

Scouters: Lots to Learn! Where to Start?

Sometimes, volunteers feel overwhelmed, but some simple steps can help...

You've seen it. I've seen it. We all would like to have it.

In many ways, the "Trained" patch symbolizes adult advancement and achievement. Mostly, it simply means you have "a clue."

However, it might be the first step to feeling like your work *outside* of Scout or Cub meetings is paying off.

But even before getting into the training that delivers the patch, volunteers need to take the first step.

Or maybe, once they put on "the shirt," it is the "next" step.

Back in 2013, *Scouting Magazine's* Mark Ray spoke to two Cub Scout leaders and asked how they encouraged training among the volunteers in their units:

To fill their packs' training gaps, [Andy] Albin and [Todd] Birkhoff took on the role of pack trainer... In the years since, they've more than achieved their goal of getting pack leaders through the basic training sequence of Youth Protection Training and position-specific training.

Their tips, in short:

- Set a good example.
- Establish expectations.
- Eliminate obstacles.
- Keep good records.

And why is training so important?

“As long as you have a trained leader, the [Scouts] are going to have a better experience,” Birkhoff told *Scouting Magazine*.

The full article is much more comprehensive, and might just be the introduction to your own unit’s training manual.

Do You Know How A Pinewood Derby Kit Gets Made?

Sure, you might know how a Pinewood Derby *car* gets made, but how about the actual *kit*?

“Who knows how a Pinewood Derby kit gets made?”

Shhh. Put your hands down. Signs up!

Okay now. Yes, you know how to build a kit, but do you know how that kit gets made?

Well, true to form, *Scout Life* magazine (yes, it’s the same publication you read as *Boys’ Life*) has the answer.

From Forest to Finish Line

SL’s Bryan Wendell wrote:

Even before you open the box, your Pinewood Derby car has traveled thousands of miles. The journey begins in a forest in Idaho. The wood blocks travel to Indiana, where they are packaged and shipped. Finally, they arrive at your local Scout shop. The rest is up to you and your parents or guardians.

Cutting, sanding, painting and racing is the best part.

I must recommend the whole article, because the photos are pretty cool.

But they included a video, which is pretty cool, too – all 73 second of it:

Making a Pinewood Derby Kit in Just 73 Seconds

However, for those of you who are still reading along and could use some real tips on assembling the kit, we can help there, too.

In this vintage video, “A former NASA engineer explains 7 steps that are scientifically proven to help you build a fast Pinewood Derby car for your next race.”

Scout Life magazine presented the below video in 2014.

The Science of Making the Fastest Pinewood Derby

Meanwhile, if you weren't quick enough, check out the 7 steps, below:

7 Key Steps

1. Max weight ~1" in front of rear axle
2. Reasonably aerodynamic
3. Ride on 3 wheels
4. Lightweight wheels
5. Bent polished axles
6. Railride/alignment
7. Lots o' graphite



Scouts Honor: Molly J, Troop 1920 Plymouth

What do you do when your Girl Scout Troop stops meeting? Well, if you are Molly J, you join a Boy Scout troop, then found a Scouts BSA Girls' Troop, earn Eagle Scout, and finally garner the title of "VFW Scout of the Year" in Massachusetts.

NBD. The Order of the Arrow is in there, too, BTW.

Yep, that's how Molly rolls. She sets up the challenges and just knocks them down. Over and over and over.

Rick Harbert of Wicked Local reported:

Plymouth's first female Eagle Scout is now also the state Veterans of Foreign War's Scout of the Year... Molly Joyce won the state VFW's 2021 title after winning similar honors on the local and district levels. [The junior] at Plymouth South High School received a \$1,000 scholarship during ceremonies at Camp Squanto [in August].

A member of the first-ever girls' class of Mayflower Council BSA Eagle Scouts, Joyce joined Plymouth Troop 1620 after reaching the Girl Scout rank of Cadette. Then, she founded Crew 1920 (a fitting moniker, as the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified in 1920, giving women full citizenship in the United States).

She then worked her way up the ranks of the BSA.

