

ABILITIES DIGEST

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Summer 2015



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

From the Chief Scout Executive



Meet the Buddy Troop

One of the best parts of Scouting is sharing what we do with the communities we serve, especially helping those with special needs. That's why I am pleased to introduce you to what I'll call the "Buddy Troop," [Troop 133](#).

The Kansas City, Kan.-based troop provides opportunities for men of any age with developmental disabilities to participate in the Boy Scouts of America. Scouts from other troops volunteer to serve as "[buddies](#)" and pair up with the members of Troop 133 so they can take part in Scout activities, such as camping. (Continued on page 2)

In This Issue

We hope everyone is having a terrific summer of Scouting experiences! Meanwhile, the Summer issue is shorter than usual.

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This summer, Scouts from Troop 366 in Fort Leavenworth, Kan., provided eight buddy Scouts to help Scouts from Troop 133 enjoy summer camp at the Theodore Naish Scout Reservation in Bonner Springs, Kan. Buddy Scouts helped Troop 133 campers get around Camp Naish safely, understand the instructors in merit badge classes, participate in camp activities and have fun. During the week, buddy Scout volunteers are treated as members of Troop 133. They camp in the same campsite, eat at the same tables in the dining hall and arrive and leave camp with the troop.

Leaders emphasize that while this program is geared toward giving Troop 133's Scouts an experience they might not otherwise have, it also benefits the young buddy Scouts.

"This is a testament to their leadership, influence, persuasion and their belief in the Scout Oath and Law," said Troop 366 Scoutmaster Jerry Overbey, who says this program has been so popular with his Scouts that he may have to hold a drawing for next year's team of buddy volunteers.

Buddy Boy Scout Sam Overbey, Fort Leavenworth Troop 366, talks with Chris Bruce, Kansas City Troop 133, as they begin the walk to their next destination from their campsite, June 18 at Camp Naish.

This is a great example of Scouting's commitment to reach out and give others the opportunity to build their own new adventures through the methods of Scouting. Congratulations to Troop 133 Scoutmaster John McBurney for all of his efforts to bring Scouting's values to this special group of men in his community.

Wayne

Article originally distributed via ScoutingWire July 15, 2015



Enhancing Awareness

New Cub Scout Program Includes Disabilities-Focused Adventures



With the launch of the new Cub Scout program on June 1st, there are now TWO specific elective adventures that are centered on disabilities awareness. The first one is a Wolf adventure entitled “Cubs Who Care”, and the second one is a Webelos/Arrow of Light adventure entitled “Aware and Care.”

The “Cubs Who Care” adventure has five requirements, the last four chosen from eight options. They involve visiting with a person who has a disability, and then learning about different types of disabilities by experiencing what that disability is like through a simulated activity. Disabilities to be explored include mobility, “invisible” disabilities, blindness, and sensory challenges. Scouts can also learn about a famous person who has or had a disability, or attend an event where people with disabilities participate in such as Special Olympics.



The “Aware and Care” adventure has seven requirements, the last one gives Scouts a choice of two selected from eight options. The first five requirements have Webelos Scouts participating in simulated activities meant to demonstrate blindness, severe visual impairment, deafness, mobility impairment, and dexterity impairment. The sixth one requires Scouts to participate in an event that focuses on accepting diverse differences.

The seventh requirement provides Scouts with opportunities to do a good turn for residents in a special needs facility and discuss how this experience impacted him. Other options include:

- Discuss what activities are challenging to a person with disabilities
- Attend an event that has distinct disability factors such as a Special Olympics, service dogs event, or sign language interpretation
- Speak with a person who works with individuals who have disabilities
- Demonstrate the Scout Oath using American Sign Language,
- Participate in a service project that focuses on a specific disability
- Or participate in an activity with an organization whose members are disabled.



Cub Scouts who earn either or both of these adventures will be well prepared to earn the Disabilities Awareness merit badge when they proceed into Boy Scouts. More importantly, they will have a distinct understanding and awareness of why disabilities really mean “different” abilities!

In the News

Karen Jones Honored with the 2015 Woods Services Award



Karen Jones from the Heart of America Council in Kansas City, MO is this year's recipient of the Woods Services award. One award is granted nationally each year to a BSA volunteer for exceptional service and leadership benefitting Scouts with disabilities. The award recognizes Karen's dedicated years of service training leaders, developing new events, and working with advancement --- all to ensure Scouts with disabilities are welcomed in Scouting and are having a successful experience.

