

Sunset at Camp Mattatuck

A Sense of Ownership

By Joe LeClair, III

It was over twenty years ago. As I approached the circle of leaders I heard one remark, "That Joe LeClair thinks he OWNS this camp". My face flushed, the hairs on the back of my neck stood up, my jaw clenched. Then I took a breath and relaxed. After all, I thought, he's right! Dad DOES think he owns the place, and that's just how Scouters SHOULD think.

Joe's sense of ownership was developed through years of volunteering at camp. From hauling stones to build Lovett Lodge, to hanging wagon wheel light fixtures in the dining hall, to helping build the first chapel in camp, he's always had an active hand in what goes on.

In 1935 he joined Troop 1 (now 52) Oakville as a twelve year old. In 1937 he attended the first National Jamboree in our nation's capitol. When Camp Mattatuck opened in 1939, Joe was there. He recalls a kind of "Oklahoma land rush" for campsites, and while most troops headed to the far side of camp, the Oakville boys chose Hickory, and made it their home for about 35 years.

"The mason in charge of building Lovett Lodge was very fussy. When we mixed the mortar we had to add just the right amount campfire ash to give it the proper shade of gray to match the fieldstone"...Joe LeClair

Joe served on staff in 1940 and 1941 before starting a 35 year career as a surveyor for the city of Waterbury. Shortly after serving two years with the U.S. Army in World War II, he married Yvonne LeMay, and continued his involvement in Troop 1. His Scoutmaster, Walter Thorne, was in his 60's, so Joe assumed much of the active leadership in the troop, especially on outdoor activities. In 1950 he was a leader at the Valley Forge National Jamboree. A 16-year-old Patrol Leader in that Jamboree troop was Tom Horan.

...In 1954 the chapel was being built by brothers Lovrinowicz, LeClair, Horan, Tomassi, Kirby, Bovay (the "Sacred 6")...from "History of the Mattatuck Lodge 1967 by Paul Hadzima

During the 1950's, Joe's buddy Ed Lovrinowicz was camp ranger. Joe frequently worked on camp projects during Ed's tenure. He still speaks in glowing terms of people like David Babson, Pop Hirsch, and Norm Baril, who Joe says never received the credit he deserved.

After 14 years as an Assistant, Joe became Scoutmaster in 1955 and served until 1976. To this day he is one of the most respected leaders in the Waterbury area. He led troops as Scoutmaster at National Jamborees in 1960 (Colorado Springs) and 1969 (Idaho).

With the appointment of his old friend Tom Horan as Camp Director in 1973, Joe started working as a volunteer staff member. He directed cars in the parking lot with Dick Giacini and Joe George, served as a commissioner, inventoried and repaired tents, mapped water lines and other

Continued on page 4, "Ownership"



Scott Slater to Return as Program Director

Our Program Director is Scott Slater III of Wolcott Troop 231. Scott is one of those dependable men who make camp what it is today.

Moving to Program Director last year was a big jump for Scott, but he took it in stride. His past experience, two years as an Office/Trading Post clerk, three years as Trading Post Manager, and two years as Commissioner, only required him to work with small groups of people at a time. While some Program Directors are limited in their responsibilities, Scott has taken on the traditional role of managing the entire camp program. He makes a point to check in with the various departments during the day, talks to troop leaders, and provides input to directors where necessary. Extremely intelligent and mature at twenty-one years of age, people follow the soft-spoken Eagle Scout willingly and respect his judgement. He enjoys the Program Director job.



Scott works hard "to keep on top of things" and considers developing the younger staff one of his most difficult but most important roles. "Success in my job depends on the cooperation of the staff", he says. A third-generation Scouter, he lists Tom Horan, Alan Colangelo, Robert Reed, and Jim Miller among the major influences on his Mattatuck career.

A History degree from the University of Connecticut may lead to the teaching profession, which would suit Scott just fine. It could mean a life in camp.

The 2002 staff is packed with experience and skill:

Assistant Camp Director...Jeromy Nelson; **Special Services**...Rob Reed; **Chef**...James Aniki
Program Director...Scott Slater; **Business Mgr**...Jeremy Gannon; **Archery**...Greg Gubitosi;
Rifle&Shotgun...Ray Hanley; **Waterfront**...Sean Mahoney; **Commissioners**..Eric Dutko, Dick Lenkowski;
Handicraft Director...Sandy Starbuck; **Scoutcraft Director**...Andrew Mandigo;
COPE/Climbing Director...Erika Burns; **Nature Director**...Devin Krevetski; **Trading Post Mgr**...Amanda Pannone;
Mountain Bike Director Josh Gilbert; **Assistant Chef**...JC Clair

Plus! 1960's era staffers Dick Lorenz and Vince Ferri are each planning to volunteer on the waterfront for a week. It's great to have them back. Life is a circle.

Correction...

In the last issue we left an outstanding Mattatuck man off the list of camp directors. In 1950 the camp was led by Roland (Hatch)

G.Hathaway, former waterfront director for several seasons and an Eagle Scout from Troop 2, Naugatuck. Our apologies.

