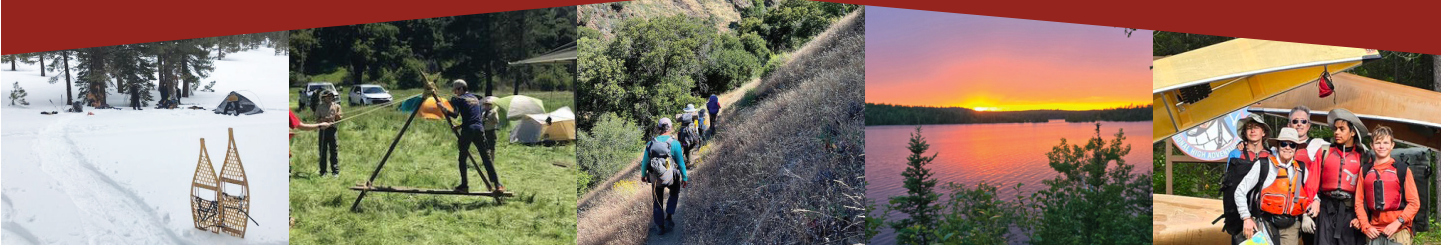


# Troop 26

2024 Year-End Newsletter



## Scout Master Minute

Hello friends of Troop 26,

We have had a year full of great outdoor adventures and public service!

Our Scouts plan the event calendar 12-18 months in advance. With the help of our uniformed Scoutmasters and the support of the parent committee, the Scouts trekked by canoe on the Canadian Boundary Waters, snow-camped in the Sierras, backpacked at Big Sur, and had a superb first experience at Camp H-Sierra summer camp. Every month there are hikes, overnights, biking, canoeing, and/or service projects. Nine Scouts achieve Eagle Rank. One of our Scouts was the first ever in Los Padres Council to earn the BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award. Our troop grew to 50 Scouts and 47 adult leaders (including 13 trained ASMs).

In 2025, our Scouts will go to Camp Emerald Bay, backpack in the Emigrant Wilderness, and enjoy the many other events on our busy calendar. In 2026, the troop is planning our first trip to BSA Florida Sea Base. Sam and Donna Soga continue to provide friendship bread for every outing, to maintain our connection to past Scouts and our troop traditions.

We continued our tradition of community service projects, including help at Memorial Day and Wreaths Across America projects, filling sandbags with two tons of sand and placing them strategically around St. Mark Church for storm protection, eradicating invasive species from a beach nature preserve, and many more.

When American youth are hooked on smartphones and traditional values are questioned, our Scouting program is the antidote. We prepare young men for a life of leadership and public service under the Scout Law and Oath.

This year, the Sunrise Rotary of Santa Barbara made a special gift to Friends of Troop 26 to start a special fund for financial aid for some of our more expensive trips. We call it the Troop 26 Sunrise Opportunity Unbound Fund. We also appreciate contributions that help us maintain and replace equipment and invest in community service projects.

Please help us continue the great traditions of Troop 26:

- **Give to our charity, Friends of Troop 26**, which funds equipment purchases and helps our families pay for more expensive adventure trips. (Friends of Troop 26 Santa Barbara, 311 E. Carrillo Street ste D, Santa Barbara CA 93101 IRS 501(c)(3) EIN 842524919.)
- Follow us at [troop26.net](http://troop26.net) and on Facebook.
- Spread the word about Troop 26, as this is a great source of recruits and volunteers.
- Volunteer to help as a registered adult or other volunteer.

Thank you for helping our Scouts. Onward and upward!

Yours in Scouting,

Mike Schley SM



26

# Troop 26

2024 Year-End Newsletter

## COR Corner

Charter Organization Representative – Paul Weakliem

Many things have stayed the same: we still meet at St. Mark United Methodist, have the troop room, and do projects for them – this year, two Eagle candidates replaced the pre-school fence, and dealt with some ongoing drainage issues. However, on the administrative side, the 'charter organization' of the troop is now 'Friends of Troop 26', a 501(c) set up to help enable the scouts to get the most out of scouting, in a large part by supporting the outdoor part of our mission.



When the organization was set up a few years ago, I figured if we could raise enough in a year to buy a tent or two, we'd be doing well. I have been proved wrong, as people have been willing to contribute both small and large amounts to the mission. Many scout families have decided to give back to the troop that meant so much to them. We were touched when a former ASM showed up, unannounced with a generous check and said he and his wife thought it was the right thing to do. Even people who are simply acquaintances, but believe in the Scouting mission have donated. The Rotary

recently donated to enable a 'Troop 26 Sunrise Opportunity Unbound Fund' to help support Scouts going on some of our big trips, such as summer camp, or a High Adventure, or Jamboree. We've been able to replace most of the aging camping equipment. Like many other things, the fees to be a scout have increased, as have the costs of trips, but we're able to offset some of these costs, especially for those who it might be a financial burden.

If you can, we invite you to give back with a tax deductible donation in any amount. All of the legal costs have been donated by Scoutmaster Schley and his law firm, so close to 100% of the money goes into supporting the troop. And even if you can't chip in this year, we'd love to hear back from you. The scouts always get a kick out of hearing about what former scouts are up to – when they look at photos, hear stories, or look at the Eagle carving with all of the names, they always get a kick when they recognize a name!

Friends of Troop 26 Santa Barbara, 311 E. Carrillo Street ste D, Santa Barbara CA 93101  
IRS 501(c)(3) EIN 842524919.

## Manzana Narrows Overnight Backpacking

Our June backpacking trip took us again into the Los Padres National Forest in the San Rafael Wilderness north of Santa Barbara with a good group of more than twenty leaders and scouts. Manzanita is a Spanish word for apple; some sources report that Manzanita wilderness was called this because in the 1870's there was a large apple orchard here. Others speculate it possibly refers to the large number of Manzanita bushes that grow along parts of the creek. The Chumash Indians used this land for hunting, gathering and accessing water sources in the area and were known to eat the fruit of the Manzanita bush. The

*continued on next page*



## Inyo Craters Snowshoe Camping

In preparation for our backpacking trip into the snow, we started before Christmas and made our own snowshoes of wood and leather strappings. Leaving Santa Barbara on Friday with three leaders and seven scouts we made our way up Highway 395 stopping in Bishop where we spent the night in a church. Saturday morning, geared up at the trail head with warm clothing, backpacks and our new snowshoes, scouts and leaders both headed uphill toward the Craters. It was a sunny morning with a very blue sky and partially up the trail it was warm enough to strip off the outer jackets. Finding a great spot, we set up camp by digging out where the kitchen, tents and fire would be located. After a cozy night sleep in our tents and a breakfast of oatmeal and dried fruit, the camp packed up, and we continued up the hill to the Inyo Craters. The two southern craters are 660 feet in diameter and over 200 feet deep with lakes in the bottom. It was fun experiencing the results of the volcanic explosion with all the other scouts. Hiking out that same day, we came across a dog sled team and we were given banana bread which was a great way to end our trip. Jack G.

# Troop 26

2024 Year-End Newsletter

## Camporee

We headed to Camporee with an enthusiastic 12 parents and leaders and 28 scouts this Spring. This was our annual district-wide gathering of



all Scout Troops for camping, cooking, and friendly competitions at Rancho Alegre. The highlight of the camp for some was probably getting our new influx of younger Scouts to experience the trip. The more experienced scouts focused on these new scouts, putting the scouts in the forefront for the flag ceremony, flag raising, first aid, hatchet throwing and fire starting. From these efforts the younger Scouts learned a number of new skills and it was great fun teaching them. Everyone had a good time and the experienced were particularly impressed that the scouts trained on the hatchet throwing were pretty good.

Leonardo H reminded us that camp is focused on team building exercises for all the scouts. It is important to meet with your patrol ahead of time and plan the events between the senior and younger scouts. Be prepared for teaching first aid, fire prevention, fire starting and don't forget, it's not about the more experienced scouts, it's about the younger scouts. A great weekend we look forward to next year. Jack G.

## Northern Tier

In June 2024, eight Scouts and five adult leaders set out on a 6-day canoe camping journey from Ely, Minnesota, exploring the Canadian Boundary Waters.

The Scouts had prepared for two years, with regular paddling excursions on Lake Cachuma and with careful packing and planning for the adventure.

Our contingent broke into two crews, each with an experienced BSA Northern Tier Guide. Each crew traveled 50-60 miles, mostly paddling but also portaging between lakes and rivers, carrying their canoes and bags of food and equipment and gear.

These Californios had never trekked in a place where there is more water than land. We will never forget the quiet solace, broken only by the soft sound of the paddle in water and the frequent bird calls.



## Manzana Narrows continued

trailhead was originally called Manzana Camp. However, during the Great Depression the US government spent money under the terms of the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) to build the road and parking lot. Thus, the work camp was renamed NIRA and the camp we backpacked into was named Manzana Narrows. The easy six mile hike up the rocky trail was scenic walking along the creek. There was plenty of water and many calm pools. The evening meal was memorable because the temperature was cold and the food was good and hot. Liam told us on this trip he did not complete any rank or badges but he and the other scouts did get a decent amount of signoffs on their blue cards. His advice for the next trip is to make sure you have a properly fitted backpack and to not carry too much weight. Good advice for all trips!



# Troop 26

2024 Year-End Newsletter



## Camp Hi- Sierra

Camp Hi-Sierra is located on the south side of the Sierra Nevada mountains near Sonora, CA and has a rich history. Before the 1840's the area was occupied by the Miwok Indians and occasionally an artifact can be found testifying to the generations these Indians spent along the banks of the river. Just below the dining hall a grinding hole exists in the rocks where the Miwok ground acorns and pine nuts for food. In the early 1900's a sawmill, named Brown Mill was set up on the site of Camp Hi-Sierra. This logging continued until there was no more timber to log. An enormous pile of sawdust was created by the mill and is now the archery range.

In 1949, after an exhaustive search, the Santa Clara Council of BSA bought 100 acres for \$10. During the years that followed, much through volunteer work, the existing buildings were erected. Because of their devotion, we had the opportunity to experience this beautiful site in the forest learning to be self-reliant and resourceful. Many of us took advantage of the time to work on our badges and get sign-oAs on some of our activities. There were many different troops at the camp, perhaps nine or ten. And, the week we attended was very hot and a highlight of the camp was the water, a place to cool off. Two memorable meals were the mac & cheese dinner and pancakes for breakfast, favorites for the scouts. We look forward to another year at Camp Hi-Sierra.

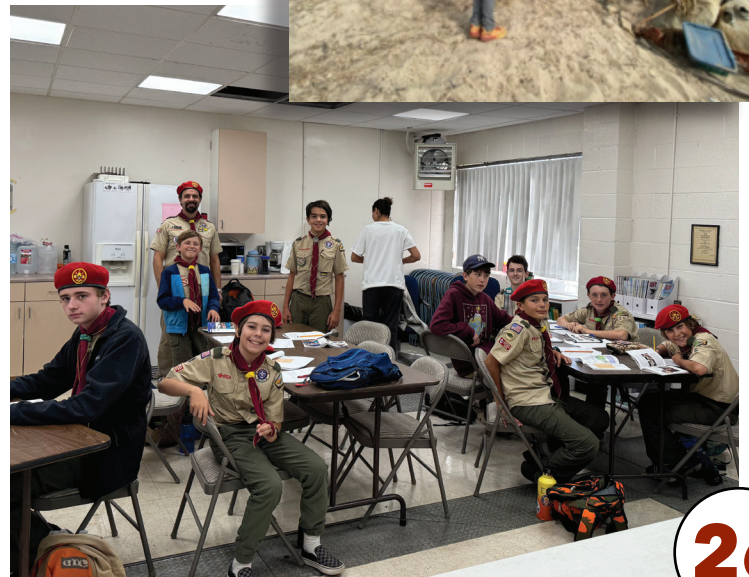
## East Beach Restoration Project

On Saturday we congregated at the Santa Barbara East Beach nature restoration area with about eight scouts. The object of the service project was to eliminate non-native weeds and plants from the area around habitat. A representative from the county gave us direction as to which plants to save and which to eliminate. We did a pretty good job of cleaning up and left the debris in several piles to be picked up later. Fortunately, it was an overcast morning and not too hot and although it was a lot of work it was satisfying to be part of the bigger effort of preserving the habitat for native plants, birds and animals. An abundance of yummy donuts sustained our hard work! Jack G.



## Radio Merit Badge Workshop

Several weeks before our trip to the radio facility, we all met via Zoom for a preparation class to learn about the technical requirements for the amateur radio license. On Saturday, Mr. Hannotte and four other leaders accompanied eleven scouts to the Lompoc Amateur Radio Club. There we met up with a member of the club, a scoutmaster from another troop who taught us about the radios and how the radio waves transmitted locally and around the world. We were then able to communicate via short-wave radio with people in other areas of the United States. It was really fun, we had a nice lunch and without having to do a lot of bookwork we learned the basics of amateur radio. As a bonus, we were given the opportunity to get our Ham Radio License from the FCC by taking a test and we obtained our Radio Merit Badge in just one day. Evan H.



# Troop 26

2024 Year-End Newsletter

## Piedra Blanca

Early Saturday morning we met at the Big 5, divided up the food amongst the scouts and drove up to the trail head to start our backpacking trek. With 13 scouts and 4 leaders we hiked up the gentle slope for 4.2 miles at a very modest pace to the Piedra Blanca Campground. True to its name, Piedra Blanca, we hiked through a patch of white rock with strange formations which we learned to be sandstone and carbonate formed millions of years ago. Mr. Hey gave us a geology lesson on the structure of the rocks around us. We learned the

difference between carbonate and sandstone and that years ago, this area would have been at the bottom of the ocean. The holes in the sides of the rocks were formed and became smooth as the acidic rain wore them down by neutralizing the base carbonate. We were very fortunate to have an expert accompany us on the trip.

The trip with many younger scouts backpacking for the first time, literally learned "how to carry their own weight" up the trail, contributing to the group effort. Mr. Schley spent some time teaching orienteering and several of the scouts worked on requirements for their cooking badge. Not only did we all achieve one more night to add to our camping badge requirement, we learned to be prepared – bring repair patches in the future so you don't have to sleep on a deflated mattress pad. In spite of being a warm day and the flies making themselves a nuisance, it was a good trip into the back country. Jack G.



More good things. Top: Some of our amazing leaders and volunteers. Fundraising with a smile. Wreaths Across America. Bottom: Camp fun. Memorial Day. Guadalupe Dunes. Scouting For Food.