

# The Western Scout

Halloween 2011



## Miriam Pybus receives the Order of CúChulainn Award

Congratulation from all of the Western Province for this well deserved recognition of your service to scouting over the last decades! We would like to wish you all the best and continued joy in scouting for many more years to come!



"Miriam, like many parents got involved in scouting when her son David joined Beavers and perhaps thought that after 3 years or so she would have done her bit but that was in 1981 and this year Miriam will be presented with her 30 year service award and David has long since left Beavers!! [...] Her quiet dedication to scouting over 30 years has been an inspiration to the many hundreds of beavers, cubs, scouts and scouters who have had the pleasure of meeting Miriam. In nominating Miriam for the Order of CuChulainn we feel that it would recognize someone who very quietly gets on with the job, someone who works, advises and guides at group, county, provincial and national level and someone who is admired, respected and loved in 1<sup>st</sup> Galway (St Nicholas) and beyond."

### Operation Christmas Child 2011/12

From Ireland, we send thousands of shoeboxes to needy children in Haiti and it would be fantastic if you could help us in reaching more needy young people this year. We ask for nothing in return and we are totally inclusive and unconditional - boxes given solely on the basis of need.

Would this be something you would be interested in? Could this be part of a badge that also teaches about world poverty and justice etc?

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I would love to come and speak with you if you would like to find out more! Have a look at the website:  
[www.samaritanspurse.ie](http://www.samaritanspurse.ie)  
Thanks!  
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### JamÓige 2012—Scouting Ireland's Jamboree for all under 12 year olds!

Up to 2,500 cub scouts and 1,000 Beaver Scouts from around the country will join up to participate in the biggest event this year.

Cub Scouts will be camping from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> June, Beaver Scouts the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> June. The activity zones and subcamps will be running to the theme of 'Gulliver's Travels' so start thinking about your costume!

Over the weekend there will be many opportunities for fun, challenge and adventure!

**We are also looking for staff** to make this happen both Adult Scouter and Venture/ Rover Scout Support Staff, details of how to register will be proved shortly. Please spread the word amongst your Scout Groups and Scout Counties.

Yours in Scouting,  
David Kessie  
Camp Chief



## Phoenix Challenge 2011

Six teams from the Province took part in this years Phoenix Challenge in Pallaskerry, Limerick. Congratulations to both Patrols from 1<sup>st</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> Roscommon-Boyle (Silver & Bronze Award) from Lough Keel, the 1/4<sup>th</sup> Ennis and 1<sup>st</sup> Shannon (both Silver Award) from Clare, the 8<sup>th</sup> Oranmore (Silver Award) and 1<sup>st</sup> St. Joseph's (both Silver Award) from Galway for their achievements!!!



### Date for your diary: National Council 2012

will be held on **30th March/1st April** at Red Cow Hotel, Dublin. It is expected that the meeting of National Council will take place over one day on Saturday, but this will be confirmed closer to the time. The Gala Dinner will be on Saturday evening. The Red Cow Hotel is situated just off the M50 and is a 15min drive to Larch Hill. Any delegate wishing to camp will be able to book into the Campsite by contacting Larch Hill.

### Not registered on Scouts members website yet?

All adult and youth members can register at [my.scouts.ie](http://my.scouts.ie) to access resources, news, forms... Contact your Group Leader, PSO or GSF should you have problems registering.



## Provincial Youth Forum for Scouts and Venture Scouts

Our next Provincial Youth Forum will be on **27th November** in the Tuam Scout Hall. Each Scout County can send 4 Scouts and 4 Venture Scouts which have been elected at the County Youth Forum. The Provincial Youth Forum will start at 11am and finish at 4pm. Registration will be from 10.30am. Lunch will be provided.

This will be a great opportunity for the elected Scouts and Venture Scouts from the five counties to bring forward ideas from them and their county as well as having some fun!

At the Provincial Youth Forum both sections elect six Reps to attend the National Youth Involvement Forum and work with the Provincial Youth Programme Rep and team for the year.



**It's early census time!** To qualify for 5% rebate your groups' census & fees need to be received by 30th November—or by 20th December for 2.5% rebate. Contact your PSO/GSF if you have any questions.



