



Victoria Scout Group

News sheet

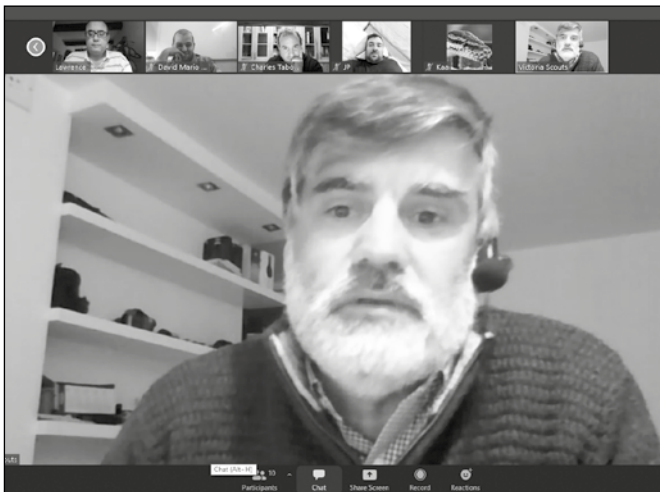
From the Group Scout Leader

• Jesmond Scerri

When I received Anita's reminder that the next news-sheet issue was in the making, I had to stop for a moment to reflect and remind myself what went on during the past three months. "Not much, it seems," was what first came to mind. However, on second thought, I realised how much we have achieved. We've managed to continue to do what we have done exceptionally well for over a year - providing a challenging, positive and adapted online Scouting programme to all our members. We have also been busy planning for the upcoming Scouting year.

The sections carried out their weekly meetings, with the Cubs and the Scouts meeting online while the Venture Scouts met in small groups for in-person meetings. More badge-work was carried out and the leaders racked their brains and toiled to come up with creative ways in order to keep our Scouts motivated and engaged.

We are looking ahead with eagerness and excitement to a time, hopefully very soon, when our halls at HQ can be filled once more with noise of shouting and laughter, full of activity and life. With this in mind, the Group has worked hard during these past few months to organise essential training courses for our leaders. Amongst these is a First Aid Course which



GSL Jesmond during an online Scouters meeting

will be held in July with the aim of ensuring that our leaders refresh their First Aid knowledge and always "be prepared" for any eventuality. Another course we are working on organising is that of Safeguarding of Minors. We strongly believe in the validity of this training in order to ensure that our leaders are in a position to recognise any danger our Scouts may be facing and be able to handle these situations with adequate knowledge and provide the best possible support.

Apart from these upcoming courses, a number of our leaders have continued to work on their leadership training. As part of this training, they have organised joint meetings with other groups, where they planned and carried out a number of online meetings regarding several pre-determined themes. This pushed them a step closer to their final goal, that of becoming fully-trained and qualified leaders. We would like to applaud their efforts and wish them the best of luck for their upcoming tasks.

On a final note, I would like to address everyone, with a special intention to communicate with the parents of our members. I feel it is imperative to remind you all that our leaders are volunteers. They dedicatedly give up long hours to keep up with necessary trainings, continuous preparations and carrying out the meetings themselves. This time dedicated to Scouting is time they could be spending with their families. We all chose Scouting because of our love for the Group and what it stands for. None of us are paid for it. To the contrary, we pay for the courses and training, camps and all other activities. Moreover, this past year has been especially challenging and time-consuming, because online meetings were uncharted territory for everyone and thus extra hours of preparation were required.

With this in mind, I urge parents to be supportive and fully co-operative with their son's leaders and not to insist upon ad-hoc requests. We are always open to suggestions on how to best improve our operation in order to provide a holistic educational and fun program for our Scouts. As such, while we invite you to feel free to put forth any suggestions

continued overleaf...

Views expressed in this publication are personal and not necessarily those of the Victoria Scout Group as a whole, or of the Scout Association of Malta.

From the Group Scout Leader *cont....from front page*

and ideas, we ask you to fully support our Leaders and the Group, as we all have the benefit of our members in mind.

I hope that I will get the opportunity to meet you in person within the coming months, when this is allowed by the Health Authorities. Here I will be able to better share with you my vision for the Group. Through this meeting, the respective section leaders would also be able to explain in more detail all the procedures each section follows.

