

THE GOAT

The Monthly Newsletter for Troop 476, their Family and Friends



Scoutmaster's Corner

When we served as the 443rd Overnight Crew on the USS Hornet in January, our Scouts, adults, and Webelos guests spent the day taking merit badge classes, exploring the ship, serving dinner to hundreds of other Scouts, and listening to ghost stories. Then came time for lights out, and a lot of tired boys climbed into their bunks and fell asleep.

All through the night, however, adult leaders took turns standing watch. Mr. Wan and I stood the uncoveted 1-3 a.m. shift. Every 15 minutes we walked through the stern berthing areas that held our troop and, nearby, a couple of other troops. We were looking for anyone having a problem—nightmares from the ghost stories, sleepwalking, getting lost on the way to the head, whatever. I guess we could have continued onto the fantail and scanned the horizon for enemy fighters trying to slip through our defensive perimeter, but in between those walkthroughs we just sat in the little

chapel and quietly read books to pass the time.

It turns out the only problems we encountered were several Scouts who got disoriented when trying to find the head or to get back to their bunks. The stern berthing areas were laid out in a very complicated way, and the twisting passageways all looked the same in the dim red lighting. So when confused Scouts wandered into the chapel, Mr. Wan and I would point them in the right direction. Then they would head off, their footsteps on the steel decks echoing behind them. And we would feel good inside because we had kept them from getting lost.

I didn't mind losing a little sleep because it meant we were able to help boys not get lost in the complicated maze of the ship. In a way, that's my job as Scoutmaster, and indeed the job of all adult leaders in the troop—to point the way and to help our Scouts find their way through the maze of Scouting and through

what might be some difficult years in their lives. So Scouts, if you're feeling a little lost, look around for a couple of adult leaders standing watch, and ask them for help.

Every once in a while those of us on watch get a glimpse that maybe we're making a difference. When Steve Parker visited the troop for his Eagle Court of Honor in January, we got to meet again with a young man who listened, learned and led. Several Scoutmasters and many adult leaders played a role in his Scouting experience, and hopefully in his life, by pointing the way for him to go. As I said good-bye to Steve and he headed back to college, if I had listened carefully I'll bet I would have heard his footsteps echoing behind him. I know I had a good feeling inside.

—Mr. Gabriel
Scoutmaster

Committee Chair's Corner

Hillary Clinton famously said, *"it takes a village to raise a child."* In the context of Scouting, this reminds me of another saying – and I'm not sure where this one came from; *"the transfiguration of a soul can only happen in the crucible of a community of other souls."*

In our modern world, Scouting provides a virtual "village" where in a friendly environment Boys have fun broadening their horizons while learning how to engage in meaningful dialog with adults, and where they learn project management and leadership skills. In this "crucible of a community of others," our boys become young men, and develop the skills to become leaders of men (and women).

In Ronald Reagan's 1985 White House Luncheon commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America, he said, "You know, America sure turns out winners. And much of the credit

belongs to organizations like the Boy Scouts. And so it's not surprising that yesterday's Scouts have helped to shape our today -- in business, government, the media, science, medicine, education, show business, and -- well, the list goes on and on...

Former Scouts have walked on the Moon, become President, and won the Heisman Trophy. Today they serve as Cabinet Secretaries, as my Press Secretary, and in the Congress. In fact, about two-thirds of the Members of the Congress have been in the Boy Scouts... You can be certain that today's Scouts will help shape America.

... it's easy to understand why the Boy Scout badge, the American eagle superimposed on the north sign of the mariners compass, means "Follow me, I know the way." The Boy Scouts of America do know the way, the way to set high standards and how to live by them,

and the way to build character, train in citizenship, and foster fitness of mind and body."

It is the Adult volunteers that build and maintain the framework for this "village," this, "crucible." And, over the next several weeks we will have some new families (new Scouts and Adults) coming on board. And, we have some families moving on. So, while adjusting the ranks of our Patrols we will also be adjusting Adult roles and responsibilities to ensure continuity of our program.

Frankly, I am humbled to think that the Boys going through our Troop, on our watch, are tomorrow's leaders – who will shape the future. And, I am honored, to serve by your side.

