

THE GOAT

The Monthly Newsletter for Troop 476, their Family and Friends

Scoutmaster's Corner

One sunny afternoon at Camp Whitsett, I was standing outside the Trading Post with several of our younger Scouts who were in between merit badge classes or Scoutcraft sessions. We were admiring a 10-foot-tall totem pole standing there, and I took a picture of the Scouts reaching up and pretending to put sunblock on the hot, hand-carved animal faces. One Scout wondered where Camp Whitsett got the totem pole, and I immediately replied that I had seen one just like it at Costco the week before. There was a long pause and the Scout asked, "Really?" I told him, "Don't you know I like to joke around?" There was another pause, and Gareth R. looked me in the eye and said, "I *believed* you, Mr. Gabriel—you're *my Scoutmaster*."

I was struck once again by how carefully I need to watch what I say and

how I act—not because it's important that I not trick Scouts about the availability of totem poles at Costco, but because of so many other real situations where Scouts are listening to what I say and watching what I do. Being careful with our speech and behavior applies to all our adult leaders, and for that matter to all our parents—our Scouts and sons *trust us and emulate us*. We shouldn't mislead them by our thoughtless comments or unwise actions.

This principle applies to our senior Scouts as well. Eleven Troop 476 Scouts were students at Bristlecone Council Junior Leader Training in July, and three of our Scouts served as staff members. By now, they are all certainly familiar with the principle of "setting the example." I was privileged to visit the training camp on the last evening and to sit with each Scout as he set three

tough goals for himself. Many of our Bristlecone Scouts chose the goal of setting the example in a specific area where the troop needs help.

We will all benefit as they work on these goals, but this principle is not just for Bristlecone Scouts, adult leaders, and parents: Whenever we say the Scout Law, we *all* promise to be trustworthy. I hope every single Scout and adult in the troop will work on setting the right example by being trustworthy in his or her words and actions. That way, we'll accomplish a lot more as a team and we'll feel better doing it. Plus we won't be disappointed when we discover there really are no 10-foot-tall, hand-carved totem poles at Costco.

—Mr. Gabriel
Scoutmaster

Committee Chair's Corner

I would like to dedicate this month's Committee Chair's Corner to Adult Troop Support. During the next Committee Meeting, September 20th, the 2004-2005 committee assignments will be presented to the troop adult membership for approval. The remarkable history and success of Troop 476 is directly related to the quality of the parents, their interest in their son's development, and their ability to work together toward a common goal.

It is the Committee Chair's responsibility to make sure the fundamental positions are filled and it is the parents responsibility to serve these roles and support the Troop.

When our most experienced members "age-out," it is vital that we

pass the baton to newer members who understand and accept the responsibilities of the positions.

One of the roles we need to start working to "back-up" is the Holy Name Room Cleaning Coordinator. The Holy Name Society is our chartering organization and is a primary supporter for Troop 476. Paul Yee, our current coordinator, would like to find a parent to serve as his assistant and learn the ropes.

At the next Committee Meeting, we will be asking for everyone to confirm the positions they are signed up for, for the 2004/2005 Scouting year. In the meantime, please go to the protected area of the Troop web site to see the role that you are currently signed up for.

Please accept your Troop positions with the happiness that comes with knowing that what you are doing for the Troop and the Scouts is deeply appreciated and absolute necessary. If you have a special skill not captured on the current roster, please see me, or our assistant Committee Chair, Dave Bunzel, about including that skill.

—Karl Darr
Committee Chair

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Important Websites

Troop 476
<http://www.troop476.com>

Santa Clara Council
<http://www.sccc-scouting.org/>

National BSA
<http://www.scouting.org>

Camp Whitsett – The Scout’s View

The 31 scouts and 8 adults who attended Camp Whitsett on the week of Aug. 15-21 will remember that week for many years to come. We accomplished a couple of “firsts,” like winning the Whitsett aquacade paddle, seeing Mr. Gabriel do belly flops, and getting placed in almost every single competition. We also accomplished some difficult achievements like earning 100 merit badges and making a tremendous amount of rank advancements.

We have never won the aquacade at Whitsett before, but unlike last time, we have learned from the last aquacade. The aquacade consists of a series of competitions that help determine the winner. The contest requires almost every kind of skill, from eating sand to paddling with hands backwards. Getting

placed in the competitions will get you points, and the one with the most points in the end wins. With our experienced scouts, we easily crushed the other troops and took the aquacade.

