

JANUARY 18, 2026

www.gamehavenbsa.org

GAMEHAVEN CUB SCOUTS

NEWSLETTER



Gamehaven Scout Office will be closed
Monday, January 19th
In Honor of
Martin Luther King Jr. Day



Take a look and find out what is happening in Cub Scouts this winter, any leader trainings planned, as well as the latest Gamehaven Council news.

Recognize Great Scouting Leaders

HEY LEADERS! – did you know that you can qualify for, or nominate a deserving person for, a great number of awards that get recognized by the Gamehaven Council? Read along to see brief descriptions of the awards you can earn or nominate for, and make sure to turn in all nominations by February 14th!

- Den Leader Training Award: To recognize amazing den leaders who have completed training, tenure, and performance requirements.
- Gamehaven Scouter of the Year: To recognize extraordinary adult leaders in packs, troops, ships, and districts who have given back to their unit more than they have received.
- Fretwell Outstanding Educator Award: The Outstanding Educator Award — also referred to as the Fretwell Award, after Elbert Fretwell, the BSA's second Chief Scout Executive and a former professor of education at Columbia University — is presented to teachers, educational support staff, and school administrators who instill Scouting values in their students.
- William D. Boyce New Unit Organizer Award: The William D. Boyce New-Unit Organizer Award is presented to recognize volunteers who organize one or more traditional Scouting units.
- District Award of Merit: The District Award of Merit is a council award presented by districts to Scouters who render service of an outstanding nature at the district level. The award is made available annually on the basis of 1 for each 25 traditional units or fraction thereof.
- Veteran's Award: The veteran's award recognizes those dedicated volunteers who have spent a number of consecutive years registered in Scouting, in 5-year increments.

Learn more about these awards and turn in nominations early by going to

<https://gamehavenbsa.org/resources/for-leaders/adult-recognitions/>

Silver Beaver Nominations Due by Feb. 14th

The Silver Beaver is one of, if not the, highest awards that a local council can offer its members, and is annually given to two Gamehaven Scouters of the highest pedigree. This award was introduced in 1931 and is a council-level distinguished service award of the Boy Scouts of America.

- Who is Eligible: Recipients of this award are registered Scouters who have made an impact on the lives of youth through service given to the council.
- Who can Nominate: A registered Scouter must submit nominations for the Silver Beaver award.
- Selected By: Selected by the Council Selection Committee, and approved by the National Court of Honor.



THIS FORM TAKES A WHILE! Nominations are due absolutely no later than February 14th, 2026, so start the process now. <https://gamehavenbsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Silver-Beaver-Award-website-app.pdf>

Welcome , New Employee Brad Walters

Please welcome Brad Walters to our team. Brad has joined our council as a District Associate and will serve units in both the Hiawatha and Wakpaota Districts.

Brad was born in Springfield Illinois and in the 4th grade, his family moved to Bonita Springs, FL. Brad's favorite Scouting memory as a youth was paddling the BWCA and his troop camping next to a 20' waterfall. Brad is an Eagle Scout, Vigil Honor Member of the Order of the Arrow, achieved the Scouts BSA STEM NOVA Award, and is a triple crown winner (attended 3 of the 4 high adventure bases). Outside of Scouting, Brad has hiked the Florida Trail, enjoys "Elk Shed Hunting" (looking for antlers in the wilderness), and is a fan of beef ribs.



Welcome to the Gamehaven Council, Brad!

Brad can be reached via email at: bradw@scouting.org or by phone at 507-361-5346.

Annual Council Kick-Off Event- 2026-2027

Please join us for the **2026- 2027 Program Kick-off Event** on **Tuesday, February 24th** at Hosanna Lutheran Church – 2815 57th St. NW Rochester. The event will begin at 6:30 pm and will be in-person. Dinner will be provided for 2 people per unit. Please RSVP by February 17, 2026. We will be handing out program information and supplies for the remainder of the calendar year and winter months of 2027. Please register at:

<https://scoutingevent.com/299-kickoff26>



Some Facinating Fun Facts of Scouting

- The Scout handshake is done with the left hand, symbolizing trust and friendship.
- The "*International Day of Scouting*" is celebrated on February 22nd each year, commemorating Baden-Powell's birthday.
- Scouting is represented in over 216 countries and territories worldwide.
- During both World War I and II, Scouts were actively encouraged to start what were known as "victory gardens." These gardens served a dual purpose: easing food shortages and making a valuable contribution to the overall war effort.
- In 1988, Scouts undertook a remarkable effort by amassing over 65 million containers of food in the Inaugural Scouting for Food campaign.

