



TROOP 31

SERVING THE YOUTH OF RAMSEY, NJ SINCE 1912
WWW.BSA-TROOP31.ORG

2011 **DECEMBER** 2011

Well, the holiday season has arrived! It's a wonderful time to spread some holiday cheer: Spend some quality time with family and friends. Say "Hi!" to your neighbors. Reflect on how you are living by the Scout Oath and Law. Visit your house of worship. It's a great time to catch up on things. That could be schoolwork, a book you'd like to finish, master a game (but not at meetings!), a phone call to say thanks for the gift!

It's also a good time to see where you stand in the Troop. Am I doing my best? Am I mentoring a younger Scout? Do I need help in finding out what I am responsible for in my position? Am I on track for advancement? What about my Merit Badges? Only one person can answer these questions: Look in any mirror and you'll find him.

The Adult Leaders of this Troop are here to help and assist you on your Trail to Eagle. Remember, it is YOUR TRAIL, and how far you get on the trail is up to you!

At this time I'd like to wish the entire Troop 31 Family a Very Merry Christmas, a Happy Hanukkah, and a Joyful New Year!

Yours in Scouting, *Mr. M. McKiever* ~ Scoutmaster, Troop 31

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Upcoming Events Mark-Your-Calendar 6 weeks out (details on following pages)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>What</i>	<i>Where & how</i>
Friday, 12/16	DEADLINE	Signup for Saturday, 1/7 <i>Cradle of Liberty Council's Cold Weather Training Seminar</i>	Firestone Resource Center, Wayne, PA. Permission slip and \$0 to ASM Baxer. We need firm commitments in the form of submitted permission slips! One or two adults and scouts (each) MUST attend this training in order for anyone to attend the 2/17 – 2/19 100th Annual Valley Forge Pilgrimage and Encampment (see below).
Saturday, 12/17 Sunday, 12/18	Sign up for duty slots!	<i>Christmas Tree Sale</i> (only a few trees left ...)	Ramsey High School tennis courts
Monday, 12/19	6 – 9P	Troop Holiday Party!	Ramsey High School. Movie! Pizza! Drawing! Special time! 6 – 9P!!
Wednesday, 12/28	3 – 6P	<i>Annual Indoor Rock Climbing</i>	The Gravity Vault, Rt. 17 North, Upper Saddle River. Permission slip AND waiver to ASM Keith Kaplan no later than 12/22.
January 2012			
Monday, 1/2	7:30 – 9P	PLC	Ramsey High School. SPL, ASPLs, & PLs only!
Wednesday, 1/4	7:30 – 9P	Dragon & Lightning Patrol meeting	Masonic Lodge
Saturday, 1/7	6A – late afternoon	<i>Cradle of Liberty Council's Cold Weather Training Seminar</i>	Firestone Resource Center, Wayne, PA. The 1 - 2 adults and scouts (each) who MUST attend this seminar will later train all other Troop attendees to the 2/17 – 2/19 100th Annual Valley Forge Pilgrimage and Encampment outdoor winter tent camping weekend.
Monday, 1/9	5:45–8:15P	<i>Snow Tubing at Campgaw</i>	Campgaw Mountain, 200 Campgaw Rd., Mahwah. Permission slip to ASM Odin by 12/19; complete Campgaw's tubing release form on their website at http://www.skicampgaw.com
Saturday–Sunday, 1/14 – 1/15	Sat 7A – Sun 12N	<i>Winter Cabin Camping</i>	Peterson Lodge, Camp Turrell, Dow Drukker Scout Reservation, Cuddebackville, NY. Limited to the first 18 scouts and 6 adults with permission slip with \$35 to ASM Baxer, no later than 12/15. Only 13 scout and 4 adult spots are still available!
Monday, 1/16	7:30 – 9P	Troop Meeting	Ramsey High School
Tuesday, 1/17	7 – 9P	<i>Scout Swim at Rockland County College</i>	Rockland County College, to work on 1st Class swim requirements. Contact Joe Odin at odinj01@excite.com . More details soon!

