

# **“Around The Campfire” Podcast – Episode Four**

Monthly Podcast from the Mayflower Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

Around The Campfire Podcast from the Mayflower Council of Scouting America for leaders and volunteers.

May 2024 episode features:

Rick Riopelle; Deputy Scout Executive discussing Scouting name change, announcements from the annual meeting and Council Procedures about incident reporting.

Andrea Watson; Director of Outdoor Programs and Properties for Scouting American discussing safe outdoor activities and providing a Jamboree 2026 update

Alyssa Budd Eagle Scout from Troop 424 discussing her Eagle Scout Project which recently won Council and Territory recognition for Project of the Year.

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## **Den Leader Appreciation Month**

**We know our den leaders truly light the way for our youth, creating the safe adventures, learning, and fun that makes Cub Scouts the perfect**

activity for boys and girls in kindergarten through fifth grade. Mayflower Council has marked the month of May as Den Leader Appreciation Month.

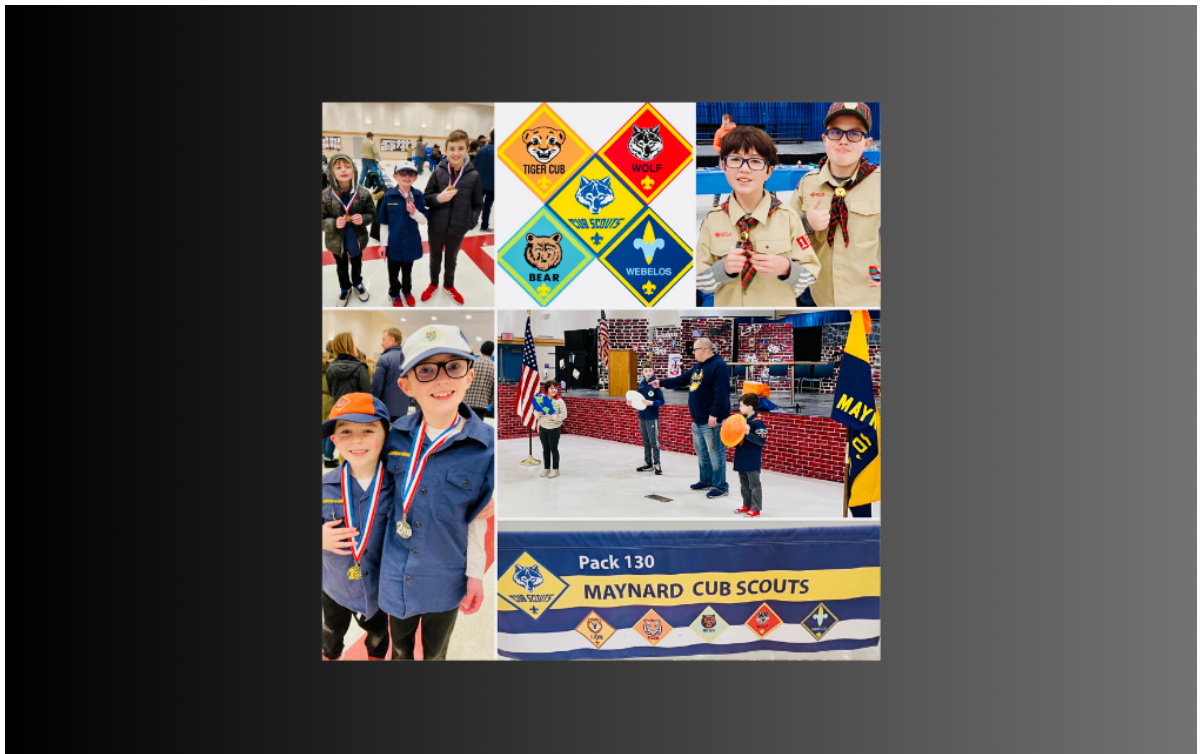
Mayflower Council highlights one of these fantastic den leaders every Wednesday in May



## Den Leader Appreciation: Matthew Kelly

Today, we conclude Mayflower Council's Den Leader Appreciation Month for 2024. Beyond focusing on the

Scout Law and Oath, Lord Baden Powell said good leaders often see things from the Scout's point of view, and [...]



## Den Leader Appreciation: Rob DeMarino

As we continue Den Leader Appreciation Month, the nominations keep rolling in. This week's top nominee comes from Maynard, Massachusetts, where Cubmaster Jarrod Kennedy singled out Rob DeMarino for special recognition as Den Leader [...]



