

2026 HTC SPRING CAMPOREE RAILROADING MERIT BADGE

ADULT LEADERS GUIDE



Friday, APRIL 24 – Sunday, April 26, 2026

ARRIVE FRIDAY BETWEEN 5:00 AND 8:30 PM

DEPART SUNDAY AFTERNOON AT 2:00 PM

Hosted by Whitewater Valley Railroad
Connersville, Indiana

Open to all Scout Troops and Cub Packs.
Register your unit by March 8th to attend a
Saturday night Cracker Barrel sponsored by
the Hoosier Trails Council.

Attendance limited to 500 Scouts and Leaders

Registration Deadline: Wednesday, April 12, 2025

Registration Fee: \$20 per Scout/Scouter

Registration Fee: \$10 per Cub/Cub Parent

CAMPING:

Robinson's Whitewater River Campground
1614 South State Road 121
Connersville, Indiana 47331

Earn the Railroading Merit Badge!

**DRIVE HAND POWERED CARS - EXPLORE LOCOMOTIVES – LEARN ABOUT
RAILROAD CAREERS – LEARN SWITCH AND HORN SIGNALS - WORK TO LAY
TRACK – TWO HOUR SCENIC TRAIN RIDE - AND MUCH MORE!**



SAFETY:

Safety is our first priority. On-site medical support by Scout personnel will be available. Local police, fire department and hospital services will be notified of the camporee in advance and will be available if needed. At the camp site, Scouts are restricted to designated areas. The areas for Scouts are within the Scout camping area, in the Scout vehicle parking area, and in the stage area. **THE WHITEWATER RIVER AND ITS BANKS ARE OFF LIMITS TO ALL.** An aerial photo of the site is included at APPENDIX 'C' of this guide. When working on the railroad, scouts and scouters must follow instructions. Railroad personnel are in charge when working on the railroad. Railroad equipment is heavy and elevated, which requires climbing on steep ladders for some events. Always stay at least 10 feet away from the tracks, even when a train is not approaching. If crossing the tracks is required, stop, look, and listen to be sure no trains are coming; then cross the tracks carefully by stepping over the rails. Do not step on the steel rails, which are slippery and narrow. When leaving a locomotive or rail car, always face the locomotive/car, hold onto the handrails on both sides and walk backwards down the steps.

LOCATIONS:

Camping: Robinson's Whitewater River Campground. 1614 South State Road 121 Connersville, IN

DIRECTIONS

Most web mappers take you directly to the site. Travel is about 1.5 hours from Indianapolis, 1 hour from Colerain, Ohio.

Starting from State Road 44 and State Road 121 in Connersville: Turn South on State Road 121, follow it and turn left at the large U.S. flag, into **Robinson's Whitewater Campground**.

FEES:

The registration fee is \$20.00 for each person attending the Saturday day long programming (Troops). The fee includes \$5.00 for the railroad ticket to Metamora. Adults who are not riding the train or want a patch may register at reduced cost. For Packs, the registration fee is \$10.00 for each person. The fee includes \$5.00 for the railroad ticket to Metamora.

CONTACTS:

Tony Zizak, chairperson, 317-995-2857, tizak@gmail.com

Misse Baker, co-chairperson 812-350-7611, purdueshutterbug@gmail.com

Colton Cawood, staff advisor, 574-361-4525, Colton.Cawood@scouting.org

There will be 2 Opportunities for an online pre-leaders meeting via Zoom. Follow our council FB for more details. March 3rd. April 2nd. Zoom links will be posted on HTC's FB page soon.

CHECK-IN:

Unit arrival times on Friday, April 25, are from 6:00 PM to 9 PM at Robinson's Whitewater River Campground. Check-in is the first activity and must be completed before any other activity. Greeters will direct vehicles to areas to unload Scouts, park vehicles and park trailers. One unit trailer may park at the site assigned to the unit.

UNIT SUBMITTALS AT CHECK-IN:

Put the following documents in a One Gallon Zip Lock bag with your unit number in big black letters on the bag. This will be collected as soon as you arrive at the campgrounds

a. **WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT**

The railroad requires every person attending the Camporee to have this form properly completed, signed and submitted on Friday evening. Failure to submit the form will prevent that person from attending training on Saturday or entering railroad property.

