

SCOUTS-L

VENTURE SCOUTS

Date: Mon, 3 Oct 1994 14:14:00 CDT
From: Darla Keller <C60DJK1@MVS.CSO.NIU.EDU>
Subject: Girls with Venture Crew & Troop

The BSA does authorize girls on Venture Crew outings. See any of the activity guides for the new Venture and Varsity programs. For insurance purposes you must file for a supplemental policy with your local council. I have not seen any specific official policy regarding this matter, only the booklets that promote the idea of Scouts inviting female guests on Venture or Varsity activities. I have not really promoted or even hinted at this possibility to my venture crew Scouts. I am very uncomfortable with this program. The BSA needs to publish a list of very specific rules and regulations concerning this program. I also have an Explorer Post, if any Venture Crew members are interested in coed activities I will refer them to the post. The activity guides I referred to earlier are available at any local council office and are published under titles such as: Orienteering, Backpacking, Water Skiing, Whitewater, etc. Inside the cover there is a short description. It covers the issue of coed activities. Coed leadership is required, all youth members must be insured, members under regular insurance, guests under supplemental insurance. Beyond that there is little information.send

Date: Tue, 4 Oct 1994 22:37:08 -0400 (EDT)
From: "Michael F. Bowman" <mfbowman@cap.gwu.edu>
Subject: Re: Girls with Venture Patrol
To: Pab Benford <BENFORD@MUVMS6.BITNET>

Pab,

Ach laddie, I gee up. Yesterday I posted a message indicating that I had been abundently corrected. I now am aware of the shift allowing and encouraging young women to participate with venture programs. But in any case thanks. I thought for awhile that the only skirted ones allowed were Scots or their decendents - speaking as one from Clan Sinclair.

**Yours in Scouting, Michael F. Bowman, a/k/a Professor Beaver
Deputy District Commissioner Exploring, GW Dist., NCAC, BSA
Speaking only for myself, but with Scouting Spirit . . .**

_____ mfbowman@CAP.GWU.EDU _____

From: BENFORD@MUVMS6.MU.WVNET.EDU
Date: Wed, 05 Oct 1994 08:47:32 -0400 (EDT)
Subject: Re: Girls with Venture Patrol
To: mfbowman@cap.gwu.edu
Message-id: <01HHWSTZS29E005ISK@MUVMS6.MU.WVNET.EDU>
X-VMS-To: IN%"mfbowman@cap.gwu.edu"

Hey Michael,

Nice to hear from another "Highlander"

Since I just started the Venture Program a year or so ago, I was having problems getting any info at all especially from my council. I have the only Venture crew here and it seems to be working quite well. As far as the girls go I havent had any go on our outings but I did teach a few of the mothers how to rappel since they werent going to let their sons go on our big adventure at first.

I dont think there is very many Venture crews in the US.....and I cant understand why ? It seems to be one of the few ways I can keep my older boys interested. We're working on two of them at the moment. The Frontiersman Program is going to take us a long time since the boys are making their own knives, tomahawks, shirts, pants, lanterns etc. but the best part is they want to dress, cook , and even go to a few of the Rendevous's in our area. They asked me when they finished the program if they could continue doing it at Camporees and other functions which I said no problem. The Caving program we have been working on since July and our big adventure is in November, its nice having good cave systems only an hour away.

I would like to hear some more about which ones you are doing or have done.....maybe we could exchange some notes.

Take care

Pab

BTW, Do you compete in the Highland Games or anything ?

Im with Clan Campbell.....

Date: Tue, 4 Oct 1994 01:37:51 -0400 (EDT)
From: "Michael F. Bowman" <mfbowman@cap.gwu.edu>
Subject: THXS for JLT & Venture Info

Thanks. Many of you posted information to me that I did not have regarding JLT & Venturing. I was happy to learn that although BSA has decertified the one day JLT course, the week long version is still alive and well. It sounds like many Councils do a wonderful job of putting on exceptional leadership courses. Likewise, I was happy to learn that supplemental insurance coverage was available for co-ed venture activities and that they were covered in Scouting literature.

