

Scouts looking for new recruits



Hayden Landry, 8, holds up his trophy at the Kub Kar Rally in Marmora at the end of March. Each Cub gets a kit and over the meeting they design, carve and decorate their own car. Groups get together to race the cars. Hayden's Incredible Hulk car was voted best design.

By Sarah Sobanski

The 1st Bancroft Scouts staff are seeking aspiring young Scouts.

Scouts Canada is planning for the 2016-'17 year. Bancroft's local Scouts group wants to jump on board ? but it is concerned about Scout ages and numbers. It's asking parents to connect with local Scout leaders to gauge interest for this September. Without local interest and support the program could end up not running this year.

?We're interested in knowing who wants to be a part of Scouts Canada in Bancroft, as a Scout or a Cub or a Beaver,? said Bancroft Scouter Graham Cameron. ?We're interested so we can put a plan together that addresses interest. Say we get a dozen to 15 that identify that they're interested, then we have enough for a program.?

Scout programs run in three age groups. Beavers are between five and seven years old, Cubs are between eight and 10 years old, and Scouts are between 11 and 13 years old. Without demand for each of the age groups one or more could be cut to save the time and resources of volunteers.

?We're wrestling with participation and with having enough leaders to take on some of the programming and what's required,? said Cameron, explaining that the Scouts have to be run in different age groups. ?The only trouble is that at different age groups they interact differently. If you're dealing with a teenager and a seven-year-old, and the older kids get rowdy, they might make the younger kids feel intimidated.?

He noted the Scouts program operates mostly on fundraising and volunteer time. Membership fees go to Scouts Canada for insurance and the greater framework for the program ? such as the badges structure.

Cameron would like to see the program continue. He pointed out that the Bancroft program is one of the longest running for Scouts Canada and that it's a lot of fun.

?We do a lot of outdoor activities. What I think we offer is both unstructured and structured play. The kids just love being outside in

a new place and interacting with nature," said Cameron. "I think that's really important. I'm seeing lately a use of screens as a way to engage each other, everyone has a tablet or a smartphone and it's getting out of hand."

Skills Scouts learn include wilderness survival, identification of animals and plants, fire making, knot tying, proper use of knives, how to cook and all the different necessities of camping including finding a safe and dry place to sleep, and we also do navigation use of compass.

"I think it fosters a relationship with the natural world and allows them to be able to care about the natural world. Without that connection you're unable to care about that importance, you're unable to feel that. It's important to get them to realize the utilitarian importance and the beauty in it," said Cameron.

Cameron encouraged anyone looking to volunteer or interested in the program to contact him at 1stbancroftScouts@gmail.com. He said he was just looking to identify interest and that expressing an interest in the program did not mean commitment to the program's start in September. Girls are also welcome to join the program.