

# The Gamehaven Gazette

September 7, 2025 4th Edition



**Scouting  
America**

Gamehaven Council

# Gamehaven Council Celebrates 90 years of Scouting

**T**he Gamehaven Council's program year has launched, and we are celebrating 90 years of Scouting!

Scouting has undoubtedly evolved over that time, as has Gamehaven. In the 60s, our council had events such as Cub Pack Days, Webelos Adventure Camps, and Scout Summer Camps. In 1977, our council was written up in Scouting Magazine for our outstanding family camp, and Boys' Life magazine recognized our "Boy Scout" summer programs. Lastly, our council was awarded the National Green Seal from the US Department of Agriculture for our conservation practices.

Gamehaven Council has been innovative in fostering new programs, initiatives, and delivering high-level programming to over 250,000 young people since 1935. As we prepare for the next 90 years of Scouting, I often find myself thinking about what we can collectively do to strengthen the Scout Experience. At our fall camporee on September 27th, we will begin celebrating our 90th anniversary at Gamehaven Scout Camp. The day event is free for all current and former Scouts (small fee if you stay for a meal/s).

This event marks the beginning of numerous get-togethers to celebrate our anniversary with our current, former, and future Scouting family throughout the program year. Our objectives in these activities include letting our community know that Scouting is fun, safe, relevant, and here to give youth better futures. Another aim was to create new relationships with people who can serve as the next generation of volunteers, board members, and Scouting supporters.

Please share this Gazette with friends in your circle, and, more importantly, with others who would benefit from a fantastic Gamehaven Council Scouting Experience.

Thank you,  
Arne Landsverk  
Scout Executive



*"The gift to each child in the world, should be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life."* - Rachel Carson

## Council Calendar

DATE	EVENT/MEETINGS/TRAININGS
<b>September 2025</b>	
Saturday September 13	Pop-Up Merit Badge- Nuclear Science
Fri.-Sun. Sept. 26-28	BSA Troops- Fall Camporee - Celebrating Gamehaven Council 90th anniversary
<b>October 2025</b>	
October 3-5	<a href="#">OA Fall Mawenemen</a>
Saturday October 11	<a href="#">Fall Family Adventures</a> - Cub Scout Fall event with lots of fun things to do! Traveling Store of Cub Scout uniforms will be at this event.
Saturday October 18	JOTA-JOTI - Jamboree on the Air - Opportunity for Scouts of all ages to learn about the ham radio and talk to other Scouts around the world.
Saturday October 25	Fall Merit Badge Rally -
<b>November 2025</b>	
Saturday November 8	<a href="#">Ten Commandments Hike</a> - This hike to various places of worship happens every 3 years. Good opportunity to learn about other religions.
<b>December 2025</b>	
Sunday December 6th	OA Winter Fest
<b>January 2026</b>	
Fri.-Sun. January 2-4	Operation Icicle for Cub Scouts
Fri-Sun January 9-11	Operation Icicle for Scouts BSA
Saturday January 24	Cubs Polar Cubs

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# That's A Wrap on Summer Camp!

Another summer is waning, the nights are getting longer, the air getting colder (at least I hope), and the water is being drained from our swimming pool. It's hard to believe that it's been three months since our first Summer Camp session in June. Since that first session, we have had families from sixteen amazing Cub Packs in Gamehaven enjoy all the fun and games at camp. Thanks to an amazing team of volunteer staff from all over Gamehaven, those cubs earned a over 180 advancements, spent 158 nights in tents, shot over 450 BB's, performed 19 skits, sang over 50 songs, swam for a combined 300 hours, and experienced a combined total of 15 inches of rainfall!

Another highlight of our summer camp programs this year was the development of an amazing team of young camp staff – between the ages of 11 and 18. These staff worked so hard to have so much fun with their younger peers, from planning sessions ahead of time to running campfires, teaching badges, and more. Through late evening staff meetings and learning to live with “one foot raised”, we're super proud of them and excited to see what lies in their future.



You can check out all the footage from camp and photos on our YouTube channel and Flickr pages:

YouTube: @gamehavenscouting

Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/people/gamehavenbsa/>

Thanks for camping with us this year Gamehaven! And see you next time!

*Brady Geary, Council Program Director*



# Scouts From Two Troops Head to Washington DC

## Surprise Recognition for Air Force Veteran For Local Scouts

Most summers it is a common occurrence for Byron High Schoolers to attend a trip to Washington, D.C., and each year that Byron High School participates in the trip, United States Senator Amy Klobuchar requests that a flag be flown over the United States Capitol in honor of the trip. This flag is then presented to the group with a certificate detailing the date the flag was flown.



When it became known to trip organizer Mr. Kyle Finney during their stop at the Flight 93 National Memorial in Pennsylvania that parent attendee and longtime Pack 42 Scouter Jean Nichols was a military veteran, he saw an opportunity to make the flag presentation portion of the trip even more special this year. Knowing Jean's son Samuel was a Scout, Mr. Finney pulled Samuel aside to request his help with recruiting other Scouts on the trip to participate in a surprise flag presentation for his mother. Samuel agreed even though the secrecy at first gave the impression he was in trouble!

