

Scouts Wont Budge From Airfield Region

Although unhappy at the nearness of the Grumman jet airfield to their more than 30-year-old Camp Wauwepex at Wading River, Nassau County Boy Scout officials said yesterday they did not intend to close the camp.

"The Boeing 707 that nosedived Aug. 15 into a potato patch just outside the Grumman field," said one official, "was several miles from the lake and main campsite of Camp Wauwepex. It is true, however, that part of the camp's more than 600 acres on the north side of Jericho Turnpike is opposite the airfield, but that section is undeveloped and virtually unused."

Pilots Avoid Runways

The official added that he understood pilots have been ordered to avoid using runways pointing toward Camp Wauwepex, except when absolutely necessary.

Eventually, he said, the Nassau County Boy Scout Council may move out of Camp Wauwepex, but only if similar camping facilities can be found within an easy drive of Nassau County.

"Camp Wauwepex," said the official, "is actually more of an overnight or weekend camp for scouts. A Scoutmaster can bundle a bunch of boys into his car and easily drive the 60 or so miles, either in summer or winter, and spend a few days roughing it. It can handle only up to 5,000 of the 36,000 Boy Scouts in the council."

"The real fun of outdoor life and camping is actually found at our 3-year-old, 2,400-acre Onteora Scout Reservation, north of Livingston Manor. There the boys have a chance to see and climb mountains instead of this flat Long Island terrain and they really begin to get a good idea of what scouting is really like."

Real Camping

"After all, what are you offering a Boy Scout if you can't offer him a taste of real camping?"

The Onteora camp handled approximately 3,500 boys last summer, in addition to the 5,000 who went to Camp Wauwepex.

Facilities at the Onteora reservation are crude, purposely so. They are built as development funds become available, but will never become luxurious or elaborate as is the case with private camps for similar age groups.

"We not only want to keep it rough so that the boys will get the full benefit of outdoor living," said the official, "but we don't have the money even to attempt to make it elaborate. After all, if not for a gift from a private foundation we would never have been able to even buy the land."

Negotiate for New Camp

He revealed that the council is concluding negotiations for a 900-acre tract on Alder Lake in Ulster County. It hopes to have it by next summer.

The funds for purchasing and improving the camp site do not come out of the council's operating budget, he emphasized. All funds for operating the council in Nassau and for camp operation, aside from development, are obtained through the fund campaign each October.

Within about a decade the council expects to hit a peak of almost 60,000 Boy Scouts, Explorer Scouts and Cub Scouts. It already is sixth in size in the United States.

"We'll need even more land upstate," said the official, "if we

want to do a good job and give each scout at least two weeks of outdoor life. But we will certainly need either Camp Wauwepex or the gift of some large acreage somewhere on the north shore for overnight and weekend camping, second best to the real thing, of course."

Card, Bunco Party

The Sewanhaka Parent-Teacher Association of Floral Park will hold a card and bunco party at 8 P. M. Monday in the Sewanhaka High School students' dining hall.



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