

Troop 61 Newsletter

November 2010

Forestburg Scout Reservation

By Mr. Galbraith

The main event for November is a trip to a Scout Camp in New York. Forestburgh is the sister camp to Quail Hill. It should be an interesting trip in that the Troop has never been there before. The plan is to work on our backpacking skills by taking a hike on the camp trails. At the midpoint of the hike we'll stop and prepare lunch with the equipment and goods we pack in and pack out. This will serve as a prep to a longer backpack trip with an overnight on the trail. We'll plan this for sometime next year. I've not been out on the trail overnight for a couple years and it is a very different experience. Planning and outdoor skills are at their sharpest with this type of outing and it will be great fun.



Backpacking Tips

By Efren (With some commentary. Not a lot! There wasn't a lot to criticize. Actually most of the parentheses were already there. The only thing that's mine is the thing about the double colon.)

As of right now, only a few scouts in our troop have actually went on a backpacking hike that lasted more than a single weekend. Unfortunately, as a troop we cannot do this yet, partially because no one (except the few) know how to organize themselves and the backpack for maximum efficiency (as well as a few other pointers). I won't divulge too much information, but here are some extremely simple basics that should help you get started.

1. Pack efficiently: You don't want your pack to be top heavy, since it will mess with your balance. Putting all the heavier things at the bottom of the pack will hurt your back. Distribute the weight evenly, putting the most of the weight close to your back, usually between your shoulder blades. Pack things you will use sparingly or at night near the bottom of the pack. Don't waste any space either; find a way for anything to fit inside something else. Make sure to pack things you use often in a place that you can easily reach. When packing food, make sure that it is on top of any fuel that you need for a lightweight stove or any other viscous substances to prevent leakage. Packing your own personal first aid kit is not a bad idea either (you probably should).

2. Make sure you have water/snacks on hand: this is especially true if you are going on day long or week long hiking trips. Bring a Nalgene or any other sort of fluid container filled with water beforehand. It may be a good idea to bring an extra water bottle or three if you get tired/thirsty easily. Bring snacks as well if you want, but please make sure that you know what constitutes as snack food and what is junk. Granola, nuts, dried fruit, trail mix are all viable options. Chips, candy, and soda is not that smart. Remember, there is no such thing as too much water (for our purposes at least).

3. Have some good, broken in hiking boots (broken in, not broken): You are packing a backpack for a reason: you are going somewhere (he just used a double colon, is that allowed?). And if you are packing a backpack to go to this place, it probably means you are hiking there. It should be clear then that you do not want your feet to be tired. The shoes you wear are just as important as the pack you are carrying, because if your shoes suck, you are in for hell. Obviously, if you don't have any sort of boots or shoes that you are comfortable in (I find that hard to believe), you should probably buy a nice pair (that you won't mind getting dirty, because they WILL get dirty) soon. However, don't just buy any sort of shoes. Buy a pair that you will be comfortable walking in for an extended period of time. And make sure you break them in: walk around with it for a week or two so you can feel how your feet are when walking in them. Wearing unbroken/bad shoes will result in blisters, which are not fun to walk on at anytime, especially hiking. If you already have a nice pair of comfortable shoes, then great! For our sake, just make sure you won't complain about them if we do hike (and your own sake, if you don't want duct tape over your mouth). And if you are really unsure about the blisters, bring some moleskin. If you feel a blister forming (or already have one), then just put some moleskin around the blister and you won't have to endure...too much pain.

4. Plan for anything: It might be a nice, sunny, cool 60 degrees when we are scheduled to go hiking, but you never know what might be in store for us. Always bring a poncho or light raincoat for the possibility for rain (poncho is your best bet, it is lighter), even if it doesn't look like it is going to rain, bring one anyway. Make sure you know what temperature it is going to be at night. As we get used to backpacking, we may end up sleeping where we stop, and if the nighttime temperature dips to the 50's or 40's, then bring something warm so that you keep yourself warm. Also, remember about hygiene: yes, we're guys, and to be manly and tough out the entire hiking trip without cleaning ourselves is a little disgusting. Bring a toothbrush and toothpaste, toilet paper (or baby wipes) and a small bar of soap if we go out for more than a day of hiking so that you can stay clean (at the very least, a small bottle of hand sanitizer would be helpful in our case).

Oh well...so much for too much information.

Backpacking Merit Badge

By Josh

The Backpacking merit badge is a very interesting merit badge. This merit badge helps you learn what to bring and what to do when you are on a backpacking trek. If anyone is interested in earning this badge or just wants to learn more about it, the troop has two merit badge books on backpacking that you could borrow. I will bring the troop library of merit badge books to the next meeting so check it out.



White Water Rafting

By Paul



As most of you know the troop went white water rafting. Well, not only was it cold, but awesome! We were all very wet, luckily no one fell in because the water was freezing. The bad part was we all had to sit in a cold bus on the way back and change out of our wet suits. For all who did not go I feel bad for you.

Puzzles, Jokes, and Games!

Q: How do you tell the difference between a black bear and a grizzly bear?

A: When you see the bear, climb a tree. If it climbs up the tree and kills you, it's a black bear. If it knocks the tree down and kills you, it's a grizzly bear.

Q: How do you start a fire using two pieces of wood?

A: Make sure one is a matchstick.

Environmental Irony

Richard Treanor andCarolynn Bissett, a married couple in Sunnyvale, California, are concerned about the environment. The point to the grove of eight redwood trees they planted in their backyard as proof. Their neighbor, Mark Vargas, is also concerned about the environment. He installed solar panels on his roof. One problem: Treanor and Bissett's redwoods have grown so tall that they block the sun from hitting Vargas's roof, rendering he expensive solar panels nearly useless. After asking the couple to cut down the trees (they refused), Vargas contacted Santa Clara County officials, who cited "California's Solar Shade Control Act," which protects solar

panels from shade. Treanor and Bissett were informed that they must remove their trees because, according to the Act, the redwoods have become an “environmental hazard.”

Calendar

Monday	11/1/2010	Scouting for Food Begins
Sunday	11/7/2010	PLC at Nativity 7:00
Monday	11/8/2010	Backpacking Demo
Friday	11/12/2010	Forestburg Forestburg Backpack Hike to
Saturday	11/13/2010	Lunch and back
Sunday	11/14/2010	Forestburg
Monday	11/15/2010	Scouting for Food collection
Wednesday	11/17/2010	Ctte Meeting, Nativity 7:30
Sunday	12/5/2010	PLC at Nativity 7:00
Friday	12/10/2010	KMSR Service to Camp and
Saturday	12/11/2010	KMSR run up to Klondike
Sunday	12/12/2010	KMSR
Wednesday	12/15/2010	Ctte Meeting, Nativity 7:30
Monday	12/20/2010	COH, Last meeting of 2010