

The  
**Gamehaven  
Gazette**

December 1, 2024 - First Edition



**Scouting  
America**

Gamehaven Council

"Gamehaven at Night" photo by Bill Cleveland, 2024

# Welcome to the Gamehaven Gazette

Dear Reader,

As promised, here is our 1st Edition of the Gamehaven Gazette. This is not just another newsletter, but an evolving showcase highlighting Scouts in action, great unit adventures, fun facts, and inspirational messaging. We want to see this publication highlight all the good that is happening throughout the council, and we hope to hear your voices and see your pictures in future editions. The Gazette will be coming out once a quarter on the first Sunday of that month. Our next edition is scheduled for March 2, 2025.

*Gamehaven Staff*

## Council Calendar

### DATE EVENT/MEETINGS/TRAININGS

#### DECEMBER 2024

Dec. 3	Sugar Loaf Fundraising Breakfast
Dec. 5	Rochester FOS Fundraising Breakfast
Dec. 5	Sugar Loaf Roundtable Meeting
Dec. 5	Wakpaota Roundtable Meeting
Dec. 6	Order of Arrow– Winterfest
Dec. 23-31	Gamehaven Office Closed

#### JANUARY 2025

Jan. 3	Scout Night at Grizzlies
Jan. 10–12	Scouts BSA Operation Icicle
Jan. 17-19	Cub Scouts Operation Icicle
Jan. 18	Cub Scouts Polar Cub Day
Jan. 20	Gamehaven Office Closed –MLK Day
Jan 24-26	Scouts BSA Winter Klondike

#### FEBRUARY 2025

Feb. 1	Ice Fishing Tournament
Feb. 6	Wakpaota Roundtable Meeting
Feb 7-8	Cub Scout Operation Icicle
Feb.8	Cub Scout Polar Cubs
Feb. 17	Gamehaven Office Closed– President’s Day

#### MARCH 2025

Mar. 3	Sugar Loaf Roundtable Meeting
Mar. 6	Wakpaota Roundtable Meeting
Mar. 15	Order of Arrow Lumber Jack Day
Mar. 22	Spring Merit Badge Rally
Mar. 29	Scout Expo Owatonna

## A Special Thank you

The two most essential words in any language are "Thank You." They are simple yet profoundly impactful words, and truthfully, they are not spoken often enough.

2024 has been a year of success for our council and, more importantly, our Scouts. All of that was only possible with your efforts. We are serving over 1,100 Scouts throughout seven counties—that's great. What is even better are the efforts of 650 unit volunteers that are providing better futures for these youth. But, while unit volunteers are the backbone of the Scouting Adventure, we can't forget to thank our camporee staff's, event volunteers, the Thursday camp improvement group, Project Spruce, Blue Ox Lodge volunteers, the countless program committee volunteers, special office helpers, commissioners, council board of directors, merit badge counselors, popcorn chairs, special events volunteers, and all of the parents who help behind the scenes.

Friends, thank you for being catalysts, visionaries, doers, helpers, and impactful volunteers. Your efforts have steadfastly increased the Scouting Adventure for thousands of youths, and we cannot thank you enough.

Sincerely,

**Aaron Benike** - Council President

**Jeff Kranz** - Commissioner

**John Devlin** - Past President

**Arne Landsverk**-Asst. Scout Executive

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## Hosting Exchange Student— Rodrigo Fernandez Ruiz

One of our Hiawatha District Scoutmasters, Ronda Marshall with Troop 82 Girls and Troop 82 Boys, is a Host Parent to 15-year-old foreign exchange student, Rodrigo Fernandez Ruiz, from Madrid, Spain. Not only has Rodrigo joined Troop 82 Scouts during his school year here in the USA, but he is also a member of Scouts in his home country. I interviewed Rodrigo on November 4, 2024, about his experiences so far as an exchange student and in Scouting.

**Pam: Rodrigo, tell me about you and your family and your hobbies.**

**Rodrigo:** I'm the middle son of a family of five and I have 2 sisters and my parents. We live in a good house with a garden, which is not usual because most people live in apartments. One of my sisters is in University and the other is in High School. In Spain I am busy with Scouts and basketball and I like to hang out with friends and go to DJ dances. My family has family time on Sundays and every summer I look forward to vacation time at my grandparents' home in Malaga by the Mediterranean Sea. My favorite memories of my time spent in Malaga is the Fair there: dancing in the streets, eating the typical foods and drinks and seeing the street attractions.

