



Front: Scout Armstrong. Middle (l-r): Chloe Methven, Chelsea Thompson, Alisha Smart, Emily Bates, Hannah Veinotte. Back: Emma Davis, Becca Lance, Emily Lance, Amber Grant, Brianna Keniston, Katelyn Barton. Standing at left: Leaders Kait Armstrong (front) and Joanne Seeley. "Mascot" Nick Keniston up high. Standing at right: Leaders Brenda Lance (front) and Carmen Bates. Photo: Carmen Bates

## Andover Girl Scouts

By Carmen Bates

Andover Girl Scout leader

Twelve Girl Scouts, four leaders, and one mascot went to Sunset Valley Swift Water Girl Scout Camp in Gorham, New Hampshire, for the weekend of July 25 through 27. In the past the Girl Scouts camped in tents, but due to a bad rainstorm last year, the barn was reserved for us in case we wanted to sleep inside. The barn is a large camp-like building with a small kitchen, a bathroom, and an open loft space for up to 17 people to sleep on the floor.

For many of us, this was a first camping experience with the Girl Scouts. We met at the AE/MS parking lot late Friday afternoon and loaded four cars with the "essential girl stuff": food, girls, and lots of excitement!

The weather was beautiful on the drive up there, and the girls were hungry but ready to start the adventure. After a two-and-a-half-hour drive, we finally pulled into the campground. We parked near the barn, and I set up my tent on our site. We were then informed that a bear had been visiting and to be extra careful!

Dinner was prepared by some of the older girls while the others set the table outside. It was a nice, quiet evening, and we had a campfire and made s'mores. I think I was the first one into my sleeping bag that night, and it was great just to lie there and watch the girls all giggling with each other.

Have you ever wondered how early Girl Scouts get up in the morning? I now know! Is it possible that they never even slept?

The smell of bacon soon filled the air, and we ate scrambled eggs, bacon, English muffins, and fruit out in the fresh morning air. It was wonderful to

see everyone do their share.

The sun was shining, and all the girls wanted to go and check out the swimming pond. After a short drive through and around, without a map, we found where we were going and went down to the water. There was a bridge where you could jump down into the water. Our mascot, Nick Keniston, proved the water safe for us, and the first Girl Scout to jump into the cold water was Katelyn Barton.

We went back, had lunch, and then did crafts and played games. Alisha Smart concentrated hard and made a beautiful bracelet from string for herself. Charcoal box ovens were made and – not that I ever doubted that you could really cook something in a cardboard box – the rolls and brownies really did cook! It was amazing, and they were very yummy.

The second night at the campfire was a lot of fun! Kait Armstrong told us that when the smoke blows in your face, if you simply say "I hate white rabbits" three times the smoke will blow away. I'm not sure that was proven true, but I think the more I tried not to say it and laughed at Kait, the more smoke I got in my face!

We made banana boats in the campfire and ate them, that being my favorite part! Soon after, ghost stories started, and the greatest part was Chelsea Thompson scaring herself with her own story.

Then it was time for our talent show, which Brianna Keniston and Becca Lance put together. These two girls were great role models for the younger girls. We had singers, loon callers, wild dancers, and a much-enjoyed puppet show put on by Emily Lance and Amber Grant.

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