



OPERATION ORPHANS, INC.
Mason, TX

January, 1 2024

Dear Executive Director:

Enclosed herewith you will find a packet of information regarding Operation Orphans, Inc. This program is offered free of charge. Please check our website for film presentations of our program: www.operationorphans.org. After reviewing the information please complete the necessary forms and return them to us no later than October 1, 2024. We encourage you to notify us as soon as possible of your desire to participate. Your early response concerning this year's program is vital to our planning process and to ensure availability of dates.

Operation Orphans, Inc. is a non-profit organization which for 60 years has offered a quality outdoor hunting experience for underprivileged children in Texas. Since 1960, over 19,000 boys and girls have taken part in the "Take a Child Hunting & Fishing" program. This program gives participating children an opportunity to experience the great outdoors, meet new and positive people, and experience a whitetail deer hunt. Great effort is made to ensure a safe and positive experience.

The "Take a Child Hunting" program operates with two paid camp supervisors, Jerry and Lyla Crouch, and several hundred volunteers. These men, women, organizations, and businesses from all parts of Texas provide the man-power, time, money, talents, and donations to make this program possible.

The children and counselors arrive at Camp Gene Ashby the Friday evening before their scheduled Saturday hunt. Camp Gene Ashby is located 10 miles southeast of Mason, Texas, off U.S. Highway #87 on Lower Willow Creek Road, on the banks of the Llano River. A Mess Hall, Jordan Activity Building, and three dormitories make up the base facilities. We request that you be at the Camp no later than 11:00 p.m. on the Friday night preceding the scheduled Saturday hunt.

We ask that you bring the exact number of children and counselors which you have previously confirmed with our camp supervisors. We provide the food, sleeping quarters, places to hunt, guides, and ammunition/rifles for the number of kids you have advised us are coming. We ask that you call Friday morning with the time you will depart and with the names of the children participating.

In order to ensure the maximum enjoyment for the underprivileged children that Operation Orphans, Inc. serves, we must insist that only children who have been admitted to your home be allowed to harvest animals during our hunts. We cannot allow any child or counselor or house parents to harvest any animals during our program. To do so would contravene the entire spirit and intent of our organization - to allow a disadvantaged child to enjoy the excitement of the outdoors in a way that they may never know.

Please be sure that your Home's representatives have with them upon arrival (or have mailed at least one week prior to their departure) the Liability Release Form which is enclosed. In addition, each child should have a current Texas Hunting License in his/her possession before they leave the Camp Saturday morning. Also each child and counselor is responsible for his/her own bedding and clothing.

After groups check in, they are fed, given a brief orientation, and visit the "Boot Room", where boots and clothing are available for the kids to keep. Everyone enjoys the Saturday morning breakfast which is prepared by the Mason Jaycees and other groups.

The children are assigned a guide each. During the girl's hunt, each girl is assigned a female or male/female couple as guides. All guides will have had a background check. Groups are also assigned a ranch where they will spend the day learning outdoor facts, enjoying wildlife, and hunting. Ranches surrounding the Mason area serve as hosts for the groups. Ranchers use this program as a means to reduce doe populations and to help educate youngsters of the outdoors.

We request that you send adequate supervision for your children for the duration of their stay. Counselors are responsible for seeing that each child has the name and address of the host rancher and the guide, as well as seeing that the children take the time to write these individuals a thank you note. The ranchers and guides greatly appreciate these letters, so please take the time to see that the letters are sent.

Your counselors and children should be prepared to spend the entire day in the field. We want all homes to know that they are welcome to spend Saturday night at the camp, and we encourage you to do so if possible. After a short night and a long days hunt, we do not feel it wise for the Homes to leave Saturday night for the long drive back. A light breakfast will be available Sunday morning.

Please arrive at Camp Gene Ashby Friday evening with a full tank of gas. Be prepared to transport the harvested game from the ranches back to your home. Our success rate is usually good, and often is 100% or more. NOTE: If you are not interested in taking the meat back with you, please notify us before you arrive Friday so that we can offer it to the other homes. If we are not notified, we expect you to take your meat upon leaving for home.

If at all possible, teach your children how to safely operate and fire a rifle. Our guides spend time familiarizing the youngster with the rifle he/she will be using on the day of the hunt, but it will certainly help if the child has some previous exposure to a rifle. Because the children hunt with a guide, the children are not required to have completed the Hunter Safety Course. However the course is recommended if possible.

Beginning in 1994, all guides with Operation Orphans, Inc. are required to have successfully completed the Hunter Safety Course. This was initiated to further ensure the safety of all involved with the "Take a Child Hunting" program. As previously mentioned, all guides will have had a background check.

It is the Camp policy that the children will not smoke at the Camp or at the host ranches.

We hope you will make plans now to participate in our program this Fall. We suggest that you immediately discuss the program with your local school administrators should you need excused absences to allow for satisfactory and safe travel time.

Please make sure you notify us by returning the form by e-mail or phone of your intention to participate as soon as possible. We need the contact information and the number of children attending. We must stress the importance of the accuracy of the numbers of children which will be attending. Please notify us immediately if your numbers of attending children changes.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. We want to make every effort to serve underprivileged youth with the "Take a Child Hunting & Fishing" program.

THE DIRECTORS OF OPERATION ORPHANS, INC.
TELEPHONE NO. (325)347-6745
E-MAIL: info@operationorphans.org
Camp Supervisors: Jerry & Lyla Crouch

Reminders:

1. Return form of date choices as soon as possible.
2. Contact Jerry or Lyla Crouch if number attending changes.
3. E-Mail Release of Liability prior to leaving or bring along when attending.
4. Children need a Texas Hunting License.
5. Groups need to bring sleeping bags and toiletries.
6. Contact Jerry or Lyla with any questions or concerns.
7. E-Mail names of children attending Friday morning prior to leaving.
8. Groups may attend more than one date.
9. Children will have an opportunity to visit the "Boot Room" for clothing to keep.