**Pam: What guided you to trying the exchange student program?**

**Rodrigo:** My sister went first in the program and lived with a family in Idaho, USA. She said she had lots of fun there and liked learning about new cultures and traveling in the USA.

**Pam: I hear you are enrolled in Scouts in Spain. How does it work there?**

**Rodrigo:** Scouts are divided into 5 different sections by age:

- Castores** - Beaver Scouts: Ages 6-8
- Lobatos** - Cub Scouts: Ages 8-11
- Rangers** - Scouts: Ages 11-14
- Pioneros** - Senior Scouts: Ages 14-16

**Rutas** - Rover Scouts: Ages 16-21-similar to USA youth leadership development

I started Scouts in the first year of Lobatos and now I'm in my first year of Pioneros. We have a campout each month and every week we hang out to do things. We have no ranks; we advance by age. I've noticed the skills that are learned and demonstrated are similar between the USA and Spain. Summer camp is a big event. We do it in stages: We Go, We Ride, and We have Ceremony. For the Go, we go to an open field and set up the camp. We lash together our latrine and shower house and set up the big tent for the dining hall and commissary. The Ride is a 4-day backpacking walk or hike. And we have ceremonies, some secret, some around totems and some by trial (example is jumping into river blindfolded).

**Pam: What have you noticed about Scouting in USA compared to Scouting in Spain?**

**Rodrigo:** I like that the group size is smaller and that there is more coordination and organization [structure] in the USA. I do not like, as much, the bigger age ranges here and being around the younger Scouts. But I was challenged by Troop 82 Senior Patrol Leader Ryan to *(continued on page 4)*



Picture of Rodrigo Fernandez Ruiz with Ronda Marshall from Troop 82 in Rochester.



## Unit Spotlights

Rodrigo Fernandez Ruiz- (continued from page 3)

lead the little ones in an activity, and I found it was more fun to help them and get to know them better.



**Pam: What have you learned already and what do you hope to gain from your exchange student experience here?**

**Rodrigo:** I have found the culture to be very different. In the USA families do everything together and every month there is a holiday that people gather for.

In Spain we have 4 big holidays:

• Palm Sunday to Easter for celebration of Christ's life and death

• Christmas to New Years-every church puts up a big Nativity, 3 Wise Men morning celebration, 31<sup>st</sup> & 1<sup>st</sup> celebrations for the end of a year and beginning of new one

• Fair (summer celebrations)

• Military holiday

I like that people to be more friendly and open here and that families spend more time together.

**Pam: Do you recommend the US students try the foreign exchange program?**

**Rodrigo:** Yes! You learn lots of things, experience different cultures, and meet new people.

<https://youtube/UQpyWRHhfMM>

The above link is a video of some Scout Facts from Spain; their 5 sections of Scouting and their law and promise.

## Wakpaota Unit Spotlight - Pack 350 in Medford

If you have asked yourself, "how do I put more adventure into my unit?", you could take some ideas from the Medford Cub Scout Pack. Pack 350 has been a part of the Medford



community for well over 50 years, and in that time they've participated in a lot of amazing adventures. They are a regular fixture at all of our family adventure camps, and lately have been sharing their Cubmaster Steven Droog with the program committee and the campmaster committee. They hold an amazing haunted house, pancake breakfasts, and more.

But what makes them really noteworthy is their commitment to bringing amazing experiences to their youth. Just this last summer, the pack went on a whirlwind tour of the Rocky Mountain area. Starting from Medford on July 26<sup>th</sup>, they traveled to Theodore Roosevelt National Park, then camped in Montana just outside of Glacier on a horse ranch. While exploring both parks, they got to encounter wild horses, bison, and so much more. Some of their favorite memories were cooking turkey in a backpack, seeing bison wander into their campsite, and exploring the beauty of the American Rockies.

You can learn more about the pack anytime you meet Mr. Droog – he's a regular at all of our Cub activities and at Wakpaota district roundtables.

