Wilderness Survival Weekend

March 14-16, 2014

A large roster of scouts and adults departed the church around 6:00pm for our surviving destination in Jackson County.  The land is owned by Dr. Wells' family and they agreed once again to let the scouts roam, camp and make temporary shelters during the weekend.

We shared the acreage with T7 and were given the traditional "front" camping area nearest the road.  This would prove to be a great advantage; when the rain finally began to fall, T7 had difficulty getting out from their more remote location due to Georgia red mud.

Upon arrival, our survivors under the direction of Ken S., were led into the hills to begin surviving for the weekend.  The Base Campers unloaded the trailer, put up the large shelter and place other troop gear underneath, and were then allowed to pitch their tents and settle in.  There was a little confusion about what to do first, but our acting SPL Matthew M. made certain the base campers took care of troop gear before personal gear.  There was plenty of wood for a campfire and many chose to enjoy the warmth before a brief meeting about the schedule for the weekend.

Saturday morning was cool and the fire was waiting on the scouts before sunrise.  The two Base Camp patrols led by Jared E. and Andrew P. began cooking breakfast. One patrol did a more traditional eggs, bacon and such while the other made a valiant effort of converting a Dutch oven mountain man breakfast into a non-traditional egg/bacon/hash brown gruel over the camp stove. The appearance of the breakfast stew was less than photogenic…there are no pictures….but was consumed eagerly. Quotes following included, "That's better than it looks," or "Wow. It's good," or "Nope. Not going to try it," as the dad ate a granola bar and fruit instead.

While the cooking/cleaning process was taking place, the patrol leaders and SPL noticed that there were missing some key items. The chuck boxes were not complete and the cleaning buckets were not present.  In the end, everything worked out but scout leaders need to remember to check their supplies before leaving.

The day then turned to scouting skills led by Mr. Evelyn. Through the day, the scouts learned the following: Square Knot, Taut Line Hitch, Fire Building, Scout Rank Requirements, using Map and Compass while hiking.  They also had time to visit the Survivors as dinner was being prepared.  Dinner was delicious for both patrols….hotdogs, corn, fruit, chips for one and a mexican rice and taco meat concoction for another.  Mr. Gilland also cooked for Jared E. and John S. for selling the most popcorn during the fall. He made teriaki chicken, potatoes, carrots, and a cobbler. If everyone could have tried his meal, they would have said it was the best food EVER on a camp out.  After cleanup and a small amount of free time, we turned our attention to the campfire and introduced the new scouts to our traditional Thorns, Roses and Buds….our version of the Bad, Good and What I'm Looking Forward To.

The next day saw the expected rain arrive but the two patrols began cooking pancakes and bacon for the surviving hordes to soon arrive from their temporary and now wet shelters.  A massive amount of bacon was ably prepared and the pancakes, though it took longer, were well prepared and waiting the survivors as they slogged out.   The cold rain continued to fall as we ate and began to break camp.  Several scouts from our troop did not bring appropriate rain gear and were taken to the safety of warm cars as the morning continued.   Most scouts make this mistake at least once and our leaders responded quickly to move them towards warmth and and a car roof.

After gathering their belongings and packing the trailer, the group headed for Herman C. for pick up. It was a wonderful weekend as the survivors made some very good shelters and had adequate supplies of water.  Food was adequate and the survivors were even given field-dressed rabbit to cook over their fires.  The Base Campers conducted themselves appropriately, learning troop procedures and the patrol method, all the while having a good time and making the most of their learning opportunities.

*A report, submitted by Mr. Stanley, indicates the accomplishments of the Survivors:*

Let it be known that the young men who participated in the survival course weekend persevered through the cold , wet, darkness to embrace what most grown men will never face! Each group showed that they could be diverse yet work together to accomplish the task at hand. Each Scout had a positive mental attitude that enabled them to overcome the elements & hardships throughout the adventure! I'm proud that I had the opportunity to shepherd each of these young men.

**ROSTER / DRIVERS**

**Surviving**

1 Harry B.

2 Mark B.

3 Will E.

4 Samuel H.

5 Caleb L.

6 Jack Mc.

7 Hyatt T.

8 Devin S.

9 Dwayne S.

10 Drew S.

11 Bo W.

12 Alex W.

**Base Camp**

13 Garrett A.

14 Eli C.

15 Jared E.

16 Matthew M.

17 Nicholas P.

18 Andrew P.

20 John S.

21 Dillon S.

22 Warren T.

23 Caleb W.

24 Ethan W.

**Adults**

25 Gary A.--3 total

26 Bill E., Saturday Only, No Overnight

27 Geof G.--Driving. Ford F150, 3 total

28 Matthew P.--Driving, 7 total

29 Ken S.--Driving, Tow Trailer. Truck. 3 total

30 Keith W.--4 total

31 Ty Chambers, 1999 F250 Truck. 3