



Troop 251 Hooter Gazette

Larimer, PA

May, 2012



Fish-'n-Fun 2012

The first weekend in May saw the return of Troop 251 to one of our favorite haunts, Mammoth Park in Mt. Pleasant Township. The troop has been camping at Mammoth since long before any of the current members were around, and it remains a great place to go for our traditional early-season outing — the Fish-'n-Fun Weekend.

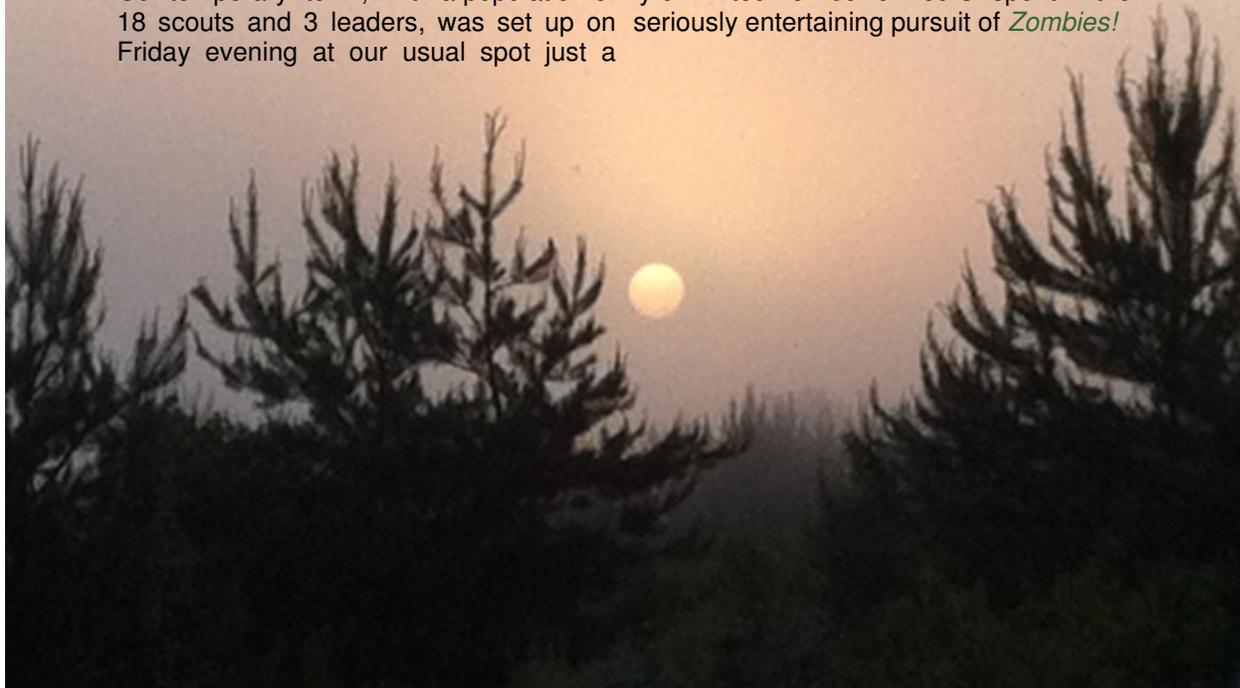
The name *Mammoth Park* conjures up images of prehistoric pachyderms roaming the hills and valleys where we camp. But alas, no mammoths have ever been unearthed in Westmoreland County. The name comes from the Mammoth Mines that operated there in the late 1800's, and from the town that the coal company built.

Our temporary "town," with a population of 18 scouts and 3 leaders, was set up on Friday evening at our usual spot just a

short hike away from Mammoth Lake. The lake gave up a fair number of fish this year, some of which were cleaned and pan-fried back at camp. It also gave up one boot, which we are happy to report was NOT cleaned and pan-fried.

One of the great things about the Fish-'n-Fun Weekend is that the new guys get to work on their Tenderfoot skills, this year with help from Troop Guide **Jacob** and others. The older scouts get to practice their skills as well, as evidenced by **Mitch's** somewhat *Escherian* knife carving of ... a knife.

