

Ins and Outs of Camping with Pack 129



As a Scouting family, you may camp free at any BSA camp in the United States as long as space is available and there is no special event planned for the camp. There is no charge to camp with the Pack for any of the events at Bert Adams. Families who elect to cook with the Pack (discussed below) split the cost of food, but your family can also cook its own meals. If you attend a daytime event (such as Family Camp), there is usually a registration fee for Cub Scouts and participating siblings, but you are not required to attend the daytime event in order to camp.

Bert Adams Scout Reservation, near Covington, is the place we usually camp. Although we often select Robert Woodruff Scout Reservation, near Blairsville in the cooler north Georgia mountains, for summer campouts or camp at Stone Mountain Park. Campsites are large -- not single tent sites like Georgia state parks -- and are somewhat separated from other campsites.

Each site has at least one fire ring, a "two-holer" latrine with running water, one or more "Adirondacks" (a three-sided wooden building great for storage or open-air sleeping) and ample room for tents. For the "unadventurous" flushing toilets are located at a central site, along with showers and hot water. Depending on our Pack's campsite assignment, the "flushies" may be 50 yards or a quarter mile away.

Except for the July family camp, when tents are provided by the BSA, families must provide their own tents at Bert Adams or Woodruff Scout Reservations. If you do not own a tent and are unable to borrow one through the Pack, you may rent one at REI, Geared to Go, or another camping store. Before you buy any equipment, such as stoves or lanterns, note that we usually have enough to go around. If you do buy equipment, consider propane stoves and lanterns because they are generally considered safer than liquid fuel (i.e., white or "Coleman" gas)

The Pack generally cooks as a group when we camp. The meals included in the food fee are: dinner and desert on Saturday and breakfast on Sunday. (Be sure to bring your own sack or box lunches for Saturday.) We eat very well as a Pack, there may even be several culinary experiments underway at any campout.

The entire family is invited. Younger siblings have as much (and maybe more) fun as Cub Scouts when catching frogs, singing songs, roasting marshmallows, and running a pair of underwear up the flagpole. (If it is your first camping trip, you may want to be sure to take in Rick Barnes "hand thrown" tent.) After a day's activities, you will drop into an exhausted sleep without worrying about the peculiar noises made by quadrupeds roaming about the campsite in the dark (such as Bert Adams' Legendary vampire deer). However, the blissful snoring from your neighbor's tent may be harder to ignore.

Boy Scout policy requires that all Cub Scouts under the rank of Webelos be accompanied on each campout by at least one adult relative. Webelos may camp at a Scout Reservation without an adult relative, as long as we have at least one adult leader for each four Webelos. Boy Scout policy also prohibits adults from sleeping (or even being) in a tent with a youth to whom the adult is not related. A final note on BSA policy: **smoking and alcohol are prohibited** on all BSA property. Bring a nicotine patch if you must, but DO NOT expect to smoke (surreptitiously or otherwise) while on BSA property.

On Sunday mornings, we often have a short non-denominational worship service for those who wish to attend. We usually clean and break camp after breakfast and leave by 11:00 AM. The goal in cleaning camp is to leave the site cleaner than when we arrived.



Both Bert Adams and Woodruff Scout Reservations have lakes available for fishing. The fishing is not particularly good, but a plan is in the works to clean and stock the lake at Bert Adams. **Regular state fishing license laws apply.** You may stay to fish on Sunday after breaking camp.

A parting hint: DO NOT forget to bring a toothbrush for each member of your family to camp. You will not want to miss the "Shortbrush Drill" a famous (or infamous) part of PACK 129 camping lore.

Family Camping Checklist:

(We recommend that you bring the following items for each family/person)

Tent

Ground cover (for under tent)

Sleeping bag and pillow

Foam or air mattress

Toothbrush and toiletries

An extra change of clothes and shoes

Coat or sweater

Camp Stool or lawn chair

Flashlight

"Sierra cup" or plastic cup

Cooler with non-alcoholic beverages.

The Dreaded NO's of Camping:

No throwing anything in the fire if under the age of 100.

No sandals or "flip flops" - closed toed shoes only in camp.

No running in camp.

No smoking.

No alcoholic beverages.

No knives unless the Scout has earned his whittling chip.

No running with scissors.