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Lafayette Troop 224 Scouts are staying healthy while having fun

Submitted by Chan Whiting



Photo provided

During the pandemic, the Scouts of Troop 224 are living up to their mantra, "Be prepared!" With creativity, the Troop continues to be active, achieving rank advancements, earning merit badges and celebrating these achievements virtually. While many in-person activities have had to be canceled, the Troop chose to test their mettle with a challenging 50-mile backpacking trip through the beauty of Lake Tahoe's Desolation Wilderness, using strict social distancing measures and COVID-19 testing prior to departure.

All scouts carried their own 30-plus pound packs, with tent, sleeping bag, food and 10 essential survival items for the adventure. Younger Scouts joined for a shorter version, fishing in the lakes and using their rope tying skills to build temporary structures along the way. Despite social distancing, camaraderie and enthusiasm were high.

"It was hard but super rewarding," related Khozema Shipchandler, who attended along with his son, Juser. "Beautiful scenery, rewarding journey . great group of boys and girls. The food was fantastic! And we learned how to keep it away from bears!" Zac Robb, senior Scout, echoed similar sentiments: "Amazing views as we climbed to the top of the passes, where you could see plenty of lakes and beautiful wildlife," and, "Hikes were long and hard but it was a great experience that I would

gladly do again."

Troop 224 welcomes both boys and girls. Although girls officially have their own troop and leadership, the girls and boys troops, 224B and 224G, are linked and do many activities together. The Troops are committed to using a combination of virtual platforms and/or social distancing to keep everyone safe during this global pandemic, while continuing to provide a healthy and stimulating set of activities, building character and having them be prepared for life.

Troop 224 was established in 1953 and meets at the Hut (behind Happy Valley Elementary School's gymnasium). It will hold a virtual open house from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Nov. 16. A Fishing event at Heather Farms is planned for late November. Contact Troop 224 for information on these events or to join the Troop (struchenadams123@gmail.com, <https://www.troop224lafayette.com/>).

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