

MAY 2024



Steve Hammond  
COUNCIL PRESIDENT



# THE TRIBUTARY

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE VIRGINIA HEADWATERS COUNCIL

Matt Phillippi  
COUNCIL COMMISSONER



Sue Hart  
SCOUT EXECUTIVE

Virginia Headwaters Council  
(VAHC)

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**2024** marks the **5th anniversary** of a historic moment in scouting history: we celebrate the incredible journey of girls in the **Scouts BSA** program.

The **Boy Scouts of America** welcomed girls into its iconic program in **2019**, breaking down barriers and opening up new avenues for adventure, leadership, and personal growth<sup>1</sup>. Since then, around **6,000 female scouts** have advanced to the prestigious rank of **Eagle Scout**. Across the country, there are now over **45,000 female scouts** actively participating in the program.

This milestone represents not only progress but also the spirit of inclusion and empowerment. Girls ages **11-17** have had the opportunity to explore a wide range of activities, from hiking to whitewater rafting, just like their male counterparts. Together, they've learned valuable skills, forged lasting friendships, and contributed to their communities.

Here's to many more years of growth, camaraderie, and adventure in Scouts BSA!



I hope you and your Scouting unit has been enjoying the nice weekend weather. It is certainly a tough time of year to plan on what you need to wear. At nights, you need a coat and in the day you need shorts, t-shirt and a hat. Camp Shenandoah is looking so beautiful with the dogwood blooming and the new leaves breaking through. Make sure you enjoy the spring as much as possible and remember Scouting is “outing”.

The Scout Executive and I will be off to the Annual BSA National Meeting the first week of May. The folks at National are promising big news at the meeting. We already know about the changes to the Cub program,. We will get any “news” out to the Council once we get it.

I would like to thank all the Scouters and Scouting families that have given so generously to our Friends of Scouting “Own Your Day at Camp Shenandoah”. We are ahead of last year’s numbers and we expect continued success. Every dollar we receive is crucial in providing for Camp and our Scouting program. Much work has been and is being done at Camp in anticipation of another wonderful summer camp season. If your Scouting unit has not decided where to go this summer, please consider “Coming Home to Camp Shenandoah”. We would love to have you.

Cub units also can get the Camp experience at Cub Camp. I hear we are promising better weather than last year. Please sign up your Cub pack to have some fun.

I once had a Scouting leader tell me that his unit

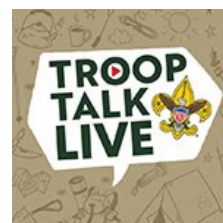
never knew what was going on in the Council. I reminded him, that there is a Roundtable each month in both Districts, there is a website, there is a Facebook account and there is a monthly newsletter. If you feel that you are not getting enough information, please feel free to let me know. We want everyone to know what is going on. There are no secrets. There is no hidden agenda. And yes, I am paying my own way to the National Meeting.

Happy Scouting to you all!

Steve Hammond - Council President  
 steve.hammond@hammondtownsend.com  
 (cell) 434-962-5813



Watch [Cub Chat Live](#) every Friday at 2 p.m. CT on [Facebook Live](#) for tips, tricks and ideas to help your den or pack.



Watch [Troop Talk Live](#) every second Wednesday of the month at 2 p.m. CT on [Facebook Live](#) for ideas to help your troop.



April was certainly an exciting month in Scouting. We saw our Scouts and Scouters at community events to bring in new members. Shenandoah Lodge traveled to Pipsico for Conclave and from all accounts they had a great time of fellowship, service, and fun. There was the Woods of Merit Camporee in the Monticello District that saw many Scouts having a great time, and we had our Outdoor School at Camp Shenandoah where we trained newer Scouters how to deliver the Scouting program safely and effectively while in a camp environment. That's a busy month!

As we move ever closer to the end of the school year and the summer months we look forward to even more. This weekend I will be teaching Cub Scouts how to catch fish out of Hope Lake during our Cub Camporee. This is going to be an exciting weekend and I hope to see many of you there! So often our district and council leaders are working with other adults in the program and we lose sight of the real purpose of Scouting: the youth! This is why I love being at events like camporees and visiting during the summer camp season. Seeing our Scouts taking part in the program and understanding their needs is key to what we do.