First competition is a relay race: a guy wearing a T-shirt swims to the other guy, and the other guy puts on the shirt and swims back. There’s the ‘eonac’ race, where two people paddle a canoe with their hands backwards (hence the name “eonac”). The in-and-out race consists of three people paddling with their hands, and when the whistle blows, they jump out and climb back in. Some of my favorite competitions were the chicken fight, where a guy sits upon another person’s shoulders and tries to push other pairs of people over. I also enjoyed the sandman, where the contenders go into the water, come out,

and try to get as much sand on themselves as possible. Kyle B. won easily because he was the only one brave enough to eat the sand. We were placed in almost every competition and totally won the aquacade paddle. The other awards we won were 3rd place in the Pentathlon for both age groups, and Peter S. got second place in the Ironman.

It was not merely the talented people in our troop that helped us win. We could not have won these awards without everyone cooperating. Everyone helped out, even the small kids. When we work together, we can accomplish almost anything, and that is what makes troop 476 great!

—Jeremy W.
Troop Historian

Whitsett Reflections

I attended Camp Whitsett last week with my son Jacob and I thought I’d share some of my experiences and impressions of the trip.

Camp Whitsett is south of Sequoia National Park, about 5000 feet up in the Sierra Nevada mountains. We arrived Saturday afternoon, moved into our campground, had our medical check, camp tour, then congregated at Lake Ida for swim checkout. The lake is fairly small, but well set up for swimming, games, kayaking, canoeing, and rowboating. And, of course, fishing.

That evening we had our introduction to the food of Camp Whitsett, which I must say was very good. We had hot breakfasts every day, including eggs, hash browns, bacon, sausage, pancakes, Belgian waffles, fresh fruit, oatmeal, biscuits and gravy, and oj. Dinners were excellent with fresh salad every day (only in California!), chicken, tacos, steak on Friday night, and dessert every night. I was impressed!

I managed to get in some fly fishing almost every day. I was greeted by at least 100 Violet-Green Swallows performing acrobatics above the lake, catching bugs and scooping up water from the lake with their lower beaks. At dusk a beautiful Common Nighthawk

joined the swallows, darting every which way catching bugs.

Mr. Champion, Mr. Bunzel, Mr. Wedig and I participated in the 5-day COPE course, Challenging Outdoor Personal Experience. The first 2 days we played “trust” games where we got to know many of the other adults attending camp and have a lot of fun. Day 3 we practiced working our way across a low “ropes” course, consisting of steel cables strung about a foot off the ground in various configurations. Thursday and Friday we hit the high “ropes” course consisting of a “giant’s ladder”, a cargo net, various cables, ropes and logs all 30 feet off the ground! They had names like “tarzan” and “hee-bee-jee-bee”. We worked our way across from one pole to the next, finally flying down a 400 yard zip line! It was definitely a challenging and rewarding experience.

We also took mountain bike rides, going into Johnsondale and out to a watering hole with a small waterfall. We had lunch there and played in the stream. Unfortunately Victor S. took a spill from a bike and broke his collar bone. We offered a prayer for him that evening before dinner. He returned to camp later that same evening and went home Friday, only 1 day early,

fortunately having completed all the merit badges he set out to accomplish.

Indian Rock is the main rock climbing venue. It is the size of a small house and has an Indian’s face on it, if you look at it just right. I managed to climb 3 of the 5 routes up it.

Thursday morning we rose at 4 am to climb Sentinel Peak. It is a 1-mile trail that climbs about 1500 feet! We watched the sunrise from the peak and surveyed the damage from the fires 2 years ago. Thankfully Camp Whitsett was spared any damage, but evidence still abounds of what fire can do, and how nature rebounds after a fire.

Many of the boys got to ride and learn about horses. They must have over 20 horses at Camp Whitsett. The other merit badge stations were equally impressive, among them the Scoutcraft providing Trail to First Class activities, the Nature Lodge, archery range, and rifle range.

Friday night at the closing campfire we were treated to an exciting show of cannons, black powder rifles, fireworks over the lake, and a spectacular lighting of the final campfire itself. Of course we had the requisite hilarious skits and songs (Way-Yo, Way-Yo!). I was very impressed with the troop 476 scout’s improvisational abilities. Their skits were very creative!

Friday night after the closing campfire, Jacob and I walked out to the bridge over the dam on the lake and took in the view one last time. The stars were incredible. We could see the Milky Way and more stars and constellations than I ever knew existed. The mountains and trees were silhouetted against the backdrop of the brilliant sky. The waxing crescent moon was like a Christmas ornament in the

sky. The mirror of the lake reflected the sky, the trees and the mountains. The water flowing over the dam splashed on the rocks below on its way down the creek. This scene combined with the sounds of laughing and talking boys left me with a strong feeling of God's warm, loving embrace.

