

Left: Flag Ceremony, 1967; Right: Week 6, 2005
(Note new metal roof on dining hall in 2005 photo)

Trailblazer

Robert Udell

January 3, 1933-August, 2005

What a pair they made...Bob Udell, bigger than life, outgoing, booming voice, always with a joke; and Tom Horan, small in stature, quiet, and shy. Bob was the Camp Director, but to him it was Tom's camp, and he dubbed Tom "Mr. Mattatuck". Bob rarely ventured past the dam, and concerned himself with the business side of camp, public relations and major personnel decisions. Tom ruled the dining hall and the day-to-day program and operations. What they had in common was a passion for Scouting.

Robert Clayton Udell (Bob) of Torrington, passed away in August after a four-year battle with cancer. He was born January 3, 1933 in Cambridge, MA, son of Frederick and Helen (Walsh) Udell. Educated in the Watertown, MA, school system, he attended Boston University and Emerson College, Boston. He was a career Scouter with Boy Scouts of America for 28 years. He served as a Scout Executive in Boston, Downeast Maine, Waterbury, Litchfield County, Norwich, CT and New Bedford, MA. He was camp director of Hemenway, Tamworth, NH; Hinds in Raymond, ME; Mattatuck in Plymouth, CT; and Squanto in Carver, MA.

He left three daughters and five grandchildren: Barbara Chute, RN and husband, Dennis of Bowdoin, ME; Karen Howard and husband, Paul of Goshen, CT and Licia Sas of Griswold, CT. Daughter, Susan Udell, predeceased him. Grandchildren are Michael Fischer of Torrington, April Burroughs and Sean Sas of Griswold, CT and Christopher and Meghan Chute of Maine. Also, he was predeceased by two former wives- Patricia McNeil Udell of Auburndale, MA and Joyce Huff Udell of Goshen, CT.

A Korean War veteran, he served as a senior air operations sergeant in the Far East Air Force. He had also been a soldier in the Army National Guard.

He was past president of the Torrington Area Council of Churches; past Tunxis District Chairman of the Boy Scouts; taught AARP Defensive Driving courses at the Sullivan Senior Center; was a Free Mason and a member of the Knight's Templar; and a life member of American Legion Post 27 in Litchfield and had been a Rotarian.

He was very active with his "extended family" at the First United Methodist Church. He served on a number of committees and was head usher for 17 years



American Savings Bank Foundation, Leever Foundation, Volunteers Contribute to Growth of Camp Mattatuck

A \$106,000 grant from American Savings Bank Foundation enabled the Connecticut Rivers Council to rebuild the East end of the Rotary Dining Lodge in the Spring of 2005. The original stone fireplace is intact, but everything behind it was removed and rebuilt with a slight expansion. The 12 feet of building behind the fireplace were removed and a new slightly larger area was added. In this new area there are now 2 public restrooms and an entryway from the porch as well as the Dining Hall. An improved commissary storage area and a chemical storage room have been added also. Heat has been added to this addition for year round use. The cement porch was completely removed and replaced. The roof line was extended the entire length of the porch. A new green metal roof tops the building giving it beauty and making it maintenance free for decades. New entry doors were added and the area around the addition has been landscaped to match the rest of the building. Chris Start of Do Alls Construction was the general contractor for this project. This was made possible as part of the council's Capital Campaign. If you have ever wondered if the money ever gets to the camp, the answer is Yes. Come up and see for yourself.

The Harold Leever Foundation has just offered to donate \$300,000 to Camp Mattatuck for a Training Lodge near the COPE course to be used by scouts, scouters and outside groups. It will be a log cabin design for year round use. A large meeting room, 2 bunk rooms sleeping 12 and 16 each, 4 smaller bedrooms sleeping 4 each, kitchen, office, COPE equipment storage, showers and restrooms will make up this building. An exact date to begin construction has not been set yet. The late Mr. Leever, former Chairman of the MacDermid Company, was once President of the Mattatuck Council.

Other exciting news...

