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# Scouting®

A F A M I L Y M A G A Z I N E

## Den Meeting Magic

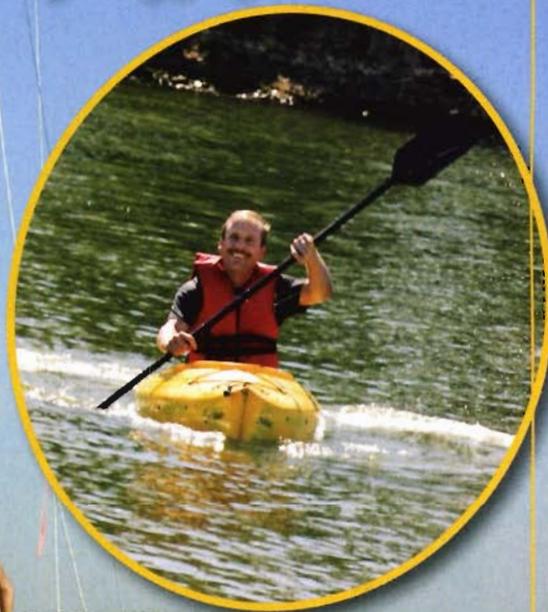
Tips, Tools, and Resources  
For Cub Scout Fun





# Getting Excited About High Adventure

*At Powder Horn training, Venturing and Boy Scout leaders experience high adventure activities and learn the best ways to share them with young people.*

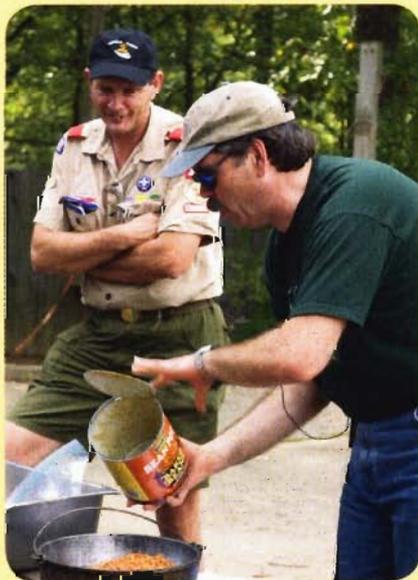


(Left) Powder Horn Scouters learn that sailboats and sandbars are a bad combination. (Top, left) Venturer Patricia Burke, of Crew 57, Mexico, Mo., goes for a mountain bike tour around camp. (Above) Advisor David Banks, of Crew 111, Lexington, Ky., kayaks on Lake Kentucky.

BY MARK RAY ■ PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN C. HILLERY ►



*Focusing on fun with a purpose, Powder Horn sees*



(Above, left) Steve Wilson, owner of Wood-N-Wave Bicycles, offers bike maintenance tips to Scouters. (Above, right) Ryan Krempasky, left, assistant Scoutmaster of Troop 101, Metropolis, Ill., watches outdoor author Don Jacobson lead a cooking demonstration.

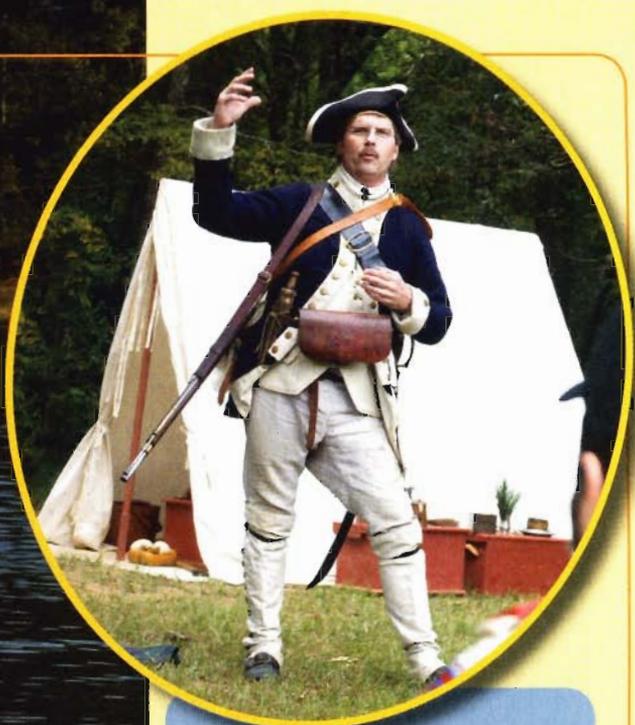
**W**hen would-be Venturing leader Meghan Henning arrived at Camp Roy C. Manchester near Aurora, Ky., early one morning last September, she might have wondered if she was in the right camp—or even in the right century.

Standing near the gate of the Shawnee Trails Council camp was a group of buckskinned frontiersmen, decked out

with powder horns and black-powder rifles.

