



# Troop 251 Hooter Gazette

Larimer, PA  
September, 2012



## On the Horizon



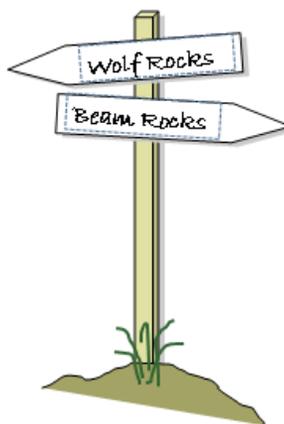
Oct	Troop meets every Thurs in October
7	Kayaking Lessons
9	Norwin Reality Tour
12 — 14	Fall Camporee
14	Yough River Cleanup
16	PLC Meeting
Nov	No Troop Meeting 15th or 22nd
1	Hallowe'en Party
13	Norwin Reality Tour
15	Irwin Light-Up Night Parade
Dec	No Troop Meeting on the 27th
Jan 11	Klondike Derby

For detailed info on upcoming events, consult the troop calendar at t251.org.

## Rock Hoppin'

Article by Mr. Chenot

On Saturday, the first of September, eight scouts (**Brandon, Bradley, Vance, Zane, Jake S., Derek, Andy, and Justin**) took another — pardon the expression — step towards earning their Hiking merit badge when they took a ten-mile hike in the Laurel Highlands area of Forbes State Forest.



After leaving Wolf Rocks, the route headed another three-and-a-half miles to Beam Rocks, a similar outcrop overlooking the Beam Run valley on the opposite side of Laurel Ridge. While the view from Beam Rocks wasn't quite as nice as the view from Wolf Rocks, Beam Rocks was even more fun to explore. The scouts squeezed through narrow crevices between

According to the route that the scouts planned, the hike would first take them four miles to Wolf Rocks, a sandstone outcrop on Laurel Ridge that overlooks the Linn Run valley. Wolf Rocks has a great view of the valley below and provided plenty of opportunities to climb and explore. Several large, flat boulders also made Wolf Rocks a nice place to have lunch.

giant boulders to get to the bottom of the rocks and then scramble climbed to get back to the top.

When leaving Beam Rocks, the scouts had an unusual wildlife encounter: a three-foot snake chasing a toad, presumably with the intention of making the toad an early dinner. Upon seeing

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Westmoreland-Fayette Council Celebrates its 75th Anniversary

1937 was a big year for news. The Hindenburg crashed, and Amelia Earhart went missing. George Gershwin died that year at age 38. And the Golden Gate Bridge was completed. And SPAM, that wonderfully salty spiced ham product, made its debut.



It probably went without national notice that the Westmoreland-Fayette Council, BSA, was founded that year. Surely much will be written in the local newspapers, and in the Council newsletter, *Smoke Signals*, about the 75th Anniversary and the celebratory activities that are planned.

Troop 251 is proud to be an active and growing part of the Bushy Run District, Westmoreland-Fayette Council, as Council celebrates its 75th!

*Rock Hoppin' (Continued from page 1)*

the scouts, the snake stopped, while the toad, seizing the opportunity, hopped away as fast as it could. It must have been the toad's lucky day.

Maybe it was the excitement of seeing the predator-prey relationship in action, or maybe it was just fatigue, but the scouts started off on the last leg of the hike in the wrong direction. Fortunately, **Justin** took a compass bearing and noticed the mistake after the group had walked only a few hundred feet. A consultation with map, compass, and GPS followed, and, after some double-checking by Mr. Chenot and Mr. Varner, the group headed off in the right direction.



Scouts take in the view from Wolf Rocks.

The last two-and-a-half miles of the route followed a trail familiar to many of Troop 251's older scouts: the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail. The last leg of the trip proved to be the most challenging: the LHHT was very rocky, and the final half-mile of the

trip was a short-but-steep ascent to the hike's starting point on Laurel Summit. The scouts then had a well-deserved snack at the Laurel Summit picnic area, having traveled 10.2 miles in just over six hours.



**Scoutmaster's Minute ...**

**Make a Plan — Work the Plan**

Success is attainable by everybody, you just need to set a goal and work towards that goal. Remember as you work towards your goals you must check to make sure that you are still on course to attain that goal.

