



THE BROWNSEA GAZETTE

The Newsletter of Independent Scouting

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MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!!!



The Christmas Star

May the Light that shone from the Christmas Star
On that night so long ago
Fall on you this Christmas night and set your face aglow.
May it shine from your eyes.
May it rest in your mind.
May it burn in your Spirit bright.
May the Peace it spoke to a weary world.
Bring joy to your heart tonight.



The Timber Wolf Pack

Timber Wolves Grow Best When.....

- They are with adults who are at ease with them and who seem to enjoy them most of the time...
- They are permitted to make mistakes, which will not harm them unduly, and are permitted to live with adults who do not pretend to be perfect...
- Those about them believe in them and express confidence through word and through giving them freedom...
- Those about them understand what they are trying to do and support them in their endeavours...
- Those about them permit them to express doubts, to raise questions, to try their own ideas...
- They understand the limits of the freedom within which they can make decisions, and when this freedom is limited to the responsibility they feel they can carry at their stage of development...
- Those about them deal with them firmly and consistently...
- Adults around them behave as adults and show what the adult way is like...
- Those about them help them to succeed when they need help, but let them struggle when they are winning by themselves...
- Those around them gear their expectancy of a child's behaviour to their capacity for that behaviour...
- Those about them understand how they grow, and encourage sound growth...
- They feel strong within themselves, when they feel they are just the kind of person wanted by their family and friends, and their nation...
- There is an atmosphere of friendliness and warmth whether with adults or children...
- They meet actual life situations, emotionally charged, and deal with them successfully, with or without adult help...
- Their performance expectancy is related to themselves and not to others...
- They are interested in what they are doing for its own sake. They will be interested when it has meaning for them. Youth who are forced to perform at tasks they are not interested in are not learning, but are actually blocked. This attempt of battery against human nature will lose in the end.



The Otter Den

Songs for your Otters....

THE CIRCUS SONG

(Tune: "I've Been Working on the Railroad")

I am walking through the circus,
Happy as can be.
I am walking through the circus,
Just to see what I can see.
I can see the clown laughing.
I can see the elephant, too.
I can see the lion sleeping.
Look out! He sees you.

THE CIRCUS COMES TO TOWN

(Tune: When Johnny comes Marching Home)

The Otter circus comes to town
Hurrah, hurrah.
The elephants, monkeys and the clowns
Hurrah, hurrah.
The big brass band, it plays around
The circus acts with lots of sound,
And we'll all be there, -When
the circus comes to town.

The circus parade has come to town
Hurrah, hurrah,
With lions and tigers, and bears, and clowns,
Hurrah, hurrah,
The acrobats will do some tricks
The juggler performs with balls and sticks,
And we'll all be glad
When the circus comes to town.



Camp Recipe Corner

This month our Camp food ideas come to us from the Camp Kitchen of the 14th Dragon Lake.....

Chicken Kabobs

Chicken Breast is best precooked and then cut into cubes

Cut Red and Green Peppers into cubes

Quarter an Onion and separate the layers

Cut fresh mushrooms in half.

Soak the Kabob skewers in water for at least 20 minutes beforehand (or else they tend to catch on fire)

Alternate chicken with pepper, onion and/or mushrooms, as preferred.

Cook over low heat, covered, until heated well through. If not too hot, they do not need to be turned.

They can also be wrapped in foil and cooked near (not on) the coals of a fire. Hot rocks removed from a fire with the wrapped kabobs placed on top of them works well.

Can be served with rice, salad or baked potato wrapped in foil and cooked over the coals of a fire.





Camper's Corner

Well, it's the end of the year so we thought we would look at one of the activities 14th Dragon Lake did this year.....

Moose Camp at Cottonwood

It's mid-November and the 14th Dragon Lake Timberwolves are arriving for their first Winter Camp of the year at the historic Cottonwood House on the Barkerville Highway west of Quesnel, B.C. The sky is overcast and a balmy -2C as the 14 wolves, 4 leaders and 2 parent helpers unloaded their kits. Each Six was assigned a cabin with fair warning to keep their lair clean and tidy as surprise inspections would be conducted during the weekend. After the opening, a hike to the river was arranged with eyes to be peeled for fresh tracks in the snow. Moose, deer and dog tracks were everywhere to be found along with rabbit and mouse tracks as well. The river was still unfrozen and the low water showed many types of rocks and quartz. A story was told of the gold in the hills and the panners that still look for gold in the river today. Arriving back at the Cottonwood House site, a game of "Camouflage", a sort of hide and seek but you have to be able to see "it" at all times without being spotted.