## New Procedure for Adult Member applications

As of 1st October 2011 completed applications for adult membership are sent the directly by the Group Leader to Scouting Ireland, National Office, Larch Hill, Dublin 16. The Provincial Office will no longer process the completed forms.

For correctly completed forms: information will be entered on the database, Garda vetting process commences. Scouters will be notified when the garda vetting is completed and their application has been processed.

For forms with errors or omissions, the following steps will take place: information will be recorded on the database and problems will be noted on the Scouter's record (minor errors/omissions may be dealt with by a phone call) if not, the application form/garda form will be returned to the applicant with a cover letter. The PSO will receive a weekly email with all problem applications listed and will liaise with Group Leaders concerned to resolve issues raised.

**Adult Application and Garda Vetting forms can now be downloaded from [my.scouts.ie](http://my.scouts.ie).** The Provincial Office will continue to supply blank forms on request.

## New Procedure for training booking

All **Stage 2-6** Woodbadge training course bookings are now sent to: Training Administrator, Scouting Ireland, National Office, Larch Hill, Dublin 16. Please use the latest revision of the training booking form which can be downloaded from [my.scouts.ie](http://my.scouts.ie). The course fees are stated on the booking form.

Bookings and queries for **Stage 1** courses now go to the County Training Coordinator of your county. The fee for Stage 1 courses is €20.

Please contact your PSO or GSF for contact details of your County Training Coordinator or if you have any queries in relation the new training booking process.

## Wood Badge Beads presentations

Congratulations to the following Scouters who were awarded their Woodbadge Beads: Michelle Murphy, Paddy Hennelly (14th Galway St. Patrick's), Harry Jennings (1st Mayo Castlebar). Diane Moran (2/3/10Sligo Town), Gerry Flanagan (3rd Sligo Rosses Point). Well done!!





## Western Province Training



### Yeats first County to have all Groups transitioned to One Programme



October saw all 6 Groups in the County complete the

transition to One Programme. All Scouters & youth members that attended the training were very enthusiastic & eager to start using the new material. Early in the New Year the county plans to host a County One Programme review for all Scouters & youth reps.



Well over half of all the Groups in the Province are now running the One Programme. Groups



that do not have a Transition Training date yet, please contact the Groups Mentor

(via the Group Changeover Coordinator) to arrange a date.



### Training Calendar November'11 – April'12

Course Code	Course Type	Month	Date	Day & Time	Venue	Closing Date
WP/ST2/7-1111	Stage 2	November	12th	Saturday, 9.30am	Boyle Scout Den	28th Oct'11
WP/ST2/27-1111	Stage 2	November	12th	Saturday, 10am	Ballybane, Galway	28th Oct'11
WP/ST1/24-1111	Stage 1	November	15th	Tuesday, 7.30pm	Boyle Scout Den	1st Nov'11
WP/ST1/26-1111	Stage 1	November	15th	Tuesday, 7.30pm	Ennis Scout Den	1st Nov'11
WP/ST3/8-1111	Stage 3	November	20th	Saturday, 9.30am	Ennis Scout Den	6th Nov'11
WP/ST6/9-1111	Stage 6	November	25-27th	Friday, 7.30pm	Castlebar	28th Oct'11
WP/ST5/10-212	Stage 5	February	5th	Sunday, 9.30am	Boyle Scout Den	20th Jan'12
WP/ST5/11-212	Stage 5	February	12th	Sunday, 9.30am	Ennis Scout Den	28th Jan'12
WP/ST2/12-212	Stage 2	February	26th	Sunday, 9.30am	Ennis Scout Den	12th Feb'12
WP/ST3/14-312	Stage 3	March	4th	Sunday, 9.30am	Sligo Scout Den	17th Feb'12
WP/ST2/13-312	Stage 2	March	4th	Sunday, 9.30am	Ballybane, Galway	17th Feb'12
WP/ST4/15-312	Stage 4	March	11th	Sunday, 9.30am	Lough Keel Campsite	24th Feb'12
WP/ST1/28-312	Stage 1	March	21st	Monday, 7.30pm	Galway	7th Mar'12
WP/ST1/29-312	Stage 1	March	21st	Monday, 7.30pm	Mayo	7th Mar'12
WP/ST2/16-312	Stage 2	March	24th	Saturday, 9.30am	Claremorris	10th Mar'12
WP/ST3/17-312	Stage 3	March	25th	Sunday, 9.30am	Ballybane, Galway	11th Mar'12
WP/ST4/18-412	Stage 4	April	21st	Saturday, 9.30am	Lough Keel Campsite	7th April'12
WP/ST5/19-412	Stage 5	April	22nd	Sunday, 9.30am	Lough Keel Campsite	7th April'12
WP/ST4/20-412	Stage 4	April	28th	Saturday, 9.30am	Ruan Campsite	14th April'12
WP/ST5/21-412	Stage 5	April	28th	Saturday, 9.30am	Ruan Campsite	14th April'12