Over the next few months there will be a lot of changes coming from National. Our Scout Executive and President will be at the National Annual Meeting this month to learn about some of what is to come. Some we have already heard about, like the changes to the Cub Scout program (which look awesome, I must say!). There are even going to be changes to the role of the commissioner and I will likely be reading some of that information as you read this. The important thing to remember is that we are here to support you: the Scouts, Scouters, and Scouting families. Your commissioner team is to be your single

best resource as we navigate all of this and I will be working to keep all of our commissioners as current as I am on these changes.

Your Friend in Scouting,

Matt Phillippi - Council Commissioner  
 matt.phillippi@virginiaheadwaters.org  
 (cell) 540-560-2807

*Be the heart. Build relationships. Change Lives.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## \$1,000 BALL DROP

September 16, 2024 • Lexington Golf & CC

Balls are \$5 each. All of the sold balls will be dropped at once. Closest ball to the pin wins \$1,000!

Benefits the Mountain Valley District, Virginia Headwaters Council, Boy Scouts of America  
 Rain or shine event - You do not have to be present to win. No. 0841

### MOUNTAIN VALLEY GOLF TOURNAMENT

### SEPTEMBER 16, 2024

### Lexington Golf & Country Club

### GET YOUR BOOK OF DROP BALL TICKETS NOW!

### SELL THE WINNING TICKET AND RECEIVE \$100.

Cindy Zollman (540-460-4832)

Tom Greenwood (540-968-1343)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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Dear Scouting Families,

Our Council is hosting its first-ever Cub Scout Camporee, "May the Forest Be with You," this inaugural event will have a ton of fun activities and plenty of opportunities for our Cub Scouts to explore the great outdoors. It is set to take place this weekend, on May 3, at Camp Shenandoah. This Camporee marks a significant milestone for our Council as we aim to provide an unforgettable experience for our young Scouts and their families.

While you're gearing up for the Camporee, why not also consider registering for Cub Scout Resident Camp? It's a fantastic opportunity for our Cubs to dive into the new Cub Scout program, learn new skills, and make lifelong friendships.

As you know, Camp is not just for our Cub Scouts, but for all our local Scouting community! We need your help to keep our grounds pristine and inviting. If you have some time to spare, please consider volunteering to help mow and weed whack the grass. Your contribution will make a world of difference in maintaining our camp's beauty. Reach out via email, and let's arrange a time for you to join us at camp. Together, let's create unforgettable memories and ensure that our camp remains a cherished destination for generations to come.

If you have any questions or need further information, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Yours in Scouting,

Sue Hart

VAHC Scout Executive

[susan.hart@scouting.org](mailto:susan.hart@scouting.org)

(cell) 434-872-3320 (Office) 540-943-6675



The good news is that we have secured an Aquatics Director for the 2024 summer session. With that all senior Positions are filled. There are a few junior staff positions open as well as addressing the needs for dishwashing in the dining hall.

Registrations at approximately at halfway to goal (329 youth/105 adults/34 units) which is similar to where we were this time last year. The ratio of out of council vs. in council is in favor of out of council (15:19 units). Generally, we are around 50:50 ratio so this is not particularly unusual. We are currently trying to determine which in council units have not signed up in order to try to convince them to attend camp with us. Out of council sign ups at this point are generally desperation events due to them not getting slots elsewhere thus we could still pick up some from this cadre as well. As they say, "So Far, So Good".

That said, pending summer's end a discussion of 3 vs. 4-week summer session is warranted if for only due diligence.

Come Home to Camp Shenandoah where the units are the focus of our service!

#### Camp Director:

Robert Clemmer

[Robert.clemmer@scouting.org](mailto:Robert.clemmer@scouting.org)

540-292-2391 (cell)





