

## Scouting - Helping Boys Develop Life Long Skills

By Bo Reese

If you have a 10-year-old or older boy who is looking for and needs some outdoor FUN, with a healthy dose of practical, life-long skills mixed in, please consider the Boy Scouts of America and Troop 1104 right here in Clifton.

Every day within our community, many of our citizens, young and old, perform unselfish acts that improve the quality of life for all of us, and tend to add to the overall "character index" of our community. Where do they garner the strength and know-how to take small acts of kindness and concern, and transform them into widespread benefit for all? Many learn as young people at the feet of like-minded, strong and visionary parents. Still others learned at school, from friends and family, church, or via the team-building attributes of athletic teams. Many have the Scouting program to thank, regardless of whether it is the Boy or Girl Scouts of America.

In the Clifton community, Troop 1104 of the Sully District, National Capital Area Council, of Boy Scouts of America works every



Ian McClure being shown the proper way to shoot a musket gun.

day to build that "character index" of which I spoke. Surprisingly, the first ingredient is simple "FUN", done in the greatest classroom in the world--the wonderful outdoors. Many of our boys, who start as 11-year-olds, grow 12 or more inches during their time, progressing to senior scout ranks, and that's only on



Troop 1104 Scouts at Camp Big Mac

the outside. On the inside, many of them seem to grow ten feet taller. And we don't even tell them that the real fun is in the learning.

To reach the highest rank, EAGLE, one must tackle and succeed at many challenges. Some test physical skills, like hiking and swimming, and canoeing and backpacking. Some test mental skills like communications and personal management. Would it surprise you to know that the Boy Scouts have three activities that one must complete to reach EAGLE rank, that relate to "Citizenship"? Why

### Scouting Continued

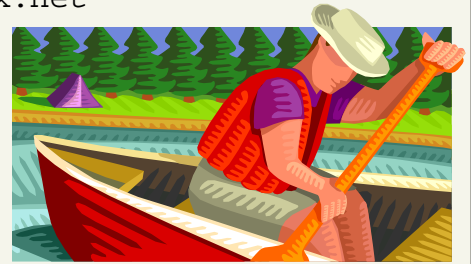
three? Because, in the Boy Scouts, character really counts as we've said before! Where you learned it is not as important as--you did learn it. And where you display it is also important. Your citizenship needs to be on display at all times as a Boy Scout--in your Community, in Your Nation, and in the World, and all three are vital to making good boys into better men, ready for the challenges of being better fathers, husbands, and citizens.

The scouts learn that a promise made is a promise kept; that we always strive to leave things better than we found them; and that being prepared is a way of life that meets all situations--these are just some of the FIRST principles of Scouting embodied in the Scout Oath and Law. We come from and gain support from Clifton and so, we give back to Clifton, through service projects like trash pickups and Clifton Days for example.

So again, if you have a 10-year-old or older boy who is looking for and needs some outdoor FUN, with a healthy dose of practical, life-long skills mixed in, please consider the Boy Scouts of America and Troop 1104 right here in Clifton. We are always eager to have new scouts. We also need those adult leaders to show the way. We meet on Wednesday evenings at the Clifton Presbyterian Church from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. The Scoutmaster's

contact information is below:

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## Watch Out for Ticks

By Sarah Mayhew, Fairfax Master Naturalist

Ticks emerge from hibernation beginning in March and are found throughout our area by April. Some species of ticks are very small, about the size of the head of a pin. Because ticks can cause Lyme disease and several other serious illnesses, you should take precautions to avoid them when gardening or walking through tall grass and bushes. Wear light clothing so you can more easily see the tick and remove it before it attaches. Tuck your pants legs into your socks to keep the ticks from reaching your skin. Use an insect repellent containing DEET on your clothing and all exposed skin other than your face. Even with these precautions, you should check your skin thoroughly when you come inside to be sure no tick has bitten you. Segregate your outdoor clothes and wash them in hot water to kill any ticks that may be



crawling on the clothes. If you do find that you have been bitten by a tick, remove it with tweezers by holding it as close to your skin as possible and pulling gently, but steadily until you have pulled it out. Put the tick in a container, with the date you discovered it and the locations where you might have picked it up and toss the container in the freezer. If you develop a rash, unusual pain symptoms or fever in the next several months, tell your doctor about the tick bite and bring the tick for analysis. Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses are treatable with antibiotics, but it is best to start treatment early.