

The FORUM

Venturing, Sea Scouting and Exploring Newsletter since 2003
April 2020 Issue

FORUM Articles

What is the FORUM
How to submit an Article
FORUM articles for download

Central Region

SSS-Soaring Eagle 700—Overland Park, Kansas
Ship 9024 travels to Wisconsin for Winter Amidships

National

National Venturing Report
Venturing Newsletter—Fall
National Venturing Report—2017-18
Council Venturing Journey to Excellence
Council Venturing Journal to Excellence
A Venturer's Guide to World Scout Center
National Commodore's Corner
Announcing the 2020-2021 National Boatswain
Sea Scout Manual 2019 Edition
Medical Forms
Coast Guard Auxiliary
Apply for National, Regional or Area Boatswain!
SEAL 2.0
Commodore's Corner Charlie Wurster
Sail Aboard the USCG Eagle
Apply for SEAL Training 2020
Mariners Explorer Club
National Exploring National Law Enforcement Conference

Western Region

Regional Commodore's Corner
Northern Lights High Adventure base



WHAT IS THE FORUM!

The FORUM is a National cluster concept and a friendly way to help Scouting Leaders exchange ideas and programs among our Troops, Crews, Ships, Posts, Councils, Areas, Regions and National.

The FORUM is shared by Volunteers and Professionals across the country.

The FORUM has been published monthly since 2003 and is not an official publication of any Council, Area, Region or National. It is a Volunteers and Professionals newsletter to promote our senior program. Help support our teenage program by sending the FORUM your stories, Newsletters. Council articles, By-Laws, Questions and Best Practices to share with others.

As always, articles, questions and comments are welcome. Promote Venturing, Sea Scouting and Exploring by promoting your Unit and Council etc. stories. We are seeking support from anyone interested in working on the newsletter.

Thanks for all you do!

Bob the BEAR Monto, Editor in Chief

How to submit an article

The FORUM would like any articles and event promotions you have on Exploring, Sea Scouting and Venturing programs from your units, council etc. Articles with photos are best. Articles with youth (under 18) must use BSA Youth Protection guidelines.

Attach your article as a **Word document** (preferable method) with identified photos (With descriptions of photo), clipart, etc. and send to rmonto47@gmail.com. Please email Bob "The BEAR" Monto by the 25th of the month with your articles. Since the FORUM is published monthly, if you miss one month it will get in the next month.

Your article should also include contact information and name of the individual submitting the article.

Use subject line **FORUM** to highlight this is a FORUM email.

Please edit your article.

All photos should have permission of all the participants in the photos. Indicate in the email that permission has been granted.

Submit a brief bio of the author(s) of the article.

Thanks for all you do for Youth
Bob "the BEAR" Monto
FORUM Newsletter Editor

FORUM Articles for Download

The Current FORUM Newsletter:

http://www.minsi-southmountain.com/newsletters/current_forum.php

The FORUM Back Issues

http://www.minsi-southmountain.com/venturing_archive.htm

Large Crews

[http://minsi-southmountain.com/newsletters/documents/FORUM-Crew 27-Large Crews articles.pdf](http://minsi-southmountain.com/newsletters/documents/FORUM-Crew_27-Large_Crews_articles.pdf)

UPDATED March Crew 27 Large Crew Series (Articles on Large Crew Operations)

SSS Soaring Eagle 7007 - Overland Park, Kansas #GetOnTheWater – Boating Basics and Safety Course

The Sea Scout Ship Soaring Eagle and the Kansas City Power Squad4ron held the first part of a three part boating safety course on March 11. We learned about specific equipment required for boating in the State of Kansas and general variations in the law for Missouri. We also discussed emergency radio transmissions and communication.

We're going to get creative with completing parts two and three, but excited about getting part one done!



Paul McDonald, Skipper
SSS Soaring Eagle 7007

Paul is the Skipper of the SSS Soaring Eagle, is an Eagle scout, and attended the National Jamboree in 1985 as a youth. He is also currently serving as the CR Area 5 Sea Scout Commodore.

Ship 9024 travels to Wisconsin for Winter Amidships

For the second year, Ship 9024 (Muskegon, MI) made the journey around Lake Michigan to Fond du Lac, Wisconsin to participate in Winter Amidships (WAM) put on by the BSA Bay Lakes Council. 2020 was the 46th time that the Council has put on WAM, a one-day competitive event open to all youth of all scouting programs. Youth are invited and come from not only Sea Scout Ships, but Boy Scout Troops, Venture Crews, Girl Scout Troops, Girl Scout Mariners, American Heritage Girls – just about everyone interested in displaying some of their competitive spirit.



While the event has competitions that reflect the nautical nature of Sea Scouting, none of the competitions are out of reach for the regular scouting disciplines. Signal flag reading, compass point placement, heaving line toss, and nautical knot-tying typify the naval events, but a tug-of-war, first-aid demonstration, and various obstacle courses and relays even out the playing field for the non-mariners.

