

BOYSCOUT TROOP 629 NEWSLETTER

August 2006

This newsletter is intended for scouts and their families. Please assist us in sharing this information with other parents and scouts. **DOWNLOAD THIS NEWSLETTER AT WWW.TROOP629.ORG**

Scoutmaster Minute by Fran Gillis

A new scouting year and a new school year is ready to kick off. Our schedule and events have been posted for number of months and we sure hope that our activities are not going to take a back seat to the decision process. While a balanced scouting experience is highly encouraged to round out each scouts growth a certain portion of active participation needs to occur with our program not only to keep interested but to end up as the best of both. Take the long-term view that scouting and the ultimate Eagle award, is recognized by many scholarships and admission boards as a key indicator for future success in their programs. Multiple one-time school activities while appealing are not always the right direction to neither follow nor do they influence anyone's future success. Our most successful scouts are the ones who know how to balance and actually participate regularly in many of our activities. If scouting is boring the first question to ask is how many activities have you actually participated in the last year? If you cannot count on many then that is a good indicator why it is boring! Our program is run by the youth and conceived by their input. If your not part of those meetings and decisions then you only have yourself to criticize for any shortcomings you may have with the program. Having fun starts with showing up and actually participating!

Next Activities:

- Allatoona Adventure - Forms are out and on the website for Lake Allatoona adventure August 18-20.
- Callaway Garden - Bicycle trip Sep 9-10.
- USS Alabama – A visit to the USS Alabama in Mobile Bay on October 7-9th
- AT – Appalachian Trail - Backpacking trip for November 11-12.

Something for everyone with side adventures of community support, local events and activities to participate in.

Merit Badges

A scout in our Troop earns Merit Badges only after they have read the entire merit badge book and have met with a designated approved adult who will verify the completeness of all the requirements. Clinics and camp earned badges are to be verified with this process as well to ensure quality control over the process being used to help a scout actually learn the expected materials. Troop meetings are not the normal place these get accomplished but with adult counselors at separate settings. Scout through First Class advancements are conducted during Troop meetings and that is where new scouts need to be concentrating their time. Merit badge help nights will commence again on the second Tuesday of each month from 6-7PM starting in September.

Scout activity scholarships through a community service work effort are available to all our scouts who may be in need. No scout should be denied participation purely for temporary financial situations and we can help each scout earn his own way if that is the way to go.

Lending closet is available for scout items from the Troop from gear to uniforms. Our closet has recycled items that any can seek to use or have just for the asking. Those who have items to pass along are also encouraged to do so for the next needy scout.

High adventures for 2007 for those scouts 14 and older include the following:

- New England ski trip over a January weekend
- Bahamas tall ship sailing in April
- Rocky mountain backpacking in Philmont, NM in June
- Backwoods Canadian canoe trip in July with Northern Tier, if folks show interest

If you haven't made your interest known and signed up for your high adventure – what are you waiting for? See the SM at the meeting or the web site for other details.

There is a parent and participant meeting on August 21st after the troop meeting to hand out special information flyers on these trips. Please be there if you are signed up or wanting to sign up.

Troop meetings go back to their formal process of starting at 7:15 PM on Aug 14th and ending by 8:45 PM each Monday. Full uniform is expected unless otherwise noted. Merit badge work time is limited to the designated game time at each meeting. If it is a patrol competition night then there is no merit badge time at those meetings. Scouts are expected to be active members of their patrols and cannot be constantly away working on their own advancement. Its not just about the individual – scouting is outing using the patrol method and working with the group.

A Court of Honor is being held Aug 28 and all scouts and their families are invited to recognize those accomplishments over the past few months. Hope to see all of you there and great place to re-confirm next year's activities and how it all fits together for each scout.

Eagle Court of Honor

We have two Eagles who will be having their Eagle Court of Honor this month.
Kevin Smith – Sunday, August 13th @ 4:00 @ Mount Pisgah UMC, Room S305
Joe Dembowski – Monday, August 28th following the Troop Court of Honor

Behind the scenes of any great Troop are many helpful adults doing their part to keep the activities and events running smoothly. If you have some time and can help, please see our committee chair, Wendy Kraemer, to find out how you can help.

Popcorn and fundraisers: It that time of year to start looking for handouts on our annual fundraiser support programs to help each scout earn his own way on those high adventures scouts want to go on. Its never too early to start a scouts high adventure account which the troop maintains for each individual and many have been able to fund their entire big ticket trips from earnings they have had earned over the years. Look for details at the end of meetings near the bulletin board or from special handouts.

