

HAMPTON Connects

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Hampton Scout Troops 93 and 1093

"Leave this world a little better than you found it."

-Robert Baden Powell, founder of The Boy Scouts Association

Boy Scout Troop 93, Hampton, CT, began in 1948. Its continuing success is due not only to the young people who participate but also to the adults who volunteer their time to guide them. Scott Garafano, Hampton Troop Committee Chair, is one of those people. Since the 60s, when his own Scouting experience began, he has given his time and energy to helping young people become responsible and active citizens.

Scott said there are now two troops in Hampton: Troop 93 (boys) and Troop 1093 (girls). He explained that although there are two separate units, both troops join together for the same activities. This is a result of changes made by The Scouts dating back to 2018 when girls were given the opportunity to join the Cub Scouts. In 2019 they were given the opportunity to join the Boy Scouts. To



Eagle Scout Project: Picnic Tables at the Pavilion



Eagle Scout Project: Storage building at the Congregational Church

reflect these changes, The Boy Scouts of America announced a name change in May, 2024 and made Scouting America its official name in February, 2025. Hampton troops reflect the benefits of these changes.

Scouting offers a wide range of outdoor activities and projects. Hampton Scouts have enjoyed the fun and challenge of winter tent camping, white water rafting, beach camping, backpacking, and 50 mile treks on foot, by bike, or canoe. But as Scott pointed out, the outdoor activities are a means to an end, not the end itself. Scouts earn badges through these activities, but they also

continued on other side



Eagle Scout Project: Boardwalk at the Nature Preserve



Wall of Honor at the Congregational Church
to recognize Scouts' Achievements

continued from other side

learn about themselves and gain self-confidence. They build trust with each other and their leaders, become self-reliant, and develop a positive mindset that encourages them to use what they have learned to give back to their communities.

Hampton Scouts have several ongoing fundraisers. There is a receptacle for returnable bottles and cans at the transfer station, a food drive in the spring, and a food booth at the Scotland Highland Games and Festival in the fall. The money earned from these projects is used not only to help the community but also the troop and individual Scouts who may need financial assistance.

Eagle Scout is the highest rank in Scouting and the most challenging to achieve. Anyone who pursues this challenge is in charge of the entire project. The Scout tackles the planning and organization, doing the work, and dealing with problems as they crop up. As Scott said, "Life isn't always winning." A scout's dealing with obstacles and setbacks is a learning opportunity that will make the Scout a better thinker and a better leader. Eagle Scout projects have included constructing bridges and boardwalks at nature preserves, clearing trails, building community picnic tables, and landscaping to name just a few.

Young people aren't the only ones who benefit from Scouts. The adults who give their time and energy to the Scouts reap rewards as well. Scott mentioned several of these rewards such as giving back to young people what he received as a Scout himself, watching a young person develop into a self-confident and unselfish leader, and knowing he made a difference in someone's life.

There's no question of Scott's love for Scouting when he speaks about Hampton Scouts with pride and respect. And there's no doubt Hampton Scouts will continue to leave this world a little better than they found it.

Looking for a Good Book?

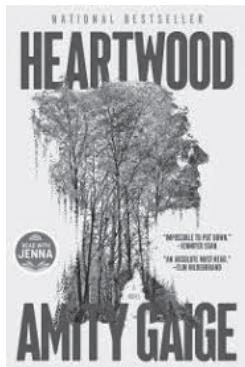
By Stephanie Bayne

I really enjoyed *Heartwood* by Amity Gaige (320 pages/Simon & Schuster). It's beautifully written, and the descriptions of the Appalachian Trail and the Maine woods are stunning. It's a twisty mix of the stories of three people, each with family complications.

The main characters are three women who couldn't be more different.

Valerie is a nurse burned out by Covid and an experienced hiker who sets out to "through hike" the Appalachian Trail. Her husband Greg supports her by driving the route to meet Valerie at trailheads to resupply her with food and water, etc. When he reports her missing, we meet Lt. Beverly Miller, an experienced Maine State Game Warden. She leads a massive ground search, eventually aided by Lena, a CT retirement community resident, avid birder, and unexpected armchair detective.

The three story lines weave together into a fascinating and suspenseful mystery with a very satisfying conclusion.



Breaking Your Resolutions Isn't Your Fault

By Claudette Russell

If you always break your New Year's resolutions during the first week of January, don't despair. You no longer have to deal with the public humiliation heaped upon you by all the judgmental people you know. There's a solution. Let people know your inability to keep your resolutions has nothing to do with personal weakness or failure. Use any of the following explanations that apply.

When someone asks you why you haven't been to the gym lately, explain that you canceled your plan to reach unprecedented levels of fitness when you discovered you were allergic to sweat. This rare and often undiagnosed medical condition is the sole reason you'll never be a gym rat.

If anyone scolds you when you reach for a second cupcake, explain that you abandoned your plan to eat healthy when a steady diet of wholesome food transformed you into Mr. Hyde. After contemplating doing bodily harm to the next person who offered you a carrot stick, you came to the only logical conclusion: the key to happiness is sugar.

When a friend trips over the dirty laundry piling up in your entryway, don't be alarmed if you hear a volley of swear words directed at your failure to follow through with being more organized. Without going into complicated psychological theories, explain that you discarded your plan to be more organized when you learned from an online psychologist that the "neat and tidy syndrome" isn't part of your psyche.

When your neighbor asks why you haven't been at book club, explain that your goal to immerse yourself in literature was cut short by none other than the library itself. You've been banned from the premises until you pay your triple-digit overdue fees. Burdened with this unexpected financial debt, you've been forced to take a second job, thus eliminating any free time to read.

If a family member asks when you last put down your phone, explain it didn't take you long to realize that breaking your phone addiction would force you to commit unspeakable acts like making conversation, finding other ways to use your thumbs, breaking up with AI, going outdoors, etc. No one should have to endure such suffering.

If these explanations don't work, find the ones that do. Don't be weighed down by shame and guilt. The sooner you tell people your perfectly logical reasons for breaking your resolutions, the sooner you can start enjoying the new year.

"Winter is a time of rest, reflection, and renewal."
- Unknown

Contributors to our Winter 2025 issue include: Scott Garafano, Stephanie Bayne, Mark Becker, Frank Russell, Lena Fontaine of Gulemo Printers, Joan Fox, and Claudette Russell.

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