Molly, a Senior Patrol Leader, whose Eagle Scout Service Project restored the Stations of the Cross of St. Kateri Tekakwitha Church in West Plymouth, became an Eagle Scout on

the same day as her younger brother Liam (whose Eagle project created shooting benches and targets for the gun club in Middleborough).

“To have a student reach that level is an incredible accomplishment because it takes a great deal of effort to get to that point,” Denis Russell, commander of VFW Post 1822, told *WickedLocal.com*. “It’s quite an achievement, and the VFW was proud to have her represent the state.”

Do you know a Mayflower Council Scout who deserves some recognition? Email john@mayflowerbsa.org and send along the details.

Norman Rockwell And The BSA

Most folks know the name “Norman Rockwell.” But did you know that the illustrator documented Scouting from 1913 to 1976? Rockwell’s portfolio is evocative of the Scouting spirit and portrays the ideals of the movement during its infancy through the United States Bicentennial.



A Scout is Helpful (1941) – Hillcourt's "Norman Rockwell's World of Scouting" explained this work was inspired by a 1938 hurricane. Rockwell thought to show the rescue in "the hurricane's fury." The powers that be preferred that the good turn be pictured in perfect uniform.



An Army of Friendship (1933) – As the Scouting movement made its way around the globe, Baden Powell hoped it would make future generations less susceptible to war. Here, Scouts from the US, UK, Thailand, Poland, Sudan, and Hungary represent those attending the 4th World Jamboree.



High Adventure (1957) – This time Rockwell illustrated a group of Explorers at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico. Modern Explorers are more vocationally oriented; however, the spirit of adventure continues with Venture Scouting. Philmont remains a treasured destination.



Mighty Proud (1958) – Now a scene played out by boys and girls across the country, here Rockwell's young Scout leaves Cub Scouts behind as he dons the antique olive green uniform and garrison hat, while mom pins a Troop 2 patch on his sleeve and brother helps with the neckerchief.



A Scout is Kind – Today's illustrations, named Good Friends (1927) and A Good Scout (1935) portray Norman Rockwell's oft-used interpretation of "A Scout is Kind" as focused on an appreciation for animals (especially dogs). This motif is seen many times in NR's work.





Come and Get It! (1970) – Cooking is a big part of camping. However, this illustration – used on BSA publications – represents the many different ways that a Scout outing plays out. But the Scout in the foreground is feeling pretty good about whatever he's made for the troop.



Stressed Out? Scouts Can Try These Techniques

Scouts in the UK have some ideas for in-the-moment relaxation...

Getting back into the routine of things after the Holidays is

supposed to put folks on even footing. It's supposed to be comforting to be back in "the swing of things." But for many of us, especially during these confusing, frustrating COVID times, that old routine might seem far from mind.

Nearly everyone feels this way, sometimes. And our youngest scouts are no less susceptible to a bad day than the most experienced Scouter.

What's to do? Nothing.

I mean, do something. But not the thing that is stressing you out? Um. IDK.

What do I know about relaxation? I'm blogging at 11:30 PM.

But the folks at *Scouts.org.uk*, compiled a pretty spectacular last of cooling, calming techniques that can be done just about anywhere.

- *Breathing*
- *Go for a walk*
- *Write it down*
- *Talk about it*
- *Eat something tasty*
- *Laugh*
- *Have a hot drink*
- *Get some rest*
- *Light a candle (safely)*

And my favorite, since I have three new kitties...

- *Pet an animal*

Size doesn't matter here – a hamster or gerbil can be just as calming as a Great Dane or a pony. If you don't have a pet at

home, you could visit a city farm or petting zoo, ask an animal-loving friend if you can visit, or just go on a walk around your neighbourhood in hope of encountering a furry friend.

The full list and explanation is [here](#).

However, I do know one thing that can help nearly everyone relax.

A campfire.

And just in case you don't have any tinder in the vicinity, Pedro the Mailburo can help.

Crackling Campfire at Scout Camp – 1 hour of Relaxing Nature Sounds and Pedro the Mailburro

Image: [Scouts.org.uk](https://scouts.org.uk)

Scouts Honor: Thomas R., Troop 101 Northborough

Eagle Scout project garnered 300 new LEGO sets for Boston Children's Hospital

Recently, children at Boston Children's Hospital received almost 300 new LEGO sets from a former patient turned Mayflower Council Eagle Scout – Thomas R.