## Den Leader Appreciation: Todd Johnson

As you know, May is Den Leader Appreciation Month in the Mayflower Council. Today, we recognize Todd Johnson of Pack 748 Medway as our third Den Leader of the Week for May 2024. Todd [...]



## Den Leader Appreciation: Matt Schickling

May is Den Leader Appreciation Month in the #MayflowerCouncil. Today, we recognize Matt Schickling of Pack 55 Northborough as our second Den Leader of the Week for May 2024.

Do you know a Den Leader who deserves some recognition? Fill out our form; maybe you'll see a familiar face in our next announcement...

*Sincere thanks to all of our Den Leaders for all you do!*

## Join us for a Den Leader Appreciation Extravaganza!

**Calling all den leaders!** It's time to celebrate the incredible individuals who make Scouting adventures happen – you, our den

leaders!

These special events are dedicated to showing our heartfelt thanks for the dedication, creativity, and endless patience our den leaders bring to their roles.

**RSVP Today!** Click on the event below to RSVP

- May 14, 5-7:30pm: Dairy Queen, 21 North Main St., Bellingham, MA
- May 15, 4-6pm: New City Creamery, 534a Boston Post Rd, Sudbury, MA
- May 15, 5-7pm: Panera Bread, 1401 Washington St., Hanover, MA
- May 15, 6-8pm: Ben & Jerry's, 1265 Worcester Rd., Natick, MA
- May 22, 5-7pm: Panera Bread, 400 Franklin St., Braintree, MA
- May 22 6 pm to 8 pm Panera Bread, 1301 Belmont St, Brockton, MA
- May 29, 5-7pm: Kravings Pizza and Ice Cream, 979 MA-109, Millis, MA

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## **Slices for Scouting**

**A Night With Friends & Fun to  
Kickstart a New Year of**

# Scouting in the Mayflower Council!

## What It Is

**What:** Fun, easy-to-host, one-night “pizza party” launch for 2022 – 2023 “sponsored” by the Mayflower Council

**When :** Any date in October 2022

**Where:** Your unit at the venue of choice...just need a YouTube-ready TV

**Who:** You, your Scouting group and prospective Scouting families

**How:** See the agenda for the evening below

## The Agenda: What Happens At Slices For Scouting

Scouts & friends eat pizza

Watch the Mayflower Council video on YouTube

Units share a slide show

Scouts share stories & upcoming adventures

Answer questions & invite to next meeting

Give out prizes to those in attendance  
Ready to join? Fill out application online

# How It Works: Your Step-By-Step Guide

1: Choose a Slices for Scouting Party Host Rick Riopelle 2022-08-12T16:15:36-04:00

## 1: Choose a Slices for Scouting Party Host

Choose a parent who will lead your “Slices for Scouting” party event.

Duties will be to lead the next steps.

2. Order Your Party Pack Rick Riopelle 2022-08-12T16:26:11-04:00

## 2. Order Your Party Pack

Order your Slices for Scouting Kit below!

Loading...

3: Confirm Date/Location Rick Riopelle 2022-08-12T16:27:31-04:00

## 3: Confirm Date/Location

**Determine date, time and location** for the unit Slices for Scouting Party with parents/unit leadership.

The council video will go “live” on YouTube at 6 p.m. on Friday, October 1 and be available any time thereafter.

4. Promote on Social Media and Accept Requests to Attend Rick Riopelle 2022-08-12T16:38:29-04:00

## 4. Promote on Social Media and Accept Requests to Attend

1. Create a Google Form to collect names of prospective



Scouts who would like to attend in response your Facebook Post. The form should include:

- YES! I would like to attend your Pizza Party to learn more about Scouts BSA!
- Name
- Phone Number
- Email Address
- How did you hear about us ?
- Questions/Comments

2. Promote your pizza party on your unit Facebook page and share in your community Facebook pages with a link to the Google Form. Be sure to include information on the date, time and location of your party, as well as a date for them to sign up by. SAMPLE:

*From taking your first hike in the mountains...to starting your first campfire...Scouts BSA is about testing your limits and pushing yourself to do things you never thought possible. Don't let adventure pass you by! Check out our troop today!*

*Learn more at our New Member Pizza Party on Friday, October 14th from 6 to 7:30PM at First Congregational Church, 123 Main Street; Milford! Click the link below for your personal invitation!*

