



Troop 251 Hooter Gazette

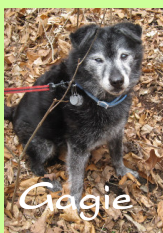


Larimer, PA

March, 2009

A Doggone Good Hike!

Story and photos by **Kevin B., Second Class Scout**
and *Hooter Gazette* Contributing Writer



We had not been on a hike since December. On Sunday, March 15, we returned to Dead Man's Hollow for a small conditioning hike. In addition to scouts, leaders, and families, five dogs joined the hike with us. The weather was great, and on this visit, we found the Hollow to be in much better condition than last September. A new wooden bridge was erected in place of the old one, which was badly deteriorated. In the middle of the Hollow, we took a rest and played fetch with the dogs. We were having a great time and decided to make a diversion up the steep Witch Hazel Trail. The entire hike was 3.5 miles. A doggone good time was had by all, including the dogs. We look forward to future hikes at the Hollow.



Candy Sale

Over 72% of the troop participated in the recent Easter candy sale! Not bad for a sale that only lasted a couple of weeks. Kudos to everyone who pitched in! The money you earn helps to keep the troop running!

Scouting for Food

In these times of economic turmoil, it is particularly important to help those in need. Scouting for Food is a great way to do that. Mark your calendars for drop-off on March 27, and pick-up on April 4.

Upcoming Events

- 3/27 — Scouting for Food dropoff
- 3/28 — Camping: Bedford
- 4/ 4 — Scouting for Food pickup
- 4/11 — Hike: Cedar Creek
- 4/24 — Camping: Mammoth
- 5/ 2 — Hike: Five-Star Trail
- 5/15 — Spring Camporee
- 6/28 — Summer Camp

These are just some of the events that are planned for the coming months. Be sure to check the Troop Calendar for the latest, most up-to-date info!

Late-Season Ski Trip



Six Scouts — **Justin, Mitch, Adam, Solomon, Jacob, and Andrew** — and almost as many leaders spent the day at Seven Springs on March 8th, taking advantage of a late-season opportunity to do a little skiing. Among the six Scouts were two first-time skiers, and one first-time snowboarder. Mr. Astley and Mr. Flaherty made sure that the skiers had fun, while Mr. Gillham proved himself to be an excellent snowboard instructor.

This trip generated a few more stories than the previous one. Maybe the late-season snow, or the lack of it, contributed to the tales of memorable crashes, including one unplanned yet reportedly well-executed cartwheel. Everyone had fun, some walked away a little sore ... but they all walked away!

Scouting Hierarchy: Part III — The Troop

Ask anyone, and they will tell you that Boy Scout units are called “troops.” But what is a troop, really?

A troop is a group of boys aged 11 to 17, who, together with their adult leaders, follow the program designed and specified by the Boy Scouts of America. It is a local organization, in that its members typically live near the troop’s base of operations.

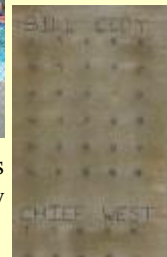
The troop is the smallest organization in Scouting to have its own legal identity. A troop enters into a contract with its chartered organization, and typically has its own bank account through which it conducts business in its own name.

How Well Do You Know Camp Conestoga?

Last month’s object was the right column of the pool tag board.



See next month’s *Hooter* for a new visual challenge!



Scout Leadership

Elections were held on 2/26/09, and the following Scouts were entrusted to lead the troop:

SPL	Adam	PL	Drew —Scorpion Patrol
ASPL	Steve D., Nick M., John	PL	Kevin T. —Falcon Patrol
Librarian	Jacob	PL	Kyle —Dragon Patrol
Chaplain’s Aide	Justin	APL	Edwin —Scorpion Patrol
Historian	Kevin B.	APL	Bradley —Falcon Patrol
Troop Guide	Solomon	APL	Austin —Dragon Patrol
Scribe	Mitch		

Hiking the Coal & Coke Trail

We ventured into new territory on March 21, for a hike along the Coal & Coke Trail. Running from Mt. Pleasant to Scottdale, the C&C offers 5 miles of varying types of surface, and sights that are unique to this area. Named for what was once the lifeblood of the region, the Coal & Coke Trail pays homage to our coal and steel heritage.

Within the first mile of the Willows Park access in Mt. Pleasant, we discovered a bank of coke ovens fairly well hidden under the dried remains of last summer’s growth. We were lucky to have gone to this trail early in the season, as the view



of the ovens is almost certain to be obscured later in the spring. A little farther along the trail is the rusted

skeleton of an old coal hopper. The remainder of the trail, though an enjoyable walk, was unremarkable save for a few wildlife encounters.



These mallards were very patient with our photographers, taking a break from their noontime meal to strike characteristic poses. Closer to Scottdale, a circling red-tailed hawk swooped in for a closer look at our hiking party.

Things That Aren't in the Handbook

This article is for the new Scouts and their parents. There are a few things that may come as a surprise to you when you get to Summer Camp that first time. Here is a list of *Things That Aren't in the Handbook*. Some are obvious, some are not.

Foot Locker - All of the Scouts use 'em for Summer Camp. Get one with a tray, if you can.

Tarps and Rope - A 9'x12' tarp is large enough to cover your tent. Be sure to bring rope to tie it down. All blue tarps look alike; print your name on two corners of the tarp with permanent marker.

Cardboard - Save that box from your big-screen TV. Cardboard works great as a smooth support layer between sleeping bag and cot.

Sealable Container - If your Scout keeps snacks in his tent, he'll want to make sure that they're reserved for human consumption. Be sure to bring a sealable metal container — preferably one that will fit in the tray of the foot locker.



Arrival - Get to your campsite early (but not *too* early!). Good tents don't always have good cots. Mix-'n-match. Strings on springs is not necessarily a bad sign; it may be an improvement if laced properly.

Floor Covering - A rag rug or piece of old carpet is much better than rough wood on bare feet. You have about 2'x6' between the cots.

Family Night - Wednesday night is family night at Summer Camp. Bring your Scout's favorite home-cooked meal, but don't give in to demands for a mid-week trip back down the mountain.

Smoke Signals Camp Edition - A special edition of the Council newsletter, with lots of good info. Time spent reading it is time well spent.

Chairman's Corner

Have you noticed the number of Scouts at the meetings lately? Not only have we been seeing record numbers in attendance, but they've been arriving well ahead of the 7:00 PM start. One might be tempted to ask, "Who are these boys, and what did they do with our Scouts?"

I have a theory. Or, as Mr. Morgart exclaimed in his best fake British accent late one night around the campfire, "*Oi ... 'ave ay thot.*" My *thot* is that the growing interest in the troop is a direct result of the interest that our Leaders are displaying towards Scouting in general. The more active we are, the more active our Scouts will be. And the more active they are, the more they will enjoy their years as Boy Scouts. Let's give them a Scouting experience they'll want to tell *their* sons about!

- 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>. All articles and photos are © 2009 Troop 251 BSA except where noted.