

CHAPERONE DUTIES

PRIOR TO THE DAY YOU LEAVE:

Make sure you have the following items to take along: Cell phone, if possible; 2 copies of trip itinerary and directions to hotel and race course (on www.stlouisrowingclub.com web site); rain gear; credit card and cash for emergencies; jumper cables to start rowers' cars upon return; alarm clock; sun screen; pen/pencil; lawn chair; trash bags for the bus; ziplocs for injuries. (Note: On trips by plane, where a rental van is involved, you may need to secure the rental with your credit card at time of pick up. Check with the Travel Coordinator for details.)

ON THE DAY YOU LEAVE:

Be at the Boathouse parking lot 45 minutes before the scheduled departure. Meet the other chaperones and decide who rides in the Varsity bus and who rides in the Novice bus. Members of each squad must ride on that squad's bus. Introduce yourself to the coaches and find out which coach is going on each bus. To the extent possible, there should be at least one coach riding on each bus. If only one squad is going to a regatta, the coaches may be driving the boats and unavailable for bus duty. Ask the coaches for a copy of the room list. If the buses get too far apart, you will need to use your cell phones to reach the other bus. Therefore, exchange cell phone numbers with the chaperones on the buses. Keep your cell phones on during the bus trip in case it is needed.

Introduce yourself to the bus drivers and give them each a copy of the directions to hotel and race course. Look over the bus for potential safety problems. As the bus driver if the air conditioning/heating is working. Point out any problems you see to the driver. Consult with the coaches if you discover a safety problem that the bus driver cannot immediately remedy.

Help Regatta Coordinator unload food and equipment from his or her car to the underside compartment in the Varsity bus. Put the table in first and load other stuff on top. Make sure the coolers are in a position where they can be removed at the hotel for ice. The propane tank for the stove should be securely strapped in the boat trailer, which probably left earlier in the day. Find out from the Regatta Coordinator what to do with the equipment when you return.

Be sure all rowers and chaperones leaving cars at the Boathouse have a placard indicating that they are members of SLRC attending an out of town regatta and will be parked overnight "on date ____." (Placards are available in the Boathouse.)

About 15 minutes before scheduled departure, ask the coaches if you should start getting kids on the bus. Send a rower into the Boathouse to get rowers out. Get everyone on the bus and call the roll using the room list or alpha list (the coach may want to do this, so ask him/her). Make any corrections in the list that need to be made so it accurately reflects each and every rower who is on the bus. Collect cell phone numbers from the rowers. Do not allow the kids to switch buses. Sit up front so you can talk to the bus driver. If a coach is on the bus, he or she should sit further back in the bus for control purposes.

Ask the coach or team captain to introduce you and to tell the kids that they must follow your directions and help you with equipment. Either you or the coach should tell the kids the bus rules using the microphone that most buses have at the drivers seat:

1. No standing in the aisles or on seats or arms of seats. Stay in your seats at all times when bus is moving.
2. Keep the noise level down. No screaming.
3. Keep the bus clean. Nobody will be allowed to leave the bus when we get to the hotel until all trash is picked up and put in trash bags.
4. Do not use on-board toilets. They smell up the bus. There will be bathroom stops.

Check with coach and bus driver to set dinner/bathroom stops. Whenever you stop, tell the kids what time the bus will be leaving and to use the bathroom because there will not be another stop for several hours, at the earliest. Do not stop whenever a rower needs to go to the bathroom. Each stop takes time, and you will never get there if you do. Also, rowers often just want to stop for candy, not to use the bathroom. CALL ROLL USING THE LIST BEFORE YOU LEAVE ANY STOP – ALWAYS ASK IF EVERYONE HAS A WALLET/PURSE. We seem to leave one behind during every regatta.

If the bus has a VCR and rowers bring movies, you have the right to limit what movie is shown and when it is shown. If a rower brings a movie that you believe is inappropriate because of violence or sexual content, you may refuse to let it be played. Also, if you are traveling late at night and most rowers are trying to sleep (or should be, given the late hour), you can turn the movie off.

