

Valley Forge Campout

November 18-20, 2011

“...unless some great and capital change suddenly takes place ... this Army must inevitably ... Starve, dissolve, or disperse, in order to obtain subsistence in the best manner they can.”

George Washington

VALLEY FORGE. The name evokes the images of George Washington kneeling in a snow-veiled forest praying for God’s blessings, while shivering, rag-tag soldiers – their feet bound in bloody rags and their coats tattered and worn – look on in desperation, hoping their leader will help them survive the winter and the next engagement with the British. The narrative and images of a rag-tag and demoralized Continental Army hunkering down in Valley Forge over



the winter of 1777-1778 come to the fore when we hear the name of that hallowed ground, and yet they are only partly true. Like many good legends told of weaker opponents defeating stronger ones, the story we are all told of Valley Forge when we are young is only half the story. The other half is equally if not more important.

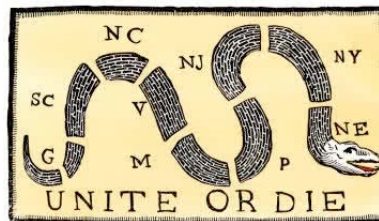
For it was in Valley Forge where that desperate Continental Army, demoralized after suffering numerous defeats against the more numerous and better trained and equipped British Army, determined to achieve a victory, prepared for the spring and summer fighting seasons ahead, and thus emerged stronger and more ready for

action than it had been entering the valley. It is from Valley Forge that the army under General Washington emerged in June to go on to battlefield victories at Monmouth, New Jersey and against British-held forts in present-day Indiana and Illinois and beyond. Drawing on these two images of Valley Forge, Troop 349 will encamp at Fort Washington State Park November 18-20, and focus its activities in two areas:

- 1) To train for and practice camping in cold weather conditions; and
- 2) To gain an appreciation for the vital importance of Valley Forge in our Revolutionary War history.

The cooking, camping and other activities we will do outside of Valley Forge will be done at Fort Washington State Park. We will spend most of Saturday, November 19 at Valley Forge National Historical Park, touring the Visitor Center, hiking the 6.6 mile historical Joseph Plumb Martin Trail, and learning from the re-enactors spread out along the trail. Key historical sites we shall see include Washington's headquarters, cabins of the type built by Continental Army soldiers during the winter of 1777-78, redoubts and revetments, and artillery placements.

This will be a good opportunity for our younger and new Scouts to focus on their Tenderfoot, Second and First Class requirements (including knot-tying, first aid, cooking and the proper handling of the knife, axe and saw), and for our older and more experienced First Class, Star and Eagle Scouts to teach these requirements, as well as develop an appreciation for the benefits that come from teammanship and proper, sustained training. *The aim is to go into Valley Forge over the weekend and come out a more cohesive, better trained and better prepared troop than we were entering the site. This would be in keeping with the experience our forefathers underwent over 230 years ago.*





Baron Von Steuben training Continental Army recruits at Valley Forge

We will need drivers. Because we cannot camp in a national historical park, we will have to stage out of Fort Washington State Park. (Fort Washington was the location where Washington and his soldiers encamped just prior to heading into Valley Forge.) It is a 30-minutes' drive from Valley Forge. The drive between Falls Church and Fort Washington takes 4.5 hours. We will need parents to take us up there and back, and to transport us between Fort Washington State Park and Valley Forge National Historical Park.

A notional, framework schedule which we will use for planning purposes is attached and should give you a better sense of how the weekend will play out, and how vital our parent drivers will be. Thank you in advance for your contribution to our troop in this way.

Scoutmaster Michael Keays

Friday, November 18, 2011 (Departure)

- 1500 GMHS Release
- 1530 Rally at American Legion parking lot.
- 1600 Depart American Legion parking lot.
- 1600-2000 Drive to Fort Washington State Park in Fort Washington, PA.
- 2000 Arrive at Fort Washington State Park and check in.
- 2000-2230 Set up camp. Review plan of day for Saturday.
- 2200 Lights out.

Saturday, November 19, 2011 (Main Day)

- 0650 Sunrise
- 0700 Wake up.
- 0700-0830 Breakfast and clean-up.
- 0845 Depart for Valley Forge National Historical Park.
- 0915 Arrive at Valley Forge National Historical Park.
- 0915-1530 Activities at Valley Forge National Historical Park.
- 1530 Depart for Fort Washington State Park.
- 1600 Arrive at Fort Washington State Park.
- 1600-1830 Dinner and clean-up.
- 1600-1640 Collect fire wood.
- 1640 Sunset.

1900-2000 Campfire.

2000-2015 PLC Meeting.

2015-2200 Free time.

2200 Lights out.

Sunday, November 20, 2011 (Return)

0700 Wake up.

0700-0830 Breakfast and clean-up.

0830-9000 Non-mandatory "Scouts Own" service.

0900-1030 Strike camp. Ensure campsite is clean. Review remaining plans for the day. Load and board vehicles.

1030 Depart for Falls Church, VA.

1030-1430 Drive to American Legion in Falls Church, VA.

1430 Arrive at American Legion parking lot. Distribute gear for cleanup.

Cold Weather Packing Checklist

Note: This list is in addition to clothes worn to campout.
Wear your Class A Scout uniform for travel.

Remember: “Cotton Kills” & “Always pack for one season *colder* than now.”

Sleeping Gear:

- ___ Backpack or duffle bag (lined w/plastic bag to keep contents dry)
- ___ Sleeping bag
- ___ Pillow Case (to be stuffed with your down jacket or clothing)

Clothes:

- ___ Winter coat or vest
- ___ Warm cap
- ___ Gloves or mittens
- ___ Sunglasses
- ___ Pants
- ___ 2 Long sleeve shirts
- ___ Class B shirt
- ___ Class B fleece or vest
- ___ 2 Underwear
- ___ Long underwear, top & bottom
- ___ 2 pair wool or acrylic socks
- ___ Hiking boots or walking shoes (no open-toe sandals)

Safety, Kitchen & Toiletry, Miscellaneous:

- ___ Personal 1st Aid Kit (BSA Handbook p. 289)
- ___ Water bottle, filled
- ___ Pen/pencil & pocket-sized notepad
- ___ Scout Handbook
- ___ Book for reading
- ___ Whistle on neck lanyard
- ___ Compass with a base plate
- ___ Toiletry kit (hand soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, comb, small towel)
- ___ Toilet paper (half a roll in a Zip-Lock bag)
- ___ Flashlight/head lamp & extra batteries (keep easily accessible in backpack)
- ___ Two garbage bags (for storage of items; for trash cleanup at end of campout)
- ___ Camera