## A Special Thank you to our Volunteers and Units Who Were recognized at our Annual Council Awards Dinner.

- **Scouter of the Year Award** - Jay Tasson, Catherine Clermont, Jason Majorowicz, Eric Spaulding, David Temple, Brian Knutson & Bennett McBroom and Nathan Early.
- **District Award of Merit** -
  - Jed Magnussen -Troop 39 -Wakpaota
  - Daniel Wildfeuer - Troop 83 - Hiawatha
  - Mathew Gurtner - Troop 110- Hiawatha
- **President's Award**—Brent Ferguson, Chris Arendt and Mike Oberholtzer.
- **William D Boyce Award**—To Troop 80 Girls— Forming a new unit. Jesse Arroyo, Catherine Clermont, Steve

- Mengis, Blake Claremont, and Rachel Hayver.
- **Commissioner's Award** - Mark Mowry-Hiawatha District
- **Veteran Awards**— Tiffany Risch (10 yrs), Oliver Sohm (10 yrs), Phillip Sohm (10 yrs), Eric Goddard (15 yrs), Rory Haney (20 yrs), Jeffrey Allman (20 yrs), Merle Edel (25 yrs), John Zeller (45 yrs), Michael Haney (55 yrs).
- **Silver Beaver Recipients:**
  - **Joel Earl**— Received District Award of Merit in 2018, a Scoutmaster, and Training Chair
  - **Tom Wright** - Eagle Scout, Cub & Scout Master for 110, current VP of Council Board.



## Introducing our 2026 Jamboree Leadership

Gamehaven Council is excited to be returning to hosting a Jamboree contingent for the 2026 Jamboree in Glen Jean, West Virginia. This will be the first time we have sent a contingent since 2017, and our leadership team has been hard at work preparing for an amazing trip. Our contingent couldn't have started without the hard work of our Contingent Leader (Scoutmaster) and Assistant Contingent Leader (Assistant Scoutmaster), so what better way to start than by introducing your 2026 Adult Leaders:



### Contingent Leader / Scoutmaster

- **NAME:** Eric Dierks
- **HOME UNIT:** Troop 76 of Wanamingo, MN
- **POSITIONS:** Assistant Scoutmaster (Troop 76), Roundtable Commissioner (Wakpaota District)
- **MOST EXCITED FOR:** Eric is very excited to help guide our youth leaders as they plan an amazing trip to and from Jamboree, including lots of sightseeing along the way!

### Assistant Contingent Leader /Assistant Scoutmaster

- **NAME:** Steven Droog
- **HOME UNIT:** Pack 350 of Medford, MN
- **POSITIONS:** Cubmaster (Pack 350), Program Committee Vice-Chair, Summer Cub Adventures Director
- **MOST EXCITED FOR:** Steve has fond memories of attending Jamboree as a youth in 1997 and meeting Scouts from all over the country and world, and wants to make sure our council's youth get the same amazing opportunity!



# A Word on Scouting Volunteerism

## The Heart of a Volunteer

“There is nothing stronger than the heart of a volunteer – James “Jimmy” Doolittle.”

That statement defines why Scouting is relevant and prevalent – for over one hundred years in our corner of Minnesota and since 1935, as the Gamehaven Council.

While I’m proud of our past, I’m equally proud of what community volunteers have done for the Gamehaven Council Special Events. Their efforts have bolstered our image in various communities, created new partnerships, and allowed us to fund our program better. In short, they gave our Scouts better opportunities.

The Killen Scout Classic Sporting Clays Event has been one of the marquee special events for our Council. What made this event what it is today is the excellent unit volunteers in Owatonna 50 years ago. John Killen has been the event chair since his father’s passing and has been on the organizational committee for decades. However, 50 years ago, he was a Scout in Troop 246 and remembers the values learned from camping trips, OA events, and earning merit badges. This event wouldn’t exist if it weren’t for the dedicated volunteers of Troop 246, the friendships he made, and perhaps a vigilant mother and father.

Thank you for allowing stories like this to unfold and for building a new generation of stories.

*Arne Landsverk*



## Scout Earns Scout Life Patch

Brody from pack 59 in Zumbrota wanted the Scout Life Patch. To do that he needed to get a joke published in the “Scout Life Magazine”.

