

Official Newsletter of the Camp Mattatuck Volunteers, BSA

First Lost Lake Encampment 1968

By Joe LeClair



To commemorate the purchase of the Lost Lake property in 1968, the Camp Mattatuck held a special week-long encampment on the new property. Serving as staff were Scoutmaster Paul Hadzima of Woodbury, an outstanding Scouter, and Junior Assistant Scoutmasters Bob Abromaitis and Ken Richardson.

At the time the site still showed evidence of its prior life as a fishing club. There was a narrow wooden bridge spanning the little finger of water near the dam, and a tiny cabin was still nestled against the hill on the south side of the lake.. The two patrols camped at the top of the hill on the south side of the lake. Among the Scouts were Jim Bellerive, Rick Bozzuto, and Bill Handelwich of Watertown, and John Schlosser, Jim Pierce, Joe LeClair, and Jim Bossie of Waterbury. Other Scouts escape my memory. One

patrol's dining area had a great view of the pond. During the week Dick Giacini visited with some friends...two large trout. He taught us how to cook them on a wood plank near the fire. Tom Horan came up one night with ingredients for strawberry shortcake. "Mickey" our Japanese exchange Scout also visited. We cooked over wood fires all week and learned a great deal.

The staff stocked the cabin with trading post goods, and provided a couple of canoes and rowboats. The boats were used for recreation and to gather firewood from the far side of the lake. We set up a swim area off the large rock on the north side. We shared the pond with the huge water snakes that resided there. The weeds were thick and we exited the water with heavy silt on our skin.

On a rock outcropping overlooking the lake east of the campsite we built a small council circle, where we had some memorable campfires during the week. Paul taught us a round song called "Zoom-Golly-Golly". How special was the week? After over 30 years, Ken Richardson still has some of the ashes of the first Lost Lake campfire, some of which were mixed with the main camp's fire ashes at the end of the week.

There was talk of developing the area into a traditional Scout camp, but it was never followed through. Today the cabin and bridge are gone, as is the house at the Christmas tree farm. Lost Lake is wilder now than it was 30 years ago, and I think it's better that way. The Scouts who visit Lost Lake have the sense of adventure as they explore the area.

About the photo...provided by Rob Reed, who received it from an undetermined source...This photo shows the bridge and cabin described in the article. The tents are staff tents. The patrols slept on top of the hill behind the cabin.

Lightning Safety

In the last issue's editorial I questioned the media's coverage of Scouting, where it seemed to emphasize the tragedies and ignore the triumphs. My message was not to suggest, however, that Scout leaders were licensed to charge out into the mountains and rivers without preparation, knowledge, and a sense of safety. JLL

The summits of mountains, crests of ridges, slopes above timberline, and large meadows are extremely hazardous places to be during lightning storms. **Begin your hike early in the morning** so that you'll be off the summit before the late afternoon, when storms are most likely to occur. If you are caught in such an exposed place, quickly descend to a lower elevation, away from the direction of the approaching storm, and squat down, keeping your head low. A dense forest located in a depression provides the best protection. Avoid taking shelter under isolated trees or trees much taller than adjacent trees. Stay away from water, metal objects, and other substances that will conduct electricity long distances.

By squatting with your feet close together, you have minimal contact with the ground, thus reducing danger from ground currents. If the threat of lightning strikes is great, your group should not huddle together but spread out at least 15 feet apart. If one member of your group is jolted, the rest of you can tend to him. Whenever lightning is nearby, take off backpacks with either external or internal metal frames. In tents, stay at least a few inches from metal tent poles.



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Lightning Safety Rules

- Don't use metal objects such as fishing rods and golf clubs. Golfers wearing cleated shoes are particularly good lightning rods.
- Stop tractor work, especially when the tractor is pulling metal equipment, and dismount. Tractors and other implements in metallic contact with the ground are often struck by lightning.
- Get out of the water and off small boats.
- Stay in the car if you are traveling. Automobiles offer excellent lightning protection.
- When no shelter is available, avoid the highest object in the area. If only isolated trees are nearby, the best protection is to crouch in the open, keeping twice as far away from isolated trees as the trees are high.
- Avoid hilltops, open spaces, wire fences, metal clotheslines, exposed sheds, and any electrically conducted elevated objects.
- Keep a high level of safety awareness for 30 minutes after the last observed lightning or thunder.
- Treat lightning like a snake: if you see it or hear it, take evasive measures. Every 5 seconds you count between thunder and lightning equals 1 mile in distance.
- Medical treatment and symptoms. Treat the apparently dead first. Immediately administer CPR to restore breathing. Eighty percent of lightning strike victims survive the shock. Lightning strike victims do not retain an electric charge and are safe to handle. Common lightning aftereffects include impaired eyesight and loss of hearing. Electrical burns should be treated as other burns.

Sources... National Lightning Safety Institute, Scout *Fieldbook*, <http://www.kidslightning.info/lsoftposi.htm>

PROJECT REPORT ...news from Camp Director Chris Moon.

The camp staff, with support from the Mattatuck Volunteers, is hard at work maintaining and improving camp.

◆ We have begun a program to paint 3 buildings a year.

◆ Through a combination of funding from Vince Ferri, the Mattatuck Volunteers and the council we will be replacing the top boards on the Boy Scout as well as the Cub Scout swimming docks. We will take off the old boards (all 616 of them) and replace them with a composite material. Yeah...no more slivers!

