Spring is upon us…

…and adventures abound!

From a cool weekend of backpacking in Pine Mountain to exploring the terrain of Hunting Island and skiing in frosty New Hampshire, the smiles on their faces tell it all!

**All newsletters, pictures and up-to-date information are at www.troop629.org**

**IF YOU ARE NOT RECEIVING THE TROOP NEWSLETTER OR OTHER TROOP COMMUNICATIONS, PLEASE EMAIL: Kathryn Cline, Troop Communications at k.cline@earthlink.net**

Scoutmaster Minute by Fran Gillis

Congratulation to our Tim Turtles Patrol, led by Thomas T. the first ever in Troop 629 to earn the special National Honor Patrol award. Late last year they set out the vision to earn this award, outlined their goals and laid out a plan to accomplish this task and was just recognized at our Troop meeting to being one of the best possible patrols. Great group effort. And another first for our Troop, with three of our college-age Eagle Scouts being hired to work on staff of the National High Adventure programs. What a way to spend the summer for Vijay Narayanan at Northern Tier in Minnesota, Walker Bowen at Philmont New Mexico and Paden Herring at Sea Base in Florida. We are honored to be represented Nationally by these three young servant leaders.
More news from the Scoutmaster...

- Campout 100, the Council Camporee at Bert Adams Mar 11-13 is our next outing for all scouts. Many fun activities to participate in while celebrating 100 years with Atlanta Area Council as part of the Congressionally Charted Boy Scouts of America. Scouting is outing so come in join thousands in this weekend of challenges and events. Please register now.

- In 2017 we have a special horseback High Adventure at Philmont Scout Ranch for a select few Scouts who will be 14 and First Class by June 2017. We also have an April 2017 Sea Base sailing in the Florida Keys. Let the Scout Master you want to be considered for this first time horseback trip for the Troop in the Rocky Mountains.

- Camp Card fund raiser is ongoing and the absolute best way to earn your own way to scouting high adventures. A card sold at $5.00 gains the scout $2.50 while the purchaser obtains many times that value in savings. Easy way for scout to make the most. See Mr. Loedding at troop meetings.

- Summer camp 2016 Jun 19-25 registration is in full swing for all registered scouts. It’s important for current scouts to sign up now to make sure they get the classes they want. New scouts we can handle anytime as they ease into the troop as those schedules are preset for first timers.

- We strongly support all our scouts to attend the National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT) course program and registration is now open on line for those scouts who are at least 13 and FC by the camp dates. This program gains a scout half the fee reimbursement into their troop high adventure account after graduating and returning to provide leadership in the troop.

We are always planning for the next activity and need feedback ASAP. Remember that we are asking for **CONFIRMATION TWO WEEKS IN ADVANCE**. This allows **EVERYONE** to plan ahead. *Please* at least send in the permission slip as soon as possible, we can catch up with cost later. No scout should miss out on adventure due to cost, as we have a scholarship service hour program for them to all earn their way... just check with the Scoutmaster. **Can you help DRIVE the Scouts? Let us know! We would certainly appreciate your help!**

Don’t forget to use the troop website to keep up-to-date on all activities – it’s refreshed each time we have a change, and event flyers are posted with all the details. Go to the “Events” tab, then click on the event or activity for the flyer/form.  [www.troop629.org](http://www.troop629.org)

**Upcoming events:**
(These are just a few highlights - the Calendar on our Troop web site is updated regularly, so check it often! Flyers typically available for each outing under the “Events” tab on our Troop web site and at every meeting.)

- 3/21  Board of Review
- 3/26 Oceanography Merit Badge
- 4/2  Fulton County Spring Break begins, Sea Base Bahamas sets sail, and Backpacking Shakeout

*Check the Troop web site regularly for updates and additional information... there’s an outing planned every month of the year!*  [www.troop629.org](http://www.troop629.org)  You can learn as much about the trip from the pics as you can from the flyer...one thing’s for sure, they all look like FUN!
Adult Volunteers We **APPRECIATE** You!

If you can spare some time to support our Troop 629 Scouts in *any* way, please contact Troop Committee Chair, Mary Beth Bierbaum at marybeth@bierbaum.com

Welcome to ALL of our new Crossover Scouts and their families! We are glad you are here as a part of Troop 629!

Thank you to Rick and Lea Taylor for their hard work in coordinating our food drive with Mount Pisgah, in conjunction with Scout Sunday. There were many adults and Scouts who helped that day and we thank you ALL!

Helpful Reminders

- **Lending Closet**: The troop has a camping gear lending closet and uniform exchange. Let us know if you need to look at the items and where we can help. Our Troop website shows you not only the clothing and equipment that is available to borrow and/or to donate to the Troop, but also instructions on the process. Don’t forget we have Merit Badge Books too! Court of Honor is a great night to get uniforms or bring donations! Please view at: [http://www.troop629.org/about/lending.htm](http://www.troop629.org/about/lending.htm).