“Well, that looks like an interesting bunch of people,” Henning thought. “I wonder what the course has in store.”

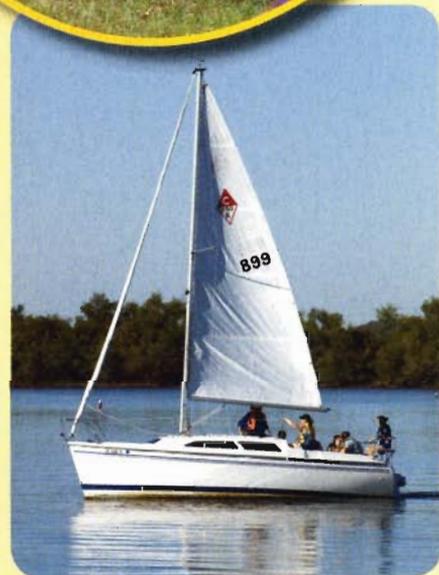
Henning was at Camp Manchester to take Powder Horn, a high adventure skills resource course for Venturing leaders and Boy Scout leaders working with a troop’s program for older Scouts.



s like "summer camp for adults."



(Left) Robert DeAngelis, co-owner of The Emerging Angler, gives Kathy Baker a lesson on casting a fly rod. (Above) Meghan Henning carefully ties a fly during class. (Right) Charlie Thorpe explains the use of a WAG bag.



(Top) Colonial re-enactor Elyon Davis describes the Revolutionary War during a living history lesson. (Above) Scouters navigate Lake Kentucky near Camp Manchester.

Powder Horn courses are conducted throughout the year in the BSA's four regions. This one, organized by the Central Region, was held over two three-day weekends at two different Scout council camps.

The costumed men and women were members of the course staff, Scouters dedicated to getting participants excited about unit high adventure programs.

The staff came from seven Scout councils, although most represented the course's two hosts: Buffalo Trace Council, in Evansville, Ind., and Shawnee Trails Council, Owensboro, Ky.

### Setting the tone

Course director Keith Gehlhausen (who is also Venturing chairman for the BSA's Central Region) said the staff

helps "set the tone right off the bat."

Arriving participants "don't see somebody standing there in a Scout uniform with all kinds of badges," he said. Instead, they see "a guy in a Colonial era tricornered hat, breeches, and stockings, which gets their attention and tells them that this [training] is going to be something different."

Different, indeed. The course's first day included visiting a Revolutionary War-era encampment, shooting black-powder muzzle loaders, throwing tomahawks at wooden targets, and attending a campfire featuring (continued on page 48)

folk-music duo Traveler's Dream and professional storyteller Bob Valentine.

The staff donned different costumes for the second day, which was devoted largely to aquatic activities. It began with wakeup music by Jimmy Buffett and ended with a laid-back beach party. Staff outfits for the day included Hawaiian shirts, a pirate costume, and Sea Scout dress whites.

Powder Horn is officially described as a way to introduce unit leaders to activities and resources for conducting unit-level high adventure programs that can also assist crew members in earning Venturing's coveted outdoor skills Ranger Award.

It is anything but dull training; rather, it can resemble, as one staff member put it, "summer camp for adults."

Over two full weekends, the course's 48 participants had opportunities to sail and kayak, climb and rappel, ice-skate and scuba dive (in the same day!), and try geocaching and bird banding.

They also learned about cooking, fishing, emergency preparedness, nature, wildlife, and conservation. And they took a float trip and camped out overnight.

"The staff is having fun, and the participants are having fun, which I think is the greatest way to learn," said Chris Szybisty, the Central Region's Venturing president. (One of several national Venturing youth leaders who attended the course, Chris gave a presentation on Venturing in the Central Region.)

### Fun with a purpose

The training is fun, to be sure, but like many things in Scouting, Powder Horn is designed to be fun with a purpose.

"It's true that [trainees] can go on the Internet and find a lot of the same information we're providing," course director Gehlhausen said. "But our staff also provides enthusiasm and mo-

tivation that inspire them to go back home saying, "This or that [activity] is something I really want to try with my Venturers or Scouts."

In 2005, Barry Goff, a veteran Scouter from Pikeville, Ky., started Venturing Crew 12, chartered to the First Presbyterian Church. He came to the course because he wanted the crew to add high adventure activities to its program.



The Powder Horn staff gathers for a group photograph in their historical costumes.

"I'm going to have to dig a little deeper and get out of my comfort zone," Goff acknowledged, as he reflected on the wide range of program options available to Venturers.

### Using local resources

One important lesson at Powder Horn is that high adventure doesn't have to cost hundreds of dollars or involve traveling hundreds of miles from home.

To emphasize that lesson, the course's second weekend, which was officially based at the Buffalo Trace Council's Old Ben Scout Reservation near Winslow, Ind., actually began more than 40 miles away, with a day of activities in downtown Evansville—at a climbing gym, a nature center, a YMCA, and an indoor ice-skating rink.

