



Willistown Troop 78

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September 2025

Volume 42 Number 1

Algonquin!

HIGH ADVENTURE IN THE CANADIAN WILDERNESS



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September 2025

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Troop Committee 7:30PM

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8 Monday Friends of Troop 78 Board, 7PM

12 Friday Troop Meeting 7PM, Family Food Festival

13 Saturday Cabin workday, 8AM - noon

19 Friday - 21 Sunday Campout: Knoebels Park

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Algonquin Canoe Trip!

Algonquin Provincial Park Ontario Canada

Friday August 8 - Sunday August 17, 2025

Algonquin: River Crew POV

By Jay T.

We got on the bus bright and early at 6:00AM on Friday, August 8th and we were in for a long haul. Most of us expected it to be around 8 hours but I don't think any of us were prepared for that long of a bus ride. To pass the time we read, played games, watched movies, and got a bit of extra sleep to prepare for the adventure ahead. We got off the bus in Pembroke, Ontario and set up tents all together for the first night. Then we were treated to a flyover by the Canadian military in a Chinook helicopter for a nearby baseball game.

The next morning, the river crew woke up bright and early again to get back on the bus for an hour and a half bus ride to our put-in point in Algonquin Provincial Park. From there we got our bearings and started paddling before two short portages, and then we moved on to our island campsite. We got to the campsite early so we had plenty of time to play on the beach and sink the canoes. This is where we filmed some quite eventful scenes for the Court of Honor trip review (coming this fall). Dinner was a great meal of shrimp alfredo before heading off to bed.

On Sunday we got on the water and had a couple short portages and stretches of paddling through lily pads—I learned later that they are entirely edible, but I do not recommend it—before eating a very light lunch of bars, crackers, cheese, tuna, and pepperoni (an Algonquin staple). Then it was on to the white caps of Radiant Lake. This lake was really hard to get through as strong winds and shallow waters in the middle of the lake made paddling in anything resembling a straight line virtually impossible. Eventually, we landed on a beach for a break before walking the canoes around a point. From there it was a short paddle to a short portage and our campsite. We had to split up the crew to sleep in different campsites. The campsite that the youth got was full of mosquitos (another Algonquin staple).

Monday was the toughest day by far. It took forever to make our breakfast of pancakes, though they were pretty good. Then it was on to lots of little stretches of paddling with longer portages in between them. We did the longest portage of the trip, and even after that we still had 4 more to go. I will never forget the wave of relief that washed over me when, at the end of a portage, from under my canoe I heard Mr. Siegle's voice tell us to "put [our] stuff down and get in the water. It's good for you." That dinner was the best one of the trip with steaks, sautéed mushrooms, grilled asparagus and mashed potatoes. Little did we know that it was the calm before the storm as when the sun got low, the mosquitoes came out like they had never before and sent us running (and yelling) to our tents—some of which still needed to be set up.



On Tuesday we slept in, recovering from the previous day, before having a cooked breakfast of eggs and bacon. We paddled across Lake Traverse which thankfully wasn't anything like Radiant Lake. The water was calmer and the wind tamer. We stopped for lunch on a beach before continuing across the lake. Luckily, we were finally going with the wind so Justin and I got to use our canoe sail and didn't have to paddle. We stayed at another beautiful island campsite where we swam before having dinner and, as a little treat, freshwater muscles—yummm. Later we were treated to some of Doug's philosophical insights to think about as we fell asleep.



On Wednesday we ran a few light rapids. We all ran the rapids multiple times, practicing our techniques and coordination, with only one canoe flipping (Mr. Duff and Mr. Wark's). Then we continued on through some class 2 rapids before arriving at our campsite. Like before, we had to split up, so the youth took a campsite in the middle of the portage by the class 4 rapids that we were portaging around. It was beautiful and, with nature's white noise machine to help us sleep, we went to bed.

We were quite anxious to get to the Natch on Thursday. There was a portage and then a bit of paddling before we reached the worst portages of the trip. They were on the sides of steep hills with trees and rocks blocking the canoes from moving freely and pine needles to slip on. No one fell with their canoe and we were able to make it to the Natch before noon. We had a nice lunch of "grilled cheeses" and soup before exploring the freshwater spring and the giant cliff that made the Natch, the Natch. The spring was freezing, so we filled our water bottles up straight from the rocks before climbing the long sketchy trail up to the cliff. We sang the second highest troop song ever before descending back down to the campsite to swim.

Friday was our earliest day as we had a long way to go before we would be picked up by the bus at 1:00pm. We headed out at 6:30am and made our way through rapids that we could not see through thick mist. The air was cold but the water was warm so it felt nice to be splashed a little by the rapids. Rapid after rapid, we continued on. Then we reached the three lakes we had to paddle across before our take-out point. Just 300 yards away from the take-out point, Doug and Colton flipped. We were able to perform a canoe-over-canoe rescue and get them to shore before putting the canoes on the trailer and piling on to the bus. With that, our thrilling adventure through the Canadian wilderness was over. PHYCH! Then we drove to another put-in point, got out, unloaded the canoes and had lunch before paddling through a beautiful canyon and doing a few more portages. We reached our final campsite and then had a great dinner of whatever meals we had left before learning about more of Colton and Doug's exploits working at the Sly Fox.

