

## **Ockinickon Summer Camp**

So, the end of the year has come. Many scouts saddled up packs and loaded their trunks for the last trip of the year: the one-week summer camp. This year, the troop went to the Ockinickon Scout Reservation, located conveniently close, and listing nearly seventy merit badges. We would be attending the second week of the summer. On Sunday, at 1:00 in the afternoon, the troop left for this camp, bravely daring the work and accomplishments to come. There were eighteen scouts that left that day, and though more were to join the next day, those eighteen scouts would come home nearly changed from their experience.

We all arrived at 2:15 and gathered into our campsite, Neshaminy, seated distant from the camp's majority of buildings and sights, and nestled close to the corner of the property. We were showed a tour of the place, though it wasn't the first time for most scouts. Also, those who did not previously take a swim test went to the pool to do so. A dinner of hoagies was provided inside individual campsites for the first night. At 8:00, there was a flag lowering in the Grand Parade Field. Following this was the large campfire at 9:15. The staff members performed skits and such to kick off the week to come.

On Monday morning, four scouts who were simply a day late joined the troop. Each scout began to work on their schedule, however busy it may have been. This was the first day of merit badge classes and activities. The weather was beautiful, the meals ran smoothly, and all scouts enjoyed the classes involving mostly first aid skills. At siesta, the troop held elections for the coming year ahead. As top of the positions, Danny Stauffer was elected at Senior Patrol Leader. On Tuesday, Ethan Himes held a Flag Retiring ceremony in the campsite. All scouts got a glimpse of how to be respectful for their country before going to bed. Many younger scouts throughout the day had been working on rank advancements from learning skills through Dan Beard, a first-year course that teaches requirements in the lower ranks and gives two merit badges, one being Swimming.

The trip took a turn on Wednesday, with storm warnings flashing all around. Luckily, the weather held up until late at night, once everyone was in bed. The sky practically fell into shards of water on all of the tents. But all was fine by the morning. On Thursday, the troop completed a service project by clearing the paths in our site of trees, branches, and overgrowth. There were pizza deliveries in the evening, and three scouts went to an overnight for Wilderness Survival.

Friday came, and all realized that it was the last day to work on badges. Everyone finished off any last-minute badge work and relaxed from the extra time due to classes being finished. That night was the campfire with skits to be performed by the scouts, rather than the staff. The troop decided to reincarnate the Johnny and the Soup skit, made from previous scouts that are now gone. Andrew, Barry, Jack and I preformed this with five selected versions. There was Regular, Redneck, Lancaster, Shrek, and Irish Turkey. The scenes were hilariously successful and well-received by all.

Saturday was the official last day, and all woke up early to begin cleaning up the camp and packing all of their belongings. Around 9:30, after a buffet breakfast of leftovers, there was a flag-lowering ceremony even though it was in the morning. All were packed into cars and we headed home.

Scouts completed merit badges such as Lifesaving, Oceanography, Wilderness Survival, Pulp and Paper, First Aid, and many, many more. The average scout gained about six badges that week, so there was a ton of advancements. Many younger scouts completed ranks as well, which was a huge load of work. We held elections, completed a service project, and brought an old skit back to life for one more performance. Congratulations to all for their fine week in boy scouting!

This will be my last report for the year of 2013-2014. In my first year as Historian, I have loved recording all trips and pictures to share with everyone. I have been re-elected, and will continue my work next year. It is sort of sad for me to think that so many trips, memories, laughs, ceremonies, activities, work, service and such will all be held in one collection of reports and pictures. It has been wonderful being the Historian to share all of our scouting times. It is my realization that each scout has developed throughout the year outstandingly, and it is an honor to witness it. I will leave you all with this: success is the reward of our failures; we cannot succeed without first failing. Do not be afraid of your mistakes. Rather embrace them and accept them to lead you to higher grounds.