Camp Directors:

1939-1951:	David Babson, Camp Chief and Director	1957-1958:	Liudas Koncius
1941:	Sandy Donohue, Resident Director	1959-1960:	Richard Bielefield
1944-1947:	Edward Butler, Resident Director	1961-1962:	Liudas Koncius
1948:	Arol Charbonneau, Resident Director	1963-1965:	A.J. (Gus) Bosio
1949-1949:	Edward Butler, Resident Director	1966-1969:	Harold Jackson
1950:	Roland (Hatch) Hathaway	1970-1972:	Robert Udell
1951:	James Hennessey	1973-1998:	Thomas Horan
1952-1954:	Douglas Crichton	1999-2001:	Alan Colangelo
1955-1956:	Edward Tomasi	2002- :	Christopher Moon

Camp Mattatuck Reunion...July 27, 2002.

Join us on Saturday, July 27 from 2:00PM to campfire time. Bring yourself, family, photos and stories and relive a great part of your life. Swimming, Boating, Archery and other program areas of camp will be open for you and your family to use. A hot dog and hamburger barbecue will be running during the afternoon. Campfire at 7:00pm.

Order of the Arrow News

Thirty-two new members will always remember clearing a new shotgun range adjacent to the existing rifle range as part of their Ordeal experience in April. They may also recall the fine dinner served that evening by a kitchen staff led by head chef Brian Turner and steward Frank Rodrigues. With six other members completed the Brotherhood Honor requirements, it was a very successful weekend. The year 2002 marks the 60th anniversary of the Mattatuck Lodge and Chapter. Our summer issue of *Mattatuck Messenger* will feature a history of the O.A. at Mattatuck.



Feedback from Issue No.10...

"I remember Sully well. I can picture him carving or painting neckerchief slides, while he was kneeling in a canoe during General Boating." ... Dick Barone

"Having served on camp staff with Ray, I can attest to what a great individual he is." ... Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient, and current Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy, H.C. "Barney" Barnum.

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If you hit the Lotto, make sure you send the check to the right place...
Mattatuck Volunteers, PO Box 257, Plymouth, CT 06782-0257

Visit our website, built and maintained by Marc Moody... <http://matwreck.org/volunteers>

Have a story to tell? Have a suggestion for a future article? Your input into this newsletter is most welcome. Contact Joe LeClair, 108 Chipper Road, Waterbury, CT 06704
ileclair@snet.net.

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Cedar Latrine landscaping
Foreground L-R: Jon Andrew,
Josh Bartlett, Brian Shannon
Photo by Joe LeClair III

Projects Update:

by Chris Moon, Camp Director

- **Troop 102, Naugatuck** got the work on Barnum Cabin off to a great start this Spring. Bruce Monahan dropped the huge Tulip tree that was a potential hazard. Removing the tree was no small task because not only was it very large, it was extremely close to the cabin. Jon Andrew and his array of equipment made the job go faster and easier. Then **Jim Doback, Charlie Doback, Joe Ascencao, Chris Moon** and others replaced the roof. **Larry, Ben, and Jon Heebner** spent a day cleaning up the shingles, a dreadful task. The work is now centered on the interior. Much still needs to be done. If you have carpentry skills and are willing to spend a few hours please contact Chris.
- As shown in the Page 1 photo, the new latrines in Cedar and Arrow South campsites are nearly complete. The construction of the buildings was a cooperative effort by **Troop 54 Woodbury, Troop 480 Woodbury**, with **Chris Start** taking the lead role. Jon Andrew, Brian Barry, Newell Hill and Jeff Lukens were also extremely important. Matt Downey has taken care of the plumbing.. They each have private toilets (what a concept!) and four private shower stalls. Camp now has showers in Polaris, 49'ers, Cedar, Arrow North, and Arrow South campsites as well as the central shower house. The completion of the septic systems is taking place as this is being written. Jon Andrew, and Chris Moon have spent 20 to 30 hours a weeks on this project. **Mark Shaw of Liner Brothers Inc.** from Goshen has been helping to install the leech fields. The maiden voyage of his brand new dump truck was 10 trips of septic sand into the camp sites with more scheduled in the next few days.
- **Troop 231 Wolcott** has installed a coffee counter in the Dining hall in memory of **Mr. Scott Slater**, the grand father of our program director. It is made of tongue and groove pine and matches the walls of the Dining Hall.
- The Old Directors Cabin, AKA Tobe Lodge has had much of the wavy edge siding repaired and new steps installed. It still needs a new electrical load center. It will be painted over the Memorial Day weekend along with the Cook's Cabin and the Dining Hall. This was made possible with a donation from the family of a scout in Troop 102. *(Check with Frank to get a name.)*
- Thanks to the leadership of **Bruce Monahan**, the front of the Dining Hall has been transformed into a beautiful green lawn worthy of a golf course.
- The addition of new oversized gutters has been completed on the Dining Hall. This was made possible by **Jerry Usher** who is a member of the council Properties Committee.
- The kitchen of the Dining Hall has had a few well deserved installations. **Randy Clair** and a scouters from **Troop 231** fabricated and installed a new pot hanger, a stainless steel cover for the serving window and an aluminum insert for the shelf below the griddle.
- The driveway at the Health Lodge should finally be paved this June by **Mark Shaw and Liner Brothers Inc.**
- **Jon Andrew, Rob Reed, Andrew Mandigo, Brian Gorman and Jeff Lukens** installed underground pipes for gutters of the Health lodge. They also dug a trench to drain water from the natural spring in the hillside behind the Health lodge.

