



Monthly Newsletter Pack 208

TROOP 208

providing Scouting in Swanton since 1923



Chartered by the Murbach-Siefert American Legion Post 479 in Swanton, OH

December 2020

Pictures of activities, forms, updated news at our website

www.swantonscouts.org

THANK YOU for your help with our Annual Scouting for Food collection effort. **A total of 1,238 items** were collected for distribution this year which is especially important every year at Thanksgiving and Christmas time.



2026 Pinewood Derby

Time to start thinking about what you want to drive for the Derby this year and remember your family can race a car too! We have a race for family members.

Tentatively Feb 21st, 2026 is our Pinewood Derby

It's never too early to start planning you "hot rod" Scouts!

PLEASE check your School Schedules in case there is a conflict so we can look at scheduling a better date.

For our Scouts - please think about spending a few extra minutes calling your relatives to let them know they are special during this time of the year; especially this year.



Let us not get so involved with special meals or football games as to forget why we should give thanks for a history that is still very young and a gift given

unto us as a sign of God's love for us and those before us.

The leadership of the Pack and the Troop wish everyone a very safe and enjoyable holiday time; hopefully with people special to them in their lives. And we pray for the safe return of our service men & women defending us wherever they are along with our vigilant police & EMS personnel who are on duty away from their families serving to also protect us during the holidays too.

Please stay SAFE EVERYONE

Pack Leaders Committee Meetings

1st Thursday each month at 7pm; January 6th, 2026

is the next meeting at the American Legion Hall

Parents are welcome to attend & participate also

As we approach the fall and winter again, our leadership would like to remind all of our parents and volunteer leaders that "If Swanton Schools close due to weather, then our meeting that night will be cancelled."

TROOP NEWS & FUTURE FUN!!!

December Campout? Gentlemen, we need your input so we do what you'd like to do!

December 6th: Swanton Christmas Parade & Meat Stick Sales - a chance to earn some \$\$ funds \$\$ to help pay for your Scouting experience. Registration or Summer Camp?

Camp Alaska 2026

January 17th & 18th is usually our overnight Camp Alaska weekend if you want to plan a Camp Alaska weekend.

Swan Creek District Winter Weekend

February 7th - 9th is the Swan Creek District Winter Weekend at Camp Miakonda and the rumors are it's going to be fun weekend, but no promises of snow...maybe

March 24th will be our Winter/Spring Court of Honor to recognize your efforts and achievements. Let's keep going on your advancements and other awards.

Spring Camporee is still in the planning stages

April 24th - 26th, 2026 is the SCD Spring Camporee.

Mr Raven & Mr Waterstradt NEED SUMMER CAMP!!

PSR - Summer Camp 2026

Week 2 June 28th thru July 4th

Nessle Campsite !

Plenty of time to get ready for our current and future (the Webelos II) Boy Scouts to plan for a week of Camp.

And time for any parents who'd like to go to plan for it too. Scouts, Summer Camp is a great chance to try things you can easily do here in Swanton. Choose well.



2026 Member Registration Fees

If you receive any notice from the Boy Scouts of America regarding Registration Fees please see Mr Raven to go over this first. It's still a new process and a learning experience for all of us! Thank you

The best Christmas gift in U.S. military history

<http://www.albanyherald.com/news/2014/dec/26/eric-hogan-the-best-christmas-gift-in-us-military/>

It was the bitter cold and snowy Christmas eve of 1944, just 81 years ago during World War II. The cocky paratroopers of the American 101st Airborne Division were hunkered down and surrounded by some five German divisions of tanks and infantry in the Belgian town of Bastogne located in an area known as the Ardennes.

In an amazing illustration of that unique American ability to maintain a sense of humor in the face of the most grim of circumstances, their commander, General Anthony McAuliffe, had just sent a radio message to General George Patton reminding him there was only one more shopping day until Christmas. But this was deadly serious business as McAuliffe knew that Patton's 3rd Army, relentlessly attacking the Germans from the south, was the only hope of relief for the 101st that would save them from total destruction.

The successful D-Day invasion almost seven months before had marked the beginning of the great Allied offensive to liberate Western Europe and inflict a final defeat on Nazi Germany. But, by November 1944, the advancing Allied armies had outrun much of their supplies and unwisely transitioned to a less aggressive strategy. This pause in the Allied offensive gave the German army which was on the verge of collapse the ability to regroup and reinforce.

