

The FORUM

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

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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.

Scouting Youth Protection Guidelines apply.

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)

On the Proposal to Reduce the Age of Senior Scouting

By Melissa Mader, Venturing Participant



Everyone in Scouting should be aware of The Churchill Project by now. This is the initiative by the National Headquarters of the Boy Scouts of America to preserve the organization in the face of lawsuits dealing with child abuse in Scouting's past. The Churchill Project focuses on six key areas and the National Headquarters is doing the best possible job to try to preserve Scouting in the United States while fairly compensating the victims of abuse. I applaud our leadership.

However, one particular part of their proposal troubles me. The National Headquarters has proposed that all youth Scouting end on a person's 18th birthday. We saw murmurs of this when Scouting created the Venturing Participant membership class. This was done for valid legal reasons since the people between the ages of 17 and 21 are legal adults in the states, but....

Venturing, Sea Scouts and Exploring have long been a safe place for young adults to continue to absorb Scouting ideals and participate in and lead Scouting programs. Not every young person is ready for Scouting programs at age 11 or 14 and as we all know, Scouting is largely out of reach for low-income families in this country because uniforms, registrations, camps, camporees, Philmont, Jamborees, etc. are expensive. Campership programs *are* available but the young adults who really need them do not have access because they can't afford the membership fee. Since camperships are only for registered Scouts, the impoverished looking in from the outside can't apply for them. Allow young people to turn 16 and get jobs and now a few of them join Scouting because they can afford it. I know Venturers who have done this in my crew. If they have to leave on their 18th birthday, they are not likely to bother joining. Scouting is a particularly bright opportunity for these Scouts as it provides them with life skills and resources that will serve them well for the rest of their lives and careers.

For the young adults who do join Scouting, the ability to remain a Scout as they finish high school (many graduate high schools at age 19 and a few at 20) is priceless. Unable to afford university education, or not ready to move away for other reasons, many young people turn to community colleges and continue to participate locally in Scouting until their 21st birthday. Once again, many Venturers in my crew have done this. Scouting provides a source of stability and an infusion of ideals during an otherwise turbulent transition from youth to adulthood.

On the Proposal to Reduce the Age of Senior Scouting

By Melissa Mader, Venturing Participant

“The Senior Division is tiny,” you say; with Exploring being the largest component, then Venturing and then Sea Scouts. “Since it is so small, there is obviously little need for it so we can shed the 18 to 20-year olds without any damage.” This is *not* true. There is a large need for them and not just at the unit level. Camp staffs depend heavily on their 18 to 20-year olds. These members are on staff because they love the program the Boy Scouts of America is allowing them to continue to be a part of. Ask any local camp counselor, they are not in it for the money. If these young adults lose their connection to the program at 18, at the crux between high school and adulthood, many staff will leave earlier as the draw of adult employment strengthens, and scouting will lose them.

Scouting has developed magnificent leadership development programs like National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT) and National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience (NAYLE). Look at how many NYLT Senior Patrol Leaders (SPLs) are over 18 – look at how many NAYLE Senior Crew Leaders (SCLs) are over 18! All of these youth are serious about giving back to the program that gave them so much and if we turn them all into adults on their 18th birthdays we will rob them of the opportunity to provide years of service to younger Scouts as youth leaders. Staffers are often not yet ready to be SCLs until they are 18 because of age requirements to attend these intense programs. Most NYLT courses don’t allow participants until they are 13 and frankly, youth are not ready until they are 14 at least. That means not attending future courses such as NAYLE, until they are 15, not staffing until they are 16. This gives SCLs one year (one course) of staffing experience until they steer the ship next year as SCL. How will these leadership trainings handle this? And all this assumes that the NYLT participants start at age 14. Many do not attend until they are 15 or 16. You can see how the proposal to end scouting participation on the 18th birthday robs these leadership training programs of the youth leadership that is essential to conduct them!

