

Troop 824 News

A Publication of Boy Scout Troop 824

September 2003

Troop Elections

Congratulations to all who were elected to serve in Troop leadership positions. And to their appointed assistants, and various volunteer positions. You can see who's who at the troop web site: www.troop824-gslac.org. Here's the list just in case you can't go online.

Scout Leaders		
Peter E. - SPL Aaron C. - ASPL		
Mark B. - PL Eric S. - APL	Chris E. - PL Ryan K. - APL/Historian	Clayton G. - PL Will S. - APL
Eric D. - PL Tyler S. - APL	Tony M. - PL David D. - APL	Davy O. - PL/Bugler Robby L. - APL
Jason W. - PL David M. - APL	Aaron D. - QM Zack J. - QM	Tyler B. - Scribe Jared H. - Scribe
Jacob J. - Librarian	Alex W. - Den Chief	Bryan R. - JASM
David B. - OA Rep/TG	Wes B. - TG	Doug B. - TG
Patrick F. - Troop Guide	Michael H. - TG	Tim K. - TG
Adult Leaders		
John Dundon - SM		
Jim Lehn - Treas Tim Kinmartin - ASM Ron Schrenker - ASM Bob Schepers - Adv Chr	Jim Chambers - CC Bob Miller - ASM Charlie Lombardo - ASM Dave Eppestine - Adv Chr	Carol Bender - Sec Frank Eftim - ASM Neil Phipps - WebM

The Shiloh Hikes are Coming Up

By Mrs. Eppestine

Troop 824 will be heading down to the Shiloh National Military Park in Tennessee on November 6th, hiking on the 7th and 8th, and returning to St. Louis on the 9th. Total cost is expected to be about \$90-100 per person. (Gas money is extra, for those riding with someone else.) Funds can be used from a scout's Long Term Camping Account. A \$50 deposit is required by the end of September. Sign-up sheets will be at troop meetings. The older scouts should indicate which trails they will hike.

For those of you new to the troop or those who have not been to Shiloh before, the troop has been hiking Shiloh since the 1970's in odd numbered years. Shiloh is located about 315 miles from St. Louis, about 100 miles due east of Memphis, very close to the Mississippi border. A Scoutmaster from Memphis set up the hikes in

1960. There are 6 hikes (ranging in length from 10 miles to 20) and we do two each time we go. If a scout hikes at each opportunity, he will complete all 6 and earn a Veteran Hiker Award during his scouting career. This is a popular activity and scouts who have completed all 6 hikes have been known to return to Shiloh with the troop on subsequent trips. Who knows? You may even see some of them this year.

This is a family activity and family members can hike and earn the awards too. We stay in cabins at Pickwick Landing State Park, which is about 15 miles from the park. We cook breakfast in the cabins, pack sandwiches for lunch, and go out to a buffet dinner after hiking. It is a weekend of fun, hiking, and history. We need lots of help, from shopping, carrying supplies down, cooking breakfast and clean-up afterwards, and driving support vehicles through the park. There's something for everyone to do. Everyone will need to arrange their own transportation. If you are driving and are willing to take others, please indicate so on the sign-up sheet.

If you have any questions, ask your PL or SPL, or see Mr. Or Mrs. Eppestine or Mrs. Oster at upcoming troop meetings. For a little preview, you can check out the following web sites:

<http://www.shilohmilitarytrails.org/>

<http://www.nps.gov/shil/index.htm>

<http://www.state.tn.us/environment/parks/pickwick/>

The First Philmont Report

By Patrick Fitzgibbons

On July 7th, four crews of about 10 scouts and scouters each left their nice air conditioned homes and headed downtown to catch a train to Kansas City. The



train arrived in St. Louis at about 3 p.m. We loaded up onto the train and made it to KC at about 8:30 p.m. that night. Once in KC, we had about a 3 hour layover waiting for the train to Raton, New Mexico. The train came at about 11:30. We rode through the night passing through Kansas, Colorado, and then into New Mexico.

Once we got off the train, we loaded into some not so luxurious school buses for the ride to Philmont Scout



Ranch. But first, the bus drivers took us to some fast food restaurants for one last taste of civilization for the next 2 weeks. After we filled ourselves up, it was time to take a bouncy one hour bus ride to Philmont. As we pulled into Philmont's parking lot and saw the huge mountains surrounding us, we all started thinking to ourselves, "What have I gotten myself into?". After a day of checking in and checking our packs at base camp, we attended an opening campfire. Afterwards, we hit the sack in the "Trail Bound" section of tent city.