Thomas, a sophomore at Willow Hill School and a Scout in Troop 101 Northborough, learned those little blocks' true value while fighting through illness several years ago.

“During my stay, there was not much I could do because of all the wires attached to me,” he told the Community Advocate last August of his stay at Boston Children’s. “I remember the Child Life Specialist bringing me a new Lego set to build, and that was a lot of fun.”

The Eagle Scout service project, “The LEGO Drive,” was announced in April 2021 via YouTube.

BTW: Shout out to whoever played the LEGO Minifig in the video.

In the video, Thomas explained that he was a patient at Boston Children’s Hospital in 2015; he talked about the cords and equipment and how the distraction of LEGOs was integral to his morale.

“I built [that] set and many more throughout my stay at Boston Children’s Hospital,” explained Thomas. “To bring that excitement to Children’s Hospital, I am hosting a LEGO drive.”

The Advocate elaborated on Thomas’ plan:

Lego sets were collected using an Amazon Wishlist, which shipped directly to Thomas. He also had donation bins set up at his school and house. In addition, a drive-up collection was held at Assabet Park on April 11.

Of course, like many things during 2021, COVID-19 made things difficult for Thomas and his fellow LEGO drivers.

“I delivered 60 sets and will deliver the rest as soon as BCH has lifted their donation restrictions due to COVID,” said Thomas last summer

Although tenacity is not an official part of the Scout Law, it is implied. Despite obstacles, Thomas was definitely HELPFUL to each of the kids at Boston Children’s Hospital who received the LEGOs.

“I am grateful to everyone who contributed to help make this project a success,” he said to the Community Advocate. “I hope the Legos will put a smile on the faces of the patients at Boston Children’s Hospital like it did for me.”

BTW: If you know of a Mayflower Scout who deserves some recognition, email John@MayflowerBSA.com.

Photo submitted to *Community Advocate*

A Scout is Helpful: Session Explains Scoutbook

The Mayflower Council looks to help leaders open Scoutbook on January 31...

Scouts BSA may have been born in 1910, but the current program is a little more contemporary vintage. And since a Scout is brave, Scouting continues to march into the digital landscape.

For example, did you know that Scoutbook is the BSA’s online tracking service?

Scouting.org explains:

From the first knot tied to the final hours of service performed, the Scouting experience is a journey like none other. And Scoutbook is your go-to tool to ensure not a moment is missed – tracking advancement, milestone achievements, and all the fun along the way.

Okay, okay. You’re familiar with Scoutbook. But maybe you are just a bit unsure of how to use the online module. Or perhaps

you are just a bit technologically averse.

The Mayflower Council has a solution.

Mayflower Council Scoutbook Training: January 31, 7:00 to 8:30 PM

Does your unit use Scoutbook, or are you wondering how to get going with it? This session will cover a basic overview and ways to begin using it.

Topics like how to log in and how leaders sign off on requirements will be covered. Please join us with your questions and come away with an understanding of how this tool can benefit the scouts and leaders in your unit.

So, Zoom in on Scoutbook!

Register in advance:

[Register Now](#)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Annual Recognition Dinner Postponed

Due to the recent spike in COVID-19 cases and in an abundance of caution, for the health and safety of our attendees, the Council Recognition Dinner has been postponed until April 28 at 7pm at the Franklin Country Club. If you have already registered to attend, please mark the new date on your calendar.

The Annual Business Meeting scheduled for January 26 will move to a virtual format from 6:00pm to 7:00pm. Information to access the virtual meeting will be emailed to all board members and chartering organization representatives.

Other upcoming council activities, including the Freeze Out, are still being held as scheduled.

Scouting For “Unbored” Kids In The Winter

A helpful post from Scouting Magazine outlines information about boredom...

We're just a few days into winter, and my kids are already tearing the paint off the walls. Beyond school break and the COVID caution, we're all staring at each other a whole lot.

