FOREST RANGER
CADET

Guide Book
this book belongs to
Once upon a time there was a family: a father (Jack), a mother (Sara), and two children (Markus and Evangelina). They were a nice, normal family and lived in a nice, normal house in a nice, normal town.

A Guide Book
for kids who want to be
Forest Ranger Cadets

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Once upon a time there was a family: a father (Jack); a mother (Sara); and two children (Marcus and Evangeline). They were a nice, normal family and lived in a nice, normal house in a nice, normal town.

They also had a nice, normal puppy named Everett.
One day, Sara announced to no one in particular, "The carpet in the den is really old and yucky. I think we need a new one."

"Hmmph," said Jack.

"I'm glad you agree," said Sara, and she went out shopping for new carpet. Marcus and Evangeline didn't say anything because they were busy teaching Everett how to drink grape soda through a straw.

Later that day, a big truck pulled up in the driveway. About 27 men jumped out (I told you it was a big truck). Into the house they came with hammers, crowbars, staplers, and this tremendous roll of beautiful white carpet. Three hours later, the men loaded themselves, their tools, and the old carpet into the truck and roared off down the street.
"Wonderful!" said Sara, as she admired her white-carpeted den.

"Grrrrr!" said Jack, as he glared at the bill for umpteen hundred dollars.

"Hurray!" shouted Marcus and Evangeline, because it looked like Everett was learning to sip soda through a straw.

"Blub, glub," said Everett, whose whiskers were turning a strange shade of grape-soda purple.

"Now," said Sara, "We're going to have a new rule."

"Hmph," said Jack, still gazing sadly at the bill.

"Yuck!" said Marcus and Evangeline, since there were already more than enough rules in their family.

Everett didn’t say anything, because the soda straw was tangled in his mouth.

"The new rule is this," said Sara. "No eating or drinking in the den. We don’t want spills on the new carpet."
"Right," said Jack, imagining a carpet-cleaning bill to go with the carpet-buying bill he already had.

"Aw-w-w-w!" said Marcus and Evangeline, because everybody knows you can't watch TV without food. And Everett didn't say anything because he was busy throwing up grape soda on the kitchen floor.
Laws are rules to protect people and their property. In the story, Sara made The Rule to keep the new carpet from being ruined. (The Rule also protected Marcus and Evangeline. Without it, they would have taken some grape soda into the den and probably spilled it. Then they would have been yelled at, or worse.)

The Rule only applied to eating and drinking in the den. Marcus and Evangeline could eat and drink anywhere else in the house, except in the closets which were too small and dark, anyway.

Some laws work that way, too; the area where a law applies is called a jurisdiction.

Everett, because he was busy throwing up, didn't hear the new rule. Does that mean he doesn't have to obey the rule? No, because everybody is responsible for knowing what the rules are. (I hope Marcus and Evangeline tell him, or he's going to be in BIG trouble!)

Now that you understand how laws work, let's look at the laws that protect the forest and the people who live nearby...
I. The law says that people must be careful if they burn. If someone is going to burn, here's what the law says they must do:

1. Make a **firebreak** around whatever they want to burn. A firebreak is a path which has been cleared of leaves, pine straw, sticks or anything that could burn.

2. Gather all the tools and helpers needed to keep the fire under control. For a small pile of leaves and sticks, they probably need a rake or shovel and a water hose or water bucket.
3. Get **authorization**, or permission to burn. They must call the local Fire Tower; they should also check with the local Fire Department in case their community has special rules about burning.

4. Once the fire has been started, someone must stay with it until it is completely burned out. Before they leave, they should check for hot coals and put them out with water or dirt.

II. The law says that a person must not allow his fire to escape and burn someone else's property, even by accident. **Property** means woods, lawns, pastures, houses, cars, boats, etc.

III. The law says that no one is allowed to intentionally set someone else's property on fire without the owner's permission.

Turn to page 24. Do Ranger Cadet Challenge #1.
Now, back to our nice, normal family, in their nice, normal house with beautiful, new white carpet in the den.