- All Stage 2-6 bookings must be made before the closing date through National Office, using the new training booking form.
- For Stage 1 courses please contact your County Training Coordinator. The Stage 1 course fee is €20.
- Bookings are taken on a 'first come' basis.
- If the minimum number is not reached, the course will have to be cancelled.
- See all Scouting Ireland courses at <https://my.scouts.ie> and download latest version of the training booking form.



## The West @ 22<sup>nd</sup> World Scout Jamboree - Sweden 27<sup>th</sup> July - 11<sup>th</sup> August 2011



On Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2011, 36 young people from the west of Ireland woke early to make their way to Dublin airport. The plan for the next 16 days was fun, adrenaline, friendships, challenges and a once in a lifetime experience. In total there were 800 scouts and adults traveling to the Jamboree with a total of 38,000 from all across the world in attendance, making this Jamboree the worlds largest scouting event ever. The 800 Irish were divided up into 15 troops each with 36 scouts and 4 adults. Each of these 15 troops were named after an native Irish tree. The name for the Western Contingent is Silín, meaning Cherry Tree.

These 36 scouts in Silín Troop was made up of teenagers between 14 and 18 from Roscommon (Boyle - 8 scouts), Longford (Longford Town - 1 scout), Mayo (Ballina - 3 scouts & Ballinrobe - 10 scouts), Clare (Ennis - 1 scout) and Galway (Kinvara - 8 scouts, Renmore - 2 scouts, Killannin - 2 scouts & Oranmore - 1 scout). There was now a great sense of camaraderie in the troop and this is due in no small amount to the fact that the troop was formed more than 18 months ago in preparation for the Jamboree. Between fund-raising events, preparation events and getting-to-know you sessions there was seldom a quiet month in the run up to the Jamboree. The Irish contingent also displayed their many talents in the Irish house, a restaurant in the main square of the Jamboree open for all to attend, get something to eat, relax and meet new people. Here Irish dancing, singing, plays and poems were recited from the stage in order to keep all in the house entertained. It proved to be the busiest spot in Kristianstad for the entire two weeks.

Coupled with the irish house, was a flash-mob of 600 people who hosted the largest ceile dance that Sweden had ever seen. One thing is for sure, everyone knew about Irish scouts when they left the Jamboree for all corners of the world.

For the Silín Troop there was never a quiet moment in the sub-camp. With different nationalities around for dinner we were the host with the most it appeared by welcoming scouts from Guatemala, United States of America, Wales, England, Portugal, Germany, Belgium and of course Sweden! To top it all off the Chief Scout Michael John Shinnick and the Contingent Leader John Lawlor wore a path to the Silín site looking for tea and Foxford fruit cake from time to time! As for activities, the scouts got to experience the different areas of the Jamboree site: Dream, GDV (Global Development Village), Quest, Hike in Camp, People and Earth - in each of these areas the scouts learned more about that particular topic and played games with others scouts from across the world. However the largest gathering of the trip was the closing ceremony at the end of the Jamboree. With music all night long and a spectacular fireworks display, it will remain in memories for a very long time.

Now, unfortunately, the Jamboree is over, but the scouts have long standing memories of a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Friends from far and near were made and bonds were put in place between different countries for years to come. What you can be certain off is that for the 23rd World Scout Jamboree in Japan, the Western Province will be sure to have 10 troops travelling and not just one!



### A Silín Scouts' Jamboree experience



My experience of the World Scout Jamboree in Sweden. For me the Jamboree was a journey. It started about a year before the actual event. I had missed two of the meetings with my troop so the first time I met any other scouts going on the jamboree was in Portlick for an Irish contingent camp. Despite the fact that I knew nobody, everyone seemed to be very friendly and I quickly made many friends with scouts from all over the country. But that was just the beginning and there would become not just nationwide friendships but international ones to. Now let's skip forward to the 27<sup>th</sup> of July 2011.