On Saturday, we completed our final paddle, portage, and rapids before betting on how late the bus would pull into the parking lot to pick us up. (The bus could not fit into the parking lot so nobody ended up winning.) We then, for a second time, loaded the canoes onto the trailer before piling onto the bus with the lake crews to head home. We stopped at Wellsley State Park for a shower/bathroom break and then boarded the bus for the trip home. PHYCH! The bus wouldn't start! We got off of the bus while the adults flagged down anyone with an old diesel and got to work. Finally, the bus shuddered and then whirled up to a sound close enough to what it had been before so we got on the bus and were off again, back home. Lots of sleeping, movies, and fast food later, we reached the cabin where we unloaded and got picked up. This was an awesome trip and, I think, even though it was hard at times, we worked together and pushed through like always to make the trip an amazing success.

Algonquin: Lake Crew, Classic Loons Paddlers and Portagers

By Judah C.

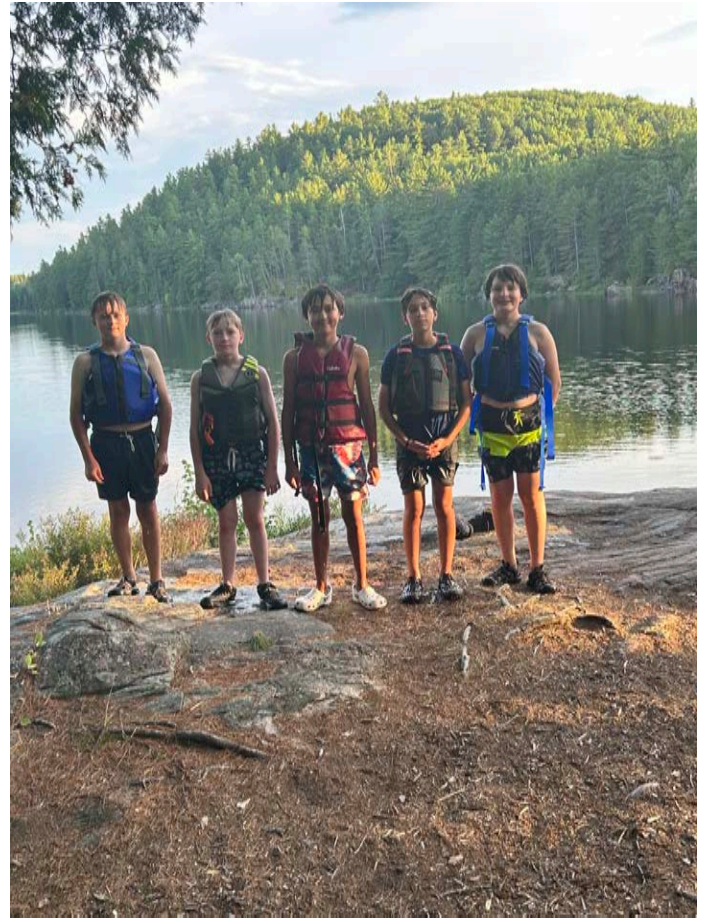
This summer, 33 Scouts and Scouters from Troop 78 embarked on an unforgettable canoeing and camping expedition through the wilderness of Algonquin Provincial Park in Canada. My crew, the **Classic Loons**, included Mr. D, Mr. Siegle (when he wasn't with the river crews), Mr. Bull, Mr. Skodny, Mr. Campbell, Alexander Bull, Cooper Hartman, and me.

Our journey was filled with challenges, laughter, hearty meals, and moments of pure outdoor fun. By the end of the trek, we had paddled more than **35 miles** and carried our canoes across **17 portages—some as long as 600 meters**. The hard work was well worth it, as we came away with memories to last a lifetime.

After leaving early Friday morning (6:00 a.m. sharp!) and driving nearly nine hours, the troop set up camp in Pembroke, Canada. The next morning, we launched our canoes on Grand Lake—the true start of our wilderness adventure. Spirits were high as we paddled across glassy waters toward our first campsite, tucked away in a quiet cove. That evening, we faced our first challenge: discovering we had forgotten the

grill grate for our much-anticipated steak dinner. Quick teamwork saved the night as Mr. Siegle and Mr. Skodny paddled back to retrieve one. Thanks to their effort, we enjoyed a delicious steak meal under the stars.

The next day, after fresh eggs for breakfast (with Montreal steak seasoning, of course), we moved to a breezier campsite on a scenic point—complete with a perfect swimming spot. That night, we enjoyed another “Mr. Siegle Special”: shrimp dinner cooked to perfection. On Monday, our crew split duties: Mr. Siegle joined the river group, while Mr. D and my dad repositioned vehicles. The rest of us tested our paddling skills and explored the beautiful cascades nearby. Tuesday brought another move to Carcajou Bay—our favorite campsite of the trip. We joined the other lake crew for swimming, exploring, and fishing. Cooper proved to be our best fisherman, though I managed to catch seven fish using just American cheese!



Wednesday tested our strength with portages around waterfalls and explorations of Upper and Lower Spectacle Lakes. Lunch that day was a classic Algonquin lunch of meat, cheese, crackers, and a strange food called SPAM, enjoyed on a lake with no one else in sight. We returned to camp sore but more confident for the big portages ahead.