In 2020, Thomas and Gracie of Ship 9024 teamed up with local talent from Troop 32 (Tyler and Tanner) and Troop 6032 (Bre and Shealee) to improve their award take over the 2019 campaign. Last year, the team picked up a first place (first aid) and a second place (surprise event). But in 2020, while holding on to their supremacy in first aid, they picked up a second place in knots as well as a second place in one of the two (different) surprise events. Even the adults got a chance to participate, taking a first place in the

lifejacket relay! Not bad for a team that was comprised significantly of youth under 16.



Once the dust had settled from the competition, the hungry contestants were treated to a wonderful pasta dinner put on by the WAM staff. After which the Youth got a chance to change into more comfortable attire in preparation for the DJ and dance that closed out the festivities.

If you are looking for a great event to participate in during the colder months, Ship 9024 HIGHLY recommends you look at Winter Amidships. The staff is open and friendly. If you have a small group (even just one or two) they will work to match you with other Units. The events test the skills of the Youth and are entertaining to watch.

Ship 9024 travels to Wisconsin for Winter Amidships



Special thanks to Ann Gratton, who has been running the event for the past (many) years and who, for two years, helped get us set up and connected. Her team puts on a heck of a show. Also, thanks to Paul Kaestner and Sea Scout Ship 5792, who hosted the nightly accommodations at Church of Our Saviour, and to the Wisconsin National Guard Armory who let us use their facility for the event.



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA BAY-LAKES COUNCIL **WINTER AMIDSHIPS**

SAVE THE DATE for The 46th WAM

February 29, 2020 www.BayLakesBSA.org/WAM

WAM is a 1-day event for Scouts BSA Troops, Venture Crews, Sea Scout Ships, Career Explorer Posts, Varsity Teams, Girl Scout/Mariner Troops, American Heritage Girls Units, and 4H Clubs. Youth participants must be registered members of the Boy Scouts of America (Troop, Crew, Ship, Team, Post participant), Girl Scouts-USA, American Heritage Girls or 4H. Dinner is included; lunch is on your own.

National Venturing Report

Venturing Newsletter - Fall 2019 Edition



[View Online](#)

[Download PDF](#)

The second edition of the Venturing Newsletter is here! Learn more about what has happened the last three months and what is upcoming in the Venturing world by visiting the link below. Happy New Year and happy reading!

National Venturing Report

As the 2017-2018 Venturing Officer term draws to a close, we would like to share with you all of the amazing happenings in the Venturing world. The Annual Report includes a final letter from this year's NVOA, updates on some of the progress Venturing has made over this past term, as well as the national opportunities for Venturers coming up in the future.

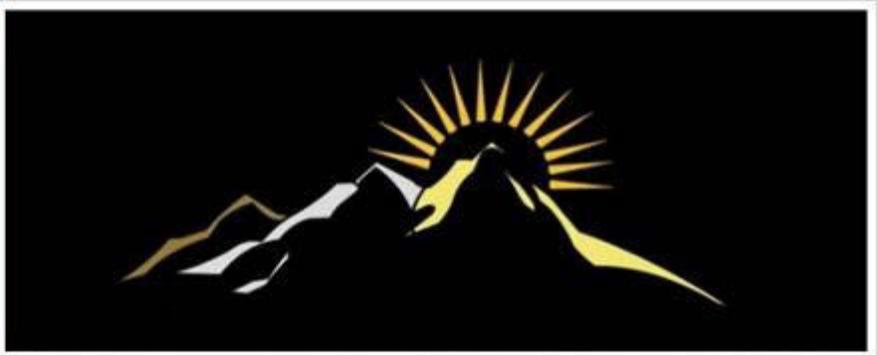
Thank you again for an awesome year!



<https://spark.adobe.com/page/>

National Venturing Report

Council Venturing Journey to Excellence



venting.org/journey-to-excellence.html

April, 2018

The Council Standards of Venturing Excellence Award has been redesigned and re-branded as “Council Venturing Journey to Excellence”. This will help provide continuity with other BSA programs, and better evaluate the quality of a council’s Venturing program. See the new form at:

A Venturer’s Guide to the World Scout Centre National Venturing Communications Team



Jean Perea, a Venturer from Atlanta, Georgia recently spent a few months staffing at the Kandersteg International Scout Center in Switzerland. Read more hear about the experience in Jean’s own words and learn more!

Denmark on an overnight train, I am reminiscing about the past five months I just spent staffing my favorite place on earth: Kandersteg International Scout Centre — and here’s why I think you should should staff here too...

KISC, or the World Scout Centre, is placed in a town, Kandersteg, in the gorgeous and serene Swiss alps. No place has ever left an impact on me like KISC has, and that’s due to the life-long international friendships I gained, the high adventure I experienced in the alpine setting, and the knowledge I gained about sustainability during my work there.

I stayed at KISC as a guest for a few weeks, but I mainly stayed as staff for the 2019 Autumn season. We worked hard and played even harder. So, what exactly did we do? I served the World Scout Centre as a Short Term Staffer between September 6th and December 6th, and then as a Helper until December 24th.

But wait, what’s a Short Term Staffer? What’s a Helper? Are there *Long* Term Staff? Are you a volunteer? Do you get paid? What kind of work do you do? Don’t worry, all of this will be answered shortly!

