

Troop 111 Summer Camp 2007
Ockanickon Scout Reservation (OSR)
Guide for Parents and Scouts

WHEN: Sunday to Saturday, 24 – 30 Jun 2007.

WHERE: Ockanickon Scout Reservation, which is part of the Bucks County Council.

HOW: The Troop will travel by POV's and Troop vans.

The Scouts have selected one of the premier Boy Scout summer camps to attend. Troops come from significant distances to attend this camp and most Troops return year-after-year. This Camp probably is the most professionally run camp the Troop has ever attended. The Camp is in its 67th year and the Camp Director has served in that capacity for 22 years.

The Camp attracts the best and most qualified staff. Even the Counselor-in-Training (CIT) positions are highly competitive and candidates for those positions must prove themselves in a weekend-long demonstration of their personal camping and leadership skills. Further, the Camp enjoys a very high Staff retention rate. The Scouts immediately will notice that the Summer Camp staff is older and more experienced. Trained merit badge instructors are available to work with any Scout who has learning disabilities and needs extra support.

The Camp offers a very robust list of merit badges and other program activities. Some activities, such as horsemanship, rafting, and golf, use facilities located in other parts of Bucks County. Scouts will be faced with difficult decisions each day about which activities to do since it is a physical impossibility to do everything that the Camp offers in just a week.

The large, air-conditioned Dining Hall is staffed by ARAMARK Corporation, a world leader in providing award-winning food and #1 in its industry. The company is headquartered in nearby Philadelphia and its client base includes universities, major corporations and the Olympics. The OSR Dining Hall will accommodate campers with medically required dietary restrictions provided the food restrictions are noted on the Scout's medical form. The Food budget for summer camp exceeds \$400,000 (to put this in perspective, for some summer camps this amount exceeds their entire budget). The biggest complaint by the Scouts about the food comes after they return home when the Scouts realize that their moms do not cook as well as the ARAMARK staff.

The Camp Director wants everyone – Scouts, adults, program staff – to truly savor the Camp and its many opportunities and programs. Appropriate behavior is expected of all attendees so that everyone can enjoy the Camp. Attending OSR is a privilege – not a right.

MERIT BADGES and other ADVANCEMENT

All Scouts received guidance from Melissa B. our MB Coordinator, for this year's camp. Each Scout submitted his merit badge selection in time for the filing deadline with OSR. With the exception of Golf, Horsemanship and Photography whose enrollment is determined by a lottery conducted at Camp on Sunday evening, all Scouts received their first choices. The Merit Badge Pamphlets **MUST** be brought to camp - don't forget! Each Scout also should write his name and "6/2007" on the inside of the pamphlet cover. Also note, that if certification is required for certain precamp requirements, the Scout needs to bring the certification. Many merit badges have prerequisites.

The merit badge pamphlets were distributed to all Scouts who registered for a merit badge that has pre-requisites. Scouts should complete the pre-requisites before they arrive at summer camp. The merit badge pamphlets for the merit badges that do not have pre-requisites will be distributed at summer camp.

In addition, the Troop *may* run some Junior Scout Modules "in camp." The most important of these are Totin' Chip and the various Practical Exams. This depends on the willingness and availability of the Troop Adults and/or Senior Scouts to conduct these classes. If time allows, we also may conduct Scoutmaster Conferences and a Board of Review. Note that each Scout has or will receive the Merit Badge Pamphlets for the Merit Badges he will pursue at summer camp.

OTHER AWARDS

Older Scouts are encouraged to earn the Mile Swim and Polar Bear Swim awards. The Camp offers many competitions during the week including Air Band, Magic (cards), Water Carnival, and Volleyball. Senior Scouts also may earn additional "Leadership Credits" by teaching Junior Scout Advancement Modules at camp or by serving as Patrol Leaders or Senior Patrol Leaders. All Senior Scouts earn one leadership credit for each night of camping – **however, these may also be subtracted for disciplinary infractions.**

THE GENERAL PROGRAM

Day One is taken up with site set-up, medical checks, swim tests, dinner, and the start of several merit badges on Sunday night. The merit badge programs are offered all week long, beginning Sunday evening and ending Friday night. Some sessions are as brief as one hour and other sessions can last up to seven hours. Each Scout will need to keep apprised of his individual schedule, since, for most Scouts, no two days will be alike. All Scouts will be encouraged to participate in the many non-Merit Badge Programs, which are offered both during the day and in the evening. The various Program offerings will be posted daily on the Troop Bulletin Board. Several programs require advance registration on Sunday evening. The SPLs will be collecting the names and fees, if any, from the Scouts who want to participate in those Programs and registering our Scouts for those activities.

There is a "First Year Camper" program at this camp; however, our past experiences at six different summer camps suggest that its quality will not be acceptable for Scouts in Troop 111. "First Year Camper" programs are designed to advance a Scout to First Class in a few weeks or months, and generally just "present" the material to the Scouts rather than actually teach it.

