

**SCOUTS-L**

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**TALES, HUMOR,  
& STORIES  
ABOUT SCOUTS**

**Date:** Fri, 10 Nov 1995 02:36:07 -0500 (EST)  
**From:** "Michael F. Bowman" <mfbowman@CapAccess.org>  
**Subject:** They'll Do The Darnedest Things

My all time favorite intelligent Scout was the one who showed up for a Ski Trip in a tee shirt and shorts back in Tacoma, Washington. It was about 60 degrees F in town and neither he nor his parents could conceptualize that up in the mountains in the snow it was going to get a lot colder in a hurry. He was not permitted to attend the activity when his parents pitched a fit about going back to get warmer clothes. We had idle thoughts about taking his parents and making them wear shorts and tee shirts in the cold all day as an object lesson. :-))

Then there was the Tenderfoot whose mother encased him in a snowsuit and winter parka to attend a Spring canoe trip. Didn't want him get cold I guess? :-))

And of course there was the dad who had promised to go on another canoe trip with his son. The dad went to work on Saturday morning having forgot the trip and thenafter a call from his wife rushed to meet his son at the rendezvous point still attired in his suit. By golly he went though and shrugged off the jokes all day. I think it was about lunch when he finally gave up on his tie and jacket.

**Date:** Sun, 12 Nov 1995 02:55:56 -0500 (EST)  
**From:** "Michael F. Bowman" <mfbowman@CapAccess.org>  
**To:** SCOUTS-L Youth Groups Discussion List <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>  
**cc:** Multiple recipients of list SCOUTS-L <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>  
**Subject:** Re: Re[3]: keeping warm

Two things not to do to keep warm on a frigid campout:

1. Don't pick the wrong type of rock. Back in Indiana, we had a lot of rocks that were mostly compressed sediment and full of water. A couple of bright lads picked these and tossed them on the fire to warm and then wandered over to see what was going on at the next patrol site. Ckkrrraaack! Kabloom! The rocks started exploding. The water became super pressurized steam and the rock was basically weak structurally. No one was hurt but a couple of tents looked liked they had be fragged by a grenade from the flying shards. Any geologists that can help out as to

what these rocks were or ones to avoid?

2. Don't try everything you see on TV or the Movies Dept.: Some twenty years plus years ago I was the ASM in charge at a Troop Campout. It was fairly chilly (not freezing cold), but the boys in the most experienced patrol wanted to sleep outside like "Mountain Men" around the fire. They had heavy sleeping bags, warm extra clothes, etc., so I agreed like the green ASM I was then and proceeded to check on the other patrols. When I returned to the campfire the older Scouts were snuggled in and telling the usually stories. All appeared to be okay, so I decided to get a little shut-eye. About three in the morning I awoke to an ear piercing scream and howling. There was great commotion around the fire and some excited dancing. On closer inspection I saw the cause - one of the sleeping bags was smoking. Yep smoking - great clouds of real smoke. Unknown to me these guys had seen Jerimiah Johnson at the Theater

and decided they wanted to try out what they saw, which was burying hot coals from the fire under the sod to keep the ground warm. While I was visiting the other patrols they had used an entrenching tool with great stealth and speed (this was back in the days when two-deep leadership was

a good idea honored as much in the breach as in practice). We spent the next hour unearthing the coals and sod that was starting to combust. Of course the next week-end the same Scouts had a service project of resodding the campsite. They became known as the Cooked Goose Patrol, a name that stuck through summer camp to the amusement of any who asked how

they came by the name. They were also presented an honorary patrol flag depicting a Scout with flames and smoke belching from his aft end (probably couldn't do that anymore either). Its kind of funny to think about it now, but it sure scared the dickens out the boys back then, not to mention the ASM. :-)

Speaking only for myself in the Scouting Spirit, Michael F. Bowman  
DDC-Training, GW Dist. Nat Capital Area Council  
mfbowman@CAPACCESS.ORG

Date: Wed, 15 Nov 1995 23:22:55 -0500 (EST)

From: "Michael F. Bowman" <mfbowman@CapAccess.org>

To: Jim Beesley <Hoowah6@AOL.COM>

Subject: Re: NOW exploding potatoes

Jim,

What I did not put in the original posting out of a sense of responsibility/embarassment was that my patrol used to collect geodes and place them strategically around camp in various campfires, knowing that they would explode in an hour or two. Our sense of humor got us latrine duty and garbage hauling tasks most of the week that year. We were still allowed archery and rifle-range though. :-) And yep, I too keep some firearms.