On July 10, 2025, in front of the Iwo Jima Marine Memorial in Arlington, Virginia, Carson Scrabeck (Troop 42), Samuel Nichols (Troop 42) and Teddy Mills (Troop 231) folded the flag that had been flown over the Capitol on January 22, 2025, and presented it and a certificate to eleven-year Air Force veteran Jean Nichols in the presence of all the participants of the trip. I had the pleasure of meeting these Scouts and Jean Nichols in

the Eagle Scout constructed gazebo in front of the Byron Community Recreation Complex Pond on a beautiful day in August to discuss the trip.

When I asked about their favorite memories, Carson Scrabeck said he liked the National Museum of the Marine Corps, which is a building shaped like the Iwo Jima memorial. Teddy Mills liked the battlefield walk at Gettysburg to see the 200+ monuments of honor, and he felt fortunate to find his great uncle's name on the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C. and take a rubbing of it. Samuel liked hearing the story of the First Minnesota Regiment who fought bravely at Gettysburg, suffering heavy casualties. In their fighting with the Virginia Regiment, they captured their battle flag. They saw it as a symbol of their victory and sacrifice and kept it, and to this day, Minnesota holds the flag and has declined multiple requests by Virginia to return the flag.

Jean shared that she was very surprised to be honored for her service in the Air Force in the flag ceremony and it meant a lot to her to receive the folded flag from Samuel, Carson, and Teddy. I was surprised to hear that Jean was serving on the Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska during the 911 attacks on September 11, 2001. She was serving as a Computer Communication Specialist and on that day, she was in the process of transitioning to a new work center. When she arrived at the base, it was chaotic and all the plans for the day changed. She was told to go home, so she, like many Americans, watched events unfold



on the television. Upon returning to Base, it was evident that everything had changed. Instead of just flashing her badge at the gate entry, her badge was checked and verified, the car was searched thoroughly, and the guards were visibly armed. When she left Offutt Air Force Base for Osan Base in Korea five months later, security was still top priority.

Jean has had an interesting and diverse military service and has seen a lot of the world. Thanks to Jean for her service to our country and to Samuel, Carson, and Teddy who recognized that service in such a meaningful way.

Thanks to Candee Mills, Teddy Mills, Jean Nichols, Samuel Nichols, and Carson Scrabeck for their contributions to this story.

Article Courtesy of - Pam Legried Registrar





## A Summer of Scout Adventure!

**S**couts in Gamehaven have been all over the country this summer, participating in adventure in all its forms. We've had troops visit all four national High Adventure Bases, over ten different summer camps in and around the Midwest, represent Gamehaven on the staff of camps and national committees, and more. It would be impossible to fit all of the amazing adventure into just one article, so stay tuned on our YouTube channel for interviews with some of these amazing Scouts and Scouters! But in the meantime, here are a few of our highlights:



### Get that Scoutmaster Outta Here! Troops 18 & 04 Support the Lewiston National Night Out.

**T**roop 18 and Troop 4 helped serve food for the Lewiston police, fire, and ambulance departments during National Night Out on August 5th, 2025. To have a little fun, we took a picture with our Scoutmaster Nathan Hedlund in the backseat of the cop car.

*Nicole Heinz (Troop 18 & Troop 04)*

## Boots On The Ground: A Participant's View of NYLT



**I** attended NYLT this year. I learned a lot of good things. It was hot at the beginning of the week and rainy most of the time. A lot of gear got wet. We set up fans in Deer Lodge and worked on drying everything out. Despite these changes the staff youth and adults put on a good program. My patrol was quiet but we became more vocal as the week went on. There were a lot of fun games. We spent a lot of time sitting and listening to people talk about how to improve our leadership skills. Every time we did a hands-on activity the staff would push us to do our very best even if we needed to start over. The food was good. The QMs spent time learning how to serve people with dietary restrictions. I hope there is NYLT next year and if there is I would love to staff.

*Megan S. (Troop 04), NYLT Participant*

## Days of Yesteryear – Scouts is a Historic Institution!

Through the help of an Eagle Scout, Issac Wendt who shares his time serving the Olmsted County Historical Society, I was invited to bring the West Concord Historical Society's Scouting Exhibit on the road. We set up at the Days of Yesteryear event the second weekend in August, supported by Troop 80 of Rochester, talking about the history and future of Scouting in Southeastern Minnesota.

*John Z., West Concord Scouting Museum Curator*



## Working on Gardening Merit Badge This Spring & Summer

**I**n anticipation of the growing season..... Becky, Lily, and Molly from Girls Troop 4 in Winona, along with Matthew from Troop 18 decided to spend a Saturday afternoon early in April to start working on the Gardening Merit Badge.