We toured the buildings of the historic site and the young wolves were very interested in the "root cellar". Returning to the camp, dinner was started with a salad being prepared by some TWs while others were cooking the ground beef and preparing the fixings for the hard and soft Tacos. After a very filling meal and cleaning up the kitchen, a "scavenger hunt" was organized inside the General Store. In this hunt, the idea is to find information that is hidden in the pictures and displays, such as "Who built the Cottonwood House?", "When was it built?", "What kind of pickup truck is pictured here?" and "How many children did the original Boyd family have?". (We would give you the answers, but maybe you should visit the site for yourself to find out.) After the hunt, one of the parent helpers, Ahmed, told of his youth growing up in Somalia, Africa where his teacher told his class about a great gold rush that happened in a far away place called British Columbia and of a Roadhouse there called the "Cottonwood House". This place, he said, was across the Atlantic Ocean and across the continent of North America to a place on the other side of the World. "And here I am" said Ahmed "Standing in the Cottonwood House on the other side of the World from where I was born and my teacher telling me about over 30 years ago!"

The Timberwolves asked Ahmed about lions and tigers and he told them what life was like growing up in Africa. We returned to the camp and prepared a dessert of Bandarlogs (Bananas cut in half lengthways and stuffed with marshmallows and chocolate chips, wrapped in foil and either baked in the oven or placed on the coals of a fire). While the dessert was cooking, Bagheera pulled out his guitar and we all sang songs from a songbook that Grey Wolf had made up. The night getting late, it was time for the young wolves to head to their lairs and retire. (The Old Wolves stayed up a little later and planned the next day).

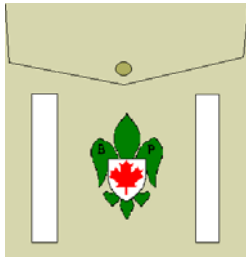
Sunday morning was still overcast and cool and a breakfast of sausages and omelettes with toast was prepared and devoured. Before heading out, a discussion on hypothermia and its dangers was in order due to the mild temperatures. Did you know that the most cases of hypothermia happen **above** the freezing point? That's when we don't dress properly and the cold sneaks up on us. A quick inspection of the lairs revealed neat and tidy cabins so another hike was arranged. Just as we started out some movement in the woods across the field was noted and out walked two huge moose! We all stood quietly and the moose sauntered away leaving the Timberwolves to call this our "Moose Camp". We explored the various trees in the area (mostly Cottonwood trees, however there was also Spruce, Fir and Birch).

We found a Vole running across the top of the snow, but it was not nearly as interesting as the Moose. Returning to camp, half the group decided to play a game of tag outside while the other half helped Keego build a harness on a pair of snowshoes using an inner tube. After the game, all the Timberwolves headed inside to warm up and watch Keego explain the differences between his external frame and an internal frame backpack. A lunch of grilled cheese sandwiches and chicken noodle soup warmed us up and it was time for the wolves to return to their lairs to pack up to head home.

Everyone had a wonderful time and we are all looking forward to our next Winter Camp at the end of January. Who knows what wildlife we might see next time!



Bagheera plays guitar while Ahmed and the Timberwolves decide which song to sing next.



Patrol Leaders Corner

How to Care for Your Backpack

1. Pack hard-edged items, such as stoves or cookware, carefully so they don't poke your back or rub holes in packed gear.
2. Remove any food bags from your pack, and don't leave pieces of crumbled snacks inside. The odors and tasty tidbits draw hungry varmints.
3. Clean out your pack after every trip. Unzip all pockets and compartments to shake out crumbs, dirt, sand and hazardous waste like crusty trail socks. If the pack is really grungy, sponge it off with mild soap and water. Air dry out of the sun, since ultraviolet rays can damage the nylon fabric in a surprisingly short time.
4. Perform basic maintenance. Stitch up any rips with a heavy metal needle and upholstery thread. If nylon straps are frayed, melt the edges with a match.
5. Check for annoying squeaks on external frames; try silicone spray anyplace the bag touches the frame. Replace any worn clevis pins or split rings.
6. Carry a spare clevis pin and a couple of split rings if you've got an external frame pack. These little units love to disappear at the most inopportune moments, and unless you have a spare, you'll have to live with a floppy pack-bag or shoulder strap.
7. Inspect your pack for loose seams or deteriorating hardware at major stress points around the hip belt, shoulder straps, and suspension stabilizers. A blown shoulder strap could mean big transport troubles deep in the woods. Repair worn zippers before they pop, otherwise you might end up with belongings strewn along miles of trail.
8. Store your pack in a cool, dry, airy place to keep it from collecting mildew, which can delaminate the fabric's waterproof coating.





Winter Skills

Snowshoe Basics

By Karen Berger

Photographs by John R. Fulton Jr.

Don't let a blanket of white keep you from hiking through a winter wonderland.

It's cold, it's winter, and there is two feet of snow covering the ground, but that's no reason to stay indoors. Strap on a pair of snowshoes, and you can stride out into the backcountry no matter what Mother Nature has in store.

Snowshoeing has become enormously popular in recent years. It's inexpensive, it's terrific exercise, and it's easy to do. If you can walk, you can snowshoe. Beginners can master basic skills in a few minutes.

