

Sacred Grove Academy

A Pagan Cover School Ministry of Church of the Spiral Tree

Summer 2014

Sacred Grove Academy
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Sacred Grove Academy is a church school operated under legal code 16-28-1, 16-28-3, 16-28-7, and 16-46-3 (church school law) of the State of Alabama



Happy Summer!

There are several changes in fees and policies at Sacred Grove, so please read the following carefully.

Email Addresses

Do you have email? If you are receiving this newsletter via snail-mail, that means we either don't have a working email address for you, or no response was sent back when we emailed this newsletter to you. As we send a lot of communications to families via email, including changes to policies and fees, newsletters, and reminders about deadlines, we just want to make sure that everyone who has an email address listed is actually *receiving* our emails. So if you do have a working email address that you check on a regular basis, please email it to us. And if at any point in the future your email address changes or if you no longer have access to your email, please let us know as soon as possible.

Sacred Grove has a new email address! We have moved to Gmail, both for security and convenience reasons, and also to cut down on the humongous amount of spam we've been getting. So while you can still send email to <homeschool@sacredgroveacademy.org>, our new email address is <sacredgroveacademy@gmail.com>.

Fee Changes for 2014

Tuition: Tuition is increasing this summer, for the first time since Sacred Grove began in 1999. We will have gone 15 years without a fee increase! But in those 15 years, costs have increased, thus tuition will increase by just \$25, to \$75 per family.

Transcript Fee: We are now charging a \$25 transcript fee. You may prepare your own transcript using the blank forms provided on our website. However, if you'd like Sacred Grove Academy to prepare an official transcript for you, with the director's signature, you will need to fill out the Transcript Request Form (available on our website), and send it in with your check or money order (or pay via PayPal). If you'd like the records faxed, there is a \$5 fax fee, and there is also a \$15 rush fee for faster than two-week service (fax fee is extra). **NOTE: See our transcript policy on page 3.**

Records Mailing Fee: Finally, we now request a \$6 mailing fee for any records held by Sacred Grove that you would like us to mail to you. Any school records sent to Sacred Grove by your child's former school will be held in file until the parents request them, in writing, and pay the \$6 mailing fee. To avoid this, please ask your former school to mail the records directly to you, rather than to us.

If You Move:

If you move to a new residence within the state of Alabama, and you move into a different public school district, you **MUST** send in a new Enrollment Form for the new school district, **immediately** (don't wait for re-enrollment time!). You do not have to inform the previous school district that you have moved, but you do need to let the new one know that you are enrolled in a church school; otherwise you will be subject to truancy laws.



Attendance Forms Due by August 1

Attendance forms for 2013-2014 are due now, and must be received by August 1. Your completed attendance forms are essential to fulfilling the letter of the law, and without them, you will not be able to re-enroll for the following year, even if you have sent the \$75 tuition fee.

NEW: Submit your attendance through our website!

<www.sacredgroveacademy.org/forms/Attendance/form.html>

You can also email your attendance forms; either by scanning and emailing your handwritten copies, or by emailing your Word or Excel document.

Re-Enrollment Deadline: August 1

The deadline for sending in your attendance forms and for re-enrolling is AUGUST 1. All enrollments will officially end on July 1; however, you can re-enroll for the 2014-2015 school year beginning anytime after June 1. The tuition is \$75 per family. In order to re-enroll, you must send the \$75 tuition, and your previous years' attendance forms. You do not have to fill out a new Enrollment Form, unless you have recently moved.

If You Miss the August 1 Deadline:

If you have not re-enrolled by August 1 and have not contacted us to let us know you will be late, you'll be considered withdrawn, and we will send the obligatory letter to the school board stating such. You can re-enroll after that time, but you will need to pay the \$25 admission fee per child in addition to the \$75 tuition, and fill out both the Enrollment Form (CSEF) and the Admission Form again.