Before we left Saturday morning we held a Scout's Own. Each person thanked God for one thing from the

week and offered one thing he would do different next time. It was a wonderful time to reflect and share our gratitude for a great week at camp.

—Steve S.

Camp Whitsett – A Dad's Impressions

No, I did not go. Yes, most articles in Goat reflect experiences of the events but this one is the opposite. I want to talk about what I experienced in the void of participating the event.

My son Cauchy went to Whitsett. We had to be at church by six on that Sunday morning. I know this would be very hard for him because he just came back from Hong Kong on Friday night. Hong Kong is place where its night time is our day time and vice versa. I knew he had a hard time getting to sleep the night before and had hard time to get up the day before. Although he had set the alarm, but he slept through his alarm so many times in the past so I was expecting I would have a hard time getting him up that morning. To my amazement he slipped into my bedroom in the dark and woke me up before my alarm went off. My house was only about five minutes away driving from the church, we had put everything he need in the trunk the night before and he woke me up at 5:30. I was about to grumbled and then I hold my tongue. I remembered how I woke up myself when I was young on the events of some family picnic. We lived in Hong Kong. We had no cars. We needed to take public transportation, usually with

transfers and the line was always long, so we need to get off early from home, usually before the sun was up. Before we left home, I showed my boy the stack of forms he left on the counter and to see he had all forms he required. He went through and quickly went to the computer to print out two more. Not for himself, but for his buddy scouts because he said it would be disastrous if they forgot to bring those forms. Now I could see how over the years in scouts had developed the bonds and love between the boys. Gradually, they think of not only themselves but the well being of other people around him.

Although I still needed to turn the head lights on, the east had already shown some brightness when we left home. We arrived on time, but already there were people there. It is always pleasing to see the eagerness and excitements as the boys met each other. All of a sudden, their tiredness were gone, although I was pretty sure they would all fell into sound sleep as soon as they were on their way. On the other hand, the looks on the parents who send them there were so different. You can see the big contrast on the faces of those parents and the faces of the boys.

Then there came the week without my son around. The house seemed missing something. I felt so quiet. Times seemed to be going by a little bit slower. There was some kind of an unreal feeling somebody was speaking to me at night time. It was a nice cool week here in Cupertino, but who knew what was the weather down there near Bakersfield? Finally, it came Saturday and at four o'clock sharp, somebody dropped my boy off at my house. I was so amazed how our troop could manage their time so well.

It was so dusty. That is what Cauchy told me on his first statement. Yes, I could see how dusty it was from his backpack. Fine dust everywhere as if he came back from a dessert. After that, my boy began to tell me all the things happened during the camp including the mishaps of one boy who broke his bone during a mountain bike. I realize not only I missed him a lot during the week, I also missed a great experience which I could have shared with him together. I become a little bit more certain I will come along on the next occasion, probably the Emerald bay camp?

—Ming-Lam C.

The Sunol Backpacking Trip

14 Troup 476 Boy Scouts and 4 adults participated in a fun-filled overnight backpacking trek at Sunol East Bay Regional Park on July 31-August 1, 2004. The Trek was lead by Michael R.. The following Scouts participated in the Trek with Michael: Scott G., Nick F., Zahi H., Rigo A., Reese C., Josh L., Nick L., Victor W., Cameron R., Owen L., Gareth R., Peter S. and Kevin C.. Adults involved in the Trek included, Mr. Fishler- Adult Trek

Leader, Mr. Gabriel, Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Wan.

This was a beginning backpacking trek, designed to introduce our new scouts or scouts that have never backpacked before to the fun and excitement of Boy Scout backpacking. The Trek distance was 1.1 miles each way. The Trek involved backpacking on a moderately steep (600 vertical feet) uphill climb from a Trail Head near the Park Visitor's Center to High Valley Camp. The Park is an old cattle ranch

set in coastal mountains with lots of beautiful scenery. Hiking weather was unseasonably cool (about 75 degrees F), with a slight breeze. The trail posed a good challenge to the new Scouts, and gave them a good taste of what it was like to back pack. I am sure that they will now start to think about how to pack lighter. If you are interested in learning more about this great park, take a look at the East Bay Regional park website:

<http://www.ebparke.org/resources>.

