

TROOP 824 NEWS

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A Thorough Recap of Summer Camp will take Several Issues



Summer Camp 2002

By Mr. Eppesine

I just can't resist being a reporter. But you Scouts should be writing some things about your experiences at summer camp. Remember, it's YOUR newsletter. Some day another adult, but preferably a Scout or group of Scouts will take the newsletter function.

Enough preaching... on with the show.

Summer Camp at Medicine Mountain Scout Ranch in South Dakota was truly an adventure. The trip itself was exciting enough. Loading the buses was a challenge, as was the trip up to SD. Bus #2 had a transmission problem that started maybe half way there and got worse as we got into the mountains. This made our arrival late. We later learned that the gravel road into camp damaged the transmission of Bus #1. For the return trip home the bus company had to hire a local bus in Rapid City to take us to Sioux City where we changed to another bus. Then, just outside of Des Moines, Bus #2 threw a set of wheels (literally, Peter said he saw them bouncing down the road). Fortunately, we were able to pull off the highway without further problems. It took about two hours to figure out what to do. We loaded gear from the broken Bus #2 onto the old Bus #1 which caught up to us as it was limping home at 40 mph. Then, as many as possible boarded New Bus #1, with a few on Old Bus #1 and all got back to St. Louis safely. Just before this transmission trouble really started, we took a side trip to visit the Badlands National Park. This was really something to see. You'll note from the pictures that we got to climb all over things.

They don't call it the Badlands for nothing. There was little shade to be had, so we ate our sandwiches in shifts under what little shade those poor trees could offer us.

Camp itself started off on a couple of sour notes. First of all, our original camp site(s) were replaced by a new site. The picture above gives you an idea of what it looked like. On the plus side, it was closer to the Hub and the Waterfront, but on the minus side, it was unimproved, meaning it didn't have water or toilets on-site and the weeds and debris from a recent forest thinning were evident. Organization of camp staff and programs weren't up to our usual S-F expectations. Several of the programs we were expecting were cancelled or replaced, and communication between the Troop and camp Staff was poor at times.

The scenery at camp was excellent. The Black Hills were glorious, with many great hiking trails. When it wasn't cloudy, the night sky was the best this writer has ever viewed. The weather was hot during the day and cool at night. The humidity was low however and the lake was very cool, so as long as you had plenty of water and a hat, it wasn't uncomfortable.

The cooking at this camp was by "Patrol Method" as we're used to, but the routine at the commissary was a bit different... all the food was given out in bulk with the Patrols left to sort out who got what when it all got back to camp. This made for some confusion at some meals... like sometimes one Patrol had too much milk and another didn't get any, same with things like butter, syrup, etc. Nobody really went hungry, and I noticed near the end that some Patrols were sharing and the LC helped out when it was needed.

Our mid-week break was a trip to Mt. Rushmore with a hike after. The monument was amazing! If you could keep your face out of ice cream and the gift shop long enough to take the tour, you got to see the monuments from a completely different angle. After a couple of hours at the monument, we took a break for lunch (provided by camp, peanut butter sandwiches), then headed off for an "easy" 3 mile hike which was to lead to Horse Thief Lake. That was the longest three miles I think I've ever hiked. Good thing I took about a half gallon of water along. Some Scouts weren't expecting such a rugged hike and had only a small amount of water, or none at all. This, and the fact that some Scouts had consumed a lot of ice cream or candy right before the hike might have made it a very unpleasant experience for some. The Scout motto is "Be Prepared"... I hope this helps you remember.

We were out of time and everyone was really beat, so we passed up our opportunity to go to the Crazy Horse monument too... maybe another day.

The closing ceremony Friday night was about as exciting as I've ever seen. After a full week of beautiful weather, we were finally treated to a thunder storm just as the closing campfire was getting under way. Some tents were left open and adults back at camp rushed to button things up as best they could in a driving rain. It was too late for some, as the open tents were already swamped. I guess this was a good chance to get those sweaty Class A uniforms washed a bit, as the Scouts huddled under the Picnic Shelter to escape the rain and lightning we noticed many soaked to the skin. But long faces were soon replaced by smiles as we had skits and fun anyway... many great skits were by Troop 824. Way to go, guys, you made us proud. A bit later, camp Staff allowed us to use their meeting building to have our Patrol awards ceremony. Although everyone really missed our traditional Dutch Oven cobblers (no fires, including charcoal), we had a good time, and finally shuffled off to crash in our wet tents.

Next morning we broke camp, packed up the buses, and headed off to come home. On the way, we stopped for lunch at Wall Drug Store. It's supposed to be world famous, and it kind of reminded me of Missouri's Bass Pro Shop. Lots of museum like exhibits, all kinds of stuff to buy, and good stuff to eat.

We got all the way to Des Moines before all the scary stuff started with the buses which brings us back around to where I started this tale.

This was our summer camp in brief. Now, I'd like to see some Scouts and perhaps some adults fill in the parts I've left out... the over night hikes, the caving, the climbing. I wasn't on those so I can't tell you anything about that. Also the adventures at the trading post with Chantee... who's going to fill us all in about that?