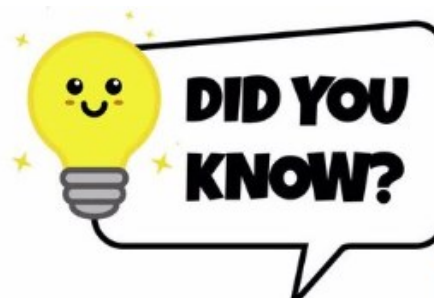
A few issues back he received his patch.

*Congratulations Brody!*



## Did You Know - Fun Facts:

Early Gamehaven Council History



- ◆ **1927** – Blue Ox Lodge of the Order of the Arrow was formed.
- ◆ **1935** – Gamehaven Council was chartered.
- ◆ **1937** – Council sends first contingent to first National Jamboree in Washington, DC.
- ◆ **1946** – Scouts begin first Civic Day in Winona and Rochester by taking over city officials offices.
- ◆ **1951** – Charlie Mayo and Leonard Ekstrand received the Silver Antelope.
- ◆ **1956** – 2,000 Scouts attend the Whitewater Camporee. Scouts deliver "Get Out The Vote" doorknob hangers to every home in the Council.
- ◆ **1960** – Six Troops & 241 Scouts attend the 5th National Jamboree in Colorado Springs

# Remembering Past Scouters

## Remembering, Ronald Schultz

**June 24, 1969-August 18, 2024 -Lewiston,**

A long time Scouter from Lewiston, Ron Schultz, passed from our presence on August 18<sup>th</sup> of this year just after his 55<sup>th</sup> birthday. From the moment his sons, Zach and Josh, were eligible for Scouts, Ron became an active adult leader with Lewiston Pack 16 and Troop 18, often doing double duty between the Units. He loyally served 13 years with the Pack and Troop and his memories will live on in the youth and leaders of the Lewiston Scouting community. His wife of almost 23 years Jennifer Schultz agreed to an interview about Ron and his Scouting career, and current Pack 16 Cubmaster Darien Heimermann shared his thoughts about Ron as well.

**Pam:** I see from Ron's obituary that he was famous for his Dad jokes and movie quotes. What do you remember as his favorite ones?

**Jennifer:** For a Dad joke memory, the kids would say, "I'm going to take a shower" and Ron's response would be, "smells like a good idea." We would typically groan. And a movie quote he would say, "We're going to need a bigger boat" from Jaws, one of his favorite movies. These and other strange facts that Ron knew are what connected him to people. He was our game show "life line" for knowing facts.

**Darien:** I remember when Ron and I worked on a Den Adventure activity about logic thinking and Ron told the story, "You're the bus driver and at your first stop 2 people get on, at the next stop 3 get off, and at the next stop 5 get on. What color was the bus driver's eyes?" You could see the Scouts trying to keep track of the numbers so they could figure out the answer and not remembering the first line of the story, "you are the bus driver" to use that to answer the final question.

I remember football seasons. Ron was a diehard Packers fan and liked to poke fun at the Vikings. When the 2 teams would match up, he would say, "It's just the Vikings-no worries there."



**Pam:** Why Scouting?

**Jennifer:** Ron wanted to find ways to do stuff with the kids [Zach and Josh] and he loved hanging out with them and their friends. He knew the value of time spent with the kids and I think he got so much out of it, probably more than the kids. Ron had been a Cub Scout and his mother was his Den Mom. Zach and Josh can now look back at these special moments and memories of their Dad from their scouting experience together.

Scouting was big for both of us. It was great to be a part of Zach's Eagle ceremony [2022] and see his growth from the beginning to the end of his time in Scouting. It's important to me that Josh stay in Troop 18 so he can connect with the leaders that knew and worked with Ron so they can share their stories about Ron with Josh.

**Darien:** I remember Ron's laughter and fun. We started together as Tiger Den Co-leaders and we stuck together for many years in the Pack and Troop. I could always count on his helping hand. He would be the first one there to set up Pack meetings and the last one to leave. He brought activities and prizes to our combined Pack & Troop Halloween parties and was a willing helper at Lewiston Heartland Days.

