

2017 Suburban Steader Update

– Week 17

Wow! Are we at another week already? Last week was a busy week for us here at the Suburban Steader Homestead and this week wasn't much different. Let's check into the going-ons at the Suburban Steader Homestead for Week 17 of 2017!

This Week's Milestones

Get Your Hike On!

My twin girls are a masters course on nature versus nurture.

They have been together since conception and have been exposed to life in the exact same way. In fact, it was only two years ago when they were in Kindergarten (they're in Second Grade now) that they were separated in school. Why am I telling you all this information? Because, despite being exposed to exactly the same experiences, they are as different as different can be.

One is a sporty girl (let's call her M). She loves to play soccer, lacrosse, and basketball. M also loves to do stuff with me like running, swimming, hiking, camping, yard work and can't wait to surf, wakeboard, and snowboard in the next year.

My other daughter is my little nerd (let's call her J). And I say that as lovingly as possible (I am an engineer after all).

She will gladly curl up on the couch with a book and read the day away. J likes being outside but isn't much of an athlete.

We constantly have to tell her about walking while reading her books is dangerous. I've actually seen her walk down the stairs while reading a book. I was scared that she was going to miss a step and crack open her head.

Back To The Hike

But, despite their differences, they both love to explore new things. I was able to take them to Bear Mountain State Park in New York last weekend and we actually climbed the mountain.

Now, before you get too impressed (sarcasm, folks!) Bear Mountain's summit is at roughly 1,300ft and the trailhead is at roughly 200ft. It's not a terribly difficult hike nor is it terribly long – I think it was about 4.5mi round trip.

The hike was great. We started up Major Welch trail, summited and returned on the Appalachian Trail (AT). That description sounds relatively easy, but the Major Welch Trail provided it's own level of difficulty in that it was rainy and there were lots of rock outcroppings. I taught the kids (and my wife) how to make sure their footing was safe before moving the next one. M took to it like a duck to water and was flying up the trail. J was a bit timider and slow. She also didn't like getting her feet muddy.



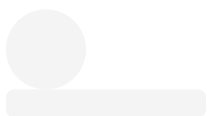
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J took one spill off a slippery rock and started crying pretty loud. The Mrs and I calmed her down and we decided to take a break. We had just hit a false summit and everyone was a bit bummed. M was ready to go, but we got some raisins into J. After that, she was a rock star! She scampered up to the peak, climbed the lookout tower stairs (which were the worst part for Dad) and rocked on the way down.

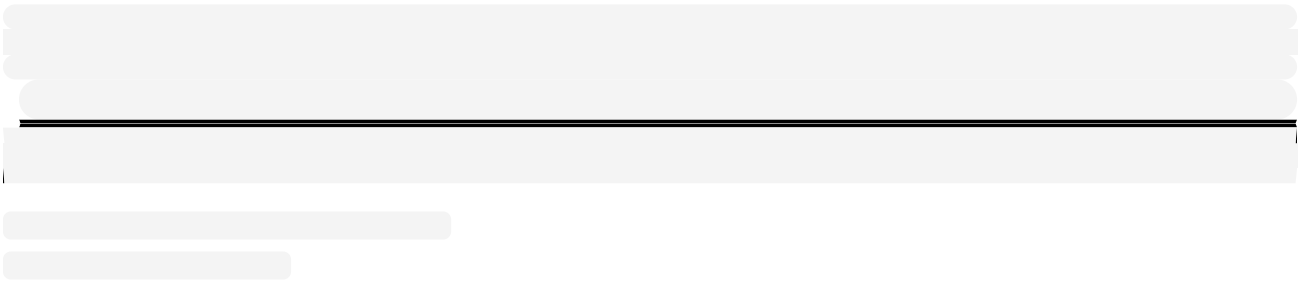
Their First Time On The AT

The girls were pumped about the way down. This hike was their first time on the AT. I had told M and J all about it and they were very excited to be on a trail that ran all the way from Georgia to Maine. I have to say that I've hiked parts of it in New England (most New Hampshire) and the portion around Bear Mountain might as well have been a sidewalk compared to New Hampshire. There was crushed blue stone and "manicured" steps the entire way.



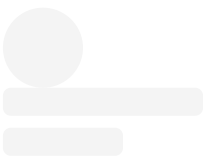


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We finished the day with some great steaks on the old charcoal grill.





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What a great end to a great day!

Rain, Rain, Go Away!

Yes, I'm a gardener and I'm wishing the rain away. Blasphemy, I know! But this last week has been non-stop rain. Unfortunately, that situation is not conducive to the point I'm at. I need to harden up some plantings and, to do that, I need *some* sun.

It looks like the sun will be coming out this afternoon for a while and the temps will really be creeping up – looks like we'll be hitting 80F today (29-Apr)!

We should be able to harden off the seedlings and get them planted.

Civic Duty Calls

I had the pleasure of being called in for jury duty this week. Truth be told, I am one of those weird people who doesn't actually mind it much. Over ten years ago I served on a grand jury and really enjoyed that opportunity. I got to see all kinds of cases come through there including murders, drugs, drunk driving and numerous other offenses. It's very interesting to see how our court systems works – and how inefficient it is.

On this trip, I was brought up to final jury selection for a double murder case. It sounded quite interesting to be sure. Unfortunately, the case was expected to run from early May to the end of June. My employer does not pay for jury duty absences so I had to dismiss myself for financial hardship reasons. I was kind of bummed out as I would have liked to see how a criminal proceeding of that magnitude played out.

Next Week's Goals

Gardening

I plan on getting the current seedling hardened off. I also have to plant my final crops – both for indoor and outdoor starts. The blueberries still need some loving – I have been so busy around the house and with work/jury duty that I haven't gotten to them.

Workshop

I started building an alignment jig for chisel and hand plane iron sharpening similar to what Cody from Wranglerstar did.

I'll post pictures on Instagram once it's complete. After that, I need to get the workshop cleaned up and then take a look at my grandfather's old wooden toolbox. That should prove to be an interesting project.

That's it folks – Week 17 is in the books! How was your week?

Thanks for reading!

SUBURBAN STEADER

WEEKLY UPDATE

2017 EDITION

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