The next site was harder to reach, with slippery rocks and a long hike to the thunder box, but it came with its own treasures and beautiful views. We discovered an old Aboriginal campsite and even found lake mussels in the shallows. That afternoon, we paddled down Stratton Lake and found a natural waterslide—an instant favorite memory for the whole crew.

Friday was our toughest day yet: **nine portages** plus miles of paddling. Late in the afternoon, we reached our final campsite along the Barron River.

Though tired and sore, we felt immense pride in what we had accomplished. That night, we reunited with Mr. Siegle, cooled off with a river bath, and celebrated as Cooper landed a huge smallmouth bass. We closed the evening with a beautiful poem about Algonquin, written and recited by Mr. Siegle.

On Saturday, we packed up and began the long journey home. With time to spare, the troop decided to push through and return to the Troop 78 cabin that night, rather than camping again. But our adventure wasn't finished just yet—our faithful bus broke down for over an hour, adding one last challenge. Thanks to some dad-powered “mechanic magic,” the bus roared back to life, and we rolled into the cabin just before midnight—tired but proud.

The Algonquin trip was a huge success. The Classic Loons crew faced our challenges with teamwork, enjoyed the beauty of Canada's wilderness, and built memories together. It was the kind of experience that embodies the spirit of Scouting: outdoor skills, resilience, friendship, and fun. I can't wait to go back.



CLASSIC LOONS PADDLERS AND PORTAGERS

Algonquin: Lake Crew

By Sebastian B.

Day 1

When I arrived at the cabin in the early morning with my pack filled with everything I would need for the next week in Canada, I helped load all the gear onto the bus. Once everyone's gear was loaded, I got on the bus with everyone else and got ready for the long ride ahead of us. For the first few hours I was resting trying to get some more sleep before I finally gave in and hopped onto my phone. I played Clash Royale and other games before I decided to switch to my Nintendo 3DS. I played Pokemon Heartgold for a few hours before we stopped to get lunch. Most of the group went to Chick-fil-A while most of the adults and some kids went to Chipotle. We ordered one at a time and I got a Chick-fil-A sandwich, fries, a shake, and then a lemonade which was extra that no one ordered. We then got back on the bus with full stomachs and then I played on my 3DS until we finally got to the border. I pulled out my phone and took a few photos of the bridge and gateways before the entire crew hopped off the bus to go through security. Once we were in Canada, I played Baseball 9 on my phone before we were at our campground for the night. I then helped set up Alexander W's and my tent. I organized my sleeping equipment before heading out with the others to play tag on the playground in the area. After the group was exhausted, I went to eat pizza delivered by the adults and went down by the river to



skip some rocks. The group then saw an army helicopter with two sets of blades flying over us for the baseball game nearby. We then got water from a kind lady who allowed us to get some from their faucet. Afterward I went out with a bunch of other kids from our troop to play mini golf. Ethan S paid for us and we split up into groups. We used tactics such as riding on the concrete walls that surrounded each hole to get us closer to the hole. I scored a few holes in one and got a few bogies, but overall, I tied with Ryan W for first place out of everyone with a score of 42. I then paid Ethan back and organized my things for the next day before joining a meeting where the adults told us what to expect for the days ahead. I then headed into my shared tent and went to sleep ready for the week ahead of me.

Day 2

When I got up in the morning, I packed up my sleeping equipment and helped take down my shared tent. Afterward I went to the picnic table for a breakfast of cereal, donuts, and bagels. I then continued to take a shower in the shower house. After taking a shower, the kids on the river crew left on the bus so I had time to relax. For a few hours I skipped rocks on the beach, threw rocks to see how far I could get them, and went out onto the peninsula where the lake crews sat on rocks and looked at the view. I then went back to the playground and went on the swings for a little while before joining the other kids in the water park. I did not want to get wet, so I tried to avoid the water while still having fun. We then waited for the bus to come back to pick us up and drive us to the lakes. When the bus came, Mr. D got us hoagies for lunch since the bus came

back later than expected. After the meal I played on my 3DS until we arrived at Achray campground, our drop off area. Once we arrived, we got our bags, PFDs, and paddles to the shore before portaging our canoes down to where we left our bags. I then applied sunscreen and bug repellent before loading my pack into my dad's and my canoe, after everyone was ready, we split up with the other lake crew and paddled our way down the river to our first campsite. Once we arrived, we set up our tents, clotheslines, and chairs before filtering water from the lake. Later that evening we made dinner and a dessert of blueberry pancakes. After eating, the bugs started to come out, so we went inside our tents, set up our sleeping supplies and went to bed.



