



Boy Scout Troop 1323: A Pillar in the Town of Laytonsville, MD for More Than 50 Years

The Boy Scouts of America is one of the largest youth organizations in the United States. The organization was first incorporated in 1910, and has played an important role in American life. The organization celebrated its Centennial in 2010. In 2011, the organization had almost 3 million youth members and more than 1 million adult volunteers.

Troop 1323 has been a pillar in the Town of Laytonsville for more than 50 years. The troop was established in 1962 at the St. Paul United Methodist Church in Laytonsville, MD and is comprised of boys living in the Laytonsville and Gaithersburg areas. The late C. Grant Shaw (1929-2011) was the founder and served as the troop's first Scoutmaster from 1962 to 1965.

One hundred years ago, on August 21, 1912, Arthur Rose Eldred became the first Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts of America. Since then, 2 million other Scouts have attained this distinction. What is less obvious to the general public is that becoming an Eagle Scout is only part of a much bigger picture. The old adage 'it takes a village' couldn't be truer. There are many terrific scout leaders involved who have volunteered a great deal of their time to help these boys attain this goal. David Elseroad was the first to attain the rank of Eagle Scout in Troop 1323 in July 1966. Since then, Troop 1323 has had 41 youths attain the rank of Eagle Scout. Most recently, Colin Headrick of Laytonsville attained the rank in March 2012. He joined Cub Scout Pack 1323 as a Wolf when his family moved to Maryland in 2002. Colin successfully completed a challenging Eagle project in which he presented proposals to the Laytonsville Town Council and Historic District Commission. He renovated a water storage tank from the 1920s for the Town of Laytonsville. This project required multiple phases and over 180 hours of work from many volunteers. Colin enlisted in the U.S. Army and is now a Private First Class (advanced military

promotion due to having an Eagle Scout Rank). He completed Army Basic Training at Ft. Benning, GA where he received an award for the highest score for marksmanship in his company. He is currently at Advanced Individual Training at Ft. Meade, MD where he is enrolled in the Defense Information School taking art, graphic design and other courses for his military occupational specialty—Multi-Media Illustrator. As a small town, to turn out so many Eagle Scouts from the troop is something to be proud of.

The troop is supported by a number of committed leaders, parents and other volunteers who foster a troop environment that provides a strong educational program for the boys to build character, to train in the responsibilities of participating citizenship, and to develop personal fitness. The troop meets weekly at 7:30 p.m. at St. Paul's and conduct and participate in numerous other year-round activities. Mr. Brian Galuska is the current Scoutmaster and Jorge Cedillo, Larry Halvorson, Franco Milza, John Mitchell, and Roger Roop serve as Assistant Scoutmasters. In addition to earning rank advancements and merit badges, highlights of the troop's activities include attending yearly summer camps, biking, hiking, skiing, rafting, backpacking, kayaking, jet skiing, zip lining and a host of other physical and mental challenging activities. The troop also volunteers at numerous events and ceremonies to include the Town of Laytonsville celebration parades, the Germantown Oktoberfest, Wreaths Across America at Arlington National Cemetery, and much more. The troop has been financially self sufficient and has supported itself through various fundraisers including the all famous Trail's End® popcorn sales. The troop will launch a mulch and bulb sale in the Laytonsville and Gaithersburg areas starting in mid December and running through early March 2013.

A former Troop 1323 Eagle Scout and current supporter of the troop, Richard Durant, had these words to share about his experiences with scouting and the importance of keeping scouting alive in the community. *"I continue to support Troop 1323 and scouting because of what the organization did for me as a youngster. As a youngster, scouting provided a wonderful outlet of activities and opportunities. Many of the current day activities such as organized sports leagues and gadgets such as video games that potentially compete with scouting activities today were not available at the time when I joined and actively participated in scouting. Scouting taught me good religious and social values. These values include good sportsmanship, friendship,*

teamwork, and leadership which I carried into adult life. In order to become an Eagle Scout, I had to demonstrate good planning skills and hold senior leadership positions in the troop. My activities were overseen by the Scoutmaster and other troop leaders. When I graduated high school and applied to various universities, they all noted the achievement of Eagle Scout rank in my application. The same held true when I applied for jobs after graduating college. Despite not having graduated from a prestigious college or university or being an honors graduate, the rank of Eagle Scout was and still is a distinctive honor to have as a part of your credentials.” Mr. Durant concluded by saying that he is happy that Troop 1323 is actively growing and remains a significant organization in the Town of Laytonsville.