Late Re-Enrollments With Notice:

If you contact us PRIOR TO AUGUST 1 to tell us you will be late: You will have a grace period of 30 days, until August 31, to send in your re-enrollment tuition for the upcoming school year. There will be a late fee of \$25 per family, which must be paid, in addition to the \$75 tuition, for a total of \$100 per family (no discounts are available to CST members in the case of late re-enrollments), before you will be considered to be re-enrolled. Please note that if your late re-enrollment is not received by August 31, we will begin un-enrollment procedures.

How to Pay for Your Re-Enrollment:

We accept re-enrollment tuition payments either via check or money order sent regular mail, or over the web using PayPal. You can use this free service to pay for your renewal each summer.

The link to pay via PayPal is
<www.sacredgroveacademy.org/Paypal.html>.

Transcripts Policy

The parent/teacher must supply the subjects and grades for the student, using the Transcript Request Form. Sacred Grove does not know what your child studied nor what his/her grades were. Parents must turn in attendance forms BEFORE an official transcript will be made. If the student has not turned in an attendance form, we will send a letter stating no work can be verified. Official transcripts will not be made for non-graduating students withdrawing before the end of the school year. If a student withdraws during the school year to transfer to another school, parents will need to negotiate admission to another school on that school's terms, without a transcript from Sacred Grove Academy. Official transcripts will not be made for partial years of less than three months. For any partial year of the student's enrollment, we will send a letter stating no work can be verified. All fees must be paid before a transcript is sent to the parent, school, or college. All transcripts will be mailed, unless a fax is requested and the extra fee (\$5) paid. Every effort will be made to complete the request within 14 days, but Sacred Grove reserves the right to take up to 30 days to complete the request. Note that you may request a rush for an extra \$15 (this does not include the fax fee).

Withdrawal Policies:

All enrollments end on July 1. If you do not re-enroll by August 1, you will be considered withdrawn, but may re-enroll at any point in the future, as long as all other policies have been adhered to. After August 1, an official letter to your local school superintendent will be sent stating that you are no longer enrolled in Sacred Grove Academy (as required by state law).

You can also officially withdraw from Sacred Grove at any time during the school year. ****No refunds will be given at any time.**** Families withdraw for various reasons, including sending their children back to public school, or moving out-of-state. To officially withdraw during the school year, just send a notice to Sacred Grove by mail or by email, stating that you are withdrawing. An official letter to your local school superintendent will then be sent stating that you are no longer enrolled in Sacred Grove Academy.

Removals & Improper Withdrawals:

NOTE: After *any* official or improper withdrawal or removal, an official letter to your local school superintendent will be sent stating that you are no longer enrolled in Sacred Grove Academy, and we will send a letter to your last known address stating the same. If you are not enrolled anywhere else, you will be subject to truancy laws.

You will be removed from enrollment with Sacred Grove if:

- You do not send your child's previous years' attendance forms in by August 1;
- If you write a worthless check, and restitution is not made within 30 days (civil charges may apply); or if any other fees are in arrears and are not paid within 30 days.

In the above cases, until your fees or forms are mailed in to us, no

records or information will be released about your child to you or to subsequent schools that may request such, nor will we provide diplomas, transcripts, letters giving date of withdrawal for purposes of GED, driver's license, or other reason, or any other information requested about that child. Furthermore, if attendance forms are not received within 12 months of your withdrawal (for example, 2013-2014 forms sent in by August 1, 2015), all of the above will apply, and no one in your family will be allowed to enroll or re-enroll in Sacred Grove Academy at any point in the future for any reason.

You will be considered to be improperly withdrawn if:

- If your summer or winter newsletter is returned undeliverable because you have moved and not sent in a change of address, and we cannot then get in touch with you by phone or email; as we will have no way of knowing whether you are still in your original school district or even in the state (Note: if your newsletter comes back, we make a reasonable attempt to contact you before removing you from the rolls);
- We discover that you have enrolled your child in a different school when that school sends us a request for your child's records, and you have not officially withdrawn (NOTE: We will NOT send any information without receiving an official withdrawal from you!)

