

Welcome all to the Bearclaw camp! Here is a little summary to help you (or to remind you) everything you need to know to be well prepared for this amazing camp.

The Bear Claw camp:

This themed camp for Scouts and 3rd year Cubs, starts on Friday night until Monday noon. Many groups from the Montreal region do participate, as well as groups from other areas of the province! This camp has been running for more than 35 years now, with each year a different theme. It is a great opportunity to meet other groups and have fun participating in various activities. It usually takes place during the long week-end of Victoria's Day.

Theme and costume:

Since this is a themed camp and to have the most fun, we invite you to prepare costumes and decorations for your camping site. You can wear your costume anytime during camp, but we ask you to wear it at least for the opening ceremony and for the characters' site visit (see below). You will also get a camp t-shirt that you can wear at any time.

Competition:

During the week-end, the patrols and groups will be competing to win a pennant to bring back home. All will be judged throughout the camp on their punctuality, team work, energy, organization, campsite safety,... We suggest that you find a rallying cry for your group to let the other groups know that you are there. You can be as loud as you want! There will also be some surprises inspections of your campsite anytime during the week-end (often when you are not there...). The evaluation details will be sent to you before the camp for your information and preparation.

Schedule helpers:

Leaders meeting:

On Friday and Saturday night, we ask that one leader by group participate in the meeting. In those meetings, we will circulate last minute info or schedule changes that might happen.

Bead run:

One of the Bear Claw traditions is to bring back home a bead necklace that represents camp theme. To get the beads, the kids will have to do the "bead run" in the morning (specified in the camp schedule). They will have to run to the designated area to get them. What a great way to wake up in the morning and to get ready for the day!

Outposts:

On Saturday & Sunday, we will have small activities called "the outposts". The groups are going to be divided into patrols and are going to do a series of different activities. The patrols will receive a passport with a schedule for the outposts and a map of where to find them. We ask that you please follow the schedule for your group and that you double-check to see if you are at the right outpost at the right time. During the outposts, the groups are going to be judged on their energy, their team work and their participation. The outpost can be physical, creative and/or intellectual activities. The outposts are going to be led by

Ventures and a section leader.

In order to maintain order, discipline, make sure they follow the rules and, of course, encourage the patrols throughout the outposts activities, we ask that at least one leader follow each patrol around the outposts. If you need leaders please let the committee know prior to the camp.

However, we need some help and ask participating groups to prepare 1 or 2 outposts (depending on the number of participants) before the camp. They are responsible to gather the material and prepare the outposts activity - not necessarily to animate it, but they are more than welcome to do so as we will also need a section leader per outpost as well!. You will be informed about the details outpost(s) to prepare around end of March.

Saturday dinner:

During your dinner on Saturday night, you will host 1 or 2 Ventures (depending on the size of your group). They will come from other groups (according to a raffle). This dinner is always really fun for both Scouts and Ventures. It's a great way to meet other Venturers! It's really important to take care of those Ventures because they are the one that are running the camp. You will be handed out any dietary conditions should there be.

Saturday evening great game and/or campfire:

Traditionally we have a great game event, closed by a gathering around a campfire. It does happen that the fire is skipped.

If the fire does take place, we ask that every group prepare a song or a sketch (no more than 3 minutes) that they will perform in front of everyone. We will advise groups ahead of time if they must prepare for the campfire.

Flour war:

On Sunday afternoon, the Scouts, the Ventures and the leaders will take part in the traditional flour war. This friendly and harmless war is made from flour wrapped in a paper towel and soaked in water. It goes without saying that this wonderful mix might stick to clothing. This is why we ask that you prepare clothes for that event. DO NOT wear the camp t-shirt or your costume during this battle. Be ready!

Character's visit:

On Sunday afternoon, you will get a special visit from the camp characters right before dinner. This visit is a great way to gain points for the week-end. This is the time to go big with the theme.

Competition will be fierce! For that special visit, wear your costumes, make sure that you have some decorations for your site, and prepare a sketch or a special story... It's time to shine! You can even bribe the judges! This visit will also be a camp inspection. They are going to check if the camp is tidy and secure. Please note that the characters are going to be separated into 2 groups. So do not expect to receive a visit from a specific character or all.

