



Scouts in ACTION

Australian Capital Territory Branch

July 2014

Scout Central 2.0 - COMING SOON!

Scout Central 2.0 is the latest advancement in Scouts Australia's digital strategy. This exciting web platform is available to Leaders and youth has been developed to increase the efficiencies and effectiveness of our Leaders in delivering quality programs as well as empower our young people! The new platform is expected to be released this month and is packed full of new features!

For starters you will get all the latest Scouting news, a complete award scheme reference from Joeys to Rovers, access to areas of personal growth, a program finder filled with exciting activities and games (you can even upload your own activities so other leaders around Australia can use them), a Scouts Wiki, E-learning, online resources like books, templates and other cool stuff, an activity board so you can invite other Groups across Australia to join in on your adventures, a program builder so Leaders can create section programs easily and align it with any awards, a Scout register so marking attendance is even easier, a Scout Cloud where you can store all Scouting notes,

information and files and of course, a social feed from National and Scouts ACT's Facebook page.

You will be able to access the new Scout Central through the link on our website. More information on the release of Scout Central 2.0 will be coming out shortly, so keep an eye out on our Facebook page and ScoutsIT.

From the Chief



Group Support At the recent National Operations and Executive Meetings in Melbourne, Scout Branches from all over Australia were very impressed with the work that the ACT Branch has done in working on a plan to assist new Group Leaders (and Leaders in Charge). The aim of our work has been to devise and implement a strategy that will assist those in Group Leadership positions in the first few months of taking up their position. The results of an Australian wide survey on Group needs are also being examined – stay tuned for more developments.

Child protection remains a key national topic and all branches are working to ensure we have clear and consistent policies to keep our youth members safe. All section leaders are reminded that it is imperative that we have two adults at all section meetings. Where possible two trained leaders - otherwise one leader with a Certificate of Adult leadership and a parent helper must be present at all youth meetings. Our Child Protection policies are now in line with all other branches – a visible sign that this important issue is taken very seriously by Scouting nationwide.

Bean and Gone our very own Gang Show is about to commence – and what a treat it is. When you watch a performance you will see one of our most successful Scouting programs being delivered – and I don't mean the booklet you buy on the night! When you go more than once you see the results – the incredible growth in development that our youth and young adult members show on stage, backstage, front of house and in the orchestra. Of course some people just go along to watch the show – and that's great – but only a part of the magic of Gang Show – Bean and Gone!

Sharps Aware since 2010

By Timothy Kirsopp, Draco Fellowship

For those of you who don't know us, we are Draco Scout Fellowship. Draco Scout Fellowship began from a group of booted Rovers in the A.C.T seven years ago. Since starting up we have made sure that we are constantly providing service to the scouting and general Canberra, Australian and International communities.

One of the big projects we have had running for a number of years now is our Sharps Aware program. Most of the Draco Scout Fellowship members are also Cub Scout leaders and an important part of our pack programs is our annual participation in Clean Up Australia Day. After doing it for a number of years we noticed that the numbers of sharps (needles, syringes and other drug paraphernalia) was increasing and becoming more and more of a hazard for our youth members. In 2010 we found 25 individual needles, 2 fit packs, 18 needle disposal units of various sizes and 6 used condoms in or around Lake Ginninderra in Canberra. (Our recent hauls have reduced slightly but not by much. It is especially bad after big rains when all the storm water drains are washed out.)



Needles and other drug paraphernalia can carry hepatitis C. It is a disease that can live in dried blood for up to three months. The NSW Government Health program website describes its effects as *"without treatment, about three quarters of people infected with hepatitis C develop chronic (long-lasting) infection, which can eventually develop into liver failure or cancer of the liver. However, there is treatment that can cure hepatitis C in 70-80% of cases and treatment continues to improve."*

Rather than call off the whole activity, which the cubs loved participating in, I decided to go and do my Sharps Training with the Canberra City Rangers (unfortunately they no longer run this course, but you can organise a course through CIT). After doing the course I felt comfortable in taking my cubs out into situations where they might find sharps, confident that I could keep them safe and properly and correctly remove any offending items. Unfortunately I soon realised that with a pack of 40 cubs I couldn't be everywhere I needed to be at all times.

So I contacted the City Rangers and asked if they could come to my pack and teach my cubs what to look out for. They City Rangers were brilliant. They showed the cubs syringes, disposal units of various types, fit packs and even condoms, all with an age appropriate theme. For the Cubs it was "Don't Touch it, Don't Touch it, Don't Touch it!" We did not go into detail about how the particular objects were used. Unfortunately it was decided by the A.C.T Government that the City Rangers were no longer allowed to run their Sharps aware sessions and here Draco saw an opportunity. We decided to take up the reins, run the program ourselves and push it into all sections of scouting.

A typical Sharps aware program now consists of two Draco members attending a section meeting with the display that the City Rangers used, going through the items in question and enforcing the rule "Don't Touch it, Don't Touch it, Don't Touch it!" Our program costs \$2.50 per participant and includes a camp blanket badge to remind the participants of the program. (continue to page 3)

Since 2012 we have delivered over 20 Sharps Aware sessions to all sections of scouting from Joeys up to Rovers. In the junior program (Joeys, Cubs and Scouts) the focus is on identifying the objects, knowing what to do if you find one and knowing who to call to have the objects safely removed. In the Senior program it is more about identifying the objects and then making an assessment on whether or not the object poses an immediate threat to a situation and how to manage the risk around it while waiting for a City Ranger to come and retrieve the item.

