

Troop 61 Newsletter

October 2011

Shakedown Campout (Lessons Learned)

By Mrs. Anouna

Our first campout of the year, September 23-24 at Washington's Crossing State Park, was cancelled due to weather. Typically, we wouldn't cancel a trip due to a little rain, or even a lot of rain, but conditions in the area has been poor over the previous month due to heavy rain & tropical systems:

- The bike hike was cancelled because of numerous trees down across the tow path. The sponsors warned us this might happen when we reserved space, as they were working to clear the path from August storms
- There were still road closures in Mercer county due to flooding from Irene, a month previous,
- The campsite, while not underwater, resembled a floating sponge. Using tarps correctly under tents would have made camping possible, but the patrol boxes and poles for the dining fly structure would have sunk right into the ground!

The goal of a shakedown is to test out all the equipment & determine what needs repair or replacement. Luckily, we were in good shape already. The Troop tents had all been tested by James (and Paul) in June right when school ended. Sixteen tents were returned to the shed in good condition, and three were given to Mr. Anderson for evaluation & repair. The large pole structure & tarp had been assembled by the whole Troop at the picnic, and minor repairs made by Mr. Galbraith at that time. The only troop gear that needed to be checked out was the patrol boxes, so those were set up in the Anouna's backyard & tested out on Sunday when the sun re-appeared.

Though lots of Scouts brought their books to the cookout & completed numerous requirements, there was one area missed. Personal camping gear wasn't brought. On a campout scouts need bedding (understand why that wasn't brought - please check out your bag & pad at home), mess kit, utensils, and cups. Luckily, we had paper goods available - but please remember to bring your mess kit, utensils & water/hot cups on all future outings! Each scout is responsible for cleaning & caring for these tools himself, so they should not be piled in the patrol dishpans for others to clean.

Congratulations on all those awards at the Court of Honor, but please don't forget to check out your personal gear.

Pilots vs. Mechanics

By Mr. Anderson

Just in case you need a laugh:

Remember it takes a college degree to fly a plane, but only a high school diploma to fix one; that's reassurance to those of us who fly routinely. After every flight, UPS pilots fill out a form, called a 'gripe sheet,' which tells mechanics about problems with the aircraft. The mechanics correct the problems, document their repairs on the form, and then pilots review the gripe sheets before the next flight.

Never let it be said that ground crews lack a sense of humor. Here are some actual maintenance complaints submitted by UPS pilots (marked with a P) and the solutions recorded (marked with an S) by maintenance engineers. By the way, UPS is the only major airline that has never, ever, had an accident...

P: Left inside main tire almost needs replacement.

S: Almost replaced left inside main tire.

P: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough.

S: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft.

P: Something loose in cockpit

S: Something tightened in cockpit

P: Dead bugs on windshield.

S: Live bugs on back-order.

P: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a 200 feet-per-minute descent

S: Cannot reproduce problem on ground.

P: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.

S: Evidence removed.

P: DME volume unbelievably loud.

S: DME volume set to more believable level.

P: Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick.

S: That's what friction locks are for.

P: IFF inoperative in OFF mode.

S: IFF always inoperative in OFF mode.

P: Suspected crack in windshield.

S: Suspect you're right.

P: Number 3 engine missing.

S: Engine found on right wing after brief search

P: Aircraft handles funny.

S: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right and be serious.

P: Target radar hums.

S: Reprogrammed target radar with lyrics.

P: Mouse in cockpit.

S: Cat installed.

P: Noise coming from under instrument panel. Sounds like a midget pounding on something with a hammer.

S: Took hammer away from the midget

An Article from Josh

By Josh

(Looks like it has something to do with merit badges)

Did you know that Steven Spielberg got interested in movies while working on his photography merit badge (I read it in Boy's Life. I don't know if he got the idea for Jaws from a merit badge or if he is just afraid of fish)? Aside from the 12 Eagle-required badges, there are elective merit badges for just about anything you could be interested in. Really, I'm not making this up. Go to <http://usscouts.org/meritbadges>. You can print out the worksheets, and each merit badge worksheet has links in the back to sites that will help you complete the worksheets. You should also borrow the merit badge books at the meetings because otherwise I won't have a job. If you need a booklet that is not in the troop library, you can buy them at the Council Scout store on Route 130. The East Brunswick library has some booklets, too.

Also

Josh and Mrs. Furgang would like to let everyone know that they need to turn in their Popcorn order form and check when they are finished selling, or Monday, October 31st AT THE LATEST.

The Eagle Horizon

By Mr. Weibel

Troop 61 is proud to have two scouts who will be facing their Eagle Boards of Review in November: James Anouna and Efren Deasis. To get to this stage, these boys not only had to achieve the rank of Life Scout, and earn 21 merit badges (half of which are required), but they also had to organize and pull Eagle Projects - and write up what they did.

James' Eagle Project was at Cheesecake Park. He renovated part of the trail system there by extending a walkway, and ending it by building a stairway. This covered a down slope which was starting to erode and become muddy; it will protect the environment and prevent accidents. The problems which came up required a lot of out-of-the-box thinking on his part and he had to master a lot of carpentry in order to plan this project.

Efren's Eagle Project was at Davidson's Mill Pond Park. He constructed 28 signs for placement along the 1/2-mile Pond Trail and the compost area, setting them into the ground with cement. The project was subject to a lot of changes due to weather, such as the temperature that concrete will set at, and the presence of rocks. Efren had to display great flexibility in rearranging the elements of his project in order to overcome these obstacles. His project was sponsored by the EARTH center at the park.

Troop 61 wishes both scouts all the best, and offers our support and encouragement as they prepare for their Eagle Boards of Review.

In Addition

Mr. Weibel would like to remind everyone to go have a look at the Troop website. It can be found at <http://www.pack61eastbrunswick.org/Troop61/troop61.html>.

Empty Space

This is empty space that could've been filled with cool pictures or an article. All of you who "forgot" to send one in, this waste of space is your fault. Feel ashamed.

100 Years of Sea Scouts

By Mrs. Anouna

At Leader's Roundtable in October the skipper of Ship 216 in Metuchen gave a short presentation on Sea Scouts. Sea Scouts are considered a Venture Crew within the BSA. Venture Crews, including Sea Scouts and others, focus on High Adventure trips, and are open to boys & girls from ages 14 to 20. They require both a female and male leader over age 21, and are often made up of college students.

Ship 216 has two vessels that sail from the Raritan Yacht Club. Sea Scouts stress all important areas of seamanship including navigation, piloting, search & rescue, safety rigging & knots. Most boys within any venture crew remain active in both their Boy Scout Troop until age 18, earning their Eagle & more advanced awards, while they participate in crew or ship activities. Basic Scouting skills are a must for a venture crew, as the outings are truly high adventure!

If you have interest in Sea Scouts, whether for yourself right now or when you or a friend becomes 14, James or Mrs. Anouna have flyers from our local Ship. Please make this info available to friends, the many female cousins, and female "cousins," who have joined us for Troop events from time to time.