To conclude, I would like to remind you that Section meetings are on hold for the summer months. In this down period, the leaders will have time to complete their training and prepare for when meetings resume in September. Although Summer Camp



GSL Jesmond leads the Group's virtual Easter campfire.

2021 will not be held in the traditional way due to the restrictions currently in place, we hope to be able to offer different experiences to our members.

Point to Ponder with the Editor

● Anita Muscat

Scouting & Guiding Nominated for Nobel Peace Prize for Global Contribution towards Peace & Dialogue.

The World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM), together with the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS), have been nominated for the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize, recognising the outstanding contributions of Scouting and Guiding, their efforts in *"giving young people the tools they need to solve the challenges of the future, while building strong civil society"* and the fact that they have empowered hundreds of millions of young people to create a lasting culture of peace and sustainable development in their communities for more than a century.

Scouting helps to build a lasting culture of peace by incorporating the ideas of teamwork, unity, and intercultural understanding into its Youth Programme and activities. Over the past decade alone, Scouting's flagship Messengers of Peace initiative has inspired Scouts around the world to take action in their communities by contributing to peace and sustainable development, contributing more than 16 million local projects and actions.

In a joint statement issued by the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS)



and the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM), the two organisations welcomed the nomination highlighting the importance of recognising the unique contributions by young women and men who form part of these two organisations.

"We are honoured to be nominated for this year's Nobel Peace Prize and we believe this nomination highlights the significant role played by youth organisations in advancing peace and development worldwide," said leadership representatives of WAGGGS and WOSM.

The Nobel Peace Prize recognises the outstanding contributions of individuals and organisations towards building a culture of peace in the world. Since their founding in 1907, Scouting and Guiding have empowered hundreds of millions of young people with the life and leadership skills to be active global citizens who are serving their communities, and promoting peace through local action and community-based activities.

The Nobel nomination was submitted by Norwegian Liberty Party MP, Solveig Schytz, former Chief Commissioner of The Guides and Scouts of Norway and a current volunteer for the Scouting and Guiding Movement. In her nomination, Mrs. Solveig Schytz said that *"The Scout Movement is built on empowering young people to be active citizens in their local communities and in the world. WAGGGS and WOSM bring together millions of boys and girls from across the globe to form international friendship. It's a movement for young people from different cultures, religions and backgrounds. It's a movement that promotes leadership development in young people so they affect change in their communities and solve the challenges of tomorrow. At a time when our world is threatened by so many international challenges, be it climate, wars or the pandemics, we need a counterweight to egoism and nationalism. We need to offer young people a chance to rally around a set of common values and the belief in service, not only to one's own community, but to international society."*

The application will be considered by the Nobel Committee alongside other nominations.

Information taken from the WOSM sites

<https://www.scout.org/scouts-nobel-peace-prize-2021-nomination> dated 27.1.2021

<https://www.scout.org/nobel-peace-prize-nomination-2021> dated 16.2.2021

Annual rally Mass – 25th APRIL 2021

• by CSL Anita Muscat

Since the National Scouts and Guides Annual Rally could not be held this year, a special thanksgiving Mass was held on Sunday 25th April. H.E. the Archbishop, Mgr Charles Scicluna celebrated mass. This was live streamed on the Facebook pages of both Associations.

At the end of the mass, the Girl Guides President Karen Buttigieg, the Chief Scout Reuben Lanfranco and, H.E. the President of Malta George Vella each delivered a short speech.



The President of Malta, H.E. Dr George Vella addresses those present.

Our Group Scout Leader, Jesmond Scerri represented our Group. In these times where it is easy to give up hope, where leaders have to meet their members in front of a screen instead of face to face, where at times participants at meetings need to be muted, where outdoor activities, the backbone of Scouting have been curtailed and where the necessary restrictions applicable have changed completely the way Scouting activities are done, there is still a silver lining. In the face of adversity, Scout leaders have changed challenges into opportunities. Living up to the motto Be Prepared meant they have adapted to the times and did their best to keep their members engaged, entertained and together as a community.

All this was acknowledged and appreciated by the highest officials of Associations, the President of Malta and the Archbishop.



The Archbishop of Malta, Mgr Charles Scicluna and the Association's chaplain, Fr Anton Briffa celebrate mass.



The Group Scout Leaders and other guests at the Seminary



Our GSL Jesmond Scerri attends the Annual Rally mass. (Photo courtesy of the Scout Association of Malta.)