# HELP US CREATE A Scout SPIRIT WALL AT CAMP SHENANDOAH!



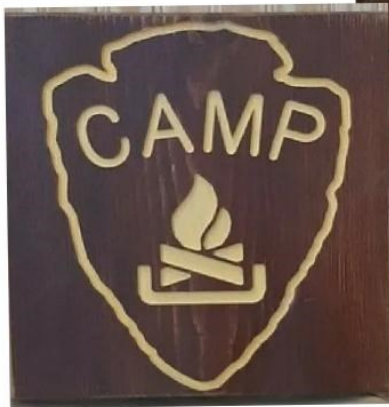
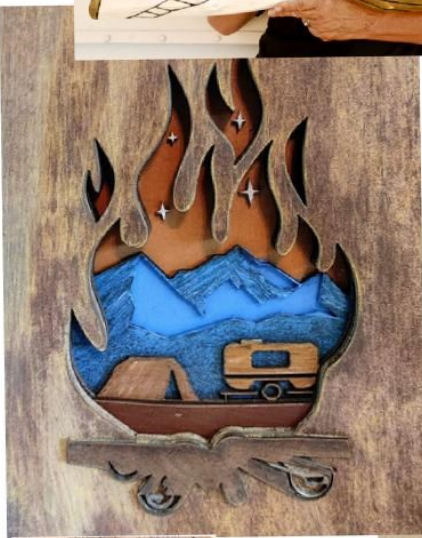
## Calling ALL Troops!

**It is time to let your creativity shine and show your Scout Troop spirit! We need your help transforming a giant wall at Camp Shenandoah into a permanent backdrop that will be used for photo ops!**

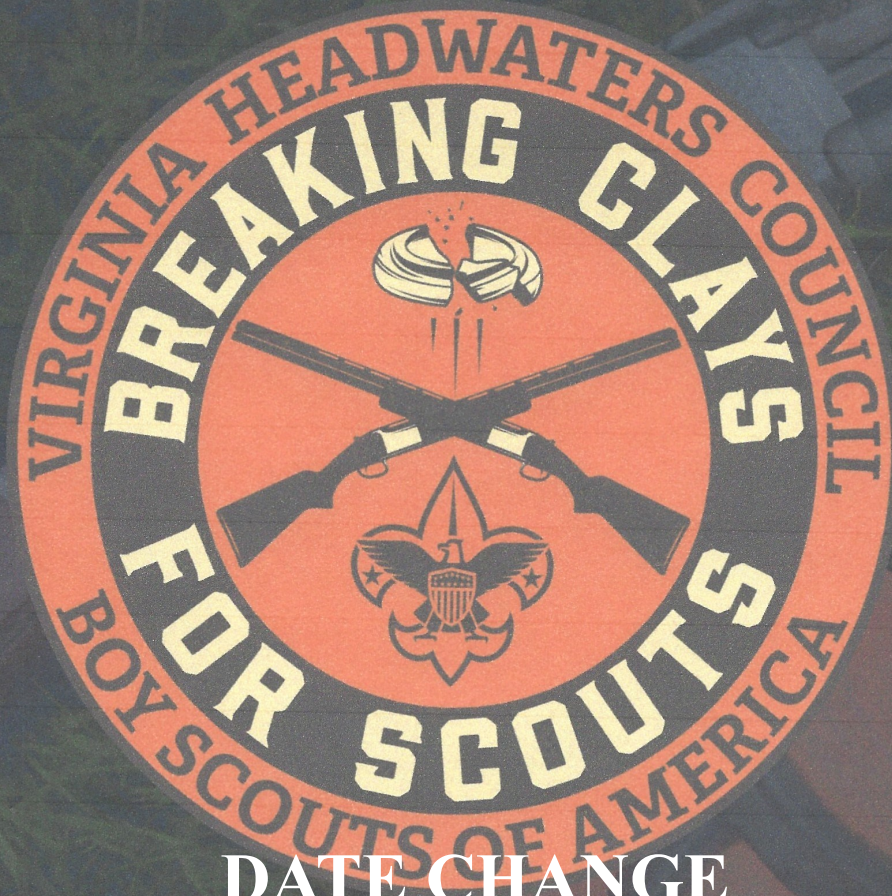
**Create a Medallion that highlights your love for BSA and Camp Shenandoah. Does your troop LOVE to fish, canoe, have campfires? Work together to make a large, bold, medallion shaped like your favorite activity!**

- Medallions should be BOLD, CLEAR, and 3D. Irregular shapes are HIGHLY encouraged! Ideas include; canoe, campfire, tent, totem pole, fish, bear, snakes, birds, feather, backpack, sleeping bag, arrow, arrowheads, etc. Take your time, work as a team, and BE CREATIVE!
- Medallions should be between 24inches and 36inches in size.
- Medallions MUST be made of, and decorated with materials that will hold up outdoors, AND finished with a clear spray sealer. Examples include; Wood, wood burning or carving, metal, heavy rope, up-cycled materials, exterior paints, epoxy, glass, etc. NO plastics, paper, or cloth.
- Medallions MUST be flat on the BACK to be mounted onto a wall! See attached page for inspiration ideas!
- NO hand lettering or writing, with the exception of troop # somewhere on the piece. Troop #'s should be no larger than 3inches.
- Medallions must be delivered to Paul Hansohn by JULY 1, 2024