- New kitchen flooring has been added to the Old Directors Cabin (Chief Tobe Lodge) thanks to Rob Reed and Pat Sheridan.
- Griffin Cabin has a new kitchen. The old cabinets and paneled walls were removed. Insulation and sheet rock were installed with some updated electrical wiring. A new counter top, stove and cabinets were installed along with a laminate wood floor. Jeromy Nelson, Jon Andrew, Paul Hoffman, Matt Downey, Tim Martin, Chris Start, the Perkins family and a few others made this possible. There are plans to insulate the rest of the building and replace the fuse panel.
- Jon Andrew, Michael Andrew, Steve Ramponi and Chris Moon have completed the ground work and cement slab for a new latrine in the lower COPE field.. It will be similar to the one in the camporee field next to Gesner cabin. Bob Thacher and Troop 90 Cheshire will be building the structure again. There are plans to replace the 2 remaining box latrines with this style building.
- The Mattatuck Volunteers are considering purchasing a Kubota Zero Degree Diesel Mower that will take the 3-4 day job of mowing camp and reduce it to 1 day. Cost is about \$11,000. If you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to the Mattatuck Volunteers please send it to "Camp Mattatuck Volunteers, PO Box 257, Plymouth, CT 06782-0257

Camp Director Chris Moon was the primary contributor to this story

Mattatuck Volunteers Officers 2005-2007

Chairman:	Joseph Gannon
Vice Chairman:	Jonathan Andrew
Treasurer:	Robert Reed
Secretary:	Paul Hoffman

Mattatuck Influences Lives

Note: The following is Liz Pizzano's Senior Essay for Wamogo High School, as published in the Litchfield Enquirer, 2/11/05.



There is not one individual who has influenced my life; it is more of a group of people and a place. In the 18 years of my life, I spent every summer that I can remember in a Boy Scout summer camp.

The people who work there and the scouting program have influenced my life tremendously. Camp has instilled in me a drive to do three things each day: learn a new skill, teach someone a skill, and make a new friend. The people at camp have taught me the value of friendship, and a great sense of belonging. I know that if I ever need anything, I can call on any one from camp and they will come and help me - no matter what.

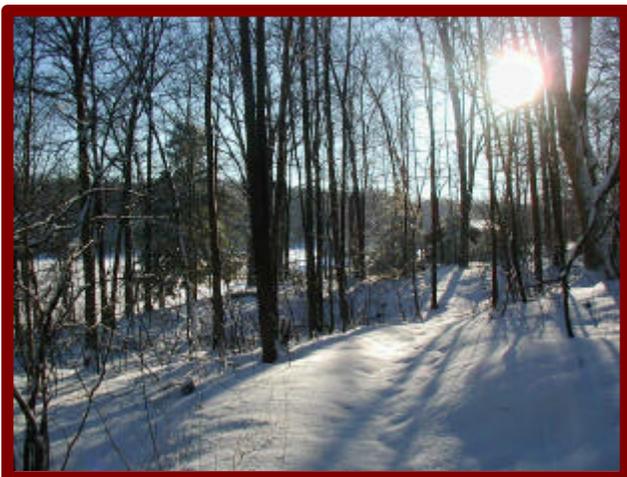
Camp has influenced my life because it gives me a chance to give back to the community. Every summer about 1200 boy scouts and 600 cub scouts come to camp from the New England area, and I get the chance to make a difference in their lives.

A group from Harlem is one that I remember very well. When they were asked how many of them had been shot or knew someone who had been shot, more than half of the boys raised their hands. One scout from this group said he did not want to leave camp, because for the first time in a long time he did not have to worry about carrying a knife around or getting shot.

I remember two Cub Scouts that came to camp to visit a troop and see what resident camp was like. They could not be more than seven or eight years old. They came down to the archery range where I work and we taught them how to shoot. They were having such a great time that they did not want to go back to their campsite. The smiles on those boys' faces are what keeps me coming back year after year. It is what I enjoy most about working there.