AWARDS AND BADGES FOR JANUARY TO JUNE 2021

CUB SCOUT PACKS

Liam Apap – Bagheera, Botanist
Matthew Aquilina – Bronze Arrow, Kaa
Joseph Attard – Baloo, Kaa, Altar Server, Musician, Bagheera
Bernard Borg – Bagheera, Kaa, Craftsman, Computer, Bronze Arrow
Matthew Buttigieg - Mowgli
Giorgio Anici Camilleri – Book Reader, Altar Server, Musician, Craftsman, Mowgli
Camilleri Thomas – Bagheera, Botanist
Warren Cauchi – Chil, Botanist, Musician
Gabriel Cutajar – Bagheera, Bronze Arrow, Astronomer, Botanist, Weather Lore, Health and Fitness, Our Earth

Lucas Debono – Mowgli
Alex Ellis – Baloo
Matthew Angel Ellis – Baloo
Jaiden Joe Formosa – Link
Jake Formosa – Computer, Phototographer, Collector
Jake Galea – Bagheera, Bronze Arrow, Botanist, Computer, Our Earth
Mathias Gauci - Baloo
Gabriel Grech – Bronze Arrow, Kaa, People and Places, Computer
Adrian Hili – Bronze Arrow, Bagheera
Mathias Gauci – Baloo
Francesco Mercieca – Botanist, Bird Lover
Glenn Mifsud – Link
Lucas Joe Portelli – Bagheera, Collector
Gabriele Puglisi – Raksha, Scientist
Isaac Sacco - Chil

Jan Sacco – Computer, Weather Lore, Altar Server, Photographer, Local Historian
Luca Schembri - Computer
Jordi Spiteri – Bronze Arrow, Kaa, Book Reader, Botanist, Collector, Health and Fitness, Naturalist, Our Earth, Artist, Scientist, Astronomer, Computer, Weather Lore, Bird Lover
Luke Spiteri – Bronze Arrow, Musician, Health and Fitness, Local Historian, People and Places
Liam Sultana - Mowgli
Tabone Andreas – Astronomer, Computer, Local Historian, Our Earth, Altar Server, Weather Lore, Bird Lover
Vassallo Jake – Bronze Arrow, Bagheera, Kaa
Isaiah Zahra – Computer, Collector
Sven Zerafa – Musician, Bronze Arrow

Group Easter 2021 Activities

• by CSL Anita Muscat

Virtual Campfire



To round up the Easter Camp at Home @ 2021 initiative, the Group organised a virtual campfire on Wednesday 7th

April. Members and leaders from all the sections participated.

GSL Jesmond explained that when the campfire is held in its 'natural' setting, that is at camp, **it involves a whole process** which is much more than building a fire, gathering around it and singing some songs and enjoying the experience. It also includes underlying factors such as **teamwork** within a smaller group, be it Cubs, Scouts, Ventures or Rovers. They learn that **one has to prepare** for an activity, **to discuss it** beforehand, **to put forward one's ideas** which may or may not be accepted by the rest of the group. Thus they learn that even if one's ideas are not necessarily adopted, everyone's contribution is necessary and appreciated.

Another factor involved is the **safety issue**. As Scouts we are taught to think of others. So when preparing for a campfire, Scouts practise **being responsible** for each other and themselves.

The last thing GSL mentioned was the fact that when the younger members retire to their tents once the campfire is over, the older ones generally remain around the glowing embers and narrate stories and discuss this and that. This helps in **forging friendships** which last a lifetime.

SL David reminded those present that Lord Baden Powell started off the campfire tradition in his first experimental camp on Brownsea Island in 1907. Baden Powell used to narrate stories of his life in the army and of his campaigns. Since then, campfires have been part and parcel of camps all over the world, with the biggest ones held at the World Scout Jamborees. There is also **the element of reflection of the day at camp** and of **self-evaluation** during the campfire's dying moments. The campfire brings together Scouts of different ages, backgrounds and even nationalities, thus **building a close-knit community**. It also helps to **boost one's confidence** and competence in public presentation.

All these are important life skills which one will find useful in life. So **let's sing and be merry** but in the meantime **Scouts are learning by doing** which is a hallmark of the Scouting programme.