The next day, we hit the trail. A bus chauffeured us to our starting point. Our ranger would hike with us for the next two days. We hiked an easy 2 and a half miles that day to our first camp. We stopped along the way to get some stuff branded. We branded stuff such as boots, hats, and even Nalgene bottles. The next day we hiked a fair distance to our next camp, catching a glimpse of Mount Baldy, the tallest mountain on the ranch, along the way. At our next camp, we enjoyed the best campfire show at Philmont, and probably the best any of us had ever seen. The next day we hiked to Ewells Park, a camp which is very close to Mount Baldy. We stayed there for the night, and in the morning saw 3 nicely sized bucks standing in the field very close to our camp. We left our tents up and all our unneeded gear in camp since we would be staying there again for another night. We started our hike towards Baldy.

On our way to Baldy, we stopped on a ridge and got an

amazing view of most of the ranch. We then hiked to Baldy Town, which used to be an actual town with an operating post office. We filled our water bottles and platypuses and started our several thousand foot ascent towards the peak of Mount Baldy. We hiked for about 2 and a half hours until we reached the tree line. All we had left was a 700 foot climb at, no joke, about a 75 degree angle. We reached the top about 30 minutes later to find one of our other crews already there waiting for us. At the top, we took off our sweat-drenched shirts and sat down to eat a lunch of peanut butter and jelly on graham crackers. After staying at the top for about an hour and snapping through several rolls of film, we headed down the mountain. On the way down we again encountered another deer. About 2 hours later, we arrived back at Baldy Town.

At Baldy Town, we all decided it was time to take our first shower since base camp five days earlier. After we finished our showers, I started feeling a little sick. I blew it off as altitude sickness and took a few ibuprophen. We hiked back to Ewells Park to stay again for



the night. At about 11 p.m. I woke up feeling kinda queasy. I realized what was about to happen and darted out of my tent, climbing over Chris Efthim in order to get there. I'll save you the details, but let's just say I didn't expect to see my dinner again so soon. After cleaning up and brushing my teeth, I went back to bed. Needless to say, it happened twice more, the last time I didn't exactly make it all the way out of the tent. Just ask Chris.

Well the next morning I had about a 102 degree fever so the whole crew waited for me to start feeling better. At about 10:45 that morning we finally started hiking. I felt bad for holding the crew up. That day they took it slow for me and we hiked to Head of Dean camp to eat lunch. I was feeling a little better by then, probably because I had been inhaling water like a goldfish, although I

didn't want to. Those adults do know a thing or two as much as I hate to admit it. So after lunch we hiked on to Santa Claus camp where I didn't feel 100%, but hey it was better than before. We stayed the night there and I



surprisingly enjoyed a good nights sleep and woke up feeling not too bad. But that didn't last long, soon I was feeling worse than the day before. So after hiking about a half a mile, I was doing pretty bad and it was decided that my dad and I would hike back to Head of Dean and the rest of the crew would hike on. (We hiked back to Head of Dean because Santa Claus was an un-staffed camp).

It took us quite a while to get back to Head of Dean, where the staff gratefully made me feel at home and called my condition in to base camp. The health lodge at base camp decided they wanted to take me off the trail for a few days. So my dad and I waited for about 6 hours for a ride to get there. Well, it finally came late that afternoon. A bear researcher gave us a ride back, and man he did not know how to drive. At one point he hit a tree with his side view mirror and shattered it. I'm surprised he didn't make me sicker. We finally got to the health lodge and the doctors discovered I had strep throat so they put me in a bed and stuck an IV in my arm. But first I had a hot shower. I felt like I was cheating. I met some other kids in there. One was from Alaska and had fallen off of a 15 foot cliff and broken his arm and punctured his liver. Another had a pot of boiling water poured into his boots, which burned off most of his skin on both feet. I didn't feel so bad after I met those kids. I stayed in the health lodge for the next two days, which wasn't that bad, except for this one nurse (she had a mullet and a mustache) who came in to take my temperature every 5 minutes. After my dad bugged the heck outta the guys at the health lodge, they finally decided to drive us back out to the trail. That was quite a ride as well. The driver this time was about 21 years old and enjoyed doing fish-tails. Needless to say we got back to our crew.

The camp we were driven to was Cypher's Mine, where we got to tour a real mine. We then watched a blacksmith make tools from iron, then our crew got to try it as well. That night we stayed in an Adirondack, just like the ones



we stay in at Beaumont, except without the bunks. After that we hiked to our next camp where we had the option of hiking to the top of Mount Philips, the 2nd highest peak on the property. Half of us decided to go, the other half decided to stay back. The guys who stayed back really missed out. At the peak we measured Mount Baldy to be 11 miles away using my dad's (Mr. Fitz's) GPS.