Day 3

When I woke up in the morning, I got out of my sleeping bag and went to help cook breakfast. We had a late start to the day, but nothing a delicious breakfast could not fix. Once we were done, we cleaned up and got our gear into our canoes. I headed out on the lake with my father and paddled up the lake until we eventually stopped and cast out our rods to try and catch some fish. After a little while the group pulled their canoes ashore and started fishing together while wading into the water. We caught smaller fish at shore and used them as bait to try to catch larger fish in the middle of the lake. We were fishing for a few hours before we got tired and got back in our canoes. We had a lot of fun and caught many fish, but unfortunately none were big enough to eat during that adventure. We canoed for a while until we landed at a trail. We then pulled our canoes ashore and got out our lunch which consisted of crackers, Nutella, Spam, and rice crispy treats. We did not have enough rice crispy treats so some of the adults kindly gave up their snack for the younger kids. We then cleaned up and headed back out onto the lake before paddling back to our campground. We rested for a little bit looking at the view while some people cooked dinner. Once dinner was ready everyone ate until we

had a dessert of muffins that looked like a giant pancake. Alexander was not feeling well, so I was going to sleep with the three other kids for tonight. We looked at the water until we spotted an otter swimming across the lake. We then cleaned up dinner and went back into our tents. After getting ready for bed, I saw a toad and thought of a funny idea. I brought the toad into Mason's tent before handing the toad (wrapped up in a bag) to Mason. Mason freaked out when it jumped on him, so the toad hopped to the other side of the tent where it peed. I then picked up the toad and put it outside while Mason was still looking surprised. Later we got ready for a good rest to prepare for the days ahead filled to the brim with excitement and adventures.

Day 4

I woke up and started helping make breakfast, which was pancakes. After a delicious meal we cleaned up and headed out on the water. We went out farther on the lake and started to explore. We went up a small stream and pulled our canoes out of the water. My legs got torn up from the weeds, but we later got into the woods. After hiking in the woods without a trail for a while we saw poop on the ground that was purple. Mr. Opielski said that it was bear poop and was purple because of the berries that they ate. We continued hiking until we reached a road that was an old railroad track and a lake on the other side. I thought that this would be a good place to see fish, moose, and other wildlife, but they would not come out until the evening. After looking at the surroundings for a while the group decided to go back to our campsite for lunch. We went back down the hill into the woods before we quickly reencountered the bear poop. After a little more hiking we finally arrived at the canoes. My dad tried to enter my canoe, so he used Mason's canoe for balance. He capsized their canoe and almost capsized ours. Once we were back on the lake Mason noticed a tadpole and a few leeches at the bottom of his canoe. We later arrived back at our campsite and started on making lunch. We ate a late lunch before cleaning up and heading back to fish on the lake. We did not catch any fish after a few hours, so we headed back to camp to start cooking a dinner of beef stroganoff. Later after cleaning up dinner, we cleaned our clothes and took a bath in the lake before hanging up our towels and clothes to dry off. We then went to bed exhausted and not excited about the early rise in the following morning.



Day 5

We woke up early in the morning and started taking down our tents, clotheslines, and chairs. Once we were all packed up, we ate a quick breakfast of oatmeal and power bars before cleaning up breakfast. We devised a plan that some of us would get more food from the truck while some other people and I went to claim a campground. I put my gear and some of my father's gear into our canoe before heading off. I paddled for a while before we saw the other lake crew and talked for a little while. Later we left and continued paddling before we saw a bald eagle high up in a tree. After passing it, we then saw a rocky island filled with birds before continuing down a narrow passage into our next lake. When we found a good campsite, we left a few scouts to stay there while the Esterlys, my dad, and I went to explore the other campsites. After paddling for a while we found out that the other campsites were too small and rocky to camp on, so we decided to head back. Once we came back, we found another campsite, so we checked it out. It had a lot of space, but it had half a table, bones lying on the ground, and tree trunks in the ground. We decided to take the one we started with just before the other lake crew came in. They chose the big one while we set up our tents in the cozy, but spectacular smaller one. Once the water filters were running, we started making a delicious lunch before

cleaning up and exploring the falls at the end of the lake. When we arrived at the high falls, we pulled our canoes ashore and started hiking to the waterfalls. The rocks were a bit slippery in the small ponds with moss covering them, but we continued until we reached the top where there was a beaver dam. We did not go near it, so we went on the natural water slides until the day was over. We then saw some green blobs that were tadpole eggs, so we avoided them and headed back. We canoed for a bit before we arrived at a jumping rock. I jumped off of it a bunch of times before going back to our campsite. We cleaned our clothes and ourselves in the lake before hanging them up to dry and starting dinner. After dinner we made dessert before cleaning up and heading to bed.

Day 6

When I woke up, I packed up my sleeping supplies and started taking down the tent. We then made, ate, and cleaned up breakfast before loading our gear into our canoes. Once we were on the water we paddled for a little while before we were back on Grand Lake. We went down a slow narrow river before we reached another lake. We paddled for a few hours before we reached our lake. We split up and one group stayed at another campsite to save one for us while Mr. Opielski and my family went further towards another campsite that was open. Once we arrived, we thought it was a great-looking campsite, so Mr. Opielski went back to get the others. The others came a little while later thinking that their campsite was better;



however, we had already made up our minds. We started setting up our tents and clotheslines before deciding to head back out onto the water. We paddled up the lake until we reached a small passageway, where we canoed until we saw a small rapid. I went down it two times before we pulled the canoes ashore and went through a trail to the falls. We swam, hiked, and waded our way through the small lakes until we reached the natural water slides. We went down the water slides a lot until we decided to have lunch. We had Spam, naan, cheese, and pepperoni before we started to rest. After a while we decided to continue exploring the falls. We continued until we saw a huge waterfall where we took a photo and tried to find a way down. The trail did not continue for long, so we turned around and started to head back. Once we were going back, we saw some people jumping off rocks, but we continued until we reached our canoes. When we arrived, we started to push our canoes back into the water before we paddled back to our campsite. When we arrived back at our campsite, we started to make and eat dinner, before cleaning up. The kids went in the water and started playing. Later when everyone dried off, we started to head off to bed.