For any additional questions contact Heather Hansohn @ [hansohhm@jmu.edu](mailto:hansohhm@jmu.edu)







DATE CHANGE

Friday, ~~May 24, 2024~~  
**JUNE 21, 2024**  
Shenandale Gun Club

11:30 AM to 3:00 PM

with catered lunch and adult refreshments (after the shoot)







# MOUNTAIN VALLEY District

District Chair: Dr. Carey Usher

District Commissioner: Jim Echols

Dr. Carey Usher: [cusher3@comcast.net](mailto:cusher3@comcast.net)

Jim Echols: [jeechols@verizon.net](mailto:jeechols@verizon.net)

District Director - Robert Clemmer: [robert.clemmer@scouting.org](mailto:robert.clemmer@scouting.org)



## Spring has definitely sprung!

First, I would like to thank those of you who participated in our Membership Rally at BRCC in April. Keep an eye on our social media for

a new “Membership Moment” where we regularly share ideas and resources for growth. Remember to appoint a New Member Coordinator if you have not already. I am so pleased to see more attendees each month at our Committee and Roundtable meetings – we need ALL of you to be engaged and present as we grow and plan. We are still meeting virtually but have added quarterly in-person meetings and will see each other in person in July.

We are making gains in both youth and adult membership here in Mountain Valley, and we expect to see even more momentum as we participate and build visibility in our community events throughout the spring and summer. During the last weekend in April we saw hundreds of families as we participated in the Harrisonburg Schools Spring Fling, the Frontier Culture Museum 5K, and Waynesboro’s Riverfest. I was humbled by the number of adults who relayed wonderful stories of their own Scouting experiences as youth, asking for more information about adult leadership. Likewise, the amount of interest and excitement we received from families and youth was phenomenal and uplifting!

Visibility is key, remember to put your youth into their Class A or B uniforms for community events and always be ready to recruit. Think outside the

box in terms of potential recruitment events: farmers markets, spring and summer festivals or concerts, town bar-b-ques... any events where youth and their parents are likely to gather. Packs, continue gathering your Cubs through the summer - they can now more easily earn the Summertime Fun Adventure belt loop or pin.

Units and CORs, as we come closer to the end of the school year and plan our advancement ceremonies, don’t forget your leaders! If you have questions about recognition, reach out to our Advancement and Recognition Committee Chair, Dave Kenee ([endodave@comcast.net](mailto:endodave@comcast.net)). Also, if your unit has not yet scheduled its Friends of Scouting presentation, please do so immediately. We are so close to meeting our 100% participation goal!

Our unit highlights this month follows Troop 124 to N.C. as they camped at Oregon Inlet., Troop 5 as they visited New Market/Luray Caverns, and Troop 29 working in their area on Earth Day. What awesome adventures, keep it up Mountain Valley District!

Yours In Scouting,  
Dr. Carey Usher, District Chair  
[cusher3@comcast.net](mailto:cusher3@comcast.net)