On arrival at Sunol Park on Saturday morning, the Trekers were all treated to a fun visit to the Park Visitor's Center. The Center had lots of great Park information, and live snakes (Rattler, Gopher, King), mounted animals, and plant information, and some nice things for sale (compass, tick remover, toy snakes, etc.). It was staffed by a Park Naturalist, who treated the Scouts to a session with a very tame gopher snake, called Sonja. The Scouts were allowed to hold and pet the snake.

High Valley Camp, our campsite, is situated in a beautiful valley surrounded by coastal mountains. The Camp has many picnic tables and is situated on cut grassland, adjacent to a still active cattle ranch. The campsite is adjacent to big barn that is not open to the public. The

camp is relatively flat and there was plenty of space to pitch the tents and for the scouts to run around and have fun.

Upon arrival, everyone pitched his tent and ate gourmet bag lunches. Following lunch, Mr. Lincoln treated the Scouts to a fun game. He walked up the trail several hundred yards beyond the campsite, and hid a box of small squirt guns in a tree. He recorded the coordinates of the tree on a portable GPS device that he brought along on the Trek. He then gave the Scouts the GPS Unit, and let them use the unit to find the squirt guns. They found the squirt guns within 10 minutes! They then came back to the campsite, and had fun for several hours having squirt gun "fights" and exploring our campsite. They really enjoyed the squirt gun

game- Thanks Mr. Lincoln! The rest of afternoon gave the Scouts the option of working on several requirement sign-offs by Mr. Gabriel or fun time. At dinnertime the Scouts showed off their great cooking talents. At dusk, we saw lots of bats flying around catching insects in flight for dinner. After nightfall, we told jokes and did skits, mostly being entertained by our camp comedian, Michael R.. The next morning, we packed up leaving no traces, had a Thorns and Roses session, lead by Kevin C., and made it down the hill to the trailhead by 10AM. All in all a very fun overnight trek!

—Glenn F.

Advancements

Scout

B., Kyle, 8/16/04
 D. O., Alex, 7/12/04
 E., Andrew, 04/15/04
 F., Nick, 05/13/04
 G., Scott, 04/08/04
 H., Zahi, 04/08/04
 I., Mark, 04/15/04
 L., Owen, 04/08/04
 L., Josh, 03/04/04
 L., Nick, 03/04/04
 N., Siddhartha, 05/27/04
 P., Bill, 04/29/04
 R., Cameron, 04/01/04
 S., Andrew, 05/13/04
 S., Jacob, 04/22/04
 W., Victor, 07/01/04
 W., Sean, 04/29/04

Tenderfoot

C., Lonny, 06/10/04
 E., Andrew, 08/26/04

H., Zahi, 08/12/04

L., Josh, 05/27/04
 L., Nick, 05/27/04

Second Class

C., Lonny, 08/26/04
 L., Josh, 07/29/04
 L., Nick, 07/29/04
 W., Jeffrey, 07/22/04
 W., Ryan, 04/15/04

First Class

C., Kevin, 05/13/04
 L., Josh, 08/05/04
 L., Nick, 08/05/04
 M., Kyung, 07/08/04
 W., Jeffrey, 08/26/04

Star

C., Cauchy, 05/20/04
 E., David, 07/01/04
 G., Alexander, 04/08/04

H., Ben, 06/03/04

Q., Clarence, 03/25/04
 S., Devin, 08/24/04

Life

D., Marshall, 06/10/04
 D., Kevin, 07/22/04
 L., Bobby, 04/29/04
 L., Lawrence, 05/06/04
 Q., Brian, 06/10/04
 S., Victor, 06/24/04
 W., Jeremy, 05/20/04

Eagle

P., Steve, 07/15/04
 T., Henry, 03/11/04
 T., Kevin, 05/06/04
 W., Jonathan, 08/05/04

Special Award

100 Nights Camping: Kevin D.

Troop 476 Calendar

September 7 Holy Name Room Clean-up
 September 12 Court of Honor
 September 18-19 Del Valle Car Campout & Canoe
 Training & Webelos Outreach
 September 20 Committee Meeting
 September 23 PLC Meeting, 6:30 pm
 September 25 Monterey Bay Sea Kayaking
 September 26 Fall Planning Meeting
 September 30 Junior Leader Elections

September 30 Aluminum Cans Due
 October 2 Troop Junior Leader Training
 October 7 Pie/Cookie Dough Sales Start
 October 15-17 St. Joseph's Carnival
 October 16 Coyote Classic Cycling
 October 23 WEST Fair(Webelos Recruitment)
 October 28 Pie/Cookie Dough Sales End
 October 30 Patrol Outing