Karen has trained leaders who work with Scouts with disabilities at every council level. She has covered all aspects of special needs Scouting from how to deal with specific disabilities to advancement possibilities.

Karen has created a council newsletter and special needs website, promoted Scouts to several organizations for the disabled, started a Cub Day Camp for Cub Scouts with disabilities, and created a special events plan to be used for all council activities ensuring all the physical, educational, and transportation needs for each Scout are met.

Karen serves on the National Disabilities Awareness Committee's Advisory Panel and on the National Advancement Committee's Eagle Issues Task Force. Thus, the Woods Services Award was bestowed upon Karen Jones on May 22, 2015 at the Central Region's Silver Antelope Luncheon in Atlanta, GA.

The Woods Services and Residential Treatment Center established in 1913 in Langhorne, PA sponsors the Woods Services Award. The Center is a leading advocacy and service organization that provides educational, residential, and vocational services to children and adults with disabilities.

The Woods Services Award was created in 1978 to commemorate the life of Luther Wellington Lord who served as a residential supervisor at The Woods Schools for more than 23 years. During his tenure, he coordinated Scouting at the schools, and under his guidance, the first Scout with a disability earned the Eagle Scout Award.

Luther Lord was an active member of the National Advisory Committee on Scouting for the Handicapped (long preceding the current National Disabilities Awareness Committee) and served as the course director for national workshops at Philmont and Schiff Scout Reservations, and for numerous area and local courses. One national Woods Services award is granted to a deserving volunteer each year in his memory.

How Many Scouts or Scouters Served Have a Disability?

This is a hard question to answer. Last year a survey by one council found that 15% of the Scouts they served had some kind of disability. They repeated the survey during their 2015 re-chartering process and got similar results. A second council used the same survey and also arrived at the 15% figure. The National Disabilities Awareness Committee is refining that survey tool to use in a representative sample of councils across the country.

On July 30, 2015, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) released a report on the prevalence of disabilities among adults in the United States. The key finding was that 1 in 5 adults, or over 53 million people (22% of adults), in the United States have a disability of one form or another. The press release for this report can be viewed at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/features/key-findings-community-prevalence.html>.



Additional information from the CDC regarding disabilities can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/index.html>.

One of the CDC's goals is to improve the health of people living with disabilities. We in the Scouting movement are discovering a healthy lifestyle is a solid vehicle for helping Scouts with disabilities be successful through healthy living and positive behaviors. Statistics also show Scouters treat their disabilities as exceptions in order to fit in with the general population. To do well at Scouting, we must all "help parents and Scouting volunteers to improve their understanding, knowledge and skills related to including and serving the special needs population." This is the purpose of the National Disabilities Awareness Committee.

A Peek Ahead

Topics Planned for Next Issue:

- **From the Chief Scout Executive:** Mike Surbaugh's Vision for Scouts with Special Needs
- **Abilities Training:** Summary of This Year's Disabilities Awareness Conference at Philmont.
- **Enhancing Awareness:** American Sign Language Interpreter Strip: Current thoughts on Person First versus Identity First.
- **Adapting Advancement:** The Disabilities Awareness Merit Badge – Teaching it to Scouts with Disabilities, and Keep Watch for Revised Requirements.
- **And the Survey Says:** Results from the 2015 Random Survey

Recognizing Abilities

Archer Hadley Addresses National Employees

Eagle Scout Archer Hadley uses a wheelchair because he has cerebral palsy, but that has not slowed him down. He manages his high school football and basketball teams, and is the national spokesperson for Challenge Aspen, a nonprofit dedicated to providing recreational, educational, and cultural experiences for those with cognitive and physical disabilities. He recently visited the BSA's National Council in Irving, TX in early June where he spoke to national staff members. What follows are excerpts from his speech.



“I started out in Pack 20 as a Tiger Cub, and earned my Arrow of Light. I loved Pinewood Derby and won three years in a row because my mom was such a great carpenter. She built one with a replica of the Wii remote. I didn’t care if I won races; I just wanted to have the best looking car. As a Pack, we went places like the aircraft museum in Galveston.”

