own meal plans and decide the exact menu themselves. Additionally, there are restaurants and a Food Lion nearby in the case of emergencies.

11. What do scouts/troops need to bring?

It is expected that Scouts and Leaders bring the following items for Camp: tents, sleeping bags, tarps, cooking area, camp/lawn chairs, coolers, changes of clothes, and any other items needed to camp for two nights.

Note: Weather in late March is a hit or miss. Please follow the forecast before the weekend and make the best judgement on what clothing to pack that will be appropriate for the weather.

12. What is in it for leaders?

Along with the scouts, leaders are encouraged to ride the train, visit the museum, take part in hands-on activities, etc., providing a fun filled weekend for them as well their scouts. Although leaders will be unable to earn the Heritage Patch, they will have the opportunity to learn interesting information about railroading and the history of the site.

13. How do scouts earn the Spencer Shops Heritage Patch?

Although many believe that merit badge classes are boring, we promise that our five teaching stations provided to scouts on Saturday will be interactive and fun. Only taking half of a day, the classes will not only provide help to answer questions found on requirement worksheets, but will explain the reasoning behind answers. Additionally, the instructors and volunteers will give additional insight about railroading topics from a unique point of view.

14. Are there adequate restroom facilities?

Yes. Restrooms are located on either side of the general camping area at the Barber Junction Visitor Center and the Electric House Building (both of which will be highlighted

in a map provided to troops). Throughout the day Saturday, scouts/leaders will also have the access to use the restroom facilities located in the Roundhouse.

15. Will Girl Scouts and Leaders be safe camping at the facility?

The North Carolina Transportation Museum follows and enforces all policies of every branch of scouting, including Girl Scouts. Therefore, it is required that ALL safety policies in the Girl Scouts program be followed at ALL TIMES. Multiple Female Staff members will be on site during the evening hours to ensure protection of all campers.

Additionally, the Spencer Police Department will be making rounds throughout the night to also ensure safety. Thus, camping at the NCTM will be a safe experience for everyone.

16. Can Scouts purchase items in the Gift Shop?

The Gift Station is open to everyone, especially visiting Girl Scouts and leaders. The Gift Station will be open on Saturday from 9am to 5pm for visitors and scouts/leaders alike to browse the store. However, troops may have policies on purchases during scouting events, which would be left to the discretion of the troop leader(s).

17. Who is my contact for the event?

Anyone with questions, problems, or concerns over the course of the weekend should speak directly to the Campmaster, who will be based at the Master Mechanic's Office and will be operating a golf cart with a "CAMPMASTER" sign. It is advised that any problems that can be worked out within the troop should be done in that manner. However, the Campmaster will be more than happy to address any concerns that may arise.

18. Who should I contact in the case of an emergency?

ALL EMERGENCIES should be directly reported to the Campmaster, who will handle the issue with the best judgement and will contact 9-1-1 if necessary. If the Campmaster is unable to be reached, report the Emergency to any NCTM Staff Member. The Campmaster's contact information will be distributed to troop leaders at the Cracker Barrel meeting Friday evening, which will be used ONLY in the case of an emergency.

19. Can my troop return to Girl Scout Rail Camp?

Absolutely! Numerous troops return year after year for the enjoyment of the weekend and bring younger or newer scouts to earn the Railroading Merit Badge. There is no limit for the number of times a troop may return to Girl Scout Rail Camp.

20. Ok, I'm sold! How do I register for this event?

Registering for the event is easy! Just download the registration form from the Girl Scout Rail Camp event page at:

<http://www.nctrans.org/Special-Programs---Tours/Girl-Scout-Rail-Camp-2017.aspx>

For any additional questions, please feel free to contact the NCTM Campmaster, Lucas Safrit, at lucas.safrit@ncdcr.gov or 704-636-2889 ext: 258.