

Memories of Scouting

from

Dave Barry's "Complete Guide to Guys."

Virtually all of my memories of Boy Scouts involve farting. I spent several years in the Boy Scouts, ultimately attaining the rank of Second Class, but I can't remember the Morse Code, or how to hang your backpack from a rope so the raccoons can't get your food, or how to start a fire by rubbing pine cones together, or how to tie important tactical knots with names like the "sheepskank" or "cloverhitch." What I can remember is being out in the woods on our Scout Troop camping trips, at 1:30 AM, lying in a sleeping bag in a tent with three other guys, none of us even close to falling asleep due to the fact that we were entertaining ourselves by ritualistically telling jokes that we had all heard upwards of four hundred times, such as:

"What'd you have for breakfast?"

"Pea soup."

"What'd you have for lunch?"

"Pea soup."

"What'd you have for supper?"

"Pea soup."

"What'd you do all night?"

"Pee soup."

The laughter was followed by shouts of "BE QUIET!" and "GO TO SLEEP!" from the scoutmaster's tent.)

So we'd be lying there, trying to giggle as quietly as possible, and one of the guys - probably as a result of eating our usual Boy Scout-camping-trip food, which consisted of semi-warm baked beans mixed with Hershey's chocolate and Tang - would have some kind of gaseous nuclear chain reaction in his bowels, and there would be a sound like BWAAARRRRRRPPPPPPPP and flames would come shooting out of the victim's sleeping bag and the tent walls would bulge violently outward. The other three of us guys, in a desperate effort to escape before the tent was filled with the Deadly Blue Cloud, would lunge for the tent flap, still inside our sleeping bags, all trying to get out simultaneously, so that, from the outside, the tent looked like some bizarre alien space pod giving birth to giant crazed green worms.

"GAS ATTACK!" we'd shout, causing the startled raccoons to drop our Hershey bars.

"BE QUIET!" and "GO TO SLEEP!" the scoutmaster's tent would shout, but by now we were totally out of control, rolling around on the ground, howling, setting off chain reactions of laughter and fart noises in the other tents.

Boy Scouts: It made me the leader I am today.