

GSL's Report

Welcome to this year's edition of Smoke Signals.. I am pleased to say that 2nd Farnborough have had another brilliant year. We have welcomed Dan as a young Leader and Lee as Assistant Cub Scout Leader. Numbers are up again and we are at capacity in all sections. During the Autumn term we had 7 Beavers moving up to Cubs, 4 Cubs moving up to Scouts and a Scout joining the Beavers as Young Leader. We have a healthy waiting list of people to take their places. We now have 8 girls in the group 6 in Scouts which outnumbers the boys, 1 in Cubs and 1 in Beavers. I am delighted that all sections have entered all the District competitions over the past year and had many section and individual successes. Well done to the under 91/2 Cubs who all gained 1st 2nd or 3rd placed certificates at Sports day. The Cubs retained the District 6 aside Competition due to it being cancelled and the Beavers came 3rd overall in the District Swimming Gala in November.

I really enjoyed attending all the sections camps and the District Camps during the past year it was good to see everyone enjoying all the various activities and using the skills they had learnt. I am looking forward this year's Tolmers camp in a couple of weeks and hoping the weather is better than it was last year and also the Cub Camp in September. It was great to attend the Beavers trip to The Jutland Jack Experience in Portsmouth and the Picnic last Summer, the Cubs shooting and trampolining activities and the Scouts scuba diving experience.

It was brilliant to have 12 recipients of Chief Scout Awards this year 6 Beavers, 4 Cubs and 2 Scouts. Due to the weather the official awards presentation evening was cancelled but it was great to see them get recognition at The St Georges Day Parade in April. Well done for gaining Bronze , Phoebe, Steven, Alfie, Keegan Reece and Oliver. Silver Bayley, Thea, Keyen and Jack and Gold to Emily and Dan. It is unlikely that we will have this number again but everyone is working hard so we are hoping to have a few recipients at the ceremony next March.

We had a good turn out at St Georges Day Parade this year a few were less than normal but this is because it fell on the same day as The London Marathon and the Junior charity Mud race. Those that did attend did 2nd Farnborough proud.

Word has got round about us and what we get up too and we have had lots of enquiries about joining it would be great for us to be able to take everyone but in order to do so we will need more Leaders in each section.

As a group we have continued with our fundraising efforts this year, which has helped with the refurbishment of the hut and to keep the subs down. Thanks to everyone who has supported us with the sponsored Fright Night Hike. The group have also supported Guide Dogs for the Blind and Chloe's and Sophies Special Ears Fund in appreciation for their visits to help the Cubs and Beavers achieve their Disability Awareness Badges. Our biggest income is from Gift aid if you are a taxpayer we can claim 25p in the pound back against subs all you need to do is fill in the new form as all previous forms are obsolete so if you have not signed up yet please ask your leader for a one.

Our hut is looking good both inside and out and although we have allowed other groups to benefit from the work of the Monday Crew they have fixed the overflowing toilet, repaired the floor and improved the security fencing around the perimeter. We still need a few minor repairs done so I hope they will soon be free to complete them. Thank you again them for all their hard work again this year.

Finally thank you to all my leaders Young Leader s and helpers for all their hard work over the past year making this group what it is today thank you Bosun, Bagherra, Blackthorn, Kodiak, Tom Dan and Tallie . A big thank you all the parents who took their turn on the parent rotas helped at fundraising events and provided transportation. Thank you also to Emma and the District team for their support. and to my executive committee Henrietta, Kenna, Sue, Sharon and Marisa and who have had a very busy year helping us make the past year a resounding success.

Beavers Smoke signals 2016 The Beavers have been really busy as usual and have welcomed Dan as a YL to the Colony this year. The day after last year's review, all our Beavers attended the special picnic at the 6th Form College. It was a very hot afternoon so the Beavers cooled down by water sliding on the giant slide, firing water rockets and throwing wet sponges. Everyone had a great time and they are really looking forward to 2018 picnic tomorrow.

The first couple of weeks of term were spent finishing off the Gardeners Badge which the colony started in July. The fine weather the rest of the month allowed us to build fires, cook marshmallows and follow trails. October started with a visit to Rushmoor Fire Station after a short talk about the jobs fire fighters tackle, the Beavers got to explore the engine and operate the hose which they all thoroughly enjoyed.

There were some amazing costumes worn at the annual sponsored Halloween fright Night Hike around Southwood Woodland in October. The colony took the preferred route so were able to complete the observation boards which added to the fun. Thanks to everyone who came along and sponsored the Beavers to complete the course,

The first meeting in November was spent preparing for the Beaver Sleepover which was held at 1st Frimley's Hut in Frimley Lodge Park. This year all the Beavers stayed over and took part in Space activities which included planet hoopla, balloon rockets, planet mats, daleks, team games, obstacle course, a glow stick hike and a campfire. Congratulations to the Beavers who completed their Outdoor Challenge badge over the weekend. Some Beavers left camp to attend the District Swimming Gala well done to Sebastian, Luke and Phoebe who all were placed in their races and finished 3rd overall. Also in November the Beavers had a caving experience at Runways End. For some this was a scary experience but everyone completed all the tasks and really enjoyed the session.

