



The Water Rat

Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

May 2000

Skipper's Scrawl

I'm sure those of you who saw our Scouts on *News Night* last week were impressed at how smart they looked. They were somewhat surprised when they came down to the meeting and found a BBC cameraman and presenter in the HQ. It's a shame that we were only featured so briefly – about one minute in total, after an hour and a half of filming!

Thanks to those parents who came to the AGM/parents meeting last Monday. Despite the fact that only about 20% of parents were represented, I feel we still had a worthwhile discussion on the future of the Group. I sometimes wonder just how interested parents are in what the Group does for their children ... or do they regard us like a car park – somewhere to park the kids for a modest charge whilst they go off and do their own thing? Of the 70 letters I sent to parents only 17 have so far returned the gift aid form. This is a simple way of increasing our annual income at no cost to you, so if you want subscriptions to remain as they are please return your form.

I am pleased that Mike Freeman has volunteered to take on the job of HQ bookings and will also hold a key to the building for parents cleaning and working parties. (telephone no 020 8549 8634). Please note your allocated date in your diaries and remember that it is your responsibility to arrange a swap with someone else if you cannot make your day. The first named on the days duty list should arrange with Mike to collect the key.

I am still keen to find a volunteer to take care of mowing the lawn on a regular basis. Is this a job you could take on? Please let me know.

On the Leader side, thanks to Keith Aldred for offering to help with Beavers and also Steve deSousa for agreeing to help with cubs. One of the items discussed at the meeting was the admission of girls to our Beaver and Cub sections. This will be initiated as soon as we have a couple more female adult volunteers to help as Leaders. Obviously we will start by taking in a group of 3-4 girls as soon as space permits and will give preference to those with brothers or sisters already in the Group. Now is the time to let Nigel Duffin know if you want someone to go on the waiting list even if we may not have space just at the moment.

You will probably be aware that we did not have a Supporters Christmas Dinner evening this year. It has been decided instead to hold a social buffet/drinks evening and this will take place at HQ on Saturday 8th July. Thanks to Madeleine and Angie for agreeing to organise the food and drink and Guildsman P.L-C for subsidising the food.

Finally, for those who may have mislaid their gift aid forms, a duplicate is attached to this Water Rat. Please return to me as soon as possible – remember if everyone signs up it will be worth about £1000 a year to the Group.

Keith

Leander Social Evening
Saturday 8th July, 7.30pm
for all Leander parents and supporters
£2.50 per head – reply slip on page 3

Leander (Kingston) Sea Scout Group

Headquarters: 92 Lower Ham Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey
Telephone: 020 8549 6286 — www.leanderss.free-online.co.uk



Coxswain's Corner

As everyone knows, now is the time for the Troop to get out on the water as much as possible. With so much rain recently, we keep a careful eye on the flow of the river, but so far conditions are quite reasonable. It is our good fortune that Chris Hampton is now regularly taking our many keen canoeists, assisted by Alex Newman and 2 instructors from Surbiton Sea Lions – there should be number of one and two star canoeists very soon. The K2s (lightweight 2 seater racing canoes) have been out for the first time for some years – not easy to paddle, as they sit high on the water and need good balance. Matt and William overcame their wobbles and now should be showing us what they can do.

The coypus are beginning to show their age, so a few cracks have appeared which need sealing, (three boats need repairs). Nothing too serious but each one has to be lifted on to trestles to be sealed.

Regarding other events, we were just pipped at the post for the Marshall Trophy this year; being the largest troop in the District means we have to score a very large number of points – the total gained for District and National activities is divided by the number in the troop. In effect it would be difficult for us to gain additional points – apart from patrol camps, which did not happen this year (how about it PLs – you're the guys to organise them?)

The District six-a-side competition will be rescheduled for mid June – DON'T FORGET!

All those who have joined recently are rapidly becoming proficient at pulling and boat handling, and, although the river has a lot of water coming down, conditions are getting better. Hopefully by then time we go to the Isle of Wight for Summer Camp, the weather might have settled.

PLEASE NOTE: All Scout parents will be receiving a communication concerning essential Troop matters. It is most important that everyone reads this and returns the attached questionnaire.

Coxswain

Cubs

After the last *Water Rat* we have been able to recruit a new leader. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Steve de Souza as another Assistant Cub Leader (name to be agreed – we are still in arbitration!).

This term we said goodbye to Chris Pearce, who has now gone up to the Troop. We also welcome three new cubs: Alex Coniff, Chris Bolster and Barney Blackhurst. The investiture will be on 7th June, the first meeting after half term.

Once again we won the District five-a-side on 13th May. The five boys representing Leander were: Ben Cockle, Charles Kimber, Ben Sollis, Nick Pratt and Jed Wingrove. I was well informed that all the other teams has team meetings and talks throughout the day – if you wanted ours, they could always be found in the tuck shop! (Who said that sweets were bad for you?!!) I must point out that we retained the cup.

This term we hope to be out and about a lot more. However, the weather has held us back so far. We will be going to Richmond Park for events and also a visit to the Fire Station has been planned.

We still need more help and would like to get one more warranted leader. Hopefully, this will be a lady, as we hope to soon be taking girls into the Pack.

Akela (Tim)

Ham Fair – 10th June

This is an excellent fund raising opportunity for Leander. Karen hopes to provide refreshments, take the barbecue, run a tombola and put on a small display about Leander. If you could spare a couple of hours on Saturday 10th June that would be marvellous. Tombola items also needed (eg: bottle of wine, soaps, chocolates, etc).

Please contact Karen at Scouts on Tuesdays or phone 8543 7277

Sunday Working Parties

Parents' working parties on the second and fourth Sundays of each month have been very successful in keeping up with regular cleaning and maintenance of the Headquarters. In March, all Leander families were divided into groups of four or five and one parent from each family was asked to come along from 10:00 to 12:00, arranging swaps where necessary.

We're now near the end of the current 'allocation' of families, so there will be a new list after the Summer. Please would the first named on the list arrange to collect a key from Mike Freeman (020 8549 8634).

June 11th – Thomas, Tindall, Walters, (also Maintenance Party)

June 25th – Whitaker, Whitfield, Williams, Williamson,

July 9th – Wingrove, Woods, Yagnick, Young, (also Maintenance Party)

Keith

e-mail addresses

We're compiling a list of e-mail addresses for members of the Group, to make contacting people and circulating information much quicker and simpler. *Water Rat* distribution will largely become electronic (being piloted at present). Send an e-mail to me at nigel@duffin.demon.co.uk. A blank one will do, but make it clear what it's about – I don't read the 'get-rich-quick' ones!

Nigel Duffin

Dates for your Diary

June 10th – Ham Fair

June 11th –HQ Cleaning and Maintenance Party

June 25th –HQ Cleaning Party

(No Regatta at Kingston in July this year)

July 8th – Social Evening

(parents and friends of Leander)

July 9th –HQ Cleaning and Maintenance Party

July 15th – *Water Rat* copy date

July 29th/Aug 8th – Troop Summer Camp, IOW

Leander Social Evening

An evening with buffet and drinks, for relaxing, meeting friends, generally enjoying the River, on Saturday 8th July at 7.30pm.

£2.50 per head includes the buffet, drinks extra. Please complete and return the slip below to Madeleine Connolly by 24th June.

Leander Social Evening – Saturday 8th July, 7.30pm

Please book places at the Leander Social Evening

A cheque for £..... is enclosed (payable to *Leander Sea Scouts*)

Name

Address

Telephone

Return to:

Madeleine Connolly, 326 Richmond Road, Kinston upon Thames, KT2 5PP, 020 8546 8173