As a Short Term Staffer you do two types of work: daily jobs around the chalet and, in my case, helping rewrite some of the Centre’s program. For most “Shorties” — which is another word for Short Term Staff — almost all of your responsibilities come in the form of manual labor in four main areas: Catering, Grounds, House, and Programme. Yes, program is spelled with an extra “-me” but that’s okay because we love learning about cultural differences!

National Venturing Report

A Venturer's Guide to the World Scout Centre

National Venturing Communications Team



If you love cooking, then you'll love Catering. This area is all about making food, serving guests, and doing random bits around the kitchen. In low-season, during Autumn and Spring, you can expect to serve anywhere from 0 to 100 guests. Sometimes you'll have to serve a bit more than that, but it's never for more than a day or two. Of course, you also have to feed your fellow staff but they're never more than 50 people during low-season.

From chatting with your fellow staff all day, to blasting international music in the kitchen, to just having a grand time during long breaks, there's never a dull moment in the kitchen during low-season. There is always high energy in the kitchen and you develop a sense of unity in such an intense environment.

If that's low-season, then what about high-season? According to legend, high-season can get as high as 1,000 people! And that's just for lunch! Granted, this is on August 1st: the biggest celebration of the year as it is both the birthday of Scouting and of Switzerland. But on average, you can expect between 100 and 400 guests daily. More guests means more staff to help share the load. So, it's never too crazy.

For those of you not so inclined to cooking, there's House and Grounds. In these two work areas, you can expect to be on your feet all day but you lose the apron.

House works indoors checking in guests, folding laundry, and keeping the Centre up to hygienic code. While that may sound boring or just downright disgusting at first, don't let that fool you. Some of my favorite memories come from working in House. From checking in guests from every corner of the world, to deep cleaning bathrooms with my best friends for eight hours, you get extremely close with those around you.

For a breath of (very) fresh air, there is Grounds. Here, you take care of our beautiful campsite and attend to tasks outside of the Chalet. This includes generic landscaping, chopping wood, and repairing random bits around our property.

Grounds has you working outside 90% of the time and these jobs are like no other. Whether you are chopping down our home-grown Christmas trees or repainting the Chalet, Grounds will give you a workout and memories that last a lifetime.



You might be thinking, "Okay, this sounds insane. I can barely cook for myself, know nothing about landscaping, and my own room is a huge mess. Why would I even attempt to work here?!" And that's because KISC grows people like you wouldn't believe, and after just a couple of weeks, you'll be one extremely capable volunteer.

Don't know how to cook? That's fine, you'll learn! Besides cooking you'll learn lots of other skills to help prepare you for the rest of your life. Personally, my household has never looked so organized and sparkly until my time at KISC. So, who are these different staff? What's a Short Term Staffer?

A Short Term Staff, or Shorties for short, are volunteers that have applied and been accepted to work at KISC during one of the four seasons. The seasons are Autumn, Winter, Spring, and Summer. Autumn and Spring are low-seasons, while Winter and Summer are high-seasons. Each season is three months long and afterwards you can be a Helper, essentially a Shortie without a contract. Three months is a long time, but it's not as long as you would think. So, how can you spend even more time there? Well, you have three options: become a Helper, High Season Staff, or Long Term Staff!

National Venturing Report

A Venturer's Guide to the World Scout Centre

National Venturing Communications Team

High Season Staff come back in the summer to help with the ridiculous amount of guests we have in *high season*. They are just like Short Term Staff but they are usually ex-staff who are coming back just for the high-season in Summer.

Secondly, you can become Long Term Staff. These are the team members that specialize in one area. They manage that area, like House or Grounds, as well as those assigned to work there for the day. They also get paid!

Long Term Staff have an extensive range of time requirements that can fit almost everyone's needs. Only have five months? Apply for High Adventure Assistant! Looking to hone your skills as a chef while managing Shorties and Helpers for a year? Then Catering Manager sounds like your fit.



Want to boost your career as a member of the Senior Management Team for three years? Well, look no further than being our Staff Development Director. As you can see, there is a multitude of different opportunities for you to grow as a member of our Long Term Staff.

During work I had a blast with my friends from around the world, but afterwards the real fun began. Every week we had a Staff Night Out where we had a special evening team activity.

From learning to blacksmith, to playing an advanced version of manhunt in the campsite at night, it's always a fun time on Staff Night Out. Other activities included going out to local restaurants or clubs for some high-energy fun, or chilling in the staff room to watch a movie together.

Nights were never dull and they always brought us that much closer, but not nearly as close as adventuring around the local Swiss towns with Alex, Ari, Maja, and Stephen. Or when Dave, Lovisa, and I went hiking

around the Swiss alps and ate lunch off the edge of a cliff. That's what a potential day off at KISC looks like.

Whether it's to take a break between chapters in your life, to gain international experience, or to engage in a unique opportunity like no other, I highly recommend considering an application for the Kandersteg International Scout Centre.

National Commodore's Corner

Announcing the 2020-2021 National Boatswain



It is my privilege to announce that the National Quarterdeck has selected **Aven Alexander** as the National Sea Scout Boatswain for the 2020-2021 term starting on June 1, 2020. Aven is a Quartermaster Sea Scout with Ship 1, SSS Unique (2018 National Flagship), in **East Texas Area Council** and is presently serving as Southern Region Area 2 Boatswain. She is a Junior at Palestine High School, is active in her school in varsity tennis, in the National Honor Society, as a class representative in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and as the director of an ongoing project to provide emotional and material support to children removed from their families by Child Protective Services. She is also a youth leader in her church, has staffed Vida Nuevas Tres Dias for the past two years, and has earned the religious emblem for her faith.

