

Letter from Jerry Foust Scoutmaster 1974

We started the thong and beads to reward achievers and inspire others. I am pleased to see that you are still using them. The large beads on top represented rank. The smaller beads represented outings and activities. Special outings, such as Camporees, Jambories, and Summer Camps had special beads. They were very well received.

Tooting My Horn:

When I became Scoutmaster, there were eight members. Two years later, we were thirty-five strong and concerned about becoming too big. How did this happen? Discipline! No gum. All four legs of the chair down. No chatting. Regular outings. We went backpacking every month, rain or shine. Several of the Scouts attained the "Peakbagger Badge". This required topping seven major peaks.

We went on two major backpacking outings. One was to The John Muir Wilderness from the east. The most memorable was into the Mineral King area. The first day in, Dale Stilwell twisted his ankle and was unable to continue. Fred Woodworth and I stashed our backpacks and carried Dale, and his backpack down to the van. We took him to Visalia Hospital and had an exam done. He had no permanent damage but was unable to continue. We put him on the bus the next morning and headed back to catch-up. It took us two days to catch the troop.

On the next to last day of our journey, we were camping at a lake, east of Sawtooth Pass. At the same lake was a group of hunters that packed in on horseback. The next morning we heard a gunshot. Later the group rode up to our campsite and told the boys that they had to shot one of their horses and had too much food to pack out. They had eggs, real fresh eggs. We had been eating the processed freeze-dried backpacking food for a week. Fresh eggs, as much as we could eat. Cheese, sodas, meat... manna.

The years as Scoutmaster were some of the most rewarding of my life. Why did I become Scoutmaster? I had four boys. Scouting forced me to allocate time with them. We are always so busy, next week is soon enough. By committing to set dates, I made time for them. They weren't the only ones that gained.

I would love to be with you at this time of celebration. My thoughts and prayers are with you.

God bless America and God bless the Scouting program.

Jerry Foust.