Day 7

I woke up and started to help cook breakfast. After eating we cleaned up and organized our fishing gear into our canoes before we pushed them into the water. We then paddled until we arrived at a trail where we portaged our canoes across to another lake. We put our canoes on the water and fished for a while. By the shore we caught a lot of fish; however, none were big enough to eat. We fished for a few hours until we started getting bitten by black flies, so we headed back to shore. We fished for a while at the shore before we portaged our canoes back to the main lake and paddled back to our campground. We then started to make and eat lunch until the food was depleted. We then cleaned up lunch before spreading out to read, sleep, catch frogs, or organize gear. I was trying to catch frogs when I noticed two big frogs, a bunch of tinier frogs, and a frog with

only three legs. After a while I tried to fish from shore, but I did not have much luck. I went back to looking at the frogs and then I heard a frog squealing. I went over and saw a snake, with a frog in its mouth, trying to swallow it. I called the others over just in time to see the snake swallow the frog whole. After a while of resting, we decided to have dinner. We cooked dinner and cinnamon swirl bread for dessert which was delicious. After we ate, we cleaned up and organized our gear for the following day. A little while later I noticed the thousands of stars in the sky. I got my dad and everyone else up and we started to look at the stars for a while. While we were looking up, we saw the Milky Way, a bunch of shooting stars, some planes, satellites, planets, and millions of stars speckling the sky. After a while people got tired so they started heading off to bed.

Day 8

When I woke up, I packed up my things, took down my tent, and helped my father with his gear. Afterward we helped make a skillet breakfast, before eating it and cleaning up. Once everything was put away we loaded our gear into our canoes and started to paddle back. We paddled for a few hours before we reached a narrow waterway with lily pads on the edges. We then saw a beaver carrying a clump of grass swimming across the water. We got close to it before it dived under Mr. Opielski's canoe and swam off. After a little more paddling we reached the lake and headed towards the campsite where the other lake crew stayed. When we arrived we started to make lunch. After a lunch of Spam, tuna, Nutella, and crackers we cleaned up and started to fish. We caught some fish and avoided a yellow jacket nest in the area. After a little while Mason caught a fish and waved it in front of a snake that he found. The snake bit it and got stuck on the hook. After a while the fish wiggled out of the hook and fell into the water, but the snake we had to pull out. After it was free it quickly slithered back into the water. Later we played Uno in which some adults and a few kids won. After playing Uno, the group started to make dinner and eat before cleaning up. After dinner there were a few more rounds of Uno before people started to get tired and headed off to set up their sleeping supplies and go to bed.



Day 9

We woke up early in the morning and started taking down our tents getting ready for the journey home. We made a breakfast of leftovers which included oatmeal, power bars, and hot chocolate. Once we packed everything up, I brushed my teeth before getting my canoe in the water. It got away from me and started floating down the lake, so I hopped in and pulled myself aboard the canoe. After bringing it to shore my dad hopped in the back and we paddled off back to Achray campground. Once we arrived, we loaded life jackets, and canoes onto Mr. Siegle's trailer. Afterward I loaded my personal gear onto the bus and stopped by the souvenir shop with my dad to get ice cream and a book of photos. I then boarded the bus and played on my phone until we arrived at squirrel rapids where we picked up the river crews. Once the river crews were on the bus we drove for a few hours before we reached the border. I went through security again. I played on my phone for a few hours until we stopped for lunch at Wendy's where I got chicken nuggets, fries, and lemonade. After I ate, I played on my phone until it died before switching to my 3DS. After a while we stopped at a campground in New York and went on the playground for a bit. The bus broke down when we tried to turn it back on, but after awhile some people helped us get it to start up again. Once we were on the road again, I got on my 3DS and finally beat Pokemon Heartgold. I continued to play before we stopped for a bathroom break. After I got back on the bus, I continued to play on my 3DS before we stopped for dinner. We

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ordered at Chick-fil-A where I got a chicken sandwich and fries. After dinner, my 3DS died so I tried to get some sleep.

I could not sleep, but after a few hours we got back to the cabin where we unloaded our gear and drove home to get a good night's sleep.



Camp Horseshoe: Summer Camp

Week One Sunday June 22 - Saturday June 28, 2025

Dan Beard Campsite

By Jay T.

The over 40 scouts in the troop arrived at Dan Beard in the early afternoon of Sunday, June 22nd. The usual hustle and bustle of move in day ensued as Patrol Leaders helped their patrols get settled into their patrol sites and scouts rushed to set up hammocks and secure their spot in hammock city. When all were present and accounted for, we got a tour of the camp before our health check-ins.



Then we went down to the pool to do our swim checks. After some missing buddy tags were crafted, we made our way back up the trail to Dan Beard to get changed and relax before marching practice. I am proud to say that on the first day of marching at retreat, we won the trophy! At dinner, we got a taste of what the food would be like for the rest of the week or two that we would be at camp and the general consensus was that it was better than last year. When the bell rang 21 times for the 21 times Cole forgot to say “when the bell rings 21 times,” we headed down for the opening campfire where we saw a few funny skits and sang a few songs.

