

# Kids' KOrner

## Girl Scouts Go Wild At Speedwell Lake

LYNN ROSSI

**Special To Lancaster Farming LITITZ (Lancaster Co.)** — In a topsy-turvy world that seems to lack permanence and tradition at every turn, it's a fact that Girl Scouts are still earning badges for worthwhile efforts.

Although these girls sing and dance to the latest tunes on the Walkman and play Game Boy as much as any other youngster, they are willing to consider that there's more to life than videos and television. With a little bit of encouragement from their parents and considerable effort of local Girl Scout leaders, 70 Lititz Girl Scouts recently had the opportunity to earn a "Wildlife" patch at Speedwell Forge Lake, Lititz.

The "wildlife" dealt with the out-of-doors type, not the kind of erratic behavior you read about in the newspapers.

Arranged by a local Girl Scout organizer and resident of the lake area, Evie Bergey, the program featured three hours of activity designed to make the young participants aware that people can no longer afford to take the natural world for granted. Consistently mentioned as the greatest danger to

creatures of the wild was loss of habitat.

Barry Pollock of Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, bureau of law enforcement, along with Dale Boyer, presented displays of fish and other aquatic life native to the Commonwealth.

Speaking about the importance of an untainted food chain, Pollack said that some companies are more interested in making a dollar than the environment. And the people who manage these businesses are not only destroying vital aquatic life but also polluting someone's clean drinking supply.

His overview included explanations of spawning, habitat, coloration and endangered species. Ears were particularly alert of information about the venomous snakes indigenous to the state. The two men distributed a large number of publications about fishing and boating.

A real highlight for each girl, though, was the opportunity to personally test the cruiser's siren and hand-held microphone.

Unknowingly and simultaneously, Mark Metzler of the Lancaster County Conservation District emphasized some of the very



Junior Girl Scouts form a large horse shoe in preparation for the closing flag ceremony of the Speedwell Lake Outdoor Day. Becky Frey and Katie Ransing facing camera on the left.

same points made by Pollack. While that could be a contributing factor to adult boredom, it is not with children. Hearing the same idea from different people using different words only reinforces the truth of what is being said.

Both men cited the bog turtle as an endangered species on the local level. Metzler noted that in the Orient one of these little creatures can fetch as high as \$600 on the black market. Of course the children were so busy absorbing this information that it never occurred to them to ask why, even though that was the adults' unspoken question. As it turns out, bog turtles are the perfect complement to bonsai forests.

Metzler said the turtles would live only three days without water and depending on their size and health only three months without food. He also pointed out that while water is primary to life, it's of no use when someone falls through ice in wintertime, and death occurs in a matter of minutes.

To emphasize that diminishing habitat endangers wildlife, he scattered on the ground three different colors of cards that represented food, shelter, and water. As deer competing in the wild, the girls had



Hiking through the woods to earn the Wildlife Badge are, left to right, Megan Dougherty, Sara Gibb, Erica Krelder, Becky Krelder, Carrie Judd.

to secure as much of each as they possibly could in order to survive. Although most were able to obtain some of each in the first round, dramatic results were noted when the number of cards were cut in half. Clearly some deer would die without the basics to sustain life.

On another hillside of the land bordering the lake, a couple of leaders played a game that emphasized the same concept: when a number of deer remain constant

but the food, water, and shelter do not, deer will die.

Recognizing that all talk and no action does contribute to children's boredom, Bergey included a short hike in her itinerary. Of course, any wildlife in the area, with the exception of birds high in the treetops, instinctively recognized that this was a good time to make themselves scarce. A domestic cat that followed the group was a real hit though.



Wildlife elude Girl Scouts on their hike, but the domesticated cat cooperates nicely for Kate Schreiter, Whitney Rossi and Jolene Ortega, left to right.



Dale Boyer and Barry Pollock of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission talk about aquatic life in the state.



Junior Troop 242 folds the flag at the conclusion of the morning's activities to earn the wildlife badge.