



Vol. 3, No. 10

FREEZING WEATHER EDITION

In this Issue:

Antarctic Scout

Wind Chill Factor

The Hottest In Cold Weather Gear

Freezing Weather Challenge



Late autumn is here with winter around the corner. As temperatures dive, it's time to gear up for great cold weather adventures. That's a tradition running deep in the Boy Scouts of America, with an Antarctic Scout leading the way.

A thermometer on a frosty snowshoe
signals great winter fun



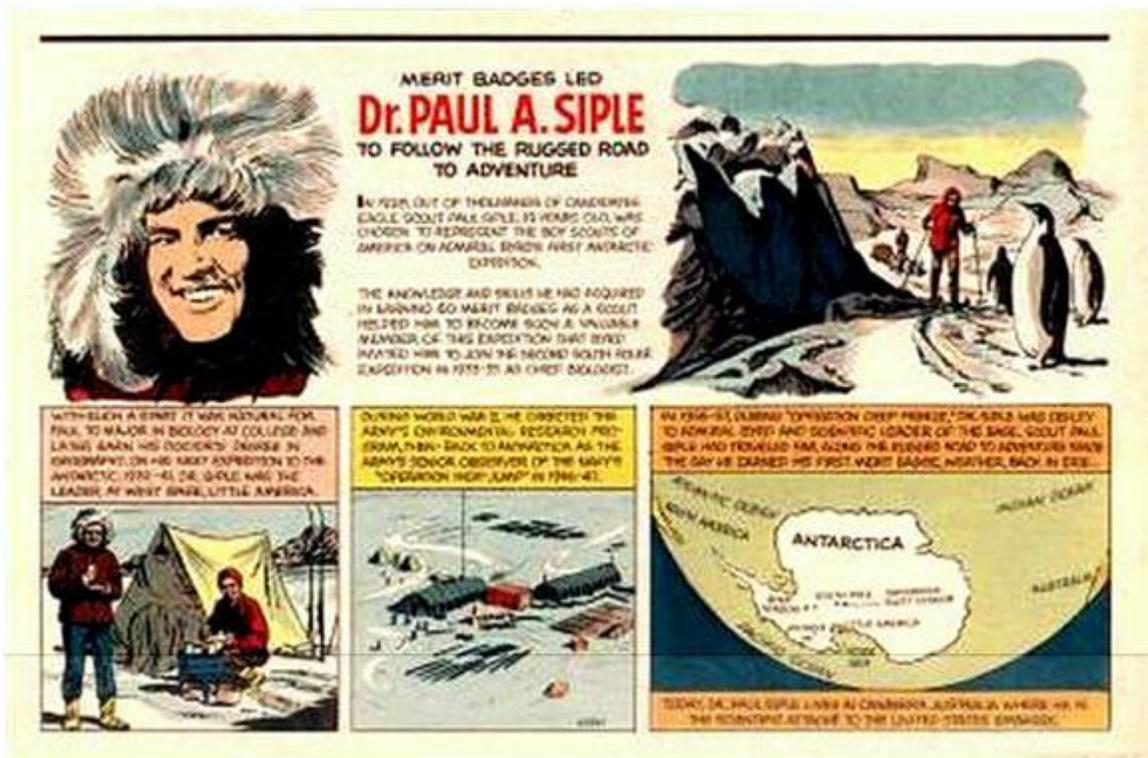
Photo by: Robert Birkby

ANTARCTIC SCOUT

What do the South Pole, wind chill factor, and an Eagle Scout have in common? They all come together in Paul Siple, the BSA's first Antarctic Scout.

One hundred years ago next month, five Norwegian explorers were the first to reach the South Pole. The men covered 2,000 miles in 99 days, skiing and walking across a vast expanse of snow and ice. Dogs pulling sleds helped haul their supplies.