From top to bottom: ASL Jean Pierre and his son Scout Juan, GSL Jesmond Scerri and the former GSL Lorrie Saliba



Campfire's burning, campfire's burning



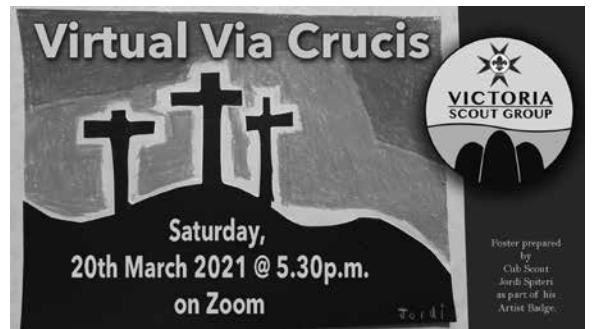
The Chief Scout, Captain Reuben Lanfranco joins the Group for the campfire.

Via Crucis 2021

For the second consecutive year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Group could not organise its Lenten activity of the Way of the Cross at ta' Ghammar Hill. So once again, it was held online.

Members and their families, leaders and Council members joined in the meditation of the 14 stations and prayed together.

Thank you GSL Jesmond Scerri, former GSL Lorrie Saliba, Group librarian Carm Cachia and Assistant Cub Scout Leaders David Mario and Svetlene Marie Fenech for making this activity possible.



Camp at home 2021

The camp ground is calling and I must go.....

Although we could not meet up for our Easter Camp, our members still put up their tents, used their mess tins, lit up a fire and Camped@Home.



[GSL Jesmond and I

[Part 2]

- A reflection on our Scouting journey by Lawrence Sciberras

Following a number of activities and personal endeavours over a span of three years, Jesmond and I completed the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award (which was also known as the President's Award) and the Dolphin Award, the latter being the highest award a Scout can achieve. Of course, we felt very fulfilled after having completed the Scout award programme up to its final stage. During this period, my brother Anton and Michael Refalo also attained the Dolphin Award. The presentation of the Dolphin Award took place during the Annual Parade in Malta and was presented to us by the late



Summer camp 1993

President of Malta H.E. Dr Ċensu Tabone and the Chief Scout Mr James Rizzo. The Gold Award, which was also attained by Michael Refalo, was presented to us by the then President of Malta H.E. Dr Ċensu Tabone at the President's

Palace. As Gold Award holders, we were also honoured to have had an audience with the late Duke of Edinburgh himself, Prince Philip, when HRH Queen Elizabeth II was visiting Malta in 1992.

In 1992 we attended the 9th World Scout Moot held at Kandersteg International Scout Centre (KISC). Kandersteg is situated in the heart of the Swiss Alps surrounded by nature and spectacular views. The World Scout Moot is a major international Scouting activity for young adult members (Venture / Rover Scouts), gathering up to 5,000 people every four years. Our stay in Kandersteg was certainly a memorable one as we participated in numerous activities which included: trekking in the Swiss mountains in Kandersteg and in Zermatt close to Mount Matterhorn - an iconic emblem of the Alps, mountain biking, hiking in subterranean caves, white-water river rafting, and international Scouting evenings amongst other activities. While we were at the World Scout Moot, we actively participated at the 5th World Youth Forum which was being organised during the same period. The theme of the World Youth Forum, which was attended by Scouts from 51 countries, was 'Youth Participation in Decision Making and Co-education'. During the Forum we had the opportunity to meet Dr Jacques Moreillon who was the Secretary



12.11.1988 The Venture Unit prepares a meal at headquarters as part of a test for the Venture Award. Lawrence Sciberras is on the furthest left in the 2nd row while GSL Jesmond is next to him.



August 1993 - GSL Jesmond, (2nd from left) as a Venture Scout, goes abseiling at Mgarr ix- Xini



7.11.1993 The winning team of the Reynolds Cup with the Venture Scout Leader Jesmond Scerri. Left to right: Dennis Monpalao, Jesmond Scerri, Joseph Galea and Charles Tabone

have no doubt that GSL Jesmond, with his deeply rooted Scouting knowledge and skills, will be very effective in the running of the Victoria Scout Group. This augurs well for the continuation of the very remarkable progress and huge strides the Victoria Scout Group made under the leadership of Lorrie Saliba who so outstandingly served as our Group Scout Leader during the past 30 years.