THE WAIVER FORM IS INCLUDED IN THIS GUIDE AT APPENDIX 'B'.

b. **BSA Medical form Parts A&B,** current. Required for all participating youth and adults. Must be signed by a parent or guardian for youth 18 or younger.

c. **A Merit Badge Blue Card** for each Scout. The blue card must be completed front and back and include the title of the merit badge (Railroading), Scout's name, address, Troop number, District, Council, Scoutmaster signature, and date.

d. **A roster of all attendees who arrive at the site,** to include the names of all Scouts and Scouters.

E. **Printout of the RR Program booklet for each scout.** (make sure the file is one big one including waiver, blue card, etc). Attachment will be on the registration site.

CAMP SITE RESTRICTIONS:

Units will be registered as they arrive at the Scout camping area on the Robinson campground. Unit campsites will be assigned based on the number of people attending. Only scout trailers may be parked at the unit camp sites. All other vehicles must be parked in the designated parking area. Vehicles should remain at the campground and not be driven to the railroad training area due to very limited parking there. The Robinson campground is a commercial camping facility and will be hosting other campers. There are only three areas that Scouts and Scouters are permitted to use: 1. the Scout camping area which includes the flagpole; 2. the vehicle parking area; and 3. the stage and audience area. AN "AERIAL PHOTO OF CAMP SITE WITH LOCATIONS MARKED" IS AT APPENDIX 'C'.

EVENTS:

Events on Friday evening include registration upon arrival and briefing for senior patrol leaders and Scoutmasters at the stage area. There will be two briefings, one by railroad personnel and the other by a Scout representative. Saturday morning will include flag raising, briefing and train ride to the railroad yard for all-day training (bring lunch and canteen/water bottle with water). Railroad personnel will operate 14 training sites until scheduled afternoon departure and return to the campground. Evening events will include flag lowering, campfire and skits. Sunday will include flag raising, briefing, religious services, train ride to the railroad station to buy a ticket, and train ride to Metamora. Scouts will have lunch upon arrival (bring lunch and canteen/water bottle with water), tour Metamora on your own and return to the camp site by train. Scouts will complete their merit badge tests during the train rides. Units will out-process by having their camp sites inspected, submit completed camporee evaluation forms in exchange for their patches and blue cards.

THE "SCHEDULE OF EVENTS" IS INCLUDED IN THIS GUIDE AT APPENDIX 'D'.

SCOUT EQUIPMENT:

Scouts should bring/wear the following on the train Saturday and Sunday:

- Boots
- Rain gear when rain is forecast
- Coat for forecasted temperatures
- Railroad pamphlet prepared by the railroad
- Merit badge book
- Pens & pencils for note taking
- Canteen/water bottle filled with water
- Lunch

RAILROAD MERIT BADGE INFORMATION

The railroad prepares information for the merit badge weekend and publishes it on the web site listed below. It includes an explanation of each of the 14 training sites and links to other relevant sites. A handbook prepared by the railroad will be available for download. The handbook should be downloaded and printed by each unit and a copy given to each Scout. The BSA merit badge book and railroad handbook will be used as study guides for the merit badge and will assist Scouts to pass the open book test. **Please bring a signed blue card for every scout seeking the merit badge.**

DESIGNATING PATROLS FOR RAILROAD TRAINING:

The railroad has requested that 14 equal-sized patrols be designated for rotation through the 14 railroad training sites. A tentative plan is to select 14 senior patrol leaders and assign each one of them to lead one of the "railroad training patrols". The approximate number of Scouts assigned to each "railroad training patrol" will be determined by dividing the total number of Scouts in attendance by 14. Existing patrols from troop units will remain together as a unit and be assigned to a "railroad training patrol" based on the size of the unit patrol. Unit patrols will be cross leveled between "railroad training patrols" to achieve the approximate desired size in each of the 14 patrols. The senior patrol leader for each "railroad training patrol" will be given a clipboard with a blank roster and will be asked to write the name of each Scout in their training patrol. At least two adult leaders will be assigned to accompany each "railroad training patrol" for all training sites. This plan will be reviewed and discussed at the Friday evening leader meeting.