### Save the Dates:

Mountain Valley District Roundtable, Zoom: May 1 7:00pm-8:00pm

Youth Fishing Derby, Lake Tams in Staunton: May 4 8:00am – 11:00am

Kids Matter Day, Staunton: May 11 10:00am – 1:00pm

Mountain Valley District Committee, Zoom: May 15 7:00pm-8:00pm





# MOUNTAIN VALLEY District

District Chair: Dr. Carey Usher

District Commissioner: Jim Echols

**Troop 29 doing an Earth Day cleanup project.**  
The entire event was planned and executed by the



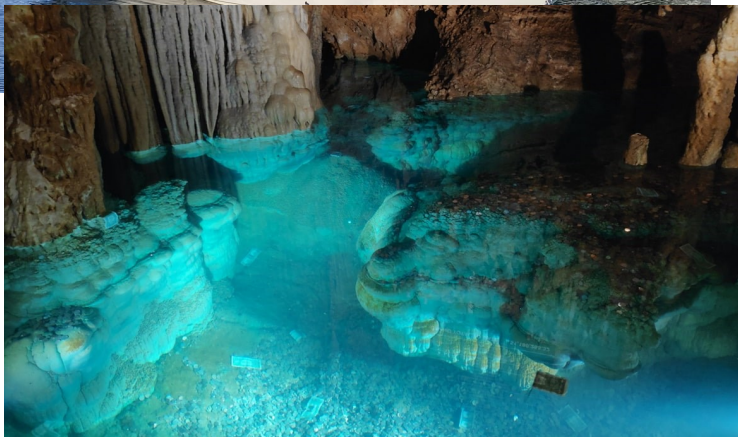
**Troop 124 Mountains-to-Sea**  
**North Carolina**



**Troop 5 spends weekend at The New Market**  
**Battlefield and tours Luray Caverns**



**VMI Cadets**  
**at the**  
**Battle of New**  
**Market.**



**The Wishing Well/Luray Caverns - Once a year,**  
**all of the coins/bills, hence the reason for thee**  
**color of the water, are removed and donated to**  
**various charities. So far, since 1954 more than a**  
**million dollars has been collected and donated.**





# MONTICELLO District

District Chair: Ed Murphy

District Commissioner: Mike Bonham

Ed Murphy: [emm8xuva@gmail.com](mailto:emm8xuva@gmail.com)

Mike Bonham: [mike@eqros.com](mailto:mike@eqros.com)

Scout Executive - Sue Hart: [susan.hart@scouting.org](mailto:susan.hart@scouting.org)

## WOODS *with Merit 2024*

### MONTICELLO DISTRICT MERIT BADGE CAMPOREE



#### *Merit Badges*

Thank you to the Merit Badge Counselors who were able to offer 13 Merit Badges to over 120 scouts.



#### *Units Involvement*

There were 17 units who attended the camporee. Over 150 scouts and 50 scouters were involved in this event.



#### *Thank you!!!!*

The biggest **Thank You!** goes to **Breanna Richardson** for spearheading this effort. She did an amazing job as she worked her Wood Badge Ticket!

### SAVE THE DATE!

We are planning for an event BIGGER event for April 2025!





# Membership Moment



## Crossover (Youth & Adults)

The current Unit Key3 OR a parent can initiate an online youth transfer in [my.scouting.org](https://my.scouting.org). Any of the new Unit Key3 can accept!



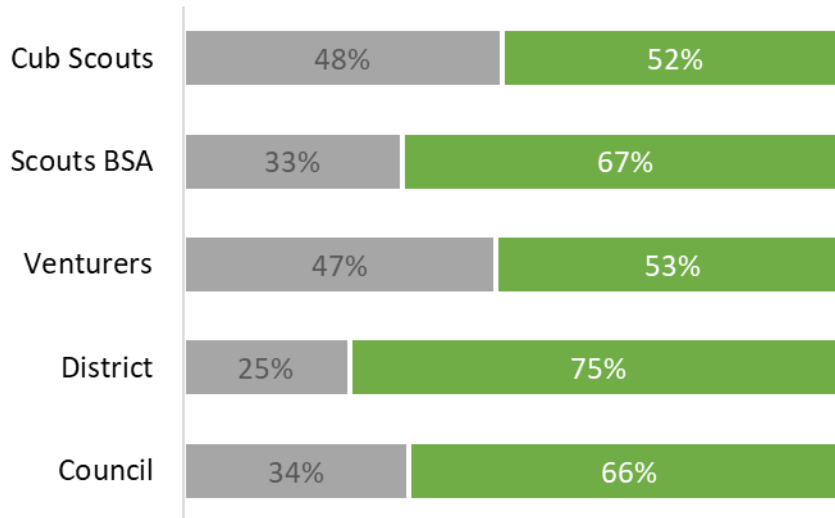
Registered adults can initiate a transfer or multiple registration of themselves by selecting “join” at [beascout.org](https://beascout.org) for the new Unit. Only the new Unit COR can accept adult applications. Remember adults must be registered with a Troop or Crew to camp with them.

# VIRGINIA HEADWATERS COUNCIL TRAINING

*Growing Lifelong Leaders*

## Council Training Overview

The Council is **64% position trained** for registered adults. The graphic below provides an overview by program area. The largest position-specific training need is for Committee Members (Pack, Troop, and Crew). As a reminder, all Direct Contact Leaders are required to take Hazardous Weather training every two years.