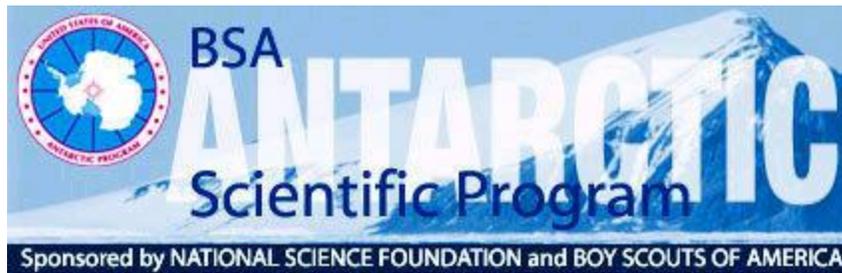
Eighteen years later, Rear Admiral Richard Byrd of the U.S. Navy set off on a two year expedition to Antarctica. Among his crew members was Eagle Scout Paul Siple. Here's how a 1965 Boys' Life magazine issue reported Siple's amazing story:



The Boy Scouts of America celebrated Admiral Byrd's achievements (including the first flight over the South Pole) with the Silver Buffalo Award, Scouting's highest recognition for noteworthy and extraordinary service to youth. The United States Post Office issued two stamps in his honor.

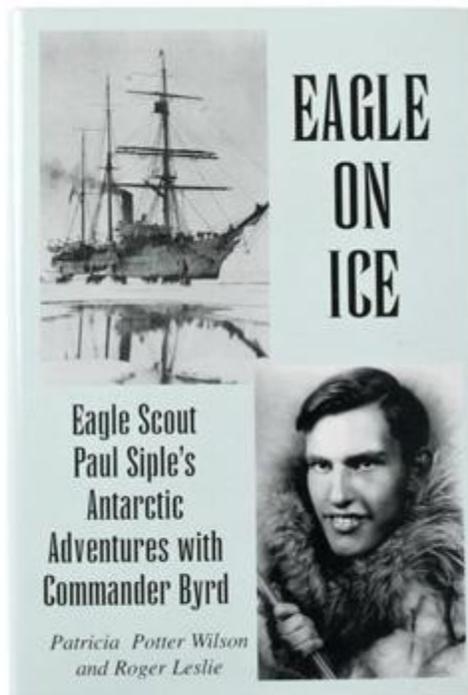


Paul Siple would return to Antarctica many times. His interest in research led him to a career as a cold weather expert. Other Antarctic Scouts followed in his footsteps for months at the South Pole where they mixed adventure with science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.



A number of locations in Antarctica have been named for Dr. Siple, including Siple Island, Mount Siple, the Siple Coast, and the Siple Research Station. Like his mentor Admiral Byrd, Paul Siple also received the BSA's Silver Buffalo award.

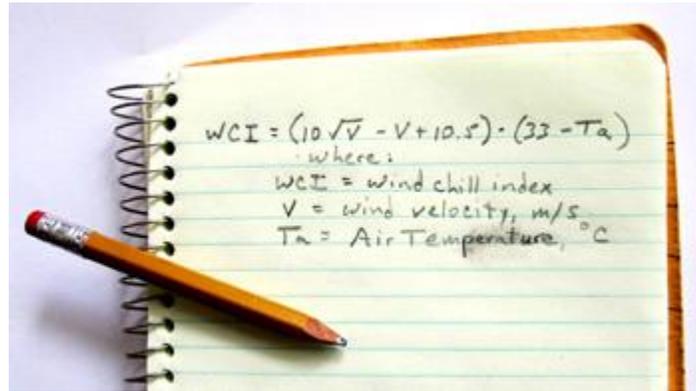
To learn more about Paul Siple's remarkable life, check out the book *Eagle on Ice*, available now at www.scoutstuff.org.