There is a scout law that says: "A Scout is a friend to all and a brother to every other Scout," and nowhere was this more apparent than at the jamboree this year. Arriving at the site we were greeted by very cheerful scouts from Sweden all willing to help us carry our gear, guide us to our sites and answer any questions. Everyone helped each other in good spirits as we found our way through the massive campsite and set up camp. The rain didn't dampen spirits and there was full attendance of 38,000 scouts and scouters at the opening and closing ceremonies. It was great to see so many people of my age come together to celebrate scouting and to make new international friends. And it wasn't just the scouts that were friendly, all the IST (staff) were always willing to help everyone with anything. [cont'd on page 5]

Many of the activities promoted meeting new people and through that I made many new friends. Not only did the activities help friendships some also raised awareness about many different world issues. One in particular stands out in my mind. To raise awareness about refugees and what they go through, UNHCR had set up a course in a wood that represented life fleeing from your country and passing through others. We were grouped with other scouts of different nationalities and scouts who spoke different languages. With these people we created a new family. We were blindfolded and separated and then we heard many loud noises simulating a riot. The aim was to gather everyone in the family together. The course didn't stop there. We were then told to go through war zones and minefields to escape with rebels chasing after us. At the border we were shouted at in a language that we couldn't understand and eventually we understood that to cross we had to pay. At the end people from the UNHCR showed us foods and aid that would be given to real refugees when they reach a UNHCR station. It was quite an experience.

The jamboree became a home to all of the 38,000 scouts involved and it resembled something like a city. There was a City Square, lots of shops and restaurants from many different cultures, internet cafes, information centres, a bank and even a pharmacy. There were sub camps that resembled suburbs that had towns in them and they in turn had many local amenities. Shopping centres, cafés and lots of things to do. In my sub camp there was rock-climbing and Zorbing. We could also play tug of war against another group with a car in the middle. There was even an ice rink in one subcamp!

The jamboree was even more than that and for ten wonderful days this summer, I had the opportunity to visit almost any country in the world, sharing stories and songs, trying traditional foods and experiencing many different cultures.

There were many food houses that you could experience the food music and culture of other countries. The Irish house was very popular, in fact even the King and Queen of Sweden visited it. The jamboree was a place where any person of any nationality would welcome anyone, respect everyone and treat everyone as an equal.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> World Scout Jamboree in Sweden 2011 was an amazing experience and it's something that every scout should go to when they get the chance. I am looking forward and counting down the days to the 23<sup>rd</sup> World Scout Jamboree in Japan 2015!



## County Galway

### Galway County Cub camp a fantastic success,



with over 320 cubs attending, and the privilege of the Chief Scout Michael John Shinnick visiting the site, along with the Chief Commissioner Adult Resources John Brennan, for the Saturday activities.

The weekend kicked off with the Cubs from 16 groups putting up their tents. The opening ceremony was our first gathering, where we were all greeted with speeches from Anna Casserly, County Cub Coordinator, Noel Leahy, County Commissioner and Brian Webster, Provincial Commissioner. This was followed by a disco, which was a great social event to allow the cubs to get to know and play with one another.

The number of activities on the Saturday made for a very busy day. All the cubs were divided into colour groups, decided by the coloured hats they each received. We had numerous



bases such as kayaking, archery, zip wire, crate stacking, water activities and an obstacle course. There was also hammock making, wall climbing, games, survival shelter building, making ropes from nettles and cups from coconuts.

In the evening each group put on a culture fair and a talent show representing different countries from around the world. Saturday finished up singing around the camp fire. On Sunday we had the closing ceremony and a rain-soaked clearing of the camp site, but that didn't stop the cubs from enjoying themselves.



Email your news, articles, photos, updates, ideas, etc to: [dhabermann@scouts.ie](mailto:dhabermann@scouts.ie)





## County Galway



**C o u n t y  
O r i e n t e e r i n g   D a y**  
was held in Portumna Woods on Sunday, 2nd October organised by 8th Galway Oranmore.

Over 230 Cubs, Scouts and Ventures from all around Galway took part in two rounds of the 2.9km trail. Congratulations to the winning teams - and everyone taking part!!!