MERIT BADGE TEST:

On Sunday Scouts will be with their home unit for the train ride to Metamora. The merit badge test will be issued on the train. Unit Leaders will be given the test key and will grade their Scouts' tests to determine Pass or Fail. It will be an open book test using the railroad handbook and the BSA merit badge book. The Conductor will be available to answer questions. Only those Scouts with no interest in earning the merit badge should fail the test. The Counselor part of the Blue Cards will already be stamped by railroad personnel. Unit Leaders will complete the blue card by signing them for those who successfully complete the test.

Each Troop must bring their food for all meals. Plan to have breakfast and clean-up completed before the flag raising and briefing on both Saturday and Sunday. Pack the Troop's lunch in a designated cooler for loading on the train on both days.

WATER: Water for drinking, handwashing and dishwashing is available at the camp site.

SANITARY FACILITIES:

Portable latrines will be stationed near the Scout camping area. There are no operational rest rooms on the train. There are flush toilets in Metamora.

THE PERMANENT LATRINES AND SHOWERS IN THE CAMPGROUND ARE OFF-LIMITS TO ALL SCOUTS AND SCOUTERS.

FIRES:

Ground fires are not permitted at the campground. Above-ground metal fire rings may be used. Firewood cannot be transported to the campground in accordance with state law. Firewood can be purchased at the campgrounds for a nominal fee. Units must take their campfire ashes with them when they leave.

TRASH:

Each unit is responsible for taking away its own trash and ashes and for policing its area prior to inspection and clearance by the camporee staff.

LOST & FOUND:

Camporee headquarters will serve as a lost and found site. The headquarters site will be designated at the Friday evening and Saturday morning briefings.

CAMPFIRE:

A campfire will be held Saturday evening. Skits to be performed at the campfire must be submitted to the camporee committee by 6:00 PM Saturday evening for approval. The campfire preparation, monitoring, and extinguishing and the host for the campfire will be done by volunteer units.

ANIMALS AT THE CAMPGROUND:

There are many animals at the camp site. Do not touch, chase or otherwise disturb the rabbits, chickens, ducks, dogs, cats, peacocks, donkeys and other animals. Do not bring your own animals.

UNIT OUT-PROCESSING:

Each unit will notify the camporee staff when its campsite is clean and ready for inspection. Units should clear their campsites and have them inspected prior to departure for Metamora to expedite early departure from the campsite when the units return. Trailers are to be removed from a site prior to inspection.

After a unit camp site is approved and prior to departure, each unit will submit complete camporee evaluation forms, receive its plastic bag with patches and blue cards and then depart the camporee.

CAMPOREE EVALUATION:

Scouts and Scouters in each unit will be invited to complete an evaluation form for the camporee via an online link given at the leaders meeting, Friday evening.

EARLY DEPARTING UNITS:

Some units choose to leave Saturday evening, and some units leave directly from Metamora

Sunday afternoon. Early departing units must advise the camporee staff at the Friday evening briefing that they intend to leave early. **These units should plan on their scouts completing the merit badge independently.**

CUB SCOUT PARTICIPATION OPTIONS

Option 1: Saturday Evening & Sunday (Recommended)

- Arrive Saturday evening for dinner time (approximately 5:00-7:00 PM)
- Set up camp Saturday evening
- Participate in Saturday evening campfire program
- Camp Saturday night
- Full Sunday railroad experience including scenic train ride to Metamora

Option 2: Sunday Only

- Arrive Sunday morning at 8:00 AM
- Participate in flag raising and briefing
- Full Sunday railroad experience including scenic train ride to Metamora
- Depart Sunday afternoon at 2:00 PM
- No overnight camping required

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Registration Fee: \$10.00 per Cub Scout and Adult Partner

- Fee includes \$5.00 railroad ticket to Metamora. Registration Deadline: Wednesday, April 12, 2026
- Register online at: <https://scoutingevent.com/160-ED25Spring>

LONE CUB SCOUTS

Lone Cub Scouts (not registered with a Pack) are welcome to attend with their required adult partner. Please note: Lone Cub Scouts will be placed with another Cub Pack for the event. We highly encourage you to partner with a Scout Troop to share campsite setup and equipment. All Scouting America youth protection and two-deep leadership requirements apply.

