



Newsletter

Volume 25 Number 10 June 2009

COMING EVENTS

JUNE 2009

6/1 – Patrol Leaders Council (7:30 PM)
6/2 – Troop Committee Mtg. & Board of Review (7:00 PM)
6/4 (Thurs.) – TROOP MEETING: Field Day Part One
6/5-7 – Order of the Arrow Ordeal & Service Weekend @ HSR
6/7 – Field Day & Family Picnic (1:00 PM)
6/11 (Thurs.) – Camp Info Meeting for First Yr. Scouts
6/12-14 – Order of the Arrow Conclave at HSR
6/19-21 – Canoe Trip – Potomac River
6/26 – TROOP MEETING: Camp Preparations
6/27 – PLC to Summer Camp (3:00 PM)
6/28-7/5 – Horseshoe Summer Camp WEEK ONE

JULY and AUGUST 2009

7/5-12 – Horseshoe Summer Camp WEEK TWO
7/18 – Horseshoe Alumni Assoc. Reunion (at Horseshoe) Honoring G. Ernest Heegard
8/1-8 – Algonquin Park Canada, Canoe Trip

NOTE:

Camping Trips/Major Events shown in: Bold

TROOP MEETINGS: underlined in CAPITALS

Adult Leader Only Meetings: in Italics

NEW DADS NEEDED!

The June Troop Committee Meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 7th at 7 PM at the cabin. The Committee meets on the first Tuesday of the month to guide and discuss the operation of the Troop. New dads are especially encouraged to attend these meetings to get involved in Troop activities.

OA NEWS

Congratulations to our newest Troop 78 Order of the Arrow Members who passed the April Ordeal: Eli Bravo, Luke Conover, Chris Duncan, Gabe McDonald, Mr. Dave Bravo, and Mr. Stan Conover.

And our newest Brotherhood members: Michael Bennett, Mr. Jim Bennett, Stephen Lessley, Nino Poidomani, and D.J. Robinson.

DOWN UNDER – A CAVING RETROSPECTIVE

by Sean Miller, SPL

Upon our arrival at the campsite, at twelve-something in the morning, things looked bleak. In all my six years with the Troop, and with every trip I've been on, we have only had to set-up camp in the rain once before. I can say from personal experience that it is one of the more unpleasant parts of camping. Fortunately, everyone did the right thing which is to set up quickly and to just get used to the feeling of being wet. Better yet, in the morning the rain was relatively over with. Breakfast consisted of expertly crafted pancakes, tasty bacon, and the usual accoutrements. With food in our guts and our caving "gear" ready, we set off. When I refer to "gear" I mean, of course, our flashlights, the clothes on our back, and a standard issue hard hat. This made travel light and fast which allowed us to go deeper into the cave.

The rules of the cave are simple. Be safe, listen to and stay close to the guide, and don't touch the bats. We stopped our descent a couple of times in order to just sit with our lights out in order to appreciate the complete darkness that one can only find in locations such as a cave. There were some tight squeezes and many interesting rock formations which entertained all. We found that inside the cave were many signs of previous human presence in the form of graffiti. Some even dated back to before WWII. Since we were not allowed to bring food or water into the cave, we soon had to return to the surface world. Many of us felt like mole-people as our eyes readjusted to the sunlight.

For lunch we had grilled cheese with a special surprise. We still had bacon! The reason for this surplus was soon discovered. Instead of buying eight one pound packs, we had eight one and a half pound packs. It felt like Thanksgiving. We used this extra bacon in our grilled cheese and went into a food coma, but not for long. We loaded onto the bus and headed for a hike in Ohio State Park. The beautiful Youghiogheny River runs through the park and offered many spectacular shore-side views as well as views from higher up on the gorge rim. The hike was fast paced, but many breaks were taken to appreciate the natural beauty of the area. Back at camp we had some time to shoot the breeze as the dinner crew began to prepare another bacon meal.

We thought that we had seen the last of the bacon at lunch, but it turned out that the beans for dinner were, in fact, bacon flavored. Around the fire that evening, the genius idea was hatched to make this bacon-filled trip an annual event. In the morning we packed up and headed out. After a short lunch break we made it home safe and sound. A caving trip is truly a rare treat and even more so this year as we found out that this cave will be closing to protect the bat population from a pesky fungal disease. It's a good thing there are still those out there who are conservation minded.

ATTENTION FIRST YEAR SCOUTS!

On Thursday, June 11th, there will be an informational meeting for all Scouts who have not spent a summer with the Troop at Horseshoe Scout Reservation. The meeting will be cover topics such as packing, the typical day, special events, and insider tips. There will be time for Q&A at the end of the meeting. Parents are welcome and encouraged

to attend. Mark your calendars as this an event you will surely not want to miss!

CANOEING TRIP HEADING DOWN THE RIVER

For Father's Day weekend, June 19 – 21, 2009, Willistown Troop 78 is heading down to Paw Paw Maryland for some camping and canoeing. We'll be traveling down a 25 mile stretch of the upper Potomac River. This year, we'll be exploring a section of the river that we haven't seen before.

The Troop leadership views the annual canoeing trip as a "tune-up" for those going on the Canadian wilderness adventure this summer, or for those considering making the trip next summer. Given the length of the paddling excursion, and the limited number of people we can take (we are absolutely capped at 39 attendees), the Troop's older, active Scouts (defined by the Troop Committee as those Scouts who attend at least 50% of Troop meetings and activities) with advanced rank (First Class and above) will be permitted to fill the allotted slots first. Next, we will augment the Troop's adult leadership by permitting enough experienced canoe "dads" to attend so that we have appropriate adult supervision on the trip. Dads with a CDL license will have preference over those without a CDL license. Finally, if there are slots remaining, newer Scouts will be permitted to attend. It is unlikely that any first year Scouts (those who crossed over to the Troop in 2009) will be permitted to attend. Scouts or adults who cannot meet the "Swimmer" qualifications at summer camp will not be permitted to attend. If you have questions about those qualifications, please call Mr. Bennett.