The next morning, everyone went through the daily routine of going off to their merit badges, lunch, then more merit badges before marching practice and retreat. That night was the first campwide game, and we had no idea what it was. We expected it to be the standard scavenger hunt and we were very wrong. Luckily, we had a new tool to help us scheme on the go—our walkie talkies. With these we were able to work together to figure out that the game was supposed to be a combination of the scavenger hunt and patrol games. Each patrol would go to stations around camp to collect staff signatures through games and then come back to Goodman Pavilion and make items for the scavenger hunt. Our strategy to dominate the competition was for each patrol to go to every station while the ASPLs and I made all of the scavenger hunt items so the patrols could just hand them in. This plan worked quite well and we won first place in this event!

By Tuesday the week was getting quite hot (100°F+), so retreat was cancelled and a new cheer, the “Water Check” was introduced. That night was the troop auction where scouts bid on items they wanted to raise money for the troop snack every night at Horseshoe. On Wednesday the walkie talkies worked quite well again as the game was again one that we had never seen before: staff hunt, but with bracelets and a little murder-mystery game within the staff hunt. We, again, came in first! On Thursday, the events for Paul Bunyan Field Day (Pbfd) were announced and so the troop gathered materials and everyone practiced for their respective competitions. That night was another troop night, so we had a campfire with more skits and songs.

On Friday the air was alive with nervousness and excitement as we went off to our morning merit badges before having lunch and an extended siesta before the Paul Bunyan Field Day activities. The games started with string burning, where we destroyed the competition—we had burned out both of our strings before any other team had even lit their fire, earning us the Paul Bunyan Field Day record in that event. In 9-knot, we also won and set another Paul Bunyan record. The troop competed in many other events, including a Paul Bunyan look alike contest,

Babe the blue ox hunt, heaving bar, giant clove hitch, and knot squadron, to name a few. We were getting first in most of the events and placing in almost every other one. Finally, with our scout spirit through the roof, it was time for the last competition, SPL marching (aka musical chairs). Being the SPL, I had no choice but to put my listening ears and reaction time to the test. I made it to the final three before they paused the music when I wasn’t in front of a seat, so I grabbed the chair from my



opponent and sat down myself. After a bit of controversy the staff ruled that it was a legal move, so I moved on to the last round. In this round, my opponent and I grabbed the chair at the same time, neither of us getting it, so we both agreed to not move the chair again and I got second place. After PBFD we were all anxious to know how we did but we still had to march and after a few days of no marching practice because of heat or rain, we were a little rusty. Even so, we won, securing the marching victory for the week. That night we had our closing campfire, where every patrol earned the Standard Patrol Award and we earned the Standard Troop Award. Then, after a full day, we had a snack and went to bed.

On Saturday morning we woke up bright and early to make our way to Chapel by 6:30AM before returning to pack up our campsite. At 9:30AM we headed to brunch where the campwide competition awards were given out. We placed in almost every event including the speed climb, the inter-troop archery shoot, the obstacle course, the track meet, and the clean camp award. Places and competitions aside, this week at camp was a blast! Even with the scorching heat, we were able to have fun and make Horseshoe our own. I hope everyone had as good a time as I did and I am sad that it will be my last as a youth.



Week Two: Sunday June 29 - Saturday July 5, 2025

Dan Beard Campsite

By Ethan S.

A few newcomers joined most of the scouts from week one in Dan Beard for Troop 78's second week at Camp Horseshoe. After the new arrivals completed their health check and swim test, they rejoined the rest of the troop. The scouts spent the afternoon organizing their tents and getting to know their new patrols. Once everyone was finished, we started marching practice, which paid off with a win that evening. After the next morning's tent inspection and breakfast, the scouts departed for their morning merit badges. My first badge was kayaking, which is a great choice for scouts looking to avoid the summer heat. That evening was our first camp-wide game of the week. The patrols raced to each of the program areas hoping to be the first to complete every department's game — by the time the event concluded, we were all ready for a shower and the troop's nighttime snack.

The next day, each scout made considerable progress on their morning merit badges. That changed during siesta, when hardcover was called and torrents of rain drenched the camp for hours. We kept ourselves entertained with songs and cheers under the shelter of the pavilion. Unfortunately, the rain resulted in the pool being closed for the rest of the week, meaning our Wednesday evening water polo game against the camp staff had to be cancelled. However, we arranged for a volleyball game to be held in its place. After a hard-fought match (which included the Horseshoe choir singing the troop song and our team entering to the Chicago Bulls entrance song), Troop 78 emerged victorious. On Thursday, those of us not on outpost competed in the troop volleyball tournament and performed creative skits during the troop campfire.

We spent most of the next day preparing for the highlight of the week, the first ever Water Bunyan Carnival Day. This inter-troop competition was a substitution for the traditional Water Carnival (the pool had not reopened yet) and included a mix of water themed PBFD events and land-adapted Water Carnival events. One of the first events was Nautical 9-Knot, which swapped seven of the usual knots for obscure sailing-related knots. Our contestant, Nic O, learned all of the new knots in less than a day and was the only one to finish. Another highlight was Synchronized Swim, which was adapted to be a group dance event. Our team of scouts impressed the judges with their patriotic performance (the competition took place on July 4th) and earned scores as high as 13/10.