**Yours in Scouting, Michael F. Bowman, a/k/a Professor Beaver
Deputy District Commissioner Exploring, GW Dist., NCAC, BSA
Speaking only for myself, but with Scouting Spirit . . .
_____mfbowman@CAP.GWU.EDU_____**

Date: Wed, 5 Oct 1994 22:52:49 -0400 (EDT)
From: "Michael F. Bowman" <mfbowman@cap.gwu.edu>
Subject: Re: Girls with Venture Patrol
To: BENFORD@MUVMS6.MU.WVNET.EDU

Pab,

We have a very active Venture program in our District and almost always have a Venture column in the District Newsletter. >From what I understand

our District is the only one in the Nation to do it the way we do and we're being gently ushered into the mainstream. Right now we have Venture

Roundtables and a District sponsored Venture Trek each year. Crews are formed from Troop members (hence my confusion) in each of some 20 or so

Troops for individual activities and then disbanded. We'll be moving towards more permanent crews like Varsity Teams. My son's Troop just started a venture program. Here the emphasis is on more challenging outdoor activity; e.g. mountain climbing, compass hikes, Appalacian Trail, High Adventure bases, special trips to places that are exciting and challenging, etc. We also have High Adventure Posts (mostly girls and can't get enough guys). Something's wrong with that picture. The Venture Scouts stay with their unit as a leadership corps here with just enough adventure to keep 'em coming back. It has helped retention and many Eagles.

Aye, I'm a Highlander at heart. If I'm listening to music in the car, theres about a 90% chance its Allistar MacDonald, Alex Beaton, or a good recording of a piper(s). Tis the sweetest music of all. When confronted with a bass vibration unit - a car playing rap with strong bass and all the windows down, I usually crank up the pipes and roll my window down to show my support for the enjoyment of music. Can't understand why I usually get Russian friendship symbols and excited short utterings. :)) Most of the time they roll their windows up. Thanks be.

Though I attend the Alexandria Scottish Games and others locally with fervor, I don't participate for reasons of health. But I sure enjoy watching and then usually wander over to the folk music tent and indulge my ears and thirst with a good ale. I've been known to find the whiskey sampling table easily enough too. I particularly enjoy the working dog demonstrations. Maybe that's because I've got a Border Collie and

appreciate her intelligence, even if she's not a working dog. Best dang companion you could ask for. We also have a Scottish Walk (parade with dozens of pipe bands and clan contingents) each December. And of course I can't go home without a bundle of heather to start the Christmas decorating.

My balmoral is now tattered and ragged from wear, but still in service. Its got me in a scrap or two and helped more often. I had my car break down in traffic. A fellow driving by recognized the balmoral from work and stopped, which was lucky cause it wasn't a good area. Its been a great entry to better food at a few local establishments as well. In Denver it got me into a fight with a drunk cowboy leaving a bar. He thought I looked like a queer and threw a punch. I dodged and lost my balance and wouldn't you know my foot caught hold of his wee bits coming up, forcing me to lean forward to keep balanced where upon my hand accidently bruised his neck as he bent in pain. Now being the good chap, I was worried he might fall, so I helped him up with a bit of knee to the face. As he lay on his back in no little pain, I suggested to him that he should stick to shadow boxing and leave fighting to good Scots who've had 900 or more years of practice in the sport. Now I'm not really the violent type and I'd rather avoid a fight, if I can, but to be called queer for being a Scot was a bit much.

Most of the local Scouters know how to find our house. Its the one with the red & yellow Scottish Flag flying from the flagpole in the front yard. Needless to say, I enjoy indulging a little interest in my ancestor's homeland. I'm also descended from the Farqharson line. My wife's father was descended from the Gordon line. My kids are proud of their lineage and get a kick out of the folk songs. Quite often they sing them in the car on long trips, when not engaged in the serious business of portable Nintendo or Sega adventures.

Yours in Scouting, Michael F. Bowman, a/k/a Professor Beaver
Deputy District Commissioner Exploring, GW Dist., NCAC, BSA
Speaking only for myself, but with Scouting Spirit . . .

_____ mfbowman@CAP.GWU.EDU _____

Date: Wed, 12 Oct 1994 00:07:39 -0400 (EDT)
From: "Michael F. Bowman" <mfbowman@cap.gwu.edu>
Subject: Re: Girls with Venture Crew
To: "James H. McCullars" <mccullarsj@email.uah.edu>

Jim,

Apparently BSA has broadened its definition of guest to include females on venture outings from what I have been told. We are learning that Venture units can be organized like Varsity Teams as separate units, but that they must be in association with a Troop. So far as I can learn, venture activities can occur at the same time a Troop is doing other things at the same site. What isn't clear is whether females can participate in such a setting or whether it would be wise.

**Yours in Scouting, Michael F. Bowman, a/k/a Professor Beaver
Deputy District Commissioner Exploring, GW Dist., NCAC, BSA
Speaking only for myself, but with Scouting Spirit . . .**

_____ mfbowman@CAP.GWU.EDU _____

Date: Tue, 3 Sep 1996 23:27:25 -0700
From: Alan Houser <troop24@EMF.NET>
Subject: Re: VENTURE

Dave Rogers <DA6ver6@AOL.COM> wrote:

>I need to find out as much as I can about Venture crews ... and success
>stories ... and how to become one my ownself.

