



2016 Summer Camp at Ockinickon



The troop's week at summer camp for 2016 was a success. It is, in my eyes, the biggest trip of the year. Our new leadership team has a chance to adapt in their roles and prepare for next year while handling a large-scale scouting event that gets their gears moving. New scouts are

shown a diverse and exciting camp experience, and they have an entire seven days to truly discover if Troop 280 is for them...and hopefully it is. The 2016 summer camp is a finale, the year's climax.

We used the Thursday meeting preceding our day of departure to pack trunks. On the morning of the following Saturday, we attended eleven o'clock mass and ate hoagies for lunch in the Drexel Center. We hitched the trailer and drove off for Ockinickon by half past one. Throughout the week, about twenty-five people attended.



Camp Ockinickon welcomed us during check-in with health exams, a tour, a swim test, and dinner (which was more hoagies, actually). Of course, Troop 280 is no stranger to the

*Tom Garback, Troop Historian
July 3rd-9th, 2016*



place. We've attended many times over the years. It has seen us in various generations of youth and leaders, some of which I am sure are unknown to me and anyone currently in 280.

We set up camp in Mohawk B. It sits next to the lake, far off from the center of the camp's reservation. We attended Vespers, led by the one and only Betsy, participated in Retreat (flag lowering), and watched the staff's campfire program.

Our troop has two patrols. I led the Iron Wolves, and Jack led the Pancake Patrol (or Flying Flapjacks). Nine scouts were first-years, so there was a lot for them to learn and work on. Also on our plates were requirements for various honor awards we planned on achieving. Such were service projects, troop and patrol activities, having a clean campsite, and maintaining scout spirit and group cooperation.



*Tom Garback, Troop Historian
July 3rd-9th, 2016*



Monday was the first day of merit badges and every-day scheduling. Dan Beard scouts were enjoying their trip so far, and older scouts were following full days of classes. The most popular merit badges included Public Speaking (with Josh),

Engineering (with Paul), and Soil and Water (with Henry). We volunteered to retire an American flag flown in WWII, as it was the Fourth of July.

On Tuesday, one of the most hilarious incidents in Troop 280 history struck. Jacob, our SPL, was preparing pasta Alfredo and peach cobbler for the Golden Skillet competition. In using a small propane tank, he set half a table on

fire. Only older scouts were at the site, but we quickly resolved the issue. Tom dumped more than two full bins of water on the flames before finally putting them out—and just before the

Tom Garback, *Troop Historian*
July 3rd-9th, 2016



Boy Scouts of America--Troop 280



tank could explode and possibly kill us all. No worries, though, for Jake continued making his meal and served it to a few staff members when they arrived a few minutes after the incident. As food and dirty dishes were left about, we had a skunk visit us later that evening. Those were eventually taken care of.

Wednesday started off with my patrol's early-morning hike, followed by the troop's

attending of muster (flag raising). Also, service projects were worked on. My patrol's two were cleaning

campfire pits and

making a path by the

lake. Jack's patrol cleared away underbrush by the photo

lab. This unfortunately resulted in Brian and Collin going home early

with cases of poison ivy. Apparently some staff

members weren't well aware enough of the jobs they were assigning.

Our troop's project was to paint the latrine



*Tom Garback, Troop Historian
July 3rd-9th, 2016*

Boy Scouts of America--Troop 280



and lay woodchips around it. Dan visited that evening, the first-years built a fire all on their own, and the leadership team held a PLC meeting.



The projects were wrapped up on Thursday. Both patrols attended muster. I, Craig, and Joe went to Del Val with Mr. Faille for our Landscape Architecture merit badge. The field trip was quick, and the campus was desolate and stunningly beautiful. Upon going back to Ockinickon, the Pancake patrol participated in the volleyball competition.



They won their first game, setting a troop record.

On Friday, we went to muster once more. Merit badges were finished and everyone worked on rank advancements. Older scouts



taught the younger ones for a couple hours, and a lot of progress was made. Joe Russo even made Star Rank. For Engineering, Mr. Oakley attended (as he is an engineer) and



*Tom Garback, Troop Historian
July 3rd-9th, 2016*



was interviewed by the class. At dinner, Tom helped in singing “The Cat Came Back” before everyone went to the scout’s campfire. Although we had a perfectly harmless skit about presidential candidates running Ockinickon, we weren’t approved to perform it. This

wasn’t a downer though, as our troop succeeded in winning two Honor Patrol awards, the Clean Campsite Award, and (you won’t believe this one) *three* Honor Troop Awards. That last part isn’t even possible, so good work, everyone, even if it was just some sort of mistake.

We woke up at six-thirty on Saturday to pack and clean the campsite. Parents came to watch our final hours. We went to breakfast and retreat, at which Dominic was recognized as our Honor Camper. Later on, we sat by the Trading Post and awarded Brendan and Buster Honor Patrol Members. Matt Cawley was given the Scout Spirit award, too. Congratulations, scouts! A little after ten, we left Camp Ockinickon. Upon arriving at Bedes, we divided our gear and went our separate ways.

The weather throughout the week was very humid with little wind. It also rained a few times. The staff was very fun to become friends with (and for some, near-harass). Everyone completed a lot of work. Some newly famous quotes for Troop

Tom Garback, Troop Historian
July 3rd-9th, 2016



Boy Scouts of America--Troop 280

280 include, "Appropriation is the best form of flattery," "I'm pro-choice for flags and basketball," and "Jaden for Presedent!" Carol coughing up bugs, Confederate flag debates, Elijah's scandal, and all the ones I've mentioned plus more; tons of memories were made over the week.

Next year is looking to be very good for Troop 280. We have a strong leadership team, many new scouts, and lots of interesting and inventive trips planned. I'm pleased to begin closing the year in such a hard-working, funny, successful, and unforgettable way. We have only a single trip left in this scouting year.

Ockinickon may not have seen the last of some of us, but it sure has seen the best. And for that, I couldn't be happier.



Tom Garback, Troop Historian
July 3rd-9th, 2016



Tom Garback, *Troop Historian*
July 3rd-9th, 2016