That evening was the closing campfire, where scouts were recognized for their achievements during the week. We were up early the next morning for the sunrise Chapel service, which was followed by the traditional Saturday brunch. During this meal each troop was presented with ribbons for each competition they placed in (Troop 78 earned quite a few) and it was announced that we had tied with Troop 56 for first place in Water Bunyan Carnival Day. After celebrating our successes, we had one last fall-in and were soon on the way home from another great summer in the Octoraro bend.



Field Day!

Part I Friday June 6, 2025

Part II Sunday June 8, 2025

By Ethan S.

This past spring, Troop 78 held its 74th annual Field Day. In this tradition, the six patrols compete to earn points in various events. The first few events were held during Part I on Friday evening. The night started off with the ever-challenging scout's pace. Once everyone caught their breath (especially first-place Rattlesnake patrol), the patrols rotated through four more events around the cabin grounds. First was compass, followed by nature identification, eight knot, and judging, where Stag patrol excelled. The final event of the night was water boiling, one of the more heated competitions. At the end of Part I, Panther patrol was on top, followed by Cougar, Rattlesnake, Stag, Flying Eagle, and Moose.

On Sunday afternoon, families and friends were in attendance to watch Part II unfold. The inaugural competition was log chopping, in which the entire patrol takes a turn with the axe. Next was 9-knot and the lashing-based chariot race. These were followed by the quickest event: flint and steel, which went very well this year. Putting the fires out probably took longer than lighting them! Soon it was time for heaving bar, which saw a number of disqualifications in the youth event, while Mr. Tyson won the adult version. In giant clove hitch, a crowd favorite, Moose patrol pioneered an innovative but unsuccessful method. The final two events of the day, string burning and knot relay, saw excellent performances from Cougar patrol and Flying Eagle patrol, respectively.

At the conclusion of the competition, the winning patrol, Panther, was presented with the W. Roberts Cameron Scoutcraft Trophy for the first time in 29 years. Rattlesnake patrol came in second, followed by Cougar, Flying Eagle, Stag, and Moose.

After Field Day, everyone headed inside for the Court of Honor. Four scouts—Ben B., Oliver L., Doug J., and Abhinav J.—were presented with the rank of Eagle Scout. We are all proud of their leadership and commitment to scouting. At the close of the ceremony, Mr. D was recognized for his outstanding dedication as Scoutmaster of Troop 78. The day ended with the Family Picnic, where we enjoyed hamburgers and hot dogs and celebrated the Eagle Scouts' accomplishments.



PANTHER, THE WINNING PATROL, PL: ETHAN S.

“Band” - Our New Text Notification Platform!

Long story short: The Troop 78 text notification platform “Remind” has changed its rules and no longer allows non-profits other than schools.

We are adopting a new platform called “Band.”

Band will offer Troop 78 access to an expanded set of communication and group / event management services. This will allow us to provide improved instant communications and a better membership experience for scouts, scouters and parents.



Please download the Band app on your smartphone and join our group, “Willistown Troop 78” using the following link.

[Click this link to join the Troop 78 group on our new system.](#)

Radnor Races Thank You!

On behalf of the Troop Committee; Don Tyson, Steve Brown and I want to thank you for your efforts at this spring's Radnor Event. The Radnor Hunt Races depends on Troop 78 to handle most of the supporting functions that make this great event possible. The Troop depends on you, its extended family, to enable us to do this.

You can choose your own cliché for Race Day this year. "Dodged a Bullet," or maybe "snatched victory from the jaws of defeat." A wet week followed by an ominous Saturday forecast left us scrambling to devise a plan that would allow us to park a bunch of cars and welcome lots of patrons with the prospect of up to 3 of our Parking areas unusable. The big day began with more rain and... The sun came out, ground drying winds picked up and we were able to execute our original plans! In this, our 35th year, the Troop faced big challenges. Pony Races were expanded again and we needed to be ready to react as things developed. But Troop 78 came through! Thanks for your flexibility, which allowed us to accomplish our tasks. You came out in great numbers on Saturday and more than 50(!) of us were back on Sunday for clean-up. We finished that task in well under four hours. Quite an achievement, and we unquestionably left the Radnor Hunt Club grounds in better condition than they were early Saturday morning. *Thanks so much for your fabulous efforts.*

Your participation helped the Troop in one of our major fund-raising activities. Further, you helped raise money for the Brandywine Conservancy in its ongoing and crucial efforts to preserve open space in our area. We also were able to show the public the kind of great work that Boy Scouts & Troop 78 do in our Community. I hope you were able to enjoy yourself too.

This year we had a large group of newcomers to join with our veteran members and our legendary corps of "Old-Timers." Together we once again put forth the kind of effort that most groups could not even imagine; just another day at the Races for Troop 78.

THANKS AGAIN!

Very sincerely,
Brian Rothberg



These are the families who came out and worked with the Troop. If you could not make it this year, we look forward to seeing you next May.