—Karl Darr
Committee Chairman

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Important Websites

Troop 476
<http://www.troop476.com>

Santa Clara Council
<http://www.sccc-scouting.org/>

National BSA
<http://www.scouting.org>

Overnight on the U.S.S. Hornet

The trip on January 15-16th to the USS Hornet was comprised of 32 scouts and 13 adults with approximately one-third of the group being Webelos or their parents. Around half of the scouts left at 8 a.m. to do either the radio or aviation merit badge. The rest of the group arrived around 3 p.m. The scout trek leader was Marshall D. and the adult leader was Mr. Gabriel. The Hornet is located in Alameda, which took under an hour to drive to.

The USS Hornet is a World War II aircraft carrier, built during the war and retired 1970. It is the most decorated ship in the Navy's history. The Hornet participated in 50 major naval encounters without ever receiving any injuries from enemy aircraft. That is incredible! Topping this off, the Hornet also had the privilege of recovering the Apollo 11 and 12 astronauts.

To begin with, there were two merit badges offered at the Hornet during the morning and early afternoon hours: the aviation and radio merit badges. I participated in the aviation merit badge, which I found to be very interesting. I learned that becoming a recreational pilot requires a large amount of time, energy and dedication, yet you are still limited to a fifty mile radius with no passengers! The instructor was definitely a no-nonsense

guy, who was a great teacher with clear explanations. The merit badge work wasn't very difficult; it just required taking copious notes and having good listening skills. The packet we received was exactly what we were tested on later. We finished after about four hours. Unfortunately, I can't report on the radio merit badge, so you'll have to ask someone else about it. Maybe next time, if I go, I would take that merit badge training if offered.

After the merit badge work, we went to the dock and waited around 30 minutes and then proceeded to get our gear to get back onto the ship. By this time, everyone else had arrived. The military-like, not-so-friendly staff, who even admonished a parent, requested we get in a line or suffer the consequences! Of course, we got in line and headed into the ship. After getting wristbands, we attended a general meeting, where the staff introduced themselves and answered questions. The troop then placed our gear in the room where we would sleep on the "comfortable" bunk beds. The group broke up into patrols and Webelos were assigned to them.

Everyone went on their own educational tours by patrol, and Orion visited the control tower and the catapult room. Some patrols went to the special weapons room, which I had viewed last

time when I visited the USS Hornet with another group. In this area alone, there were enough nuclear weapons to blow up half the world! Also, the poor men stationed there had to remain below except for an occasional breath of air and weren't allowed to talk to anyone about anything they did, ever. In fact, most of the ship personnel didn't know that room existed and if someone crossed the two red lines, they could be shot unless they had the proper authorization. Even today, no one is allowed to go into one of the rooms in that area. On a lighter note, the crew played sports on the flight deck such as soccer, golf, skeet shooting and basketball.

Dinner was actually quite tasty and definitely better than camping meals. I went back to my bunk with my patrol, and others went to the fo'c'sle to hear ghost stories. We stayed up until 'lights out', which was at 11 p.m. The next morning we had a Scouts' Own and some scouts tried out the flight simulator. I highly recommend that scouts who have not been on this trip go at least once because it's a fascinating look into our nation's past.

— Kyle B.
Troop Historian

Advancements

| Second Class | First Class | Life |
|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Nick F., 01/20/05 | Chris E., 01/06/05 | Cauchy C., 01/13/05 |
| Scott G., 01/13/05 | Zahi H., 01/20/05 | |

Merit Badges

| Aviation | Aviation | Citizenship In The Community |
|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| Luke B., 01/15/05 | Ben H., 01/15/05 | Trevor G., 01/15/05 |
| Kyle B., 01/15/05 | Owen L., 01/15/05 | Ben H., 01/06/05 |
| Christopher C., 01/15/05 | Wesley L., 01/15/05 | Doug H., 01/06/05 |
| Trevor G., 01/15/05 | Victor S., 01/15/05 | |

Troop 476 Calendar

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|----------------|---------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|
| February 3 | Court of Honor | March 18 | St. Patrick's Dinner Service Project |
| February 6 | Scout Sunday | March 18-20 | Big Basin Campout/Philmont Dayhike |
| February 12 | WeST Fair | March 21 | Troop Committee Meeting |
| February 19-20 | Tahoe-Donner Snow Campout | March 31 | Junior Leader Elections |
| February 21 | Troop Committee Meeting | April 9 | Patrol Outing |
| February 24 | PLC Meeting | April 16 | Junior Leader Training |
| February 24 | Al Cans Due | April 18 | Troop Committee Meeting |
| March 5 | Skill-O-Rama | April 21 | PLC Meeting |
| March 13 | Spring Planning Meeting | April 23-24 | Pinnacles Backpacking |