



SOARING NEWS

Troop 869

Clear Lake Presbyterian Church
Chartered 1968

70 Eagles

Clear Lake City • Houston, Texas
November 2010

Editor

Many thanks to those who contribute their time and skills in writing articles and sending in photos. Please continue to send your stories and pictures about troop campouts, fund-raisers, volunteering and Eagle Scout projects, etc. to sstanley17@comcast.net.

Canoeing at Double Lakes



On September 17th-19th, our troop went to Double Lakes for our canoeing campout. It took awhile to pack up on Friday so we ended leaving at 6:00 pm. When we arrived, we put up our tents in the dark and then had to move to another site. We were mad but ended up laughing about it. On Saturday am, the weather was sunny and hot. John C. and I worked on our 5 mile hike for second class emphasis with Mr. Gales and Mr. Fiske. The other scouts went canoeing and we caught up with them after lunch. Canoeing was a blast. My grub masters brought a lot of food and we had a feast for breakfast, lunch and dinner. When we were done with canoeing, we enjoyed playing football and putting up the canoes. Our Saturday dinner was awesome. We made hotdogs, hamburgers, sausage and beans. The funniest thing that happened during the campout was when me and John S. were in our canoe and ended up in a swamp and got stuck in the mud. We finally got out and realized there was mud in and out of the canoe. We spend about 20 minutes cleaning out the mess with help from Mr. Cochran and Scott Marshall. All of us got along real well and had an awesome time. Thanks to all of the adults who came.

- Anthony C.

SHAC Jam



The Armstrongs, the Hollands, and the Hansons in front of the SWAT Truck

SHAC Jam—our Council’s Jamboree to celebrate scouting’s one hundredth anniversary—was held on October 8-10 at the Texas World Speedway near College Station Texas. Three families from our troop attended: the Hollands, the Armstrongs, and the Hansons. We arrived Friday evening around 8:30. There were so many people—about 22,000! Fortunately, there were lots of volunteers around to direct traffic so it didn’t take too long to find our campsite, which was inside the track loop on the south side of the Speedway.

On Saturday morning, we got up, had a simple breakfast, and started off to see what we could see. We went to the Native American area where we saw some Native American crafts and bead work. Next we walked through the “Lumberjack” area where we practiced axe throwing and log dragging. We visited an area where some historic race cars were on display. We also saw a seatbelt demonstration, including a pickup truck that was all smashed up but the two teenagers inside had survived. We visited the law enforcement area: saw the bomb squad truck (including their bomb-handling

continued on page 2

Looking Ahead

Winter Camp
(cancelled)

January 14-16
Buescher State Park

February 18-20
Pedernales Falls S.P.

March (date TBD)
Enchanted Rock S.P.

April 30 - May 1
District Camporee
Camp Strake

SHAC Jam continued from page 1



Jonathan H. throwing an axe

robot and their bomb-proof suit), a SWAT truck, and a police helicopter. My sister, Alicia and I raced up the Army's "rock" wall—Alicia won! We also got to see World War II weapon demonstrations.

After lunch, we saw a world-record-setting model rocket launch—3130 model rockets took off simultaneously. (The previous record was 965 set in 2007 by a scout troop in Austin.) We visited the water area, where there was a scuba diving demonstration, a sailing demonstration, and model boats that the scouts could steer around. At the Scottish village were a bagpiper, Celtic dancers, and miniature Celtic games like the caber toss (throwing a wooden pole that looks like a telephone pole). At the blacksmith area we made a dinner triangle, which we plan on using to call our family to dinner every night (this should drive our neighbors crazy).

After dinner we went to the Speedway grandstand area for the 100th Anniversary program. Gill Clay, the granddaughter of scouting's founder Lord Baden-Powell led the gathering in the Scout Oath and Law. Astronaut Mike Fossum talked about his experiences as a boy scout. The program ended with a really great fireworks display.

On Sunday morning, there were lots of religious services to choose from: Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Episcopalian. The Armstrongs attended the Episcopalian service and got to visit with Gill Clay, who is Anglican. After church, we broke camp and left about 11 a.m. for home.

The number of activities was really amazing, we weren't able to see and do everything, but it was fun to enjoy the activities with so many scouts from other troops.

- Jonathan H.