“I got really excited when I crossed over into Boy Scouting. My parents and I visited many troops. Troop 5 was different from all the others because it wasn’t too serious about getting the Scouts where they needed to go. We played steal-the-bacon, and we tackled each other, breaking arms and legs. I knew this was the troop I wanted to join. I’ve been to two National Jamborees, more summer camps than I can count, and attended my first NOAC this summer. I remember being in a tornado at summer camp—calming the other Scouts because they were so terrified, and getting stuck in the mud at the Disabilities Awareness Challenge during National Jamboree.”

“These were fundamentally important experiences I had as a Scout. The most important thing to me is the leadership and compassion young men and adults develop through Scouting. The one thing I love is the camaraderie one develops with fellow Scouts and adults, and the world-class training in first aid, wilderness survival, or cooking and being a chef. No other program offers the type of training one receives in Scouting—except maybe the Navy Seals.”

“I now want to share an experience I had while at the 2010 National Jamboree. My dad and I didn’t like the showers because the water was freezing cold and limited space. Then, I thought of the idea of bathing at the aquatics pool. So, as we approached the pool, we met Aquatics Director Brian Gray. My dad told Brian I really needed to get inside the pool to wash off the dirt while secure in a life jacket.”

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“Brian said OK to my dad, but wanted to add a challenge. As I was being lowered into the water, he instructed two life guards to remove the life jacket to see if I could float. I was so terrified because I had never swum without wearing one. I thought I would surely sink to the bottom and never see a smiling face again. As they removed it, one of the guards told me to relax and breathe slowly, and then grabbed my arms to make sure I wouldn’t sink. By week’s end, I was swimming laps up and down, not being able to breathe because I was smiling too much.”

“This is a good example of what a leader like Brian can do for a Scout with special needs because he had the heart to believe in me and in what I was capable of doing. So many people in my world have doubted me because of my disability, and I just had the mindset to prove them wrong. So, the BSA is a life changing program, and we change the world through the program. That’s what you’re doing because you’re developing young men and women as leaders in their communities. That’s how important you are. You change the lives of the people you encounter in Boy Scouts. Whatever your role is, continue it with great effort, enthusiasm, and passion because what you are doing is changing the world. Thank you so much for listening to me and being such a great audience.”

Eagle Scout Archer Hadley

Official Materials Posted on Scouting.org

Here are links to current materials to aid volunteers and Scouts with disabilities:

Scouting with Disabilities new landing page: www.scouting.org/disabilitiesawareness.aspx

Registration Beyond the Age of Eligibility form, No. 512-935: www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/512-935_WB.pdf

Individual Scout Advancement Plan, No. 512-936: www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/512-936_WB.pdf

Advancement for Members with Disabilities and/or Special Needs:

www.scouting.org/scoutsource/guidetoadvancement/specialneeds.aspx

Application for Alternative Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges, No. 512-730:

www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/512-730.pdf

Guide to Working with Scouts with Special Needs and Disabilities, No. 510-071:

www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/510-071.pdf

About *Abilities Digest*

Abilities Digest is the official e-letter of the Boy Scouts of America National Disabilities Awareness Committee. Its intent is to help expand membership through helping parents and Scouting volunteers to improve their understanding, knowledge, and skills related to including and serving the special needs population. Therefore, districts and councils may reprint articles from this publication. Our plan is to distribute four issues of *Abilities Digest* annually, but special editions may go out whenever there is important information to share. Feedback, suggestions, and letters to the editor are welcome at

disabilities.awareness@scouting.org.

Other Web Resources

Working With Scouts With disabilities: www.wwswd.org/

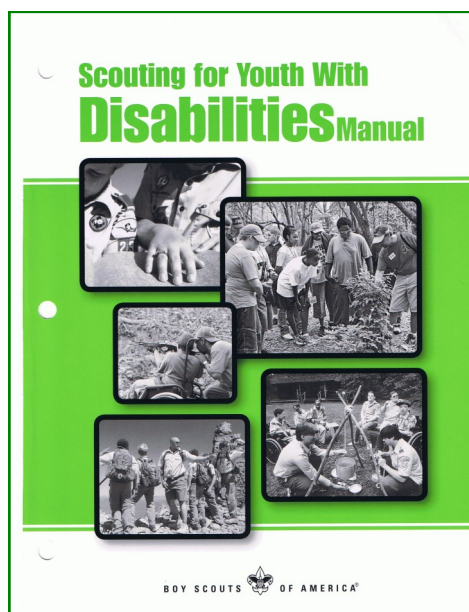
Autism Empowerment website: www.AutismEmpowerment.org

Autism and Scouting Website : www.AutismandScouting.org

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