When you are about 2-3 hours away from the boathouse, begin watching the signs along the way for exits that have a good variety of fast food (especially Subway). Mark these exit numbers on one of your papers so you will know of good stops for dinner on the return trip.

About 45 minutes before arriving at the hotel, call the hotel on your cell phone and ask them to have the room keys ready. This saves a lot of time at check-in. About 10 minutes before arrival, pass trash bags back and tell the kids to pick up all trash on the bus. Remind them they will not be allowed to get off the bus until it is clean.

Upon arrival, have all kids stay on the bus. You and the coach coordinate picking up the room keys. While the kids are sitting in the bus, the coach will read the room assignments off the list and give a key to the kids as they exit the bus. Assist as needed. Ask coaches when they want lights out. Make sure the coach tells the kids this while they are on the bus. Get a copy of the room assignments so you can make wake up calls and lights out checks. Make sure kids know what time to be on the bus in the morning.

Rowers may not enter the rooms of rowers of the opposite sex. This is a new rule and will not be popular. Nonetheless, if male and female rowers want to socialize, they must do so in the hotel lobby, or in a room designated by the coach, ***not in their rooms.***

Get coolers off the bus and after check-in fill them with ice from the hotel. If the ice runs out, finish in the morning.

About 15 minutes before lights-out, go to each room and tell them "lights out in 15 minutes". Go by the rooms several more times until you see that lights are out. Report any problem rooms to the coaches.

THE MORNING OF THE REGATTA:

Make wake up calls to all rowers about 30-40 minutes before departure time. Finish filling coolers with ice and load them on the bus. Fill water jugs from the spigot in the bathtub of your room.

Take roll call when kids are on bus. Make sure driver has directions to race course.

Upon arrival at course, get some rowers to help unload and transport the equipment. Pick a good site and set up the tents. Put tarp on ground under tent. Set up table and food. If appropriate, set up stove and heat water for hot chocolate. Ice down the drinks or mix gatorade.

Through the day, monitor food area and keep it clean. Watch the races and enjoy yourself. Ask the coaches if they need any help. If you brought a camera, take pictures for use at the banquet.

If rowers ask to leave the regatta site, it is a judgment call. They should never be alone, since their safety is paramount. Also, they must be available for their races, or they will jeopardize the entire crew's ability to compete. If they are not back when the bus is ready to go, everyone will have to be delayed. In the summer, we sometimes have college kids who row in the regattas. They do not need the permission of the chaperones to leave, but we must know where they are so we won't accidentally leave them. Cell phone numbers are helpful in all of the above situations.

At the end of the day, clean up area and pack up equipment. Get rowers to help transport it to the bus and store it. Securely strap propane tank (if utilized) in the boat trailer.

Call roll and hit the road. At the last stop before arriving in St. Louis, have all rowers who are being picked up at the Boathouse call their rides and tell them when we expect to be in. Tell them this is mandatory. If the calls aren't made, you will be stuck waiting at the Boathouse until they are picked up. You can also offer your cell phone if you have free long distance.

About 15 minutes before arrival in St. Louis, pass out trash bags and make rowers pick up bus before you let them off. After they are off the bus, go through the bus again and pick up any trash that is left. Check the bus and luggage compartments for lost and found items. Give them to the Regatta Coordinator. Move equipment and leftover food to Regatta Coordinator's car or your own car, depending upon the arrangements you have made. If you take the equipment home, please rinse out the coolers, sweep off the tarps, and get the equipment back to the Regatta Coordinator during the next week.

Do not leave the Boathouse until all rowers have been picked up or have left.

FOLLOW UP:

Call the Regatta Coordinator and tell him/her about any problems or make suggestions for the future.

Get equipment and lost items back to Regatta Coordinator if you have it.

Send receipts for any expenses you had to the Treasurer for reimbursement.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!