Bundle Up and Have a Blast at Polar Cubs!



Bundle up and get ready for a frosty day of fun at Polar Cubs in Rochester, MN! Whether you're a first-year Cub or a seasoned snow explorer, this winter-themed adventure has something for everyone. Dive into a flurry of games, creative crafts, and cool challenges inspired by the Winter Olympics—like curling, geocaching, and of course, the legendary cardboard sled races. It's a celebration of Cub Scouting in the snow, and it's FREE for all member Cub Scouts to attend!

Saturday - January 24th, 2026

Hurry Deadline to register is Friday, Jan 23rd at Noon.

<https://scoutingevent.com/299-polarcubs26>

Ice Fishing Derby- Calling All Ice Fishers!

Calling all ice fishers - experts, novices, and newcomers to the hobby alike! The Gamehaven Ice Fishing Derby, Saturday February 7th, will be held at the Gamehaven Reservoir by Gamehaven Council, is fast approaching. Fishers will receive help from experts, free gear checkouts, tips and pointers, a hot lunch, and entrance in all of our ice fishing derby categories including:

- Most Fish
- Funniest Fish Photo
- Biggest Fish
- Smallest Fish
- And more!

Register online at: <https://scoutingevent.com/299-icefishing26>



Ultimate Sledding Night- February 7th

Come to the Gamehaven Sledding Hill for a night of Ultimate Sledding from 5-8pm. Our team has created the most EPIC sledding hill you can imagine; lights, music, hot cocoa, a warming house, and so much more. We really just can't wait to share with you how much fun you'll have at this one-night event. Proceeds help fund construction and development of Gamehaven Scout Camp.

REGISTRATION: <https://scoutingevent.com/299-sledding26>

Deadline to register is February 6th @ noon.

Attention Arrow of Lights



Are you the den leader or a parent of an Arrow-of-Light (5th grade) den?

You are invited to join your associated Scouts BSA troop at the Winter Klondike on January 30th – February 1st, or just for the day on January 31st.

You can learn more about this exciting event at <https://scoutingevent.com/299-klondike26>

250th Anniversary Committee

Hello Scouts and Scouters,

The Gamehaven Council Activities and Civic Service committee is in need of dedicated and excited volunteers to help us run amazing service projects recognizing the 250th anniversary of the birth of our nation. If you are willing to give us ideas and help find meaningful work to do, please reach out to committee chair Karl Kruger at karl.kruger@gmail.com

UNITS: Gamehaven Council, in partnership with the National Council of Scouting America, is excited to be facilitating and encouraging the Service 365 initiative this year. Units that perform 250 hours of community service between all of their members (including adults) between February 8th and December 31st will receive a special recognition from Gamehaven Council. More information coming soon!



Gamehaven Council Online!

Did you know that Gamehaven Council has a number of online presences? Check it out:

- FACEBOOK: facebook.com/gamehaven
- INSTAGRAM: <https://www.instagram.com/scoutsgamehaven/>
- YOUTUBE: <https://www.youtube.com/@gamehavenscouting>
- BLUESKY: <https://bsky.app/profile/scoutsgamehaven.bsky.social>
- TIKTOK: <http://tiktok.com/@scoutsgamehaven>

In addition to our social media channels above, we have a few online resource pages:

- MAIN WEBSITE: <https://gamehavenbsa.org>
- CAMP WEBSITE: <https://gamehavenbsa.org/camp>
- FLICKR (Online Photo Album): <https://www.flickr.com/photos/gamehavenbsa/>

If you're interested in helping us curate these online platforms, reach out to us at brady.geary@scouting.org

RATA (Range and Target Activities) Update

2025 was a banner year for RATA at Gamehaven Scout Camp! We onboarded three new Range Safety Officers, two new shotgun instructors, and two new Archery/BB Gun/Slingshot rangemasters, and offered RATA programming at the Spring and Fall Camporees, Order of the Arrow Section Conclave, five Family Adventure sessions, and multiple open shoots.