The next event was a visit to Aldershot Police Station where everyone got the chance to try on uniform and test equipment they also had a turn in the back of a Police van luckily they were all well behaved and were allowed home. The rest of the term was spent gaining the space badge we learnt that this was not a good time of the year to view the moon and stars so will look at the Spring term next time. The District Christmas Campfire at Runways End was well attended and our Beavers did us proud by singing our song beautifully. For the Christmas Party the Beavers and Cubs gathered at Lazer Run

The Spring term was spent concentrating on the skills challenge it covered healthy eating, fitness, tying shoe laces, folding scarves, learning knots and problem solving. Also during this term all the Beavers gained the new Builder Badge and the Disability Awareness badge. Thanks to Sarah from Guide dogs for the Blind who brought her Guide dog Jess along and to Brian from Chloe's and Sophie's special ears fund who taught everyone to sign some useful phrases. To thank them the Beavers raised money by doing good turns. To end the term the group went to Gravity Force Trampolining Park.

Congratulations to our 6 Beavers now Cubs who were recognised at St Georges Day Parade in April as Chief Scout Bronze award winners. The following week on a cloudy day 7 Beavers completed the annual District Beaver Hike around the Wellesley Trail. All the Beavers who took part gained their Hikes away and explore badges.

During the Summer term we welcomed 2 new Beavers, they were able to experience sandcastle building, bug hunting, tree climbing, litter picking, assault course, miniature gardens, parachute games, sports, teambuilding and rehearsing for the show tonight. We are not at the end of term yet so have a few more activities planned which includes the Picnic and a water activities evening. Everyone did brilliantly at the District Sports Day we gained a 2nd and 3rd place and got through to all the finals but just missed out on the placings. Well done guys.

During the year we had 7 Beavers swim up to Cubs and welcomed 5 new Beavers into the colony. There are 2 Beavers due to move up soon and we have people on the waiting list to replace them. A few Beavers are close to achieving the Bronze Chief scout Award and I am hoping they will be presented with their badges soon.

Cubs Smoke signals 2016 We like to keep the Cubs active and we certainly have done that this year. Bagherra began his training and was officially welcomed as Assistant Cub Scout Leader has been kept very busy too. We welcomed 7 new Cubs from Beavers at the beginning of term and they were able to experience following a trail, shelter building, pioneering, fire lighting and backwoods cooking. This was all good preparation for the joint camp with 14th Aldershot at Mytchett lake where they also got to experience kayaking, raft building, swimming and bouldering. For some of them it was their 1st experience of camping in tents and they all took it in their stride and had a brilliant time. Our thanks goes to Kirsty and her team at 14th A for inviting us.

The Cubs had another sleepover after completing the Sponsored Night Hike where there were some interesting costumes. Thank you to everyone who accompanied us on the walk and who sponsored them. Oliver and Dan stayed longer and joined the Scouts at the Jamboree on the Internet where they talked to Cubs all over the world.

In November a few Cubs gained their swimmer badge during an evening at Farnborough Leisure which was good preparation for the swimming Gala where our team did their best. We did come away with some certificates in the swimming and in the fun events which the Cubs really enjoyed. In the following weeks the Cubs joined the Beavers for visits to the Police station and the Fire station where they were able to complete the criteria for their Fire Safety Badges. For the Astronomers badge the pack learnt about planets and stars as we were only able to see them briefly through the telescope. They really enjoyed making models of the solar system and making up new rhymes to help them remember the order of the planets. An evening rifle shooting was a great success. Well done to Santino and Anthony for representing the pack at the District Carol Service at North Camp Methodist Church. The 3 new Cubs represented us at the District Indoor Games competition coming 4th overall.. The whole group gathered at laser Run for the end of term party.

The Cherokees had a very busy Spring term doing badge work the activities challenge and disability Awareness too all term. As well as visits from Brian from Chloe's and Sophie's special ears fund and Sarah from Guide Dogs the Cubs learnt about hidden disabilities and Josh showed them how he deals with diabetes. They also were shown how to operate a wheelchair safely which was a challenge for some, how to cut paper one handed and to foot draw. The Skills challenge included things like ironing, washing up, folding scarves, sewing on badges and how to look after their health by eating the right food and by keeping fit.

The pack had a good turnout at The St Georges Day Parade and well done to the 4 Silver Chief Scout Award winners who were recognised at this event.