It was Saturday afternoon, and Sara (the mother) was out shopping. Marcus (the son) had gone camping with the Boy Scouts and Evangeline (the daughter) was spending the day with a friend. Everett (the puppy) had gone to the Bow-Wow Boutique to get the purple stain washed out of his whiskers, leaving Jack (the father) alone to watch college football on WJOK-TV.

Jack, of course, was satisfied with this entire arrangement until he realized that you can’t watch TV without eating. The TV was in the den, the den had new white carpet, and the family had The Rule.

“That rule is just for kids,” said Jack, as he served himself a big bowl of green garlic marmalade.

Balancing his bowl carefully, he plopped into his favorite chair and settled down to watch his favorite team get clobbered on national TV.

“Offsides!” yelled Jack as his quarterback was sacked for a twenty-yard loss.

“Interference!” he screamed as the tight end dropped a touchdown pass.

“Ehhhhh!” he moaned as his bowl of marmalade did a double somersault onto the floor.
Up in a flash, Jack dashed to the laundry room for towels and sponges and the big bottle of Never-Fail Miracle Carpet Cleaner. (As advertised on TV, “Just a drop and stains disappear.”)

Two hours later. . .

Jack was exhausted, the bottle was empty, the green garlic marmalade stain was bigger than ever, and Sara was walking in the door.
“Sara, my dear!” said Jack, “Let’s go out to dinner!”

“What’s that funny smell?” asked Sara.

“I only smell your lovely perfume,” said Jack.

“Smells like garlic and carpet cleaner,” sniffed Sara, heading for the den at a dead run. (I think she was getting a little suspicious, don’t you?)

“It’s ruined! It’s ruined!” cried Sara, and big tears plopped onto the carpet, creating little stains of their own.

“Who did this?” asked Sara.

“It is a nice shade of green,” comforted Jack, trying to avoid the question.

“Don’t try to be funny,” snapped Sara, as she bent down to inspect the damaged carpet.

“The kids are gone,” she murmured. “Everett is gone. And this smells like green garlic marmalade. And nobody in this house eats green garlic marmalade except YOU!”

And Jack didn’t say anything, because he was busy looking up the carpet cleaning company in the phone book . . .

Forest fires can happen like this. Somebody ignores the fire safety laws and gets careless with their burning. They’re usually very sorry, and most people try very hard to put out the fire. Unfortunately, it’s harder to put out a fire than it is to clean green garlic marmalade from a white carpet.
Anytime there is a forest fire, an officer investigates to find out how the fire started. He looks for evidence. **Evidence** is facts or information that help explain what happened.

Sara figured out what caused the stain by its smell and color. She figured out who caused the spill by knowing that Jack was the only person home, and that he was the only person who ate green garlic marmalade.

Carelessness can be expensive. Jack is going to have to pay someone to clean the carpet. People who let fires escape may have to pay a fine for disobeying the law; they also must pay for damage caused by the fire.

Enough about Jack (the father) and Sara (the mother) and the hassle with the new white carpet. Let's get back to Marcus and Evangeline (the kids) and Everett (the puppy).

Marcus and Evangeline were once again adding to Everett's education, this time teaching him to fetch an old, worn-out tennis ball. They'd worked all morning with little success, mainly because Everett didn’t like the taste of tennis balls as well as grape soda.
"I’m thirsty!" said Marcus, heading for the kitchen.

"Let’s make lemonade!" said Evangeline.

"R-r-r-ff!" said Everett. (In dog talk, that means “I’d rather have grape soda, but anything is better than a tennis ball.”)

"How do you make lemonade?" asked Marcus.

"You squeeze the juice out of a whole bunch of lemons," said Evangeline. "Nothing to it."

So that’s what they did. Evangeline got a big pitcher, and Marcus squeezed, and Everett sat patiently and watched.

"This sure is slow," said Marcus. "Let’s go ahead and drink what we have."

Evangeline got two glasses. There was only enough juice to fill each glass halfway.

"Ice! That’s what we’re missing!" shouted Marcus.

What’s missing is another glass for me, thought Everett, but he didn’t say anything. He was too well-mannered for that.