A handout regarding the trip will be provided at the May 29th Troop meeting, and extra copies will be available in the gray "mail slot" at the Cabin. We will also post the handout on the Troop website. Let your Patrol Leader know by Friday, June 5 if you and/or your dad would like to go on the trip. Patrol Leaders – get your list of attendees to SPL Sean Miller by Sunday, June 7. By Wednesday,

June 9, your Patrol Leader will know which members of his Patrol, and which dads, are going on the trip. If you have questions, call your Patrol Leader. Patrol Leaders should call Sean Miller, and Sean will call Mr. D. or Mr. Bennett with questions.

The Potomac is an awesome river for canoeing. It's a great place to see bald eagles, and the scenery is fantastic. Hope you can join us. Remember – sign up early!

WILLISTOWN TROOP 78 TO RECYCLE AT SUMMER CAMP

By Jim Bennett, ASM

Continuing the tradition that we started at Summer Camp 2008, Willistown Troop 78 will once again be recycling during our two week stint at Camp Horseshoe this summer. For those who didn't attend camp last year, the Troop decided to recycle plastic bottles and aluminum cans when we attend camp. Mr. Bravo built two chicken wire "Bravo Bins" – one for plastic, and the other for metal – and these bins were kept at the tool shed near our pavilion in the Dan Beard campsite. Mr. Hogan added a can crusher to the effort. All Scouts are required to rinse empty bottles and cans before placing the empty, clean container in the appropriate Bravo Bin. Cans are crushed before deposit. The contents of the bins are then regularly bagged, and visiting fathers were asked to take the bags home for curbside pick-up. Mr. Compton won the "Big Bagger" award, as he loaded his truck with recycling numerous times!

Our results last year were astounding. Because of the efforts of our Scouts, we kept hundreds of cans and bottles from ending up in landfill. We hauled about 15 large bags of recyclables out of the camp, helping to save the environment, and reducing the strain on Horseshoe's operating budget. Our Scouts took to the program with zeal. Early on, after "Hawkeye" Mr. D. flagged one rogue Gatorade bottle that was headed to the trash, all the rest of the recyclables made their way to the proper containers.

This year, we'll be adding a new wrinkle to our program: We'll have a

separate container for bottle lids. As you probably know, plastics are recycled based on their type. Most containers have a number that is surrounded by the three-arrow "recyclable" imprint. Typically, bottle lids cannot be recycled with the bottles themselves. By sorting the recyclable plastic at camp, we'll be more efficient, and ensure that even less material ends up in the landfill.

Our 2008 program was so successful, that this year, we are asking both Paoli 1 and Devon 50 to undertake their own recycling programs at camp. Together, these three Diamond Rock District troops can demonstrate to the entire camp, and to Chester County Council, that implementing a camp-wide recycling program is the right thing to do. Recycling supports the tenets of the Scout Law – "A Scout is Clean," and "A Scout is Thrifty."

Of course, recycling is the last prong of a good environmental protection program. Remember that the order is, "Reduce, Re-use, Recycle." If we don't generate waste in the first place, we don't have to recycle it. So, bring your Nalgene bottle to summer camp, and keep yourself hydrated by filling it with water. You'll be healthier, you'll stay cool, you'll cut calories, and you'll save the environment.

Our recycling efforts won't end with summer camp. Currently, the Troop is evaluating large mugs that would be available for purchase. These plastic mugs would be used by campers in place of cereal and soup bowls, and would greatly reduce the amount of refuse that we discard on weekend camping trips. We're looking a whether we can bring smaller holding bins with us on weekend trips to hold recyclables, too.

If you have other ideas about recycling or reducing waste, consider writing an article for the Newsletter and sending it to Mrs. Miller. In the meantime, we're looking forward to seeing everyone at Horseshoe this summer.

ODE TO CLEAN-UP AT RADNOR

By Stephanie Robinson

We put on our boots, our hats and our
gloves
And headed on out to Radnor Hunt
Club.

This was our chance to get dirt on our
faces –

It's clean-up day after Radnor Races.

We arrived bright and early that chilly
May day

To find boxes and bags – It was quite
an array...

Of donuts and wings and hoagies and
more

Of cakes and of cookies and bottles
galore!

We picked up the trash like good little
Scouts

You'd be amazed by the things that
some people throw out.

Like chairs and food and flowers of
scale

Sounds like good fodder for our next
Troop Yard Sale!

We drove with ambition from gate to
gate
to make sure we got every spoon, fork
and plate.

We hauled all the trash - in the
dumpsters we tossed
"Flatten out those boxes", hollered the
boss.

The rain that had fallen the previous
night
served up some soup and gave us a
fright.

We held our breath as the wheels on
our truck
were spinning and spinning in the
mud and the muck.

Our family went out when we were all
done

for breakfast at Bob Evans, boy was
that fun.

We had omelettes and pancakes and
tried to erase
the sight of that trash that we earlier
faced.

When the Races are over and the
trash is voluminous
No people shortage here – volunteers
were numerous

We did all our jobs in the Troop 78
way

Finished in record time and had a
great day.



Newsletter

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