Aven has been announced as a recipient of the Congressional Award for Youth Gold Medal, which will be presented in June at the Capitol in Washington DC. Aven also has been awarded the U.S. President's Volunteer Service Award Gold Medal.

As a Sea Scout, Aven has earned the Long Cruise, Small Boat Handler, Qualified Seaman, and Sea Scout Advanced Shooter Awards. She is a 2019 SEAL graduate, having completed SEAL in Seattle with Skipper Makin and is a recipient of the Area Sea Scout Leadership Award. She is a Star Scout in Scouts BSA Troop 101G and is on track to be a member of the first class of female Eagle Scouts. She is a Brotherhood member of the Order of the Arrow, serving as Lodge Secretary and member of the Section Conclave 2020 planning team.

Aven attended the week long Aquatic School in Longhorn Council in 2018 where she was certified as a lifeguard and aquatics instructor. Of the 82 participants from Scouts, Venturing, and Sea Scouts, Aven was among the 20 graduates recognized for excellence with the Anchorman Award. She returned to Aquatic School in 2019 as staff assigned as a swimming merit badge instructor, and will be returning again this summer as a senior instructor. She uses the skills learned in Scouting as a lifeguard and swimming instructor at the YMCA.

Aven is a very vocal advocate of Sea Scouting. She has made speeches and presentations at her high school, to veteran's organizations, the Rotary and Lions clubs, to the Child Welfare Board, to public assemblies on the courthouse lawn, has been interviewed twice by two different radio stations, and has been interviewed several times by the newspaper. Aven has the poise, personality, and passion that make her an outstanding representative of Sea Scouting and BSA, which will serve her well in her role as National Boatswain.

The official change of watch ceremony will take place at the BSA's National Annual Meeting in May in Washington DC.

National Commodore's Corner

Sea Scout Manual – 2019 Edition



Since the beginning, the Sea Scout manual has been an evolving document that changed with the times. The 2016 edition incorporated some significant changes – perhaps the biggest of those was the addition of paddlecraft advancement requirements, making true paddlecraft ships a reality. National supply still has a big inventory of those 2016 editions in stock so it'll be a while before another printed edition comes out – but several things have changed since then. Since 2016, we've been making available 'errata' files in the [manual resource center](#) on [seascout.org](#) – if you print those and replace the appropriate pages in your 2016 manual, you can bring it up to current. The ability to update like this was the plan and is why the manual was produced as loose-leaf rather than bound. If like me, you prefer to refer to a downloaded PDF of the manual, you're in luck – the [PDF version available for download](#) has been updated to 2019 so all you need to do is to download a fresh copy. Check the fine print on the title page to make sure you have the correct one – it should say "Updated to October 2019". Either way, please do make sure your manual is up to date so that you're looking at current requirements and standards!

Medical Forms

For the first time in several years, BSA has made some changes to the standard medical forms for 2020. There's no need to panic, they've given us a year to transition – but do remind your people that if they're going in for their annual physical, be sure to use the new form. Read more about this [in Bryan on Scouting](#) along with some good advice as to when you need parts A, B or C but if you don't need that, you can go straight to the form [here](#).

Coast Guard Auxiliary

As I'm sure you saw, the Coast Guard Auxiliary has gone nationwide with our new agreement making us their official



youth program – so any Auxiliary flotilla anywhere can charter a ship, and any Sea Scout youth 14 and up anywhere can join the Auxiliary (whether or not they are in an Auxiliary chartered ship). If you somehow missed that, full details are [here](#) on our website. We have gotten tremendous support from inside the Auxiliary as you can see from the [Sea Scout coverage](#) in the current edition of their magazine, Navigator Express. It even includes an interview with me!

One of the challenges in this new relationship is explaining to our councils (both the professionals and the non-Sea Scout volunteers) what this whole partnership is about. The December newsletter for District Executives included a link to this [8-minute video](#) that tries to explain the essence. If you need to make a similar presentation at a roundtable or whatever, you're welcome to use or adapt

the [slides](#) and the [talking points](#) for your purposes.

And finally, several of you have asked me where to get those navy blue shirts (featured in the [last Commodore's Corner](#)) with both our logo and the Auxiliary logo on the back. We are working with the merchandising folks in the Auxiliary Association to make some things like that available and I expect you'll see some of them appear soon. If there's anything you'd like to see available, let me know and I'll pass it along to that team. I've asked for a Coast Guard orange wicking t-shirt with the Auxiliary logo on one sleeve and ours on the other (so that they're still visible with a life jacket on) but I don't know if I'll get that or not. We'll see!

National Commodore's Corner

By National Commodore

Apply for National (or Regional or Area) Boatswain!



Hannah Carter

National Boatswain 2019-2020

It's time to apply for National Boatswain for the 2020-2021 term – taking office at BSA's National Annual Meeting for a one-year term starting June 1st, 2020.