The Camp closes at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday. We will be stopping for lunch near Baltimore and expect to be back in Arlington on/before 4:00 p.m. on Saturday. We'll return directly to the Parish Center for unloading. Parents need to be available for pickup when called. We'll try to have a teletree as we leave Baltimore to give everyone a "3-hour warning." The Scouts are NOT released upon arrival at the Parish Center but rather when everything has been cleaned and put away. So if we arrive at 4:00 p.m., pickup would be between 4:30 and 5:00 p.m.

HABITATION

All campsites are equipped with large platform tents (floor is about 8 x 6, roof is about 7 ft tall). Each tent has two wire-frame cots (76 x 30 inches), with mattresses; they're noisy but reasonably comfortable. The Troop also provides heavy-duty cord and wire hangars for the Scouts to hang up their uniforms inside the tent. Adults may wish to bring a thin sheet of plywood to provide additional support. In a new protocol that we started in 2005, all tents will have a blue polytarp placed on them to ensure that they are 100 percent waterproof. The sites are generally fairly pretty and reasonably quiet. Each site has several picnic benches located under heavy-duty tarps at which the Scouts can sit and study or play tabletop games (chess, cards, etc.). The Troop provides numerous lanterns, by which the Scouts can read, write reports or complete various projects at night. Also located nearby the site is a latrine, with a pit toilet, combined with a source of potable, running water and cleaning facilities. Because Troop 111 brings along a garden hose and our own cleaning supplies, we always have the 'best' latrine in the camp. Finally, each site has a campfire ring, always a popular gathering point and also providing us the opportunity to hold our own campfire programs (which we hold, usually every night.) Showers are available at the main complex.

CLEANLINESS

As noted above, each site is equipped with a communal wash trough at the latrine - the adults and Senior Scouts try to ensure that all Scouts wash and brush their teeth each morning and night. Showers use will be continuously encouraged. Aquatic activities also help keep the Scouts clean.

MAIL

Mail may be sent to the Scouts and adult leaders at the following address:

Scout Name _____
Troop 111
Ockanickon Scout Reservation
5787 State Park Road
Pipersville, PA 18947

You should send letters on the Thursday or Friday before we depart if you want them to arrive on Monday or Tuesday. You also may give letters to us before we leave to relay to your son(s) during the week. Do not mail food or money. Do not mail anything without a return address. Don't mail anything after Wednesday (we probably won't get it

in time). In fact, I recommend mailing directly from the Post Office on Wednesday to save a day. Scouts who are prone to homesickness should receive cheerful, upbeat letters - don't tell him "how much the dog misses you" or that "all your friends have been calling since you left." Remember, we usually have a lot more homesick parents than homesick Scouts. As a matter of Troop policy, we strongly encourage (but don't insist) the Scouts to write at least two letters home during the week. We therefore ask all parents to please give two self-addressed and stamped envelopes to the "Banker" for your son to write home. [We can extort letters in exchange for junk-food money.]

HOMESICKNESS – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

This is generally not a problem with Scouts surrounded with friends and kept constantly busy with enjoyable activities. However, it can occur (especially if the weather is unusually poor or if a young Scout has a bad personal experience with another Scout.) Birthdays during camp can be a problem, especially if the Scout's family usually makes a "big deal" of birthdays. Latrine use is an occasional problem with first year campers who have never seen a pit latrine, however, the Camp also has flush toilets available. None of these scenarios is common, and the adults try to keep an eye out for any developing problems. Positive letters from home can help. Scouts are allowed to call home (as long as it doesn't get excessive). Troop 111 has experienced only a few cases of homesickness during the last 19 years (and most of them were problems revolving around mid-week birthdays, or Scouts who were missing some other, more desirable activity.) If your son's birthday does coincide with camp, please remind us of that fact, and give us a few gifts and cards to relay to him on the big day. Promising your son a "big deal" party upon his return is also an excellent preemptive strike if you anticipate possible problems.

FORMS

OSR requires all Scouts (and adults) to complete a BSA Class 1/2 Medical Forms completed (BSA Class 3 for Adults 40 and over). There are no exceptions. The forms are posted on the Troop website <http://www.troop111.org/med.html> In addition, each Scout will need a completed Troop 111 permission slip and all attendees must complete a Troop 111 Medical Form. Scouts needing medications will need their parents to fill out the Medication Administration Form. Finally, Scouts taking specific MB's (e.g., Personal Fitness

or Sports, many others) will need all the additional forms specified in the MB requirements list.