One option would be to have Scouts attend NYLT earlier. This won’t work! In my experience being assigned to be the Crew Guide for the youngest crew at NAYLE, when Scouts attend these trainings too young, it robs them - and sometimes fellow participants, of experiencing the course fully. Another option is for more adult involvement. That is a quick NO. These trainings, just like Venturing, are youth-led and should remain that way. The beauty of having youth staff and being youth-led would be taken away. The threat that this move poses to NAYLE is personal for me because my experience at NAYLE when I was 16 drastically changed the course of my Scouting experience, leading me to get so much out of the program. I am worried for these programs that mean so much to me and other Scouts that have been through them. Our leadership model lacks adequate resources when you rob it of the 18 through 20-year olds.

Another program that I have become involved in is my Council Venturing Officer’s Association (VOA). VOAs are opportunities for experienced, competent Venturers to lead at the council level. During my time in the CVOA, I used my experience as a seasoned trainer to provide trainings across the Council that are mandatory for advancement. Others programs my CVOA led covered more areas of the ALPS (Adventure, Leadership, Service & Personal Growth) advancement model, and built a network of active Venturers across the council. We also represent Venturers at council executive meetings. VOAs rely on Venturers with substantial experience at the crew level. That takes a couple years to obtain. Leaving Venturing at the 18th birthday precludes joining the VOA since that is about the age when Venturers have enough leadership experience to be effective in a VOA. I joined my Council VOA at 18. After serving on Council VOAs, Venturers move up to Area VOAs, then Regional, and finally National. To be able to move through all four levels without skipping would mean joining the CVOA the same year you join Venturing. That would not make for effective, knowledgeable CVOA leadership. This proposal disqualifies the already meager population of Venturers interested in serving on VOAs.

On the Proposal to Reduce the Age of Senior Scouting

By Melissa Mader, Venturing Participant

Ending Venturing at 18 makes it a 4-year program while Scouts BSA continues to be a 7-year program. Scouts have from age 11 to 18 to earn Eagle; many don't Eagle until late in their 17th year. Why would we think Venturers could achieve Summit in 4 years? The Venturing program needs all 7 years to be effective, just like Scouts BSA does. We can't make up for the loss of three years by having Venturing start younger. Venturing is a program for more mature youth; they have more privileges and responsibilities. That is the draw of our program. As an experienced Venturing participant, I see this so clearly.

Having a 7-year program also casts a larger net to attract more participants for our program. Everyone matures at different rates and we need a wide age window to be of the most service to our young adults. I think that keeping the current age limits on the Senior Division participants is essential.

Some Scouts BSA leaders have expressed a concern that Venturing bleeds members from their units. My experience has been that this is not true. Venturing merely provides a place for Scouts, who are looking for more ways to participate, after they age out of troops. Venturers return to their Scout units to serve as leaders to meet Venturing requirements. Venturing also offers Scouts an opportunity to continue to be a member in the BSA when their interests depart from the main focus of their troop. Senior Division programs also provide a place for young people who missed Scouts BSA by providing a similar program keyed to an older audience. The Senior Division programs pick up members that would otherwise have no way to enter the Boy Scouts of America and they provide dynamic leadership opportunities that make young people more knowledgeable, skilled, better teachers and better leaders. In fact, better at everything the modern workplace demands!

A compromise I have seen tossed around is to create a *Rover* program. Rovers is a program for young adults who have aged out of Scouting but still want to participate rather than just serve as adult leaders. Rovers are a common part of Scouting around the world but not currently supported by the BSA. The program gives those who need it a place to socialize and do scouting activities with their peers in the early adult age group. Many simultaneously also serve as adult leaders. I would argue for adding a Rover program in the BSA for those aged 21 to 26 to keep camp staff interested but it doesn't help solve the problem of youth leadership. Rovers is an *adult* program.

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I don't know if the National Board is amenable to input from their constituents. If they are, I hope they will actively resist this initiative to end scouting for everyone in BSA at age 18. It is a huge mistake and will hurt the entire program in many ways. Most notably, it will rob the program of essential youth leadership and move Scouting further away from a youth led model. That movement is dangerous to the livelihood of Scouting as a whole.

Please take the time to let the National Board know how you feel. You can contact them at this address with your thoughts.