Other great things about Fish-'n-Fun include the 96' giant slide, and the seemingly unlimited number of hours spent in the seriously entertaining pursuit of *Zombies!*



By Air, By Sea, By Land!

Article by Mr. Langford

Nine scouts and two leaders from 251 attended the "Air, Sea and Land" Spring Camporee at Camp Conestoga on May 18-20, along with patrols from several other troops from across Bushy Run District. It was an excellent opportunity for these patrols to get together and compete, using their knowledge and their skills.

The camporee consisted of four specific activities per "Air", "Sea", and "Land". Scouts had opportunities to demonstrate their skills in knot tying, frisbee throwing, land navigation, and stretcher building. Interesting as those events were, the boys also had to compete with their first aid skills, using knowledge and speed of action to "save" a victim with a specific injury at each of the air, sea, and land stations.

Our patrol leader, **Austin P.**, with his assistant **Mitch**, led Troop 251 with confidence and discipline. All the boys worked together and achieved every possible point they could. In the end Troop 251 did not finish in the top 3 but they did have a lot of fun and encouraged each other at every activity. That makes them winners – every time!

Towards the conclusion of the camporee, the scouts and their leaders had the final opportunity to compete against other troops with dutch oven cooking. For some of our boys, this was their first experience cooking with a dutch oven. They took it upon themselves to make a chocolate cherry cake and it turned out perfect. The leaders cooked beef stew. Although we did not place within the top three, **Austin P., Dylan, Derek, George, Jon, Kevin L., Kyle, Michael**, and **Mitch**, along with Messrs. Evan and Langford, did have the last laugh, eating up all of the samples for the taste testers!

They Were Prepared

Austin P., Ben, Jacob F., and Justin were all set to demonstrate their fire-building and shelter-building skills at the Bushy Run District's **BSA Open House** at the Norwin Elks on May 12th. They had their log cabin, lean-to, and teepee fire lays ready, and had constructed a shelter near the fire pit.

But alas, not one visitor came to the Open House. Mr. Powell, Mr. Peschock and the guys then offered assistance to another troop, by helping to eat the lunch that they had prepared for the visitors!

Spring Camporee Report

Article by Star Scout, Mitch

Well first we woke up in the morning and cooked breakfast. We had delicious scrambled eggs and crunchy bacon along with orange juice and coffee for the leaders. Then we went to the flag ceremony and were directed to go to our stations. The first station was to haul a bundle of sticks over the Paiute sign. We also did first aid and throwing a life preserver to practice our throwing skills that is the first station out of three.

Summer Meeting Schedule

June 7	August 9
June 21	August 23
July 12	August 30
July 26	<i>Class B's in Summer!</i>

Scoutmaster's Minute ...

Set high goals – and aim for them ...

During the troop shoot this year I watched our scouts take aim, and shot after shot gain confidence as they hit the targets they were aiming at. It made me think about goals and what it takes to achieve those goals.

It is important to set high goals for yourself, but you need to know you won't achieve them unless you aim for them. Like with shooting, you might completely miss the mark on your first few shots, but as you practice, gain knowledge, experience, and control you'll become a better marksman, able to consistently hit your target.

Set high goals for yourself – and aim for them. Those who have reached the rank of Eagle Scout will tell you they decided early to aim for Scouting's highest rank, and then they kept that target in their sights until they achieved it.

- Mr. Michael Peschock, Scoutmaster

From
this ...



to
this ...



The Art & Science of the BSA Standard Wall Tent



C.S. Fuller, Troop 251, Larimer, PA

All of the tents at Camp Conestoga are the same size and shape. The peak is 7' high. They measure roughly 8' x 8', with 42" side walls. At least that's their potential. Usually when we arrive for Summer Camp, the tents are in their much narrower droopy configuration. The problem with a droopy tent, of course, is that the walls lay on top of you as you lay on top of your cot.

Shown here with the "optional" front porch made by "borrowing" a floor platform from an unused tent (a practice not necessarily endorsed by the folks who run the camp, by the way), the properly -supported wall tent has plenty of room for two scouts and their belongings, not to mention a little extra protection against the furry critters that roam the campground at night and can make you smell worse than you normally do after a week at camp. Well, a little worse.

The key to squaring a wall tent is to get the roof into proper alignment. Start by making sure that the center poles are actually in the center. This should be easy, since the floor platform is made of two pieces and divides right down the middle of your tent. Reposition the base of the center poles, if necessary, before putting any tension on the roof line.

This next step is where a little preparation pays major dividends. You could spend your first hour at Summer Camp scouring the nearby woods looking for Y-shaped sticks, or you could bring them with you. For best results, you'll need (8) 47" lengths of 2"x2" pine, with a notch cut into one end.

Make sure that the tent stakes are well-anchored, and not in loose soil. If the ropes are correctly placed, with a secure bowline knot and a working tautline hitch, you could simply place the 47" sticks against the side walls and tighten up the ropes.

In most cases, the knots you'll find are a cross

between a square, a monkey fist, and a failed attempt at a Matthew Walker, tied so tightly that it would take a hacksaw and a hand grenade to untie them. Or you'll find that the ropes are just too long. Your best bet in that case is to plant the base of the 47" stick against the edge of the platform floor, run the rope through the notch at the top of the stick, and lever the stick outward until the rope is tight. This will pull the roofline taut, with the lower edge approximately 42" off the deck — the perfect height for those 42" walls.



The walls should be hanging square now. Examine the lacings at the corners, adjusting so that the two sides lay flush against one another where they meet, without any bunching. Re-lace if necessary. Once the corner lacing has been adjusted, go back and adjust the sticks if necessary. Make sure not to over-tighten, or you won't be able to tie the front and rear flaps. If the gap in the flaps gets wider toward the bottom, that's a good indication that your corner ropes may be too tight.

There's some debate about whether or not there is any benefit to tarping your tent.

Your tent should now be square, and ready to withstand that summer storm that's just appeared on the horizon.

Whatzit?!



The answer to last month's *Whatzit?! is: a raccoon track. But you knew that.*

The next installment of *Whatzit?! won't be quite so easy ...*

Upcoming Events

June 2—Fishing Derby—Indian Lake

June 15-17 — Backpacking Trek

June 24-30 — Summer Camp

July 14 — Bike Hike — TBD

July 28-29 — Overnight Canoe Trip

August — Camping — Cook's Forest

Sorry, Mom!

It was the only day that we could reserve the range for the troop shoot. Honest!

Admittedly, our timing could have been a little better. Not only was it Mother's Day, it was a *rainy* Mother's Day. On Sunday, May 13th, eleven of our scouts — **Austin P., Ben, Brandon, Chris, Jake M., Jake S., Jon, Michael, Nick D., Nick H., and Skyler** — ignored the rain for a morning of firearms and fun at the Pitcairn Monroeville Sportsmens' Club.

PMSC has hosted our "troop shoot" for three years. In those three years, they have never failed to present an excellent — and well-staffed — program of education and hands-on experience for our boys.

This year's program began, as it always does, with a safety lecture and instruction in the proper handling of firearms. Then it was out to the ranges for more instruction from NRA Certified Range Officers who once again volunteered their Sunday morning to work with the troop.

Michael pulled down 25 out of 50 clay pigeons, enough to fulfill the shooting requirement for the Shotgun Shooting merit badge. On the .22 range, the scouts enjoyed hearing the "ping" of bullets hitting iron targets, instead of the usual paper ones. The ever-popular muzzleloaders were on the program again this year, with an option of iron targets a little farther downrange — a tough shot, but several of our boys managed to make contact.

Chairman's Corner

I've been around this troop long enough to remember when a quarterly newsletter was frequent enough to cover all of the activities in a 3-month time span — on one page! The scouts who were here then wouldn't recognize today's Troop 251. We are very lucky to have a group of leaders who give so freely of their time. My personal thanks to all of you, Scoutmasters and Committee alike!

Sincere thanks this month, also, to those who contributed articles to the *Hooter*. We have two new authors this month, including one of our Scouts. And to Mr. Peschock, who provided all of the info for the articles on the troop shoot and the BSA Open House.

- 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 © 2012 Troop 251 BSA except where noted. All rights reserved.