



# The Scoutmaster Minute

MAY 2009

TROOP 368 ALGONGUIN, ILLINOIS

## Aims of

### Boy Scouts

- Character Development
- Citizenship Training
- Mental and Physical Fitness

## The Methods of Scouting

- IDEALS
- PATROL METHOD
- OUTDOORS
- ADVANCEMENT
- PERSONAL GROWTH
- LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
- THE UNIFORM
- ASSOCIATION WITH ADULTS

## Inaugural Issue

We'd like to welcome you to our inaugural issue of the Scoutmaster Minute. As the name implies, this won't be a long piece, but rather a monthly snapshot that we, the adult leaders, wish to share about topics, tools, insights and "State of the Troop" information that

we think might be useful to both Scouts and Scouting parents. As usual, we will continue to post News and Information on our website as it happens. So, is the Scoutmaster Minute simply repeating what is on the website? The answer is no. We hope

that the Scoutmaster Minute serves provide its readers, you, interesting topics about Boys Scouts and our Troop as a whole. In our first edition, we thought an interesting and timely topic would be *Discovering and Rediscovering Boy Scouts*.

## Discovering and Rediscovering Boy Scouts

Change is hard. The one constant about change is that it always happens. Some might say that in today's world, changes are necessary to stay current. However, as we celebrate 100 years in 2010, the Boy Scouts have been able to "stay current" without really changing too much. The principles, ideas and aim of Boy Scouts are still the same since Lord Baden-Powell (LBP) founded the Boy Scouts. Sure, some things have been added to the Boy Scout program. Cub and Varsity scouting began later in 1930 and 1978, respectively. But, at the end, the Boy Scouts is rooted in the principles and practice of the Scout Law, Slogan and Motto. Most of all, Boy Scouts have one thing in common, our words to live by in the Scout Oath.

As we celebrate our 100 years, we are in our own journey of *Discovering and Rediscovering Boy Scouts*. The \* Methods of Scouting have served us well! Just look at of our alumni: John F. Kennedy, Gerald Ford (Eagle), Bill Gates, Jim Lovell (Eagle) and Steven Spielberg (Eagle) are proud to call themselves Boy Scouts. Whether it be the outdoors, advancement, leadership development or the uniform, the methods of scouting helps deliver all that Boy Scouts hopes to be. As LBP offered in his famous advise to scout leaders, "it is easier to grow a boy than change a man."

Change is indeed hard. Some of you have noticed some dramatic changes in the troop. Some have seen little changes. Some have not seen any change. All is true! We are all on the journey of *Discovering and Rediscovering Boy Scouts*. As an example, we have recently re-implemented Troop Leadership Training, after a lengthy absence, for those newly elected leaders. And most importantly, we are stressing the importance of the Patrol Leaders Council and its participation. Why? These two single efforts touch every one of the 8 points of the Scouting method that in turn allows the Scout to achieve every thing he wants to achieve.



...*be wants to achieve*. Lastly, participation in the Boy Scouts is purely voluntary. It's like anything else. You achieve what you put into it. As we continue our journey together, the opportunities in Boy Scouts will always be there. It is really up to the Scout to "go for it". Whether it is camping, advancement, or merit badges, personal growth is achieved by both effort and Scout Spirit. *Discovering and Rediscovering Boy Scouts* is easy for some, more difficult for others. It's all a matter of Scout Spirit. ***More to come on Scout Spirit next month***



## Growing Up in Scouts

For many Boy Scouts, the Scouting journey begins early when they joined their first Cub Scout den, more likely in the first grade, but perhaps later on. And, there are also a variety of reasons that they joined Scouts in the first place; maybe Dad was a Scouter or maybe because a friend was in Scouts. Wherever the Scout joins, the experience of learning and fun begins.