It is an amazing feeling to know that someone trusts you and the people you work with enough to let their guard down. Yet it is a sad feeling, when towards the end of the week, you can feel their walls going back up because they know that they are leaving and going back to their other world.

The scouting program has instilled in me a will to push my limits, to work my hardest and to put my all in to everything that I do. It has taught me to be focused and determined in setting and achieving goals. Scouting has taught me to be a good problem solver and be a straight thinker, to be able to see a problem and solve it before it becomes a bigger problem. It has taught me to know what matters in life, to put my priorities in order. It has taught me to know where I stand, in life, on my own two feet



Humor, Faith, and a Positive Attitude...the Bob Udell I Knew

By Jean Horan

I remember answering an ad in the Waterbury-Republican American (1971) for a camp nurse. As I was planning on heading west in the fall, I thought this was perfect for filling in the summer. I called and made an appointment at the Scout Office on Randolph Avenue. I listened to Bob talk about camp and then he offered to show it to me as it was only "10 minutes up the road." So here I am, a young woman of 21, with a guy, a total stranger in my car, heading into the woods. All I could think of was how was I going to explain that to my mother and imagined her telling me, "You're not that stupid!" I was lucky. It was a man who would become a life long friend. I remember meeting Bob Herbert and seeing the central area including the old Health Lodge. I took the job, a 9-week season for \$500 for the entire summer. The shift 7AM to 7AM, 6 days a week. And oh yes, I was given 2 days off in July to go to Hartford to take the state boards so I could actually be a Registered Nurse. Fortunately, I passed but in those days, you didn't find out the results till weeks later. I soon realized I didn't know the first thing about setting up a walk-in clinic and wondered why I had put myself in the predicament of being the sole "health care provider" without any back-up for the thousands of questions newly graduated nurses have. Bob's daily visits to the Health Lodge (I didn't know at the time that this is part of being a good Camp Director) always brought a joke of the day (how did he ever remember so many jokes?) and a lesson about state health regulations. I would have to keep temperature charts, note every visit in a bound log, count every controlled drug, etc., etc. And oh yes, I would be cleaning the toilet too. He also let me know it was perfectly OK to put a sign on the Health Lodge door that the nurse was at the Dining Hall and to go enjoy morning coffee with whomever was there. At the end of that wonderful, enjoyable summer, I headed west to Colorado. After almost a year there, I was yearning to be closer to salt water and family. I contacted Bob and was instantly hired for my second summer - with a \$50 raise. On one of his visits to the Health Lodge he shared an observation that I was much less nervous as a nurse and that he could see the confidence a year's experience had provided me. I rarely saw Bob get angry but one morning, the breakfast was to be hard boiled eggs and the one Bob picked was very runny (just the way I like them). He squeezed it in his hand at the table, wiped his hands and took a silent deliberate walk to the kitchen. His face and neck were crimson. I never heard any sound from the kitchen. I was just wishing I had chosen the soft-boiled egg as I didn't like hard-boiled. Bob and I lost contact for several years. I'm not sure how it resumed but I became one of his e-mail buddies. Sometimes I'd have to leave his e-mails unread until I had time to catch up on the numerous jokes and inspirational messages he so frequently sent. I shared a few church lobster dinners with him - a chance for us to reminisce twice a year and I would fill him in on the improvements at camp. He would proudly show me his church and just like state health regulations, I got a lesson in church history. I have no doubt at all, that his humor, faith, and positive attitude are what sustained him through his personal storm. He is fondly remembered. He is missed.

I first met Bob Udell when he came to work at the Mattatuck Council; I had heard of him before but we had never met I can tell you that it was a great pleasure to know him and his family and we had such a good time particularly working at Camp Mattatuck; I was the Camp Director, Bob was the Business Manager and Tom Horan was the Program Director.

Bob Udell knew more jokes than anyone I have ever known and he could tell them at high speed; how he could remember them all I will never know but it just shows you what a sharp mind he had. He was so funny but also could be very serious. He later became the Camp Director and did a wonderful job.