5. Invite Your Guests via Text (Sample Copy & Image) Rick Riopelle 2022-08-12T16:42:23-04:00

## **5. Invite Your Guests via Text (Sample Copy & Image)**

**Text for parents to send to friends:**

*Hi (NAME)! Our Scout unit is hosting a pizza party to kick off the new school year and I'd love to invite you and (SON/DAUGHTER). We'll have pizza, prizes and would love to share some of the fun we have in store to get our kids*

*unplugged, outdoors and having fun this year!*

**Text for Slices for Scouting Party Host or leader to send to Scouts who dropped or have requested more information from your area (the Mayflower Council will send you a list of any prospects):**

Hi (NAME)! My name is (YOUR NAME) and I'm with Scout (troop/ship/crew NUMBER). Our Scout unit is hosting a pizza party to kick off the new year of Scouting and I'd love to invite you and (SON/DAUGHTER). We'll have pizza, prizes and would love to share some of the fun we have in store to get our kids unplugged, outdoors and having fun this year!

**Social Media Images to Include** (right click to download)





6. Follow Up, Confirm RSVP by September 17Rick Riopelle2022-08-12T16:43:10-04:00

## **6. Follow Up, Confirm RSVP by September 17**

Slices for Scouting Party host should follow up with parents about attendees and prepare the pizza order.

7. Create a SlideshowRick Riopelle2022-08-12T16:44:01-04:00

## **7. Create a Slideshow**

Assign an adult or Scout to create a short photo slideshow presentation of your unit's adventures. This is an easy, friendly way to get your Scouts talking about the fun things

you do!

8. Prepare to Party!Rick Riopelle2022-08-12T16:45:11-04:00

## **8. Prepare to Party!**

Party packs will be delivered the week of September 22.

It will include your \$30 Dominos gift card which should cover at least 3 medium pizzas. (You may need to order more.) It will also include prizes, quick start guides and more. Instructions & tips for a successful event will also be included.

9. Follow Up After the Party (Sample Copy)Rick Riopelle2022-08-12T16:45:53-04:00

## **9. Follow Up After the Party (Sample Copy)**

Follow up with prospective Scout parents with the following:

*Hi (NAME)! It was so great to have you at our pizza party! I hope you enjoyed it. Do you have any further questions? I'd also like to invite you and (SON/DAUGHTER) to our upcoming Scout meeting on (DATE/TIME) at (LOCATION/ADDRESS). It's going to be super fun!*

Scouts BSA Boy Troop Mayflower Council YouTube Video

Scouts BSA Girl Troop Mayflower Council YouTube Video

## **Pizza – Party – Prizes**

Hosted by You, Sponsored by the Mayflower Council



## **Deadline to Register: September 18, 2023**

Register Your Scout Unit Today!

### **What you'll receive:**

- \$30 gift card to order Dominos pizza
- Prize pack including fun giveaways, stickers & more
- Event "how-to-guide"
- Quick start guides
- Online application QR code

### **Keys to Success**

**Keep it Personal:** Have each parent invite one other new parent/child

**Keep it Simple:** You may elect to have a game or activity or keep the "party" as simple as you like.

**Keep it Small:** this allows for more conversation and questions with new parents & Scouts.

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# **Covid Modified Requirements Ending March 1**

**As of March 01, 2022, all temporary changes made to Scouts BSA advancement requirements to address the COVID-19 pandemic will expire, and there will be a return to the standard rules for Scouts BSA advancement. This includes deferment of some swimming requirements for First and Second class, virtual activities for Tenderfoot, Second and First Class, and requirement 9b of the Camping merit badge.**

As always, the BSA's top priority is the health and safety of all youth participating in BSA programs. In 2020, the BSA instituted several modifications to rank requirements and merit badge requirements ("advancement modifications") to accommodate activity restrictions necessitated by COVID-19. Effective March 01, 2022, those modifications will be removed, and the standard rules for advancement and merit badges will again become effective. These requirements are published at [www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/advancement-and-awards/](http://www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/advancement-and-awards/) and in the Requirements Guidebook.

Specifically, these modifications related to the swimming requirements for Second and First class ranks, virtual activities for Tenderfoot, Second and First Class, and requirement 9b of the Camping merit badge.

The Guide to Advancement, section 10.2.2.0, states that "Members must meet current advancement requirements as written for merit badges, all ranks, and Eagle Palms—no more and no less—and they are to do exactly what is stated."

