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## Gilchrist County Scout program continues to grow; *Biggest campout in six years*



Assistant Boy Scout Troop 406 Scoutmaster Christine Medina reads about 'Old Glory' as the Color Guard, comprised of Boy Scout Troop 406 Senior Patrol Leader Kurtis McConnell, and Cub Scouts Serenity Dillon, Sadie Murray, Brayden Smith, Jackson Manders and Tanner Rhoades prepare to do their duty. Among the Color Guard's requirements were to unfold and display the worn American flag, and then to fold it and retire it to the fire. The children clearly did their best in a picture-perfect ceremony that showed respect for one of the nation's symbols of freedom and democracy.

### Story, Photos and Video

By Jeff M. Hardison © Oct. 14, 2018 at 7:28 p.m.

GILCHRIST COUNTY -- American Legion Jamerson-Sheffield Post 91 -- located between Trenton and Bell -- held the distinction of being a place where history was made Saturday (Oct. 13).

<https://youtu.be/zfefXCR5XH8>

In this video, the audience has heard about the process, and the Color Guard has folded the flag. Then, the worn flag is put into the fire -- where it burns until it is ashes and the Color Guard is dismissed.

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**The Color Guard displays the flag as Assistant Scoutmaster Christine Medina reads and Assistant Scoutmaster Jessie Stanley remains prepared to help the young Scouts if they need.**



**Assistant Scoutmaster Christine Medina, Scoutmaster Jace McConnell and Assistant Scoutmaster Jessie Stanley pause for a photo opportunity after the Scouts were dismissed following the retirement of the worn flag on Saturday (Oct. 13). The fire where the flag became ashes is behind the Cub Scout Pack 406 and Boy Scout Troop 406 leaders. The Cub Scout pack and Boy Scout troop tentatively have planned to retire another worn out American flag when members of American Legion Post 91 can be present at some point in November.**

It was a trifecta for the records of Scouts in Gilchrist County.  
This was the biggest campout of Gilchrist County Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts in the

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past six years, Cub Scout Pack 406 Committee Chair Christine Medina said.

Medina is also assistant scoutmaster of Boy Scout Troop 406 as well as being the Pack 406 den leader for the Arrow of Light Cub Scouts.

Scoutmaster Jace McConnell is the leader of Troop 406. Joining Assistant Scoutmaster Medina as McConnell's two assistants is Assistant Scoutmaster Jessie Stanley.

As for the overnight campout held on the grounds of American Legion Post 91, there were 74 people, Medina said, with 42 of those campers being children.

The Scout program in Gilchrist County continues to grow. The Cub Scouts anticipate adding more members from the Bell area soon, Committee Chair Medina said.

The second part of this three-part point of Gilchrist County Scout history is that Pack 406 has 11 members who are girls. A few of the first girl Cub Scouts are Serenity Dillon, 10, a Webelos Cub Scout; Madelin Springer, 7, a Wolf Cub Scout; and Phoebe Medina, 5, a Lion Cub Scout,

Committee Chair Medina said that to dispel any misinformation -- though girls are allowed (and encouraged) to join Cub Scout Pack 406 -- they will meet in different groups than the boys.

"This is because, well, girls should be able to be girls and boys should be able to be boys!" Medina said. "Next year, girls will be able to join the Boy Scouts (ages 11 to 18 years old) but they will have an entirely separate Troop. They won't just be joining up with the boys. It is merely an opportunity for girls to experience the wonderful curriculum that the Boy Scouts of America has to offer."

From youngest to oldest Cub Scouts nowadays are Lions, Tigers, Wolves, Bears, Webelos and Arrow of Light Cub Scouts. (Wolves may seem peculiar, because wolves is the plural for the animal, but for the Cub Scout rank of Wolf, this writer chose Wolves as the plural form.)

A half-century ago, the rankings went Wolf, Bear, Lion, Webelos.

The third aspect of the history-making campout was the retirement of a worn American flag, which was retired by burning it in a most honorable and respectful manner, per United States Code.

The Scouts selected to be the Color Guard for this event were Boy Scout Troop 406 Senior Patrol Leader Kurtis McConnell, and Cub Scouts Serenity Dillon, Sadie Murray, Brayden Smith, Jackson Manders and Tanner Rhoades.

Assistant Scoutmaster Medina led the program.

She shared with Scouts, parents and guests that the United States has a code related to respect for flag.

That code is shown below:

"No disrespect should be shown to the flag of the United States of America; the flag should not be dipped to any person or thing. Regimental colors, State flags, and organization or institutional flags are to be dipped as a mark of honor.

"The flag should never be displayed with the union down, except as a signal of dire distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property.

"The flag should never touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, the floor, water, or merchandise.

"The flag should never be carried flat or horizontally, but always aloft and free.

"The flag should never be used as wearing apparel, bedding, or drapery. It should never be festooned, drawn back, nor up, in folds, but always allowed to fall free. Bunting

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of blue, white, and red, always arranged with the blue above, the white in the middle, and the red below, should be used for covering a speaker's desk, draping the front of the platform, and for decoration in general.