Georgia Tech Football Game Ushers: Some of the home games allow scouts to be used as ushers and this year our SPL will be looking to see if there is any interest to participate. See him for details by the middle of August and to sign up if you're interested.

Trip Paperwork: Each trip we ask for a permission slip for a scout's participation to ensure we have the parent's concurrence and have the latest info on each scout. This permission slip is important for each of activities and has many blocks to fill in including if you can help with the driving to and from any activity. Please fill them out completely and have them in by the suspense times so we can gather the proper resources to carry out each and every activity.

KROGER Debit Cards: Continues as a fabulous Troop fund raising activity. It's painless and easy for families to help support the Troop by just participating in a no cost to you program and it is in conjunction with your normal routine of buying groceries for the family. Why not participate? The new Kroger debit card which will allow you to have actual cost deducted on each purchase rather than the set amount on the gift certificates have been a great convenience. Please contact Susan Cook at 678-297-7766 for these great funding raising cards! These funds go directly to keeping the cost down on each of our monthly activities and helping run the logistics of this Troop in the background. The troop benefits monthly with this program with about \$250 per month going to our troop.

Adult Training: All adults wanting to participate in any of our activities have a number of pre-training requirements we like to and need to have accomplished depending on the activity. Its best to get them out of the way early so that when that trip you want to go happens you are up the par and not scrambling to get in as many of the courses are held on limited basis. Check our web site out for the minimum needs and look for notices of when the classes are coming up.

New/Transition Committee Positions

Secretary - Susan and Gene Durrance will be working with Dorothea Norris for a smooth transition.

Newsletter - Sue Knoetgen will be working with Joe Ruggles for newsletter item specifics.

Open Committee Positions

Popcorn Fundraiser

We are in need of an assistant for our Popcorn Kernel, Frank Rocchio, who has headed up this project over the last two years. You can work with Frank this year, and then take it over next year. This is an annual project that happens in the fall. We need you! Please contact Wendy Kraemer or Frank Rocchio for more information.

Adult Committee Dinner & Meeting September 10th @ 6:00 pm

It's time again for our annual BBQ Dinner, which is for all adults of Boy Scout Troop 629. Once again, the Yakrus and Sevy families will provide our dinner. This is our monthly meeting where all adults are invited to attend to find out what is on the agenda for the upcoming year. It's a great way to meet folks and to find out how you can help our troop. Information will be coming soon on the website and flyers.

Special Welcome

We would like to welcome Mr. Mark Danzey to Boy Scout Troop 629. Mr. Danzey is the new Youth Minister at Mount Pisgah United Methodist Church. Mr. Danzey is our Troop's Chartered Organization Representative and I am sure we will see him at our future events.

Parents Needed for Troop Boards of Review

A troop Board of Review (BOR) provides a great opportunity for parents to better understand rank advancement and to get to know the Scouts. Each Board consists of three troop parent volunteers. Boards of review are typically held each month for those Scouts who have completed all requirements and Scout Master conference for rank advancement. If you are interested in participating as a Troop BOR member please contact Kathleen Narayanan at 770-998-6752 or kathleen@avalonintl.com. No experience required. (Unfortunately, unit leaders and assistant unit leaders may not serve as a BOR member.)

ADVANCEMENT FOR THE MONTH OF JULY:

SCOUT

Austin B

Ben M

Next Troop Board of Review – August 21

After a scout completes his Scoutmaster conference, he must notify **Mrs. Narayanan**, Troop Advancement Chair, that he is ready for the next BOR. Reminder: **Full Class “A” uniform** and **Scout handbook** are **required** for participation in a **Board of Review**.

Merit Badge Counselors Needed

Being a Merit Badge Counselor is an easy and fun way to be involved in the Troop. All Merit Badge Counselors must complete a Merit Badge Counselor application and Adult Leader Registration form (both can be found on our Troop website Forms page). To learn more about your role as a merit badge counselor visit www.meritbadge.com/info/. Please give completed forms to Mrs. Narayanan.

We are seeking counselors for all BSA merit badges; however, we currently have no one registered for the following merit badges:

Archaeology	Disability Awareness	Plant Science	Theater
Bugling	Fly Fishing	Railroading	Veterinary
Cinematography	Graphic Arts	Reptile/Amphibian	Waterskiing
Climbing	Medicine	Sculpture	Whitewater
Collections	Model Design	Skating	
Dentistry	Music	Textile	

Adult Leaders - Tell Us You've Been Trained

We need trained leaders! Upon completion of any BSA training program, please send a copy of your course “completion” card to Mrs. Narayanan, at Kathleen@avalonintl.com, or bring a copy to her at the Troop meeting.