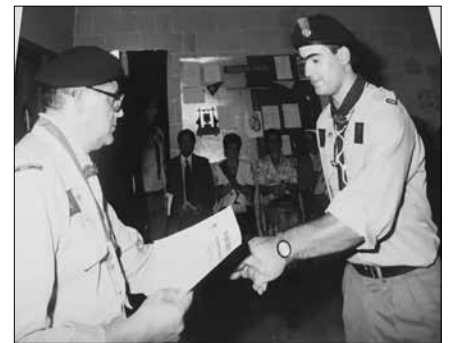
I wish Jesmond the very best at the Group's helm.

General of the World Organization of the Scout Movement. During our discussion we could notice how much he held the Scout Association of Malta in high esteem. We were surprised when the Secretary General mentioned Skip Joseph J. Grech to us. At that time Skip held the post of Chief Commissioner and Dr Moreillon apparently knew him well. We had again the opportunity to meet the Secretary General when he later officially visited Malta and our Group in 1998.

After Jesmond and I completed our Wood Badge Adult Leader Training Award, we moved to provide our support to the Sections where Jesmond joined

the Venture Unit as Assistant Venture Scout Leader and I joined the Troop as an Assistant Scout Leader. We continued to provide service to the Group as Section Leaders for several years that followed, years that were very much characterised by the exceptional work GSL Lorrie Saliba was doing in strengthening and revamping the Group in many ways.

My own Scouting experiences with GSL Jesmond have led me to develop respect and admiration for him as a fellow Scout, leader and a dear friend. Throughout his Scouting journey, Jesmond has shown himself capable of leading and organising activities. I



3.7.1994 The Chief Commissioner Joseph G Grech, presents the certificate of appointment as a Venture Scout Leader to GSL Jesmond.

Editorial note: Former Scout Leader Dr Lawrence Sciberras has been living in Portugal since 2008 where he works with the European Maritime Safety Agency, an agency of the European Union. He is presently a Scouter with the Group and regularly attends activities whenever he is in Gozo.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Cub Scouts Matthew Aquilina, Mathias Gauci, Luca Schembri, Jordi Spiteri and Jake Vassallo on gaining an excellent result in the international mental Mathematics competition called SUPERTMATIK.

Matthew placed 4th out of 75,810 participants in category CAT 5 while Mathias placed 4th out of 29,050 participants in the category CAT 4. Jordi, Luca and Jake also did very well in this competition.

Cub Scout Jordi Spiteri was also amongst the winners in a competition organised by the Ministry for Gozo. This included an artwork around the theme of World Blood Donation Day Blood and a slogan to promote blood donation.

Well done to Cub Scouts Gabriel Grech and Jake Vassallo who were awarded prizes in the Gozo Live Writing competition which was sponsored by the Ministry for Gozo and Eco Gozo.

Well done Cubs! You certainly did your best.



Saturday Pack and Seonee Pack

● CSL Anita Muscat

Another 3 months have gone by. Our online meetings were as varied as we could make them. Having 36 energetic boys, aged 7 to 11 years, (in a restless or should we say fidgety mode and rightly so), waiting in front of a screen, week after week, had us leaders on our toes and on the continuous lookout for new 'virtual offerings' - new games, quizzes, songs, hunts, snippets of information and other activities that the Cubs would enjoy in a real way.

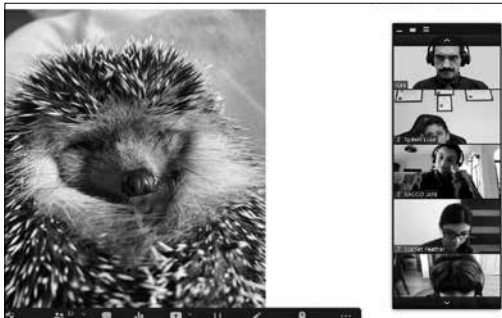
Leaving the depths and the jungles of Africa, we now followed Bagheera Betty's footsteps to the driest, windiest, coldest and most desolate place on Earth, Antarctica. We now visited a place like no other, one where very few people have been. Bagheera shared photos and experiences from her trip to the southernmost continent on Earth and we all listened and watched enthralled. We learned about Humpback flukes and dorsal fins and what icefloes, bergies and growlers are. We met penguins, orcas, glaciers, icebergs, seals, cormorants, albatrosses, Brown Skuas and admired some magnificent scenery along the way.