Looking for relief during the holiday vacation, we found a helpful article from *Scouting Magazine*. And while the information might be a few years old, the sage wisdom makes a whole lot of sense to this parent.

Back in December 2014, in his article entitled, “Activities to help your kids beat winter boredom,” Mark Ray posted, “it’s the rare kid who doesn’t complain about being bored during long breaks from school.

“So what should you do when you hear ‘I’m bored’? To find out, Scouting talked with two experts: Josh Glenn, co-author of *Unbored: The Essential Field Guide to Serious Fun* (Bloomsbury USA, 2012), and Jean Van’t Hul, author of *The Artful Parent: Simple Ways to Fill Your Family’s Life with Art & Creativity*

(Roost Books, 2013) and host of the Artful Parent blog (artfulparent.com)."

The top takeaways include:

- **A Little Boredom Is OK**
- **Preparation Is Essential**
- **Screens Aren't (Necessarily) The Enemy**
- **Fun Is A Team Sport**

But, one anti-boredom balm seemed to elude all of our authors (although admittedly, participation in BSA was probably assumed based on the publication).

However, as we are entering another membership drive here at Mayflower Council, we would also include:

Join Scouting!

Example: Two of my three sons are members of local units. And while the Cub Scout was excited to join members of his Lions Den for a special Pinewood Derby garage (for the Kindergarten set) and looks forward to the next meeting, the older Scout asked to invite a member of his troop to the local Scout Reservation for a hike. We did that.

Then, the middle guy invited a friend along and said we could consider them both "recruits." We're heading to the trail tomorrow.

Suddenly holiday break seems just a little too short for this sappy Assistant Scoutmaster!

So, if you are interested in joining Scouting, just send me an email. I'll get your family signed up before anyone in the house utters b-o-r-e-d.

So Far, So Good: A New Scoutmaster's Story

Via storytelling, this concise, helpful book tackles the wide breadth of emotions that come with being a Scouter...

I found it!

For several weeks since becoming a leader in my son's Scout troop, I looked for some reading that would help me sort out the many observations, emotions, and lessons that popped into my head on the drive home from our unit's weekly meetings.

As an assistant scoutmaster, I often marveled at how cool the more experienced Scouters were in terms of dealing with the moods and methods of our teenage boys and girls. I noticed that, contrary to the Cub Scout meetings I've been more used to over the length of my son's BSA career, the adults endeavored to place the Senior Patrol Leader in the prime leadership position.

They were also much more able to deal with the cacophony of squeaky sopranos and tenuous tenors. But I digress.

Former Scoutmaster Clarke Green's book *So Far, So Good! A New Scoutmaster's Story* reads like the way you'd hope your interactions with the Scouts, fellow Scouters, committee members, and parents would sound like in real life. Of course, Green fully admits that the book contains moments, incidents, and experiences from his over 30-year career.

However, Green's Amazon description reads:

Now that I've retired my Scoutmaster badge I'm able to write what I would have appreciated reading when I first took on the job 30 years ago.

Since I started writing a blog at ScoutmasterCG.com 11 years

ago, I've learned something of the power of storytelling. This narrative loosely follows my own experiences, but the new Scoutmaster in the story begins knowing things that took me many years to understand [emphasis mine]. I share it with the hope you'll find it useful, and inspire you to discover something more about the spirit of your work as a Scouter. This was a great "listen" – and I would recommend downloading the audiobook and listening to Mr. Green himself speak to the experiences we all look to understand.

Now, hindsight is 20/20. But the way the "Mr. G" in the book interacts with everyone lends real insight into the actual goals of Scouting, with an emphasis on youth leadership and giving teens a safe place to learn, fail, and find success.

Moreover, in regard to adult leadership and learning, as Green said in his dedication:

We all encounter the same challenges, setbacks, triumphs, and rewards. We are never alone.

We share the joy of serving Scouting's most important volunteers: the Scouts themselves.

The entire book reminds the listener/reader of those facts and emphasizes the patience required to help the kids in our charge improve along their own path rather than churning so-called perfect Scouts.

I can't recommend So Far, So Good! more.