



# Troop 251 Hooter Gazette

Larimer, PA  
December, 2010



## Christmas Hike

December 27<sup>th</sup> fell on a Monday this year, so it was with some trepidation that we made plans for our third annual Christmas Hike. We had no idea what the crowds would be like downtown. The weather prediction called for sub-freezing temperatures. But we're Scouts! We can take it! And so it was that 8 scouts, 4 leaders, and 7 siblings and parents gathered at Station Square to begin their 2.5-mile urban hike through *da 'Burgh*.

Our trip began, as has become customary, with a walk across the Smithfield Street Bridge. It was a *cold* walk this year! First stop: Macy's, to check out the holiday window decorations and to take a group photo beneath the clock. The County Courthouse was our next stop, with another photo op in front of the Christmas tree in the courtyard.

Then our route took a new turn. This year's hike took us a little farther east, to the Consol Energy Center and the now-closed Civic, er, *pardonnez-moi*, Mellon Arena. From there, it's just a few hundred yards to Flag Plaza, the home of the Greater Pittsburgh Council, BSA.

From Flag Plaza, we hiked to the Crèche, a focal point of our Christmas hikes. It's one of the most beautiful in the world, and we're blessed to have it right here in Pittsburgh. After a late lunch at Primanti Brothers in the recently-renovated Market Square, we finished our hike with an hour of ice skating around the Christmas tree at PPG Place, followed by a *frigid* walk back across the bridge to Station Square. Temperatures in the low 20's were probably the deciding factor in choosing to forgo the planned ride on the Monongahela Incline. Maybe next year!



**Top:** Smithfield St. Bridge on a cold day; A Primanti's cheese steak is a great way to warm up; Consol Energy Center **Bottom:** Mellon Arena; PPG skating rink with Christmas tree centerpiece; looking toward Market Square from PPG Place



## LOOKING BACK

2010 has been another very active year for Troop 251. We celebrated the 100th Anniversary of Scouting in the United States with *once-in-a-hundred-years* activities. We visited the traveling Scouting museum at *Adventure Base 100*. And we pitched camp along with 10,000 other scouts at *Campaganza!*

We took first place at the Klondike Derby this year! And despite the record snows, we managed to squeeze in a ski trip and an evening of snow tubing. Shooting sports were the focus of the Spring Camporee and a troop shoot five months later. We built a parade float. We performed the opening flag ceremony at an archaeology conference. We took a few hikes and backpacking treks. We camped. We biked. We canoed. We went orienteering and rock-climbing. And we won the log-rolling competition and swamped canoe race at Summer Camp! The highlight of the year, though, was the trip to Gettysburg!

The year also saw growth and transformation in the troop. We started the year with 15 scouts on the roster, and finished with 25. The sudden growth caused a little confusion at first, but we quickly overcame that with some creative scheduling on the part of our Scoutmasters. The Patrol Method is back, with semi-regular PLC meetings. We acquired new backpacking gear this year, and a pair of pop-up shade canopies.

We have strong leadership, and a great bunch of boys. Looking forward, the coming year should be another exciting one for Troop 251!

**CERTIFIED!**



Throughout the year, our troop medical instructors, Mrs. Sudsina and Mrs. Bratkowski, keep the Scouts of Troop 251 well trained in the treatment of the types of injuries that we might encounter in our outdoor activities.

On December 9th and 16th, an instructor from the local emergency medical service, *Rescue 8*, conducted CPR/AED and First Aid training for the troop. Many thanks to *Rescue 8* for keeping Troop 251 prepared!

## *The Making of Luminaria*

Sort of sounds like a "behind the scenes" featurette, doesn't it? There is a certain amount of work involved in preparing for a luminaria sale, as our scouts found out on December 11<sup>th</sup>. A week later, these plastic bags, containing paper bags, sand, and candles, were distributed to customers in North Irwin to help to make their Christmas a little brighter.



*Happy New Year!*

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- TBD Sled-building ... watch your email!**
- Jan 6 Last day to pay recharter fees!**
- Jan 8 Klondike Derby**
- Jan 20 Committee Meeting**
- Feb 3 Dues are due!**
- Feb 4 Snow Tubing at Seven Springs!**
- Feb 6 Scout Sunday at St. John's**
- Feb 17 Committee Meeting**
- Mar 3 Summer Camp Deposit is due!**
- Mar 6 Court of Honor**

**CHECK THE TROOP CALENDAR  
FREQUENTLY FOR UPDATES  
AND MORE INFORMATION**

### How Well Do You Know Camp Conestoga?

No one guessed the answer to last month's puzzle, or if they did, they didn't mention it to me!



The clues — besides the photo of course — were that it's constructed entirely of stone, with a wooden top ... and although it's the center of attention, it's not in the center. Of course, we're talking about the fire pit at the campfire circle. The detail photo is of the one on the left. There's one on the right, just like it ...



### Chairman's Corner

Thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Peschock for managing the luminaria sale ... and to all of the leaders and scouts who helped with the logistics. Most importantly, the troop would like to thank Norwin Landscape Supply, and the Subway at Norwin Hills for their support. The next time you visit either, be sure to wear your troop t-shirt to let them know that we appreciate them!

I would also like to thank Mr. Jeff Tirpak of *Rescue 8* for teaching us how to help others. This is the second time that Mr. Tirpak has brought his knowledge and expertise to Troop 251, and we really appreciate his efforts. Thanks also to Mrs. Sudsina for taking the initiative to arrange his visit.

Thanks to Mrs. Bratkowski for leading the Christmas Hike through the wilds of the Golden Triangle!

My personal thanks go out to *all* of the leaders and parents who have pitched in to make this year a great success for our boys. With your help, 2011 just may be the best year ever for Troop 251 !!!

- Chuck Fuller, Committee Chair, Troop 251 BSA

### 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>. All articles and photos are © 2010 Troop 251 BSA except where noted.