Cub Scouts Gabriel and Warren during their presentation about Earth Day.



Jonathan's mum describes her native country, Germany.



One of the hedgehogs under Bagheera Betty's care



Daniel Cilia explains what we find in the citadel.





And this is Antarctica, courtesy of Bagheera Betty.



During these months, 2 of our junior leaders, Svetlene Marie Fenech (Scarlet Feather) and David Mario Fenech (Wontolla) completed the first part of their training for the Pathfinder course. They separately held several extra meetings with some of our Cubs and other Cubs and leaders from another Pack within a Maltese group. This first part has now been completed successfully. Well done indeed! We wish you all the best for the rest of your training sessions.

In April we celebrated Earth Day. 2 Cubs, Warren Cauchi as President of the EkosSchools committee

and Gabriel Grech as President of the LEAF Programme gave a presentation about the topic. This presentation had been shared among various classes at the school they attend, the Victoria Primary. The Cubs watched a video about the release of 11 hedgehogs back into the wild by authorised Wildlife Rescuers from Nature Trust.

During one meeting the leaders explained the importance of blood donation and how donating blood saves lives. During another meeting, we learned more about the history of the Gozo Citadel as explained by photographer

Congratulations!

Dream it, Believe in it and Achieve it!
 Congratulations to Junior Leader **Beppe Galea** on his election as Chairman of European Democrat Students for the working year 2021/2022. EDS the largest European youth political organisation. He won this election with 98% of the vote. Beppe is the first Maltese to hold this post.

All the best Beppe for a fruitful term in office.




Daniel Cilia and his photos. In our last meeting, a cub parent who is German shared some information about the country and naturally had to answer a barrage of questions from the Cubs.

The Link Badge Cubs had several sessions with the Scout Leader David Grech who explained what the Troop, the section they will soon join, is all about.

For Mother's Day and Father's Day, the Cubs prepared special cards to thank their parents. As a response for the new challenges we had so many original campfire models, wind chimes, recycling a plastic container, puppets, Earth Day Craft/activities and finally a special card to be sent to elderly people in a home to show them that they have not been forgotten during this difficult COVID-19 period.

As Akela, I would like to thank all those persons (leaders and non) who contributed towards making our meetings more interesting and interactive. Our meetings have now stopped. When we meet again, we fervently hope it will be in person. We have missed the personal contact with our Cubs as well as the outdoor activities. We are keeping our fingers crossed.....

Gone Home



John Scerri - father of Assistant Scout Leader Jean Pierre Scerri.

John served as Group Council Secretary for a number of years and was also a long-time supporter of the Group.

Please remember him in your prayers.

May he rest in peace.

Troop Report

• ASL Charles Tabone

The ancient Persian proverb, *“When fishermen cannot go to sea, they repair nets”* is a pearl of wisdom us Scouts have taken to heart throughout the pandemic. There was no time for sitting on our hands sulking about what we were missing, when there was so much to learn and so many new ways to learn it.

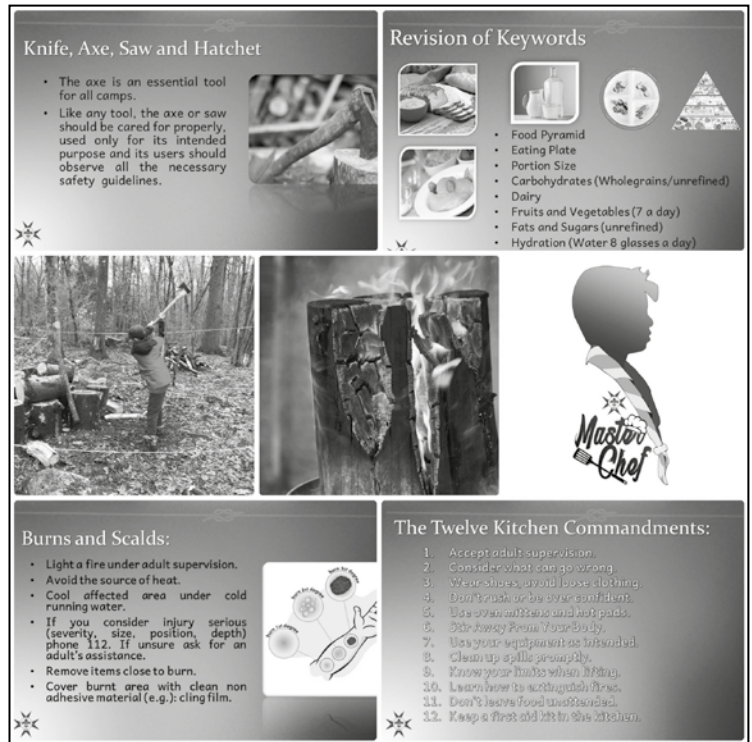
Between April and June our Troop together with the Xaghra Troop successfully completed their Kilimanjaro Base Camp (cooking) requirements as outlined in the newly published Mountaineer Award. The theme “Master Chef” was chosen to set the stage for this module that was derived from both the popular TV shows Next Great Chef and Amici but with a Scouting twist.