Since even before I started in Sea Scouts, I knew that I wanted to make a difference in this program. Growing up with an older brother in Sea Scouts was very inspiring; I watched him grow with his shipmates as each of them took on various leadership positions within our local ship. The bonds between my brother and his shipmates made me realize that not only was Sea Scouts the right place for me to be, but also was a place where I could make a difference.

My first season in Sea Scouting consisted of me trying to learn everything I could about the program from other shipmates and my Sea Scout Manual. I wanted to know the structure of the program and what it truly had to offer. As I continued to advance in rank, I ran for leadership positions in my ship such as Crew Leader and Pogy Master. These leadership positions allowed me to feel like I was helping my shipmates by sharing my Sea Scout knowledge and ship skills for them to be successful. Sea Scouts was also the center of my social life so I loved being part of the organization.

As much as I loved helping shipmates on my team, I realized that I wanted to make a greater impact on Sea Scouts as a whole. I ran for Regional Boatswain's mate position as a high school freshman and it influenced me to run keep running for other positions

of greater responsibility. After being a Regional Boatswain's mate for a year, I still knew that I wanted to continue to make an impact on Sea Scouts in the biggest way possible. The next step I took was running for Regional Boatswain, and eventually, National Boatswain. I had aggressive, but attainable goals for myself and Sea Scouts and I knew these leadership positions were the key to getting those goals accomplished. Along the way, I was also fortunate to attend S.E.A.L., a really challenging, but fantastic leadership program, and sail on the USCG Barque Eagle as a Sea Scout representative. I've also been able to sail in two William I. Koch International Sea Scout regattas. I hope to sail in the 2020 regatta, if my college plans permit. The common denominator in all these positions was filling out the application and having a true desire to make a difference. It all starts with the saying yes to taking on a leadership position and saying you want to be a part of the bigger Sea Scouts program.

In order to run for these Regional and National Leadership positions, you don't have to have the longest resume or be the best public speaker, but rather have goals for what you want improved in this program. If you are someone who wants to help other people, or help the Sea Scout program grow, I urge you to apply for these positions. We need people who want to make that difference and make our program the best that it can be.

Please download the application now and consider how you can help. Whether you apply for an area, regional, or national position, you'll meet amazing people from different ships all over the country and have an extraordinary leadership opportunity. Sea Scouts has been the greatest leadership program I've been involved in. I urge you to get involved too.

Applications for National Boatwain are due by February 15th, 2020. For Regional Boatswain, your application is due by March 1st, 2020, and for Area Boatswain, by March 15th, 2020. Please download the application form, fill it out and obtain the appropriate signatures, then upload. Please don't submit your form by email – upload using the form you can access with the button below. You can apply for any combination of National, Regional or Area Boatswain using the same form – there is no need to submit multiple forms.

Hannah Carter

National Boatswain 2019-2020

Download forms and Instructions:

<https://seascout.org/download/national-regional-area-boatswain-application/>

Upload your application:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfu2nVifEPv0UZ_4CPsiirCHqA-KkR4IBcPqwUkAxfgb7tsQ/viewform

Please note: using this form to upload your application will require logging in with a Google account – if you don't have one, just create one, it's free. If you have any questions about the process or issues using the upload form, contact twcook at seascout.org.

Share this:

National Commodore's Corner

By National Commodore

SEAL 2.0

Sea Scout Experience Advanced Leadership Course (SEAL) is a week of adventure and leadership on the water. We have doubled the number of SEAL courses in 2020 to ensure that every Sea Scout who wants to go to SEAL, can go to SEAL, and we've revised and improved the curriculum. Moreover, we will have our first paddlecraft SEAL courses! And for the first time ever, we have SEAL courses being held in all four regions! Applications are now available [here](#) and are being accepted already – don't wait to submit them!

If your Scouts aren't sure about SEAL, have them check out the new SEAL testimonial videos that highlight the benefits and adventure of attending SEAL:

[National Boatswain Hannah on SEAL](#)

[SEAL with Trinity from Texas](#)

[SEAL Seattle with Sea Scout Madi from Ship 993](#)

[Sea Scout Nick from Ship 24 on his SEAL Cruise](#)

[SEAL Prospective from a Skipper](#)



Commodore's Corner: Charlie Wurster

Congratulations to our immediate past National Commodore! Distinguished Eagle Scout, VADM Charlie Wurster (USCG, retired), has been named as one of the 2020 Silver Buffalo award recipients. He and his family will be honored at the 2020 National Annual Meeting of the Boy Scouts of America in May near our nation's capital.

The Silver Buffalo Award, created in 1925, is bestowed upon those who give truly noteworthy and extraordinary service to youth. This award, Scouting's highest commendation, recognizes the invaluable contributions that outstanding American men and women render to youth.

Charlie's contribution to Sea Scouts cannot be overstated. He oversaw the transformation from our legacy Sea Scout program into a new, modern Sea Scouts and laid the groundwork for growth. Here is what I said about that at our change of watch ceremony back in May:

I think that history will look back on Charlie's time as National Commodore as being as transformative a leader as any in the history of Sea Scouts -perhaps only Tom Keane had such a profound impact on our program.