To keep the momentum going in 2026, we need more volunteers. Many hands make light work, and we're trying to deepen the bench. There are several options to become involved:
Range Safety Officer (RSO)

A least one Range Safety Officer is necessary to operate the shotgun range. To obtain the credential, one must complete the NRA Basic Range Safety Officer Course. The next course close to Gamehaven Council is on January 17, 2026, in Spicer, Minnesota. Contact Eric Holien, 320-226-3225, to sign up. Cost is \$50.00.

Shotgun Instructor

No classes currently scheduled

Archery/BB Gun/Slingshot Rangemasters

These volunteers operate the Archery, BB Gun, and Slingshot ranges, primarily for Cub Scout programming.

- Northern Star Scouting offers the course several times a year; to register, search for courses at <https://www.northernstar.org/news/enavigator/shooting-sports-trainings>
- Gamehaven Council will offer this training on April 25, 2026. Contact Rob Wilkinson, 612-214-8768 or Robert.m.wilkinson@gmail.com, to sign up.

We're flexible in offering this training, and require only two participants.

If you can't make April 25, 2026, let Rob Wilkinson know and we'll schedule additional sessions.

Watch the newsletter for additional training opportunities!

Calling All Makers!

The bad news: Wasps are a constant problem at Gamehaven Scout Camp.

The good news: Wasps aren't very bright.

Apparently, wasps won't build a new nest near an existing nest, and have a hard time telling the difference between real and fake nests. For 2026, the Logistics, Health, and Safety team is experimenting with 3D printed wasp nests, which we'll install strategically around camp in the hope of discouraging new pests. If you're a 3D printing enthusiast, we can use your help! We're looking for volunteers to 3D print dummy/decoy wasp nests. These can be any size, though preferably in a realistic color...white, grey, brown, are all good. A couple of links are below, but any similar design will do!

<https://www.thingiverse.com/search?q=wasp+nest&page=1>
<https://makerworld.com/en/search/models?keyword=wasp+nest>



Hiker Direct Program Offers Great Discounts

ALPS Mountaineering stands out as a dedicated partner in outdoor gear, offering exclusive pricing to Scouts, Scout leaders, and parent volunteers through its Hiker Direct program, specifically designed for Scouting members. This initiative ensures that Scouting families have access to high-quality gear at affordable prices, enhancing their outdoor experiences. Being a part of Hiker Direct allows you to purchase most of the gear on the website at roughly 40% off MSRP, every day of the year! Hiker Direct also offers a great referral program offering 5\$ credits for every scout referred to the program. Hiker Direct started in 1999 with the goal of getting more youth outdoors. Being a part of various scouting groups can get pricey for parents, especially if they have more than one child involved, by offering deals on reliable gear 24/7, it would allow more youth to have a good experience while camping and hiking, and they'll continue to enjoy the outdoors for years to come.



Discover more at: hikerdirect.com

Gear up for all your outdoor adventures with **HIKER DIRECT**

Hiker Direct is a **FREE Scout Program** that offers **BIG DISCOUNTS** on camping and backpacking gear

TENTS • PACKS • SLEEPING BAGS • SLEEPING PADS • FURNITURE

Register at hikerdirect.com

JOIN OUR FACEBOOK COMMUNITY! 800.344.2577 Mon - Fri, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm CT

Link to website: <https://hikerdirect.com/>

REWARDS PROGRAM

**GET MORE
FOR YOUR
ADVENTURE**

- ✓ Easy to Earn
- ✓ Easy to Redeem

**500
POINTS**

Get 500 points for every new scout referral who signs up.

= 1 pt

For every \$1 spent, earn 1 point.

**24/7
SAVINGS**

Redeem points anytime at checkout.

No Limit

There is no limit on how many points you can earn!

Gamehaven Council Annual Business Meeting

Our Council Will be Holding Our Annual Business Meeting

Thursday, March 19th @ 6pm

Via zoom.

Who: Chartered Organization Representatives are invited to participate - please pre-register in **advance**

When: Thursday, March 19th at 6:00 pm

Where: Zoom meeting - Please RSVP in advance of the meeting using the link below :

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9tNfztl1P3>

Why: Approve the Gamehaven Council officers and board members

Other: If you have new board member recommendations or thoughts, please email those names and their contact information to John Devlin at devlin@miiq.com

Thank You