It is like taking a hike, you set your course, determine the compass setting needed to follow in order to get to the end point. Then as you hike along – you must check your compass to make sure you are still on course.

This is also true when attempting to attain other goals you set in life. Choose the goal. Make a plan in order to attain the goal, and then set some check-points so you can verify that you are still on course to successfully reach your goals.

Remember make a plan, and then work the plan – that is how we successfully reach our goals.

- Mr. Michael Peschock, Scoutmaster

## Canoes, Camping, and Cold Rain



Article and photo by Mr. Peschock

Earlier this summer members of our troop settled for a day canoe trip, due to the threats of thunderstorms, instead of the originally-scheduled overnight canoe trip.

This weekend 6 scouts and 3 adult leaders returned to the Youghiogheny River for another attempt at our overnight canoe trip. Saturday afternoon, Sept. 29<sup>th</sup>, 4 canoes and 1 kayak set out from Whitsett, PA, to take the members of Troop 251 in attendance to Cedar Creek Park and the group camping area. After arriving and setting up our campsite, we took a short hike to see how far the boat launch was from our campsite. Not a terribly long walk to the boat launch without canoes and equipment, but certainly too long to attempt with all our gear in the morning.



In attendance were; scouts: **Austin P., Ben, Tim, Jacob S., Nick,** and **Christian,** with adult leaders: Mr. Alexander, Mr. Hornicak, and Mr. Peschock. Special thanks to Mrs. Spagnolli and Jordan for

transporting some equipment to Cedar Creek Park, and to Mrs. Peschock and Mikhayla for watching the equipment, and helping us locate the campsite from the river, saving us quite a walk with our canoes and equipment we had with us.

The scouts played their usual games and sat around the campfire talking for some time. Then the first brief shower sent the scouts to their tents to stay dry and get some rest for the morning. Around 2 am, with thunderstorms in the area, we sought shelter in the men's wash room until the storms had passed. Returning to our campsite, we all took advantage of a couple hours of much needed sleep.

Mr. Hornicak did some fishing or a least some trolling as we went down the Youghiogheny River, but the only bite he had was a wandering black cat that took his bait (a small minnow) as it ran through our campsite.

Sunday morning after packing up camp, we resumed our canoe trip heading down river to the Youghiogheny Canoe Outfitters in West Newton, PA. Stopping for a few minutes so that several scouts and adult leaders could participate in the usual fun with the rope swing on the river, which seemed more like a polar bear swim due to the actual temperature of the river water.

Through all of the events everybody had a great time on the trip.

## Duck, Duck ... Cairn

Most of the troop's hiking is done near our home base in southwestern PA, where well-used trails are easily recognizable by the lack of vegetation on the walking path. Add to that the painted blazes on trees along the trail, and it's fairly easy to find one's way. But what if you're hiking in an area where there are no trees to blaze, and no vegetation to define the edges of the trail?

Have you ever seen a small pile of stones in the middle of a stretch of arid land, and wondered why

they were there? It may have been a trail marker. From that point, you should have been able to see the next pile of stones.

These piles of stones — some consisting of only 3 or 4 stones, some taller than a man — are called *cairns*. Sometimes, the builder of a cairn will place a pointed rock on the top of the stack, oriented in the direction of travel. The resulting stack sort of resembles a duck, a term which is occasionally used in place of "cairn."

## Suggestions from the Website Readership Survey

Last month, I shared with you the numerical results of the Website Readership Survey. Numbers, however, are only a part of the story. In the survey, I also asked for suggestions on how we can make the website and newsletter "better." This month, we'll look at some of the suggestions that came in. The statements presented here are paraphrased, and possibly split or combined with others. You may not recognize your suggestion immediately, but it's here.

### WEBSITE Suggestions

**More info on upcoming events,** Upcoming events can always be found on the Troop Calendar page of the website, and I'm going to be making more of an effort to highlight them in the newsletter. (See below.) Hopefully that will help.

**More info on merit badges and where & how to earn them, etc., both within the troop and elsewhere.** This could make an interesting new page on the site, though I'd want to be careful not to duplicate the purpose or content of the Council newsletter, *Smoke Signals*. Maybe we can do something with the Resources page ...?