Wednesday, 1/18	7:30 – 9P	Dragon & Lightning Patrol meeting	Masonic Lodge
Saturday, 1/21		2012 Klondike Derby	Shepherd Lake, Ringwood, NJ. Email blast with details to come!
Monday, 1/23	7:30 – 9P	Troop Meeting	Ramsey High School
Thursday, 1/26	7:30P	Committee Meeting	Ramsey Municipal Building
Saturday, 1/28	6:30A – 11A	Saint John's Soup Kitchen	Newark, NJ. Permission slip to Mr. Watters by 1/28. See permission slip for transportation details.



Medical form updates! The BSA now requires that the Troop hold copies of all Scouts' medical forms and carry them on all outings (day or overnight) in which a Scout participates. Their latest medical form for all scouts and adults [is now available on the BSA site](#). Please make sure you **have an updated form on file** with the Troop in order to be eligible to **participate in all outings!** *Questions?* Please contact **Stuart Zweighaft** at sjayzee@aol.com or at **201-394-6187**.

Outings details

1. **December 28, 3P – 6P: Annual Indoor Rock Climbing.** What are you doing this holiday break? Rather than “climbing the walls” at home while the snow accumulates outside, come join Troop 31 at the Gravity Vault on Wednesday December 28th for a fun-filled afternoon of indoor rock-climbing. Whether you're a first-time climber looking to "learn the ropes" or an experienced outdoorsman just yearning for a clear day to get some climbing in, the Gravity Vault offers a variety of challenges suitable for any climber. New climbers will be trained in proper rock-climbing technique and will have plenty of opportunity to become proficient climbers by day's end.
 - All participants should wear sneakers and comfortable clothing.
 - Harnesses will be provided.
 - Please feel free to bring a friend, perhaps introduce to the excitement of scouting (this outing satisfies First Class requirement #10).
 - [Permission slip](#) AND [waiver](#) with \$22 to ASM Keith Kaplan no later than Dec. 22.
 - *Questions?* ASM Keith Kaplan

2. **January 9, 5:45P – 8:15P: Snow Tubing at Campgaw Mountain!** What is more fun in the winter than tubing with your friends? Save time to sip hot cocoa by the fire, too! Just what the doctor ordered to overcome those post holiday/back-to-school blues.

Itinerary:

- Return [permission slip](#) to ASM Odin by 1/5.
- We'll meet at Campgaw Mountain at 5:45P on 1/9 inside the new pavilion.
- Be sure to have your guardian sign the Campgaw tubing release form as well. The form is not yet available but may be available prior to the event online at the Campgaw website: <http://www.skicampgaw.com>
- Guardian pick up at Campgaw Mountain at 8:15P.
- Bring money for some hot cocoa if desired.
- *Questions?* ASM Odin at odinj01@excite.com

3. January 7: Cradle of Liberty Council's Cold Weather Training Seminar, Firestone Resource Center, Wayne, PA, in preparation for the 2/17 – 2/19 *100th Annual Valley Forge Pilgrimage and Encampment* outdoor winter tent camping weekend (see below). See permission slip for transportation details.

- The Troop **MUST** send one or two adults and one or two scouts to this training, in order to train all other Troop attendees for the *Encampment* weekend in February.
- No cost, but [permission slip](#) required by Friday, 12/16 to ASM Baxer.
- *Questions?* ASM Baxer

4. January 14 – 15: Return to Peterson Lodge for an overnight winter cabin camping trip! The Lodge is located in Camp Turrell, part of the Dow Drukker Scout Reservation in the southern Catskills in Cuddebackville, NY. Last year, we had a great time on this outing, with a roaring fire, sledding down a camp trail, walking across the entire frozen lake, exploring wild animal tracks, and having a snowball fight at the rock quarry!