Unfortunately the 6 aside football competition was cancelled so we get to keep the trophy for another year. Dan, Santino Anthony and Oliver gained their Entertainers badge by attending the District Entertainers Day and performing in Aladdin. The pack joined the other sections at Gravity Force for the end of term activity.

The summer term is when all the outside activities happen. The cubs took part in fire lighting, backwoods cooking, following a trail, tracking, den building, tree climbing, litter picking, gained their athletes badge and some will gain their entertainers badge after performing for you tonight. Before the end of term we will be spending an evening canoeing Kayaking and paddle boarding at Aldershot Lido.

We could not field a full team at sports day but well done to all the Cubs who attended. Congratulations to Olec, Dan, Phoebe and Steven who won the relay and gained 5 more placing certificates between them and to Tino and Anthony for showing good sportsmanship.

We had a very young pack but 4 Cubs have successfully moved onto scouts in the past year we hope that will continue next year when 2 more are due to move up 2 Beavers are due to will swim up soon. We hope to have a few Cubs achieving their Chief Scout award soon and I look forward to presenting their badges.

Scouts Smoke Signals 2018 Two weeks after last year's Review the Scouts headed off to Tolmer's for their week long camp. It was another brilliant Camp the weather was not as good as the previous year but it did not spoil the fun. The Scouts took part in all the activities which included, canoeing, zorbing, climbing, abseiling, go karting, trampolining and hiking. This year some tried a few new activities such as slippery slope, gyroscope, sailing and journalism where Dan wrote an article which was published in the camp newspaper. Dan and Emily went off and did their expedition completing a vlog on the way but unfortunately I was the only one to see it before it got encrypted so they did a verbal presentation in the Autumn term. All the scouts are really looking forward to this year's visit.

As we had 3 new Scouts the troop spent the first few weeks of the term learning a few new skills. These included fire lighting, building and preparing different types of fires, backwoods cooking, knife work, feathering, kindling, axe and saw work. The rest of the half term was spent updating their knotting, pioneering, cooking skills in preparation for the weekend Camp which took place after the sponsored Fright Night Hike. All the new scouts took part and for them it was their 1st experience of putting up tents in the dark. They must have done it properly as it rained all night and they were still dry in the morning. We had to do the activities inside because of the weather so they built large newspaper pyramids, which was a brilliant teambuilding exercise. After lunch the troop plus 2 cubs attended the Jamboree on the Internet which was held at 2nd Aldershot. Our Scouts connected with Scouts in 25 different countries. The weather improved so dinner was cooked on the fire spaghetti Bolognese and chocolate bananas were a real success. Unfortunately later the wind blew up and it was unsafe for the Scouts to be under the trees so they spent the rest of the camp inside.

After half term we continued with the fire theme with a trip to the fire station where we invested the new Scouts. After completing the criteria for the fire safety badge the Scouts were able to test out some of the equipment including the cutting gear, hoses and heat seeking cameras. The following week the troop experienced Scuba diving with Divecrew at The Garrison pool in Aldershot a few were a bit nervous to begin with but after a briefing and some 1-1 tuition they soon got the hang of it. We were had some success at the District Swimming Gala well done James for gaining a 2nd and 3rd certificate and Tallie a 1st. The Christmas activity was outdoor Ice skating in Camberley. Although a few held on for most of the time everyone gave it ago it's not as easy as it looks.

In the Spring term the troop worked on improving their skills which began with teamwork spaghetti and tape bridges. In the following weeks the scouts cooked omelettes in bags and took part in a patrol Come dine with us challenge. This was judged by the young Leaders who voted Fox patrols fajitas and chocolate cupcakes to be the best. After half term the troop prepared for District Camp which this year was held at Polyapes in Cobham, 6 scouts and 1 Young Leader attended. During the day the weather was dry so they experienced a handball tournament, obstacle course, stilt racing, flagpole building, flag painting, campfire, entertainment and a wide game. This was good experience for Tolmers. At the end of term The Troop joined the other 2 sections at Gravity Force

There was a good turnout for St Georges Parade at the Aldershot Garrison Church. Our troop does not have many Gold Chief Scout Award recipients so I was really pleased that Emily and Dan got the recognition they deserved.

Unfortunately in April Blackthorn and Kodiak both decided to take a break from Scouting so the Summer Term began with troop going back to basics. The first week was knife skills followed by axes and saws then different types of fires and basic cooking. The troop took a couple of weeks off to prepare for the raft race and sports day. We were not able to take part in the Raft Race after all due to me injuring my wrist and a bug affecting the team.

Well done to the James and Izzy who both gained 2 certificates at Sports Day and to the rest of the team who did their best on a day when we had more than our fair share of bad luck hoping for better luck next year.

The last few weeks have been spent rehearsing for tonight's show. Canoeing kayaking and paddle boarding will be this year's end of term activity.