Troop Garage Sale

On Saturday, November 6th, we had another successful event due to the strength of our scouts and their families. While we didn't have the volume of items as in the past, several scouts (and adults) still managed to find those 'couldn't live without' treasures. Big thanks to all the scouts and their families for their help. Our troop earned about \$1,450! Great job everyone!

Webelos Wood

For Webelos Woods this year we went to Challenger Park. It took place from November 19th-21st. The weather was good and everyone had a great time. On Friday night, we set up our tents and made a fire. Then we went to bed. On Saturday, we judged the Webelos in a knot tying competition. The future Boy Scouts did a great job. After judging the competition, we all went back to camp and ate a delicious barbeque lunch cooked by Mr. Lillie. Then we played some football with a nearby troop. We had dinner and the Webelos came around and visited different troops. After the visits we went to bed. Sunday we got up and broke camp. Then we all left to enjoy our week off from school.

- Phillip W.

Rock Stock Eagle Project



L to R: Chris P., Tyler N., John F., Farzam F., Eric S., and Craig D.

The Rock Stock Eagle Project on October 30th was a huge success! We collected over 600 lbs of much needed pantry items for Hope Village and had a GREAT time entertaining the residents and staff of Hope Village with Rock music of the past 40 years! The residents sang and danced to the music, loving every minute of the performance! My project was unique as this was the first time anyone in the district has attempted a performance type Eagle Project. Many thanks to my band which consisted of Tyler N. (T869), Eric S. (T869), Craig D., John F. (T869), Farzam F. (T957), Chris P. (T930), Mr. Steve Stanley and Paul S. (T869). These guys donated many hours of their time in rehearsal and practice and it was very much appreciated. Thanks also go to all of the other scouts and scouters that donated their time on Friday and Saturday with helping set up, hand out programs and take down and clean-up of the concert area. We definitely left it better than we found it!

Lastly, much love and thanks to my mom for helping with everything and to my dad for getting me to rehearsals and helping with the after party.

The smiles on the faces of the residents made all the hard work worth it. It was a great experience and we have been invited back whenever we want to play again!

- Tyler N.

Top Honors for One of Our Own



On September 7, 2010, Jonathan David H. from the Clear Lake area of Houston, Texas became one of only a handful of Boy Scouts in the 100-year history of Boy Scouting to earn all the merit badges offered by the Boy Scouts of America. On the evening of November 30, 2010, he will be honored during Troop 869's Court of Honor for his achievement—earning 129 merit badges.

Jonathan, who has been homeschooled his whole life, credits that with helping him finish all the merit badges. Many of the merit-badge accomplishments quickly turned into school-unit studies and research projects. When he wrote a school paper, he would often use a merit badge as the topic. Some merit badge achievements even turned into science fair and history fair projects.

Jonathan will tell you that the most challenging merit badge he earned was the "Water Sports" merit where he had to learn to water ski. It took four weekends of practice to learn, but he mastered skiing on two skis and then on one. According to Jonathan's mother Michelle, that badge was also the most expensive. She said, "I paid for the lessons and also the emergency room trip to stitch up his foot after an accident during one of the lessons. However, the final result was very rewarding and worth the cost!"

Jonathan's scouting career began in the first grade, as a Tiger Cub Scout with Pack 848. He earned all the Cub Scout ranks, 18 arrowheads, the "God & Me" and "God & Family" awards, and the highest honor a Cub Scout can achieve: the Arrow of Light and the Super Achiever's Award. It was here that Cubmaster Martin Yeager motivated Jonathan always, "To set goals for himself and always 'do his best.'"

After graduating to Boy Scouts, Jonathan was invited to a Troop Merit Badge Workshop where he earned his first merit badge: First Aid. He enjoyed it so much, he quickly earned several more. Jonathan's older sisters told him they had earned all the Girl Scout merit badges offered, so he set a goal of earning all 121 Boy Scout merit badges to prove that he could do it too.

Hanson was always on the lookout for opportunities to earn merit badges. He tracked down merit badge counselors - volunteers who sign up to teach the merit badge requirements and then verify that the scout has met all the requirements - both within and outside his troop. Several people told Jonathan his goal was unrealistic and he would never be able to obtain all 121 badges, but that just made him more determined.

In 2006, many people assumed that Jonathan would end his Boy Scout career at age 13 when he earned the rank of Eagle Scout. For his Eagle project, he led a team of fellow scouts to build a 12-foot-long Formica-topped counter with shelves underneath for Interfaith Caring Ministries. But that didn't sidetrack him from his merit badge goal.