Speaking only for myself in the Scouting Spirit, Michael F. Bowman  
DDC-Training, GW Dist. Nat Capital Area Council  
mfbowman@CAPACCESS.ORG

Date: Wed, 15 Nov 1995 23:39:47 -0500 (EST)  
From: "Michael F. Bowman" <mfbowman@CapAccess.org>  
To: pfarnham@ASBMB.FASEB.ORG  
Subject: The Can and Will Do The Darnedest Things

Pete,

And we had a kid whose duty it was to heat the water for KP. When asked to put the water on the fire by his PL, he dutifully complied to the moans of all as the fire washed out. Ooops.

We used to collect Geodes at camp and then secretly stick them in campfires around camp. As you know these babes are hollow and full of crystals that are fragile. Takes anywhere from half an hour to two and then kaboom!!! Never thought of anyone getting hurt. Just thought it would be fun to scare hell out of everyone. Fortunately, we did this after everyone was in bed. And it had the desired effect. Unfortunately we ended up on latrine and garbage detail the rest of the week.

We also used to fill paper lunch bags with fine dust and then pop 'em in a luckless Scout's tent - sort of the "asshole of the day" award.

We also put about a hundred worms in one unworthy's sleeping bag after telling blood and guts stories at campfire.

You always checked your tent and sleeping bag carefully in our troop. I once found a blue racer in my bag - yikes!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Scared him too. Worse thing is them damn things chase ya when there peeved. Well I ran through the campsite a whooping and a shouting. Finally a couple of the guys managed to throw a burning log on the snake and set the grass on

fire. Cooked the snake. Course it was an invitation to use the ole five gallon pump fire extinguisher and a few less noble versions.

In today's world my patrol - The BAT Patrol of Troop 13! - would have been kicked right out of camp. High spirited lads we were. Poor SM. Old Mr. Fuller'd just smile and shake his head and tell us we needed to talk. We knew we were in for it then. Course, he'd done most of the same stuff as a kid and we knew it from his wife's stories.

Speaking only for myself in the Scouting Spirit, Michael F. Bowman  
DDC-Training, GW Dist. Nat Capital Area Council  
mfbowman@CAPACCESS.ORG

Date: Fri, 17 Nov 1995 00:23:52 -0500 (EST)  
From: "Michael F. Bowman" <mfbowman@CapAccess.org>  
To: pfarnham@ASBMB.FASEB.ORG  
Subject: Re: The Can and Will Do The Darnedest Things

Pete,

Your stories are refreshing, because they are real life and what made Scouting as much fun as anything else. Kids are . . . kids. They enjoy this time of life and have trials and tribulations that we really shouldn't over-react to as adults. You are right on the money.

We ought to have a few weeks of "real Scouting stories" on Scouts-L and everyone's physical and mental health would improve as a result of just simply roaring with laughter, the best of all medicinal cures.

Some day I just have to share a story with you that was passed to me by another attorney at work (who just happened to be a Silver Beaver). The story is about a patrol that couldn't go to Scout camp, so went to private camp and recounts the experience. It is hilarious. I'll make a copy and see that you get it. It'll be something worth the read. My son thought it was good as well.

We had a not-so bright Scout named Lenny in our patrol, cause nobody else wanted him - our age but dumb. He'd do things like forget to bring a towel to camp and then try to drip dry himself, cause he'd heard about drip dry on the radio. Where's Lenny? He's in the bathhouse drip-drying. So he spent half of one week. He got razzed with no

relenting of course and presented sheets of paper towel labeled "Lenny's Bath Towel."