**More info on scout skills.** I've resisted putting up anything like a "how to tie knots" page because there are already a lot of good ones out there on the web. This may be a good idea for future newsletter articles, though.

### NEWSLETTER Suggestions

**There's an index to the Hooter?** Yes there is. And now there's a new link on the main newsletter page to make it easier to find.

**Include an "Upcoming Events" column on the first page.** The responses and suggestions that I've received via the survey have given me some thoughts on redesign, the first of which is on pg. 1.

**More articles written by scouts; let the scouts decide what's in the newsletter.** Two inches from the bottom of the last page of the *Hooter* is a plea for contributions. The invitation, "Articles from Scouts, Scouters, and parents are all welcome!" has been in every issue since July, 2008. All that I ask is that the article portray the troop in a positive light, and that the author be tolerant of the editing that must always be done to fit the article into the available space. In four years, I've had only a handful of articles submitted by scouts ... and used every one of them.

**Pictures are sometimes too far away or hard to see.** Sometimes I'm working with the best available images. And sometimes it's because I've made the amateurish mistake of squeezing a photo into too small a space. Usually, it's because I've purposefully reduced the quality to make it tougher for someone to "blow up" the image in order to identify one of our scouts. Because our scouts are under the age of 18, and the newsletter is public, I'm careful not to show recognizable faces. As a result, there may be more "scenery" and less "scout" in any given photo, e.g., the Wolf Rocks photo in this issue. It's usually not by accident.

**The Hooter is not mobile-friendly.** The News page on the website has been updated. Mobile users should now be able to view the current issue of the *Hooter* without problem.



Our annual Popcorn Sale is in full swing. "Show & Sell" is behind us, and order-taking has begun. Our new Popcorn Kernel, Mrs. Spagnolli, lined up some good venues judging from the sales report. We're way ahead of last year! Now it's up to the individuals to go out and get those orders!

Popcorn sales are a great way to build your ISA to help to pay for Summer Camp or other Scouting

activities. Not only that, but a portion of the money that you raise helps Council to continue to provide an excellent Scouting program year-round. So get out there and sell that popcorn!

Please bring your order to Mrs. Spagnolli no later than the regular troop meeting on **October 11<sup>th</sup>**.

Popcorn will be delivered on **November 3<sup>rd</sup>**.



**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.

Mark your calendars now for  
**Summer Camp 2013**  
 July 7-13, 2013  
 Catawba Site

**Troop Leadership**

At the troop elections held in August, the following scouts were chosen to lead the troop for the next 6 months:

<b>SPL</b>	Justin
<b>ASPL's</b>	Bradley Kyle Austin P.
<b>Troop Guide</b>	Andy
<b>Instructor</b>	Kevin L.
<b>Quartermaster</b>	Mike
<b>Scribe</b>	Zane
<b>Historian</b>	Jake S.
<b>Librarian</b>	Mitch
<b>OA Rep</b>	Kevin B.
<b>Chaplain Aide</b>	Ben
<b>Leave No Trace Officer</b>	Brandon

**Patrol Leadership**

	<i>Feagles</i>	<i>Dragons</i>	<i>No Names</i>	<i>Duct Tape</i>	<i>Cyclones</i>	<i>Panthers</i>
<b>PL</b>	Jacob F.	Kevin L.	Ben	Skylar	Nick H.	Derek
<b>APL</b>	Kevin B.	Justin	Jon	Tim	David	Dylan
<b>Scribe</b>	Trevor	Kyle	Brandon	George	Jacob S.	Brendan

**Chairman's Corner**

Troop 251 is blessed with a number of past leaders who still show an interest in the troop, and who come around from time to time to lend a hand. Such was the case when past Committee Chair, Mr. Mark Oroukin, and his Eagle Scout son, John, visited us at Summer Camp this year. Recently, Mr. Oroukin sent me an email with information that he and John had compiled for the Eagle Roster page on the web site. Thanks to their contribution, we are currently lacking info for only 11 of our Eagles. Thanks, Messrs. Oroukin and Oroukin, for your continued interest in the troop!

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