

# Suburban Chicagoland

Suburban: def, sub-urban; sub- below, urban-city life. Well water, no curbs, street postal boxes, garbage cans in front of the house; and the best darn political shenanigans that are not covered enough by the major news media. The official blog of veteran political writer Ray Hanania.

**Saturday, May 5, 2012**

## Camping with the Boy Scouts troop 318 calumet/Orland park



Lake County fair grounds, Indiana -- The toughest part of camping is getting there, not the camping. So far, every time I've camped, after setting up the tent, the cot and arranging everything I had to lug from the car trunk - three trips, I've been beat. As soon as I lay down on the cot in the sleeping bag - 40 degrees below zero tolerance sleeper - I've been out like a light. Carrying everything the block long trek from the car can be an exercise, especially after a year from heart valve surgery. But it's good exercise for sure, and with all the consulting work I've been doing lately, it beats sitting at a desk, talking into a phone and tapping away at the computer.



The toughest challenge is putting the tent up. It's not the largest tent. Supposedly it fits 6 comfortably. Right! That's baloney for sure. Who designs these tents? Corporate dudes who were never in scouts but think they know everything? They're like computer programmers. They know how to write the complex codes to design software but have no commonsense about how the needs really need to be met. Same with the tent makers. Maybe it's because I'm Arab and tents have cultural meaning. Let's get that thought on the table and out in the open right away. No, it's common sense and little more.

For example, some ideas for improvement.

Print the instructions and a picture of the tent on the outside of the tent. Who ever keeps the paper instructions? No one. It's litter that gets thrown out.

Tents have thin ropes that anchor the tent to the ground from five to six places. So why are they black so they become invisible at night and can't be seen by the people tripping over them? Why not make them bright orange to glow at night so people don't steadily trip over them and fall or rattle the tent while you're trying to sleep?

The 10 foot flexible fiber glass sectioned poles are a great idea. At least they work!



Maybe also add a pocket on the outside of the tent to slip a card for your name, though it is fun making the name-stakes the scouts require for each tent so they easily find people after retiring for the day.

Most people will complain that while the tent will last a long time, the zippers break often. They're too taut. Making the easier to zip up so they don't break? A tent with an opening that doesn't seal to prevent insects from flying in is worthless.

Once the tent is up, it's fun. Camping outdoors in a forrest of tall oak trees is memorable. On humid nights, moisture drips from the leaves onto the tent tops below like a steady rain.

I have to give a plug to the camp scout leaders in Troop 318. They're the best. If you're lucky to have a team of great scout leaders, you are very fortunate. And watching your son mature and take on responsibility is priceless.





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## About Ray Hanania

Ray Hanania is an award winning columnist and former Chicago City Hall Reporter (1976-1992) covering "Daley to Daley." He writes a syndicated column distributed by Creators Syndicate and published every Week by the Jerusalem Post, and a political column on Chicagoland and mainstream American political issues each week in several regional community newspapers. He is a political consultant and president of Urban Strategies Group and he offers his personal insights and experiences about regional and national politics at [www.Hanania.com](http://www.Hanania.com). This is an Opinion Commentary-based news and information web site. We publish opinion columns, cartoons, comic strips, news stories, feature stories and, occasionally, local press releases of interest to the general public in our target market area. Email Ray Hanania ([rayhanania@comcast.net](mailto:rayhanania@comcast.net)) with any information, corrections or clarifications. *This blog only represents the views of Ray Hanania and no one else, unless specifically stated.*

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