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# Blue Cards Shouldn't Make You "Blue"

Merit badges are more than learning skills. They are about Scouts exploring an interest, engaging in discussions, and being recognized. When conducted properly, the merit badge process incorporates all eight of the methods of Scouting.

The MB process has been updated slightly in the new Guide to Advancement. The 2021 edition recognizes that technological advances can provide many benefits, but the overall process is unchanged and the blue card can play an important role. Alternatives to the blue card may be accepted, as long as they include the necessary information. If electronic record-keeping methods do not encompass all the steps, blue cards may be used in addition. Most importantly, a Scout should always have a permanent, hardcopy record of his or her work.

To reiterate, whether or not blue cards are included, the complete merit badge process must be followed, starting with an initial discussion between the Scout and the unit leader about the specific merit badge. The Scoutmaster (or their designee) provides advice and guidance, maybe suggesting that the Scout would get more out of the badge if they waited, or after they finished another activity. However, it is ultimately the Scout's decision to work on a particular merit badge at a particular time.

*"Since blue cards support the merit badge process as it is intended to function, the Guide to Advancement continues to reference and recommend them. It is expected that when blue cards are not used, advancement administrators at all levels will find ways to carry on the processes, interactions,*

*documentation, and other nuances that make the process such a critical element in BSA mission achievement."*

## **Guide to Advancement: Section 7.0.0.2 – About the Application for Merit Badge ("Blue Card")**

During that initial conversation the unit leader should provide contact information for at least one council approved merit badge counselor. However, if the Scout has one already in mind, they must be allowed to work with the registered and approved counselor of their choice. This initial meeting is integral to the merit badge process, and as such should be documented by the leader signing the blue card, or by other means.

The Scout next contacts the merit badge counselor, following all Youth Protection Training guidelines, and begins the process of completing the requirements. The counselor can consider work done at any time after the Scout was a registered Scouts BSA member, as long as the Scout actually and personally completed the requirement, **as written**.

As the Scout completes requirements, the merit badge counselor documents each by initialing and dating the spaces on the blue card, or other method. **These "partial" completions do not expire until the Scout's 18th birthday.** The Scout may choose to finish the merit badge with a different counselor, who should accept the previous counselor's certification of any requirements completed.

When all requirements are complete, the counselor records that information on the blue card, and/or by electronic means. The counselor should retain the "Counselor's Record" portion of the blue card for at least one year, in case questions arise.

After all requirements are completed and approved by the counselor, the Scout shows the evidence of completion to the unit leader, who initiates a discussion on how it went, but



**does not retest the Scout.** The unit leader documents this discussion as well, then the troop reports the completion to council and presents the Scout with the merit badge.

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## **Cub Scouts The 3 R's: Recruit, Recruit & Retain**

Of the six programs the BSA offers, typically over 50% of registered youth are in the Cub Scout program. Annually, we recruit more first graders to be Tigers than any other age group across all programs. In 2020, many units were unable or chose not to recruit in their communities. As a result, youth membership in the BSA plummeted.

It is time for a reset this fall, so everyone is being asked to focus on membership recruitment. As critical as that effort will be, data tells us that in a typical year we have had a problem with keeping them in the program. Voice of the Scout surveys have told us that families leave because of a poor den experience.

Dens are where the action happens, it's where we conduct activities in the form of the Adventure program. Den leaders

are well meaning adults who volunteered to guide a bunch of kids through a series of activities to reach the goal of completing an Adventure. Our volunteer den leaders like to have a playbook from which to draw and know what to do when holding a den meeting. They want to know what they should be doing with the youth and how to get it done. Our den leaders are not child development experts, they are parents and adults who volunteer. At the beginning of each program year, our den leaders and Cub Scouts are both stepping into the great unknown.

Advancement is how we deliver our program and measure the outcome, but advancement is not the end goal: it is a method for running a den meeting. Advancement should not define the activities to be completed; activities should lead to advancement. Cub Scouts do not have the developmental understanding of why they must complete certain requirements to "advance." They came to the meeting to have a good time and do something fun. Typically, that's all the Cub Scout cares about.

On the way home from a den meeting, Cub Scouts should be able to tell their families that they had FUN. They should be able to describe the meeting with glee and excitement and a need to return. If a Cub Scout looks out the car window and says, "That was boring," chances are he or she will not be back to the next den meeting or register for another program year.

