



SOARING NEWS

Troop 869

Clear Lake Presbyterian Church
Chartered 1968

58 Eagles

Clear Lake City ♦ Houston, Texas
November 2006

Not for the faint of heart

The weather and the wildlife have been on the wild side lately. One Sunday afternoon when we went on our annual 15 mile shakedown bike ride, we knew there would be some rain, — The question was how much. Well, it poured for most of the fifteen miles and we were soaked to the skin. Then, at Lake Houston, we discovered that mountain bikes sink when the ground is soaking wet and that no one will come to rescue you just because you're tired. It's best to turn around and head for firmer ground. About the wildlife: those signs that say poisonous snakes in park, — Well, they aren't kidding. On one campout we had two copperheads and two coral snakes. Fortunately the weather was cold and the snakes weren't moving fast. —Beth Morgan, Editor

Scouts Teach Fire Building Skills at Webelos Woods

The Saturday of Webelos Woods was cold and dewy. There was not a cloud in the sky all day, but it did warm up. For breakfast the senior patrol and I ate some Canadian bacon and bagels with some spreads. For us, clean up took about five minutes, which was good because the other patrols were still eating. Afterwards, Glen W and I put the troop sign up between two trees.



Senior Patrol Leader Chris W and Venture Crew President Zach M prepare to lay the last flag on the fire at the Webelos Woods flag retirement ceremony.

Next, the whole troop got into patrol files and headed to the flag raising followed by announcements. After announcements we went back to take our Class A's off and then headed to the fire building competitions.

The first fire building challenge for each pack was to burn through two

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Troop 869 Practices Canoeing at Double Lakes

The troop arrived at the church at 5:15 to load the trailer. We left around 5:30 or 5:45. Some cars stopped on the way for dinner, some didn't. By the time we got to the campsite, it was already dark, so we set up tents in the dark.

The next morning, the scouts got up, and cooked breakfast. After the wash line, we got into the canoes, or went over to the swimming area. While some scouts were doing the canoeing merit badge, some people were just canoeing for fun.

Since there was a wait for the canoes, some scouts climbed a nearby tree. That day, there were strong winds,



John F and Noel S relax on their canoe at Double Lakes.

so some people got stuck in the swamp, making it harder to get to the dock.

After the scouts went to bed, a big storm came by, causing some rain for at least an hour.

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Biking in the Mud at Lake Houston

The ground was so wet that the bikes kept sinking

On the Lake Houston campout we went bike riding in the rain and mud. On the way to the start of the bike trail we went across a huge wooden bridge that crossed Peach Creek. We did not do the full trail that we wanted to do because the rain was too hard and the trail was too muddy. The bikes kept sinking in the mud. We turned back after about 1.5 miles. When we got back to the start of the trail we ate lunch and went our separate ways.

Some of the people who went got 25 miles. I did not since I was just there for fun. Allen W and Tanner G went ridding with me on what I believe was a 10 mile bike ride, but I am not sure. It went down Peach Creek to where it joined with another part of Peach Creek and had lots of hills to go down.



Chandler M, Allen W and Tanner G ride back to camp for a snack.

Then we went back to camp and played with walkie-talkies. Tanner cooked up some rice, Allen ate some squirry-cheese and I had some pepperoni.

About 15 minutes later some other people came back and documented their rides.



Edward B, Alex B, Cristian O, Austin M, Mr. Wild, John W and Katherine W managed to log 25 miles by riding back and forth on the paved roads.

After that some people started to chase me, Jonathan H, Allen, and Tanner through the woods. I got lost and went way off course into another campsite. A while later in the afternoon we played a game of capture the flag. While Jonathan and I were walking down the trail we saw a copperhead snake. After that we went to have dinner and I did not really want to go back into the woods.

Glenn W taught us the art of building a camp fire after our failure. People sat around the fire and talked. After that, the evening slowly died away. As we packed up camp the next day another snake was found by one of the tents. This was also a copperhead. Then, as my Mom was walking down the road she saw a coral snake. After breakfast we went on a walk through the woods, and Mr. Wild pointed out some trees and things for Environmental Science. After this we loaded up and headed home. All in all this was a great campout!

— by Chandler M

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At the neighboring campsites, there was a noisy group of college students having fun and yelling into the night. So, we had a difficult time sleeping.

The rest rooms were actually modern, and clean, until people got it all dirty. The showers were even warm, making it comfortable. But at the end of the day, we were all tired from canoeing and doing the merit badge with the adults.



Cameron M practices the J stroke.

In the morning, we

found some of the tents flooded from the rain. We got up, put the tents away, did our police line, ate breakfast, and got in the cars and left. We all had a good time at the campout.



— by Nathan P

Andy P, William G, Sonny H, Brian H and Connor T relax after canoeing.

Extreme Biking

Crew 88 takes to the hills at Boomer's Bikes

We met at the church at 5:30 to load our bikes onto the two vehicles. We took several items out of the trailer and left. Our car got lost for a little bit, but we were able to locate Mr. Wallace's house without too much trouble.

