

Dear Craig,

Justin is in his 3rd year at troop 507-St. Margaret Mary (Green Trails and Naper). He is now a second class scout working on Star Scout (4th Level).

The troop is run in similar fashion as other reports--Boy led with Adult support. They have a new Scout master who is great with the kids and well organized. The troop has had 20 eagles in the past 7 years.

<http://www.bsa507.org/index.htm> is the link to a website for more information, In Summary;

The troop is supported by the parents--assistant scout masters, treasurers, etc.

The first years go to an 'orientation' camp in late February (which makes it nice if the kids cross over in Feb.)

Campouts are monthly with emphasis on rank advancement opportunities. Campouts are planned by the scouts. New scouts are encouraged to attend the early ones to achieve Tenderfoot. The troop encourages achieving 1st class before the second year. Camping Trips are in the tri state area with one or two at Blackwell/Green Valley. Meetings are weekly at SMMP 7-8:30pm except the 1st Wednesday.

There is an annual summer camp (late July) held at a camp on a rotating basis in Indiana or Wisconsin. This was nice to see as my experience of Boy Scouts was the same place every year with the same moldy tents. Older Scouts will be going west this year to Philmont Adventure camp (NM?).

Fundraising opportunities are (your favorite) popcorn sales and a delicious pancake breakfast (held the 1st of June if anyone is interested--\$10 for families).

Overall, Justin enjoys the campouts, and the fellowship of the troop. He enjoys the annual campout and looks forward to joining the next Philmont expedition. He also likes to participate in the eagle projects (paint an infant wellness center).

Challenges: Since it is a Boy led troop, new kids/parents need to understand that the advancements, etc are not pushed on the child. The child needs to 'step up' and take responsibility for his own progress. For some kids, it is an easy transition and they are 2nd class scouts within two years. Others it takes longer or they lose heart. The scout masters/counselors do not 'sign off' on achievements, rank advancement until completed.

There is always the search for more volunteerism to support the kids.

I am certain that these concerns are the same in the other troops as well but did not appear to be mentioned.

I believe the troop is well run, and has upheld the scout motto.

Please let me know if you have any questions, or if I could be of any assistance,

Thanks

Paul