

Cousin Campouts are Great Fun

This was the week for camping out under the stars with the grandkids. I started this a couple years ago just for fun so the girl cousins could have a night together as well as the boys. It was ladies first this year, and we organized a date that would work for all the families. The day finally arrived, and we got all the girls over to the farm and ready to go with all their camping supplies. I got busy setting up the pop-up camper and a tent in the woods and gathered firewood for our campfire while grandma picked up the girls. I packed up all the bacon, eggs, bread for toast, butter and jelly that we would need for breakfast. When everyone arrived, we took all the blankets and pillows down to the campsite and picked out where everyone was going to sleep. That took a little while, but eventually everyone was satisfied, and we went back to the house to eat supper in grandma's kitchen. The girls requested a nice little meal of chicken nuggets and mac and cheese. When we were all done eating, it was off to our campsite for an evening of fun and laughter. As it started to get dark, the kids stopped exploring and swinging and we gathered around the fire with our marshmallows, chocolate bars, and graham crackers ready to make our s'mores. When we finished eating them and everyone's fingers and faces were all sticky from the marshmallows, we got washed up and ready for bed. That's when the bathroom runs began. For the next seven or eight hours everyone had at least two or three trips to the bathroom that kept grandma and me pretty busy. I couldn't believe how restless and talkative these little girls were as they tried to settle down. It probably took about two hours to get everyone to sleep.

When the birds began to chirp at about 5:30 the next morning the girls were awake in an instant. We made another bathroom run and then got started on breakfast. It was great. Sizzling bacon and scrambled eggs along with slightly burnt toast over the open fire made for one great meal. After breakfast we fed the farm animals, went wading in the creek, and climbed on the hay bales. It was a great time had by all, and I started wondering how the boys campout in a couple days was going to compare.

The boys camp started out much the same, only this time I picked them all up because grandma had other things going on. Also she was pretty much burned out from the girl's campout where she volunteered to sleep in the tent on the hard ground, while I got to sleep in the camper. Everything started out about the same only this time I made pancakes for supper before we went to the campground. The boys loved every moment as I showed them the boy scout way to start a campfire with little sticks made into teepees. After the s'mores they were just as sticky as the girls. We sat by the campfire and chatted about life. We listened to the insects and frogs making all their night noises and talked about God's great creatures big and small. When the yawns started in, we took our bathroom break and hit the sack. It only took the boys about ten minutes and all of them were asleep. The good thing was there were no bathroom trips throughout the night.

In the morning, we fixed the same breakfast as the girls as each boy helped in some way or other. When all was said and done, our grandpa/grandma/grandkid cousin campouts were a huge success and we are already making plans for next year.

In the Old Testament days one of the Israelite celebrations was called the feast of booths and basically the people would come in from the country and build little shelters to sleep in so they could all gather together each night to worship God. It was like the first official campouts. All in all it was fun to bring the cousins together to play, talk, pray and even sing a few songs around the campfire. It made me realize how wonderfully blessed I am. Until next week, God bless.