**Pam:** Ron will be missed but his stories will live on! Gamehaven Council will be honoring his 15 years of Scouting time with a posthumous Veteran Award.

**Pam Legried**





## Camp Corner—A Junior Staff Interview

### Did you know that Gamehaven Scout Camp has one of the most engaged corps of junior camp staff and CITs (Counselors in Training)?

We are blessed to work with so many great youth who put on a fantastic show for Cub Scouts across the council. Camp Director Brady recently sat down with three of our junior staff: Teddy, a Life Scout from Troop 613; Megan, a Life Scout from Troop 4, and Molly, an Arrow of Light Cub from Pack 613 who acts as a junior staff in training. Here's what they had to say:



#### What Staff Roles have you held?

**Teddy:** I have done... I think it was the Bears and Arrow of Light dens this summer. Then I was the stationmaster for Kim's Game and Kickball last week [Fall Family Adventure].

**Megan:** I don't know if I had an official title. I was the photographer this summer, and I was... administration? Admin team this fall.

**Molly:** I helped my mom at a station this fall, and I helped you [Brady] in the Trading Post too.

#### What is the funniest thing that you've seen at camp?

**Teddy:** One time when we were playing kickball over the summer, one of the adults was too enthusiastic about kicking the ball. He went in for a kick and tripped, and the whole sole came off his shoe!

**Megan:** We do staff parties after the kids go to sleep, and because we're all so tired it gets really funny! We really like hanging out as a staff. Last staff party, we designed our new Camp Staff T-Shirt, and I'm really excited. It's a little silly, but we're excited to wear it next year. :)

**Molly:** A lot of the skits are really funny! I really liked Megan and Benny (another junior staff's) song called Peanut Butter in a Cup! I also think Pebbles is a really funny classic camp skit!

#### Why should Cub Scouts come to camp?

**Teddy:** It's a lot of fun when there are more people, because we can do bigger and better team games. They have a lot of fun at different games, and there is a lot of skills they learn that are really important.

**Megan:** So that they can get really nice life experience, like archery, BB guns-

**MOLLY:** ARCHERY IS THE BEST!

**Megan:** Archery is the best! Also first aid and stuff.

**Molly:** Camp is where we make learning fun and everyone is really friendly!

#### Are you staffing future Cub Camps?

**All:** Of course!

#### What are you most excited about for future Cub Camps?

**Molly:** I think I'm doing the Trading Post for Polar Cubs? So I'm most excited about sitting in the heated trading post while these two freeze! And apparently there's this thing during Operation Icicle where there are bright lights on the sledding hill and that sounds really cool too!

**Megan:** I'm excited that maybe there won't be as much kids yelling because it's too cold and they are wearing scarves. But I am sad that we won't get to do as much kickball.

**Teddy:** I think the games on the lake are the most fun!





# Troop 18– Camping in the Ozarks

## Troop 18 of Lewiston, Shares their Summer Camp Story

Troop 18 of Lewiston, MN, has a goal of never visiting the same summer camp twice. They haven't always been true to that mission, especially during the pandemic, but have stayed pretty consistent with their inconsistency. Last summer, they decided to visit Lake of the Ozarks Scout Reservation in Gra-vois Mills, Missouri. Lake of the Ozarks is run by Great Rivers Council, and has been running program for over 50 years. We recently sat down with the youth of Troop 18 to learn about their favorite memories at this exotic Scout Camp.



"Thursday Night at camp we had a night hike that the entire camp could sign up for, but only about twenty people went. Since the camp is on a hill above the lake, we had to hike down this pretty trail and watched the sunset the whole way. It is a very steep hill, so you had to watch your footing very carefully. About halfway down the staff shows you a cave in the side of the hill where the sunset lights up the entire cave when it reaches a certain point, it was very cool. On the way back up, we got to look at some constellations." -**Emmett**

"Going to Lake of the Ozarks was the first time I had ever played Water Polo, or slept for a whole camp in a hammock. I think the weather there was better for hammocking because it was less humid than Minnesota, and there were way less bugs to annoy you." -**Jonah**

"I loved Chess Merit Badge, and not just because I like chess, but

because I like merit badges! I met a lot of people who I still play chess with online via chess.com. The chess tournament was crazy. Before it started, I was teaching a new Scout some advanced chess maneuvers, then he used them against me and beat me." -**Eddie**