They visited the Cabbage Patch Garden Center in Wabasha and learned how perennials were winterized and how to get them ready to sell in the spring. After their initial field trip, Lynn Hansen (Troop 4) sat down with them and went over the other requirements of the merit badge, which included planting seeds to test for germination.

Continuing to work on their gardening merit badge this summer, Scouts planted tomatoes, cucumbers, even a kohlrabi to name a few. Different kinds of flowers were also grown. One Scout even transplanted peonies.



## Recognizing Our Eagle Scouts

**C**ongratulations to everyone on obtaining their Eagle Scout Rank. Your experiences and lessons learned from Scouting will serve you well into your future. All the Best!

- ◆ Troop 039 - Mateo Hidalgo - 08/24/2025
- ◆ Troop 498 - Owen Melnyczenko - 08/21/2025
- ◆ Troop 050 - Drew Reinke - 08/24/2025
- ◆ Troop 613 - Theodore Stoltman - 07/23/2025
- ◆ Troop 253 - Landen Sturges - 08/24/2025
- ◆ Troop 083 - Luke Unterholzner - 08/21/2025



# Scouts Pitch In to Help Feed the Hungry

**T**roop 94 and Pack 62 helped pack meals for the Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) Organization on Saturday, August 23rd in Plainview. FMSC's mission is to feed God's kids hungry in body and spirit. Since March 2009 FMSC has sent food to 110 countries in need. FMSC does not have its own staff distributing food around the world. We donate meals to an exceptional network of missions and humanitarian organizations. Volunteers across America can set up a mobile station and donate their time to help pack nutritious meals. That is exactly what Troop 94 and Pack 62 did on a Saturday in August. During their busy day they ended up with:

- 864 total boxes packed.
- 186,625 meals to be shipped in those boxes.
- Satisfaction of knowing they helped 511 kids that day.



More information on FMSC— <https://www.fmsc.org/>



# Troop 80 Enjoys Week Long Biking Adventure This Summer

Over the past 5 years, Troop 80 has discussed undertaking a high adventure trip. Over the years, many ideas were brought up, but never ever came to fruition, until in 2024. Following in the wake of a canoe trip that had to be cancelled due to low water levels, the Troop, rather than be discouraged, decided to try again with a new idea. After discussion, they decided on a weeklong bike trip. A Committee was formed, with Jeffrey Spaulding as the Chair. Jeffrey, with help from Liam Arroyo, began planning an ambitious trip spanning 5 days and well over 100 miles.

However, before we went on the big trip, we had to adequately prepare. During the spring of 2025, Jeffrey organized and led multiple meetings and campouts to prep the youth for the big trip. Full of fun, laughter, outdated playground equipment, and birthday cake, the Scouts were beyond excited for the trip soon to come. Summer flew by and the day arrived. After months of preparation, the Scouts set off to Norwalk, Wisconsin on Thursday, July 31st, 2025.

The first day, after setting up camp, the youth set off on the first of many bike rides. While this ride was only around 12 miles, it taught us something that would change the entire trip. The trail we decided on riding was the Sparta-Elroy State Trail. We had expected the trail to be paved, but it turned out it was mostly packed dirt, with patches of sand, gravel, and erosion. We returned with excitement and some trepidation for the remainder of the trip.

The next two days were spent exploring both directions on the trail, going through eerie tunnels, and having lots of fun. We learned more about the history of the trail, which was built over old railroad tracks. We rode longer and longer distances as we built up for Sunday. The Troops wanted to earn the 50 Miler award as well as the Cycling Merit Badge. However, this alone wasn't enough of a challenge. We wanted to truly push ourselves, so we decided that the 4th day of the trip would be a 50 mile day. We departed from Norwalk around 8:00 AM that morning. This was a true test of perseverance. Through tunnels, over hills, and past dozens of animals we rode. Morale was high as we reached Elroy and took a break for lunch. As we headed out again, however, spirits started to fall. We had successfully ridden nearly 25 miles, yes, but that meant we were only

about halfway done. The first stretch of our trip back to Norwalk had barely any coverage, leaving us sweating in the hot August sun as we pushed onwards. A water and snack break rejuvenated us enough to take on the next portion, a steep uphill. We stayed positive, talking and encouraging each other. Partway up the hill, one of the bikes had to be repaired, but we fixed it and kept going, refusing to let it slow us. We made incredible time to the top of the hill and flew down to our next stop, Wilton. We got ice cream to celebrate our ride thus far and to energize us enough to finish it off.

We pushed ourselves for the last several miles, until we finally made it back to camp, victorious, with huge smiles on our exhausted faces. The next day we rode a few more miles before heading home, bringing our grand total to 135 miles over 5 days. When we arrived back in Rochester, we proudly ended a successful youth planned and led high adventure trip.

*Article Courtesy of -  
Liam Arroyo  
Troop 80*