On the weekend of July 30th, 12th Galway Claregalway took part in the Corinthians football club garden festival. We set up a sample camp, with some of the pioneering structures and a small selection of flowers. We spent the weekend talking to parents and showing kids some of the different activities that the Scout sections do.

## The Normandy Landing in Gort!

Scouts from Normandy in France had a lucky encounter while completing a tough challenge in Gort, County Galway on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2011.



A patrol of eight French scouts were "dropped" into Gort in County Galway with the challenge of finding somewhere to bivvy out for

two nights. At the same time the 17<sup>th</sup> Galway - Gort Scout Group were involved in promoting scouting locally at a community family fun day in the town. Just imagine what went through the minds of the eight scouts from Normandy when they spotted an Icelandic and a light-weight 3-man tent pitched on one side of a park with two half-barrels wafting their aromas in the unexpected heat of the afternoon. Geraldine Nolan made a bee line for the visitors and the patrol was

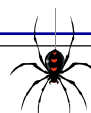
immediately made welcome, fed and watered. The Gort Cubs and Scouts then showed their unexpected guests around the locally created attractions in the park and took them shopping for supplies to a local supermarket. There was even time for an Ireland v France plank walking race (Ireland won!) The whole community became intrigued with this chance encounter and by the end of the afternoon, after the M.C. for the day played the French national anthem over the P.A. the lads from Normandy were setting up the 17<sup>th</sup> Galway Gort scout tents in the large front garden of a nearby house thanks entirely to the generosity of the Gort community.

The two groups exchanged contact details and promised to keep in touch and the possibility of exchange visits was of course discussed. This is a perfect example of the ethos of scouting internationally being played out in the West of Ireland after an incredible sequence of events brought these two groups of like-minded young people together.



The 5<sup>th</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> Clare Killaloe Scout Group

## County Clare



became proud winners of the Dulux "Let's Colour" competition run during the summer. The object of the competition is to brighten a locality by nominating a community building and transforming it with colour. The Killaloe Group nominated their sad looking Scout Hall and were delighted to win 200 litres of exterior paint worth in excess of 800 Euro. The volunteer group of parents and helpers will shortly partake in a team effort in working their magic on the old Scout Hall. The Cubs and Beavers pictured can't wait to begin the project and have been practicing in advance.



## County Clare

### Clare Scout Water Day

On Sunday June 25th the annual County Water Day for Clare Scouts was held at the National Water Center in Killaloe. Activities on offer included Kayaking, Sailing, Slippery Slope, Life Size table football and the centers new Climbing Wall. This is a fun event to round up the county year and all enjoyed meeting with their fellow scouts who they have befriended throughout the year. Well done and thanks to Diarmuid, Kieran and all the staff at the center for running the day so well and smoothly and thanks to all the scouts and their scouters in Clare for such a great scouting year.



### Clare Cub Track & Trail

On Saturday June 25th some 51 cubs from around County Clare descended on Ruan to pit their wits against the track and trail course laid out in the forest area surrounding the campsite. Despite some very unseasonal rain the cubs had a great day with some skills bases in communications, compass work, art & crafts making dream catchers and backwood cooking to keep all occupied while waiting to tackle the course. The course proved a good challenge for the teams with congratulations to all who took part. "The Frogs" from Sixmilebridge were the eventual winners followed closely into second and third place by "Team Actimel" from Ennis and "Flawless" again from Sixmilebridge. Well done to Pat and Fergie for laying out the course and again Ruan proved an excellent venue for hosting such large county events.



### 1<sup>st</sup> Clare Shannon Cub Scouts Overnight in Maughan Woods 2011



### 3<sup>rd</sup> Clare Cratloe at National Beaver Camp in Pallaskerry



12 very excited Beavers and 4 Leaders from the 3rd Clare Cratloe Beaver Scouts joined Camp Rock National Beaver

Camp in Pallaskerry on 18 June. As it was our Groups first ever camping adventure we decided to join camp for a day trip rather than overnight stay. We had a great time planning our trip and brought two tents, our cooking equipment and lots of food with us as if we were camping. We were singing in the rain, a roo tee cha, putting our tents up. Half of the group had to sit on the tents while the others put up the poles or they might have blown all the way back to Clare! Soon after, clouds clearing, camp rock neckerchiefs in place and musical instruments in

hand, we made our way to the opening ceremony which launched an action-packed, fun filled and very memorable day. We were delighted to make lots of new friends and met a group from Cork on a day trip also.

