

LAKE CHATAUQUE

September 6-8. 2013

Troop 777 departed from the church at 7:00pm on Friday for the first campout of the new scouting season. We arrived in beautiful Chautauqua, New York and stayed at the marvelous Camp Merz. Before going to bed, Mr. York felt the need to terrify us all by announcing that we were not at the top of the food chain at this campground. The Ranger confirmed the claim by telling us that there were fisher cats, bobcats, and at least one bear! Trembling, we went to bed around mid-night and were awakened by Mr. York's exquisite singing. At breakfast, there was an exciting light show as flames leaped from the sides of one of the stoves. Other than that, Saturday morning went well. After breakfast, we divided into two groups. One group went to the gorge to seek out crayfish, while the other group



FISHER CAT

went to catch dinner and tube at the Well's lake house with the plan to switch after lunch. The first group to go to the gorge scoured the frigid water for crayfish. Despite claws bent on taking fingers, we managed to catch a bucketful of fresh crayfish. The first group that went to the Wells house had a marvelous time tubing and fishing. The tubes were attached to the speed boat, and towed around the lake while screaming scouts held on for dear life. They also caught TONS of fish. Both groups met at the Wells house for lunch. During lunch it started to rain. Once the rain started to calm the two groups switched locations. The second group at the gorge decided to swim in the freezing, ice cold water the whole time instead of catching crayfish. Unfortunately for the second group at the Well's house the speed boat got put away because of the rain, but they still had fun fishing and playing card games inside. Although they did not keep as many fish as the first group they still caught a huge amount. We got back to the campsite around 5:30pm and the adults cooked fish tacos and crayfish for everyone. We built a small fire and for anyone willing to stay up until midnight there were exquisite fried Twinkies. Sunday morning we took down the tents expeditiously, and then had the normal breakfast of oatmeal. After two police lines we finally got the campsite looking better than when we arrived. We walked down to an



FATHER BRENNAN MEMORIAL CHAPEL

outdoor chapel with a magnificent stone pulpit for Mr. York to give us a small devotional and review the campout. After that we departed from camp with a mighty "Elvis has left the building" and started on the journey home.

By: Stephen Morris