**Check your training records.** If you have completed training that isn't "on the books," please send a copy of your training card to [training@virginiaheadwaters.org](mailto:training@virginiaheadwaters.org) to update your records.

**How can we help you get trained?** Do you prefer in-person training, or maybe a virtual option, over computer-based training? Would you like to set up a training date for your entire unit? Email [training@virginiaheadwaters.org](mailto:training@virginiaheadwaters.org) and we'll see what we can work out.

## Would you like to become a Council trainer?

Do you enjoy training? Do you like helping others become even better leaders? You should consider becoming a Council trainer. Email John Lindegren, the Council Training Chair, at [training@virginiaheadwaters.org](mailto:training@virginiaheadwaters.org) to express your interest.



## Interested in being on Wood Badge Staff?

Are you interested in serving your fellow Scouters as staff member? The Council Training Chair will maintain a list of interested Wood Badgers to provide to each Course Director for consideration. If you're interested, please fill out the Staff Interest Form at <https://forms.gle/czs5wL5KETxRJWY97>. (Expressing interest does not guarantee selection.)

## Great time at Outdoor School 24

The weekend of 19 April was filled with fun and learning. Instructors and participants enjoyed a great weekend at Camp Shenandoah, sharing and improving their knowledge related to BSA outdoor programs.

Thank you to all the participants for giving your time and staying engaged throughout the training to further develop your understanding and skills, and ultimately to provide a better program experience for our youth. And a huge thank you to the instructors for the additional time to prepare and deliver an outstanding training experience.

We'll be back APRIL 2025 for our next VAHC Outdoor School. Look forward to seeing you there!







It takes a lot of work to keep Camp Shenandoah running. Almost all of that work is done by volunteers under the direction of the Camp Ranger and the Council Properties Committee. The Camp Shenandoah Ranger Corps will be a group of dedicated volunteers working side by side with Ranger and the Properties Committee to keep Camp safe and in good repair.

The Ranger Corps hosts Work Days at Camp and coordinates maintenance and projects. We can also arrange for individual or unit projects and work parties upon request.

We are also always looking for the skilled handy person and the not so skilled but eager to help volunteers that want to take an active role in maintenance of Camp Shenandoah. If you or someone you know is interested in lending a hand, please contact Paul Hansohn, [pmhansohn@gmail.com](mailto:pmhansohn@gmail.com).

We are always in need of a variety of licensed and skilled tradespeople including the following:

Plumber	Professional Tree Trimmer
Gas Fitter	Small Engine Repair
Electrician	Automobile Mechanic
HVAC	Light/Heavy Equipment Mechanic
Painter	Light/Heavy Equipment Operator
Carpenters	Roofers
Welders	Commercial kitchen equipment service and repair
Landscaper	

**Work Days!**

**CAMP SHENANDOAH**

VIRGINIA HEADWATERS COUNCIL, BSA  
222 Boy Scout Ln. Swoope, Virginia 24479

**Saturday May 4th 9:30am - TBD**

# Program Updates

**EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION  
EXTENDED TO MAY 15!**

## Cub Resident Camp

Cub Resident Camp will be held June 16-18.  
Open to all scouts Lions to AOLs. Register here:

<https://scoutingevent.com/763-CubResidentCamp>



## Webelos Resident Camp

Webelos Resident Camp will be  
reimagined with the new Adventures.

<https://scoutingevent.com/763-WebelosCamp2024>





August Inductions and go through their Ordeal to become a full member of the OA.

Yours in WWW,

**Harlow Thompson** | Lodge Chief  
 Wingalouchsik Gischihan  
**ORDER OF THE ARROW**  
**SHENANDOAH LODGE #258**  
 chief@shenandoahlodge.org

Scouts & Scouters,

Mirthful May! Shenandoah Lodge just returned from Conclave at the Pipsico Scout Reservation. This submission is being written prior to the event, though I know the Lodge will have had a great time like always! Thank you to the 73 members of Shenandoah Lodge that attended the event.

In just a few weeks in our second annual Shenandoah Fest! This event is a great opportunity to show non-Scouts some of what Scouting is like so make sure to invite your friends. Shenandoah Fest is free for all to attend and will be held at Camp Shenandoah on May 18th from 10am to 7pm. You do NOT need to be a member of the Order of the Arrow or the BSA to attend. We have some great stuff planned for the event so I hope to see you there!

