



Hooter Gazette

Larimer, PA

March, 2013



On the Horizon

20,438 Steps Closer!

Apr 5-7	Spring Camporee
Apr 9	Norwin Reality Tour
Apr 12-14	OA Weekend
Apr 13	Fugitive Tire Round-Up
Apr 16	PLC Meeting
Apr 18	OA Elections
Apr 20	Scouting for Food
Apr 27	Scouting for Food
May 19	Troop Shoot
Jul 7-13	Summer Camp
Summer 2014	Northern Tier

The average walking step length of the average American male is 31 inches, according to the people who worry about measuring such things. To hike ten miles, then, requires that the average scout raise and lower each foot 10, 219 times, assuming, of course that he is able to maintain a steady gait along the entire ten miles.

The Youghiogheny River Trail, a multi-use trail that runs from McKeesport to Confluence, happens to be a very good place for maintaining a steady gait. On March 16, four scouts from the Hiking Merit Badge class including **Vance**, **Jake S.**, **Bradley**, and **Andy** along with Hiking Merit Badge recipient **Kevin B.** took to the YRT for a 10-mile hike. In recent years, most troop hikes have been done on wilderness trails in places like Forbes State Forest and Raccoon Creek State Park, so a hike on the YRT might seem a bit unusual until you take into account the amount of rain we've had this month. One nice thing about the YRT is that it drains well.

Another nice thing about the YRT is that it's level and free of large rocks. The scouts, accompanied by Mr. Varner and Mr. Chenot, took advantage of not being on the usual knee-busting terrain, making it from Suterville to a half-mile past Dravo Cemetery and back, a 10.2-mile round trip, in just under four hours. Ten-mile hikes in wilderness areas typically take around six hours. And while the stretch of the YRT that the scouts hiked didn't have spectacular scenery, there's more to see than you might think. There are several nice views of the Youghiogheny River, and Dravo Cemetery is full of interesting local history.

This 10-mile hike was a good warm-up hike for some of the more ambitious hikes that are planned later in the spring. Future hikes include a 10-mile urban hike between Schenley and Frick Parks in Pittsburgh, a 10-mile hike on the North Country Scenic Trail.

Contributions by Mr. Chenot

The YRT and the GAP

The Yough River Trail is a part of a much larger trail system. We are most familiar with the section that runs past Boston, or the section around Ramcat and Confluence. But the trail, today, is continuous from Homestead to Cumberland, MD. At Cumberland, the Great Allegheny Passage, as it is known, connects with the C&O Canal Towpath, making it possible to ride a bike from Pittsburgh to Washington, D.C..

For more information on the Great Allegheny Passage, start at the historical beginning, the Allegheny Trail Alliance website, atatrail.org.

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

Spring Court of Honor

The gym at St. John's UCC was the location of Troop 251's Spring Court of Honor, which was held on March 17th.

The Court of Honor was opened by **Austin P.**, who called **Bradley** to lead the Color Guard through their paces. **Ben P.** then presented the Invocation.

Ten rank advancements were announced: (Scout) **Kevin P.**, **Ben T.**, and **Joe**, (Tenderfoot) **Mike** and **Nick**, (Star) **Andy**, **Kevin L.**, and **Zane**, (Life) **Cameron**, and (Eagle) **Kevin B.** Rank advancements were presented by ASPL **Austin P.**

Nine scouts earned Merit Badges since the Winter Court of Honor: **Mike**, **Jacob F.**, **Austin G.**, **Bradley**, **Jon**, **Cameron**, **Ben P.**, **Mitch**, and **Zane** completed a total of 14 badges., which were presented by **Kyle**.

Following the Scoutmaster Minute and Announcements, **Ben P.** offered the Benediction. The Colors were retired, and all in attendance were invited to partake of a delicious meal.

Climb On!



