

**Mattatuck OA**  
**60 Years**  
**of**  
**Service**



**Autumn**  
**2002**

No.12

Mattatuck Messenger

Autumn, 2002

## 60 Years of Cheerful Service

*By Joe LeClair, III*

"We who love the woods and camping, love the shadow on the water, love the moonlight in the forrest, "

For 60 years the Order of the Arrow Lodge/Chapter has taken the responsibility of being "steward" of the land at Mattatuck. The young men have done the work others dread; ditch digging, moving stones, brush cutting, removing obstacles from the pond.

*"...On a night in July 1942, the first induction ceremony was held. A spot was chosen on the eastern side of the lake; it was a small knoll along the shore, a little below the present Whip-Poor-Will campsite. The ceremonial officers were: Pop Hirsch, David Babson (Scout Executive) and Zak and Chuck Hirsch (Pop's sons) from the Chappagat Lodge. The first group to be inducted was a dozen members of the camp staff."*

...from "History of the Mattatuck Lodge", Paul Hadzima, 1967

Hundreds of young men have walked the narrow rocky path to 'the circle' over the years. Some never returned to an OA event. Others enjoyed the activities and fellowship. Some infused Brotherhood, Cheerfulness, and Service into their daily lives, and Scouting and Camp Mattatuck are better because of it.

The Order of the Arrow is an excellent way for older Scouts to interact with other Scouts their own age. It gives advanced leadership opportunities to young men who may otherwise drift away from their troops. It thus strengthens the individual Scout troops while it positively affects the individual Scout.

At camp, among the projects the OA tackled were: the building of Arrow Campsite (hence the name), clearing the lake of stumps and rocks in the early years (and again in the early 1970's when the lake was emptied), and, most recently, the clearing of the shotgun range.

The current group is energetic, dedicated, and smart. They are ably advised by Blair Albrecht of Bethlehem. If you are an arrowman who has drifted away from the organization your are invited and encouraged to renew you membership and get involved.

*The updated 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary "History of the Mattatuck Lodge" will soon be available in PDF format. If you'd like a copy send an e-mail to [ileclair@snet.net](mailto:ileclair@snet.net).*

## Trail Blazer: Meredith Beebe

It was a different time with different rules. Before soccer took hold during every season, before Fall baseball, before Nintendo, Scout troops were overflowing with boys. Unlike today, troops were often led by one strong leader assisted by one or two assistants. Bob Hodges in Roxbury, Jim Reynolds and Tom Horan in Naugatuck, Joe LeClair in Oakville are examples of these Scoutmasters.

Another such leader was Meredith Beebe of Watertown. "Beeb" as everyone called him, immersed himself in the Scout program, and had a tremendous positive effect on the young men in his charge.

A machinist by trade, Mr. Beebe was actually born too late. He would have thrived in the days when people had to be self-sufficient. His mini-farm in Watertown was transformed into his own Scout camp, where Scouts learned beekeeping, gardening, canning, and other skills, with a generous helping of the Scout Ideals sprinkled in. Each patrol had its own permanent campsite on the rough wooded piece of property.



Because Beebe was largely a one-man show (he had help from Mr. Rice and a few other men at various times) it was the older boys who provided most of the leadership. As a result his Scouts were among the best prepared Scouts you would ever see.

While serving as Scoutmaster of Troop 55 Mr. Beebe learned that Troop 82 lacked a leader and was in danger of collapsing. Mr. Beebe did the unthinkable; he took on the second troop and guided two troop meetings per week! Two Scout troops were not enough for him however, so he turned his attention to the Order of the Arrow as well. He served as head cook on O.A. weekends for years, providing home-made meals from fresh ingredients at low cost. In the winter months he formed the O.A. members in his troop into the Election team. He packed them into his International Scout or Chevy Blazer and drove them all over the Blue Trail District in all kinds of weather so the boys could run elections in various troops, then conduct "tap-out" ceremonies in costumes they made themselves.

With endless patience and a strong will to make a difference in boys' lives, Meredith Beebe made the world a better place. His boys grew to be men who knew there was strength in being gentle; who would shoulder a burden until it was lifted from his shoulder, and who would be willing to serve others.

## An Interview with Our Order of the Arrow Chief

Twenty-year-old Justin Clair of Troop 231 Wolcott recently took over the reins as Mattatuck Chapter Chief. A student at Johnson & Wales College, Justin majors in Food Service Management and is a teaching assistant at one of the college's two working hotels. Where was his interest in food service developed? At camp of course. It was during his five summers working in our kitchen that Justin decided to make food part of his career. He has served as Assistant Chef the past three summers.



Not afraid to take on responsibilities, Justin was Recording Secretary, Kitchen Committee Chairman for two years, and Vice Chief for two years before being elected Chief in June. Along the way he worked on just about every committee (now called "clans") at some time or another. He credits the OA for helping to maintain his interest in Scouting, by helping him make more friends. Many of his good friends are people he met through camp staff or the OA.

The accomplishment he's most proud of is improving the 'Elangemat' system, a program that starts during the induction sequence and now follows through the first year of the Scout's membership. "More work is needed", he says. Through the OA Justin learned that "different people have different viewpoints", what works for some may not work for others. Among those who influenced him most in the OA were the late Paul Lukens and his good friend Matt Plourde. Community service, learned from his parents, has been reinforced by his involvement in the Brotherhood of Cheerful Service. One example of the Good Turns J.C. has been involved with is an annual car show for a group home.

Looking toward the year ahead, Justin sees the age-old problem of improving communication as his biggest challenge as Chief. He'd also like to get more members out to activities, and hopes to initiate a special recognition system to encourage participation. With a plan in mind, with good coaching from Chapter Advisor Blair Albrecht, and a talented group of officers, Justin Clair should have a very productive year as Mattatuck Chapter Chief.

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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>

## Projects Update:

by Chris Moon, Camp Director

Projects and major improvements at camp continued throughout the summer and into the fall.

- The Camp Mattatuck summer staff added polish to the many improvements that were made at camp in the spring. A new department was created entitled "Support Services". Of course that name was too formal, so the nickname of "Drainage" took over. It was masterminded by Jeromy Nelson, Rob Reed, Jeff Lukens and Brian Shannon.
- The electrical system at the Old Directors cabin was overhauled with the addition of a new fuse panel, water heater, wiring, outlets and outside flood lights. The front porch was replaced and crushed stone was placed around the building. Fred Van Scoy and a few staff members rebuilt the deck on the side of the building. It is now a beautiful 10' by 12' deck with Adirondack chairs. The area was landscaped and grass planted.
- The storage room in the Dining hall had new shelves built and lights installed. The bathroom behind the fireplace has new sheetrock walls and a new light and exhaust fan thanks to Jeromy Nelson, Fred Van Scoy and Chris Start. A new floor, toilet and sink are scheduled soon.
- Three temperature controlled exhaust fans and louvers were added in the peaks of the Dining Hall. They were very useful this summer considering the heat.
- Chris and Darlene Start donated 4 wrought iron park benches for the front porch of the Dining Hall.
- The new lawn in front of the Dining hall kept it's color all summer long even with the little rain. At the September OA weekend more grass seed was added and the lawn is even thicker now. Thanks to Bruce Monahan for believing it could work and to Jon Andrew for making it work.
- The landscaping at the Health Lodge was finished and the grass came in great.
- An air-conditioner was added to Griffin Cabin.
- We are presently working on air conditioning for the Health Lodge as well as heat and air conditioning for the kitchen.
- Jon Andrew and his crew graded the amphitheater in September. Topsoil was added, grass planted and new cement fire rings installed. Fred Van Scoy acquired 6 cement rings from Arrow Cement Products of Simsbury.
- Campfire areas with cement rings, seats and crushed stone have been installed next to Barnum Cabin, Gesner Cabin and 49ers Cabin. Another will be placed at Dick John's shelter.
- Barnum cabin has been finished outside. General Electric and CL&P employees painted the building as part of the United Way Day of Caring. They also installed crushed stone around the building. The counter tops still need to be installed inside the cabin. We hope to replace the woodstove someday with a more efficient one.
- The showers in the new latrines at Arrow South and Cedar campsites enabled the scouts to remember the 11th point of the scout law. A Scout is Clean. During the sweltering heat, it was common for some people to take 3 showers a day. The council plans for us to add another set of showers this year.
- A grant from the NRA allowed us to add a shooting platform to the Shotgun range. A new gun safe and a trap thrower were added. We were also able to purchase 2 storage sheds. One is at the archery range and the other at the shotgun range. 50 cubic yards of process have been placed on the road from the boat docks to the rifle range. A culvert has been installed where the old utility lines went through camp. We hope to add 100 cubic more yards next summer.
- Bob Herbert has been doing great things at the Christmas Tree farm. 900 trees were planted in the spring of 2001 and another 900 in the spring of 2002. He has already cleared a spot for more trees this coming spring.
- A new 5' Bush Hog and a 5' three point hitch finish mower as well as another golf cart were added at the end of the summer.
- Ten new mountain bikes and an assortment of parts have been ordered for next year. Pershing Cabin was stained and the screen door was replaced. A sailboat storage rack was added at the swimming side of the waterfront.

### *Camp Directors Note:*

1300 Boy Scouts and 500 Cub scouts were treated to a spectacular summer of scouting by a dedicated, knowledgeable and energetic staff. Scouts, parents and leaders went home with smiles on their faces and fond memories in the minds. The staff reunion was attended by scouters from nearly every decade of summer camp. The numbers were small but the stories were numerous.



## In Memoriam

Richard Lenkowski

March 12, 1934-September 22, 2002

Enthusiastic, energetic, and skillful, Dick Lenkowski never forgot the sense of wonder and adventure a boy realized as he traveled down the Scouting trail. An Eagle Scout as a boy, Dick's love for the program drove him to make the program more colorful, more meaningful, and more educational than ever.

The Klondike Derby was not just a competition to him, it was theater, adventure, competition, and fun all rolled into one. Dressed as a 1890's trader, gun in hand, he made the Alaskan Klondike come to life, and encouraged others to do the same.

Dick was a member of the original Takachsin Training staff and took great pride in knowing he helped start a tradition of not only training Scouters but instilling in them the Scouting Spirit he so cherished. He served as Mattatuck District Roundtable Commissioner for years. The founding Scoutmaster of Troop 5 Middlebury, in more recent years he served with Troop 330 in the Bucks Hill section of Waterbury.

Dick enjoyed sharing his hobbies with Scouts. Among these hobbies was fishing. When Dick did something he went all-out. As troop fishing counselor he introduced the Scouts to fly fishing and ocean fishing as well as lake fishing.

His last two summers were spent on volunteer staff at Camp Mattatuck. He taught the fishing merit badge with zeal, and as Commissioner, instituted a new idea of delivering coffee and the daily camp paper to troop leaders each morning. For over fifty years this Silver Beaver Award recipient and Vigil Honor member of the Order of the Arrow brought Scouting to life by always seeing the program through the eyes of a Scout. He will be missed.



The metal Mattatuck Lodge neckerchief slide made around 1971. Only 100 were made.

Among the other Scouters who passed away since our last issue were John Shea of Waterbury and Norm "Sarge" Stanchfield of Wolcott. Each left an indelible impression on the Scouts and Scouters they came in contact with.

**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](mailto:ileclair@snet.net).**

*Printing and mailing operations donated by the Elm Press, Inc. of Thomaston, CT*

## Camp Mattatuck Preventative Maintenance Program

*By Frank Rodrigues, Chairman, Camp Mattatuck Volunteers*



As adult leaders we've had many a conversation about Camp Mattatuck, the improvements that have taken place, and "boy it would be nice to have a Preventative Maintenance program so that good old Camp Mattatuck is always in great shape". Preventative Maintenance is something that we as adult leaders can make an immediate impact by our taking care of Camp as Packs, Troops, and Districts when using 450 acres of the best Boy Scout Camp in New England. Items such as driving into camp with only one vehicle, and not using summer camp sites for camporees or Klondike Derbies would help a great deal.

Using established campfire rings will go a long way towards giving the ground an opportunity to recover. Making sure that our scouts, Cubs as well as Boy Scouts, have a sense of responsibility for Camp such as no littering, no graffiti, no carving of troop number or initials. Keeping Camp Mattatuck in tiptop condition is the responsibility of every adult leader and all of those little efforts will grow into a full blown PM program.

## Campmasters

*Paul Hoffman, chairman*

Oct.11-13	Jeff Lukens
Oct.18-20	Randy Bock
Oct.25-27	Brian Shannon
Nov.1-3	Karen Pizzano
Nov.8-10	Jeff Lukens
Nov.15-17	Joe Ascencao
Nov.22-24	Randy Bock
Dec. 6-8	Ron Plourde
Dec. 13-15	Randy Bock
Dec.20-21	Rob Reed
Jan. 3-5	Pat Sheridan
Jan.10-12	Joe Ascencao
Jan.17-19	Paul Hoffman
Jan.24-26	Frank Rodrigues
Jan.31-Feb.2	Darryl Andrews
Feb.7-9	

Feb.14-16	Joe Gannon
Feb.21-23	Jeff Lukens
Feb.28-Mar.2	Ron Plourde
March 7-9	Randy Bock
Mar. 14-16	Frank Rodrigues
Mar. 21-23	Robert Reed
Mar. 28-30	
Apr. 4-6	Joe Gannon
Apr. 11-13	Ron Plourde
Apr. 25-27	Randy Bock
May 2-4	
May 9-11	
May 16-18	Brian Shannon
May 30-June 1	Jeremy Nelson
June 6-8	Randy Bock
June 13-15	



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

*News from Camp Mattatuck for:*