The visit should not exceed 15 minutes as other groups are also waiting impatiently. You will not be informed beforehand at what time they will show up. So be on the lookout for them during the scheduled period.

Community Dinner:

In order to encourage exchanges between Scouts from different groups, a community dinner is held on Sunday evening. This dinner, provided by the camp's animation and service team, brings all the groups together around a good meal that can vary each year. All you need to do is bring your tableware (plate, bowl, utensils and glass), your salad dressing and beverage if necessary (you will be notified).

Bear Claw ceremony:

The peak of the Bear Claw camp are the ceremonies on Sunday night. The event begins with a jousting competition between the groups. Afterwards, the ceremony begins for the one who will participate for the first time in Bear Claw camp (youths and adults). Each participant to this ceremony is asked to be accompanied by a sponsor who has already participated in the ceremony. This sponsor must act as a guide to the participant during his "passage". For groups participating for the first time, we will assign a sponsor to your participants.

We ask that the sponsor accompanying the participant is not a participant who must perform their 3rd or 5th ceremony which will be held at the same time as the ceremony for the first years.

NEW: Participants of the 3rd and 5th ceremonies are asked to wear their necklaces from the camp where they performed the previous ceremony. So a participant in the 3rd ceremony must wear their necklace with the bronze claw (1st ceremony) and a participant in the 5th ceremony must wear their necklace with the silver claw (3rd ceremony).

The ceremonies are unique and mythical. Therefore we try to keep it a surprise for any future participants and we ask you not share the details with a scouter who has never attended those ceremonies, so they can enjoy the full experience. Do not worry; everything is done in order to be respectful for all.

Scouts Own:

We always take a little time during the weekend for a spiritual moment. This is not a place to promote religion, but rather to bring reflections to Scouts in order to make them grow. The contributions are very much appreciated from the groups. We ask, however, not to prepare a thank you for the organizers / Ventures. These will be thanked during the closing ceremony of the camp.

You are to wear the t-shirt along with your group scarf. No costume. Please note that no blades are allowed at the location of this moment. If you have one with you, you will have to leave it in the designated area at the entrance. If you do not want to leave it, do not carry one at this moment. You are also invited to remove any headgear.

Tips:

- ✓ Each group is responsible for their lodging (camping) and meals. Bring your camping gear for the 3 nights and 4 days (tent, stove, tarp, food, ...) for your entire group.
- ✓ Your campsite will only provide picnic tables and a fire pit. Firewood available on request if available. Please advise, it may not be fully dry, so you might want to bring bagged firewood. NO TREE CUTTING ALLOWED unless authorized by the ranger! Plan ahead by bringing an axe and saw should we get the permission to use wood already on the ground. You will be advised of the wood availability.
- ✓ Depending on the selected camp site, there could be fully service toilets and showers and/or out houses. You will be informed on the amenities available once the site will have been selected.
- ✓ We try to select sites with drinking water or at least arrange to have a source of water available. Nonetheless, we strongly advise you to bring a drinking water container and possibly enough water for your troop until Saturday morning after your breakfast. We will confirm this as well once the site is selected.
- ✓ You will be handed out a schedule and map of the camp. Please make several copies, share it within your group to be punctual at gatherings. You are evaluated on this important aspect! We allowed time to move between the various activities.
- ✓ As the schedule is very busy, be sure to plan meals that can be cooked quickly.
- ✓ Usually, it's the black flies festival during camp weekend! Recommend to your Scouts to bring bug repellent and a net for protection! Also plan appropriate clothing to protect yourself against ticks.
- ✓ The temperature can be variable during this weekend. Also it may be muddy. Make sure you have proper clothing and footwear!
- ✓ We are asking the groups to be prepared to face minor injuries with their proper first aid kits. Make sure it is well stocked - specially with band-aid! In case of a serious emergency, you may contact our first aid crew on site. Instruction will be given on Friday.
- ✓ For safety reasons, campers vehicles are NOT allowed to stay on the site during the weekend camp. You may drive to your site to unload/load your supplies, but the vehicle must be returned to the parking areas no later than 22:00 on Friday.