In the above cases, no one in your family will be allowed to enroll or re-enroll at any point in the future for any reason, and no records or information will be released to you or to subsequent schools that may request such, nor will we provide diplomas, transcripts, letters giving date of withdrawal for purposes of GED, driver's license, or other reason, or any other information requested, AT ALL for that child.

Making A Terrarium: A Fun Summer Project

by Carmen

From:

www.offthegridnews.com/2012/07/09/making-a-terrarium-a-fun-summer-project/
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Learning does not need to stop in the summer. Sure, the majority of local kids are sitting at home playing video games, surfing the net, watching TV, and letting their brains turn to mush, but that does not have to be your children. Just because summer has been a vacation from school for the last hundred years does not mean that you cannot buck that trend. Taking nearly three months off from learning each year makes no sense from an educational perspective. If you do, you will likely need to spend time reviewing when you start back up again. Why not just continue through the summer and keep on learning?

Of course, there are reasons to take a break now and then. And while the weather is so nice out there is no reason you shouldn't make summer learning a little more lighthearted. Summer is a great time for outdoor learning, for tackling big and time-consuming projects, and for letting your kids pick out educational activities that they think will be fun. And what better way to start the summer than with a fun science project like a terrarium?

What Is A Terrarium?

A terrarium is essentially a garden in miniature, housed in a glass or plastic container. The word comes from Latin. Terra means earth, and arium means a place for something. So, a terrarium is a place for earth, just like an aquarium is a place for water. A terrarium can be artistic, in that you can arrange your plants alongside rocks, pebbles, leaves, sticks, and other natural elements as well as small toys or trinkets to make a scene that looks pleasant. It is also a scientific endeavor. You are creating a mini ecosystem that can be observed. You can even introduce insects or small reptiles and amphibians to your terrarium ecosystem.

What Can The Kids Learn From A Terrarium?

The learning opportunities with a terrarium are numerous. Add to that the fact that making one is inexpensive and caring for it is easy, and you have a no-brainer for a summer science project. While most of what your kids can learn from their terrarium is science-related, you can also use it as a chance to mingle art with science. Emphasize to your kids as they make a terrarium that although they are making an ecosystem, they are also making something that should look nice. It is not always easy to see art in other subjects, but this is a great chance to do so.

As for science, a terrarium is a great way to learn about the water cycle. Water on the earth cycles through several different states from ground and surface water to clouds, to rain, and back again to the ground. It evaporates from the earth to become a vapor in the atmosphere. There, water condenses to form the water droplets that make up clouds. When they get large enough, the

droplets fall back to the earth as precipitation, and the cycle begins again. In a terrarium, you get to see this process in miniature. You need only add water to it once a month because within the container, the water will evaporate, condense, and precipitate, just as it does in the earth at large.

Your children will also learn about caring for the earth and for living things. Stress to them that the terrarium is like the earth in miniature and that if they care for it properly, it will thrive. If they ignore it, pollute it, or introduce harmful substances, the terrarium will no longer be healthy. The plants will die and any animals they have placed in it will die as well. They will learn valuable lessons about responsibility in general, and about responsibility for the only earth we have.

A terrarium can be a great lesson in plants. You can let your kids select the plants to be placed in their terrarium. You can choose exotic plants that do not grow in your local environment or you can create a miniature of your back yard. Either way, you can use the terrarium as a stepping stone to learning about different types of plants and different ecosystems. To learn about the life cycle of plants, start some from seeds in the terrarium.

Learn about animals and how they interact with their environment using a terrarium. For the simplest way to do this, collect insects to keep in your terrarium. Have the kids observe them on a daily basis to see how they live, what they eat, and when they die. If you are up for more responsibility, you can include lizards, hermit crabs, frogs, toads, snails, newts, turtles, or salamanders in your terrariums. Caring for a larger animal can be a great way to teach your children responsibility and respect for life.



REMINDERS

Please do not mail any school work to our office! Also, please do not have your former school(s) mail any previous school records to us. We do not need any of these items. You, the parent, are the teacher, and as such, are fully responsible for grading, and keeping and maintaining school work and records.