“The flag should never be fastened, displayed, used, or stored in such a manner as to permit it to be easily torn, soiled, or damaged in any way.

“The flag should never be used as a covering for a ceiling.

“The flag should never have placed upon it, nor on any part of it, nor attached to it any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture, or drawing of any nature.

“The flag should never be used as a receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying, or delivering anything.

“The flag should never be used for advertising purposes in any manner whatsoever. It should not be embroidered on such articles as cushions or handkerchiefs and the like, printed or otherwise impressed on paper napkins or boxes or anything that is designed for temporary use and discard. Advertising signs should not be fastened to a staff or halyard from which the flag is flown.

“No part of the flag should ever be used as a costume or athletic uniform. However, a flag patch may be affixed to the uniform of military personnel, firemen, policemen, and members of patriotic organizations. The flag represents a living country and is itself considered a living thing. Therefore, the lapel flag pin being a replica, should be worn on the left lapel near the heart.”

While the above noted code applies to other aspects of respect for the American flag, Medina recited part “K” of United States Code Title 36, Chapter 10, which explains the proper method for taking the flag out of service. It is to be disposed of with honor and respect.

“The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning,” she said.

Using a publication of the Boy Scouts of America, Medina said that once the flag is worn beyond repair, it is to be burned.

The type of fire to use is modest but blazing, she said.

“This should be done in a simple manner with dignity and respect,” she said. “Be sure the flag is reduced to ashes, unrecognizable as a former flag.”

She said the flag had been inspected earlier that evening and it was determined to be no longer of suitable for display. It was too worn. It has been replaced with a fresh, new flag, she said.

Medina let the observers know that silence, and absolute dignity was required during the whole ceremony.

Before the start of the program, Committee Chair Medina simply raised two fingers for the Cub Scout symbol for the children to stop speaking and to pay attention, and the children raised their hands and were silent.

With a proper modest and blazing fire, which was singularly designated for the retirement of the worn flag, she continued the program.

She asked the Color Guard to display the flag. It was unfolded and held for all to see.

Assistant Scoutmaster Medina led the group in The Pledge of Allegiance.

Medina read a modified version of the prose created by Edwin Doody and first copyrighted in November of 1968.

“I am your flag. I was born June 14, 1777. I am more than just cloth shaped into a colorful design. I am the refuge of the World's oppressed people. I am the silent sentinel

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of freedom. I am the emblem of the greatest sovereign nation on earth. I am the inspiration for which American Patriots gave their lives and fortunes. I have led your sons into battle from Valley Forge to the dense jungles of Vietnam to the dry deserts of Iraq. I walked in silence with each of your honored dead to their final resting place beneath the silent white crosses, row upon row.

“I have flown through peace and war; strife and prosperity; and amidst it all, I have been respected. I am your flag.

“Old Glory’ is my nickname, and I proudly wave on high. Honor me, respect me, defend me with your lives, your hearts, and your fortunes. Never let my enemies tear me down from my lofty position, lest I never return. Keep alight the fires of patriotism; strive earnestly for the spirit of Democracy. And keep me always as a symbol of freedom and liberty in our country!”

The Color Guard folded the flag at her instruction for retirement, with help from Assistant Scoutmaster Stanley.

Senior Patrol Leader McConnell escorted Cub Scout Brayden Smith toward the fire, where SPL McConnell politely took the flag from the young child and tossed the flag into the fire.

Per Medina’s instructions, the group remained silent until the flag was ashes -- no longer recognizable as a flag.

Medina explained to the group that the reason there was no marshmallow toasting over that fire that night was as part of the final respect given to the retired American flag.

While there were these news-making highlights from this particular camping trip, the Gilchrist County Scout program included a lot of additional fun that evening.

Among the many activities were a scavenger hunt, a metal detecting exercise, and skits created and performed by the Scouts.

Of course, delicious campout food was another great part of the event.

Just after dark, the campers all enjoyed a film projected on a giant white screen.

The name of the movie was *Hotel Transylvania 3: Summer Vacation*.

This movie rated PG ran for one-hour and 37 minutes. It is an animation fantasy.

Count Dracula and company participate in a cruise for sea-loving monsters, unaware that their boat is being commandeered by the monster-hating Van Helsing family.

Adam Sandler performed the star role as the voice of Dracula. Other stars who were voices in the film were Andy Samburg (as Johnny), Selena Gomez (as Mavis), Kevin James (as Frankenstein) and David Spade (as Griffin).

The Scouts of Gilchrist County enjoy camping opportunities once a month. This summer they went to the U.S.S. Yorktown aircraft carrier in South Carolina, where they slept on bunks in the crew's quarters.

An upcoming camping trip will be near Jacksonville in Little Talbot Island State Park Campground. They plan to visit a nearby zoo on the second day of that trip.

There is a plan for the camping trip of Gilchrist County Scouts in the summer of 2019 to be at the Florida Caverns in the Panhandle.