Master Chef consisted of a total of five sessions. The first of the five sessions dealt with bushcraft, which was followed by a further two sessions covering food groups and fire handling. The fourth session was dedicated to kitchen safety, basic first-aid, revision and evaluation. The final session was a hands-on activity where Scouts put to practice their newfound culinary skills.

Overall I believe that the sessions were a positive learning experience for our Scouts. While I am happy with the general outcomes I do admit, some things such as online backwoods cooking are far from ideal. Cooking as an experience entails more than knowing how to cook and is more about the shared experience as a Troop. As soon as the current restrictions are lifted we have decided to plan to organise an authentic backwoods cooking experience.

Following the Master Chef experience, the Troop tackled the topic of substance abuse with a particular focus on Cannabis. Scouts were invited to share what they already knew about addictive substances and have any myths and misconceptions addressed appropriately. This meeting not only focused on providing our Scouts with factual information but also on informing them about alternative drug free activities that are the basis to a happy and healthy lifestyle.

June and the Scouting year came to a close with two game filled sessions meant to offer some much needed distraction for our Troop who happened to be in the midst of their end of year exams. Hopefully, if we do not literally melt over the course of the summer we will meet again coming September to embark on a new exciting Scouting year.



Rover Crew Report

• by Rover Scout Leader,
Dr Surg Capt Christopher Micallef

THE IMPORTANCE OF FIRST AID CERTIFICATION

A stitch in time saves nine is probably the best way to describe the intentions of this article. Back in primary school when we sat for out weekly dictations, studying proverbs and sayings, one would rarely think about the true meaning of such phrases. Most of our young members will probably continue doing so, but the more mature and adult ones may relate to most of them through life experiences they may have encountered.



One such clear example of the above was witnessed by a whole continent as a player from the Danish national football team collapsed while playing for his country. The immediate intervention of his teammates prior to the arrival of the medical team (who also did a sterling job

was crucial. Their recognition of the need for immediate help and commencement of CPR was essential as a stepping-stone for more specialized care by the medics present. To do this they did not sit for a degree in medicine. They were confident using their first aid skill. As bold as this may sound, first aid is not rocket science. Simply put, it is just immediate assistance to a casualty, prior to the arrival of further professional help and assistance.

First aid is an important tool in quickly responding to accidents to ensure that injuries can be efficiently and promptly dealt with before a trained medical

Venture Unit Report

During the past 3 months, the Unit has been quite busy. Their meetings were a mix of in-person meetings as well as online ones. They also managed to hold some outdoor activities and to help the Troop section in an outdoor activity.

When they met at headquarters, they carried out cleaning sessions inside the headquarters as well as in the garages and the yard. They also carried out much needed maintenance work in several rooms and cleaned the photovoltaic cells on the roof.

To avoid large numbers meeting at the same time, different groups had different meetings at different times or days.

In May, the Unit, while following all Covid-19 restrictions, organised a 10 Km hike from Ta' Kuljat down to Marsalforn Valley, the former being a place where most of them had never been. In groups of 4, wearing masks at all times, the Ventures enjoyed the open air, the exercise, and the breath-taking views.



Various parts of headquarters get a much needed intervention. Some TLC does wonders



A hike we will go



Some Venture Scouts help the Troop during a cookout.

professional arrives to administer more specialized treatment. First aid in schools, sports and other group events is especially helpful as members often get into accidents that can need swift care in order to prevent things from escalating. Whether it is a minor injury or something more serious like a fracture, preventing further complications is paramount. Ensuring there are trained first aiders within such situations will help the gathering be a safer environment for everyone.