What We Do NOT Provide:

- Curriculum (books, etc.)
- Teachers to come to your home
- Teachers at our office to check work or give grades
- An accredited school or program (no cover school in Alabama is accredited)

Join our Sacred Grove Facebook group!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/190035067717206/>



Terrarium, continued

How Do We Make A Terrarium?

Making a terrarium is essentially very simple. You can, however, make it more complex by making one that is very large or one that supports a pet reptile or amphibian. Terrariums can be open or closed, but the best way to see the water cycle in action is with a closed terrarium. Here are the materials you will need:

- A container. This can be as simple as a 2-liter pop bottle. You can also use any kind of glass container. Those with narrow openings at the top make for very striking terrariums, but it is not easy to get the plants in. You can use a glass container with a large opening and put plastic wrap over the top to make it a closed type.
- Potting soil.
- Small rocks or gravel.
- Plants. You want small plants that grow well in a moist environment. Take a trip to your local nursery to explore and talk with an expert about what you might choose. Or, wander around your yard and harvest a few plants to try out. If they don't work in the terrarium, you can always start over.
- Any decorations you like.

If each child wants to make their own terrarium, 2-liter bottles are a great, inexpensive way to go. Start creating your terrarium by cutting the top of the bottle off. Cut it about two inches down from the shoulder of the bottle. You will create the terrarium in the bottom portion and then place the top back on to create your closed environment. Once you have put it all together, a great experiment for the kids is to see what happens when you unscrew the top and

leave it open versus keeping it closed.

Start your terrarium with a layer of stones or gravel in the bottom for drainage. This should be at least one half inch deep. Next, add potting soil to a depth of about four or five inches. The fun part is next. Now you get to put your plants and any decorative elements in that you choose. If necessary, trim plants down to a reasonable size. This is where your kids get to be artistic. Allow them to find various items to place in the terrarium. Maybe they want to go natural and use moss, rocks, and sticks. Others may want to place some of their toys in it. Let them be creative and have fun!

Once the terrarium is arranged just so, put the lid on. You can tape it in place if it doesn't seem to want to stay put. Find a good spot for the terrarium. It should be somewhere with moderate sunlight. Too much light can make the inside of the terrarium too hot. You will not need to water the plants very often, as the water cycle will be recycling moisture throughout the terrarium. Just make sure that the soil is always moist, but not wet or dry. You will probably only need to add a spritz of water once a month. If it gets too wet, just remove the top and let it dry out a little bit.

If you are thinking of making a more complex terrarium with an animal, make sure you do research on how to care for the little critter. Make sure you understand how much water it should have, what it eats, and what the temperature should be so that the animal stays happy and healthy.

Good luck and have fun!

Attendance Form - Version A

School Year: _____ - _____

Student's Name: _____ Grade Just Completed: _____

Parent's Name: _____ Do you intend to re-enroll for the upcoming school year? _____

Parent's Email: _____ Do you check this email regularly? _____

Address: _____

JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
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29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29
30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
31	31		31		31	31		31		31	

MONTHLY TOTAL

Circle days designated as educational.

Attendance Record - Version B

Student's Name: _____

Grade Just Completed: _____ **School Year:** _____ - _____

Parent's Name: _____

Parent's Email: _____

Do you check this email regularly? _____

Address: _____

Do you intend to re-enroll for the upcoming school year? _____

	Month Total	Year Total
July	_____	_____
August	_____	_____
September	_____	_____
October	_____	_____
November	_____	_____
December	_____	_____
January	_____	_____
February	_____	_____
March	_____	_____
April	_____	_____
May	_____	_____
June	_____	_____

Have You Moved? If so, have you notified us?

If you move to a new residence within the state of Alabama, and you move into a *different public school district*, you **MUST** send in a new Enrollment Form for the new school district, ***immediately*** (don't wait for re-enrollment time!). You do not have to inform the previous school district that you have moved, but you do need to let the new one know that you are enrolled in a church school; otherwise you will be subject to truancy laws.

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

