

For Immediate Release

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Lafayette Mormon Youth Unplug and Re-enact Pioneers of the Mid-1840s

Lafayette – Area youth members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) take part in a three-day pioneer trek re-enactment pulling hand-made carts.

Thursday, July 11 through Saturday, July 13, close to seventy 14 to 18-year-old youth experienced an electronic-free environment while taking part in pioneer journey through the southern Indiana forests near Bloomington at the Morgan-Monroe State Forest.

The youth were joined by “ma and pa” adult leaders to get a feeling of what the pioneers endured in their expansion from the east coast to the Utah valley beginning in the mid 1840s.

Replicating the experiences of the pioneers, each participant will be dressed in pioneer clothing throughout the three-day event. Women dress in skirts, long-sleeved blouses, dresses, bonnets, aprons, and bloomers. Men wear canvas or cotton pants, long-sleeved shirts, hats, and suspenders. Each youth and leader has a five-gallon bucket to place their belongings in.

Pioneer Trek Youth Conferences are designed to “provide an authentic pioneer experience including dressing in Pioneer style clothing, eating food prepared and cooked the old fashioned way, and sleeping under the stars long the trail. These events provide an opportunity for the youth to experience a small taste of pioneer life as they work hard to cook meals, push handcarts and build fires without modern day conveniences.”

“Each day on the trail, trekkers rise early and face a new set of trials and situations. They encounter huge hills, sandy trails, river crossings, and all kinds of terrain. When trek families are not busy pulling handcarts, they also take time along the trail to play pioneer games. The journey can be long and difficult when pulling heavy handcarts, especially when the men are called away and enlisted by the Mormon Battalion to help fight the war with Mexico, (an event that actually happened during the pioneer trek of in 1846) leaving the women, to pull their heavy handcarts alone.”

“Goals of Pioneer Handcart Treks usually include: inviting the spirit, sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ, increasing personal testimonies, and building on the love and unity among youth within the church.”

<http://handcart-trek.org/>