Anandh	Capelli	Fury*	Lang*	Peruzzi	Souder*
Badgley	Charlton	Govindan	Lang	Riley*	Stergiades
Bao	Christaldi	Gruss*	Larkin	Rothberg*	Stevens*
Batuello*	Curry*	Gunderson	Madarasz*	Rubino*	Sugzdinis
Bilson*	D'Antonio*	Happ	Mannes	Rule	Tang
Bilson*	DeVirgilio*	Hartman	Marshall	Sansone	Tyson
Bravo*	Diederich	Heckenberger	Meenakashi	Saraswat	Vercoc*
Brogan*	Dinsmore*	Heo	Miller*	Schallack	Vereddigari
Brown*	Dondero*	Hogan*	Moss*	Scott	Walton
Brown*	Elangovan	Hulage	Motel*	Seymour	Wark
Brown*	Esterly	Johnson	Mundy	Shay*	Wyher
Bryan	Fenimore*	Kartick	Nakayama	Siegle*	Xiao
Bull	Fisher	Kuppireddi	Opielski	Simms	Zhao
Campbell	Fox*	Lane*	Orlow*	Skodny	

The names followed by * are people and families that came out and helped Troop 78 in spite of the fact that they no longer have (and in some cases never had) an active boy in the troop. **Thank you!**

You are a wonderful example of the spirit of our Troop and its extended family!

Upcoming Events

First Meeting of the New Scout Year!

Friday September 5, 2025

Cabin

The Scout year begins fresh on what we expect to be a glorious evening on the first Friday in September. We will greet each other at the start of another year of adventures.



Family Food Festival

Friday September 12, 2025

Cabin

Please join us for an evening of cultural exchange, fun, and food. Scouts are asked to bring a dish, either a main course or a dessert, which would be served at a gathering of their family and represents their ancestral culture.

[Click here for more information.](#)



Cabin Workday

Saturday September 13, 2025

Cabin

It will be all hands on deck Saturday September 13 for some much needed clean up at the cabin to get our meeting place ready for a big year of scouting program! Please plan to join us for various projects inside and outside the cabin. We need your help!



Campout: Knoebels Park and Hickory Run State Park

Friday September 19 - Sunday September 21, 2025

Please join us for a weekend of fun and camping at Knoebels Amusement Park and Hickory Run State Park.



Order of the Arrow

Octoraro Lodge 22 Ordeal and Service Weekend

Friday September 26 - Sunday September 28, 2025

Camp Horseshoe

Octoraro Lodge 22 Fellowship & Vigil weekend will be Friday, September 22nd thru Sunday, September 24th. The youth officers have lots of great fellowship events planned like the return of the Amazing Race Challenge.

The weekend will focus heavily on fellowship rather than service projects.

Please sign up today.

Members and candidates only.



[Please click here for more information.](#)

[Click here for the National Order of the Arrow Newsletter.](#)

Chester County Council News

Dedication of the Eagle Pavilion

Friday September 19, 2025, 6PM tours, 7:30PM
dedication
PARC

1 Scouting Way, Exton

The Eagle Pavilion at Chester County Council Headquarters in Exton will be the site of the first gathering of our new National Eagle Scout Association (NESA) chapter. We plan tours of PARC, light appetizers and dedication of the pavilion.

We want you to be a part of this new chapter of Eagle Alumni and join in fellowship and good work that Scouting America continues to do in Chester County. This is an age 21 and over event.



We're excited to invite you to the **very first National Eagle Scout Association (NESA) event in Chester County**—a long-awaited gathering made possible by the enthusiasm of volunteers like you.

Join us for **happy hour and guided tours** of the **PARC facility in Exton on September 19th**, beginning at **6:00 PM**. Then at **7:30 PM**, we'll hold a special **dedication ceremony for our new Eagle Pavilion**.

This is a **free event**, but we kindly ask that you **register in advance** so we can plan for a great experience. Dress is **business casual**—no uniforms, just a chance to connect and celebrate.

This gathering is open to all **Eagle Scouts age 21 and older**. Please share this invitation with fellow Eagles from your troop or community and on your troop alumni social media page.

We hope this marks the **start of a vibrant Eagle Scout alumni network** here in Chester County. Whether you're reconnecting or just getting involved, we'd love to have you be a part of it from the beginning.

Register now and help us launch something great!
[Click here for more information.](#)

Training Palooza

Saturday October 4 and Sunday October 5, 2025
Camp Ware

The Council will hold its annual training palooza the first weekend in October.

On those two days training will be offered in first aid, CPR, chainsaw safety, adult leader IOLS, youth leader ILST and much more.

[Click here for more information.](#)

Weekend Merit Badge Program

Camp Horseshoe

The weekend off-season merit badge will begin again with Kayaking MB Saturday September 13 at Camp Horseshoe. Please consider signing up for one of these exciting merit badges and an opportunity to visit camp during the off-season. Here is the complete list of merit badges offerings for this year: Kayaking, Shotgun, Plumbing, Cooking, Electricity/ Electronics, Communication, Geology, Welding, Fishing.



[Click here for more information.](#)



National Jamboree

Wednesday July 22 - Friday July 31, 2026

Summit Bechtel Reserve

[Click here for more information.](#)

[Click here for the Chester County Council Newsletter](#)

[Click here for the Diamond Rock District Newsletter](#)

Print this Newsletter for all of your family and friends to see!