In 2013 after an article in Australian Scout Magazine about 'The Plastiki Challenge' we were contacted by River Gums Fellowship in Victoria and they are now running our program down there. They run it annually, and I was reliably informed that their last program had approximately 110 scouter attend. I have been a part of the organising and running of the Sharps Aware program since it's beginning in 2010 and as a pack leader I can say that, despite finding the numbers of sharps that we do, we have never had an accident (touch wood). As a member of Draco we are constantly receiving news from leaders and parents that after delivering a program, their little Cub Scout discovered a sharp, knew exactly what to do and even told the parents who to call. It's great to know that what we are doing makes a difference.

Sharps, drugs, condoms, etc are not nice or easy things to talk about and I know the avoidance strategies people use. "I don't think kids this young should be exposed to that kind of thing...", "They'll be taught that when they are ready...", "It's not our place to teach them these types of things..." But the fact of the matter is that people do decide to destroy their lives by taking drugs and unfortunately they sometimes do it where our kids like to play and where we hold scouting activities (I have found sharps in kids playgrounds, in bushes around our hall, in sandpits. I have even found used condoms in preschool playgrounds).

There are ways to talk about it that keep our youth safe without having to go into details about how these things are used or why people use them.

If you find a sharp of any type in Canberra please call Canberra Connect of 13 22 81 and ask for a sharps pick up, a City ranger will be there within 45 minutes. If you are not in Canberra I suggest you contact your local council and see what services they offer for sharps retrieval.

If you would like any more information about our Sharps Aware program or Draco Scout Fellowship please do not hesitate to contact us at dracofellowship@yahoo.com.au

Scouts in action!

This month we had three Scouts (Aaron Robilliard, Gavin Finch and Lauren Freeman), one Venturer (Elyse Lenehan) and two Rovers (Calista Beck and Toby Phillips) attend and help invest the Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia, his Excellency the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd) as Scouts Australia's Chief Scout.

We have also had three exceptional Venturer Scouts accepted for the forthcoming Mawson Scholarship Camps this year. Matthew Court from Birralee and Sarah Yates from Mt Taylor will attend the course in Brisbane this month and Simone Forostenko from Kama will attend the Sydney course in October.

There were also two Jack Deeble Scholarships awarded this year. Thanks to the generosity of the Arthur Shakespeare Foundation for Scouting, Heidi Andriunas from Wanniasa Venturers and Bronte Sheaves from Kama Scout Group will be able to embark upon some exciting Scouting adventures. Heidi plans to attend the Australian National Venture in January 2015 and Bronte the World Jamboree in Japan also in 2015.

Earlier this year James Ansell became the first of our Hot Air Balloon trainees to graduate and receive his set of pilot wings! He also gave a very entertaining presentation at our Annual Council General Meeting.

Rover and Leader Calista Beck has been appointed as the Australian Contingent Leader for the Nepal expedition to Baden Powell Peak in 2015.

Earlier this month we had thirty one Group Leaders and Group Support Committee members attend a Group Managers Workshop. Well done to everyone that went and we hope to see more at the next workshop next term.

This photo is courtesy of the Governor General's website, <https://www.gg.gov.au/events/investiture-governor-general-chief-scout>





JOTT, Garran Scouts and Mt Painter

By Pam Housenloge, Garran Scout Leader

On Saturday the 11th May, Garran Scouts joined thousands of Scouts world wide for Jamboree On The Trail. With not much time available we made the climb to the top of Mt Painter and enjoyed the spectacular 360 degree view of Canberra. It was a very blustery afternoon but as you can see the kids had a ball.

Diving weekend at Jervis Bay

By John Pring, McCarthur Venturer Leader and Dive Coordinator



A small group of Scouts to Rovers decided to say bah humbug to the Canberra winter and go diving. As it turned out we picked a superb weekend to visit Jervis Bay

This was the inaugural independent diving activity for ACT Scouts. We now had the equipment and qualified people to run our own events rather than relying on commercial providers.

We started the trip, as with most scouting adventures, with a car ride down the back roads to Huskisson, Jervis Bay (near Nowra).

The first set of dives was on a beautiful Saturday morning at Hyams Beach. As an experiment we took a couple of flags to "fly". Flying the flag certainly labels those included in the photo. We soon discovered that folding flags underwater has its own set of challenges.

When we were setting out for our second dive at Hyams beach we swam into a pod of dolphins. Aside from the dolphins the weekend dives were full of sea life including rays, fish large and small, octopuses and star fish.

Our dives on Sunday were round the equally spectacular Murrays Beach. Effectively over the course of the two dives we started just to the East of the boat ramp and ended up at the actual beach (some 800+ m). For the whole time we were surrounded by a large variety of fish and other sea life.

All of us came away from the weekend with great memories and a desire to repeat the event in the future.

We run diving roughly once a month at various locations along the south coast of NSW all year round.

If you are interested in coming on some of our future diving activities and are a qualified diver please let me know and I will add you to our ACT Scout diving Facebook page.

If you would like to find out more about diving please contact me. (scuba@actventurers.com.au) Our next PADI Open Water (basic) course is scheduled for 27-28 Sep



Your Group or event in the next "Scouts in ACTION"

Would you like your Group or event to be in the next issue of Scouts in ACTION? Send 10 - 15 lines and a picture to Tyron at development.officer@act.scouts.asn.au and we will add your story to the next newsletter.