

I was asked the other day to share my thoughts on what it means to be a Scout and wanted to share my thoughts with the readers of the Mountain Echo as well.

For me - to be a Scout is all about new and fun experiences and doing things with other people that end in lasting friendships.

What it means to be a Scout is about a bunch of firsts. Things like: First time camping; first time sleeping in a tent; first time catching a fish; first time cooking; first time spending a night away from home; first time hiking; first time climbing or rappelling off a really big climbing wall; first time building a fire; first time leading; first time learning about civic responsibilities; and so many more.

As a Cub Scout, it's about doing these things with a parent or guardian. And as a member of Scouts BSA, it's all about doing these things on your own with the support of your parents or guardians, challenging your skill and resolve.

To be a Scout is to learn about leadership and be given the opportunity and responsibility to step into leadership roles and to listen, grow, learn, and to serve your fellow Scouts.

To be a Scout is to develop a lifetime of love and respect for the outdoors.

What it is to be a Scout is to serve others and serve the community.

But in the end, what it is to be a Scout... it's fun.

And to get back to fun, it's terrific to see Scouting units getting back into action. While meetings are not quite the same as they used to be, units are finding creative methods to meet while enjoying fun and fellowship. This is important work that helps us deliver meaningful program for our youth and I'm glad to see our Scouts meeting again.

Meetings don't just need to be online. I've seen a variety of units meeting outdoors in meaningful ways. Here are just a few that I've seen happen around our Council:

- Beep and Greet: Meet in a parking lot as a Pack to hand out awards, recognize advancement, and celebrate with a good honking of horns.
- Den Bike rides: Find a neighborhood, parking lot, or bike trail. Pump up the tires and strap on a helmet. Set up an obstacle course and have some fun.
- Hiking as a Patrol or Den: We live in some of the most beautiful part of the country and the fall is a great time to hit the trails. Just keep the group small and take separate cars. Check out [wta.org](http://wta.org) or [alltrails.com](http://alltrails.com) and find your new favorite hike.
- Family camping at Fire Mountain: Yes – Fire Mountain is open for family camping. Yes – that includes your favorite campsite. Yes – there are fish in the lake. Contact the Everett Service Center to make your reservation.

However, and wherever your unit meets, finding ways to get together – whether that's online or in some in-person event – makes a difference for the members in your unit.

I'd like to thank all the volunteers who are using your time and talents to provide much needed program and support to our youth. We've all faced a great deal of uncertainty and unrest over the past several months and your efforts provide our members amazing experiences and memories. Thank you and #ScoutOn!