

Troop 510!

Greetings from our bubble, where there have been no news headlines, no traffic, no lines at the store... Here we just have sand and oaks and beaches and games to play and this morning guns to learn to shoot safely! But, I get ahead of myself.

Since I pushed the last message in a bottle through a narrow gap in the bubble, we were busy at aquatics. Unlike normal summer camps where you might have a swimming class and a canoeing class every day. This year, they are rotating us through the areas to keep the troops separate. Monday afternoon was our aquatics work day, and Friday morning we have an aquatics "free" time. On Monday, all the first years worked through their Second Class requirements, and most completed the Swimming Merit Badge and all of their First Class requirements. There isn't a picture, but the first years were very effective at "saving" their Scoutmaster over and over again for their reach requirements. It was very much appreciated on a hot day until one observed that they "weren't so sure I could meet the swimming test if I needed saving so much..."



Kayaking Merit Badge...yes they fell out on purpose...repetitively...



We have met our neighbors, and they are stealthy, creative in their sneakiness, and yes WAR has been declared! WAR! we say. WAR! The scouts stepped away from the trailer for just a few minutes on Monday night, and in went the racoons to have a snack on the extra tortilla wraps. Away went all the food and trash. To bed we went. Apparently, we left out the Costco and the Gevalia coffee beans. Apparently, our neighbors are of the "high-falutin'-only-the-best-for-us" type, and they broke into only the Gevalia coffee beans. Great. Now we have caffeinated racoons. What could possible go wrong with that?



During a cease fire with the racoons, many scouts took chess merit badge while others took game design or started communications.



Later in the afternoon, many scouts took mammal study while others worked on environmental science, fish and wildlife, or weather merit badges.



For last night's activity, we just had to suffer through going to Scoutcraft to play human foosball, use the rope bridge, and practice throwing axes and hatchets.





And this morning. The cat. It came back.

No.

Really.

The cat. The black barn cat that lives somewhere just off camp, but wanders here a lot.

It came back.

And so, we regaled it as scouts do.

With song and enthusiasm. (see that awesome Troop 510 song book you should have in your pocket, page 14. You do have your song book don't you...)

At morning flags.

Magical. ...and hilarious.

After flags, and song, off to shooting sports we go. Many a shotgun and rifle part to be learned. Many a paper target to get new holes. Safely.



And through it all, the patrol method is making great progress. We have 3 patrols in camp this year, and they are beginning more and more to cook, and to clean, and to lead each other together. Some faster than others. But, all in a way that would make Baden Powel smile.

Until there is a crease in the bubble again.

Yours in scouting,

Scott McConnell