- **Scout Master Reminder**: For weekend outings we normally meet in the parking lot of South Campus. This helps us avoid church activities and traffic when we return from our trips.

- **Before** forwarding pictures of scouts and events to our webmaster for posting, please remove duplicate pictures and non-scout-like photos. This will help tremendously. Thank you!

The Merit Badge Process

- Please remember our policy: Troop Meetings are for group and team development and NOT generally for Merit Badge time. **There is to be NO merit badge work during patrol meeting time, instructional time and competition.** The only exception on Mondays is that a Scout can opt to work on Merit Badges during game time.

- Scouts occasionally come forward to work on a merit badge without reading the whole MB book from cover to cover. This is not negotiable and it doesn’t matter where the MB was started or with whom. To complete the summer camp merit badges or any other please follow these simple rules.
  1. **Read the book from cover to cover.**
  2. Bring any completed paperwork to a meeting or Merit Badge Help Night (generally Tuesday before BOR-check the Troop calendar) and coordinate with the Scoutmaster to meet with an approved Merit Badge Counselor.
  3. Sit down with the Counselor and explain, show or complete the requirements as detailed.
  4. It’s not about a memory test – it is about comprehension and covering the material as stated.
  5. Did we mention you need to read the book **first**? The WHOLE book…
**Highlights, Deadlines and Dates**

**Upcoming Troop Board of Review: March 21st** (MB Help 4/12…plan ahead for the next BOR!)

**Be sure to read the Troop Advancement Guidelines on the Troop web site. This will help you succeed!**

After a scout completes his Scoutmaster conference, he must notify Mrs. Narayanan, Troop Advancement Chairperson, that he is ready for the next BOR. Mrs. Narayanan can also be reached at Kathleen@narayanan.us **Reminder: Full Class “A” uniform and Scout handbook are required for participation in a Board of Review.**

Be sure to note all the additional Merit Badge opportunities OUTSIDE of Troop activities to help you advance. There are offerings all over the place!!

****UPDATED RANK REQUIREMENTS****

The BSA periodically updates the handbook and other details of Scout Advancement. The Troop will keep you posted on how these changes affect you, so be on the lookout. Please see Mrs. Narayanan or Mr. Gillis if you have any questions. And keep forging ahead!

**ORGANIZE YOUR FAMILY CALENDAR**

**please check the Troop web site for changes (link below)**

**March 2016**
- Mar. 2: Porsche Merit Badge (2)
- Mar. 4-6: Solo WFA
- Mar. 6: Troop Committee Meeting
- Mar. 7: Troop Meeting
- Mar. 7-11: MPCS Spring Break
- Mar. 8: Merit Badge Help Night, South Campus, 6pm
- Mar. 10: PLC Meeting, A-011, 7-8pm
- Mar. 10-11: Teacher Work Day
- Mar. 11-13: Council 100 Camporee
- Mar. 14: Troop Meeting
- Mar. 17: District Roundtable
- Mar. 18-20: NYLT Staff 2
- Mar. 21: Troop Meeting, Board of Review
- Mar. 25: MPCS-no school
- Mar. 26: Oceanography MB
- Mar. 28: Troop Meeting, MPCS-no school

**Don’t wait for the newsletter…find all you need to know online!**

Calendar and Web Site Information ~ Check out the Troop web site at www.troop629.org

***Each monthly outing for the ENTIRE year is ON the Troop Calendar!*** Take a moment to log these into your family calendar so you can plan to attend. Scouting is outing and advanced planning helps make it happen. Keep us updated on changes to phone numbers, address and e-mail accounts. Not getting the newsletter? Contact Kathryn Cline, Troop Communications at k.cline@earthlink.net
**SCOUT HANDSHAKE**

**EAGLE**~: none  
**LIFE**:  none  
**STAR**:  none  
**FIRST CLASS**:  none  
**SECOND CLASS**: Ben Hayes  
**TENDERFOOT**:  none  
**SCOUT**: none

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**CONGRATULATIONS TO EACH OF YOU!**

Scouts,  
Looking for a leadership position?  

**YOU MAY BE INTERESTED IN SERVING AS A DEN CHIEF?**

You must meet the following criteria to be a Den Chief:

- Be an active member of the Troop  
- Have achieved the rank of First Class or above  
- Be approved by Mr. Gillis  
- Review the Troop 629 Den Chief Training document (provided by Den Chief Coordinator upon request)  
- Successfully completed the BSA training found on-line training at:  

http://www.scouting.org/training/youth/denchieftraining.aspx and turn in certificate to Mr. Calvert or Mrs. Narayanan.

