



Troop 251 Hooter Gazette

Larimer, PA

January, 2011



The Return of Patrol *Lady Gaga*



Troop 251 returned to Camp Tenacharison on January 8th with hopes of repeating last year's 1st-place overall performance in the Klondike Derby. We would have enough boys in attendance to field two patrols, so hopes were high.

On a day when the thermometer topped out at 21°, fifteen boys braved the cold and packed their sleds for a day of challenges.

In the previous year's derby, our one and only patrol paid homage to glam-pop singer Lady Gaga by naming their patrol after her. When they came home with the overall win that year, it was fairly certain that the name would make a repeat appearance this year. The patrol led by **Nick** carried the venerated name, while the patrol led by **Adam** was accidentally registered under another name that they didn't want to carry. Nicknamed "Sardines" in homage to the can of mustard-coated fish found in a storage closet that morning, the second patrol spent a lot of time explaining its identity.

Eight boys — **Jon, Raven, Justin, Jacob, Zane, Brandon, Matt,** and **Adam** — made up Patrol *Sar-*

dines. Carrying their can of fish with them, and pulling the new sled, the patrol soon learned that their talisman lacked the power to protect them against the evils of scouting challenges. While they did very well at shelter-building, their fire-building time was not so good. Their responses to the first aid challenges showed, well, let's call it *creativity*.

Patrol *Lady Gaga* — comprised of **Mitch, Kevin, Andy, Trevor, Austin P., Ben,** and **Nick** — reportedly had the fastest fire-building time of the derby. Their shelter-building performance was on a par with the *Sardines*. Plus, the boys came out of the first aid station feeling good about their performance in that challenge. Their shining moment, however, was at the finish line of the sled race, where Patrol *Lady Gaga* finished in style, crossing the line well ahead of the next sled.

Expectations were high as we left Tenacharison. We later learned that the sled race counted for naught, and that our patrols finished 4th and 5th overall. But that doesn't matter. Everyone had a great time testing their skills and spending the day outdoors with good friends!



L to R: Quick shelter using a gate rail; Lining up for the sled race; Trevor and Kevin making pizza (Is that white stuff flour, or snow?)

Building the Sled

Fielding two patrols at the Klondike Derby meant having to build a sled for the second patrol. A week before the derby, a group of 11 scouts and half a dozen leaders met at Mr. Chenot's to begin construction of a classic Klondike Derby sled.



Based on plans from Boys' Life magazine, the sled was made almost entirely of 1"x4" pine boards, and looks a lot like the troop's first sled that was built in 2005. Total cost: \$75, sans skis.

Construction began with the *destruction* of a pair of Mrs. Bratkowski's old skis to be used as runners. Then came the side rails and the deck.

On the bottom of the center deck board are the signatures of the scouts who built the sled. Each piece was measured, measured again, cut,

drilled, glued, and screwed together by the scouts, under the watchful eye of the Scoutmasters.



A Snowy Hike at Harrison Hills

Thirty miles north of Larimer, in the northeastern corner of Allegheny County, lies the 500-acre Harrison Hills Park. This is territory very familiar to famed naturalist Rachel Carson, who lived just a few miles south, in Springdale. On this 25th morning, the park was relatively devoid of people, save for a couple of dog-walkers. The snow that had accumulated over the past two weeks lay 6" deep on the ground, and while the first section of the trail had seen moderate usage in recent days, the farther we went, the lighter the tracks became.

Only three scouts — **Adam, Andy, and Zane** — made the trip, along with four leaders. It was only natural that our hike began on the red-blazed Scouts Trail, a 5-mile moderate-to-difficult loop.

Thirty-five hundred feet south of Woodchuck Drive we came to the first recognizable feature of the trail, the

large pond at the southern end of the park. Usually inhabited by ducks, on this day it was frozen over, with a smooth blanket of snow covering the entire surface.

Our hike continued on the Scouts Trail, to where it met the Rachel Carson trail about 1.3 miles from our starting point. From there, we took the yellow-blazed trail for about 4/10 of a mile to where it intersected with the white-blazed Spicebush Trail. Another 1000 feet on Spicebush, and we were back to where we started.

No visit to Harrison Hills Park would be complete without taking in the view from the section of the trail that follows the edge of the bluff, with its view of the Allegheny River below, which was ice-covered on this day. This section had not been visited in recent days; the snow was untouched there. We walked only as far as the overlook, and returned.





Your CSP

It's a timeless design that uniquely represents the history of Westmoreland and Fayette counties.

The green hills are representative of the Laurel Highlands, a part of the Allegheny Mountain range that runs through Westmoreland and Fayette counties. The Allegheny Mountains are a part of the chain known collectively as the Appalachians.

The circular structure on the right is easily identifiable as Fort Necessity. Known for its role in the opening battle of the French and Indian War, the fort was built by a young lieutenant by the name of George Washington, and was the site of his first military battle — and first surrender — in 1754.

The structure on the left presents a stylized view of Fort Ligonier, looking directly at the front gate, with the rear walls of the fort shown in extreme perspective. Fort Ligonier was a part of the British supply lines during the latter years of the French and Indian War.

OF FINANCIAL NOTE

PLEASE NOTE THESE UPCOMING "BILLS":

- Feb 3** \$50 Troop Dues
- Mar 3** \$50 Summer Camp Deposit
- May 5** Balance of Camp Fees

Bring a friend!

Snow Tubing!

Friday, Feb 4th
8:00p—10:00p
Seven Springs

A scout is reverent ... Scout Sunday observance ... February 6 ... St. John's

Chairman's Corner

Gone is the BSA 2010 logo from our masthead. The anniversary year is over. As we begin a new century of Boy Scouting, we have the opportunity to lay the cornerstone for the next hundred years of building men from boys. What will Scouting be like at its 200th anniversary? With the advancements being made in medicine, it's not so far-fetched to think that at least one of our scouts may be alive to see it. People live to age 100 today. Why not 112 a hundred years from now?

How will today's scouts remember their Scouting years? Hopefully, there will still be copies of the *Hooter* floating around in some form that hasn't been invented yet. But the newsletter only serves as a reminder of where we've been, and what we've done. What's most important is what we learned while we were there. That's where our leaders — and I include patrol leaders here — come into the picture. Let's start today to build the Scouting memories of the next century.

- 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. 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 © 2011 Troop 251 BSA except where noted. All rights reserved.