

TROOP 317

Johns Creek, GA

December 2007



Visit our Troop website at www.troop317.com for regular announcements and information updates.

Important Dates to Remember

December	Stand Down – Merry Christmas!
December 16	Brandon Clark Eagle Court of Honor Midtown Auditorium – 2:00 pm
January 1	NO TROOP MEETING Happy New Year!
January 8	Troop Meeting – 7:00 pm
January 15	Troop Meeting – 7:00 pm ONLINE Registration/Payment Due
January 18 - 20	Troop Outing – Caving Raccoon Mountain Caverns Chattanooga, TN
January 22	PLC Meeting – 7:00 pm
January 29	Troop Meeting – 7:00 pm Troop Elections

November Backpacking

Mr. Alexander did a great job of planning the November backpacking trip. There were multiple routes so each Scout could choose a trip that he preferred.

I chose the 8-mile trip. Friday night, we stayed in the Pioneer campsite at Vogel State Park. Saturday morning, we left the campground and hiked up the Coosa Backcountry Trail to Slaughter Gap to the Appalachian Trail. We stayed Saturday night in a small campsite on the Appalachian Trail, then hiked back to Vogel on Sunday morning.

It was hard hiking, but a lot of fun. Although it was hard going uphill, we got to see some beautiful views.

I hope that we continue to plan backpacking trips for our Troop. It's a great way to experience the outdoors.

Cameron Van Cleave

Thank You, God...

...for Bruce Laible's safe return from Kuwait
...for Brian Mock's continued recovery

January Campout – Raccoon Mountain Caverns

For the January campout we will be going CAVING! We will be camping the weekend of January 19–20. **Instead of leaving Friday night, we will be leaving from the church on SATURDAY morning.** We'll leave at 10:00 am for Raccoon Mountain, stopping somewhere for lunch.

While we're at Raccoon Mountain, Scouts will have the opportunity to study one of the following merit badges: Geology, Forestry, Soil and Water Conservation, Bird Study, or Nature.

These Merit Badge classes are great opportunities to advance and learn. Get your friends together and have fun learning and moving forward in your Scouting journey.

The Scouts will be able to "double-up" on the Geology and Forestry Merit Badges. The other Merit Badge choices are limited to just the one.

Scouts will have the option of a 4-hour or 6-hour tour of the Cave, followed by sleeping Saturday night in the cave. On Sunday morning, as is our custom, we will worship together, then head for home. We will again stop for lunch on the way home. We will be returning to the church around 12:30 pm. Total cost for the trip will be close to \$50 per person, plus two lunches.

Caving has always been one of our Troop's favorite activities, so plan on this trip. It's going to be a great time!

Nic Orangio

Congratulations to John Aguilar!

Troop 317 has a new Eagle Scout! John Aguilar successfully completed his Eagle Board of Review on November 29. John did a great job with the board. The District Representative told us that John was the best candidate he had seen in "quite some time."

John continues our Troop 317 tradition of "**Excellence without Arrogance.**" Way to go, John, on this great milestone!

Looking Ahead – February Super Trip

The annual Troop 317 Super Trip plans are coming together. Although it was not the original plan, it is fast becoming a multi-island adventure. All the details are not yet resolved, but here are the highlights. Please make plans for your participation as we will be asking for paid commitments in early January.

We will start early in the morning on Friday, February 15 and travel to St. Mary's, Georgia. Rather than personal vehicles for transportation, we plan, again, to rent 15 passenger vans to travel in "secret service" style (just like on the TV show "24"). If the vans are black this year, it may help us gain access to our first stop, the Naval Submarine Base at Kings Bay. Kings Bay is home to the SWFLANT (Strategic Weapons Facility, Atlantic) and Trident Training and Refit Facilities (in other words, "big subs with big weapons"). While there, we hope to visit some station facilities, stay overnight in base housing, and tour a nuclear submarine. Who knows, maybe we can squeeze in some bowling (we did last time).

The next day it is early to rise to catch a private ferry ride to Cumberland Island National Seashore. Those who have been there will remember the wild horses, numerous armadillos, sprawling live oak trees, the ruins of historic residences, and the "Ranger raccoons". Since the island is off limits to all motorized vehicles, we are trying to find a way to carry our bicycles onto the ferry and the island. However, if that doesn't work we can always work on the Hiking merit badge as we visit the numerous sights.

After a full day on the island, we travel on up the coast to our campsite on Jekyll Island. Jekyll Island Campground is on the northern end of Jekyll Island with full facilities and a primitive group area that will hold our large gang. The campground has access to 20 miles of bike and jogging trails, ocean and bay beaches, and a fishing pier. We will stay there one full day and two nights, then head back to Johns Creek early on the morning of Presidents' Day (Monday February 18th).

Troop leadership will be working to develop a full plan for this long weekend. Although we are not yet certain, we expect that the all-inclusive cost will be in the neighborhood of \$150 per person (2007's trip cost was \$160). Whattadeal! So make your plans for a great Scouting adventure.

Mr. Orangio

Leader's Corner

Dear Troop 317 Family,

I trust everyone had an enjoyable Thanksgiving with their friends and families. We can all give thanks to our Heavenly Father for his many blessings – especially his love for us in Jesus Christ. While we often think about and talk about the more tangible dimensions of life in Troop 317 – weekend adventures, rank advancement, and fun activities – the intangible element of spiritual development remains paramount. We remain committed to our original Vision to "train and equip young men to be mature and impactful disciples of Jesus Christ through the vehicle of Scouting." By every indication, the Lord is blessing our pursuit of this vision. Our Scouts are growing in their faith. The pattern of progress in regular events like Scoutmaster Conferences, Scouts Own worship services, and community service projects is unmistakable.

Sometimes, however, it just "shows up." I'd like to share a recent example with you. On Saturday, November 17th, following a long day of hiking, ~15-20 of our Scouts gathered around our campfire at Vogel State Park. The remainder of our Scouts and adults who attended this outing were in various backcountry campsites. At the suggestion of Luke Van Cleave, each of the Scouts stood up for a moment while his fellow Scouts shared words of encouragement about them. It was genuinely inspiring to hear our Scouts offer words of praise for one another. Tales of helpfulness, friendliness, sharing, and teamwork stood in sharp contrast to the coarse criticisms that all too often mark the culture at large. Praise God!

It seems fitting to close with the two verses that precede our Troop Verse, Colossians 3:17:

"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God."
Colossians 3:15-16

As we enter the month of December, may the Lord bless all of you with a restful stand down and a wonderful Christmas!

Mr. Morrow

Watch your e-mail for more information concerning our NEW online registration / payment system for campouts. We will be utilizing this new system for our upcoming Caving Trip in January.

Please remember to PRAY for Tyler Avery and his family