Adolph Hitler badly needed a major reversal in the fortunes of war to give Germany a chance to negotiate a much more favorable peace agreement that would be far better than the "unconditional surrender" that President Roosevelt had in mind. So Hitler desperately decided to risk everything on a daring winter surprise attack on the sparsely defended American front lines in the Ardennes. The goal was to split the American & British Armies; to drive all the way to the Belgian port of Antwerp on the North Sea.

Because of Allied air superiority, the Germans had to move large numbers of troops and tanks at night or in bad weather to keep from getting spotted by Allied aircraft. But, in an impressive feat of stealth that was clearly the worst Allied intelligence failure of the war in Europe, the Germans managed to assemble 250,000 men and 1,000 tanks to launch the massive surprise Ardennes offensive on Dec. 16, 1944.

The thinly manned American north to south front in the Ardennes was overwhelmed by the ferocity of the German assault. The Germans pounded out a "bulge" some 60 miles wide and 40 miles deep in the American lines, thus, this battle will forever be known as "The Battle of the Bulge."

Right in the middle of the bulge was the vital crossroads town of Bastogne, with its seven roads stretching out from the center of town. To properly supply their advancing army with food, ammunition, and gasoline, the Germans had to take Bastogne. It would be the key to the epic battle. Fortunately, shortly after the battle had begun, the Allied commanding general, Dwight Eisenhower, realizing its importance, had ordered the 101st to be quickly trucked to Bastogne on Dec. 19 where they were instructed to "hold at all costs."

The 101st arrived in Bastogne just ahead of the lead elements of German Panzers and prepared to withstand a brutal siege. By December 20 they were completely surrounded by German forces, and on Dec. 22 the German commander demanded the surrender of the 101st or they would be "totally annihilated." After a brief discussion with his staff, General McAuliffe gave his immortal reply: "Nuts." When Patton was told of McAuliffe's reply, he said, "A man that eloquent has to be saved."

In a stunning display of dedication and endurance, three of Patton's 3rd Army divisions pulled out of their winter positions and did what Ike thought was impossible. They moved almost 100 miles north in 48 hours with no sleep or hot food and attacked fiercely into the southern German flank of the Bulge on Dec. 21. Patton knew the 101st could not last long against the overwhelming odds and he was determined to break through to Bastogne by Christmas day.

Meanwhile, on the northern flank of the Bulge, the 2nd and 99th Infantry Divisions were stubbornly dug in along Elsenborn Ridge. In spite of the fact they were also greatly outnumbered, they had the high ground and for several days had repulsed numerous German Panzer assaults.

The tough 82nd Airborne Division was sent in to reinforce the northern flank, so the situation on both flanks seemed secure and the large scale German offensive was somewhat contained. Now, the fate of the battle boiled down to the race to Bastogne. Could Patton's men fight their way through the ice and snow and relieve the 101st before they collapsed under the constant German pressure?

Christmas day dawn of 1944 brought clear skies to the Ardennes. Patton's most daring tank commander, Lt. Col. Creighton Abrams (the namesake of today's Abrams tank), could see American transport planes dropping supplies into the smokey ruins of what was the town of Bastogne. But Abrams was mad because there was still a strong force of Germans between him and Bastogne. He got on the radio and called for a heavy artillery barrage and informed his superiors that his tank battalion would then fight their way through German lines into Bastogne. He proved to be a man of his word, as on the afternoon of December 26, the troopers of the 101st had their prayers answered when they saw a column of American Sherman tanks lumber into town.

Upcoming Activities

Spring Trailhead Academy 2026

Saturday March 7th, 2026 @ Camp Miakonda
just a heads up to put on your calendars

Cub & Companion Day 2026

Saturday May 2nd, 2026 @ Camp Miakonda

BALOO / IOLS 2026

Weekend Training (Friday May 15th thru Sunday May 17th) at Camp Miakonda

BALOO - Basic Adult Leader Outdoor Orientation

A program for Webelos Leaders on overnight events
Interested in learning some tricks and requirements for camping with Cub Scouts? This is a fast paced, but fun overnight time to learn.

IOLS - Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills

For new Troop Leaders; an opportunity to relearn some skills and learn others so you can help with leading the youth in the Troop

as a side note on BALOO/IOLS

A lot of the BALOO training does overlap with the IOLS training, but that just helps to reinforce good stuff!

For the Troop

Merit Badge Day @ Camp Miakonda

Saturday January 3rd, 2026

Registration fee: \$21.00 and includes a patch, class supplies, lunch and a full-day experience.

