



# Troop 251 Hooter Gazette

December, 2008



## *Merry Christmas*

from the Scouts and Scouters of Troop 251

### Irwin Light-Up Night



The Christmas season began for Troop 251 with an appearance in the Irwin Light-Up Night parade on 20 November. What started with the simple question, "Are we going to walk in the parade this year?", ended with the design and construction of a 10-foot-tall interpretation of a *Seussian* Christmas.

First came the hill, formed of chicken wire and covered with a 10'x12' blanket of fluff that at one point was accidentally glued to the Sudsina's living room carpet. The green guy and his nervous dog were poised to slide down the hill atop a sled full of stolen goodies. Our older Scouts know that sled as the one they constructed a couple of years ago for the annual Klondike Derby at Camp Tenacharison. Atop the dog's head was an antler from *Mr. Sudsina the Younger's* first white tail buck.

Construction began in the Sudsina's garage, with Mr. Fuller's utility trailer. The final assembly was done in the parking lot at Irwin, two hours before the parade, on a 25° evening. So many Scouts came out to work on the float that we sometimes had more Scouts than work to be done! Everyone, including a number of family and friends, contributed to the effort.

During the parade, the Scouts walked alongside the float, handing out candy canes to the children. Two weeks in the making, the float made it through the parade and back to the parking lot, where it was promptly and unceremoniously disassembled.

## Remembering our Veterans at Christmas



Rare is the opportunity to bring some joy into the life of someone you've just met. But that was exactly what Troop 251 did when we visited the patients of the Veteran's Administration (VA) Hospital in Aspinwall on December 18th. **Mitch, Nick M., Andrew, Kevin T., Steven D., Drew, and Adam** distributed twenty-five gift bags full of presents from the Troop, as part of the *Presents for Patients* activities throughout the region. Eagle Scouts Tim D. and Dan S. were also there to lend a hand to this worthy cause.

The activity was proposed, promoted, and orchestrated by the Sudsina's, and supported enthusiastically by all of the Troop 251 families.

## Ohiopyle in Snow

No series of hikes in southwestern Pennsylvania would be complete without covering the 11 miles from Confluence to Ohiopyle on the Great Allegheny Passage. Our planned access at Ramcat would have given us the 10 miles we were looking for, but was inaccessible due to bridge construction. Moving farther back to Confluence gave us the opportunity to go the extra mile.



We could not have asked for better conditions for our hike on Nov 29th. Temperatures were in the high 30's. There were a couple of inches of dry snow on the trail, and blue skies above. Our thanks to Mr. Bratkowski for providing the chase car, which allowed us to do a one-way trip instead of a 5-mile out-'n-back.



Next in the series will be an urban hike, a walk through downtown Pittsburgh to check out the architecture and the holiday displays. And plans are being drawn up for a 20-miler in the spring that will take us across the Mason-Dixon line.

## Klondike Derby Plans Announced!

Plans for this year's Klondike Derby have been announced, and it looks like it's going to be a challenge! Scouts will be expected to demonstrate their skills at a number of stations set up around Camp Tenacharison, while pulling a sled loaded with supplies. Hopefully there will be snow on the ground! Even the Scoutmasters will be tested this year, in the Scoutmaster Cooking contest.

It looks to be a great weekend of winter camping. Break out your cold-weather gear and mark your calendar for January 16th-18th!

## Let Your Computer Do a Good Turn for You

**Your computer is probably very bored right now.** You're reading this article, that it displayed for you a few seconds ago, and your computer has nothing to do. It's waiting for you to scroll the page, or to move a window around. A few seconds, to a computer, is a long time to wait.

Instead of sitting there idle, your computer *could* be helping to find a cure for cancer, or calculating rice yields to help feed the hungry.

*How?* By joining the World Community Grid.

The World Community Grid uses over a million computers around the world — computers just like yours — to do research on problems that require more compute power than can be had with the world's fastest supercomputers.

The World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) recently invited Scouts around the world to join together on the World Community Grid. In the spirit of Scouts working together to help others, they created a "team" on the Grid which any Scout, Scouter, or scouting family can join. The SCOUTS team currently has 347 members around the world, who together have contributed over 47 years of computer time to date.

For more information on the World Community Grid, or to join the SCOUTS team, paste the following URL into your browser to read an article from the recent *Jamboree on the Internet*:

[http://www.scout.org/en/information\\_events/events/joti/now\\_your\\_computer\\_can\\_do\\_a\\_good\\_turn\\_too](http://www.scout.org/en/information_events/events/joti/now_your_computer_can_do_a_good_turn_too)



The article above introduces many of us to an organization that is a big part of Scouting around the world, though relatively unknown to Scouts here in the U.S.. Yet, as a member of the Boy Scouts of America, you are also a part of WOSM's Interamerican Region. In the next issue of the *Hooter*, we will begin a series of monthly articles on the various organizations that manage this thing we call Scouting.

## Chairman's Corner

December always presents a scheduling challenge. This year, three major holidays — Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years Day — all fell on troop meeting nights. And the Irwin parade took up a fourth, just a week earlier. Still, we managed to fit a number of activities into the month. We paraded, we hiked, we partied, and we gave from our hearts. We continued Mr. Morgart's "back to basics" meeting theme with knots and hitches led by Mr. Astley. And if all goes as planned, we'll take our first urban hike later this month. Not bad for December!

- Chuck Fuller, Committee Chair, Troop 251

## Write for the Hooter!

Your editor cannot be everywhere that the troop goes. Please send reports of events and activities to [hooter@t251.org](mailto:hooter@t251.org). Not only will it help to keep everyone informed, it's also a good opportunity to develop your writing skills! Articles from Scouts, Scouters, and parents are all welcome!

The *Hooter Gazette* is the newsletter of Boy Scout Troop 251, Larimer, PA, USA. Views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of Troop 251, the Boy Scouts of America, or of our Chartered Organization, St. John's United Church of Christ. Questions or comments should be sent to the editor: [hooter@t251.org](mailto:hooter@t251.org). More information regarding Troop 251 is available at the troop web site: <http://t251.org>.