



Troop 251 Hooter Gazette

Larimer, PA

January, 2009



Urban Hike: Pittsburgh's Golden Triangle



It seemed only fitting that our December hike should have a holiday focus. Thus began the planning for our first urban hike ... a short 2.5-miler through downtown Pittsburgh, two days after Christmas. The plan was to visit the major holiday attractions, see a little of the city, and to have some fun!



No amount of planning, however, could have predicted a beautiful 70° day with clear blue skies. The photos above were taken at the beginning of the hike as we prepared to cross the Smithfield Street Bridge from Station Square, and at the endpoint atop Mt. Washington, overlooking downtown Pittsburgh. Along the way, we walked past Macy's windows and under the famous clock, through the Union Trust Building, and around the County Courthouse and the old jail. We paused for a few minutes at the awe-inspiring Crèche, visited Penn Station, and then zigzagged our way to Market Square for dinner at the Oyster House, where we were treated like royalty. After ice skating at PPG Place, we walked back across the bridge and rode the Monongahela Incline to Mt. Washington.

By all measures, our first urban hike was a great success, with everyone in our group of eighteen finding something of interest along the way. We're already talking about future urban hikes. Our next hike, though, will take us back to more natural trails.



The Compass and the GPS

The venerable old compass, for many years a standard of Boy Scouting, appears destined to go the way of the slide rule: still useful, but not as capable as the GPS.

Scouts of Troop 251 have begun to use a GPS on hikes, and Council has started to include GPS events in Camporee plans.

But don't throw your old compass out yet. It's still much more reliable than the best set of batteries.

How Well Do You Know Camp Conestoga?

This is an easy one. The object pictured at right can be found in a public area of Camp Conestoga. You've seen it many times, but probably never paid much attention to it.



Want to take a guess? Need a clue? Email hooter@t251.org.

Scouting Hierarchy: Part I — The Patrol

Scouting can be intimidating. Oh, it's not the hikes or the campouts, the rain or the challenges that we face. Many times, it's the size and structure of the organization that easily overwhelms the Scout, parent or Scouter. Over the next few months, we will try to make sense of it all by taking a "10,000-foot view" of the organizations that make Scouting happen. We'll start with the most basic of functional Scouting teams, the Patrol.

The Patrol is defined by BSA as a "small group of boys who are similar in age, development, and interests." Grouping in this way allows patrols to work on different activities at

the same time. The older Scouts may be working on advanced skills, while the younger ones are busy learning the things that they need to know to earn their Tenderfoot badge. In larger troops, patrols may schedule their own activities in addition to troop events.

Patrol members can be identified by the insignia worn on the right sleeve. When troops gather, patrols may also fly a patrol flag, designed by the patrol members.

Our troop currently has four patrols: Bat, Eagle, Falcon, and Scorpion.

Bring a Friend!

Now that rechartering is over, it's time to focus again on building our troop. It's a simple equation: the more Scouts we have, the more fun we have! But how do we find new Scouts? Here are a few low-energy, high-impact ideas that can help to get the word out.

1. Believe in your troop.
2. Get involved. Participate in planned activities. Plan new activities. Have fun!
3. Wear your Troop 251 t-shirt proudly, and often.
4. Tell your friends about the web site. *Need any t251.org stickers for your book covers?*
5. Talk to your friends. Bring them to a meeting ... or a hike!

Are we there yet?

Our hiking program began with the new school year. In four months we have taken seven hikes, including our first urban hike, for a total of 47.5 miles. If you include the Laurel Ridge backpacking trek, that total is closer to 65 miles! Only one person — *Scout or Scouter* — can claim to have walked every inch of it. *Way to go, Kevin B.!!*

This year's snow tubing event has been scheduled for Friday, Feb. 6th at Seven Springs. We will be on the hill from 8-10 PM.

Bring your family and friends! If you know someone who you think would enjoy Scouting, bring him along!



A sign-up sheet and waiver forms will be available at the regular troop meetings. The waiver form must be signed by a parent or guardian. Please pay when you return the signed form.

The cost is \$12 for ages 12 and up, \$8 for ages 4-11. For more information, see Mrs. Sudsina.

In Memoriam

On Saturday, Jan. 3, Troop 251 suffered a great loss as Mr. Joseph Woleslagle Sr. passed from this life.

Scouts, Scouters, and parents of Scouts from all over the Norwin area gathered at the Ott funeral home to pay respects. What an impressive site, to see so many generations of uniformed boys, men, and women standing silently with heads bowed as Eagle Scout Brian Crawford read an opening prayer. After a brief eulogy, all present softly recited Vespers, which were closed by Mr. Morgart with the traditional prayer, "May the Great Scoutmaster of all Scouts be with you until we meet again."

Mr. Woleslagle was known to many of the current membership as the Executive Officer of our Chartered Organization. But his history with Scouting goes back many years. Perhaps Brian said it best when he noted that Mr. Woleslagle was, at one time, Scoutmaster to Brian's father. Mr. Woleslagle's influence on Scouting spanned generations. His son, Joe Jr., served as Scoutmaster of 251, and grandson, Joe III, recently earned his Eagle with our troop. Mr. Woleslagle's presence will be sadly missed by many.

May the Great Scoutmaster of all Scouts be with you, Mr. Woleslagle ... until we meet again.

Save the Date

The winter Court of Honor will be held at St. John's on Sunday, February 22nd. Mark your calendars now!

Chairman's Corner

With the change of the year, January also brings a sense of renewal, a new opportunity to do all of those things that you promised yourself that you would do *last* year. For our Scouts, it's a good time to finish that Merit Badge that you started last summer, or to start working on a new one!

For our Scouters, what better time could there be to make room on your calendars for some future Troop activity? Next month, as we have done every February, we will welcome several new Scouts into our troop. As Leaders, we must never forget that we owe them the best troop experience that Scouting has to offer.

January is a good time to fulfill the promise that we made when we filled out that application to be a Leader, by setting aside some time to lead in the months ahead.

- 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. 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. **More information regarding Troop 251 is available at the troop web site:** <http://t251.org>.