Please contact Mr. Calvert (Den Chief Coordinator) at stouf29@yahoo.com for more information on becoming a Den Chief and to assist you in finding a Den to serve.
ADULT INVOLVEMENT

“Many Hands make light work”
Want to be more involved?

Behind the scenes of any great Troop are many helpful adults doing their part to keep the activities and events running smoothly. If you could find some time to help out, please see our Committee Chair, Mary Beth Bierbaum at marybeth@bierbaum.com to learn about the available open positions and opportunities.

Sometimes, we just need adults for supervision,
But some outings require a little more training…

TRAINED LEADERS- The Backbone of 629 (Reasons to Be Prepared)

Are you planning to get involved with scouts? Want to go on an overnight Scout trip? Troop 629 always needs, welcomes and loves its volunteers. If you want to participate in any of our activities we have a couple of pre-training requirements we need to have accomplished. It’s best to get your qualifications completed early so when that trip comes up that you want to go on; you aren’t scrambling to get qualified.

All adults must complete the Youth Protection on line course before registration.
1. Complete Adult Registration Form (Found under Forms on Troop website, www.troop629.org Registration Form-Adult)
2. Complete Youth Protection & Fast Start (found under Training on Troop website). Upon completion of any BSA training program, please email a copy of your course “completion” certificate to Kathleen Narayanan at kathleen@narayanan.us or bring a copy to her at the Troop meeting.

To participate as an adult leader in the troop on overnight camping (see below for High Adventure), you must complete on line Youth Protection Training, Fast Start Training and review the Troop 629 Adult Guide. Assistant Scoutmasters and Committee Members must complete the above training and This is Scouting (Formerly called New Leader Essentials), SALT, ITOLS and/or Committee Training. Information on these training opportunities is available on the Northern Ridge District Website at www.c dbsa.org http://www.northernridgebsa.org/

**To participate in High Adventure, leaders must complete all the above along with special classes such as CPR, FA/WFA, safety afloat, and safe swim. When you have completed any of the BSA training, please notify Kathleen Narayanan.

EARNING POWER

High Adventure Accounts…what’s your earning potential?

Fundraisers have provided many of our scouts with additional funds to use for skiing, summer camp and any High Adventure outing. It’s never too early for a scout to start his own individual High Adventure account which the troop maintains.
CAMP CARDS ARE HERE!!!

It's Camp Card time again! This year, the sale started on February 8th (first day cards were available to the Troop). ALL money and unsold cards must be turned in by the troop meeting on May 2nd.

This is what the cards look like this year:

And, this is what you can earn if you sell enough cards:

- 1,000 – Xbox one/Play Station 4/iPad Mini 3 Wi-Fi 16GB
- 500 – GoPro- Hero + HD Action Camera
- 300 – Pill 2.0 Portable Blue Tooth Speaker or Beats by Dr. Dre Solo 2 On Ear Headphones
- 100 – $50 gift card (Amazon) and a limited edition 100th Anniversary Atlanta Area Council Patch
- 50 - $20 gift card (Amazon)
- 20 - Patch

*Selling the cards is EASY! Go door to door in your neighborhood - but remember the buddy system!
*Go places lots of people hang out, such as parks, the mall, school festivals, etc.
*Always wear your uniform, always be polite.

Need some Camp cards to raise some money?

Here's how it works: You come to a troop meeting, and talk to me (Mr. Loedding). For the duration of the sale, I'll be at a table in the back of the room. Come up and tell me your name, and ask for some cards to sell. I'll write it down, give you cards, and wish you luck. When you sell the cards you got from me, bring me the money, and ask me for some more!

For every card you sell, $2.50 goes into your High Adventure account, and can be used for summer camp, troop camping trips, or High Adventure trips, such as Philmont, Sea Base, and Northern Tier.

***To pay your own way to summer camp, you only need to sell about 125 cards!
Speaking of money,

a word from our treasurer...

High Adventure Accounts!

As a reminder, all registered scouts and adults receive a high adventure account in our troop. High adventure accounts are built up over time from troop fundraising activities such as camp cards and popcorn sales. Adults may elect to have out of pocket expenses, such as grubmaster or gas, contributed to their son’s high adventure account rather than be reimbursed (as noted on our expense reimbursement form).

Scout high adventure accounts are intended to help pay for high adventure trips, like Sea Base, Northern Tier or Philmont. Other big trips (over 1 week) also qualify, like summer camp or the ski trip. Many scouts are able to fully pay for their high adventure trips solely by participating in our troop fundraisers.

Parents take note! High adventure balances cannot be used to pay for regular scout outings, and if unused, are not refunded by BSA policy. However, parents and siblings may transfer balances on approval by Mr. Gillis.

