

Personally Speaking

Rainy Day Scouts

IT WAS RAINING STEADILY when I drove up to our Troop headquarters one Saturday, last February, and I wondered how many of the twenty-seven Scouts who had raised their hands the previous Thursday night would turn out for this camping trip.

There were twenty-six of them there. Also all six of the men who had volunteered to drive cars.

So I hid my amazement (—I was raised in the dry Southwest and didn't know folks really went camping on a cold, rainy day), and we filled the cars and set off. Sixty rain-washed miles later we turned into a muddy road and plowed our way to the campsite and unloaded our Scouts. Again I was amazed. There wasn't a word about the rain that was still falling. My passengers pulled on their galoshes and ponchos, stacked their packs on a stone wall by the road with a tarp spread over to keep them dry while they scouted the campsite. All as matter of fact as could be.

Three of us drivers turned our cars around and headed back toward our dry, warm homes. The Scoutmaster and two brave — and perhaps by now regretful of their rash offer — committeemen, stayed with the boys.

Theirs was the real experience. One of them hadn't done much camping and his son gave him a boy's finest compliment afterwards when he said, "Dad, that was fun. You gotta come with us on our next camp trip."

The other dad was an experienced camper and had suggested to his boy that the two of them pitch a tent (it is cold around here in February and the Troop was camping in log lean-tos). When the pitching time came the son was eager to head for a lean-to, but his dad held out for the original plan, and they went to it. Both were soaked by the time they had their tent up but as they sat inside drying their clothes in front of the fire, watching biscuits browning in a reflector oven, and listening to the rain on the canvas, they shared that good feeling that comes from being in control of the situation. And needless to say, this particular dad rates a lot higher with his son as a result of the experience.

Why do so many of us pass up these opportunities of getting closer to our son in camp? We don't have to; just mention to your son's Scoutmaster that you would like to go along sometime and I'll bet you will be dated up for the next hike. And after you've regained your lost sleep you will be mighty glad you did it.


Editor.

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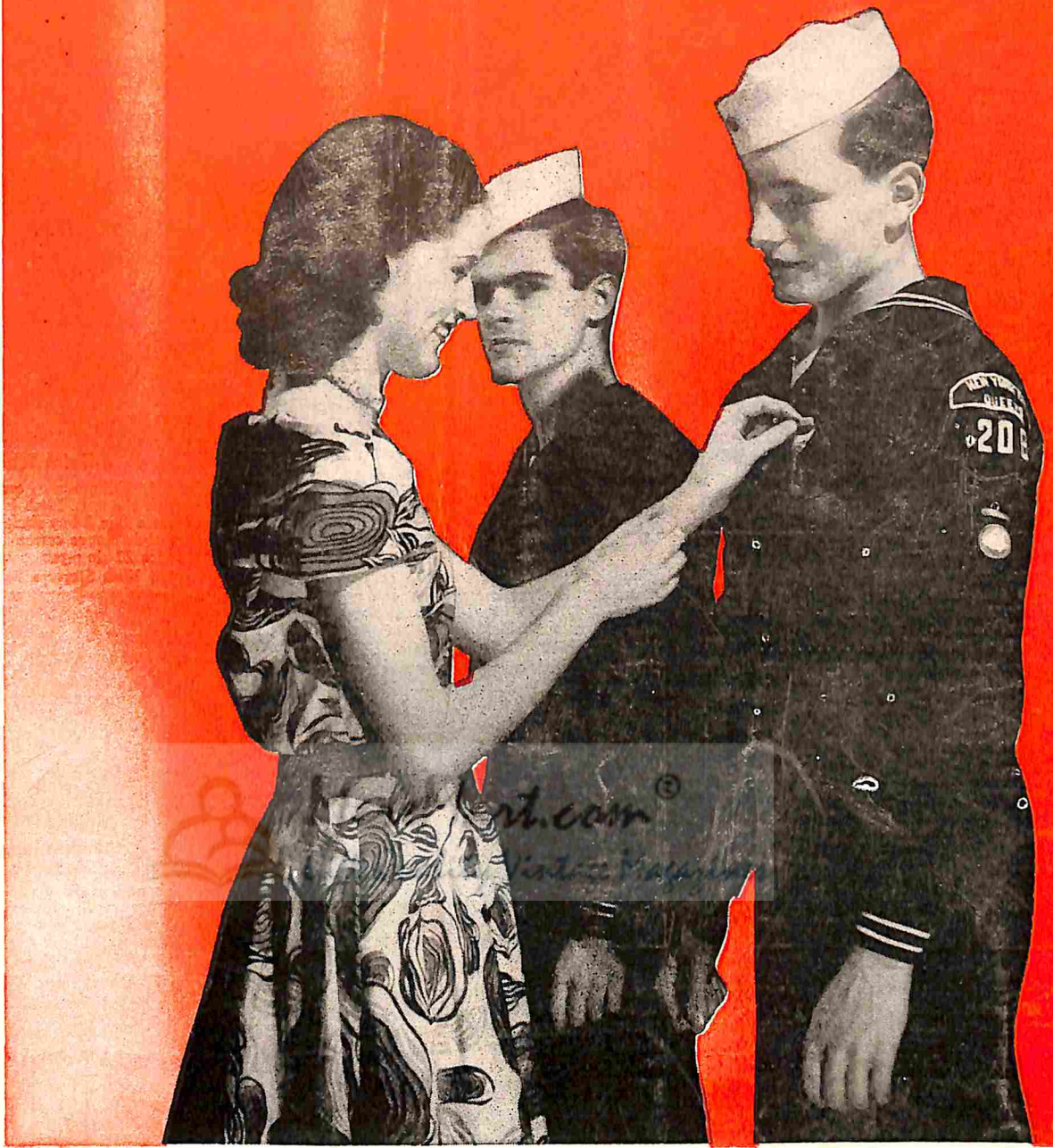
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THIS MONTH'S COVER



Recognition for the long hours of hard work leading to the highest Sea Explorer Rank, Quartermaster, is doubly sweet when the girl-friend is the one who pins on the badge.



APRIL

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1953

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