At the end of the month will be our first Ordeal opportunity of the year: June Inductions. This event is important for the induction of our newly elected members into the Lodge but also for getting Camp Shenandoah ready for the summer camp season. June Inductions will be held May 31 - June 2 at Camp Shenandoah. Registration can be found on shenandoahlodge.org

Lastly, if you or someone you know was recently elected to the Order of the Arrow, please go to <https://www.shenandoahlodge.org/ordeal/> to learn more about what to do next. All elected Scouts and Scouters will need to attend either June Inductions or



A link to a google drive folder full of photos from this weekend:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/10hpJb4sq91PP4nS6Sakj52AdRNqEUBHH>

## 2024 Lodge Events

<https://shenandoahlodge.org>

<b>6 January</b> Winter Banquet	<b>29 July-3 Aug</b> NOAC, UC Boulder
<b>22-24 March</b> Spring Fellowship	<b>9-11 August</b> August Induction
<b>26-28 April</b> Conclave	<b>24-25 August</b> Vigil Weekend
<b>18 May</b> ShenandoahFEST	<b>27-29 Sep</b> Lodge Retreat
<b>31 May-2 June</b> June Induction	<b>2 November</b> Day of Service

Unit Elections 1 Jan - 6 Apr





vahcbsa.org/shenandoah



Camp Shenandoah  
222 Boy Scout Ln  
Swoope VA

## EXPERIENCE SCOUTING AT CAMP SHENANDOAH

*See firsthand what Scouting offers in a summer camp environment.*

### ALL ARE WELCOME!

*We look forward to seeing scouts, friends, family, and everyone else, at Camp Shenandoah*



### JOIN A UNIT!

*If you happen to fall in love with scouting, talk to any of our recruitment representatives to find a local pack, troop, or crew*



### ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- ▀ Outdoor Skills
- ▀ Leatherworking
- ▀ Pioneering & knots
- ▀ Crafts
- ▀ Camp tours
- ▀ Food & MORE!
- ▀ STEM activities



# Saturday, May 18th

# 10am - 7pm

*Scouting builds great leaders, and so this event was organized, planned, and led entirely by young scouts.*

# CHANGES FROM BSA NATIONAL

NATIONAL \$85 /YR	Participants in kindergarten through age 20
COUNCIL \$ /YR	
NATIONAL \$50 /YR	For all Exploring youth and adults
COUNCIL \$ /YR	
NATIONAL \$65 /YR	All registered adult volunteers in unit and non-unit positions. (Volunteers with multiple registrations will continue to pay for only one position).
COUNCIL \$ /YR	
NATIONAL \$25 /YR	This fee is for Merit Badge Counselors who are not already registered volunteers
COUNCIL \$ /YR	
<b>UNIT CHARTER FEE</b>	
<b>\$100 /YR</b>	
For all new and rechartering units	
<b>SCOUT LIFE MAGAZINE FEE</b>	
<b>\$15 /YR</b>	

## Monday, March 4<sup>th</sup>

The adult application flow is being revised to require the completion of the criminal background check (results received) before the new adult volunteer can assume a leadership role.

## Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup>

Annual Membership fees are changing. The New Member fee is being discontinued! Stay tuned for an update on Council Fees.

## Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup>

New Cub Scout Program takes effect. Visit <https://linktr.ee/cubscoutprogramupdates> for more information.

### 2024-2025 Cub Scout Badges of Rank Requirements

The Bobcat Adventure is designed to be the first required Adventure. Each badge of rank is earned by completing six required and two elective Adventures. The six required Adventures are focused on the aims and focus areas of the BSA.