During the day we played lots of games, including new ones which we will play again in our Beaver meetings, and bounced on the bouncy castle. We studied nature, used a magnifying glass to search for bugs, and planted peas and radishes to bring home. We watched a demonstration by the fire brigade & got to sit in the fire engine. We also learned survival skills, and each Beaver got to try their hand at lighting a fire, cooking (& eating) scones and popcorn, and making a campfire treat. Finally we met Limerick Animal Welfare for a very interesting talk.



We squeezed every last minute out of the day and staying to sing the new songs we'd learned around the campfire topped off a great day scouting.

## County Mayo

### 1st and 22nd Mayo Scouts enjoyed a fantastic time at Jamborette in Holland



1st and 22nd Mayo Scouts took a trip to Holland to the Jamborette (aka the Friendly Jamboree) This was held just outside Amsterdam in a place called Haarlem. They had a fantastic camp and were made very welcome by all staff and participants. A lot of new friendships were made.

1st Mayo(Castlebar) were in the Roman Sub camp while 22nd (Snugboro) were Chinese. This led to a very entertaining invasion of Rome by the Chinese by way of a water fight. Snugborough we have very long memories!! There were trips into the local town and to Amsterdam. Very challenging with all the cycle lanes that has right of



way. The catch phrase for the camp was "get out of the Cycle lane!!!!" There was sailing on the reservoir and a trip on a canal barge. The highlight was a visit to

the 5 flag theme park.

On camp the activities included scuba diving, roller-blading, zip wires, climbing wall, beach games, wide games and some great pioneering challenges. The Mokkie was a great success in the evenings with some entertaining themed nights. We almost won the car challenge getting 32 cubs/scouts and ventures into a car but were beaten on the last day;-(

The 10 days was rounded off with a great closing ceremony and a fantastic firework display. A great camp that will be remembered for all the right reasons for a long long time!



### 1<sup>st</sup> Mayo Castlebar Group Camp



On the weekend of July 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> seventy members of the 1<sup>st</sup> Mayo Castlebar Scouts

along with their Scouters went to the woods for their annual summer camp. They did not come across any bears or big bad wolves as those creatures are a bit scarce in the Breaffy area of Castlebar.

Cubs, Scouts and Venture Scouts arrived at the field next to Breaffy woods on Friday evening and set up tents, kitchen and dining shelters. After a night hike it was time for some wide games organised by the Venture Scouts. The cubs and scouts then had supper and headed to their tents to sleep or not as the case may be. The Venture Scouts went to the forest with their tranguias and their hammocks for a survival camp of sorts.

Saturday morning seen an early start and a hearty breakfast. The final preparation for the arrival of the Beavers had to be completed. When everyone was on site it was time for some team challenges again organised by the ever willing and able Venture Scouts. It was then time to take to the forest for some pioneering and backwoods cooking. After dinner the moving up ceremony took place with lots of hellos and good byes to be said. The ceremony reminded us that even in scouts nothing stands still and life moves on.

It was then time for the campfire which was organised

by Group Leader Bernhard, 1st Mayo's resident campfire expert. Marshmallows, hot chocolate and a good sing song were all on the menu. A very tired but happy troop headed to their tents at what I suspect was a little later than their usual bedtime.

It was another bright and early start on Sunday morning. It was a case of all hands on deck. When breakfast was over it was time to put away the tents and other gear. The field had to be swept and then it was time for Flag Down.

1<sup>st</sup> Mayo would like to say a big thank you to Kevin for the use of his fine field and to Coillte for the use of their forest. Also well done and thanks to the 1<sup>st</sup> Mayo Venture Scouts who do so much work on every camp.



1st Mayo Castlebar Cubs, Scouts and Ventures at the Mayo County Camp in Achill on 23rd-25th September.

### Expression of Sympathy

We would like to offer our deepest sympathy to Trevor Rennick on the tragic loss of his brother Paul. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.