Think of it this way. Charlie brought our beloved but creaky 100-year-old vessel into dry dock, and did a complete refit. He gave her modern navigation systems allowing us to go where we couldn't before – like the ability to have Sea Scout ships on any river that can float a kayak. He gave her a refitted propulsion system including the ability for Power Squadrons and now Coast Guard Auxiliary flotillas to charter ships. He gave her a new crew in the form of a solid and effective National Committee and Regional Commodores. He reflagged her under BSA's flag, rather than Venturing's and in doing so, updated the communication systems and got us back in close contact with our colleagues in the rest of the BSA. He even spiffed her up with a new coat of paint in the form of our new Scout-like uniforms! All that remains is to re-launch the good ship Sea Scouts BSA and get her back underway. If anyone was ever set up for success, it is me, and I owe Charlie profound thanks for that.

I am delighted to see that BSA recognizes Charlie's contribution. Please join me in congratulating Charlie on this outstanding recognition.
Bravo Zulu Charlie!

Sail Aboard the USCG Eagle

by Sea Scouts, BSA

Every summer for over a decade, the Coast Guard has partnered with Sea Scouting to offer a weeklong sailing adventure aboard USCGC EAGLE to a select group of Sea Scouts from around the nation.

What exactly is it like to sail aboard the Eagle? Katie Bruton, a Quartermaster Sea Scout, provided a firsthand account of her life-changing adventure



“We began our voyage in Boston, Massachusetts where we boarded, had a safety briefing, and were assigned to our sleeping areas. During our safety briefing we were reminded that we would get as much out of the opportunity as we put in and that we were expected to do everything with the first year cadets. Some of our duties included preparing meals in the swaying messdeck for the 200 people on board, scrubbing the teak deck with Simple Green and water, polishing the brass for public tours, trimming sails for maximum speed and changing direction, and trying to stay awake in the scorching engine room at 1am. The multitude of lines we heaved and hoed during the week in order to trim the sails left us with dirty and callused hands. During our shifts, we also climbed aloft in some of the 6 miles of standing and running rigging to prepare the twenty-three sails to be set and stowed, used celestial navigation to pinpoint our location, and attended interactive trainings. These trainings included preparing for fire emergencies, man

overboard, abandon ship, and weather safety.

The week of exhausting hard work did have its perks. At the beginning of the week, I, along with many of the cadets, stared at the whale-speckled horizon. We watched dolphins dance through the waves off the bow, did sunrise workouts, laughed at a 2-hour long talent show, and gazed at the glorious sunrises while standing in the rigging above the ship’s deck.

I did not fully realize how amazing the opportunity was until I was 40 feet in the air watching the sunrise come over the surprisingly calm horizon of the Atlantic Ocean between Boston and New York. I knew how uniquely I was seeing the world and I was awestruck by the beauty of it.

Among an endless laundry list of things the experience taught me, is how so many people can come together to accomplish a common goal. Sailing on Eagle gave me a new view on life and I would not trade the experience for the world.”

If you want to see more, check the Sea Scouts, BSA Facebook group from Aug 2018 for photos and posts about the 2018 cruise. You can check the USCGC EAGLE Facebook page as well, but please do not ask the EAGLE about this program on Facebook because they do not administer the selection process for the program – Sea Scouts does.

Do you think you have what it takes to join the crew of the USCGC EAGLE? Apply today!

Apply for SEAL Training 2020

by Sea Scouts, BSA

For the first time ever, SEAL training will be offered in all four regions, at a record setting nine locations! This makes SEAL more accessible than ever before. If you are not familiar with SEAL, it is similar to NAYLE, the BSA’s advanced outdoor leadership training. SEAL is a leadership course where the “laboratory” is a boat you are in command of and the environment changes as fast as the river, lake, bay, or ocean the course is taught on. That is what makes SEAL unique and challenging. Don’t take our word for it, check out what Nick, Madi, and Trintiny had to say about their SEAL experience!

Download the application and take some time to browse the various courses available before submitting before the **March 1st deadline**.

If you have any questions check out the information available at seascout.org/seal or reach out to the National Sea Coordinator, Rob Freas, at seal@seascout.org.

Sea Scout Nick from Ship 24 on his SEAL Cruise

CLICK LINK TO VIEW VIDEO

<https://youtu.be/Ps9PUgeEu7o?list=PLrDm6XxQvjVvSNG6Uf08BcO2pgnbFEzf0>

Mariners Explorer Club

National Sea Scout leader Cassie Johnson is always thinking about how to get more youths involved in Sea Scouts, one of the high adventure wings of the Boy Scouts of America that centers on boating and paddle sports for youth 14-20.

The BSA, of course, has Cub Scouts that takes care of elementary school kids, and Scouts BSA for high school kids. But National BSA leaders wanted to have something to bring in kids in middle school – as well as bring back kids who had quit after Cubs.

So, in early 2013, after 18 months of piloting the program in 17 local Councils, the Learning for Life program of the BSA obtained official approval to start the Exploring Club Career Education Program for young men and women who have completed the fifth grade and are at least 10 years old but have not completed the eighth grade and are not yet 15 years old. The Exploring Club program was created in response to the U.S. Department of Education’s recent emphasis on career education. Cassie wanted to include Sea Scouts in the mix with the group’s own Sea Scout Mariners Explorers Club.