Marcus finished filling the glasses with ice. "That’s much better," said Evangeline. Not really, thought Everett, since there was still none for him.

Marcus and Evangeline picked up their glasses and each took a big swallow.
“Ar-r-r-gh!” choked Marcus.

“Yec-c-ch!” gasped Evangeline. “This is awful!”

Although he didn’t say anything, Everett thought it served them right for not sharing the lemonade with him.

“It’s too lemony,” said Marcus.

“We’ll just add some water,” said Evangeline. “That’ll fix it.”

By now Everett had completely lost interest and wandered off to watch a dog biscuit commercial on TV.
“Still needs something. . .too sour,” said Marcus, tasting his watered-down lemon juice very carefully.

“We’ll just add some sugar,” said Evangeline. “That’ll fix it for sure.”

Why didn’t we just have grape soda, thought Everett wearily as he tried to change the channel with his nose.

Evangeline got the sugar, Marcus got the spoons, and Everett got the TV channel changed. Evangeline and Marcus stirred in the sugar and Everett watched Julia-somebody-or-other make meatballs on Channel 6.

“It’s wonderful!” shouted Marcus.

“It’s lemonade!” shrieked Evangeline.

It’s awfully noisy in here, thought Everett, turning the volume to full blast.

Marcus and Evangeline learned that you need water, sugar, and lemon juice to make lemonade. Everett learned how to work the TV. Jack and Sara probably learned, from looking at the mess in the kitchen, that it’s better to keep a good supply of grape soda on hand.

Just like lemonade, it takes three things to make fire. It takes fuel, something that will burn like wood or paper or dry leaves. It takes heat, from a match or lighter or hot charcoal from the grill.
And, finally, it takes air. (There's always plenty of that around.) Unless you have all three together, you just can't have a fire.

Once everything is all mixed up, you can't un-make lemonade. You just have to drink it, even though you might like grape soda better. You can un-make a fire, though, except you call it "putting out the fire."

Here's how:

1. Keep the fire from getting more fuel. If a fire is burning in grass or leaves, use a hoe or shovel to remove the fuel in front of the fire. When the fire runs out of fuel, it will go out. (Remember, fuel is anything that will burn.)

2. Take away the heat. Put water on the fire to cool it off. Do not use water if something that is cooking catches on fire. Use a kitchen fire extinguisher or call for help.

3. Take away the air. Throwing dirt on a fire is a good way to do this.

Turn to page 24. Do Ranger Cadet Challenge #2
Marcus had it bad. BASEBALL FEVER! Never mind that it was January and school was closed because of snow. Marcus wanted to play baseball!

"Hey, Evangeline!" he shouted. "Wanna go throw the ball around?"

"Give me a break," said Evangeline. "It's too cold, it's snowing, and baseball season doesn't even start until April."

"Hey, Everett!" Marcus shouted. "Wanna go play ball? Where is that dog, anyway?"

Everett didn't say anything. He just burrowed deeper into his warm basket by the fireplace and hid his head under a blanket.

"Hmmph!" said Marcus. "I'll go play by myself!"

So he got his bat and ball from under the bed, put on his heavy coat, wrapped a scarf over his ears and buckled on his galoshes. He pulled his Giants cap on tight and slammed the back door behind him.

Fifteen minutes later, the back door banged again. Marcus was back. He shook the snow off his Giants cap, took off his galoshes, unwrapped the scarf, piled his heavy coat in the corner, and shoved his bat under the sofa.

"Back so soon?" asked Evangeline. "Did you have fun?"
"Lots," said Marcus grumpily, but he didn't sound very convincing.

"Where's the ball?" Evangeline asked.

"Where's Everett?" said Marcus, trying to change the subject.

"Where's the ball?" Evangeline asked again.

Marcus didn't answer. He whistled and pretended to look for Everett. Everett scrunched down lower in his basket and pretended not to hear.

"Where's the ball?" asked Evangeline for the third time.
"Lost," sighed Marcus. "It's hard to find a white baseball in all that snow."

"Maybe that's why baseball season doesn't start until April," said Evangeline sweetly.

