

The Spirit of 76

Troop 76

Pack 76

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St. Bernard's Parish Scout News

June 2000

The Adventure of Rock Climbing

David Cataffo
Scout

On Sunday, May 7, 2000, Troop 76 went to Central Park for a day of rock climbing. Only a few showed up but what an adventure they had! On a sweaty day, David Blat, Keith Simpson, David Cataffo and Philip Romano made the hot trip to Central Park in anxious anticipation of the day to come. When we first arrived we were taught first how to use the harness that attached us to the wall. After learning how to work the clamps & ropes, a form of signals were set up to make sure that there were no accidents. All of the scouts who attended had a "cool" time despite the blistering heat and the muggy climate. By the end of the climbing all of the scouts had scaled the 25' wall and felt confident and happy.

When we completed the walls, there was a knot tying class. Since all of us were excellent knot tiers the class was easy. There were a few unexpected knots which some of the scouts had trouble with but not h-ing too difficult for the Troop 76 scouts!

Hike-A-Thon a Success

Joseph Zygnerski
Assistant Scoutmaster

This year we all took turns running an activity, and I chose to run the Hike-A-Thon, a new activity that provides the troop with both a fundraiser and a day hike. It was really a great walk as they...I mean we...hiked five miles through Brooklyn to Floyd Bennett Field.

Okay, so I rode in the car with ASM Eric Simonsen to bring the Scouts and Scouters some drinks before they got to the site. We met the rest of the troop at Gateway and after sneaking up on them (but maintaining radio contact) we walked with them across Gateway to the site. Many of us managed to pick up some choice items on the trip, stuff found lying around (in other words, junk), with Sal (a known packrat) getting the best stuff. At the site we all ate lunch and had some cold drinks. The scouts ran off to play and the adults sat and talked. After a while we walked to the cars and drove home.

The Hike-A-Thon also brought in over \$600, with scout David Blatt brining in over \$350 by himself. Thanks go to all the scouts who brought in money. I hope to see you at another Hike-A-Thon. Maybe I'll even hike next time.

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Interpatrol Contest Report

Keith Smith
Assistant Scoutmaster

Recently, our troop concluded the most recent installment of our inter-patrol contest. For those of you not familiar with the inter-patrol contest, it is a competition in which the troop's two or more patrols (presently the Eagles and Pedros) compete in nearly every scout activity of scouting, over the period of several months, to determine which patrol is the most motivated and advanced in terms of scouting skills. Points were awarded for such things as an inventive menu on a trip, or a rank advance of one of their patrol's members, or even winning a knot tying relay

race. The competition was fierce as the scouts vied with close scores. But, it was during the trip to the barter house that the Pedro Patrol pulled far ahead in the score just before the end of the contest. This trip gave many opportunities for points to be earned in such competitions as the compass course race, and as always patrol attendance and participation was key. By the end of this trip, the final score was Eagles - 5,725 / Pedros - 7,250. The victorious Pedros were rewarded with a trip to the movies and snacks at the UA Theaters to see U-571. BUT THIS IS NOT THE END! The Eagles can still strike back during this summer camp, when the summer edition of the inter-patrol contest will take place. So for now, congratulations Pedros, and Eagles...we'll see you at summer camp.

Rafting in the Poconos

Andrea Cataffo
Committee Chair

It was dawn, still somewhat dark when a caravan of five cars, filled with scouts and adults departed St. Bernard's for the Poconos, for a grand adventure. With Matt Vitucci in the lead the enthusiastic band wound their way to the mountains, keeping in two way radio contact all the way. After a "quick" breakfast at McDonald's Troop 76 scouts drove the final lap and arrived at Whitewater Challenges at around 9. They wetsuited up and were bussed down to the river's edge where the guide gave some instructions and tips for the adventure. In three rubber rafts the scouts paddled, splashed, laughed, and generally caroused their way down the swift flowing Lehigh River on that warm, bright morning in April.

Perched on the back of the raft Keith Smith was doomed to a spill and he did not disappoint. And David Cataffo, the human torpedo, bombed three times into the cold spring water. Almost everyone hit the icy liquid as the scouts barreled down the river with a kayak guide swiftly rescuing them every time. As they rounded the bend at the end and beached their rafts amidst water throwing and laughs, everyone was very tired and very wet and very satisfied. The rest of the time also proved to be great. The campsite was roomy (we were the only ones in the place), the food plentiful , the campfire huge and the cracker-barrel, obtained by Mr. Farrell, Mrs. Cataffo, Brandon and Mike A. on a two-hour jaunt through the hills and vales of the Lehigh Valley, was fun. Thankfully, it had not rained as predicted and the scouts broke camp and went home excited, proud and elated.



