

Membership Meeting May 4th



Spring 2003

No.13

Mattatuck Messenger

Spring, 2003

Camp Mattatuck Volunteers Membership Meeting May 4, 2003

All members are encouraged to meet at Camp Mattatuck on Sunday, May 4, 2003 at 1PM for an important membership meeting. Purpose of the meeting will be to review our financial status, elect officers, and review projects status. A nominating committee has been formed and is at work at this moment. A new chairman will be elected to succeed Frank Rodrigues, who has served as our chairman since May, 2000. Don't miss this opportunity to get involved.



Barnum Progress



Barnum cabin received a present over the weekend between Christmas and New Years. A new cabinet, counter top, and shelves were installed thanks to the talents of Jon Andrew and Paul Hoffman. This matches the cabinet that Jon installed in Mohawk cabin in 2001. In January oak tables and benches with 3 coats of polyurethane were delivered to Barnum and Mohawk cabins. These fine pieces of furniture seat 16 people, and will serve camp for generations to come. The cabinets, tables, and benches were constructed from scratch at Jon's shop, Watertown Plastics. The oak looks absolutely amazing. It adds so much to the cabins. Thanks to Jon Andrew, Mike Andrew, Paul Hoffman, Joe LeClair Jr., Tim Martin, and Ozzie

Bartlett from Troop 52 Oakville, Rob Reed and Chris Perkins from Troop 75 Terryville, and Jeff Lukens from Troop 5 Middlebury. The kindness, generosity, talents and dedication of these scouts and the Mattatuck Volunteers are an example to all scouts.

Barnum Cabin is named in honor of Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Curtis "Barney" Barnum, former camp staff member and Order of the Arrow Chief. Prior to 1967 it was known as "Hickory Cabin".

Feedback from Issue No.12...

"What a fantastic tribute to a GREAT AMERICAN. I know of no person who affected me more than Beb did - those leadership skills he taught me (and many other young men) served me very well throughout a 30-year Army career. Beb strongly encouraged me to earn my "Eagle" while a scout, and in a large measure he ensured that I earned my colonel's "eagles" too....He continues to live in those he affected so much...

Rich Majauskas, Director of Plans and Operations, United States Capitol Police

"What can I say about a man so thoroughly involved in scouting, and who had such a profound bearing on my scouting career. Without him and his steady hand, it just would never have happened for me. ...it was Beb who I remember the most, and to whom I owe the most." Richard Lorenz

Takachsin Training

Takachsin Training, the Basic Scout Leader Training for the Waterbury area, is now up to Troop 35. Started in 1964 by then Mattatuck Council President John Evans, Council Executive Frank Savino and others, has helped instill Scouting spirit and skills in generations of leaders, leading to better programs and experiences for the Scouts in Mattatuck and Blue Trail Districts. There are many ways to learn the technical part of Scouting. Takachsin not only teaches, it motivates you to bring the highest quality Scouting back to your troop.

The key elements of Takachsin include giving the adults a feel for what a Scout should experience in a patrol and troop. The learners are in patrols. The staff is comprised of a Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, and other leaders just like a troop. The Senior Patrol Leader runs the program with the Scoutmaster in an advisory role. By the time the outdoor weekend unfolds Scout spirit and patrol spirit are at a high level.

Another key to Takachsin is providing leaders training in the Scouting skills he can pass on to the boys. Is a Scoutmaster required to be proficient in ropework and compass? No, but that doesn't mean Scout leaders don't want to be knowledgeable in the skills the boys need to know.

Weekly meetings are packed with learning and fun. Patrols often meet separate from the troop to make neckerchiefs, slides, and patrol flag and to prepare for the outdoor weekend. This year Takachsin is returning to Camp Mattatuck for its outdoor weekend after being staged at Camp Worcoeman for several years.

As stated above, Takachsin was introduced in 1964. The course ran twelve successful years. Scoutmasters could not repeat, and staff was encouraged to step down every so often to keep the course fresh. Among the staff in the 1960's were Elmer Bean, Bob Wooding, Joe LeClair Jr., Paul Hadzima, Dick Lenkowski, and Tom Horan. The course was popular and productive. Then in the early 1970's the BSA introduced "Cornerstone Training" a feeble approach to training that involved listening to cassette tapes instead of live instructors. A "dumbed down" Scout Handbook also contributed to declining enrollment in Scouting. In 1976, what would have been Troop 13 was cancelled due to lack of trainees.