Our challenge is to be sure den leaders are aware of the many resources available to help our leaders provide the best program possible; each and every meeting. Let's re-set and focus on member experiences that shine and provide great fun and adventures.

BSA resources available to provide the best Cub Scout experience for new membership – youth and adult.

Cub Scouting  
Cub Chat Live!  
Den Leader Resources  
Adult Leader Training

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# **#backtoschoolbacktoscouting Photo Contest**

## **Share the Scouting Adventure With Your Friends**

### **Share Your Scouting Photos In Our #backtoschoolbacktoscouting Contest – Ends September 30!**

The Scouts create amazing adventures. Sharing the memories you make with your Scout on your social media account is one of the most powerful ways to increase parent involvement and encourage others to join. The Mayflower Council, Boy Scouts of America has created the hashtag **#backtoschoolbacktoscouting** to use with your photos of your Scouting adventures on these social media accounts to spread the word about how fun Scouting is!

**Help us share the Scouting story** by sharing your Scout's great adventures with us and with others. Simply take a moment to share a photo or something exciting you did in Scouts on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram through Sept. 30th with the

hashtag **#backtoschoolbacktoscouting**. Sharing your photos will qualify you to win special prizes such as Amazon gift cards!

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## **Mayflower Summer Roundtable – July 2021**

Here is the slide presentation from Mayflower Council's July 28 Summer Roundtable. Slides from the main session and breakouts are included.

Slide Deck

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## **Scout Days at Fenway Park**

Wrap-up the summer with your Cub Scout pack, Boy Scout troop, Venture crew, Sea Scout ship, family, and friends watching the Boston Red Sox!

Two dates available this year:

Sunday, September 5, Red Sox vs Indians – this date includes a Red Sox Scout Day patch.

Sunday, September 19, Red Sox vs. Orioles – this date includes a Red Sox Scout Day patch the opportunity to participate in a post-game kids run the bases!!

Tickets are extremely limited so place your order today to

avoid disappointment. We'll see you at Fenway!

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# Resources for Answering Questions

Scouting instills values, gives youth a competitive edge and helps them become resilient adults, adults who lead. Scouting brings families together and gives them the platform for true, quality time together, where memories can be made that last a lifetime.

We also recognize that in your social circles, some may wonder about Scouting. They may ask questions about things they've heard or seen. They may be confused about who we are and what we do.

To help you answer those questions, we've put together a few tools for you.

We need to remind our communities why Scouting has thrived for more than 110-years. While we've evolved over the decades, along with our country, our values remain grounded in the same Scout Oath and Law.

Every family in our country should be invited and welcomed into Scouting.

If parents want their children to:

- Be of good character
- To experience the outdoors
- To make friends
- To have fun

- To learn things that will help them navigate life
- To be inspired to find careers and lifelong hobbies
- To work cooperatively with peers and adults
- And so much more

Then, they should try Scouting.

Please use the following tips and tools to help facilitate conversation as needed. You may have already received that question: “What’s going on with Scouting? What am I hearing about?”

# **Tell Your Story**

Lead with your story. Share why you choose Scouting for your family. If you’re a volunteer, explain why. Share the impact you’re making. If they know you, they will connect with your genuine assessment.

# **Share How Scouting Continues**

Share with them what Scouting is doing. While you can reference some national results, Scouting by the Numbers, focus on what your unit is doing locally. Share that in our local council, units have been meeting through the pandemic, either online, or in-person following all the safety guidelines of the Commonwealth. Remember that the local

council has offered significant virtual programming since the start of COVID-19 including service projects, virtual campouts, activities, and advancements. The council also has a robust plan to support units with virtual and in-person programming this fall.

# Ask What They Heard

Ask them what they've heard. If it's related to the national bankruptcy case or the advertising they may be seeing connected to past cases of abuse, please be prepared to address those questions. Please review the following tools to help you better understand these complex issues and help you better answer questions:

- 3-Things to Know about the BSA Restructuring
- Youth Safety Fact Sheet
- Bankruptcy FAQ

If you encounter a question you can't answer or need some help, do not hesitate to reach out to our Director of Field Service, Rick Riopelle.

Before any conversation about Scouting ends, don't forget to invite them to join. The easiest way to do that is to invite them to join your unit and they can register online at [www.BeAScout.org](http://www.BeAScout.org).