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.

Summer 2022: Seven Weeks at Camp Squanto

New video highlights Mayflower Council's 650-acre destination for adventure…

Hey, did you know it's winter? "Wonderful" snow, sleet, and freezing temps for at least a few more months. As the commercial jokes, "495 is a pahhhhking lot."

YUCK!

And now, with the holidays in the rearview, we need something significant to look forward to; something that speaks to

sunshine and swimming and well, warmth.

For those of you who live near Mayflower Council and Plymouth, Massachusetts, specifically, you need not look any further than the LeBaron R. Barker Scout Reservation.

Of course, right there in Myles Standish State Forest, Camp Squanto boasts 650-acres of year-round camping.

However, during the summer months, Camp Squanto will again feature seven weeks of “high-quality, long-term camping” for Scout troops and individual Scouts.

The official site explains:

Our Scout camp is awesome, fun, week-long, overnight camping adventures for Scouts BSA and Venturers that provide an outstanding program of education, adventure, and purpose in a beautiful, wooded environment with natural ponds. Scouts can earn merit badges and take advantage of advancement opportunities. They’ll also enjoy swimming, canoeing, sailing, fishing, nature, archery, shooting sports and learn lots of Scouting skills! All under the guidance of our trained staff members.

Curious? Want to know more about Camp Squanto?

Check out this video:

Camp Squanto Promo 2022

And then read all about Camp Squanto here.

Scouts BSA: Opportunities for All

Scouting opens opportunities for all people, young and old…

Looking back over the last couple of years, one video produced by the Boy Scouts of America really hit a nail on the head.

Talking to Scouters from around the country, the clip begins with the quote, “Scouting opens up a lot of opportunities… you can do Scouting anywhere. From a small town to a big city like New York.”

Another scouter explained, “We’re teaching young people how to become better adults. And I think those better adults who have scouting experience can come back and be great scout leaders.”

A female leader added, “I am extremely grateful to Scouting for igniting a passion in me for the outdoors and just exposing me to things I didn’t even know I liked to do.”

Yet another Scouter put one other notion perfectly. With his voice placed over moments of triumph, the leader added, “One of the great things about scouting is that it’s a safe place to fail.”

#truth

And from the victories to the defeats, from the woods to the city, and from young to old, check out the below video; whether you need reaffirmation about your volunteer role, confirmation of your decision to include your children in Scouting, or just want to feel good about Scouts BSA, check it out.

It will make you happy to be involved in Scouting.

Scouts BSA | Boy Scouts of America

The Joy of Dutch-oven Cooking

This time-honored Scout tradition need not wait until your next campout…

At our most recent Scout Troop Court of Honor, among various and sundry cookies and brownies and doughnuts, there was one, very popular, dessert.

Prepared by our Scoutmaster (and Eagle Scout), his Pineapple upside-down cake went fast.A BSA tradition, pineapple upside-down cake is cooked in another scouting staple – a Dutch oven.

Back in 2916, Tim and Christine Conners broke down the basics of Dutch-oven cooking.

"Dutch-oven cooking is as much a part of Scouting as tying knots. But learning to cook in a Dutch oven can be a bit intimidating. After all, they can be heavy and kind of messy, and the cooking style involves a little math."

But a Scout is brave. And a Dutch oven is a really excellent tool.

"A Dutch oven is such a versatile cooking tool that when you bring one to camp, it's like bringing the kitchen from home," added the Conners. "It can be used to fry, sauté, bake, stew, roast, or slow-cook – any time of day and for nearly any type of meal.

"It's not uncommon for a single recipe to involve several cooking methods using the same oven."

And the article, entitled, "A Dutch-oven cooking primer" includes tips on getting started with a Dutch oven, additional

tools, cleanup, storage, safety tips, and recipes.

Check out the story here.

Then enjoy the video recipe for pineapple upside-down cake.

How to Bake a Dutch-Oven Pineapple Upside-Down Cake

Exploring The History of Scouts BSA

It’s pretty easy to find articles and videos about the beginning of the World Scouting Movement and its “uncle” Lieutenant General Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell – Baden Powell or “BP” (Be Prepared) for short. It’s a little more challenging to get to brass tax about the origins of scouting in the United States.

Scouting.org explained:

Stop me if you’ve heard this– and if you haven’t, you must have joined Scouting very recently. It’s the story of the Unknown Scout who guided Chicago publisher William D. Boyce through a pea-soup fog in 1909 in London–and that led him to the office of Robert S.S. Baden-Powell, the founder of Scouting. There Boyce picked up a trunkload of literature about the young movement for British boys, leading him to incorporate the Boy Scouts of America on Feb. 8, 1910, soon after returning to the United States.

But despite the made-for-Hollywood story, the rest of the tale isn’t as well known, as Scouting.org added, “W. D. Boyce is a shadowy figure among Scouting’s pioneers.”

