



WMS Elective 2014

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*Primitive Shelter
Fire From Friction*

TK Update

February 24, 2014

WMS 2014 update, Feb 20-24

Weather moderated considerably, meaning warm sun Thursday. We were treated to a series of talks with Dr. Pollock covering dive exam and an overview of DAN services. Dr. Mularella did a great job about ticks and tick borne illness. Dr. Worthing presented about field sanitation focusing on human waste and water.

Then it was off to the Sheriff's range and the planned ballistics discussion, fire arm safety, vehicle specifics, and the opportunity for the group to shoot the four types of firearms. As several had never handled fire arms, it was very well received with many pictures. There were some personnel delays, but no one seemed to mind. They dispersed for the weekend.

Friday about 17 stayed for the "Lost Proofing" option with Wanda and Scott DeWaard. They built a primitive shelter and had a session on fire by friction. Several decided to sleep at the shelter—one in it. Cold was the conclusion so more leaves added. All seemed to find the time well spent on another sunny day.

Unfortunately one of the group who had a linger illness for several days developed acute gastroenteritis and made the wise decision to leave rather than risk contagious spread/being unable to complete the back pack without a real "scenario".

Saturday was also a warm day, nearly 70. As I continued organizing materials for next year about 15 continued with the DeWaards. Dr. Marcus Snyder arrived to be a back pack mentor. Dr. Worthing provided informal information about current best gear and making a simple alcohol stove.

Yesterday, Sunday, was also sunny and warm. Finally. Although several did not appear for the water experience, 16 of us with guides/instructors in three rafts floated 8 ½ miles of the French Broad River with some class 2 and 3 rapids, one class 4. In addition those of us who chose to were able to slip out of the rafts to practice the “swimmers position”. We enjoyed lunch on the river with a chance for the group to experience relatively safe ways to cross streams.

When we returned to camp, Mentor Dr. Jim Schultz had arrived, but was on a hike. The planned dinner had not been entered on the camp plan, which I discovered Friday, and the alternative plan was to have sandwich/salad bar which we would put out and clean up. With the group mellow and relaxed, it was 1900 when I set the food out and ate. After an e mail session I returned at 2000 and discovered no one else had come. So I put things away and returned to Nickle where there was a flurry of activity as people met mentors and did some final adjusting of back pack loads. Dr. Erin Meyer arrived in the evening, so with Dr. Mularella having also returned the four mentors were with their groups.

In the past we have had a hot breakfast. This year we got the same cold continental style as before. However only half the students came for breakfast, some leaving early with plans to stop on the way and others finishing food at Nickle Lodge. There seemed in no particular hurry to hit the trail.

Highs in mid 50s with lows near 30 is the prediction today and tomorrow. Wednesday high only mid 30s and low in teens with 30% snow. Could be an interesting experience. They are due to return Thursday afternoon, so I expect so send a final update Friday, Feb 28.

The sick student had one of the four helicopter ride along optional slots so three students took a shift with a flight crew. Two launched on two missions each. And the one who did not launch still had a very interesting time learning about and experiencing the air ambulance reality. TK



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