Patrol Leaders Council

Once a month our SPL leads his PLC to formulate the plans for meetings and activities. Changes and or improvements are discussed at that time and all scouts should be making sure their representative is up to date on issues, concerns and program request. Next PLC is set for August 17th @ 7:00 pm Reason to check the Troop bulletin board or web site to keep the ever dynamic and fluid scouting calendar up to date.

Summer Camp 2006 by Gregg Brasher

By now you have heard some of the stories and hopefully have seen the pictures, but I wanted to make sure you knew the real story. Summer camp 2006 was a great time! This year we had over 40 boys attend and more than half of those were first year scouts.

The drop-off on Sunday was filled with emotion, anticipation, excitement and fear. The fear was concentrated among the adult leaders who had volunteered to stay all week at camp. We were assigned campsite 11, which was a wonderful site. Each of us had our own reasons for the high marks given the campsite; it was close to the bathroom, dining hall and the beloved trading post/snack bar.

Our first evening together was spent at the campfire ceremony, enjoying skits and songs put on by the staff. As we made our way back to the campsite, I was looking forward to going to sleep. I was painfully reminded about one nightly event, the patrol leader's meeting. Conceptually, the patrol leader's meeting is a gathering of the patrol leader and the senior patrol leader runs the meeting. Daily events, special announcements and the concerns to the patrol leaders are discussed. Reality, who can burp the longest, air being released from the basement, not the attic; and special moments like” Mr. Brasher, you can work for me after I become famous and I'll let you have Fridays off.” The meeting was forcefully ended and all retired.

Monday morning came too early and I wanted to try a gentler, kinder way of awakening the boys. I brought my bugle. I cannot play the bugle, but I can create noises that represent sweet justice to an adult leader.

Monday was the first class day with all of the first year scouts attending the Mountain Man program. A special thanks to Don Dekle and later in the week Jim Padgett for helping the boys find their way each day to the proper site. On Monday evening we made sugary doughnuts, a stimulant that made certain that lights out would be delayed at least one hour.

I do want all of the parents to know that all of the leaders reminded the boys to brush their teeth. The compliance rate for this act of personal hygiene hit its high of about 19% on Saturday morning, in anticipation of the ride home. The days went by and we were very blessed with no rain and cool weather. For the remainder of the week, the late evening snacks that were prepared by the boys were french fries and cobbler. On Thursday evening, Mike Deaton agreed to meet the pizza delivery guy half way and brought back twenty something pizzas for barbaric consumption. Friday, Fran brought up soft drinks and ice cream.

I will end this writing with the factual tale of Stumpey. Stumpey was just that, an abandoned pine log, happy to fulfill his remaining days to become food for the beetles and termites. Collin and Jacob discovered Stumpey and would carry him around introducing him to the rest of the troop. The emotional reaction upon being introduced to a pine log was just what you would imagine, but Collin and Jacob saw bigger things in Stumpey. One day, I saw Collin very carefully sanding Stumpey. A scout is prepared, but I dare not ask where Collin got the sandpaper. Stumpey's coming out was not limited to our troop, on several occasions in a packed dining hall; he was lifted to the heavens with a call for "three cheers for Stumpey." Then the fateful day came when Stumpey (acting through his interpreter (Collin)), challenged the Woodruff staff to a stump-off in front of all of the scouts at evening assembly. The challenge was accepted and the stump-off was on. Last minute preparations were made to Stumpey in anticipation of the event. You see, Stumpey had quite a lot on the line. Collin had announced that Stumpey would start the bonfire if he lost the stump-off. The big day came and there were lines of people up and down the parade field to view the stump-off. A stump-off is an event that entails rolling a log down a hill and whosever log rolls further, wins. Stumpey went first and down the field he flew, weaving right and left and eventually resting on his side. The staff rolled their log, named the Eliminator. The Eliminator had the benefits of a few more pushes from their handlers and screamed down the hill; however he fell about twenty feet short of Stumpey. You would have thought Stumpey was Hank Aaron's 715th home run ball. He was picked up, held high and paraded by everyone cheering his victory. For Stumpey's superb effort, the troop was given the privilege to dine first the next morning. You can see Stumpey on the website under summer camp photos.

My special thanks go out to Albert Bodamer, Mike Foley, Ben Bierbaum, Mike Deaton and Don Dekle for staying all week and providing their guidance. Also to Jim Padgett and Fran Gillis for all of their help. Please extend your appreciation to these adult leaders for their commitment to the program.

CALENDAR AND WEB SITE INFORMATION

The Troop has its annual calendar published and it's available for all on the web site www.troop629.org