## County Lough Keel

### Lough Keel County Scout and Venture MPC Ben Bulben, Co Sligo, 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> October 2011

1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Leitrim, 1/3/5 Longford, 12<sup>th</sup> Roscommon

Not really the best forecast for a Mountain Pursuit Challenge but nevertheless the date is set and all of the Scouts and Ventures are eager to give it a go, not ones to shy away from a challenge are our crew, so all safety measures and precautions in place, cars packed, scouts and ventures full of energy and excitement, away we go!!!!

Friday night saw us arrive in dark and damp conditions at the bottom of Ben Bulben, along the swampy peat bogs we hiked carrying our heavy packs chatting all the way. When we arrived at base camp the cheering and laughter was enough to lift all of our spirits, friends greeting friends, what an amazing feeling. Once all the tents were up and secured and all

the packs safely stowed away inside, the scouts and ventures set to making themselves a nice hot drink and eating their packed lunches, a small campfire was set and a few gathered around for a little while, but we've a challenge tomorrow so a reasonably early night was had by all.

Saturday morning, we awoke surrounded by a thick Irish mist which had descended over night, camp chatter had started and breakfasts were being prepared, soon the camp was alive and buzzing. Once all the day packs were ready, the wet gear and boots put on and the mist lifted the scouts and ventures were put into patrols, given a map of their climb and a compass and away they went, ascending the mountain alongside a fabulous waterfall,



through a small cave and on up to the summit of Ben Bulben. It was fantastic the way the mist occasionally gave way to a clear sunshine filled day allowing us the privilege of the stunning views of Sligo Bay. Not a majorly challenging climb but a breathtaking one all the same.

On our return to base camp the rain set in and down it came for the whole afternoon, everyone retired to their tents and planned their songs and sketches for tonight's campfire. By some miracle the rain stopped around 5.00pm allowing all to cook their dinners, eat and clear away, it continued to stay dry for the campfire and the smiling, singing, faces lit up by the glow of the fire was incredibly heart warming. This night we were hampered by the worst winds I have ever myself experienced in a tent, the tents were flattened to within an inch of our noses, some of the poles were actually snapped but the scouts took comfort together in their sleeping bags and kept each other's spirits up. We are very fortunate in this county to have four amazing scouters who through the wind and the rain kept themselves amused by watching over the camp, re-pegging tents, talking to the scouts and reassuring everyone. Charlie, Damien, Peter and Fintan you are our guardian angels and we thank you all.

Sunday morning could not come quick enough, everyone dressed, packed and tents down, not surprisingly camp abandoned by 10.00am, a very welcome hot meal and drink in Supermacs and then home to the utterly disgusting job of emptying rucksacks and drying everything out for the next time.

Just can't wait to do it all over again!!!



### 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Leitrim Summer Camp 2011

This year as 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Leitrim Scout groups teamed up for their summer camp out at Lough Keel Scout Campsite. We put an exciting program together, here is our camp diary:

**Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> July** Landed on the camp site at 6.00pm, set up and chilled out for the evening, met up with scouts from Germany and Dublin. **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> July** We headed to Allen Centre in Drumshanbo for a morning of kayaking and jumping and swimming in the lake, brilliant fun, we had a barbeque for lunch and then spent the afternoon with boat trips and doughnuts, we had an evening campfire at Lough Key with visiting scouts and chilled out. **Sat-**

**urday 30<sup>th</sup> July**

We had a half day at Zip It, Lough Key climbing up into the trees and zipping along wires, we had a picnic lunch and then headed to the Lough Key cruise boat where we were taken out on a trip round the lake then we all enjoyed an exciting ride on a speed boat trip. We spent the evening with a bit of backwoods cooking and chilled out. **Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> July** Full day at



Lough Gara Riding Stables where all enjoyed Horse Riding, Rifle Shooting, Archery, a Boat Trip, an Obstacle Course and having Hawks land on our gloved hands, amazing, including picnic. In the evening we broke camp at Lough Key and headed to the Allen Centre once again where we had dinner and then loaded up Canadian canoes and paddled out to Holly Island for an overnight stay and backwoods camp, we had a Scouts



Own and then an night of singing and laughing round the campfire. **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> August** This morning the weather was glorious and after a review with the scouts of their camp we spent our morning on the Island collecting things to make Indian style head dresses and war paint, it was great fun and a fantastic catwalk of head dresses completed the challenge. We had lunch, packed up and headed home. A brilliant summer camp all round.