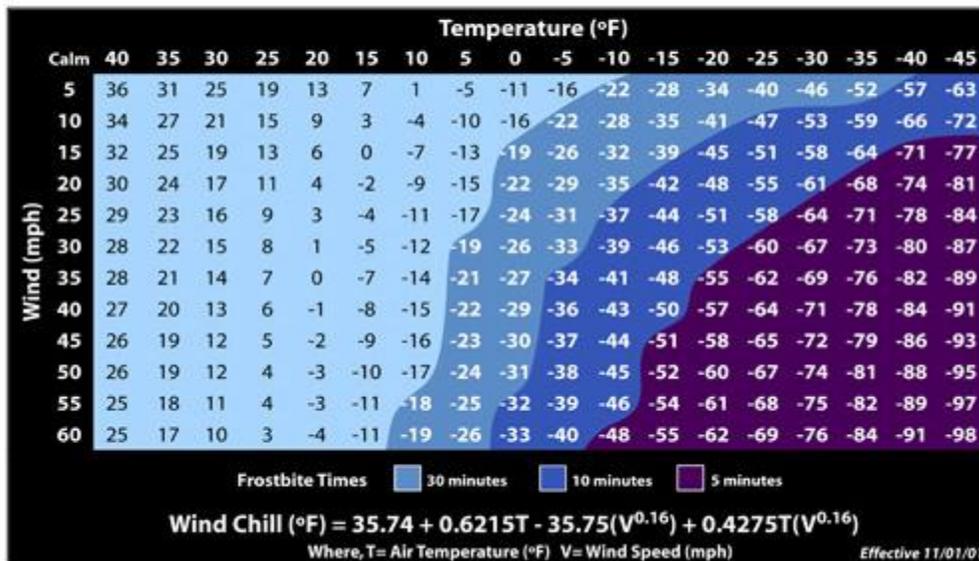
WIND CHILL FACTOR

On a blustery winter's day you're sure to notice that the wind can make the temperature feel colder than what you read on the thermometer. We can thank Paul Siple for helping us understand why.

In his doctoral dissertation *Adaptations of the Explorer to the Climate of Antarctica*, Siple used experiments he conducted in Antarctica to formulate an equation showing how cold temperatures combine with the wind to carry heat away from exposed skin:



The equation has been refined since Dr. Siple's day, but the ideas he introduced led to modern wind chill charts.



National Weather Service

The Wind Chill Index heightens Scouts' awareness of hypothermia - the condition that occurs when the body's core temperature becomes dangerously low. Wearing layers of insulated clothing, blocking the wind, and staying dry are all keys to avoiding hypothermia.

Sunwatches

A 1923 letter asked Scouting's wise old woodsman Daniel Carter Beard, "Is it possible to tell time using compass?"

Uncle Dan knew it could be done, but required complicated mathematical adjustments for angles and latitude. "Better," he replied, "to use a watch."

On the other hand, he did promote the sunwatch, a combination sundial and compass.

The sunwatch folded for easy carrying in a pocket or pack. A Scout could hold the brass instrument level in sunshine and use the compass to orient toward north. The shadow cast by the arm of the sundial would show the time.

"I would like to see every Scout have one," Dan Beard wrote, "because he could not use it without gaining useful knowledge of the sun, the variations of the compass and the principles of the sun dial."

THE HOTTEST IN COLD WEATHER GEAR

Your travels may not take you to Antarctica, at least not right away, but you can get ready for any conditions you might face in the great outdoors. Count on www.scoutstuff.org for the gear you need to stay warm.

Start with an outer shell that shields you from wind, rain, and snow. TrekTek™ clothing is designed to keep bad weather at bay.



TrekTek™ TruNorth™ Waterproof Breathable Jacket

A sleeping bag built for night at zero degrees will see you through most winter campouts. Increase comfort and insulate yourself from cold ground by putting an inflatable sleeping pad underneath.



BSA® Eagle Crest 0°F Sleeping Bag - Regular Length



Mountaineer Self-Inflating Sleeping Pad

Choose four-season tents for cold weather trips. They're sturdier and stand up better in the wind than tents meant just for spring, summer, and autumn. The Eureka!® Alpenlite is a good example of a tough winter shelter. Find it at www.scoutstuff.org.



Eureka!® Alpenlite 2XT Tent

FREEZING WEATHER CHALLENGE

Having the right clothing and gear for winter outings is one thing. Using it is another. Cub Scouts can set off for hikes, sledding parties, and playing in the snow. Boy Scouts and Venturers can plan campouts, ski trips, and freeze-outs that might feature building igloos and snow caves. Step up to the challenge of cold weather and you'll find a wintery world of possibilities for adventure.



(This edition of the Be Prepared Newsletter was developed and written by Robert Birkby, author of the current editions of the Boy Scout Handbook and the Scout Fieldbook.)