Choosing a snowshoe

Snowshoes vary in shape and size from long and lean to short and stubby, depending on a person's weight and what type of snow they will travel on.

First, determine how much "float" you need. Float measures a snowshoe's effectiveness at keeping you on top of the snow. The heavier you (and your pack) are, the more float you'll need, and usually a bigger snowshoe.

Snow conditions matter, too. On fluffy dry powder, you need more float than on the wetter, hard-packed stuff. While all snowshoe manufacturers state the maximum weight a snowshoe is designed to carry, only some specify whether this applies to powder or hard-packed snow. If the manufacturer doesn't rate a snowshoe for the type of snow, you should ask before you buy.



Iverson's Modified Bearpaw is a white ash frame snowshoe available with either neoprene or rawhide lacings. The 12-inch-by-35-inch model supports 200 pounds.

As a rule, rounder snowshoes require you to walk a bit awkwardly with your feet spread farther apart. Narrower snowshoes track through deep snow better and allow you to walk with something close to a natural gait. Asymmetrical shapes are a compromise, allowing a natural gait without sacrificing too much float.

The Trail Adventure 8 series from the Atlas Snow-Shoe Co. is designed for moderate to steep terrain. The 25-inch model handles loads of 120 to 200 pounds. A new toe crampon design provides greater traction with two rows of teeth and also a wide base that eliminates heel twist on steep terrain. (www.atlassnowshoe.com)

If you are planning big mileage trips, snowshoe weight is important. Check out Northern Lites, which uses spacecraft-grade aluminum to make snowshoes that are only half as heavy as the average. Their Elite model (which holds up to 175 pounds) weighs in at a remarkable 35 ounces for the pair; the Backcountry, at 43 ounces, can take up to 250 pounds and is appropriate for mountaineering and backpacking. Their less expensive Quicksilver series is still lightweight but designed for less rigorous recreational use. (www.northernlites.com)



(Left) The Atlas snowshoe 8 series is designed for moderate to steep terrain. The 30-inch model, \$179, supports 170 to 250 pounds. (Right) The Northern Lites Backcountry, \$229, supports 175 to 250 pounds and uses spacecraft aluminum frames.

Traditional wood and leather

Not everyone prefers high-tech materials. Traditional snowshoes are made of wood and leather. Iverson, a company from Michigan's wintry Upper Peninsula, offers several models, including the SnowMate (for children and teens) and the popular Modified Bearpaw for adults. Sold separately are harnesses and bindings (neoprene or rawhide contraptions that attach the snowshoe to your boot) and crampons (which provide traction on ice). (www.iversonsnowshoe.com)

Most manufacturers, however, use standard lightweight aluminum for the frames and synthetics for the harness and bindings. Snowshoe styles are grouped by function, depending on whether you plan to backpack, hike, or race.

A leader in the field is Tubbs, whose Discovery line is an excellent choice for children, teens, and first-timers. This moderately priced snowshoe is available in a starter kit (\$189) that includes shoes, poles, and an instructional CD.

Tubbs's Pinnacle series is the top of the line in sophistication, flotation, and price. It is designed for more advanced terrain and can hold users up to 300 pounds. (www.tubbs-snowshoes.com)



(Left) The Tubbs 25-inch Altitude series supports 120 to 200 pounds and costs \$229. (Right) The 25-inch Pinnacle series is designed for day hikers covering moderate to steep terrain and costs \$249.

Bindings, boots, and poles

Most snowshoes come with built-in bindings, which attach the snowshoe to your boot. It takes some practice to fasten the bindings securely, if you use lace-ups. Step-in, ski-boot-style bindings are also available.

You can wear almost any kind of boots, including Maine-style hunting boots (also called shoepacs), backpacking boots, or insulated mountaineering boots. Try them on with the snowshoe in the store. Not all bindings will fit all boots. You'll also need a pair of gaiters to keep snow from entering your boots.

A pair of ski poles is a must: You will need them to keep your balance—and to help crawl out of the snow if you lose your balance.

Techniques for walking

Despite their clunky appearance, snowshoes actually allow you to walk in a normal gait. The only thing you can't do is walk backward, because the heel will stick in the snow and flip you over. To reverse direction, pivot the fronts of the snowshoes around in a circle.

For your first couple of excursions, stick to fairly flat terrain. Once you've mastered that, you can start on hills. It's easier to go straight up and straight down rather than sideways. The little crampons will grip the icy spots.

It won't take long for you to become confident in your snowshoeing skills. Soon you'll be taking every opportunity to explore the winter wilderness instead of staying cooped up inside with cabin fever.

Karen Berger is the author of nine books on outdoor adventure, including More Everyday Wisdom (Mountaineers Books). Visit her at www.hikerwriter.com.

Submissions for the next edition should be sent to:
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Remember that this is **YOUR** newsletter and we need
YOUR submissions and articles.

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