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Wolf Trap Holds Campout For Area Students

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Most people associate Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts with the opera, picnics on the Filene Center lawn, or with children's performances at Theatre-in-the-Woods.

But on Sunday, September 28th, and Monday, September 29th, a walk through the park would have confused some, as it looked more like [Tuolumne Meadows](#) in Yosemite National Park, than the meadow at Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts.

With help from a local Boy Scout troop, a local Venturing Crew and the Friends of Wolf Trap, 35 fifth and sixth grade students from nine local elementary schools participated in Wolf Trap's inaugural "Campout for First Time Campers."

The area along Wolf Trap Creek, usually used by picnickers before a Filene Center performance, became the perfect place to set up tents and fall asleep to the peaceful sound of the rushing water.

For the majority of participants, this was their first time sleeping in a tent and cooking their food outside. The first day was filled with hiking, a backstage tour, an introduction to camping basics, campfire cooking, and the three-pot method of cleaning dishes, campfire songs and skits, and, of course, s'mores.

Both days included service projects – cleaning up the creek, eradicating mile-a-minute weed, and spreading native plant seeds throughout the park.

Park staff and volunteer organizers stated that this long awaited, first ever event exceeded expectations and served as a successful pilot for future campouts.

When asked what they liked best about the campout, one camper said, "My favorite part of this experience was picking seeds and spreading them around." Another said, "When they woke us up with that wake up song . . ." and another responded, "I liked having my own tent and being able to do really hands on stuff."

Perhaps one parent summed it up best, "This is cool! Teaching kids to look after themselves is very beneficial. Teaching them discipline and responsibility, I hope that my child will retain this even after camp."