- As usual, the daytime activities will depend on the weather.
- Of course, you will also have the excitement of cooking on open stoves in winter weather.
- Peterson Lodge sleeps 24 and has mattresses, electricity, and a wood burning stove.
- The trip will be limited to the first 18 scouts and 6 adults that return the [permission slip](#) with \$35 to ASM Baxer, no later than December 15. **Only 13 scout and 4 adult spots are still available!**
- *Questions?* ASM Baxer

5. January 21: Ramapo Valley 2012 Gold Rush Klondike Derby! Many years ago, men raced across the Canadian frozen wilderness by means of dogs and sleds. Scouting has taken this idea and come up with the idea of the Klondike Derby as an activity for

Boy Scouts. This year's Klondike will be a day packed with activities that mimic what explorers might have encountered during the 1896 Klondike Gold Rush. Some of the activities test life-or-death skills, such as first aid and building a fire, and some are just fun. There will be separate competitions for younger scout sleds and older individual scouts. The 2012 Klondike Derby will be held at Shepherd Lake Recreation Area, Ringwood State Park. Look for an upcoming e-mail blast for ASM contact information and the permission slip.

- 6. January 28: Annual Saint John's Soup Kitchen service.** It is time once again for an annual trip to Saint John's Soup Kitchen in Newark on January 28. This is a trip that not only gives you four hours of service credit, but also opens your eyes to a world that many people don't want to see. Saint John's Soup Kitchen serves over 200 people each day, for breakfast and lunch. Come one, come all! We will be leaving, bright and early, at 6:30A and will be back to Ramsey by about 11A. If you have any questions, please e-mail Mr. Watters at twatters@wattersfinancial.com.
- 7. February 17 - 19: The 2012 Pilgrimage and Encampment in the Valley Forge National Park.** This outdoor winter tent camping weekend event is run by the Cradle of Liberty Council and is the longest continuously running Scouting event in the world. This year will be the 100th annual visit to Valley Forge, and the theme of the weekend will be to honor General George Washington. You will get to explore the Park, stop in at the Visitors Center, and attend the program events set up by Cradle of Liberty Council. This event is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate your Scout skills! In order to attend the Encampment, you **must**:
- Receive training from those who attended the *Cradle of Liberty Council's Cold Weather Training Seminar*.
 - Return the [Encampment permission slip](#) and \$60 to ASM Baxer by 1/18.
 - *Questions?* ASM Baxer

Troop news ~ needs ~ no-no's ~ NOWs!

Meeting schedule & locations.

- "Monday Patrols" 7:30P at [Ramsey High School](#)
- "Wednesday Patrols"—Dragon and Lightning—first and third Wednesdays, 7:30P at the Masonic Lodge
- PLCs: Beginning in October, PLCs are held on the first Monday of each month at 7:30P at Ramsey High School. PLCs require SPL, ASPLs, Scribe, QM, and all Patrol Leaders.
- *Questions?* Scoutmaster McKiever mmc57@optonline.net

Important information for future Eagles: There is a new Eagle Workbook for all Eagle Scout candidates. National BSA has made the booklet available on their website. There have been several changes in the procedures and the way a candidate records his information. The Merit Badge requirement remains the same (21 MBs). All Scouts should familiarize themselves with the new booklet and its contents, which can be accessed at <http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/resources.aspx>.

Troop 31 Turns 100! As you may know, Troop 31 is one of the oldest Troops in the country. *In 2012*, we will be celebrating 100 years of continuous service to the Scouts of the Ramsey community.

We have several activities planned throughout the year. Our activities include (tentatively):

- Beefsteak Dinner
- Centennial Reception
- Troop 31 Showcase at Finch Park (free to the public)
- Historical Journal (available throughout the year)

We have an immediate need for volunteers to help us make all our events successful. Please call Claudia Perkins at: 201-679-8545 to get your name on our list. Thank you!



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Please make sure that we have your correct email address! If you are not receiving the newsletter email, check your spam filter for email from Troop31@ebiztechonline.com Go green if you can, but alternatively, a mailed hardcopy newsletter can be requested through the Webmaster or Scoutmaster.