At least somebody was thinking about helping me out. Next up we have a story by Eric Dundon about...

Inside Small- Boat Sailing

By: Eric Dundon

Medicine Mountain Boy Scout Ranch in South Dakota had a lot to offer. While I was there, I took four merit badges.

However, the most memorable merit badge I ended up taking was Small-Boat Sailing. I thought it would be the most difficult merit badge, so I expected to receive a partial. When the class began we took part in tying knots, and learning the basic parts of a sailboat. Then we got a sailboat of our own to use on Lake Alexander. Chris Efthim manned the rudder and I handled the sail.

The sail was hoisted and we were off. The water was frigid, but once we got started I adjusted to the cold. The wind carried us across the lake at tremendous speeds at times. We learned that in order to travel upwind, we would have to tack and jib.

This means to go diagonally and make a sharp turn, going diagonally in the opposite direction.

The second day of our merit badge ended up to be a very exciting day. As soon as the sailboats got into the water; we were forced to tip over and swamp it. This turned out to be a very exciting thing to do. Once the boat was right side up again, we were free to run, tack, jib, and cruise on the lake. It was a fun and learning experience. I also got to complete the merit badge! So I say to all the boys in our troop, if you ever get a chance to take the Small-Boat Sailing merit badge, take it, because it really is one of the most fun merit badges you can earn.





Scoutmaster counts heads and checks his list on bus 2



Bus #2 (with all its wheels) and #1 at a visitor center as we enter SD



Badlands National Park looked like being on the moon. This is three photos stitched together. See all the red shirts on the ridge line?



Greg Lehn poses while in line for the swim test Monday AM



Adults work on the sit-around-talking-&-drinking-coffee MB



Doug's patrol cooks breakfast... look out, here comes Mr. Fitz



Nice hat, Pete... who are those guys above you?

Troop 824 Upcoming Events

- ✓ **Aug 5** Troop meeting at Suson Park
- ✓ **Aug 12 Elections!** Troop meeting at Suson Park
- ✓ **Aug 16-18** Summer Advancement Camp will be held at Hawn state park again this year...
- ✓ **Aug 24th** Summer CoH barbeque at Beaumont. Mrs. Rose and Mrs. Rouse are again coordinators. You should see an invitation. It starts at 5 PM at Wright Lodge, and weather permitting, we will move outdoors to the council ring for the ceremonies.
- ✓ **Aug 25th** Philmont Shakeout hike. Meet 7 am at WMS. Contact Mr. Miller for more information.
- ✓ **Sept 9th** School Night for Scouting
- ✓ **Oct 18th** Fall PACAO at Fort de Chartres **Coordinators needed.**
- ✓ **Oct 25th** Adult Leader Training at Beaumont

Please Note: Parents of younger Scouts should volunteer to shadow our veteran event coordinators so the "know how" for putting on events isn't lost.

Unless otherwise noted Troop meetings are held every Monday (3rd Mondays are PLC only) at 7 PM in the Washington Middle School (WMS) cafeteria or at Suson Park during Summer when school isn't in session.

Parents' meetings are generally LAST Thursday of the month at WMS Art Room (upstairs, through the gym to the far left corner) unless otherwise noted (Also at Suson Park in Summer).

Just to let you know... this is just the first installment of pictures and stories from Summer Camp 2002. There were some events Mr. Eppestine didn't get to attend. Such as the Caving expeditions and the climbing, overnight hiking, and mountain biking events. It sure would be a help to get some Scouts to write about these and give us some pictures.

Some One-Liners from Med. Mt.
Get him outta here.

Don't forget to bust a tinkle once an hour.
Drink your water or you'll die.

The deer fly is probably the SD state bug.
No, just sit there. I'll take care of it.

On ropes course... "Falling... Still Falling"

The smoke shifter dialog:

Scout to adults: "Do we have a Smoke Shifter?" *Adults:* "Go see Mr. Z" *Mr. Z:* "We didn't bring it, but maybe camp has one we can borrow". *Camp Staff:* "Yeah, we got 'em but it'll cost \$35". *Back to Mr. Eftim:* "Oh, I'd never pay more than \$20 for one".
At Sm. Boat Sailing: "Oww! I've got an oar up my butt"

I didn't pass archery cause I couldn't see the sky.

You must be a Wolverine.

For a minute, you were Andy Rooney

It's not rescue breathing... more like heavy breathing.

Oatmeal? Looks like a bag of barf.

Is it free to shoot the shotguns? Ya, but you gotta pay for it.

Well, I think the troop's spent about 12K to come here and mow grass.

At the trading post: Ah, Chantee

Let's see... go on a hike or sit on my butt?



Adam Rose's Fish patrol was awesome at meals. The table set with flowers, and the guys wore their Class A uniforms.



Hiking behind Mt. Rushmore wasn't the easy trail it sounded like. Here's the first break. Little did we know, we were only about 1/3 done.