CUB SCOUT CAMPING REQUIREMENTS

IMPORTANT: All Scouting America camping policies for Cub Scouts must be followed:

Parent/Guardian Participation Required: At least one parent or guardian of each Cub Scout must attend and be registered for the camporee. Two-Deep Leadership: Units must always maintain two-deep leadership. Age Requirements: Tiger Cubs (kindergarten) must have a parent/guardian participate in all activities.

Separate Sleeping Arrangements:

- Parents/guardians sleep in the same tent, cabin, or room as their own child
- If the parent/guardian is the Cubmaster or den leader, they may sleep in a separate tent but must be in the same camping area
- Youth and adults tent separately (exception: parent with their own child)

Partnering with a Troop

We strongly encourage Cub Packs to partner with a Scout Troop for this event. Partnering provides many benefits, including the ability to share camping equipment such as tents and cooking gear, which reduces the amount of gear families need to bring. It also creates mentorship opportunities between older and younger scouts and makes logistics easier for families overall.

To partner with a Troop, contact your local Scout Troops to see if they're attending the camporee. Coordinate with the Troop's Scoutmaster about shared camping space and plan which equipment each unit will bring. Please note that Troops and Packs will still check in separately, even when partnering together.

SATURDAY EVENING PROGRAM (For Cubs Camping Overnight)

5:00-7:00 PM - Arrival and check-in at Robinson's Whitewater River Campground

- Set up camp in designated Cub Scout camping area
- Prepare and eat dinner

7:30 PM - Flag lowering ceremony (all Scouts invited)

9:00 PM - Campfire program

- Skits, songs, and railroad-themed fun
- All Cub Scouts and families welcome

9:30-10:00 PM - Sponsored Cracker Barrel for all those units and people who registered before the cutoff.

10:00PM - Lights out for Cub Scouts

SUNDAY PROGRAM (All Cubs)

For Cubs Camping Overnight:

- 6:30 AM - Reveille, breakfast
- 8:00 AM - Flag raising and briefing

For Sunday-Only Cubs:

- 8:00 AM - Arrival and check-in

8:30 AM - Church service (optional)

9:00 AM - Board the train for scenic ride to Metamora

- Enjoy the countryside from vintage railroad cars
- Learn about railroad history from conductors

11:00 AM - Arrive in historic Metamora

- Time for lunch (bring your own lunch)
- Explore the historic canal town with your family
- Visit shops, covered bridge, and grist mill

1:00 PM - Board train for return trip

2:00 PM - Arrive back at campground - DEPARTURE

WHAT TO BRING

Required for All Cubs:

- Completed waiver form (Appendix B) - **MUST be signed by parent/guardian**
- BSA Medical Form Parts A & B (current, signed by parent/guardian)
- Comfortable walking shoes or boots (NO open-toed shoes, NO Crocs)
- Weather-appropriate clothing (coat if cold, rain gear if wet forecast)
- **Lunch for Sunday** (no refrigeration available on train)
- **Water bottle filled with water**
- Sunscreen and hat
- Small backpack or bag for personal items on train

If Camping Overnight (Saturday):

- Tent and sleeping gear
- Food and cooking equipment for Saturday dinner and Sunday breakfast
- Camping chair
- Flashlight or headlamp
- Personal toiletries
- Class A uniform for campfire (optional but encouraged)
- Warm sleeping clothes (nights can be cool in April)

APPENDIX 'A'

SPRING CAMPOREE RULES AND REMINDERS

THE LAW OF THE CAMP IS THE SCOUT LAW!

Scoutmasters, please review with your Scouts prior to the camporee.

