



WMS Elective 2014

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*Primitive Shelter, North
Carolina*

TK Update Days 1 and 2 (2014)

February 5, 2014

WMS 2014, 2/3

It has been quite a day. I arrived in the dining hall at 0600. The cook was new and had only the vaguest idea of what we expected, and no staff to help. So we ended up getting food from the counter and eating at the desks. The students actually liked being able to finish breakfast during the first activity. We plan to continue, so a lucky break.

As has been the custom the camp provided 3 group activities: intro to ropes/climbing; land navigation (basic compass); leadership/group process. All three sessions went well and the students are as enthusiastic and energetic as ever.

At lunch again the staff did not have preparations as they had in the past. The students and I set the tables and organized the food line. Again, I think we will continue to do all the meal duties outside the kitchen.

In the afternoon pre-hospital had their orientation session. Again things went so well the session ended early. I returned to the thrift shop scene and scored a corn popper and microwave dishes to use in the lodge on weekends/evenings.

Incoming course director Stephanie Lareau appeared. She met informally with the students, and gave good talks after supper. She finished at 2130 (started at 1930 to give them some day light time).

Our breakfast routine went well. David Bradley gave overview talks about water and food procurement emphasizing the practical. Then the groups rotated for a second session with camp staff.

The water repair, predicted 30-60 minutes starting at 1000 was on going at lunch at noon. No water again. With some shuffling we did fine for lunch expecting a return of piped water in the afternoon.

David Bradley had a session on hazardous materials and a bit of conflict avoidance/potentially life saving options if confronted with physical violence. The class remained engaged and enthusiastic.

Then the last camp staff session. All the staff were quite complimentary for the quality and ability of this group.

Dr. Liz Edelstein was not able to arrive Monday night as scheduled as her flight was cancelled by the severe weather further north. Her update predicted an arrival about 1730.

An option to do some spelunking was offered by one of the staff for Sunday, and many were very enthusiastic to have this experience on an off day.

In addition I have a local friend who is a free lance nature teacher. She was once lead instructor at the Tom Brown Survival School in NJ where her husband was also an instructor. I had visited them in January and learned that their earnings were drastically lower than needed. So I asked the group and 20 opted to take the off days of Fri/Sat the 21st and 22nd to spend with them learning/practicing wood craft skills. And I will have a way to inject some funds into the lean winter season.

At dinner still no water. And a truck delivered Port a Potties. Not a good sign. The group was very relaxed. In fact they accused me of arranging the water outage to add to the wilderness experience. They jumped in to take care of supper table setting/clean up. At 1800 still no Dr. Edelstein so I released them until breakfast.

Then I checked my e mail at the camp office, where I am having great frustration trying to get notes out—hope this one makes it. At 1730 she was hoping to board after a 2 hour delay.

Great group so far. We'll see what tomorrow brings. The water

situation repair revealed more maintenance needed, a complete rebuilding of a major junction. Maybe by Thursday things will function again. Wilderness reality if not it's finest, as least as usual.

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