



How Good is Your Unit at Farkle?

Council President representing the Council Key Three

Farkle? You are probably asking, "What in the world is Farkle and why am I reading about it in our Scouting newsletter?" First off, Farkle is a dice game where the object is to reach 10,000 points with various dice combinations (much like Yahtzee). Second, what that has to do with Scouting, will be explained below.

Several years ago, I attended the Philmont Training Center with several other Mount Baker Council Scouters. During the evening there was free time to visit with Scouters from around the country who were also attending the Philmont Training Center. One evening, a few us from Mount Baker Council gathered around a table in the Tent City Headquarters and started playing Farkle.

What happened? Well, we were having fun and were laughing and started doing what Scouters often do - getting loud and boisterous (not me). Other Scouters were walking by and stopped to see what the excitement was all about. After a while we had gathered quite a crowd around us, everyone wanting to know what we were doing and why we were having so much fun. Curious folks around us wanted to know what we were playing so we invited them to join us. Some did join in and some just watched. I think our laughter and enjoyment of spending time with other Scouters was becoming contagious. Throughout the week, we would see our fellow Farkle players during the day and they always wanted to know if the game was on for that night. By the end of the week the Mount Baker Council Scouters had built a "Farkle Community" of 15 Scouters from around the country.

So, this is how Farkle relates to Scouting: You need more than one person to play Farkle and in Scouting more Scouts and dedicated adult leaders means more fun. Of course, there are rules - we have rules, guidelines and requirements for advancement and to keep our Scouts safe. Sometimes you just need to go for it, knowing you could go bust! We challenge our Scouts every day. Sometimes there are setbacks but most of the time our Scouts are successful. In Farkle, there are certain combinations needed to score points. Our Cub Scouts have adventures and develop skills and our Boy Scouts have specific requirements for each rank. Winning is usually fun but was it's not everything. In Cub Scouts we ask that our Cubs do their best. And in Boy Scouts reaching the rank of 1st class is an important milestone.

The most important lesson here was that we were able to build this wonderful community of Scouters, who did not know one another, by doing something fun, out in public and by INVITING them to join us. Now that sounds like Scouting. So you see, Scouting and Farkle are a lot alike. You need to be sure your unit is doing things that are fun, doing them out where the community can see you and don't forget to invite a friend along. If we don't invite and ASK friends to join, they will not get the chance to experience Scouting. As we head into summer, it is the perfect time to be out and about

So, the question is: Does your unit Farkle? Are you building and growing a Scouting community where you live?