“It’s like a light bulb went off for the national Sea Scout committee,” Cassie said. “The National Sea Scout Support Committee saw the proposed Explorers Clubs and wanted to know if they could add a club designation for Sea Scouts.”

Since Sea Scouts offers a viable path to a maritime career, National BSA officials said yes.

“We recognized immediately that this was a way to teach kids about Sea Scouts before they were old enough to become members,” Cassie said. “We wanted them to be involved before they got to high school, where they have other extra-curricular activities that vie for their time.”

Sea Scout leader Richard Gash in Cleveland, Ohio, was first to do a Mariners Club to promote Sea Scouts. He partnered with the county he lived in and taught boating skill because there are a lot of people using boats on the Great Lakes, Cassie said.

Photos from the Christmas Boat Parade.



Mariners Explorer Club

“It was capturing an age group we weren’t serving well,” she said. “The BSA were losing a lot of kids in middle school. That’s why Explorers Clubs were pioneered and then they were made available to us.”

Cassie started a Mariners Explorers Club three years ago at Spillane Middle School in the Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District. Her unit, Ship 502, “Invincible,” from Foundry United Methodist Church in Jersey Village, Texas -- near Houston -- has landed five new members from the club. (Cub Scouts meet as a pack, Scouts BSA meet in a troop, and Sea Scouts meet as a ship.)

How successful has that Mariners Club been? Four of the five from the club have reached ordinary rank in Ship 502, attended National Youth Leadership Training and also staffed National Youth Leadership Training. During their meetings, junior high youth are taught skills such as knot-tying, throw a heaving line, how to sail on the ocean, rules of sailing, first aid, and other skills that are used by Sea Scouts.

The youth also are invited to watch the Christmas Boat Parade on Clear Lake near Galveston Bay each year, where boats are decorated with Christmas lights and slowly sail down a channel for prizes. And the youths are invited to Trash Bash each spring, where area youth help clean up bayous in Greater Houston, Cassie said.

There is no way yet to know how many Mariners Clubs there are nationally. But they have been very successful in the test markets of Cleveland and Houston.

“It’s just a good idea,” Cassie said. “It makes us more visible in the community and the school. It’s easy because we are doing what the kids in our ship are doing anyway for their advancements, and our youth are leading it. They walk across the street from their high school to the middle school and teach. It’s like they are building their legacy.”

DSC-1280 - Sea Scouts preparing to anchor in Clear Lake near Galveston for the Christmas boat parade.

DSC-1285 – Sea Scouts preparing to anchor in Clear Lake near Galveston for the Christmas boat parade.



Mariners Explorer Club



From left to right –
Boatswain Chris D., Boatswain's Mate Hannah M., Boatswain's Mate Jewel N., Committee Chair
Cassie Johnson, and Boatswain's Mate Campbell M.





2020 NLEEC SUMMIT XPERIENCE

exploring.org/nleec-experience



The National Law Enforcement Exploring Conference Planning Committee is excited to announce that the “2020 NLEEC Experience” will be held at the Summit Bechtel Reserve located in Glen Jean, West Virginia. This is going to be an outstanding location as we lead the charge in creating an unbelievable atmosphere that is unique and a fun experience for our Explorers.

The Summit Bechtel Reserve is going to create opportunities that will enable Explorers to enjoy many of the historical conference traditions alongside the capacity to add new experiences and build new traditions. While we incorporate those historical traditions of week-long competitions, seminars, and exhibits, the “EXPERIENCE” will offer a new high adventure dimension to the NLEEC experience.

the 2020 NLEEC Xperience_FAQ's



NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT CONFERENCE XPERIENCE JULY 13-17, 2020

ONLINE REGISTRATION & POST RESERVATION

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ALL NEW SUMMIT XPERIENCE!

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*EARLY-BIRD REGISTRANTS WILL RECEIVE A
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ONE PATCH PER INDIVIDUAL WITH FULLY PAID YOUTH & ADULT
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INFORMATIONAL ADVISOR CALLS, GO TO
[EXPLORING.ORG/NLEEC-EXPERIENCE/](https://exploring.org/nleec-experience/)



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Northern Lights High Adventure Base Fairbanks, Alaska Celebrating 20 Years of Northern Lights High Adventure Base

This past Summer season marked the 20th anniversary for the Northern Lights High Adventure base, and proved worthy of celebration in every way.

Troops from across the “lower 48” trekked across glaciers, paddled over 150 miles down the legendary Yukon River, hiked above the Arctic Circle, and pitched tents under the midnight sun. Wildfires raged across most of interior Alaska this summer, but fortunately no treks were cancelled and very few rerouted to alternative locations.

Each trek is planned exclusively for the Troop or Crew visiting based on their needs, goals, and expectations. Alaska boasts vast, diverse landscapes, climates, and endless opportunities to explore, which is why Northern Lights High Adventure takes so much time to learn the wishes of each individual Troop or Crew and plan the best possible adventure, down to the very last detail.

Although the majority of treks occur during the Summer season, those wishing to try cold weather camping, snow sports, and maybe catch a glimpse of the aurora borealis might consider a winter trek.

