

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 2016, Tim and Christine Connors 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.

Mayflower Council YouTube: What is Cub Scouts?

New video explains the Scouts BSA program designed for kids in K – 5th grade...

For those of us who grew up in Scouting wearing a blue and gold uniform, the question seems – well – unnecessary?

However, it's important to understand that a whole new generation of children is coming to Scouts BSA.

Many families were not fortunate enough to live near a pack. Or, perhaps, someone in the family tried the program and, for whatever reason, it didn't stick. Meanwhile, girls joining Cub Scouts remains a relatively new facet of the program. Maybe there was even a financial component to the decision to skip Scouting.

The reasons are myriad. So, it's important for everyone to check out Cub Scouting with fresh eyes and with a notion to expand the program to more children than ever.

Perhaps you, the reader, come to contemporary Cub Scouting with lots of questions, even though you might have once been a Webelos (We'll be loyal Scouts...) Scout.

In that (arrow of) light, the Mayflower Council presents the following video, designed to take the guesswork out of the

equation and give new and old families alike an understanding of what so many of us know so well:

“Cub Scouts is a game with a purpose.”

Of course, if Cub Scouts is already part of your child’s world, be sure to forward this story along to a friend or family member whose kids might just be ready to put on the blue and gold.

And if you need more info on Cub Scouts, click this link.

What is Cub Scouts

Scouting for Inspiration: Hannah Holmes

One year ago, this Scout became the first girl to earn all of Scouts BSA’s 137 merit badges.

Each week at troop meetings around the country, scouts do amazing things. However, sometimes a Scout does something so unique, unprecedented, that ABC News calls.

One such accomplishment occurred last year, when a home-schooled lone scout from near Orlando, Florida, earned all 137 Scouts BSA merit badges. That’s right, Hannah Holmes, an eventual Eagle Scout, became the first girl in the then 110-year history of The Boy Scouts of America to earn all of the possible merit badges available, a feat only 500 boys accomplished in the history of the Scouting movement in the United States.

When the news media caught wind of the accomplishment, they

asked Hannah about filling her sash with stitching.

“My last badge was white water rafting,” she told ABC news. “And it was kind of a bittersweet victory.”

“After accomplishing my goal, I was happy,” she explained. “But at the same time, I had so many good memories I didn’t want it to end.”

Meanwhile, Hannah encouraged others to pursue their goals, especially her fellow girls in Scouts BSA.

“When the going gets tough, it’s important to persevere,” said Hannah. “It’s all going to be worth it in the end.”

However, there’s no end in sight for Hannah. With numerous speaking engagements under her BSA belt and a head start on college, Holmes intends to earn a political science degree en route to a career in the U.S. Senate.

Finally, for more on girls in Scouts BSA, visit about.scouting.org/girls-in-scouts-bsa/

Then, check out Hannah’s interview with ABC.

15 Year Old Florida Girl Makes History Earning All Boy Scout Merit Badges

Scouts Honor: Maxwell S Troop 47 Randolph

Stecker’s Eagle Scout service project revitalized birdhouses at Powers Farm Community Park

This week Mayflower Council recognizes the efforts of **Maxwell**

S of Troop 47, Randolph, Massachusetts.

As a Life Scout participating in Scouts BSA's inclusion program, Maxwell – a 21-year-old special needs student at May Center – completed his Eagle Scout service project in December.

Maxwell worked to renovate “living accommodations for some of the winged inhabitants of Powers Farm Community Park.”

On January 3, *The Journal & Sun* explained:

As a previous Eagle Scout project... bird and bat houses were placed at Powers Farm, but over time the birdhouses had deteriorated. With the mentoring of Scoutmaster Henry Colageo, Maxwell improved upon the design to make them more durable by using cedarwood, which is more weatherproof, and brass hardware.

Work in the park remains a labor of love for Troop 47, and Maxwell's efforts were bolstered by his fellow Scouts and adult Scouters.

“With guidance from Maxwell and the troop's adult leaders, on Nov. 8 the Scouts fabricated the required parts and assembled them,” added the *Journal & Sun*. “Finally, on Dec. 4, the Scouts removed the old birdhouses and installed new ones.”

Maxwell is just one of the terrific Scouts in the Mayflower Council doing amazing things. Do you know a member of our community who deserves recognition in “Scouts Honor”?

Email us with your suggestions!