Campground details

- Campsites will be assigned to a unit the week before the camporee. NO ground fires are permitted. Bring your own elevated fire pit or barrel. Do not bring your own wood. Firewood can be purchased at the campground for a nominal fee. Units must take their campfire ashes with them when they leave.
- No open flames are permitted in tents.
- Troops are responsible for packing out their own trash (ashes, trash, garbage). **Remember the outdoor code – LEAVE NO TRACE.**
- **NO** adult beverages or smoking in camp.

Safety/First Aid Details

- The Whitewater River is deceptively fast running. **NO** Scouts or Scouters are to be within 100 feet of the river.
- Hiking boots are essential for safety. **NO** open-toed shoes. **NO** Crocs.
- **NO** horse playing on or around the tracks and the railroad equipment. Always stay ten feet away from the tracks except when crossing tracks. Do not step on the steel rails. They are slippery and narrow and the result may be a painful fall.
- When leaving a locomotive or rail car always face the locomotive/car, hold onto the hand rails on both sides and walk backwards down the steps.
- Bring extra water for adequate hydration for the training Saturday and the train ride Sunday.

Scouting Details

- Blue cards **MUST** be completed and brought by each troop and turned in upon arrival. • Merit Badge processing is the responsibility of each respective troop.
- Waivers must be presented complete upon arrival at the campground Friday evening. • Adults are needed to accompany patrols during the training on Saturday and the train ride on Sunday.
- All camp site buildings, including any inoperative portable latrine, are off limits.

APPENDIX 'B'

WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT

Please Read Carefully

In consideration for receiving permission to participate in any volunteer activity of the Whitewater Valley Railroad, INC. ("Railroad"), its successors and assigns, I hereby release, waive, discharge and covenant not to sue, Railroad, it's members, officers, agents, servants, family members, state or employees (hereinafter referred to a releasees) for any liability, claims, demands, actions, and causes of action whatsoever arising out of or related to any loss, damage, or injury, including death, that may be sustained by me, or any of the property belonging to me, whether caused by the negligence of the releasees or otherwise, while participating in such activity, or while in, on or upon the premises where the activity is being conducted.

I understand that this waiver and hold harmless agreement is in full force and effect until revoked by me in a writing delivered to the Railroad.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20____