Mr. Roger Mosby, CEO
Boy Scouts of America
1325 West Walnut Hill Lane
P.O. Box 152079
Irving, Texas 75015-2079

If you have to send an email, you can use this address but a letter to Mr. Mosby is likely to be most effective! Don't procrastinate, do it now!

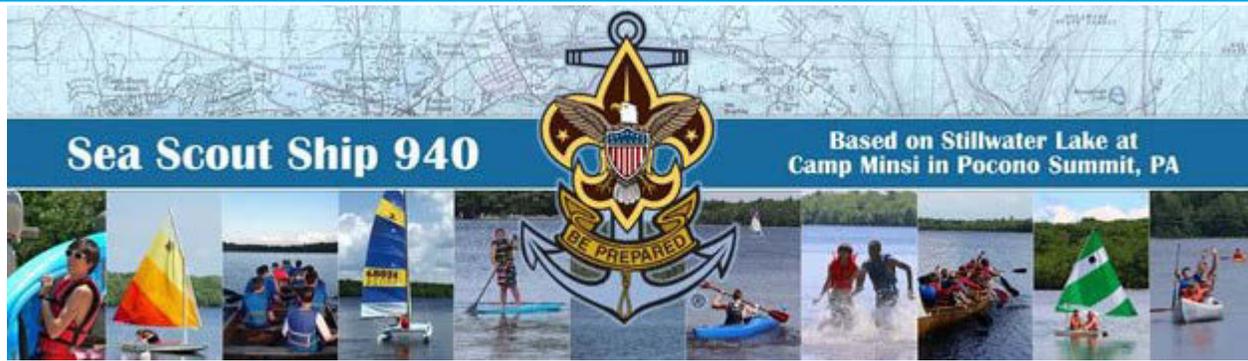
PR@scouting.org

You should also write your Council Board and Council Executive to let them know how you feel. Councils are independent corporations who send voting members to the National Meeting so addressing this issue to them is equally important.

About the Author

Melissa Mader is a Venturing participant in Crew 27 of the National Capital Area Council. She holds Outdoor Bronze Rank, the Pathfinder Award and is an ordeal member of the OA. She has served in a number of Crew leadership positions including Crew President. She has led NYLT both as a staff member and a Senior Patrol Leader and has also staffed NAYLE, NYLT Leadership Academy and Woodbadge. She holds the Council Venturing Leadership Award. A rising sophomore at the University of Maryland, when Philmont closed this summer, she enrolled in a very selective Scouting Aviation Maintenance Experience in Water & Woods Council (Michigan) where senior division scouts and older Scouts BSA youth spend seven weeks rebuilding an actual Cessna aircraft from parts under the supervision of FAA licensed mechanics. She spent this last year serving as VP-Communication for her CVOA (after turning 18).





YOU ARE INVITED – LIVE WATER EVENT – SUNDAY AUGUST 2nd

1 pm to 5 pm, at Camp Minsi's Aquatics Base, 106 Camp Minsi Road, Pocono Summit, PA

THIS EVENT IS OPEN TO PERSPECTIVE NEW MEMBERS. Come learn about Sea Scouts – the BSA's water-based high adventure program for young women and men ages 14 through 20.

Sea Scouts is not just "sea" or "ships". It is any water-based activity the Ship's members (a "ship" like a Scout "troop") decide to experience:

- Whitewater rafting, tubing, canoeing, paddle boards, kayaking
- Sailing Sunfish, boards, Hobie Cats
- Snorkeling, SCUBA, swimming
- Fly and spinner fishing
- Visiting a Coast Guard installation and ship tour
- Assisting the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary safety activities
- And anything fun on, in around and under the water !

Sign up:

Please let us know if you are coming and the total number of family and friends coming by emailing us at: <mailto:contact@ship940.org>.

Please bring a completed Sea Scout application with you in case you like what you see. They can be found at: ship940.org. There is no additional registration fees if you are already a Scout or Venturer.