Every scout should be planning for their next high adventure trip… that’s the whole idea! If you would like to know your balance, contact the troop treasurer (Chris or Karen Tostenson) at any regular meeting. We want to help scouts participate in their finances as part of the scouting experience. So find out what your high adventure account balance is, participate in troop fundraisers, and you can tell your parents you can pay for your next High Adventure!

It’s time for the news to change it up a bit…be on the lookout for a new layout and some new features!
Special Report:

Summer Camp

Our troop will attend Summer Camp at Woodruff Scout Reservation June 19th-25th! $100 deposit was due Feb. 22nd.

**REGISTRATION FORMS DUE MONDAY 3/21!!!**

All information regarding summer camp can be found on the website under the “Camping” tab at the top. Once on the Summer Camp 2016 page, check out the links on right hand side of the page. The “Informational Packet & Registration Forms” link contains all of the detail and logistics. Make sure we know that you want to attend and your desired classes so we can make that happen. **Sign up early to help ensure you get the classes you want as classes do fill up!** Registration forms must be turned in by Monday, March 21st! Annual Health & Medicals and additional Summer Camp forms are due Monday, May 9th. For any questions regarding Summer Camp please contact Jason Sutton at the following email address: jason@grubbyboys.com.

**Important Information about Health Forms**

As we are gearing up for Summer Camp, we will be collecting and updating health forms for both our scouts and registered adults. Forms for all of those attending Summer Camp (scouts and adults) are due May 9th. A few important pieces of information to keep in mind when you update your forms:

1.  It is against BSA policy to accept or store health information via electronic means. You must bring in a hard COPY of your health form for us to file.

2.  There are times when part C of the health form is needed outside of Troop activities, BE SURE to keep a copy of the form with the Doctor signature, DO NOT hand in your only copy. We store the forms in a secure locked area, and cannot always get them quickly with only a few days’ notice and make a copy. PLEASE help us to make this big job MUCH easier by keeping a copy of your forms at home, both for outside events or in case we need to replace a misfiled copy.

3.  Before sending in forms please look them over and make sure all parts of the form have the appropriate signatures and are dated where indicated. Every year we have to track down dozens of parents for unsigned or undated forms.

4.  If your personal physician is not an option to complete the part C of the health form, check around for nearby places such as Walgreens, WellStreet, or other family practices doing specials for inexpensive “sports physicals”.

The health form and information can be found via this link [http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/healthandsafety/ahmr.aspx](http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/healthandsafety/ahmr.aspx). Please choose the “Are You Going to Camp?” download link that includes part A, B, and C. If you have any questions about Health Forms you can email Pam Sutton at pam@grubbyboys.com.
Just in case you didn’t know…

❖ **Troop 629 Scout Activity Scholarships**

Please understand fully that our policy has always been and is still the same – **no scout should miss out**! We have been blessed to have sufficient funds to offer every Scout the ability to quickly earn their way through a service project of their choosing. Coordinate with the Scoutmaster or Committee Chair to bring this about, but do not hold back asking if the need exists. In addition, the High Adventure Bases and Camps also normally run scholarship applications for various events, just ask us for the forms if help is needed for a particular event.

❖ **Life to Eagle Candidates**

Is your project stalled? Do you need fresh ideas or perspective? Does your project plan effectively address the expectations of the Northern Ridge District? Contact Mr. Gillis **gillisfx@aol.com** If you would like to review past Eagle project packages, please contact Ms. Narayanan who will bring the binder to a troop meeting for your review.

**Additional Websites**

We are [Northern Ridge District](http://www.northernridgebsa.org/) and [Atlanta Area Council](www.atlantabsa.org). These websites have additional information regarding upcoming events, training, contacts and library.

Troop 629 is sponsored by [Mount Pisgah United Methodist Church](www.mountpisgah.org).

**Flyers & Links**

Our Troop Web Site is a terrific resource for all you need  [www.troop629.org](www.troop629.org) …here are a few links to help you out:

BSA Online Learning Center  [https://myscouting.scouting.org](https://myscouting.scouting.org)
Scouting Magazine (Adult Leaders)  [http://www.scoutingmagazine.org/](http://www.scoutingmagazine.org/)
Boys Life Magazine (Scouts)  [http://www.boyslife.org/](http://www.boyslife.org/)
Gear Guide for Scouts & Scouters  [http://www.troop629.org/Adventure/philmont_gear.htm](http://www.troop629.org/Adventure/philmont_gear.htm)
Council-Sponsored Events  [http://www.atlantabsa.org](http://www.atlantabsa.org)
Scout Shop News  [www.scoutstuff.org](www.scoutstuff.org)
Merit Badge  [www.meritbadge.com](www.meritbadge.com)
“ This is Scouting” formerly called New Leader Essentials for Boy Scout Leaders  [http://www.northernridgebsa.org/](http://www.northernridgebsa.org/) Training tab