It is crucial that first aid should be administered only by individuals who have the skills, knowledge and competence to ensure that

procedures are done correctly. People who lack the skills can end up inflicting more harm than good, especially in delicate emergency situations.

Topping this, access to suitable first aid equipment is also important for swift and effective treatment. A well-stocked first aid kit should be present at every meeting or activity, as it can provide care for bruises and injuries that may occur and possibly needing immediate assistance.

If an accident happens in the workplace, in your home or in a public space, being a helpless witness to an emergency can

potentially worsen the situation. Becoming First Aid certified not only benefits you as an individual but it extends to your family, friends, co-workers and even the community as a whole. As unpleasant as it is to talk about, accidents and emergencies are not completely preventable or unavoidable. This is why we educate our members about the importance of first aid since a very young age. After giving them the basics, we encourage all members to undergo a structured First Aid Certification that may be essential in the future. This is part of our contribution to future generations.

In memory of Skip, Joseph G. Grech [Part 2]

● Carm C. Cachia

Group Librarian Carm Cachia delivered this speech in Maltese on the occasion of the unveiling of Skip's bust on the 19th September 2020. For the benefit of our English speaking readers, we are providing this version.

As time went by, the Group's numbers and popularity increased. The civil authorities would invite the Group to be present during certain official ceremonies such as Queen Elizabeth's visit in 1967 or the installation of Bishop Nikol Cauchi. A regular appointment in the Group's calendar is the guard of honour provided at the agrarian show held on the feast of Santa Marija, initially to the Governor of Malta and as from 1974 onwards, to the President of Malta on his arrival. The Group also used to accompany each new priest for his Prima Messa. For a short period of time, on Joe's initiative, the Group had its own band and Joe had requested Mro Joe Farrugia to teach music to the Scouts. On Founder's Day, the band would present a display at Independence Square while similar displays were also held on Victory Day, the 8th of September and on Remembrance Day in November.



15.8.1963 Guard of honour to the Governor of Malta

However Skip was not yet ready to rest on his laurels with the fact that the Group was so popular in Gozo. He wished it to acquire a national as well as an international dimension. Therefore he started to organise trips to Malta. He would also invite Maltese Scout Groups to spend the weekend at our headquarters, something they enjoyed doing and this provided the opportunity to mingle with them. Otherwise it would have been very difficult to organise visits to Malta because of logistical problems. Skip also encouraged us to take part in national competitions such as the Reynolds Cup, which trophy our Group brought home several times.

We had visits by English, Italian, German and even Danish Scouts. One visit involved a group of Deep Sea Scouts on board the HMS Intrepid. Amongst these was David Clements, who so enjoyed this meeting that he has remained in contact and is still a good friend of



26.2.1967 Founder's Day parade at Independence Square

the Group. Together with his family and Scout Group, he visits us often and has joined us for several camps. I know for sure that Gill and Dave Clements are with us today, watching this unveiling ceremony live on our Facebook page and that they would have been present had it not been for the restrictions imposed on us all due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On the other hand, Joe wished that we would experience Scouting on an international level. He undertook leadership training at Gilwell Park in the UK. Later when he attended the NordJamb 75 in Norway, he took Lorrie Saliba with him. Lorrie later became the Group Scout Leader. A year later he attended Sherwood '76, an international camp held in Nottinghamshire. This time 4 members accompanied him - my brother Willie and brothers Ian, David and Michael, the sons of Professor Pace, the Group's present patron. This started off a series of trips abroad where the participants gained a lot of unforgettable experiences.



9.4.1967 The consecration of the new Bishop of Gozo,
H.E. Mgr Nikol Cauchi

Skip's biggest wish was that the Group would one day own its very own premises. Even though his mother never mentioned this, he knew that she wished to return to her house at Ghajn Qatet Street. So he did his best to raise funds towards this project. With the continuous efforts of the Group Council as well as help from parents, friends and supporters, a fund-raising campaign was set off. After several attempts, a piece of land was purchased and the building process began. The building was completed 32 years ago, in 1989. Headquarters was inaugurated by H.E. the President of Malta, Dr Ċensu Tabone and blessed by H.E. Mgr Nikol Cauchi, Bishop of Gozo. Skip had achieved his lifelong dream.

To be continued in another issue