Event Activities:

- Sail boarding
- Paddle boarding
- Spin rod fishing workshop (bring your rod if you have one)
- Kayaking – plastic
- Kayaking – whitewater competition style
- Canoeing – whitewater competition style 2-person

Agenda:

- 1 pm to 3 pm - Arrive and activity time
- 3 pm to 4 pm – Ship meeting. Elect Officers. Discuss upcoming adventure trips.
- 4 pm to 5 pm – Optional. Open activity time.

VISIT US AT ship940.org or contact us at <mailto:contact@ship940.org>

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/>

Western Region's Commodore's Corner

Commodore's Minute

Hello Western Region

I hope everyone is continuing to be safe and well. As we continue to move forward with our new ways of life with Covid19, I remain hopeful that we will be resuming normal operations sometime in the near future. Please continue to follow all the guidelines and policies of your local county and state so we can keep each other as safe as possible.

Our motto for this year is "No Ship Gets Left Behind." As we continue to focus on growth, we need to have an equal focus on retention. We have too many ships that are in the dark with little to no communication with the Area. We are slowly filling the vacant Council Commodore positions throughout the region but this process is slow going. Every Skipper needs to know who their Council and Area Commodores are. The Council and Area Commodores are here to support Skippers with keeping Ships running smoothly, plus help with issues that may be impeding growth and retention. Skippers please reach out before your Ship gets in trouble or to the point of no recovery



There has been a change of watch for WR Area 1: Deidre Baumgarten will now be at the helm as the new WR Area 1 Commodore. Deidre is a long time serving Sea Scouter and Adult Leader with tremendous organization and communication skills that will serve WR Area 1 well. Deidre will be forming her staff and implementing her plan for growth and retention for WR Area 1. Please give Deidre a warm welcome when you see or hear from her. Welcome aboard Deidre!

I want to thank Al Bruce for his many years of service of support and dedication to Sea Scouts. Al has been very steadfast with supporting the Nor'Wester Regatta, SEAL onboard the Propeller, and activities across WR Area 1. Thank you Al!

Jordyn Alexis, past Western Region Boatswain will now be working with the Regional Quarterdeck. Jordyn will be working with the Growth and Retention Committee to help keep track of our number of ships and to help support the Area Commodores with communication with council's that have low ship numbers. Thank you Jordyn for continuing to serve the Region!

I want to say thank you to all the Skippers who have been adaptive with their meetings and training through social media. It's been really great seeing you all broadcast your ships. Without your creativity we wouldn't be staying afloat. Keep up the great work!

This year has been a rough one for us. Please stay strong and dedicated. We will win this fight and come out stronger than ever. Everyone of us matters and everyone of us is the key to success and our future!

Stay strong,

Greg Harden

Western Region Commodore

Western Region's Commodore's Corner

Meet the New WR Area 1 Commodore



Spending her teenage years on the SSS Pathfinder in The Dalles, OR, Deidre Baumgarten joined the adult leadership ranks in 2001 in Northern CA. She was an instrumental part of the Safety @ Sea program in San Francisco for 13 years. She has served at the Western Region Level for several years, and upon moving to Oregon, her daughter became of Sea Scouting age and insisted on starting their own ship, bringing Sea Scouts back to The Dalles, OR, along with the original flagship, the Pathfinder. Her son is now the only youth in The Dalles that is multi-registered in both Scouting and Sea Scouts.

Outside of scouting, Deidre enjoys traveling, getting outdoors, camping, sailing, and kayaking.

Feel free to contact her at: Area1Commodore@gmail.com

Recorded Webinars

Weather: Coast Guard Tech Talks [Coast Guard Tech Talk - Weather](#)

Snorkeling Tips for Sea Scouts [Snorkeling Tips for Sea Scouts](#)

Rules of the Road (Part 1) [Rules of the Road, Part 1](#)

Rules of the Road (Part 2) [Rules of the Road, Part 2](#)

Coast Guard Tech Talk: Celestial Navigation [Coast Guard Tech Talk: Celestial Navigation](#)

Ground Tackle for Sea Scouts [Ground Tackle](#)

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/>



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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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rmonto47@gmail.com

Use the email account you want to receive the FORUM and give Full name and Council to place you in the right email list.