As the Scout first begins, he learn the basics and begins to experience new things. But the growth is quick! It is all a learning process where the Scout learns and then uses those new skills. He'll also be given more responsibility. It's just like any activity that the boy may be involved in. However, scouting is more of an experience and process than an event. In not just learning the new skill or experiencing something new, and then moving on. It is about *using* what he has learned. For example, in Scouts a boy first learns how to build a proper fire. But soon, he'll be teaching other younger Scouts how to build that fire. First, he is a member of a patrol, then he can be the Patrol Leader. First, he is loading his gear into the trailer, next he is the Quartermaster. He'll go on his first campout, then he'll be helping plan the campout. The opportunities are endless. All with purpose of Building Character, Developing Citizenship and growing Physically and Mentally—all while having fun!



## Getting the Most of Scouting

Unfortunately, many believe that getting the most of Scouting is the achievement of Eagle rank. In fact, only 5% of Scouts ever achieve the Eagle rank. Is that to say that Scouting failed the remaining ninety-five percent? No! Scouting is really just a way to further extend what parents, relatives, ministers, and teachers do every day to contribute to a young man's growth. It promotes a safe environment to learn, to grow, to lead. But, the key difference is that the Scout program is all about *opportunities* to grow, to learn, to lead.

*In Scouting, a boy is encouraged to educate himself instead of being instructed.*

*Sir Baden-Powell*

During their time in Boy Scouts, each Scout will continue to learn more really about what boy scouting has to offer. Whether it is High Adventure camping or Order of the Arrow, there are many pieces to Boy Scouts. Hopefully, his excitement will continue to grow as he experiences each opportunity and level. He may, however, come to the his own realization that the Scouting program is just not for him. And, that's okay too! If the interest level is no longer there, it will become evident to those around him and therefore impacting his Scouting experience and memory. In either case, it is important for parents to continue to gauge the interest level of their son and have heart-to-heart conversations.

Many Scout alumni will tell you that in order to get the most out of Scouting, it is first most important to be interested. Scouting should never be seen as a “chore” or something my parents are making me do. Second, be involved. Take advantage of the opportunities that Scouting has to offer. Learn something you've never thought of but are interested in. There are over 100 merit badges to learn about new things! There is never a dull moment in Scouting; each campout and meeting is different in its own way. And lastly, embrace the Scout Spirit. Live your lives according to our Oath, Law, Motto and Slogan.

## But What about the Eagle Rank?

It's tough! We Americans are competitive by nature and to be part of the 5% is definitely a remarkable feat. Unfortunately, our competitive spirit also means that anything less than “winning” is also viewed as some sort of failure. But, the Aim of Scouting is not the Eagle Rank. So is “success” in Scouting ever really truly defined? Yes! When a boy grows to be a young man who has embraced the Scout Spirit in their daily lives, is of service to others, who has grown to be a respectable and proud citizen of this country and has been prepared through his experience in Scout to lead others—that is truly Boy Scout success.

But, that should never stop the goal of achieving the Eagle rank! Every Scout should try for that distinction. But, it should be for all of the right reasons. Achieving the rank of Eagle means that the Scout has taken advantage of many of the opportunities available in Boy Scouts and demonstrated Scout Spirit in their daily lives. They have led others and demonstrated the willingness to learn. They are a symbol and inspiration of what Boy Scouts is all about.

As ta Scout begins or continues his Path to Eagle, it will take hard work, the right purpose, spirit and intention. It will never only be about the *steps* that have to happen in order for a Scout to achieve the Eagle rank, but rather *how and why* he is now an Eagle Scout.

### Why I want to be and Eagle Scout

During a recent Board of Review, a Second Class Scout was asked what he wanted from Boy Scouts. The Scout proudly proclaimed he wanted to be an Eagle. So, after some discussion about the Path to Eagle, a Board of Review member then asked the young Scout probably the most important question of the Board of Review, “Why do you want to be an Eagle Scout?” to which the Scout quickly, but innocently replied, “because it will look good on my resumé!”

A further discussion revealed that the Scout did not really know what a resumé is or why he wanted to be a Eagle Scout, but rather as he put it “that's what my Mom said.”