

# Jamboree is the place to learn about Scouting and have fun

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Our troop gathered at a local church in Charlotte, N.C., on July 22, 2005, to head toward the 2005 National Scout Jamboree. We gathered in a small room and waited for the tour buses to arrive. About an hour later we began to board the buses as they came to the church.

Once we were on the road, everyone became really excited about participating in this special event. The journey to Virginia was accomplished safely, and we stayed in a hotel near Williamsburg. We remained in the hotel for two nights. One of the days we spent the day at Busch Gardens in Williamsburg. On Sunday, we boarded the buses yet again, but this time to the Jamboree.

As morning turned into afternoon, it wasn't long before we arrived at Fort A.P. Hill - home of the Jamboree. We spent several minutes driving the twisted roads of the post to get to the actual site. At the time of our arrival, which was

about 2:30 in the afternoon, we were very early. Out of the 32,000 Scouts that were expected, 90 percent had not yet arrived. Everyone knew, however, that many Scouts were arriving from all over the United States. Our troop had a real advantage not only in getting set up, but in signing up for merit badges as well.

Though the temperature had risen up to an unbearable 96 degrees, we continued to work very hard at setting up our camp. While we unloaded and set up, the thundering sound of helicopters could be heard. Following about two hours of set-up, we ate a quick dinner. The rest of the day was spent relaxing in the camp and preparing for the next day.

The next morning we woke up to a light rain dropping on our tent, but even that could not stop us from preparing for our first day at jamboree. After a rather quick breakfast and



clean-up, we paired up with buddies to head toward an activity. To get just about anywhere, a bus was mandatory. If one chose to not take a bus the distance walked could be three miles. Needless to say, the boys

who did that were drenched in sweat by the time they reached their destination.

A majority spent the entire day either at Merit Badge Midway, the area where all the merit badge classes are, or patch trading with other Scouts from around the nation. Others went to other fun activities such as the rappelling tower or, for a more physical activity, the 5k run.

That evening as we sat around eating dinner, everyone spoke about what a fun and exciting time they had that day. Eventually, after a fun but tiring day, some slowly began to prepare for bed. Many others were so filled up with stories to tell, they stayed up a little lon-

ger. Late into the night we had another rainstorm, with some thunderstorms in between.

The purpose of the jamboree is to not only earn merit badges, trade patches, or participate in activities, but to celebrate the legacy of Scouting from Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of Scouting.

The most important reason was to make new friends from all over the nation, and to bring back memories to share with Scouts and family back home. As our troop continues through the jamboree, we become more and more experienced in Scouting. Not only will we have more knowledge of Scouting, we will be able to share that information with other Scouts.

