



Troop 251 Hooter Gazette

Larimer, PA

October, 2011



Knight Time at Conestoga

October 7: Skylar, Jon, Andy, Adam, Kevin L., Austin P., Vance, Tim, Ben, and George pitched tents in the Iroquois site at Camp Conestoga for the Bushy Run District 2011 Fall Camporee.

October 8: The troop broke into two patrols for Medieval-themed skill stations. Shelter-building ended with a rock-throwing siege on each patrol's "castle". "Javelins" were thrown, "jousting" and archery skills were tested. The group enjoyed a museum of medieval armor and a presentation about medieval times. But the highlight of the day was the catapult "siege" on the parade grounds. At the end, Troop 251 took 3rd place overall, and brought back a memory of what happens when a trebuchet misfires. *Story, next page.*

Rain and Ruins

The weather report called for rain, more rain, and a good chance of still more rain. Indeed, the skies had already opened up long before the time the troop had planned to depart for their archaeological adventure. The water would make it impossible to dig. Nonetheless, 15 intrepid scouts and their leaders stuck to their plan of visiting and working at the Consol site on the weekend of October 1. Mr. Morgart, an amateur archaeologist, led the group to the nearby site of a 600-yr-old village that was previously inhabited by a tribe of the Monongahela people.

The Consol site, named for the owner of the property, is very familiar to Troop 251. Two of our Eagle Scouts have done projects there, and the troop has camped there a number of times. There would be no camping

this trip, though, as the muddy field offered no place solid enough to pitch a tent.

Sifting through dirt that had already been excavated, our scouts learned that sometimes finding nothing of major interest can be a valuable result in itself. Their work did yield a number of pottery sherds and other small items of interest, some of which will no doubt be added to the collection of artifacts recovered from the site by the Westmoreland Archaeological Society.

The society opened the site in 2000, and has unearthed hundreds of thousands of artifacts that clearly identify the site as a Late Prehistoric village. More information on the Consol site can be found on the web at <http://www.quemahoning.com/Westmoreland.html>

The Ten-Hour Trebuchet



The flyer for the Fall Camporee read, "Catapults." By the time we figured out that we needed to build one, it was two weeks before the event. And even then, we couldn't get everyone's schedules together to do the build. The day before the event just happened to be our regular meeting night. So we moved the meeting to the Fuller's backyard and commenced to build a classic trebuchet. We started at 6 PM and worked under artificial light until 2 AM. A couple of hours' work on the counterweight mechanism the next day brought our total build time to just under 10 hours.

Now, anyone who knows 251 knows that we don't do anything small. Our build started with two 7-foot long 6"x8" oak beams. The boys measured, cut, and lag-screwed every piece together, based on plans drawn up by Messrs. Chenot, Varner, and Fuller. The side assemblies were 7' tall, and the throwing arm was 10' overall. Add in the height of the trailer and the lead line on the sling, and we would be releasing projectiles almost 20 feet above the ground!



Going into the field of battle without ever having actually fired our trebuchet was not the best of all possible scenarios. But that was what we found ourselves facing on Saturday afternoon. Its formidable stature engendered great speculation among the onlookers. Would it throw one past the flagpole? Or would it comically spike the projectile in sort of a trebuchet touchdown celebration?

Our first launch — a head of lettuce — was, in a word, entertaining. The head disintegrated as it left the sling, and we soon found ourselves in the middle of a tossed salad. Our next attempt released a water balloon ... *backward*. Eventually, we got the trebuchet to throw forward by modifying our sling, but our best result was only about 10 yards.



The most spectacular result, however, was the launch of a gallon jug of water. It flew 40-50 feet ... *straight up*. Upon descent, the plastic jug exploded on contact with the brace in the middle of the trebuchet, in an act quickly dubbed "*trebicide*". As one person pointed out, had this really been the Middle Ages, and had we been throwing a bucket of flaming tar, this could have been a very exciting moment in the history of Troop 251.

After the Camporee, we realized that our problem was simply one of weight. Our 150-lb. counterweight was only 1/4 of the minimum that should be used for a trebuchet this size. ***Just wait 'til next time!***



A Ghoulish Good Time ...



... was had by all!



Attention Webelos Leaders!

It's that time of the year again, when Webelos II's should be checking out the Boy Scout Troops in the area, and making their decision about bridging.

It's important to find a troop that matches the personality and needs of the individual. We, at Troop 251, would like to invite you to bring your den to one of our upcoming meetings, so that the boys can see for themselves what Troop 251 is all about. If you are interested in visiting, please see the "Contact Us" page of our web site for more information.



On the Horizon
Light-Up Night Nov 16
Urban Hike Dec 27

Chairman's Corner

In preparation for the Fall Camporee, a number of leaders pitched in to make the trebuchet build possible. Mr. Chenot and Mr. Varner contributed design expertise. They, along with Messrs. Langford, Powell, Peschock, Yusavage, and your editor provided construction (and constructive) advice and training, while Mr. Langford and yours truly pitched tents that weekend with the scouts. Thanks also to Mr. Varner for towing the troop trailer up and down the mountain.

Despite rain that prevented both excavation and camping, Messrs. Morgart, McCormley, Yusavage, and Peschock made the best of the situation when they took our scouts to the Consol archaeological site. Kudos to these leaders for their *stick-to-it-ive-ness* in the face of ... *muck*.

Last but not least, special thanks to Mrs. Peschock and Mrs. Sudsina for coordinating the Hallowe'en Party, and to all of the leaders and parents who volunteered their time on the evening of the party. This annual event is a great way for Webelos to get to know our scouts, and to help them to make their decision about the troop that they will be joining.

- 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, photos, and images are © 2011 Troop 251 BSA except where noted. All rights reserved.