I remember one time that he was helping the camp cook move a large pot of beans off the kitchen stove; the cook zigged, Bob zagged and the beans hit the floor. This happened while the national inspection was going on; we got a good laugh over that one.

Bob and I kept in touch all these years in fact, I talked with him about a week before his death and he told me that things were getting rough and he was feeling badly. I miss him! He was a great Scouter.

Harold Jackson

A note from Bob Udell...Dec., 2002

Wish I could have written something about my dad to let him know how proud I was of him and how much I loved him. He died of lung cancer, age 67, which was caused by him being gassed in World War 1. After his death, I found, and still have, his war diary..he was in all the seven major battles of WW1 !!!! He also was on the Mexican Border chasing Pancho Vila! His buddy was his childhood neighbor, the comedian Fred Allen who your dad will know. I regret missing opportunities to hear some of his stories...

Hope to see you at staff reunion. I'll need a lift up & down the hill as I'm still recovering from spinal surgery and my legs are still shaky. Bob

Visit our website, built and maintained by Marc Moody...

<http://matwreck.org/volunteers>

Editorial

A Rough Summer for Scouting

By Joe LeClair

The summer of 2005 will be remembered as a difficult one for Scouting because of a string of unfortunate incidents, the most publicized being the electrocution deaths of leaders at the National Jamboree in Virginia in July.

It was interesting to hear comments from co-workers not involved in Scouting. They expected Scout leaders to be more careful, to be more safety conscious than the average guy, and expressed disappointment and amazement that such a thing could happen. We know that Scout leaders put their pants on one leg at a time like everyone else, but evidently the general public holds us to a higher standard. What a compliment to the organization!

It seemed that in the summer of 2005 you couldn't open a newspaper without reading something negative about Scouting. The Jamboree incident, a lost Scout, and two tragic thunderstorm incidents. Very little of the good news made the paper.

While a generation or two ago high adventure was left to council contingents and a few super troops, today the average troop has its older Scouts out rafting, climbing, hiking, biking and canoeing in some of the wildest areas of our country. Given the number of Scouts involved in these outdoor adventures our safety record is quite good. This is not to say that we should not do our absolute best to keep our boys safe, but it's to acknowledge the fact that somewhere, someday, there will be someone hurt. This past summer happened to be one when a number of incidents seemed to happen all at once. It's difficult to get injured if you're sitting on the couch playing video games. Our Scouts are out challenging themselves with exciting adventures.

Today your son cannot go to school with even the smallest pen knife. Immediate expulsion is the rule of the day. Yet 40,000 Scouts carried real knives at the Jamboree and as far as we know there were no incidents! What a story! Boys from all backgrounds, of every color and creed, coming together for a great encampment, yet it took a terrible tragedy for the average hometown newspaper to give it a second thought.

In Memoriam

Gwendolyn Lukens

March 29, 1950-November 17, 2005

Gwen Lukens saw the world quite clearly in black and white. People who knew her best spoke at her memorial service and here are some excerpts...

"stalwart, true, and loyal" "opinions came from love" "had her moments with an edge when she knew what was right" "life of service" "there was a fierceness in Gwen" "deep faith and conviction"

Gwen was a lifelong Girl Scout leader, Boy Scout Leader, and church educator. She was on the staff at the National Girl Scout Training Center in New York, and was a fixture at the Silver Lake Conference Center, the camp operated by the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ. A bright, opinionated person, you always knew where you stood with her and if she thought you were wrong she'd let you know about it. While working in the former Blue Trail District she was responsible for raising several hundred thousand dollars through golf tournaments, dinners, jewelry sales, and other events. Gwen was a loyal member of the Mattatuck Volunteers who will be missed. Our condolences to her son and daughter, Jeff and Amy, both members of the Camp Mattatuck Staff.



A group of about 45 people gathered at camp July 1st to celebrate Chris Moon's 50th birthday.

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Camp Mattatuck Volunteers
PO Box 257
Plymouth, CT 06782-0257
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