In 1981 Frank Rodrigues (current Mattatuck Volunteers Chairman) organized Takachsin Troop 13. It was an instant hit with area leaders and has continued to flourish today. Takachsin Training involves dedication of much time and effort by trainee and staff, but anyone who has experienced the fellowship, learning, and fun of this course would tell you it's all worth it.



Early Takachsin Staff
John Evans, J. Lawrence Leach, Paul Hadzima, Joe LeClair Jr., Wally Harper, Dick Lenkowski,
Kneeling: Frank Savino, Scout Executive
Photo taken at Lovell Lodge, Camp Mattatuck

"The Real Deal"

by Joe LeClair

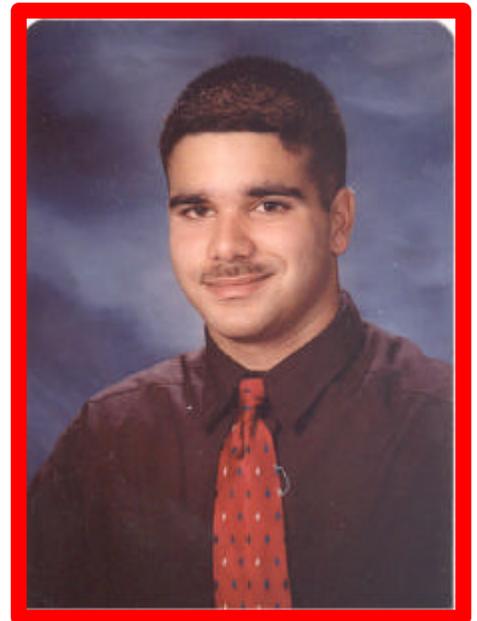
When asked to describe Christopher Reardon, his Scoutmaster, Joe Gannon, said, "He's the real deal". It's obvious Joe's not alone in this thinking, for Chris has been accepted to the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis.

Chris Reardon, 18, is a member of a set of triplets, all boys, and all Eagle Scouts in Troop 41, Waterbury. He honed his leadership skills while serving as Senior Patrol Leader in Troop 41 and as Order of the Arrow Chapter Publications Chairman two years. Chris, a charismatic athletic man, is at his best working with kids, whether it be on the waterfront staff at Camp Mattatuck, as "Troop Guide" for first-year Scouts in Troop 41, or as an "Elangamat", helping candidates through an Order of the Arrow Ordeal. He is currently the commanding officer of the 120 members of Wilby High School's ROTC program, yet he is humble and dedicated enough to take the time to serve as Den Chief for a Webelos den. After fulfilling his commitment to the navy he'd like to teach high school math or science.

Joe Gannon has a three year old son, Jake. I asked Joe which of Chris' traits he'd like to see Jake acquire. "His thoughtfulness", Joe responded. "He's still an altar boy, you know. And he's extremely considerate". Joe explained that Chris is not one to push himself into the limelight, but when a leadership void exists, Chris will step up and meet the challenge. When Chris teaches he commands attention, and other people, even adults, become immersed in his words. "And he never makes the same mistake twice", commented Joe.

By accepting the appointment to the Academy, Chris turned down a four-year Naval-Marine ROTC scholarship. He knows that the Academy will be a challenge, and refers to it as "a pressure cooker". Memorizing will be difficult. Chris feels his Camp Mattatuck experience will help him get through it. Camp staff helped him develop confidence, leadership skills, teamwork, and tact. Camp reinforced many of the principles learned in the ROTC, such as "leading by example".

Joe Gannon remarked, "when Chris says he's going to do something, he does it; and does it well". Chris Reardon will be a great midshipman. We wish him the best. He'll be missed at camp this summer.



Other Mattatuck staff members who attended service academies over the years include Gordon Jackson of Waterbury(Naval Academy), Paul Weaver of Troop 115 Naugatuck (Air Force Academy),and Richard Livermore, Troop 93 Cheshire (West Point). Do you know of others? Please write.

Volunteers have been working even during the winter months and the spring projects are about to begin. The summer camp season is almost full and the scouts and troops will benefit from all the hard work of the Mattatuck Volunteers. If you haven't been to camp in a while...come and visit us this summer "neath the summit of Mount Tobe".

**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**

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

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



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

News from Camp Mattatuck for: