

Troop 49 - The Pathfinders

Camp Turrell

July 25 – 31, 2010

Turrell by the numbers:

- 18:** Scouts attending camp for the week
- 7:** Camp days
- 6:** Camp nights
- 4:** Resident adults: Fern (SMIC), Dente, Burns, Kozak
- 74:** Merit badges completed
- 16:** Merit badges begun for later completion
 - 1:** Scouts completing the mile swim - nice job Craig
- #1:** Troop 49 finish in Water Carnival
- #1:** Camp Genius finish - nice job Nick
- #2:** Troop 49 finish in the Iron Man competition
- 11:** Scouts completing the Polar Bear Swim
 - 0:** Scouts showing signs of home sickness
- 18:** Scouts passing the swim test - whoo hooo!
 - 0:** Serious injuries
 - 3:** Scoutmaster conferences complete
 - 2:** Scouts recognized by the archery staff for their help in the program area (Michael and Tyler)
- Lots:** Critters: bears, deer, raccoons, squirrels, porcupines, chipmunks, rattlesnakes, mice, newts, frogs, & various insects
 - 2:** Eagle Scout visitors
 - 1:** Staff Member of the Week (Way to go Peter Foley!)
 - 0:** Days of rain - thank you Great Scoutmaster!
- 18: Happy Campers!**

Sunday, July 25, 2010, Day 1

Campers and parents gathered at the OLPH lower parking lot at 9:00. We wrapped up last minute medical form details, said our good-bye's and departed for Turrell by 9:30. We arrived at Camp Turrell at about 11:00, and set up camp. We set up in site M, Murray Cole. This year, we shared site M with two troops, T648 and T506, from Newark, NJ. The scoutmasters, Thaddeus (T648) and John (T506), were very nice and dedicated scouters. It was great to share the site with these troops, and throughout the week, we had some fun times together.

After getting the trailer situated, scouts selected tent sites by rank. Our annual Troop photo was taken near the entrance to our site. All scouts and leaders mustered for the walk to medical re-checks and swim tests.

We were the first troop to arrive for medical re-checks, which kept us from waiting, and we quickly moved through the process and went on to the waterfront. Swim tests went very well, with every scout passing the swimmer level. (Thank you to Mrs. Cameron who worked with many of our scouts prior to camp to practice and prepare for the swim test!) Rain started to fall while we were doing the swim tests, and this seems to be an annual occurrence. Thankfully, there was no thunder or lightening.

After swim tests, there was some free time to settle in. The afternoon rain was short lived, although it gave us some motivation to get tarps up. We created the cooking station along the path from the trailer to the latrine. We also set up another carport tarp straight back from the first one. Many scouts and leaders also had brought tarps to cover their canvas tents, which have a reputation of being leaky at times.

At dinner time, we gathered for evening flags. This was our first opportunity to meet scouts and leaders from the other troops in camp. One troop lined up next to us was Troop 304 from Tappahannock, VA, and many of the scouts quickly became friends. They had a great group of leaders which spent a lot of time talking with our leaders, and getting to know each other.

Next, we had our first Dinner in the dining hall. Each year, the first meal in the dining hall is preceded by dining hall orientation. This year, the camp went to a new procedure, which has the waiters bring the food out before scouts enter the building. When the scouts enter, grace is said, and then all sit and eat. This process shaved about 20 minutes from the old way of waiters going for food after grace.

After dinner, scouts continued to settle in, until we went to the council campfire circle for the opening campfire. The venue is an absolutely beautiful scene with a very dramatic presentation of one fire on either side of the stage, with the trees and Beaver Dam Pond in the background. All of the scouts came away very stoked!

After the campfire, the leaders coordinated distribution of Blue Cards to each scout for the merit badges they were signed up for or if they were doing the Pathfinder program. The Adult leaders and youth leaders met, and talked about leadership roles, and the leaders coached our SPL, PL's and APL's on some basic leadership skills. These skills are the same ones that are taught in the NYLT program. The scouts agreed that they are good things to have learned, and promised to practice them during the week.

The first evening was noticeably cooler than the 90+ degree heat we had left back in New Jersey. This was the tone for the week, with cool, dry weather, warm afternoons, and beautiful blue skies.

Monday, July 26, 2010, Day 2

The troop gathered at 7:30AM for 7:45 flags and 8:00 AM breakfast. This would be our morning ritual for the balance of the week. After breakfast, all scouts buddied up and dispersed to merit badge classes. By 9:00 AM, all was quiet in the campsite. Mr. Fern and Mr. Burns decided to take advantage of Adult Leader Training that was being offered in the dining hall during the day.

Prior to arriving in camp, the troop had decided to cook dinner in site. The menu for Monday was spaghetti and meatballs. We got the cooking started as early as possible, but quickly learned site cooking is fun, it takes a load of time and the scouts ended up pressed for time when trying to get to the 7PM programs going on around camp in the evening. As our dinner was being served at 6:45PM, the camp emergency drill sounded. Many of our scouts assembled on the Parade Field with dinner plates in hand. The patrol leader council convened a meeting to discuss eating in site, and decided that they wanted to divert to the dining hall for the remaining dinners, except Thursday, which is when the camp has mandatory, in-site cooking.

Tuesday, July 27, 2010, Day 3

Happy birthday Matt D!

Early risers were the ones anxious to complete the Polar Bear Swim program. A good turnout, including 11 scouts, Mr. Fern, Mr. Burns, and Mr. Kozak marched down to the waterfront for a dip in the lake. Mr. Dente came along too, didn't swim, but was there every day for moral support.

Scouts continued their programs during the day, and it was day 2 for Training for Mr. Fern and Mr. Burns in the dining hall. Later in the day, several scouts saw a porcupine near the shower house. For many, this was the first porcupine they had ever seen in the wild.

Many scouts participated in free swim after dinner. Four scouts working on Wilderness Survival MB had built a shelter for a night of wilderness survival. These scouts (Padraic, Patrick, Nick M, and Matthew R) went right to Outdoor Skills at 5PM. Their dinner was provided by the scouts earning cooking merit badge. After dinner, they made final modifications to their shelters, and bedded down for the night.

The Pathfinders program also had its outpost camping night on Tuesday. Two of our scouts (Alec and Brian) decided to join in that overnight. It was an optimum night for camping out under the stars, with perfect weather conditions.

Wednesday, July 28, 2010, Day 4

Second day for the polar bear swimmers. Those returning from Outpost and Wilderness Survival joined in the swim. It was a little bit of a rough morning for the scouts who slept in the forest and got only five or six light hours of sleep.

With adult leader training complete, Wednesday provided the adults with a chance to play a little on the rifle range, and take some of the camp bikes out for a ride. The bikes were in really poor condition. We discussed possibly doing a service project for the camp over the winter, and help to get them back in functioning order.

Wednesday also marked our visit from two of our 18 year old scouters. Jack and Austin, who turned 18 this past year, came up for a visit on Wednesday, and really did a great job at inspiring our scouts. They were helpful to the leaders, since they know the camp so well, and were able to help shuttle buddy-less scouts from program area to program area. They also sat around the campfire and told lots of stories and taught songs and skits to the troop.

Late in the afternoon, there was a rattle snake sighting in the Nature area. Many scouts went back to see the snake, and Mr. Fern came VERY close without even realizing it. Thanks to Mr. Kozak's eyes, there were no fangs deployed!

Some scouts were able to try rappelling on the "small wall". Thanks to Dan and Jerry, two leaders in Troop 350 Bellville, who are climbing certified, and were able to help the staff by running this program.

Wednesday evening weather forecast was calling for possible thunder storms. At 2AM, Mr. Dente woke to the calling of his name by 2 scouts in a nearby tent who heard some noises. The scouts quickly re-focused their thoughts on other topics, and went back to sleep. The camp had evaded the thunder storms, which appeared to be passing to the north.

Thursday, July 29, 2010, Day 5

Third and final day for the polar bear swimmers. When the troop arrived at the waterfront for Polar Bear swims, they were saddened by the call of the waterfront staff that there was apparently "rolling thunder" heard within the last few minutes. We were a bit suspect of this "rolling thunder", since we heard nothing but airplanes flying overhead, which is a sure sign that there are no storms nearby. Undaunted, the scouts headed back to camp to get ready for flags and breakfast. We were happy to learn that all scouts who were ready to swim were given credit for the Polar Bear swim on Thursday, since there was a weather related interruption in program. The threatening skies in the morning burned off and we had a fabulously sunny day. After breakfast, scouts continued their merit badge work. Lunch was sandwiches in camp, and following lunch, we started setting up for dinner – The camp-wide Chili Cook-off! Some scouts were concerned about having chili, since it wasn't a food they had ever really tried or eaten before.