PACKING FOR CAMP

Yes, your son will be gone for a week in the woods. Follow the suggested packing list described in the *Summer Camp Equipment List*. A few comments: **Do not over pack!** Boys being boys, they'll wear mostly the same things the entire week (I did the same thing when I was a Scout; disgusting, isn't it?). Your son does not need a tremendous amount of gear! **Label EVERYTHING** with your Scout's name and Tr 111. Otherwise, you can forget it if it's ever misplaced (there'll be 500+ Scouts in the camp). This especially includes things like lawn-chairs and uniform parts. It also helps if items that are likely to be left somewhere (bath towels, etc.) have a distinct 'family' design or color that make them easier to spot. All white towels look - white – and won't even survive the swim-checks on the first day without being "lost". It also helps to "customize" flashlights, knives, etc. with bright yellow or orange fingernail polish or tape to make them easier to spot if lost (or "borrowed"). **There are space limitations!** There are no dressers or closets in which to store things. As detailed in the Assembly Guide, you are best served by packing in 2-3 low profile Tote lockers with multiple plastic bags ("Zip-Locks") to separate sets of clean clothing. The boxes that Xerox paper comes in also will work and they store easily under the bunks. We suggest the purchase and use of cloth or mesh dirty clothing sacks. The Troop provides clotheslines to dry out towels and swimwear, and clothes hangers (for hanging uniforms up inside the tents). Your son's Scout Uniform should be up to date with respect to all his patches - please confirm!!! *Do NOT pack: Radios, cell phones, iPods, walkmen, electronic games, laser pointers, skate boards, dice, food or soda, candle lanterns, excessive money, 'heirloom' type equipment such as Grand-dad's 60-year old knife, etc., or anything else that detracts from the purpose of Camp or that you can't afford to lose. As is stated in the Troop Policies Guide, we will confiscate electronics, junk food, and anything else that becomes a problem.* Should your son run out of clean clothes, the Camp has washers and dryers that the Scouts may use.

MONEY

The cost of most of the program offerings is included in your summer camp fee. This includes:

- Mountain biking
- Mountain boarding
- C.O.P.E – both the Low and High Course

- Rock Climbing
- Sailing.

Other activities are offered at an additional fee:

- Magic (\$5.00 for 4 Rounds (Constructed) to \$20.00 for 3 Rounds + Build (Limited)
- Discover SCUBA (\$6.00)
- CPR instruction (\$25.00)
- SCUBA BSA (\$35.00)
- Golf (\$40.00)
- Horsemanship Merit Badge (\$50.00)
- Chesapeake Bay Expedition (\$60.00)
- Rafting (various prices depending on activity).

Some merit badges require the Scouts to purchase supplies such as:

- Archery (\$3.00)
- Rental of climbing shoes for the week (\$5.00)
- Stool kit for Basketry (\$10.00)
- Basket Kit (\$5.50 to \$7.50)
- Moccasin Kit (\$15.00)
- Shotgun (2 rounds for \$.75).
- Fishing bait (varies).

Sample Trading Post prices include:

- Compass (\$3.00 to \$42.00)
- Books (\$3.50 to \$20.00)
- Magic Boosters (\$3.75)
- Pen Knives (\$4.00 - \$85.00) and Totin Chip Card
- Camp Sweatshirts (\$16.00 to \$28.00)
- Flashlights (\$5.50 to \$17.00)

Your son probably will need about \$60 to cover all contingencies, including \$10.00 for his lunch on the way home from Camp. If your son is planning to participate in Basketry, Leatherworks, Rifle or Shotgun Shooting, Golf, Horsemanship, SCUBA BSA and/or CPR, he will require additional funds.

Excessive money is not desirable and will almost certainly result in your son violating the Troop's junk food policy. The Troop will have an adult "Banker" and a sign out ledger for the Scouts to keep track of their funds. Yes, we will cover Scouts whom – for whatever unexpected reasonable reason(s) – run out of money. For the record, pigging out on junk food, losing money gambling, spending all your money on a big knife, and/or similar idiocies, are NOT considered "reasonable reasons". We will collect Scout Funds as part of the Camp Pack-up the evening before we depart for camp, please bring cash and emphasize fives and singles. *Cash, no checks!* Any money remaining at the end of the week will be put into

your family Troop Credit Account - NOT returned to the Scout.

EMERGENCIES

OSR has well developed plans for fires, lost campers, medical emergencies and similar difficulties. In all honesty, problems of this type are extremely rare. In addition, a "buddy" system is strictly enforced for all aquatic activities and is strongly encouraged for all other activities in which the Scouts participate. The camp has a fully staffed Infirmary. There are major hospitals nearby. The Medical forms are kept on file at the Infirmary (to avoid "Where are they?" syndrome in the event they're needed) and are carefully consulted before any treatment is administered. Of course, you will be notified ASAP if any problem occurs.

OFFICIAL POLICIES

The Official Troop Policies are spelled out in detail in a separate handout, entitled "*Assembly and Official Troop Policies*," and include the Troop policies on medications, junk food, trading post privileges, and use of electronics at camp. This and all summer camp documents are available on the Troop 111 Website. All Scouts, parents and adult leaders are expected to have read the Troop 111 camp documents before departing for Camp. These policies are based on the various experiences of the past 19 years of summer camps. It is strongly urged that each parent and Scout review these together, so that there can be no "misunderstandings" at camp. We have 49 Scouts attending OSR and there is no way that we will allow their summer camp experience to be degraded by the actions of a few Scouts who have forgotten what exactly they're at camp to accomplish.

QUESTIONS???

There will be a summer camp orientation meeting for all campers on 11 Jun, starting at 7:00 p.m. and probably on the 18th also.

Dr. Bob, Scoutmaster, Troop 111