



Jennifer Clutter (back right) and Patty Smith each lead all-girl dens in Pack 3 of the Mecklenburg County Council.

5 Quick Questions with Jennifer Clutter, leader of an all-girl Cub Scout Den in North Carolina

Reprinted from Bryan on Scouting



When Jennifer Clutter first learned that girls could join Cub Scouting, she immediately rushed to tell her 8-year-old daughter, Kennedy.

"The first words she spoke were, 'So I can earn my Eagle too?' I nearly fell down," Jennifer Clutter said. "I could only think, 'Eagle? Let's just have a Bear den first!'"

Kennedy has been an unofficial part of Pack 3 of Charlotte, N.C., since her older brother, Carson, was a Tiger. She has five family members who are Eagle Scouts. But after years of participating from the sidelines, Kennedy is an official Cub Scout — blue uniform and all — thanks to the Early Adopter program that her pack launched earlier this spring.



As the BSA welcomes girls into Cub Scouting, I contacted Clutter to ask her 5 Quick Questions about her family's Scouting experience so far.

Bryan on Scouting:

Your son, Carson, has been a Scout since Tigers and has crossed over into Boy Scouting. What has that experience been like so far?

Jennifer Clutter: "I still remember the day we went to the Scout Shop to get his Tiger uniform. He was beaming, and each year when he got his new neckerchief, hat and handbook he has beamed again. In Boy Scouts, Carson is most looking forward to all the camping and backpacking trips. He is very excited to learn to rock climb, take a canoeing trip or go

whitewater rafting. Overall, he is excited for more independence and self reliance and looks forward to spending time with his Scout buddies.”

BOS: What has your daughter, Kennedy, thought as she’s observed Carson’s enjoyment of Scouting?

J.C.: “Kennedy has wanted to be a part of Scouting since day one. She would beg each week to attend his den meetings and pack meetings. She would help me prepare materials for the meetings and then be an active participant at the meetings. At a recent family campout we took with Carson’s Webelos den, she went along and participated fully in the campfire skits, stories and fellowship — even though she was the only sister there that weekend. She and the boys thought nothing of her being there and participating.”



BOS: What’s it been like recruiting girls to your pack?

J.C.: “Not difficult for Kennedy; she had her ‘Cub Scout sales pitch’ down. She has recruited eight friends from her grade at school, four sibling girls from our pack and two other girls who heard that our pack was starting a girls’ den.

BOS: How was the first meeting with your all-girl den?

J.C.: “To say my heart nearly burst can’t describe the chemistry and excitement

that everyone felt. The girls arrived knowing the Scout Oath and Law and earned their Bobcat badge by the end of the evening. All the families in our pack were excited and happy to see our girls at the meeting. We have had a good response from friends and people in our close community who know our family’s involvement in Scouting. They know that Scouting is an important part of our family and have seen the benefits Carson has received from it and want to give it a try with their daughters.”

BOS: What advice can you offer to Scouters preparing to welcome girls later this year?

J.C.: “Don’t overthink it. They are just kids who want to learn what Scouting has to teach: duty to God, duty to country and duty to community — all taught by taking them out of doors and teaching them new skills through fun activities. When I asked the girls at our first meeting what they were most excited to do in Scouting they said, ‘camping, learning about animals and learning how to use a knife.’ They are curious and want new experiences in a fun and positive environment. Keep it simple, and keep it fun. It’s kids and Scouting, and the two have been successful together for a long time.”