Photo and Contributions by Mrs. Peschock

On the 23rd of March, scouts **Austin P.**, **Brandon**, **Benjamin T.**, **Chris**, **Ben P.**, **Mike**, **Kevin L.**, **Cameron**, **Kevin P.**, **Tim**, and **Nick** harnessed up and took on The Climbing Wall, one of 251's regular winter activities.

The scouts all reached the top to place a hand on the pipe, with only **Austin P.**, **Kevin L.**, and Mr. Peschock successfully scaling the wall with the large overhang obstacle.

Mr. Peschock and Mr. Hornicak climbed, as did Mrs. Eckels, while Mrs. Huwalt, Mr. Powell, Mrs. Tomasino, and Mrs. Peschock took care of things on the ground. Siblings Liz and Mikhayla also climbed.

Scoutmaster's Minute ...

No, But a Scout Can!

I recently watched a YouTube video from the 2010 Australian Jamboree where Sammy J sang "The Scout Song". Some lyrics in this song are: Can you start a fire with sticks? No, but a scout can! Can you give first aid if your fire burns somebody? No, but a scout can! Can you find your way home using stars? No, but a scout can! Can you cook a nutritious meal on a campfire? No, but a scout can!

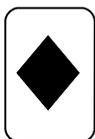
It made me think about all of the skills scouts learn during their scouting careers; Leadership, Citizenship, Fitness, First Aid, Aquatics, Nature, Leave No Trace, Hiking, Camping, Cooking, Navigation, Knots, Lashings, Knife Safety, Campfires, and other skills.

There are many resources that can be used to learn and teach these skills, from; the internet, adult leaders, and you guessed it – even your own Scout Handbook.

Of course, you can only get information from the Scout Handbook if you open it up and read it. So, remember to bring your Scout Handbook; to scout meetings, camping trips, hikes, other scout adventures, and track your advancements through scouting.

Keep your Scout Handbook with you, open it, and read it. You'll be amazed at the skills you can learn!

- Mr. Michael Peschock, Scoutmaster



There were “no noteworthy wipeouts that I had witnessed,” reported Mrs. Spagnolli following the Seven Springs ski trip on March 10th. That’s always good news!

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She and Mr. Spagnolli skied the North Face with **Jake S., Mike,** and his brother Steven. The scouts did really well, even on the black diamond slopes.



The weather presented a bit of a challenge that day, with the high near 60°F, clear skies and lots of sunshine. Thankfully, conditions were much better than expected. The slopes still had a good base so there were few bare spots. The snow, however, was more like a thick slush — not too bad if you are going fast, but, as Mrs. Spagnolli put it, “when you slowed down it was like skiing on fly paper!”

Also on the slopes that day were **Chris, Ben P., Christian, Jacob F., Vance, Zane, Skylar, Mitch,** Mrs. Alexander, and Scoutmasters Messrs. Flaherty, Alexander, and Gillham.

Photo and Contributions by Mrs. Spagnolli

Have you seen the new photo collage at t251.org ?

Chairman’s Corner

Sometimes we forget that Boy Scouts perform at a level above their contemporaries. I recently heard a scout say, “I didn’t do that very well.” What that scout failed to realize is that most boys his age couldn’t have done it *at all*, let alone have done it *well*. Consider the typical classroom speech that every student of English dreads making. Then consider the Court of Honor, a formal program, prepared and presented by scouts. Where the English student speaks to an audience consisting solely of other students, each of whom will take their turn at the podium and few of whom are even listening, the scouts speak to a room full of their peers and attending adults, on a subject of *substance*, sometimes reading from a script, but frequently expected to speak extemporaneously. How many of their classmates could do as well, while keeping a program moving along on pace?



Thanks to everyone who contributed to this issue! I’ve been absent from activities for a few weeks, nursing a bum leg. The leaders on those activities, though, have been great about providing me with reports from the field. I can only hope that I’ve captured the events as they actually happened. Thanks, also, to the leaders who made things happen this month, and to the PLC for their contributions to the activity schedule! Keep up the good work, everyone!

- 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 © 2013 Troop 251 BSA except where noted. All rights reserved.