

Barnhardt Weekend Camp Frequently Asked Questions

Overview

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic we cannot open Camp John J. Barnhardt at its normal capacity and in its traditional form. We have designed an alternative camping option for your troop that will give you as much of the camp experience as possible while minimizing interactions with other units. This means we've reduced our capacity to a third of our normal limit and removed campwide events such as chapel services, campfires, and the like, but we'll fill that time with other programmatic options. We are committed to serving your troop and ensuring your health.

What will the schedule of the Mini-Camps be like?

Each "Mini-Camp" will begin after lunch on Friday. Troops will have time to unpack and then provided afternoon and evening programming/ merit badge classes by the staff (starting at 3pm). The troops will provide and cook dinner in their site. The second day programming will include merit badges and time for the troops to cook a dinner they've planned in their site (precooked breakfast and lunch will be delivered to the sites). The third day will also include programming until late afternoon (precooked breakfast and lunch will be delivered to the sites). The use of half the first day and most of the daylight hours of the third for program provides an opportunity for scouts to earn three badges as well as enjoy other outdoor events.

Will Scouts get to pick their own schedules like regular summer camp?

Scouts will not rotate as individuals/buddy pairs as they have other summers. Troops will move around camp and through program activities as a unit. An entire patrol will take each merit badge together without scouts from other units. So, for example, a unit with 8 scouts may be take a waterfront badge, an ecology badge, and an outdoor skills badge. They would have an opportunity to pick activities, but they would have to do so as a group. They would need to pick from the options available in each area (e.g. between Forestry, Reptiles, Weather, and Fish and Wildlife in the Ecology grouping). A unit with 13 or more scouts would pick two options in each area and divide its scouts between them.

Are there drawbacks to this scheduling style?

Scouts don't have as much freedom to pick their activities and don't get to interact with other troops (which outside of this summer has been a good thing). That being said, we've created some flexibility, so patrols aren't forced into certain activities. For example, they can choose rowing or canoeing or kayaking or stand up paddleboarding. They will likely choose the option that none of the patrol members has already earned (teaching different activities is not an issue for the staff as they each had prepared multiple badges prior to restrictions).

What about special cases?

There may be instances where an individual cannot participate/earn the badge that works for the rest of the patrol. Some older scouts may have already earned all of the options, others may have physical activity restrictions, and others may not match the prerequisites (swimmer level for waterfront activities). A small number of staff members will be trained to offer personalized training in other areas and move with the unit to accommodate those needs.

Will teaching methodology change?

The Barnhardt Program Staff does have a teaching philosophy that will be adapted to fit this years' needs. We emphasize hands-on learning and educate scouts through games and activities where possible. We prefer to avoid flip charts and lectures. Due to social distancing guidelines, some team games will be eliminated and we will modify other plans; however, we still want to make each session fun rather than it feel like a classroom experience.

Will there still be free time?

There will be constrained “free time.” Scouts won’t have a block of time where they can visit any area they like, but there is time in the schedule that isn’t merit badge driven. For example, patrols will have an opportunity to swim even if Swimming isn’t one of their badge selections. They’ll get to play in the boats after their waterfront instructional time is done and so forth, but the unit will stay together and only these activities will be scheduled so only a single unit participates in an area at one time.

What about ATV’s?

In most cases, an entire patrol is not old enough to participate in the ATV program (14 years old or older) and we only run 5 ATV students at once. Therefore, it’s a bit unique. We will offer ATVs to units that want to take it, but they must have multiple scouts take ATV. Priority will be given to troops that have 3 or more scouts interested. Adults from the unit can fill the class if they’d like—this is a great time for adults to take ATV since we can’t fill open spots with Scouts from other troops. Those in ATV will take the course while the rest of their patrol is at the archery range. The schedule adjustment does require Scouts to participate in an online training session before camp—that way they can spend all the time at camp riding!

Will there still be assemblies?

We won’t assemble as a camp. Each campsite should hold its own flag ceremony each morning. Electronic messaging will provide needed updates to SPLs and SMs throughout the mini-camp.

Will there still be competitions?

Some events don’t work in an era of social distancing, but we know how important competing with other troops is to some of our units. We’ve designed activities so you can compete without being in direct contact. For example, you can compete in an activity in the waterfront and post a time or one at the ranges and receive a score. These can be compared to troops that completed the challenge at other times. There obviously won’t be as basketball tournament, but many of our other plans are adaptable to recorded scores rather than direct competition. We will post existing scores so troops feel they are competing.

What’s the biggest challenge of the mini-camp for leaders?

Scoutmasters won’t be able to let scouts leave the campsite and head to areas with their buddies. They’ll need to keep their group together. We know this will be challenging (which is one reason we’ve limited the length of mini-camps). The mini-camp style also requires cooking two dinners in campsites. Troops should prepare and purchase groceries as they would for a camporee. We think getting to cook in the campsites will be fun for scouts (and is necessary since we can’t have any large assembly in the dining hall). Restrictions prevent us from providing troops uncooked food or running groups through the dining hall, so we must choose this option.

Will the number of merit badges scouts receive change?

With fewer days, scouts cannot earn as many badges as they would with five days of instruction. That being said, by reducing walking time, eliminating flag assemblies, campfires, and the like, we have opened enough time that we believe scouts can earn 3 (possibly 4 badges each as long as the unit doesn’t select two challenging ones).

Is there a minimum group size?

A troop needs to be large enough that it can function on its own. As the troops/patrols will cook independently, it’s not feasible for a unit to attend with just a couple of scouts. Contact nearby units to work together if your unit is fewer than five scouts.

Why would regular camp be cancelled, but Barnhardt host minicamps?

We can host 275 with traditional camp. Social distancing protocols make those numbers untenable, but we can safely host up to 1/3 of that number safely. Troops can maintain isolation and scouts sleep in their own tents. Use of the dining hall was a major concern as scouts would have to interact with other units even if we hosted

multiple meal times for a full camp. The shorter camp makes it reasonable for troops to cook their own meals. While we cannot host 275 scouts at once with mini-camps, their shorter time frame allows us to offer enough sessions to meet demand. We feel the mini-camps are safer than single day alternatives as troops would have to organize as a unit for multiple day events whereas single day events often draw individual registrations that would require intermingling scouts from multiple counties.

Could my troop sign up for two mini-camps?

Troops can come to multiple mini-camps. It is possible to send a patrol one week and another the next week as long as the unit has 2 registered leaders in camp at all times. Individual scouts could attend with multiple patrols if the troop comes to multiple sessions. We won't accept provisional scouts or family camping this summer. Scouts can only come with their unit, so the only way a scout can come multiple weeks is if the troop sends a group in different weeks.

Schedule

Day 1

- 1 pm Check-in (Troops must arrive together; Scouts cannot arrive separately with their parents. Troops will head directly to their campsite and receive orientation materials there)
- 3 pm Activity Session A
- 4:30 pm Activity Session B
- 6 pm Dinner (in campsites).
- 8 pm Activity Session C

Day 2

- 7 am Reveille, Flag Raising, Breakfast (all in campsite)
- 8:30 am Activity Session D
- 10:30 am Activity Session E
- 12:30 pm Lunch (in campsites).
- 1:30 pm Activity Session F
- 3 pm Activity Session G
- 4:30 pm Activity Session H
- 6 pm Dinner (in campsites).
- 8 pm Activity Session I

Day 3

- 7 am Reveille, Flag Raising, Breakfast (all in campsite)
- 8:30 am Activity Session J
- 10:30 am Activity Session K
- 12:30 am Lunch (in campsites).
- 2 pm Activity Session L
- 4 pm Dismissal

Activity options

Troops/patrols will choose activities that total 12 sessions. Due to the current restrictions, we cannot allow troops to pick when they attend each event. An activity that requires 4 sessions might not occur at the same time each day for the troop (e.g. they may have swimming A&B on Friday afternoon and complete it during J&K on Sunday morning). We're still finalizing our offerings currently, but, for example, swimming merit badge will require 4 activity sessions, rifle merit badge will require 3 sessions, first aid merit badge will require 2, and tomahawk/archery practice will take 1.