

Interview of Sam and Jan Hecht For Troop 47's 50th Anniversary

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Interviewer Comments:

Sam and Jan Hecht were very active with Cub Scout Pack 47 and Boy Scout Troop 47 for many years. Their participation with both the pack and troop began in the early 1980's and ended in the mid 1990's, a period that covered at least 15 years. Their two sons, Samuel "Lucky" Hecht IV and Fred Hecht both earned the rank of Eagle Scout. Though neither of them were ever "officially" the scoutmaster of Troop 47, Sam and Jan's combined knowledge of events covering the entire decade of the 1980's and the early 1990's with our scout pack and troop organizations, cannot be eclipsed.

Jan Hecht's involvement included Den Leader, Cub Master, Charter Representative, Assistant Scoutmaster, District Day Camp Coordinator, and District Round Table Coordinator.

Sam Hecht's involvement included being a boy scout in the troop, Assistant Scoutmaster, Troop Committee Chairman, and District Round Table Coordinator.

I can remember all the way back to the beginning, Sam said. In 1957 I was a boy in the troop and we would meet in the basement of the United Presbyterian Church in Elizabeth with Rev. Wright. Me and my two brothers would start walking from our farm on top of Doolittle Hill, and walk to the troop meetings on Saturday mornings. It was about 3 miles one way, but we didn't care. We were kids and we would have a couple more join us along the way. Me, and my brothers Mike and Louie, would be joined by Donald Garland and Marshall Sullivan. Usually we would get a ride back, but sometimes we would walk both ways. Things were different back then and you really didn't have to worry much about kids walking along the roads. And there really wasn't much traffic to speak of.

Years later when my boys got old enough, they got involved in scouting and Jan and I became leaders too. At first we were just involved parents, but when my oldest son didn't have a Webelos leader, Jan volunteered. We were both hooked then.

Back then the Cub Scouts had a Day Camp where they would go spend all day, five days in a row. It was all the way up at Tunnel Mill Scout Reservation above Charlestown. It took forever to drive up and back every day for a week with those boys, Jan said. I proposed having a District Day Camp at Buffalo Trace Park near Palmyra. You would have thought I was trying to rip apart Cub Scouts, by the way the Council reacted. But I kept pushing for it and a lot of other parents and scout leaders got on board with me, so the council had to listen. In 1982 we hosted our first District Day Camp at Buffalo Trace Park.

Today, 25 years later, every district in the scout council has their own Day Camp and they are very successful events.

At one time, Sam said there were 7 sets of brothers in Troop 47. There were the Fitzgeralds, Lynchs, Hechts, Clampitts, Babcocks, Martins, and the Beckers. That was a pretty neat thing and they were all a good bunch of kids.

We camped a lot back then. We didn't go on a lot of real long or expensive trips, but we had a lot of fun. We would camp at Tunnel Mill and Camp Crooked Creek. We also made a trip to Lake Cumberland, KY and camped one weekend. We took several canoe trips down Blue River and sometimes would camp. We went to both Wyandotte Caves, and we camped at Marengo Cave one time. The troop also made a trip to the National Boy Scout Museum that used to be in Murray, KY.

The interviewer asked Sam if there were any special stories that he would share.

Well I don't know how special it was, but I remember one district camp-o-ree we had along the Ohio River on Bruce Babcock's farm. We had a lot of people there and we pulled the cars off Highway 111, down a bank and in a big field. We all got set up and man did it ever rain that weekend. It took us forever to push all those cars and trucks out on Sunday. The mud and the mess were pretty bad. Hard to forget that one.

Another time we camped up on top of the river hills by the old river boat captain's tomb. We camped out in the woods that Babcock's owned. McHarry's tomb was a short hike away out on the ridge. The tomb wasn't much, but the boys had a good time that weekend.

Jan was asked the same question.

I took our two boys to Philmont, New Mexico to the national scout camp in 1989. That was a great trip and the boys had a good time. I went to get leadership training for the local scout council and both boys did activities while we were there. Lucky went on a seven day hiking trek with the Philmont staff. Freddie was younger and he could not go on the trek. He was pretty mad about it, too. But he did a week of activities in a scout camp environment. It was just a great trip.

Jan said that both of their sons also worked at Camp Crooked Creek on summer camp staff for several summers and Freddie worked at a diabetes camp that was also held at Crooked Creek. Lucky was also very involved in the Order of the Arrow and was a Vigil Honor member.

Other events during the Hecht family's tenure in scouting that they were aware of included a trip to Philmont by Daniel Babcock in 1984. They also stated that Adam and Aaron Vetter went to Philmont, but were unsure of the year.