A band of Sombrero-Toting Scouts and Scouters on the river

A Scout Is Trustworthy

On the April rafting trip, one of our scouts found a wallet and watch. Proving that a scout really is trustworthy (as well as helpful and courteous), David Cataffo returned the items to their rightful owner. Here is the letter that was written to Mr. Farrell.

“Dear Mr. Farrell,

Thank you very much for returning my wallet and watch. It is very reassuring to know that there are still good scouts and scoutmasters out there. Please thank David also for finding my belongings. I really don't know what I would have done if you weren't so kind for returning them. I thank you both from the bottom of my heart. Thanks Again.

Seth Shapess

Troop 1, Syracuse NY”

Sebago Canoe Club Remains Our Home Away from Home

We must thank the Sebago Canoe Club for allowing us to use their facilities so many times. Their generosity has allowed us to have meetings when we normally might not. I think the scouts enjoyed the chance to be outside and I think the bugs definitely enjoyed the chance for a meal while we were there. Committee Member Glen Schneider, who belongs to the Club, got us permission to use the space, and he also told us about Sebago's Annual Clean-Up. Many members of the troop took the opportunity to repay the Club's generosity just a little bit. We look forward to helping the Canoe Club again next year.

Open House Draws Potential Scouts

Another event that we hope will be a new annual tradition was the Open House. Everyone worked hard to set up St. Bernard's Auditorium for the event and all that work paid off. The biggest draws were, of course,

the Trail Mix table and the food, but the boys also liked the model campsite and the other displays. Many of the boys signed up right away, and we hope to see many more in September. All in all it was a complete success.



Scouts enjoy Sebago's Generosity



Mr. Farrell explains something to the Hike-A-Thon hikers

"2000" Adventures

Andrea Cataffo
Committee Chairperson

Well, another scouting year has come to a close and as we look back over our time together, we are pleased and proud of our scouts and their accomplishments. We savor too, the good memories of good times and wonderful experiences for scouts and adults alike.

This year has been an interesting and exciting one. We started off the year's adventure with a camporee with an upstate council, had a very successful fundraising wreath sale, camped out on the top of the Empire State Building, went white water rafting in the Poconos, rock climbing in Central Park and snorkeling at Alpine Scout Camp in addition to the regular monthly camping trips and working on Orienteering merit badge. We also participated in the Scouting for Food Drive, which successfully collected many boxes of foodstuffs for the poor of the neighborhood. We did recruitment also, visiting several schools in the area and hosting a fun filled open house where over 25 boys learned about scouting, played games and ate "scout style" food during and evening at St. Bernard's auditorium. Several had such a good time that they have decided to join us in our scouting adventures.

But the adventure won't end in June. Our scouts are looking forward to Camporee 2000 which is a GNYC council gathering of scouts held at Ten Mile River Scout Reservation where our boys will also be attending two weeks of summer camp.

In the adult circle, we had a real cooperation among the committee members each one giving his or her all to make the troop go. Also, this year we were happy to experience a closer working relationship with the Assistant Scout Masters which has made the year all the more fruitful and rich.

On behalf of the Troop Committee may I offer our congratulation to all our scouts on their achievements and a hearty welcome to our new boys and our best wishes for a healthy and relaxing summer.

Last Minute "Spirit of 76" Really Shows Spirit

Joseph Zygnerski
Editor and Webmaster

I want to take this opportunity to do two things. First I want to apologize if this issue seems a little shorter and sloppier. It was sort of a last minute deal, and I'm happy to say it looks pretty good. The second thing I want to do is to thank all the people who really pulled together to help me get this out in time for the last Court of Honor. I especially owe thanks to Andrea Cataffo, for pushing me to produce a newsletter but helping me to do it.

I look forward to a nice relaxing summer, but a summer that will give me a chance to pull the newsletter together. We need more writers and merely saying "we need more writers" isn't enough. I plan to organize myself and the troop to produce three, if not four newsletters next year, including one for September. So if there's nothing then, you can show me this and say "Joe, I thought you were going to have a newsletter!"

Spirit of 76

Scouting News for the St. Bernard's Scouting Community

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For another copy of this newsletter and updated information on activities, visit us on the web at

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