>Our Scoutmaster has put me in charge of starting a Venture program in
our
>troop. Actually, it was my idea, but all I really knew to tell him was that
>it was a high adventure unit that we hope will keep our older 14, 15 and
16
>yearolds involved in the troop.

>My local Scout Service Center has been not so good at helping me. Is there
>one how-to book on organizing, etc., and high adventure ideas. The only
>thing I have found so far locally is one 1989 pamphlet in the Scout Shop
that
>is on bicycling, touring bikes to be exact. I was thinking more mountain
>biking myself.

There are about 20 or so books now in the Venture/Varsity collection. If
your council doesn't have them, you can order them from BSA Supply.
There
are also a set of 3 Varsity Coach guides. Nevertheless, there isn't much
information in the whole lot to tell you how to start the program up. So
you have a lot of flexibility to try what works for you.

>We've come up with a list of ideas that include canoeing, whitewater,
>backpacking, climbing & rappeling, mountain bikes, scuba ... also found
out
>that paintball and skydiving are BSA no-nos.

That's basically the first step, find out what they want to do. It's
really a program to let the older boys pick some things they would like
to do, then plan how they are going to do it. If they need some extra
training, have them decide how they will find the resources for getting
the training.

When our guys decided to try caving, they got in touch with the local

grotto (cavers' club) to come introduce it and explain the equipment they would need. When they decided to take up snowshoe backpacking, they took the snowcamping orientation course from the Sierra Club. The next year, they did their own orientation for the new Venture Crew members (and did a better job of it as well!).

The key thing, I think, is that they are old enough and experienced enough to plan their own program.

Unlike the training videos (JLT, planning), we do not have a fixed Venture Crew. Instead, all of the guys who are interested plan their activities outside their regular patrol activities. It seemed to be a better idea to leave the experienced Scouts in the patrols for leadership than to drain them all away from that role. Also, Scouts can drop in or out depending on the activity. We have one member who is only interested in the water activities, others that are only interested in backpacking. Some are involved in sports, so they can only participate part of the year anyway. So, the activity they pick will decide who's in the crew. There is a Venture Crew Chief who participates in the PLC to keep them informed of the calendar/schedule.

>We want to kick this program off in mid-month. Talk is we'll limit it to Life

>and Eagle Scouts ... an age limit has been brought up since we could have >some 12 YO Lifes who aren't physically up to high adventure. ...

We thought about that, but decided against a rank requirement. Our thinking was, if we can entice an older boy to join the troop because of the Venture program, we won't keep him if we require him to make up rank first. Better to get him into the program and want to do the ranks to keep up. We do require they be at least 13 years old (the original BSA recommendation), and we haven't had anyone try to do more than he was capable of.

We do require that the Venture Crew members be active in the regular troop program: attending meetings, going on campouts, showing leadership. We make it clear that this is a reward for the stuff they do to make the troop program successful.

As for recognition: once a Scout has participated in one Venture activity, he is entitled to wear the strip above the BSA pocket strip. To earn a pin, they have to plan something major and work together for a period of time (at least 3 months) to make it happen. When they earn their first pin, we also award them the Venture/Varsity letter which they can put on their merit badge sash. Thus far, we have only awarded pins for our Philmont trek in 93 and Boundary Waters canoe trek in 95.

Mike Walton has indicated that the letter is now supposed to be reserved for Varsity Teams only, but until the council stops selling them to me, we will continue to award them for Venture Crew.

>Please tell me what you're doing, so I can pass it on. ... You can reply >privately, or you can share your knowledge with others.

Since we started Venture Crew in 1993, only one Scout has left Scouting after participating in it, and that was because he didn't want to do the other stuff -- come to meetings, teach skills, etc. A couple of others have transferred to another troop, but for unrelated reasons. The key thing is they are still active in Scouts and have taken the Venture Crew program with them to their new troop. Except for the one, no one has left Scouting before 18 and without earning Eagle.

Last summer 4 of the 40 plus staffers at our council's summer camp were members of our Venture Crew, plus a 20-year-old who had also done our Venture program. When you consider the hundreds of troops in the council that could provide staff, I think we made a good show. There are some very large troops in the area, but their Scouts never do anything outside their own program. I like to think that our approach prepares these guys to face anything.

The only limiting factor that I see coming up is having the adults who can keep up with these guys in what they want to do.

Hope this helps. If you have any questions, go ahead and run them by me. I'm always looking for new angles anyway.

YiS,

Alan R. Houser ** Scoutmaster, Berkeley Troop 24 ** troop24@emf.net

**** WWW page ** <http://www.emf.net/~troop24/t24.html> ****
Scoutmaster, Mt. Diablo Silverado Council Contingent Jamboree Troop #3