◆ The Mattatuck Volunteers applied for and received a grant from the Thomaston Savings Bank to build a Mountain Bike Activity and Storage Shed. It is similar to the new Boating Storage Shed. Located between Cedar and Hawthorne campsites, this building will be used as the Mountain Bike headquarters year round. ◆ Based on a thought by Jon Andrew and funding from the Mattatuck Volunteers, the camp now has a new Kubota Diesel Zero degree mower with a 60" mower deck. It can cut grass faster than anything we have ever used before. It is now possible for 1 person to cut all of the manicured lawns in camp in 1 day. This will save us many needed man-hours of work. ◆ We hope to repair, patch and paint the ceiling of the Dining hall kitchen.

◆ Members of the Mattatuck Volunteers who are also BSA Climbing Directors installed a roof on the Climbing Tower. Chris Start, Chris Moon, Brian Shannon, Rob Reed and Chris Perkins made up the crew. The construction of the tower as well as the roof was made extremely easier by the use of the Boom Lift that was purchased for camp by the Volunteers. Camp Mattatuck is truly fortunate to have such a dedicated group of friends in the Mattatuck Volunteers. Thank you for doing a good turn. ◆ Over the past few years, members of the Mattatuck Volunteers have sold Christmas trees at the Mattatuck Christmas tree farm in December. Ranger Bob Herbert has been doing a great job over the past 4 years in making the tree farm recover from years of neglect. He spread out the rows and aisles to allow for easier cutting and harvesting. With the use of Jon Andrew's excavator, he has planned and cleared for future plantings. The council purchased a used tractor and brush hog for the tree farm. We hope to some day put a better storage area at the tree farm and remove the little brown shed. ◆ The pine grove across from Hirsch-Cole Lodge has been cleared of low lying brush by the tag team effort of some of the camp staff, the ranger and Takachsin. It will soon look as nice as the pine grove on the other side of the parking lot. ◆ In April, the Order of the Arrow cleared the site of brush and trees for the new Harold Leever Lodge near the COPE Course. The foundation is will be built this fall, and we hope to begin the construction of the building in the Spring of 2007!



Through the Eyes of a Scout... *the following is the first of what we hope will be a series of stories written by a youth, to help us remember what Scouting experiences mean to a boy. If you know a Scout who would like to submit an article please send it along. We don't guarantee it will be printed and reserve the right to edit. The following story was printed exactly as submitted...*

The Klondike Derby

*By: James Silva
Troop 52, Oakville, CT*

The day of the Klondike Derby was one of the best days of my life! Because I am a new scout and this was my first time at the Klondike Derby, I was a little bit worried. When I got there I found out there was no reason to be nervous at all. I had a lot of fun going to the nine stations and earning gold nuggets with "The Ferocious Moose Patrol". Each station promoted teamwork and my patrol was ready for the challenge.

My favorite station was the last one in the competition - Station Nine. In this station we had to start a fire without using matches or a lighter. I had never done this before, but the other members of my patrol knew what to do.

Near the end of the race we were pulling the sled at full speed down a hill. Suddenly, we heard a cracking sound and saw our back wheel fly off! We had hit a rock sticking out of the ground on the path. We took our backpacks out of the sled to examine the damage. We saw a hole where the wheel had been. "The Ferocious Moose" sled had to be dragged for the remainder of the race!

My patrol really cheered each other on during the entire competition. You could hear us from a mile away yelling, "Ferocious Moose! Ferocious Moose!" in a chanting fashion! Even though we worked hard, we still had lots of fun too.

We couldn't work without food so we had to go to a Cook Town to "rustle up some grub". This was the first time I ever cooked outside over a campfire. We started a fire and when it was burning hot we placed our lunches, covered in foil, right on top of the fire to cook. It tasted delicious, even though mine was burned a little.

At the ending ceremony, awards and hot chocolate were given out. Considering all the patrols that we were competing with, I thought there was only a slight chance that our patrol would win something. We were extremely surprised and happy when our patrol won 3 awards! We won 5th place for the "Best Sled" and 4th place for the number of gold nuggets we collected. The award I was most proud of was the "Red Lantern Award". This award is given to the patrol that showed the most spirit.

As a new scout, I am very thankful that my patrol was patient with me. I did not have the scouting skills that they had acquired, but they didn't treat me as a "tag-a-long" who couldn't help out. Instead, they treated me as a friend and showed me the skills. This is another reason I think the "Ferocious Moose Patrol" earned the "Red Lantern Award" for scout spirit!!!

Camp Barbour, the Wilderness Camp

Scout troops seeking a different place to camp should consider looking north to the 109 acre Camp Barbour in Norfolk. Located not far from Route 44 between Winsted and Norfolk, this rustic camp is owned by the Connecticut Rivers Council. There is no pond or athletic field, but boys love to camp there. It is the ideal place to practice basic scouting skills. There is adequate firewood, and we anticipate that in the coming year there will be a fresh water supply again on the property. Norfolk, 'the icebox of Connecticut' is home to bear, bobcat, deer, porcupine, and other wildlife.

A group of volunteers recently assembled to make plans to upgrade the facilities at the camp. Already the latrine has been improved, and more renovations are on the way. The small parking lot will be enlarged and drainage provided to keep it drier.

Other than the latrine, there are no buildings on the property and it is very unlikely there ever will be. Just like all CRC camps, reservations must be made through the East Hartford office or through the council's website, www.ctrivers.org.

Printing and mailing operations donated by Elm Press, Inc. Plymouth, CT

Articles, comments, etc., may be sent to jleclair@tr52.com

Visit our website, built and maintained by Marc Moody...

<http://matwreck.org/volunteers>

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