In the early days our SPL was Tom McDuffy and we thought he should be known as "Old Stuffy" so we kept filling his sleeping bag with all manner of stuffings (brains of 12 year olds then). He used to roar with disapprobation at this and we just giggled and hooted. Finally the SM moved him, but this didn't dissuade our merry band. We repeated the fun the next night and found out that our new USMC ASM was the actual target after the fact. Bigtime aw sh\_\_\_. I still can bounce quarters on a camp cot, if I try. :-)

My patrol leader in those days was a fellow name of Steve Turnipseed. We could hardly restrain ourselves at the mere mention of his name. During our week at camp, the Council Exec. Board visited for their annual BBQ. We were the honor patrol and were expected to be presented. The Council President, Old Doc. Steele intoned in grave tones his approval and asked that we should introduce ourselves. Steve stood proud with his chest out and said "Patrol Leader Turnipseed" in a loud voice. I in turn "Assistant Patrol Leader Parsley", then "Quartermaster Kirby Karrot" etc. Old Doc. Steele looked over his half rims with a wry smile and asked if the vegetables could be persuaded to tackle some ribs and chickens. Much adult snickering. It was a fun time.

Kirby later turned out to have an odd streak. He delighted in deviling the younger ones with snipe hunts and finally got caught trying to engage a group of tenderfeet in "circle jerk".

Then there was the election for SPL night. The two hot contenders - me and Dan Zieg got in a fist fight over it in the school yard, while Nickie Wilkens swept the race. We both became ASPLs and were in constant competition for a year or so after. Then we had mother "Sid" who worried enough for all of us in the Senior Patrol. We kept him nearly three years a quartermaster and never missed a hitch.

What is really funny, is that I find myself remembering these things and names as though they were yesterday and usually can't remember squat. Guess that says something. Of the eight in our original "Bat" patrol, seven made Eagle Scout. Lenny didn't unfortunately. At about 18 he hanged himself after one his father's many beatings. There were four kids in that family and only one survived to be an adult. We still remember this too, because we knew that even though his life was a lot of hell and he put up with a lot, he really enjoyed Scouting to the hilt, it

was the only time in his life that he mattered. Now with the passage of time another two have died and five are left.

If only to be young and back a camp again.

Speaking only for myself in the Scouting Spirit, Michael F. Bowman  
DDC-Training, GW Dist. Nat Capital Area Council  
mfbowman@CAPACCESS.ORG

Date: Mon, 16 Sep 1996 23:45:00 -0400 (EDT)  
From: "Michael F. Bowman" <mfbowman@CapAccess.org>  
To: SCOUTS-L - Youth Groups Discussion List <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>  
cc: Multiple recipients of list SCOUTS-L <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>  
Subject: Re: WANTED: Ghost Stories

Dave Hill isn't the only one to have a bad experience with ghost stories. At the Scout Camp I attended as a youth, it was a ritual that on the first night of camp the "Legend of Red Eye" would be told at the campfire. In this legend from the French and Indian Wars, a trapper was captured and put to death for spying. To teach him a lesson his eyes were gouged out and a large glowing red coal was placed into his forehead before he was burned alive. The legend then recounted how the ghost still prowled seeking his revenge. After leaving the campfire the Troops walked by an old blockhouse. As they did a sheet gathered around a red battery lantern was made to slide down a wire toward the road. Of course many of the Scouts broke into a run. :-)) I can remember that I used to be able to run like a deer. :-))) This practice went on for years, until during one week of camp, when a youngish Scout was on his way to the latreen. Coming toward him was another Scout just finished with his nightly duties. This exiting Scout was using one of the old Scout flashlights with the red lens in place to help his night vision. The youngish Scout panicked, thought it was the ghost come to get him, opened his Scout knife and threw it at the ghost. The exiting Scout was wounded, but no long lasting physical damage. After this the practice of telling the Legend of Redeye ceased.

I still love ghost stories, but when with Scouts, find that there are many better stories that can be told. Ray Harriot's Stories For Around the Campfire is an excellent source. I'm sure that our resident librarians can tell us a few more good books. Mike? Mark?

Speaking only for myself in the Scouting Spirit, Michael F. Bowman  
Dep.Dist.Commissioner-Training, G.W.Dist., NCAC, BSA (Virginia)  
U. S. Scouting Service Project FTP Site Administrator (PC Area)  
ftp1 or ftp2.scouters.com/usscouts E-mail: mfbowman@capaccess.org

