

Troop Bugle

Blackburn Cabin Camping

December 8-10, 2006

By the Troop Historian (Paul D.)

It has been a while since our troop has gone on a cabin campout, but Blackburn was defiantly worth the wait. As a troop favorite in the past, we considered going to Blackburn again, and so it happened. Scouts attending were Park (SPL), Stephen E (ASPL), Stephen G, Paul, Eric, Tyler, Spencer, Zack, Jacob, Jakob, Justin, Ryan, Jordan, Tim, Brian, Kurt, and Chase. Leaders that attended were Mr. Kressel, Mr. Kiel (trip Scoutmaster), Mr. Ticer, and Mr. Saunders. Although the weather outside was frightful, we had a delightful weekend full of hiking, scout skills, and a very comfortable cabin.

On Friday afternoon, about 4:30pm, we met at the church and loaded our gear into the leader's cars. We departed from the church at 5:00pm and began heading to Blackburn. We brought our own dinners from home, which we ate in route in cars. At 7:30pm, we reached Blackburn and began unpacking and getting settled in. Mr. Ticer, Park, Zack, and Paul arrived later at about 9pm, but they made it there safely. The majority of Friday night was spent by the fire playing games, talking, and sleeping. Our Scoutmaster decided for us to go to bed at about 10:30pm.

On Saturday morning, we woke up at about 7-7:30am, and began cooking pancakes for the "Best Pancake Competition", in which the Flaming Arrows Patrol won, congratulations! After breakfast, we headed outside at 9am to work on stations. These stations included cooking, fire building (the old fashion way), shelter building, and animal trapping. Before the stations started, Tim arrived as well as visiting Webelos from Cub Scout Pack. This took up about 3-3_ hours, and we had a late lunch at 1:30pm. From 2pm-3:15pm, we had about an hour of free time. Then at 3:20pm, Mr. Kressel took us on a short hike on a portion of the Appalachian Trail. It was a pretty fun hike, however, it was getting dark around 4:40pm, and headed back when the sun was beginning to set. Once inside, we began cooking dinner, which was long, yet worth it. KP for all the meals was like always, a problem, because those who were supposed to do KP slacked off, ignored it, or did a poor share of doing their job. Mr. Ticer stated that no one in this

troop can say “I’ve already done KP,” because the job doesn’t get done. Once dinner was finished, the couple that actually lived in the Blackburn cabin told their story about hiking the ENTIRE Appalachian Trail, from Georgia to Maine. It took them about 5_ months to do so (I personally can’t imagine hiking that trail for more than a week). And the Appalachian Trail is 2,167 miles long, from start to finish. The couple, as well as everyone else who hikes the Appalachian Trail for a long time, goes by nicknames, their’s being Hopeful and Redwing. There were many questions at the end of the chat, and we thanked them for giving such a wonderful presentation. At 8:30pm, while most of us were fooling around and playing Star Wars Trivial Pursuit, Mr. Kressel announced that Space Shuttle *Discovery* was going to launch in 15 minutes. Many of us rushed outside, grabbing our coats, to see *Discovery* launch. It was 8:45pm, and no shuttle was in sight, yet. We saw 2 different objects that could have been Discovery. The first one was a flickering white and red light in the sky moving much faster than a normal airplane. The second one was a white light going in a straight line going about the same speed as the first one. Either way, it was pretty awesome, and I later found out that it was the first nighttime launch since the *Columbia* explosion. Anyways, for the remainder of the night, we played games, sat around the wood-burning stove, and slept. However, some scouts were too loud when everyone else was trying to go to sleep, and that created a problem for many of the scouts.

On Sunday morning, everyone started to pack up when they woke up. However, there were some scouts who had a little bit of trouble finding their belongings since they misplaced them. In the middle of packing up, we had breakfast, which didn’t take as long to cook as most of the meals. That morning’s KP was surprisingly not as time-consuming as the other KPs on the campout, since everyone started to work faster and together. Around 9am, we were notified that we had to do a service project, which was moving rocks so that staff members could build a rock wall. Mr. Kiel divided the troop into two sections, one section to complete the service project, and the other to clean out the cabin. With two groups working at once, both jobs were complete in about 1_ hours. Finally, our cabin was inspected by both the ASMs and by the cabin owners. We had some free time afterwards, but soon, we headed down to the fire pit to have a reflection. All the scouts enjoyed the campout, although we could have done a better job with KP. Mr. Ticer also brought up how no one can say “I’ve already done KP”, since that phrase gets us nowhere. Soon afterwards, we departed and headed to the church.

Historian's Note

I must agree with everyone else in that this was a great campout, and our good campout streak continues. Personally, I haven't done much winter camping in Boy Scouts, but in the end, everything turned out great. We had some fun activities to do in the morning, a warm fire, plenty of food, a good hike, and enjoyed our free time to its fullest. On a scale of 1-10, I'd give this campout a 9. We need to improve on getting KP done so that we can move on with the day. If your job is to do KP for a meal, don't complain, do it, and get your KP partner to help as well. Even if you don't have KP as your job for a meal, and you see KP going slow, help your patrol members out (the job gets done much faster).