By January 2010, Jonathan had finally earned 121 Boy Scout merit badges; however, this year, the Boy Scouts added eight new merits! Jonathan was determined to earn those as well. Four of these are "historical" merit badges brought back to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Boy Scouts and available only during 2010. One of these historical merit badges, "Signaling," required Jonathan to learn semaphore and Morse code. A new merit badge in 2010 was one of Jonathan's all-time favorites—"Scuba." This merit took Jonathan to the National High Adventure Sea Base in the Florida Keys. On one of 11 reef dives, Jonathan and his best friend Noel S. played Tic-Tac-Toe in the sand on the ocean floor. Also, with his trip to Sea Base, Jonathan earned the "Triple Crown" award for going to all three of the Boy Scout High Adventure Camps. On September 7, 2010, Jonathan earned his final Boy Scout merit badge: "Inventing." That's the badge Jonathan will receive on November 30 to complete this noteworthy accomplishment!

Jonathan's father, Dave, is immensely proud of his son's accomplishment, and appreciative of the time they have spent together because of it. He said, "We put a lot of miles on our hiking shoes together while Jonathan earned the Backpacking merit, and we got to spend a week diving together in the Florida Keys because of the Scuba merit. We've been canoeing together, played the bugle together, rappelled down rocks together, rode bicycles together - I wouldn't trade those times for anything!"



Jonathan stated, "I am thankful for all my merit badge counselors and the help they gave me. I couldn't have done this without them. I would also like to thank Scoutmaster Gary Wedekind because he never said, 'It can't be done.' Instead, he encouraged me to go as far as I could. Along the way, Jonathan also discovered that meeting his goal could have other benefits: "At Camp Woodruff, my troop got to eat first because I had earned more merit badges than anyone else at the camp!"

Another Amazing Food Drive



Once again, we had an amazing Food Drive at Kroger's. There were over two car loads of food that went to the Food Pantry at St. Bernadette Church. We collected thousands of dollars worth of food donations. We had almost \$400 in cash donations that was used to buy more food! The Kroger shoppers were very generous but a lot had to do with how persuasive our troop was...Good job boys!



Please inform Bernadette Scott (jbvscott@sbcglobal.net) of events that will serve as great opportunities for our scouts of Troop 869 to help and serve others.

Eagle Scout COH Invitations

Christopher Green
Saturday, December 4th, at 2:00pm

John Wedekind
Saturday, December 18th, at 2:00 pm

Fellowship Hall, Clear Lake Presbyterian Church
Reception will follow the ceremony

Camp Powhatan in Virginia

From the Blue Ridge Mountain Council..."Tucked into the valley formed by the Big Macks Creek, Camp Powhatan is the largest council owned Scout camp in the United States. The big camp atmosphere surrounds you with excitement from morning flags till evening taps.

Extensive camping facilities, wireless Internet, and many opportunities for advancement make Powhatan an ideal spot to live the Scout Oath and Law. "

The dates for camp are July 10-16, 2011, *not* including travel days. We have reserved spots for 20 scouts at base camp and 6 at Claytor Lake (the high adventure place). Troop transportation will be determined at a later date. Camp fees will probably be in the \$250-\$300 range; a firmer figure will be given later.

Parents and scouts-please start thinking now of your summer plans. At this point in time we are not collecting money and probably won't do so until Jan. or Feb. of 2011. Per camp policy, all monies must be paid by June 1st. No refunds will be given after April 1st.

A high-adventure camp also awaits. You may find out more info by following this link: ww.brmcreservation.org/summer_camp. The High Adventure Camps that will be available to us include:

Claytor Lake Aquatics Base highlights

- Wakeboarding
- SCUBA Certification
- Motorboating
- Waterskiing
- Kayaking
- Olympic-style Rowboats
- Excellent food

New River Adventure highlights

- Based at Camp Powhatan
- C.O.P.E.
- Class V Whitewater Rafting
- Caving
- Whitewater canoeing

Natural Rock Climbing in the New River Gorge and Voyager highlights

- Based at Camp Powhatan
- Whitewater Rafting in the New River Gorge
- Living History
- Advance Canoe Skills

Last, but not least, *a summer camp coordinator is needed now!* Contact Susan Smith if you're interested.

Want to work on a merit badge? Here is the link to the requirements for all merit badges: http://meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/Merit_Badges