Santa's Speed

Although little is known about Santa's annual Christmas Eve late-night shift, except that it requires lots of cookies, aerospace engineers at North Carolina State University are piecing together the logistics. To deliver presents to all the girls and boys in the world (200 million, with an average of 3 per household — we'll leave aside the naughty ones for now), Santa has to visit 75 million homes covering an estimated 122 million miles. Even allotting 24 hours for delivery, Santa's sleigh would have to travel 5,083,000 mph. Flying at those speeds, it's no surprise he's so rarely spotted in the night sky. But feel free to tease younger relatives by shouting "There he goes! Awww, you missed him."

Disney on Ice ~ Frozen & Encanto

Dec 11th thru 14th

at the Huntington Center, Toledo



Monday
December
29th at 2pm
at the
Huntington
Center

Tickets available at [EVENTTICKETSCENTER.COM](https://www.eventticketscenter.com)

This is a great experience and full of action & fun!



Calling all Boy Scouts! Enjoy BSA Scout Night with the Toledo Walleye on Sunday, January 4. Puck drop is 5:15 p.m., with pregame activities including a skate on the ice.

Sunday, January 4 (Crayola Night) | 5:15 p.m.

<https://www.toledowalleye.com/bsa-scout-night>

The Candy Cane

While the **CANDY CANE** is a seasonal staple in the U.S. today—over 1.76 billion candy canes are made each year—it has a storied past. The first canes were created in 1670 by a German choirmaster, who gave out all-white sugar sticks—bent like the shape of a shepherd's staff—to keep children in his congregation occupied between hymns. In the U.S., the treat began as a straight, white stick of sugar until the turn of the century. The jury's out on who exactly brought the stripes and shape to America.

Toys for Tots

Run by U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, **Toys for Tots** began in 1947, when 5,000 toys were collected outside Warner Bros. Studios in Los Angeles and given to local children. Since the nonprofit's launch, more than 500 million holiday gifts have been donated and distributed to underprivileged kids throughout the country.

Some holiday information can be interesting!

December Historical & Current Events

December 1st

Theodore Roosevelt was the first American to win the Nobel Peace Prize, 1906



December 2nd

The Monroe Doctrine was announced, 1823



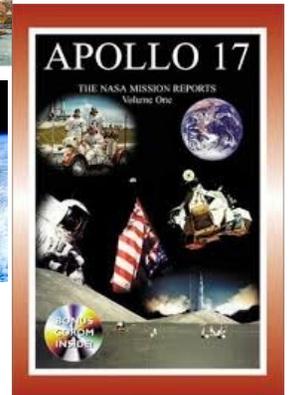
December 3rd

The first American flag was raised aboard the "USS Alfred," 1775

December 4th

General Washington bade farewell to his troops, 1783

United States *Gemini 7* was launched from Cape Kennedy on a 14-day, 206 orbit mission and rendezvous in space with *Gemini 6*, 1965



December 7th

United States Apollo 17 launched, 1972

December 7th

Noah Webster established New York's first daily newspaper, 1793

A bill was introduced to create the Congressional Medal of Honor (Navy), 19961

December 14th

The first military encounter of the American Revolution occurred, when on the report of news carried by Paul Revere that the British intended to station a garrison at Portsmouth, New Hampshire; Major John Sullivan led a band of militia to Fort William and Mary, broke into its arsenal, and carried off arms and ammunition, 1774

December 15th

The Bill of Rights went into effect, 1791

The movie, "*Gone With The Wind*" premiered, 1939



December 16th

The Boston Tea Party occurred, 1773

World War II Battle of the Bulge, which was the last major German offensive of the war began, when German forces broke through Allied defenses in the Ardennes. 1944



December 17th

France recognized American independence, 1777

December 19th

Benjamin Franklin first published his "*Poor Richard's Almanac*" 1732

December 20th

Louisiana Purchase was formally completed, 1803



December 21st

Mayflower Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, Massachusetts, 1620

The (Navy) Congressional Medal of Honor medal was approved and authorized by Congress, 1861

Reduction of the voting age in national elections to 18 years was ruled constitutional by the Supreme Court, 1970

December 24th

General Dwight D. Eisenhower was named Supreme Commander of Allied forces for the invasions of Europe, 1943

December 25th

The first recorded Christmas was celebrated in Rome, A.D. 336

"*Silent Night*" was performed for the first time at the Church of St. Nikolaus, Oberndorff, Austria, 1818

George Washington crossed the Delaware River, 1776



December 26th

New York City was blanketed with 25.8 inches of snow, 1947

The end of the Soviet Union began, 1991



December 27th

The World War II Battle of the Bulge ended, 1944