Interested in learning more about visiting the Land of the Midnight Sun? For more information on planning your trek or open guide positions contact Matthew Banaszewski, Director of Northern Lights High Adventure: (907) 452-1976 Matthew.Banaszewski@scouting.org

Space is still available for Summer 2020 and 2021!

Facebook: [facebook.com/NorthernLightsHighAdventureBase](https://www.facebook.com/NorthernLightsHighAdventureBase)

Instagram: [@NorthernLightsHighAdventureBase](https://www.instagram.com/NorthernLightsHighAdventureBase)

Website: alaskahighadventure.com Written

**Written by
Stephanie Kelly, Backcountry Trek Manager and 2018 & 2019 Backcountry Guide.
Photos courtesy NLHA.**

Northern Lights High Adventure Base Fairbanks, Alaska Celebrating 20 Years of Northern Lights High Adventure Base



Sea kayaking off the coast of Valdez, July 2019



Hiking across Root Glacier in Wrangell St. Elias National Park, July 2019 Backpacking



Backpacking in Denali State Park, June 2019



Backpacking in the White Mountains National Recreation Area, July 2019

Sea Scout News

Across the Western Region

Sea Scouts BSA and Coast Guard Auxiliary Partnership

It is now official: Sea Scouts, BSA is the official youth program of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary. With our new partnership now underway, more opportunities will be opening up for us soon. The Coast Guard Auxiliary can now be charter partners of Ships. We will be able to utilize classes and training materials of the USCG Aux to help us with bettering our Sea Scouts' knowledge and abilities. We will also have an increase in adult leadership to help support our existing ships and help with the formation of new ships to come. This is a very exciting time for us with new positive changes.

Bruce Johnson of the National Sea Scout Support Committee has led the rollout of the partnership with a series of webinars, which have been recorded and posted on Facebook and YouTube. You can watch [Introduction to AUXSCOUT](#), [AUXSCOUT Workshop 102](#), and [AUXSCOUT Workshop 201-Standard Operating Procedures](#), on the embedded links to learn more about the partnership known internally by the Coast Guard Auxiliary as "AUXSCOUT"

Sea Scout Ship Propeller Featured in Boys' Life Video



The Sea Scout Ship Propeller from the Chief Seattle Council has hosted Sea Scouts from around the country for SEAL. Check out the new video on the [Boys' Life YouTube channel](#) featuring the Propeller and the SEAL program.

Sea Scout News

Across the Western Region

Seabadge Long Beach

Seabadge will be held at the Long Beach Sea Base on March 6-8, 2020. [Registration is open now.](#)

New Health Forms



The BSA Annual Health Forms will be updated in 2020. Please see the [Bryan on Scouting Blog](#) to see a full description of the new forms. The forms can be [downloaded directly from Scouting.org](#).

SEAL Applications Now Open

Sea Scout Experience Advance Leadership Courses (SEAL) is a week of adventure and leadership on the water. We have doubled the number of SEAL in 2020 to ensure every Sea Scout who wants to go to SEAL, can go to SEAL. Moreover, we will have our first paddlesports SEAL courses in Colorado and Tennessee. [Applications are now available on SeaScout.org](#).

Sea Scout News

Across the Western Region

National Boatswain Hannah on the Benefits of Attending SEAL

Check out National Boatswain Hannah on the [value, adventure, and benefits of SEAL](#). To learn more about SEAL, here are more video testimonials:

[SEAL with Trinity from Texas](#)

[SEAL Seattle with Sea Scout Madi from Ship 993](#)

[Sea Scout Nick from Ship 24 on his SEAL Cruise](#)

[SEAL Prospective from a Skipper](#)

SEAL Courses in 2020



**Twice the number
Sea Scout Experience Advance Leadership
Courses in 2020**

Course	Type
San Francisco Bay, CA	Keelboat
Seattle to Ketchikan	Keelboat
Ketchikan to Seattle	Keelboat
Colorado	Paddlecraft
Tennessee	Paddlecraft
Long Island Sound, NY	Keelboat
Narragansett Bay	Keelboat
Chesapeake Bay, MD	Keelboat
Tidewater, Va	Keelboat
Tampa Bay, FL	Keelboat
Galveston Bay, TX	Keelboat

Websites

National Venturing

<http://www.scouting.org/venturing.aspx>

National Sea Scout

<http://www.seascout.org/>

Central Region Venturing

<http://www.crventuring.org>

Northeast Region Venturing

<http://nerventuring-bsa.org/>

Southern Region Sea Scout

<http://srventuring-bsa.org/wordpress/>

National Exploring

<http://www.exploring.org/>

Yahoo Groups

Central Region

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/crventuring/>

Northeast Region

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/nerventuring/>

Southern Region

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/srventuring/>

Western Region

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wrventuring/>

National

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/venturinglist/>



the FORUM

The FORUM is a National cluster concept and a friendly way to help Scouting Leaders exchange ideas and programs among our Troops, Crews, Ships, Posts, Councils, Areas, Regions and National..

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As always, articles, questions and comments are welcome. Promote Venturing, Sea Scouting and Exploring by promoting your Unit and Council. We are seeking support from anyone interested in working on the newsletter .

Thanks for all you do!

Bob the BEAR Monto—Editor in Chief
Bernie Suess - Webmaster

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