Volunteer: _____

Printed Name: _____

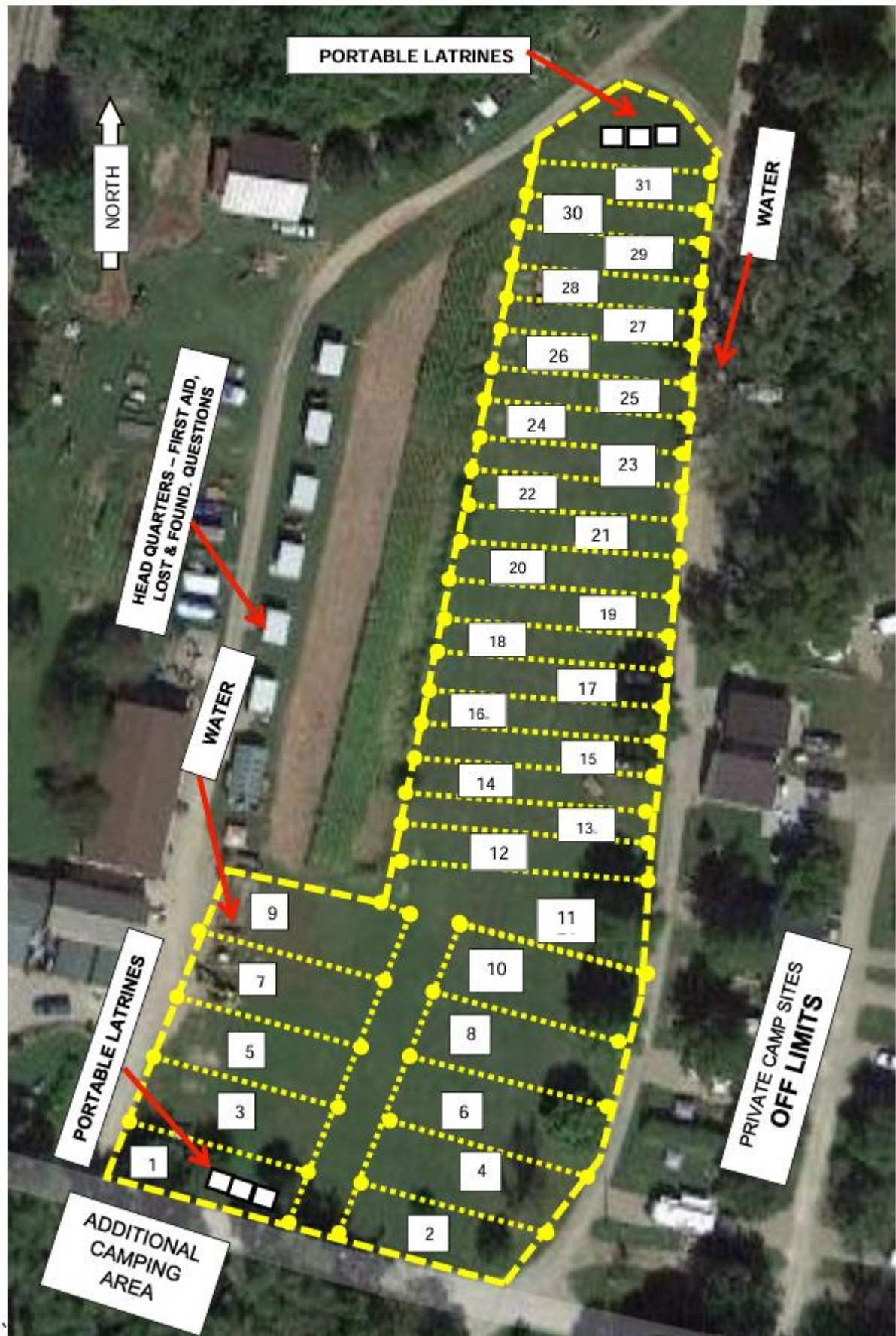
Parent or Legal Guardian

If Volunteer is a minor

Printed Name

APPENDIX 'C'

AERIAL PHOTO OF CAMPING AREA



APPENDIX 'D'

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

RAILROAD SPRING CAMPOREE APRIL 25, 26 & 27, 2025

CONNERSVILLE, INDIANA

NOTE: TRAIN TIMES ARE ESTIMATED

FRIDAY UNIFORM – CLASS “A”

6:00 PM Units arrive Friday Evening 6:00 to 9 PM

9:15 PM Scoutmaster and Senior Patrol Leader meeting

11:00 PM Lights out

SATURDAY UNIFORM – CLASS “A” FOR TRAINING & CLASS “A” FOR CAMPFIRE

6:00 AM Reveille followed by breakfast

7:30 AM Flag raising and briefing for all in attendance

8:30 AM Train arrives for ride north to the rail yard and all-day training

(Everyone takes their lunch. Camporee staff furnishes lunch for the instructors)

Noon Lunch from 12:00PM to 1:00 PM

1:00 PM Training resumes

4:30 PM Board the train for return trip to campground.

7:30 PM Flag lowering

8:30 PM Evening meal and activities completed

9:00 PM Camp fire for all in attendance

9:30 PM Incentive Cracker Barrel for those units who registered during the early registration period.

11:00 PM Lights out

SUNDAY UNIFORM – CLASS “A”

6:30 AM Reveille followed by breakfast

8:00 AM Flag raising and briefing for all in attendance

8:30 AM Church service

9:00 AM Board the train and depart north to the railroad station to buy a ticket for the train ride south to the town of Metamora (Everyone takes their lunch) (Take merit badge test during ride) - Units encouraged to have their campsite packed up prior to boarding the train.

10:00 AM Train departs for Metamora

11:00 AM Train arrives at Metamora

11:30 AM Lunch

1:00 PM Train departs Metamora

(Complete merit badge test during ride)

2:00 pm Train arrives at campground – units depart for home