Marcus didn't say anything. He just stomped into his room, shut the door, and settled down to wait for spring.

Lots of things are **seasonal**. That means that they usually happen during a special time of the year, mostly because of the weather.

Marcus now knows he can play baseball in the winter, but he's not likely to make a habit of it. It's not nearly as much fun, and you lose too many balls, especially if it's snowing.

Forest fires are kind of seasonal, too, but they can happen almost anytime. However, you can usually expect forest fires when the weather is dry and windy and when there is plenty of fuel to burn.
Now here’s something that most adults don’t even know:

In South Carolina, forest fire season is usually in the WINTER and SPRING!

HERE’S WHY:

1) There are lots of dead leaves, weeds, grass, and pine needles in the winter.

2) The relative humidity is lower. Relative humidity tells you how dry the air is. When the air is dry, forest fires are easier to start. You can check relative humidity by watching the weather news on TV. If the weatherman says the relative humidity is 100 percent, the air is very wet; if he says the relative humidity is 25 percent or lower, the air is very dry.

3) We have lots of dry and windy weather in the winter and spring. Maybe if people knew about all this they’d be more careful with fire.

Turn to page 24. Do Ranger Cadet Challenge #3
FIREFIGHTERS (WHO YA GONNA CALL?)

Ranger Cadets should be ready to call for help if they see a forest or grass fire. Here's how to do it:

1) Some cities and counties have a special phone number to call for emergencies. This number is 911. Find out if your town uses 911 for reporting forest fires. If so, that’s the only number you need to remember.

2) If you live outside the city limits or in a rural area, you should call the nearest S.C. Forestry Commission Fire Tower or your local Fire Department. (If the fire is close to someone’s house, be sure to mention this when you call.) Look up both numbers and write them below.

   FIRE TOWER ____________
   FIRE DEPARTMENT ____________

3) If you live in a town or city, call the City Fire Department. Look up that number and write it here.

   ____________

Turn to page 24. Do Ranger Cadet Challenge #4.
FIRE REPORTING (WHAT YA GONNA SAY?)

If you need to report a forest fire, you may be excited or a little scared. That's O.K., but Ranger Cadets must stay calm, speak slowly, and give the firefighters good information about the fire.

Here are some ideas that will help:

1) When you get to the phone, find the fire reporting number in the front of your phone book.

2) Read the number aloud two times before calling.

3) Pick up the phone and dial the number carefully.

4) When someone answers, say, “I need to report a forest fire. My name is ______.”

5) The fire dispatcher will ask where the fire is. You should tell the dispatcher exactly where it is, using street or road names. (Don’t say, “It’s behind the school”; instead, say, “It’s behind Anderson School on Evans Drive.”)

6) If the fire is burning near a house, be sure to mention that.

7) Give the fire dispatcher your phone number in case he needs to call you back. Stay near the phone until firefighters arrive.

8) RANGER CADETS SHOULD NOT TRY TO PUT OUT A FOREST FIRE.

Turn to page 24. Do Ranger Cadet Challenge #5
RANGER CADET CHALLENGES:

When you finish a Challenge, put a check in the box beside it. Then... when all the boxes are checked, fill out the card on the inside back cover and ask one of your parents or guardians to sign it. Then... drop it in the mail so you can get your free FOREST RANGER CADET KIT!

1. Find out how your parents get rid of leaves, yard clippings, and trash. If they sometimes burn it, ask them to follow the burning laws.

2. With an adult, list tools your family could use to put out a small fire. Make sure the adults know where rakes, shovels, and water hoses are kept.

3. Talk to your parents and other adults about South Carolina's fire season.

4. Write the forest fire reporting telephone number for your community in the front of your phone book.

5. With an adult, practice reporting a forest fire. Use a toy phone or a real phone that is unplugged.
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Please print.

Name ___________________________________________  Age __________

Mailing Address __________________________________________

City, State __________________________________________  ZIP __________

School __________________________________________

This child has completed the Forest Ranger Cadet Challenges.

________________________________________
Parent or Guardian's Signature