With our lesson learned from Monday night's dinner, we started early. While the scouts were still at Merit Badge programs, Mr. Fern and Mr. Dente unveiled the Dutch ovens they brought to camp, in addition to the one

in the troop trailer. Mr. Fern fired up the charcoal, while Mr. Dente prepared Bisquick and Jiffy Corn Muffins. Among the ingredients we got for the Chili included green peppers, onions, jalapeños and baked potatoes. Mr. Fern brought along some special ingredients, including bacon, tomato paste and spices. We dedicated one oven to the chili, and Mr. Fern organized the cooking. Austin lead many scouts in cutting and dicing the extra peppers & onions and potatoes. Jack proceeded to make hash browns as a side dish.

We filled the container which was our submission for the cook-off, and scouts ate chili like it was going out of style. By the end of the evening, we had polished off the outstanding chili, hash browns, corn, muffins, and biscuits. Of the eight scouts who never had chili before (and were hoping we would use the chop meat for hamburgers), seven of them came back for seconds. It was that good!!!

With the Monday cooking experience under our belt, and a jump on dinner, we were the first troop done with dinner, and our scouts got to the different evening programs in camp. Some participated in the Camp Genius program and others did the Archery and Rifle competitions. There were lots of activities around the camp for the evening.

Many scouts returned to the site having finished up many of the merit badges they were working on. Thursday was the late night for the astronomy merit badge scouts. The star gazing party commenced at 11:15PM! We had a big bon fire as we looked to clean up camp and burn all that we had left. Lights finally went out around 1:00 AM for the latest of the night owls.

Friday, July 30, 2010, Day 6

Friday was wrap up day for many scouts finishing merit badges. Program areas were open in the morning so that scouts could stop by and finish up last requirements. We dropped the tarps and cleaned and stowed the cooking gear in preparation for Saturday's early departure. As has become a tradition, the troop timed the breakdown of the big tarp, which start to finish, the big canopy was down in about 4 minutes! Nice work.

The Ironman contest started up after lunch, and was immediately followed by the Water Carnival, which lasted through about 4:30. We participated cleanly in both of the contests, and made sure to participate in all of the events for each program.

Friday night dinner was Rib Night. This is a Camp Turrell favorite, which tends to be a very messy endeavor. Troop 49 was prepared, and brought plastic table cloths, plastic table ware, paper plates, cups and bowls. All of this made the job of cleanup go very smoothly. The waiters appreciated it! After dinner was the annual Pie Eating contest, where one of the T350 leaders (Dan or Jerry) took on Squeaker. Squeaker is the Camp Cook. Squeaker tried his best to defeat his challenger, but it became too much. All were applauded for the efforts.

The closing campfire was held at the Council campfire circle on Friday night. This is a time when each troop gets to put on skits and the staff gives out awards for participation.

Nice job Troop 49:

- #1 position in Water Carnival

- #1 position in Camp Genius

- #2 position in Iron Man

- Staff member of the week – Peter Foley!

Saturday, July 31, 2010, Day 7

The troop was up early and packing. We had Continental breakfast in the dining hall. A few parents had spent the previous night at camp. Others begin to arrive about 8:30. We broke camp, already sharing stories with the

parents who were picking up their sons. Everyone was on the road by 10:00 AM. Later, we will hear stories of many a camper sleeping soundly all the way home!

As we became closer with the folks from Troop 304, Tappahannock , VA, they invited us to stay at their scout house. A scout house is a property owned by a troop. Scoutmaster John and ASM Jimmy welcomed Troop 49 to visit them. Our scouts were very anxious to line this trip up. Tappahannock is near to Richmond, and Williamsburg, and would be a great destination to include touring of the Williamsburg/Jamestown area.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Fern, Scoutmaster In Charge
Rob Dente, Assistant Scoutmaster
Paul Burns, Assistant Scoutmaster