The next day we hiked over several more mountains, including Big Red and Black Mountain. That day we hiked for 12 hours to get to Shaefer's Pass camp. When we got there, we discovered some bad news. We did not have enough water to make it back to base camp the next day. So Clayton Greathouse, David Bender, my dad, and I took a 4 mile side hike to pick up about 8 gallons of water from a different camp. When we woke up the next morning, we found deer surrounding the camp, which made for



plenty of good pictures. We also had another run in with the bear researcher who had been at our camp in the middle of the night scaring a bear away. We were given a warning for being in violation of bear procedures because

we left a wrapper on the ground. Well that day also happened to be our last day on the trail. We hiked to the top of the Tooth of Time, which is a rock formation that looks like a giant tooth. The view from the top of the tooth was comparable to the view from the top of Mount Baldy. The view from the tooth was more comforting, however, because we could actually see base camp. We hiked down countless switchbacks on our way down to base camp, and in the last several minutes of our trek, we encountered yet another deer, this time a doe, even closer than ever before. What a great relief when we saw the sign that said "Welcome Back, You Made It!". We hiked almost 13 miles that day, in half the time we did the day before.



Once in base camp, we treated ourselves to ice cream, sodas, and pizzas from the snack bar. Doug Boyher decided to let Dave Schwarz give him a Mohawk, which he unfortunately eventually got rid of. Later that night we went to the closing campfire, which wasn't quite as good as the campfire at Pueblano, but it was getting there. We spent the night in the "Homebound" section of tent city. The next afternoon we headed back to the train station, but not before going back to those good old fast food joints again. The train ended up being almost 2 hours late. We made it to Kansas City with only minutes to spare. But with our luck we had to ride back to St. Louis in a train car with no air conditioning, but hey, we just spent 11 days hiking in New Mexico, so it really wasn't that bad, especially since a lot of us spent the day in the food car. When we got back to St. Louis, we greeted our families with big smiles and went home.

There is no doubt, I would definitely go back to Philmont again, and I recommend it to anyone who gets the chance to go, it's a great experience!

Thank you, Patrick! You should be able to see ALL their pictures from Philmont on the troop web site as soon as I get them into their proper sequence. I'd also like captions

for these (hint, hint), and I'd really appreciate some more input from the other crews that were out there at the same time.

Last Minute Comments

The Troop has been busy the last couple of months. There's still a lot to report on.

There was, of course, the **August Court of Honor**. Lots of Merit Badges, Rank Advancements, patches, and awards were handed out. We transitioned to a new Scoutmaster. John Dundon has taken over for Clif Fitzgibbons. We introduced the new Troop leadership, headed by Peter Eppestine as the new Senior Patrol Leader, we had some really clever skits, even by some of the adults, and last but not least, we had some really fine BBQ and more pot luck dishes than you could count.

Early September was **OA Fall Reunion** at S-F. This is where those elected into Order of the Arrow undergo their "Ordeal" and are then inducted into OA at a very impressive ceremony. If you're already in OA, you can work on requirements for Brotherhood or Beyond, and that has its own ceremony. There are LOTS of Scouts at this event. Work on your Scout Spirit (live by the Oath and Law), and perhaps you'll be elected.

Coming up is **Fall Pacao** and the biannual **Shiloh Hikes** (talked about earlier in this newsletter) which we'll be talking about at Troop meetings and in this newsletter for the next few months.

I'm sure we've missed something, but this newsletter is late as usual. See the web site and the Scribes at Troop meetings for a current calendar of events. The following will have to do for now.

Scoutmaster's Roundtable Report

1. Nov 15, Nov 23- Scouting for Food
2. Jan 3- District Dinner- Same as Advancement Camp.
3. May 30- Good Turn Day
4. O/A Candidates- 136 from Gravois Trails.
5. Fall Pacao- 10/24-26 Jamaican Pioneering- Scouts can earn the Pioneering Merit Badge if they do all requirements. Will be held at Beaumont.
6. Spring Camporee- 4/23-25 at Camp Sunnen.
7. Klondike Derby 2/28
8. New Leader Training- 9/10-New Leader Essentials-Sappington School 9/17, 10/1,10/17-18 Training Dates. Check Council Web Site for more info.
9. School Night For Scouting - 9/11 (this is over now)
10. Eagle Scout Packet - New National Packet is being used for all districts. Modeled after the one used in St. Louis.
11. Merit Badge Centers - 1/24 Truck Transportation, 3/6 Crime Prevention.