All over camp, there have been numerous projects completed due to the talents and equipment of Jon Andrew. He is an example to all. Stumps and rocks have been removed in Arrow South and Cedar campsites. Roads have been graded. Wood chips made and spread. Trees cut and piled. The average visitor won't even notice most of the things that he has made possible, but his contributions are immense. He is a credit to his family, Troop 52, our camp and the Boy Scouts of America. Pretty good for a guy who was on staff for only one year, back in 1976. But he has always been at camp with his troop. Thanks Jon. Written by Christopher Moon, Camp Director

Ownership

(continued from Page 1)

camp properties, and in general has been a valued resource and advisor to the camp staff. When the camp was struck by a mysterious illness in 1999, Joe was an integral part in getting food from outside sources until the dining hall was cleared for use.

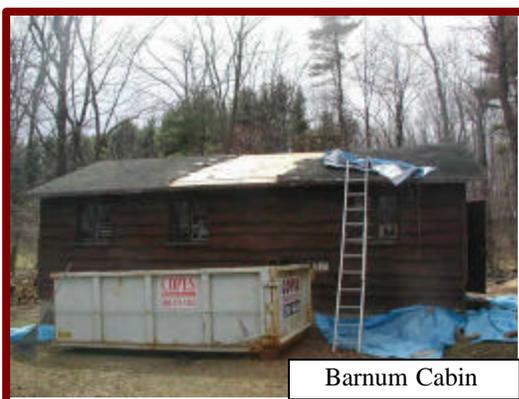
Joe was a member of a number of Takachsin Training staffs, including Troop 1. He remembers fondly working with Frank Savino, John Evans, and other Scouters in that first troop. He was Scoutmaster of Takachsin Troop 8. Since retiring as Troop 52 Scoutmaster, Joe served on the troop committee as Chairman and later as Advancement Chairman and runs the troop's fund raising sale. Over the years he served in just about every Blue Trail District capacity, including Training, District Chairman, District Commissioner, Membership Committee, Activities Committee, and Camping Committee Chairman.

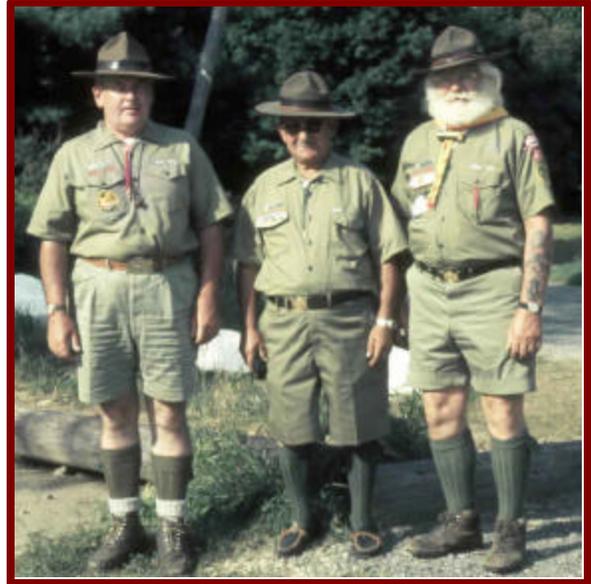
Despite the fact he's a Waterbury resident, the Watertown Rotary Club made him the first recipient of the Alves Award for community service. Despite being Protestant, Joe was awarded the Bronze Pelican by the Catholic Committee on Scouting for service to Catholic Scouting. He received the Silver Beaver Award from the old Mattatuck Council way back in 1960. He is also a Vigil Honor member of the Order of the Arrow.

Troop 52 recently purchased a computer software to track the advancement of their 60 Scouts. Joe, the Advancement Chairman, dove into the program and hen-pecked the detailed records of the entire troop into the database, keeps it up to date, and issues monthly progress reports. At the age of 78, he's keeping up with the Scouting of the 21st century.

Besides working in Scouting, Joe is a Trustee of his church, and enjoys taking care of his youngest grandson.

Camp Director Chris Moon works at camp throughout the year. If you have a free weekend to work contact Chris (860-945-6970 or usagymct@aol.com) to see if he has anything going on that weekend.





Left photo: Ken Conrad, Joe LeClair, Jim Reynolds; Takachsin 10 staff, 1973
Right photo: Joe LeClair, Joe George, Dick Giacin; Parking Crew, 1974



Camp Mattatuck Volunteers
PO Box 257
Plymouth, CT 06782-0257
<http://matwreck.org/volunteers/>

News from Camp Mattatuck for: