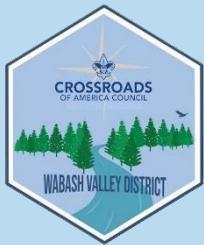


Wabash Valley District Dispatch

Your Quarterly Newsletter – December 2025



Welcome to the Wabash Valley Dispatch!

Scouts, Scouters, and friends of the movement...we're proud to launch this new newsletter as a shared space for stories, updates, announcements, news, and reflections from across our District. Whether you're leading a den, supporting a troop or unit, cheering from the sidelines, or just curious about what's next, this is for you.

We're entering an exciting chapter in Scouting across the Wabash Valley. Young people are stepping into leadership, adventure, and service, but they're not doing it alone. Families are also rediscovering the joy of shared experiences, from campfire conversations to community service projects. Scouting isn't just shaping youth; it's strengthening bonds, building resilience, and creating memories that echo across generations.

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Meet Devin Crispin, New District Chair

I credit Scouting with instilling in me the core values of the Scout Oath and Law that I still live by today. I was raised in scouting. My Grandfather, Father, and Uncle are Eagle Scouts. I was a Life Scout.

I began my current adventure in Scouting when my son was 5 years old after visiting a Cub Scout recruiting table at his elementary school. I have watched the effect that Scouting has had on him over the last 8 years as he has grown into a great leader, an individual of great character and conviction, and a caring and responsible member of our local community. These are the character values that I truly believe scouting can help to fortify in our youth, who are the leaders of tomorrow and the inheritors of the future!

I am currently the Scoutmaster of Troop 38 in Terre Haute. I am the incoming Order of the Arrow Advisor for Kickapoo Chapter, the Associate Advisor for the Mehokquima Ember of Firecrafter, and now the District Chair for the Wabash Valley. These positions, in my opinion, are complementary to one other, help to keep me involved in the local Scouting movement, and give me the opportunity to give back to the Scouting community that played such a large role in my life during my youth.

I look forward to working with the great adult leaders and committee members of our area, to design and implement activities and programs, and continue to build upon the strong background of the Wabash Valley District.

New Commissioner Role



Commissioners now play a more dynamic, data-informed, and relationship-driven role in supporting Scout units. Their mission remains unit service, but new tools and strategies are reshaping how they deliver it.

Instead of generic oversight, commissioners are expected to offer tailored guidance based on each unit's unique needs. This includes coaching leaders, identifying program weaknesses, and connecting units with resources.

The emphasis is shifting toward meaningful conversations and lasting relationships with unit leaders, rather than transactional visits.

These changes reflect a broader shift in Scouting: from compliance to collaboration, from oversight to empowerment. Commissioners are now strategic partners in helping units thrive, not just survive.

Unit leaders are encouraged to reach out to the Commissioner Corps' members with collegiality and collaboration as the foundation, designed to complement and enhance the work of all.

Please Contribute to the Dispatch

We'd love to hear from you! If you have news, upcoming events, photos, announcements or reflections to share, please send them to mark@parabolicvision.com and become a contributor to our newsletter.

Scouting Thrives When We All Recruit

Scouting's strength lies in its people, both the youth who grow through adventure and service, and the adults who guide, support, and inspire them. To keep our movement thriving, we need fresh energy, new families, and "more hands on deck."

Recruiting isn't just the job of a committee; it's something every Scout and Scouter can do. A simple conversation with a neighbor, a social media post about a recent campout, or a personal invitation to a unit meeting can spark lifelong involvement. People join because someone they trust says, "You'd be great at this."

So, let's spread the word. Share your story. Invite a friend. Tag your unit in a photo. Every connection counts, and every new member strengthens the legacy we're building together.

Social Media Tips:

- Post a photo from your last outing with a caption like: *"Scouting builds leaders...and memories. Want to join us? Message me!"*
- Share a short video or quote from a Scout or parent about what Scouting means to them, such as these:
[Scouting's Developmental Base for Positive Growth](#)
[A Scout Mother's Perspective on Scouting](#)
[Welcome to the World of Scouting](#)
- Tag your local unit and encourage others to comment or share
- Invite others to join our District Facebook page to get an "insider's perspective" of what we're doing regularly across the District

Together, we can grow Scouting...one post, one conversation, one handshake at a time.



Council Notes



by

Doug Band, CAC District Director

Scouting across the Crossroads of America Council, and throughout the nation, is experiencing renewed growth, thanks to the many new families joining our Scouting community. We've also made significant strides in financial stewardship, successfully aligning our operations with sustainable practices.

Looking ahead, we anticipate a balanced budget for 2025 and beyond. As a Council, we've welcomed 153 more youth than we did in 2024. Scouting has also expanded into Parke County with the formation of a new Cub Pack, proudly chartered by St. Joseph Catholic Church in Rockville.

When Fred Light met with the new chartered organization, they shared, "We've been waiting for someone to ask us to sponsor a unit. We already have a room painted in Scout colors and a trailer full of camping gear."

This story is just one example of the many untapped opportunities awaiting Scouting in the Wabash Valley. All we need to do is ask. Let's continue the great work being done in the Wabash Valley, stay alert for new recruiting opportunities in 2026 organized by the district, and always remember to invite a friend to join the Scouting adventure.

[**Click Here to See Our New Events Calendar**](#)

Scouting Memories: Stories from the Heart

We'd love to hear from you!

Every issue of *The Dispatch* is richer when it includes the voices of our Scouting family. Share your memories, stories, anecdotes, or lessons learned from your own Scouting journey.

If you have something close to your heart, let us know that you're interested in sharing, and we'll reach out to you and make it easy to get started.

Thank you for opening your heart and helping us inspire others through your experiences!



Two Weeks that Changed Everything

by

Mark Frederick, PhD

I was never the kind of boy people noticed.

A middle child in a family of ten, I lived in the space between noise and unnoticed; too quiet to be disruptive, too average to be exceptional. In my own mind, I was a shadow pressed against the wallpaper of a crowded life. At school, I sat in the back, small and careful, convinced I was as forgettable as I felt. One moment in third grade etched that belief into my very core. My teacher, in what I now think was her attempt to shame me into changing, leaned in close and said, "You're a stupid little boy, aren't you?"

She didn't say it with anger. She said it with indifference. As if she were stating a fact. As if my worthlessness was obvious to anyone paying attention. She was an adult. A big person. A voice that carried weight. So when she said it, I believed her.

After that, I stopped trying. I stopped raising my hand. I stopped imagining that I could be more than what she saw. I became a background character in my own story; the boy who didn't expect much from the world and assumed the world expected even less from him.

That's why the call to serve as a Boy Scout camp counselor for two weeks in the summer I turned 14 felt like a mistake. Surely, they meant to ask someone else. A troopmate, more peer than friend, was headed to the National Jamboree, and they needed someone to fill in for him at camp. For reasons I still can't explain, they asked me. Me. The quiet one. The invisible one. The boy who had learned not to hope.

I said yes, not because I believed I could do it, but because something flickered inside me at the mention of it. The camp counselors I had seen, those suntanned, fast-talking, campfire-commanding demigods, were my silent heroes. They had the swagger of older brothers and the charisma of movie stars. They were everything I wasn't. And now...I was supposed to be one of them?

I stepped into the role with trembling hands and a heart full of doubt. But something happened the moment I slipped the staff neckerchief on. I felt taller. I spoke louder. I introduced myself with a voice I didn't recognize; confident, warm...even funny. At first, I was mimicking what I had seen in other staff members. But soon, I wasn't pretending anymore.

I was becoming.

That first week, I was everywhere. Guiding merit badge work. Talking homesick boys through tears and into laughter. Leading hikes. Jumping into the lake fully clothed just to get a laugh. I surprised myself again and again. And the strangest part? I didn't feel like an imposter. I felt like I had stepped into the skin of the person I was always meant to be.

I went home between camp sessions, sunburned and smiling, and stood in the kitchen telling my mom stories. She paused, looked at me with wide eyes, and asked, "What has happened to you?"

I didn't know how to answer. All I knew was that something had cracked open inside me. Something radiant. Something real. I was changing...not gradually, not subtly, but all at once. And I liked who I was becoming.

The second week only deepened it. I wasn't the forgotten middle child anymore. I wasn't the boy labeled "stupid" in third grade. I was someone who could lead. Someone others looked up to. Someone others could really see.

That summer didn't just shift how I felt, it rewired the architecture of my life. It gave me a glimpse of my own potential. A spark of belief. The tiniest voice in my head whispering, "Maybe you're not who you thought you were."

In time, that voice grew louder. I earned my Eagle rank and was elevated to the Order of the Arrow's Vigil Honor. I worked harder in school. I found purpose in helping others. I pursued psychology, earned a PhD, and built a life around growth and transformation, not just for myself, but for others too.

And yet, no degree, no accolade, no career milestone means quite as much as those two short weeks in that one glorious summer. That little camp in the woods, filled with tents, firelight, mosquitoes, and the voices of boys becoming men, is still with me.

That place didn't just dwell in my heart.

It helped me find it.