This demonstrated that "you don't even have to get out of the city" to do high adventure, Gehlhausen explained.

Another point the course teaches is

that adult leaders don't have to become experts in an activity to introduce it to their Scouts or Venturers. Rather, they need to know how to help their unit's youth leaders find and recruit experts.

Powder Horn demonstrates this by bringing in many such experts, or "consultants," to teach nearly every session.

For example, just a few of the consultants featured during the course's first weekend were outdoor cookbook author Don Jacobson on trail cooking; kayak supply outlet operator Jack Reynolds on kayaking, and veteran spelunker Chris Anderson on caving.

Because each course relies heavily on local resources, every Powder Horn is unique, and participants may benefit by attending multiple courses.

A six-day course can be scheduled for a full week or over two weekends. It covers all eight core requirements for Venturing's Ranger Award and 10 of 18 electives.

For example, a course in the Rocky Mountains might devote a lot of attention to the Ranger Award's Mountaineering and Winter Sports electives, while a Florida course would likely spend more time on the Scuba, Watercraft, and Lifesaver electives.

### Casting a wide net

The two-weekend Indiana/Kentucky course drew participants from 12 councils, as far away as Alabama.

Scouter Russell Fisher and assistant Scoutmaster Pat Knight from Maryville, Tenn., made the 600-mile roundtrip each weekend to attend Powder Horn.

Fisher said his Troop 285, chartered to Blount Christian Church, has a very active high adventure program that includes annual Christmas break backpacking trips in Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

"I'm just trying to find different ways to keep [my Scouts] interested," Fisher said.

At Camp Manchester, participants could browse a library of books, magazines, maps, and pamphlets on every conceivable high adventure topic. The library was so extensive that it covered more than 25 picnic tables on the dining hall porch.

After the course, Meghan Henning said she'd learned so much that she "literally couldn't think on Monday because my brain was so full of everything."

It didn't take her long, however, to start sharing what she'd learned.

"You should check this out," she told anyone she could, sharing her enthusiasm for a particular activity. "I think it's awesome." ☺

Mark Ray is a frequent contributor to Scouting magazine.

## More About Powder Horn

**P**owder Horn is a **high adventure resource-management** course. It's designed to motivate and prepare adult Venturing and Boy Scout leaders to work with older Boy Scouts and Venturers as they plan and do high adventure activities as part of the troop and crew program. The six-day course is typically offered over two weekends.

Upon completion of the course, participants should:

- Understand the Ranger Award and other Venturing recognitions.
- Know health and safety requirements and BSA rules and regulations that apply to high adventure activities.
- Know what skills and certifications are necessary to lead various outdoor activities and how to obtain those certifications.
- Be able to identify local resources and consultants for high adventure activities.

To attend Powder Horn, you must be a registered adult member of the BSA, have completed basic training in either Boy Scouting or Venturing, be able to meet the physical requirements of the BSA Class III physical in a backcountry environment, and have your Scout executive's approval.

For information on future Powder Horn courses, contact your local Scout council service center or visit [www.powderhorn-bsa.org](http://www.powderhorn-bsa.org).

**ON THE WEB:** To read about Venturing crews taking part in a variety of high adventure activities, go to [www.scoutingmagazine.org/search.html](http://www.scoutingmagazine.org/search.html) and click on "Venturing Program Activities."

## Camp on the USS Yorktown Historic Charleston Harbor, SC

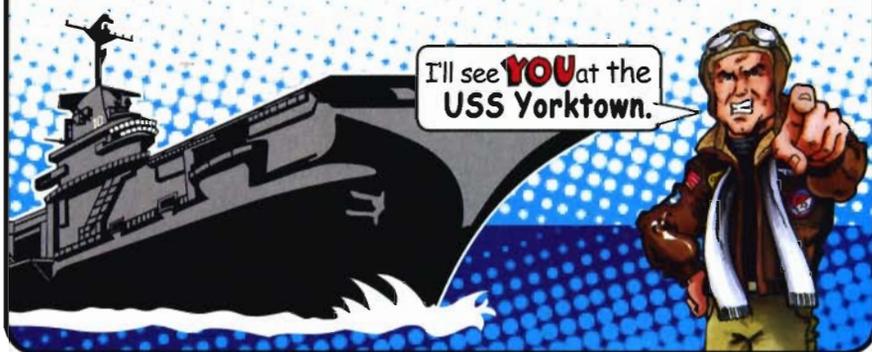
*New in 2007, The Congressional Medal of Honor Museum aboard Yorktown.*

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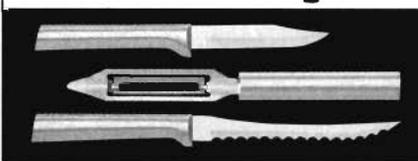
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