"The chess tournament was super fun. I did really well but took, like, eight centuries to make my move. I was definitely the slowest player there. Eddie really helped me learn new strategies to play better. Also, the staff at camp – not just at the chess tournament – were super awesome. They were really good teachers, and led fun campfires. Did you know that the reason Lake of the Ozarks Scout Camp is there is because of a robbery?" -**Leo**



"Archery was the most fun merit badge I took. Lake of the Ozarks was my first time shooting a bow and arrow. Their range is really nice, though it's a little far away, but you get to shoot at targets on the side of the bluff. I wasn't very good to start with, but I got a lot better because their staff really helped coach me." -**Josh**



"I really liked hanging out with the neighboring Scouts BSA Troop for young women – Troop 4475 from Columbia, Missouri. They brought 33 young women to camp, so it was nice to learn from other Scouts what it was like to be in their troop. They all wore the same Class B shirt every day, and their Scoutmaster was very picky about having them wear the right green pants every day. They also had fancy big tents that four or more girls slept in at the same time. But we had a lot of fun hanging out and talking about Scouts. Also, the sunsets were really pretty reflecting on the lake" -**Rosie** (Troop 0004, Winona, attended as a lone scout)



## *Recognizing Our Eagle Scouts*

- **Zachary Arendt**—Troop 047—Earned 06/20/2024
- **Joshua Brewer**—Troop 082— Earned 01/18/2024
- **Joe Brown III**—Troop 032—Earned 10/20/24
- **Jonah Buchanan**— Troop 053—Earned 04/10/24
- **Noah Clark**—Troop 083—Earned 08/15/24
- **Benjamin Condon**—Troop 082—Earned 03/21/24
- **Clayton Cottrell**—Troop 613—Earned 05/29/24
- **Philip Dahlen**—Troop 098—Earned 02/15/24
- **Braden Danielson**—Troop 053—Earned 08/21/24
- **Dalton David**—Troop 246—Earned 05/12/24
- **Liam Dewanz**—Troop 039—Earned 04/21/24
- **Jacob Eden**—Troop 056—Earned 08/15/24
- **Karsten Ernste**—Troop 027—Earned 09/19/24
- **Samuel Freimuth**—Troop 082—Earned 03/21/24
- **Charles Heinz**—Troop 018—Earned 04/10/24
- **Riley Huschle**—Troop 232—Earned 10/20/24
- **Lars Ingram**—Troop 231—Earned 4/21/24
- **Owen Janssen**—Troop 498—Earned 4/27/2024
- **William Kitzmann**—Troop 056—Earned 09/19/24
- **Francis Koll**—Troop 013—Earned 01/11/2024
- **Connor McBroom**—Troop 246—Earned 05/12/24
- **Gabriel Mills**—Troop 082—Earned 04/21/24
- **Aaron Neppi**—Troop 080—Earned 11/21/24
- **Devin Peterson**—Troop 057—Earned 01/18/24
- **Logan Pruksa**—Troop 080—Earned 10/17/24
- **Zachary Razidlo**—Troop 110—Earned 01/18/24
- **Nolan Rivers**—Troop 613—Earned 05/29/24
- **Samuel Ruskell**—Troop 043—Earned 06/20/24
- **Maxwell Ruskell**—Troop 043—Earned 06/20/24
- **Jacob Ryba**— Troop 110—Earned 11/21/24
- **Tyler Schoenoff**—Troop 498—Earned 01/18/24
- **Heidi Sohm** —Troop 082G—Earned 03/21/24
- **Hazen Stangl**—Troop 013— Earned 01/11/24
- **Matthew Storm**—Troop 054—Earned 02/07/24
- **Maxwell Thoen**—Troop 050— Earned 02/10/24
- **Nicholas Uhlmann**— Troop 083—Earned 11/21/24
- **Erik Voss**—Troop 054—Earned 10/16/24
- **Collin Weinschenk**—Troop 027—Earned 2/15/24
- **Isaac Wendt**—Troop 47—Earned 10/17/24
- **Foster Wilcenski**—Troop 053—Earned 8/21/2024