“This is due largely to the fact that he did not take a hands-on approach to Scouting as did the founder, Baden-Powell, in England and, in the United States, Chief Scout Ernest Thompson Seton, National Scout Commissioner Daniel Carter Beard, and Chief Scout Executive James E. West.

“Boyce did his thing and left the details to others.”

But what are those details? Or, how did we get here from there?

Well, two different Scouters produced videos to help show us the way.

Check these out:

History of the Founding of the Boy Scouts of America: Did You Know?
How Did Scouting Start in America?

The BSA Uniform: Always In Style

From Army hand-me-downs to Oscar de la Renta, the Boy Scout uniform is, itself, a story…

As you put on your Scout uniform, did you ever catch yourself wondering, how did we get here?

After all, it’s one of the most iconic ensembles on earth. No matter where you’re from, everyone can picture a Boy Scout.

A neckerchief, olive green, and khaki – top it with a hat (and knee-high socks); even parodies like Russell’s “Wilderness Explorers” in Pixar’s *Up* and Sam Shakuski’s Khaki Scouts in

Moonrise Kingdom can't escape the ubiquitous nature of the classic Boy Scout (or Cub Scout) getup.

That's part of what makes those films so great. No matter the color, on and off-screen, a Boy Scout uniform tells the viewer a lot of information, even before anyone speaks.

For example, we're laughing because Russell goes to great lengths (and heights) to earn an important merit badge. We believe Sam can do anything because of his Scout uniform (and seemingly magic backpack).

Meanwhile, and perhaps most importantly, Life Scout Henry Jones Jr. wearing a Boy Scout uniform in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* tells you all you need to know about Indy's character (and gives clues as to why Dr. Jones wears durable adventures gear and a wide brim hat as he gets older).

What's unique about the BSA uniform, with an over 111-year history, remains its utilitarian construction. Its durability. And its ability to tell a story for the wearer.

Over the last few months, Stan "Scouter Stan" Richards has posted three vlogs explaining the importance of the Scout Uniform and how it evolved over more than a century.

Scout Uniform Through History
The Square Knot on the Uniform Tells A Story
What is That on Your Uniform?
And speaking of Oscar de la Renta, *Scouting Wire* did a whole breakdown of the designer's work for BSA.

"We felt the uniform should meet several criteria," de la Renta told *Scouting* Magazine in 1980. "It should be equitable for strenuous activity; it should be made from an easy-care fabric, and at the same time the wearer should still look like a Scout."

What is a Pinewood Derby Garage?

Cub Scout Pack 3104 in Hudson prepares for the big race…

For the majority of Cub Scouts, two words bring visions of pole positions, paint jobs, and – principally – victory.

"Pinewood Derby."

Unfortunately, for many Cub Scout parents, those words (needlessly) bring sheer terror.

Not because the day is a bore. No, there's plenty of fun to be had from top to bottom of the track. However, for many modern families, the sound of a bandsaw is just as rare as the dings, dongs, and pings of dial-up internet.

Yes, coupled with the ever-churning imagination of a child, the thought of bringing a muscle car out of a block of pine can make even the most talented lawyer, teacher, chef, or – ahem – writer downright apoplectic.

Thankfully for Cub Scouts in Hudson, Massachusetts, this year a pair of brothers came to the rescue, wearing dark blue Pack 3104 sweatshirts and sawdust speckled beards. Taking the Boy Scout motto to heart, they remain *prepared* to take on the toughest of paper napkin-drawn designs and guide enthusiastic or frustrated Cubs, moms, dads, and mentors through the process.

And they succeeded.

From the wood to the winner, there is an unstated method that

is better taught in a garage than a classroom, better shown than told. And, like so many Cubmasters and grandfathers and den leaders (and, yes, professional carpenters) throughout the United States and the Scouting world, they also center their work in the Cub Scout motto: “Do your best…”

You see, Andrew Hermann, Cubmaster, and his brother Jeremy, the father of a new Lions scout, both know their way around a workbench. And, when there’s a Pinewood Derby car to cut, both Scouters offer up one of their well-stocked garages for everything from a tutorial to a tune-up.

There, wielding the well-used equipment (passed down through several generations of scouts) and oft-proven techniques (passed down through years and years of races – and on YouTube) a bit of magic happens.

Out of the shavings and the sweat comes a car. And it’s not any old car. It’s a Pinewood Derby racer, more precious to the Cub Scout that designed it (or painted it, or decorated it) than any video game avatar or smartphone.

So, how does a good Cub Scout Pinewood Derby garage get run?

Any old way that gets the job done!

A smile helps, too. After all, a Scout is cheerful, no? Interested in running a Pinewood Derby garage? Write to Pack 3104 for some tips and tricks.