LION Kindergarten	TIGER 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	WOLF 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	BEAR 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	WEBELOS 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	ARROW OF LIGHT 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade
BOBCAT Character/Leadership	BOBCAT Character/Leadership	BOBCAT Character/Leadership	BOBCAT Character/Leadership	BOBCAT Character/Leadership	BOBCAT Character/Leadership
MOUNTAIN LION Outdoors	TIGERS IN THE WILD Outdoors	PAWS ON THE PATH Outdoors	BEAR HABITAT Outdoors	WEBELOS WALKABOUT Outdoors	OUTDOOR ADVENTURER Outdoors
FUN ON THE RUN Personal Fitness	TIGER BITES Personal Fitness	RUNNING WITH THE PACK Personal Fitness	BEAR STRONG Personal Fitness	STRONGER, FASTER, HIGHER Personal Fitness	PERSONAL FITNESS Personal Fitness
KING OF THE JUNGLE Citizenship	TEAM TIGER Citizenship	COUNCIL FIRE Citizenship	PAWS FOR ACTION Citizenship	MY COMMUNITY Citizenship	CITIZENSHIP Citizenship
LION ROAR Personal Safety	TIGER ROAR Personal Safety	SAFETY IN NUMBERS Personal Safety	STANDING TALL Personal Safety	MY SAFETY Safety/First Aid	FIRST AID Safety/First Aid
LION'S PRIDE Family/Reverence	TIGER CIRCLES Family/Reverence	FOOTSTEPS Family/Reverence	FELLOWSHIP Family/Reverence	MY FAMILY Family/Reverence	DUTY TO GOD Family/Reverence
2 Elective Adventures	2 Elective Adventures	2 Elective Adventures	2 Elective Adventures	2 Elective Adventures	2 Elective Adventures



## MASSACHUSETTS

### 16-YEAR-OLD GIRL, FORMERLY HOMELESS, ADDRESSES MASS. LAWMAKERS AS EAGLE SCOUT

#### Emily Green of Chelsea, an Eagle Scout with BSA Troop 56 in Cambridge, spoke to the Massachusetts State House



By Darren Botelho and Sam Doran • Published April 16, 2024 • Updated on April 16, 2024

A girl from Chelsea overcame the odds, going from homelessness to becoming an Eagle Scout and addressing state lawmakers at the Massachusetts State House.

Sixteen-year-old Emily Green, a member of Scouts BSA Troop 56 in Cambridge, knows all about difficult situations as a first-generation Costa Rican American. Her family came to this country with practically nothing, living in shelters, finally getting help from the Scouts.

Green ultimately reached Eagle. She and other scouts delivered a report to state lawmakers Tuesday, lobbying for participation in Boston inner-city neighborhoods, lighting a fire for kids interested in STEM-related activities and career training.

Reading the report from the Senate rostrum, Green noted that this year marks the fifth anniversary of co-ed Scouting, with girls now welcome to join all aspects of the program. She told senators that 696 girls are members of Scouts BSA in Massachusetts, and 1,767 girls are in the Cub Scouts.

"Scouting has been instrumental in shaping my character and learning essential life skills. I started as a little girl, joining my brother, who's also an Eagle Scout, in his Scout troops. Then I joined a progressive co-ed troop and advanced through the ranks from a cub scout to Eagle Scout," Green said.

Green is pushing for more girls to join as a means of reaching their goals — just like her.

"Cambridge really helped me push forward and, like, really defy the odds, since a lot of troops weren't really accepting girls or pushing away from that," Green said. "This year, only 970 Scouts became Eagle, and only 129 of them are females."

Scouting's total membership in the Bay State stands at 35,468, with 20,495 Cub Scouts, 13,300 Scouts BSA, 933 Explorer Scouts, 693 Venture Scouts, and 47 members of Sea Scouting, a maritime arm of the organization.

Green said the program saw an uptick of around 14% in merit badges earned year over year, rising from around 27,000 merit badges earned in 2022 to 30,926 badges in 2023.

"Almost 4,000 of those badges were citizenship-related. This shows the importance of giving back to your community that Scouting really does emphasize," Green said.

As Sen. Bruce Tarr noted during Tuesday's session, scouting includes an "entire team" with parents and other adults who help the program run. The report gave a total of 13,340 adult volunteers who participate in Massachusetts Scouting.

Tarr, who hosts the annual Scouting day at the State House, in his youth was a Cub Scout and Boy Scout. The Gloucester Republican lauded the organization for "building stronger communities and a stronger commonwealth and a stronger America for the future."

The Scouts met in Nurses Hall before Tuesday's Senate session, and after their event in the chamber they were free to tour the capitol to wrap up their day on Beacon Hill.

"For many, it is a uniform, badges, and campfires. But on a deeper level, it represents much more. It's a journey of personal growth, camaraderie, and service," Green told the Senate.



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