When we took out our gear, the wind was strong, probably the strongest wind I've ever camped in. Due to this, everyone had to help each other stake out tents. I had to put all my items around the four corners of my tent to prevent it from blowing away. Another problem came from the huge number of burrs present in the grass. These tended to stick to everything; from shoes to sleeping bags.

The next morning, we had trouble with our stove. After several failed attempts to cook pancakes and bacon, we moved inside and used the Wallace's stove.

After breakfast Zach M, Chandler M, Nick S, Robert E and I loaded our bikes onto the cars and drove to Boomer's Bikes, a mountain biking park. The biking was great; there were steep hills and sharp turns. I got some really good speed down some of the hills, especially in the area of the park labeled "Drop Zone." We did experience

some minor problems with a broken chain and a popped tire, but all five of us had a great time.

After it started getting dark, we headed back to the Wallace's to unload our bikes. Then the crew headed to a local restaurant, The Oaks. I ordered a large chicken fried steak. The food was good, and everyone was happy with dinner.

Afterwards, we headed back and went inside the house to eat s'mores toasted in the fireplace. After we had finished eating, the scouts all headed outside to carouse around in the field next to the house. We played for about two hours and stopped when we started to disturb the sleeping adults. We then talked for awhile and went to bed.

The next morning, we ate powdered/chocolate doughnuts for breakfast. We broke down the tents, cleaned the burrs out and headed back home. It was a great trip and I thank the Wallace family for allowing us to camp on their property.

— by Alan M



Clockwise: Alan M, Robert E, Zach M and Nick S take to the hills at Boomer's Bikes.



Free Money for Troop

We received \$32.53 from Kroger Share Card Program and \$73.23 from Randalls Good Neighbor Program in the last quarter ending in September. That's over \$100 free money. Way to go! Keep using those grocery cards. If you need information on the grocer's programs that benefit our troop, please come see me at the meetings.

Ten percent of the proceeds from the wreath sale goes into the troop's general fund. The rest of it will be deposited into the ISA's (Individual Scout Accounts) of those who

sold wreaths. I will let you know how much you have in your account once the proceeds are finalized. You can use that money for any scout related expenses, such as camp fees & equipment, re-charter fee, scout shop purchases, etc. If you have questions on how to use your ISA money, please contact me. Remember if you don't use up the money in your ISA by the time you leave the troop, the balance in your account will go into the troop's general fund.

— by Connie Poon, Troop Treasurer

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strings then jump up and cheer. Troop 1598 assisted our troop. Another part of the first event was patrol yells. I thought some were pretty good. The biggest problem for nearly all patrols was getting the match lit. The reason why, was because they were cheap matches and the matches



Jason C, Julio H and Tanner G put 10 matches in a bag for the Webelos to start their fire.

would break. Even with this problem most patrols built their fires and burned through the strings.

After a quick lunch, some scouts played catch with the football, others explored the woods and some just stayed at camp.

Mr. Wedekind, most of the senior patrol, and a few others, headed back for the second fire-building event. The second event was not for competition, but to show the Webelos how to start a fire with other items. The items were matches, flint and steel, battery and steel wool, and a magnifying glass. Probably the most popular one was flint and steel, because it had noise and sparks.



Chandler M, Tanner W and Jason C use rakes to put out the Webelos fires.

That night there was an impromptu gumbo cook off between the senior patrol and the adult's patrols. I personally thought both were good and warm. Later on Mr. Wedekind and Mr. and Mrs. Morgan made four delicious cobblers. One of them was for the Webelos but I had a piece of it. Later on, the bakers allowed us to have some of the others. If my memory serves me right,



Devon S and Assistant Scoutmaster Gary Wedekind demonstrate how to start a fire with steel wool and a nine volt battery.

the flavors included apple, strawberry, black cherry and blueberry (meant for the Webelos).

Then, Troop 1598 invited us for some roasted pig and molten marshmallows. The molten marshmallows are marshmallows wrapped in biscuit dough, deep-fried, then rolled in cinnamon.



Bobby C and Austin M tie strings between the rebar for the next group of Webelos.

It was a good camp out because only the Scoutmaster got hurt and not us scouts. The weather was good and sunny. If you did not come you missed a very fun weekend.

– by Devon S

Flag Retirement

This past weekend Venture Crew 88 helped out at Webelos Woods. It was a pretty relaxed weekend. Our task was to keep the five gallon water jugs filled at the stations and to help with the flag retirement ceremony along with Troop 1598. There were about 150 flags to burn including one great big flag. While Ms. Stokes read about the importance of our flag, we cut out the field of blue and the strips off the large flag. We laid the red and white stripes on the fire one at a time. Chris W had the honor of holding the field of blue while the rest of the flags were being burned. At the end of the ceremony Chris carried the field of blue around the bonfire with another Scout from 1598 and then laid it on the fire. Overall the flag retirement ceremony was excellent.

– by Zach M