

St Stephen's News

ST STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH • TIMONIUM, MARYLAND

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A parish in the classical Anglican tradition

30 June 2015

FROM THE RECTOR

The 'wussification' of America continues apace

Far from cultivating a sense of rugged individualism in American youth, we seem hell bent on raising a generation of 'wussies'.

Sad to relate, the Boy Scouts of America is one more organisation to run up the white flag of surrender. This, at least, is the only logical explanation for the revelation that its national leadership has just reminded local scouters of 'a long-standing' rule banning water gun fights and water balloon fights.

And why? According to the BSA's official magazine *Scouting*, the national leadership has discovered that water guns [be still my heart] are 'simulated firearms'.

This is an astonishing epiphany. After all, from the moment water guns appeared in the stores it should have been obvious to all but the most unworldly (a class that appears to encompass the national BSA leadership) that they were 'simulated firearms'. Indeed, nobody ever tried to pretend otherwise.

But it should also be equally obvious even to folks as obtuse as the BSA leadership that they have provided endless hours of harmless summer fun for generations of young people, male and female.

What's more, I would venture to guess that water has been 'weaponised' in this entirely innocent sense for 5,000 years or more. I am sure that kids had water fights on the banks of the Nile in the days of Moses and on the banks of the Jordan in our Lord's day.

Bryan Wendall, senior editor at *Scouting*, explained the reason for the rule on the organisation's blog:

'A Scouter once told me this explanation I liked quite a bit: "A Scout is kind. What part of pointing a firearm (simulated or otherwise) at someone is kind?"'

On the basis of this rationale, truth in advertising dictates that it is high time for the Boy Scouts to change their motto from 'Be Prepared' to 'Be Prepared To Have Your Intelligence Underestimated'.

This, in turn, might give rise to useful BSA fund raising project: Boy Scouts could manufacture and sell industrial quantities of pokerwork signs reading: 'Don't underestimate yourself. Let the BSA national leadership do it for you!'

Silly me! It the poor little chaps would need to use fires to heat their poker. And fire is even more dangerous than water.

The firearms the Boy Scouts' leaders really need to worry about are the real ones, including BB guns, air guns and the like. These are the guns that should never be pointed at anyone. But, one has to ask, is the apparent paranoia about 'simulated firearms' likely to teach this lesson.

It seems to me the answer is a resounding 'no'.

When I, and most of my friends, were Boy Scouts back in the late 1940s and early 1950s, our guns – air rifles and .410 shotguns – harvested rabbits, pigeons and the occasional hare to augment our families' meager meat ration. Some earned shooting merit badges and joined the troop shooting team.

But before we were allowed to point the things at anything – at a target, let alone a rabbit – we were carefully instructed in gun safety by our parents and grandparents. And the following rhyme was repeatedly dinned into our heads. It read in part:

If a sportsman true you'd be/
Listen carefully to me/
Never, never let your gun/
pointed be at anyone./
If unloaded it may be/
Matters not the least to me . . . /
For all the pheasants ever bred/
will not repay for one man dead.

We still 'shot' at each other with our cap guns when we played Cowboys and Indians. We still had wide ranging water pistol fights, gleefully soaking each other to the skin. But never did we ever take out our real guns for play. They were serious tools used for serious business, and we treated them as such.

However we noticed that children whose parents forbade them to play with 'simulated firearms' – and there were number of such folk in the wake of WWII – were absolutely fascinated by them, and not just

toy guns, but the real thing. Guns, for them, were a mysterious forbidden fruit and, thus, extremely desirable.

We let them illicitly join in our cowboy games (usually as 'baddies'). But we never let them go shooting with us because they knew nothing about gun safety and showed no great inclination to learn. It was simply too dangerous to be around them.

Before this wussified age of ours it was by no means unusual to see school students carefully carrying their .22 rifles to the local rifle range. High schools, you see, actually had shooting teams where children were taught gun safety and how to shoot.

Today's BSA leadership has tossed aside the lessons of history. Instead of teaching youngsters to respect firearms and handle them safely, the BSA has banned all sorts of fun activities such as paintball and laser tag that manifestly appeal to boys. Even the venerable boomerang is forbidden.

This policy ignores the unfortunate reality that boys, especially, are fascinated by things that are forbidden and somewhat risky. And bans of any kind tend to act as a challenge to the adventurous.

The Parish Prayer List

Our Prayer Chain offers prayer daily for people on the Prayer List as well as the guests of the Joseph Richey Hospice. To add a name to the prayer list, or to the visiting list, or to join the Prayer Chain, ring the parish office on 410 560 6776.

FOR REPOSE OF THE SOUL: Ben, Ann

FOR RECOVERY: Hilarie, Jack, Donald, Evelyn, Cal, Finton, Edie, Cary, Judy, Julie, Phyllis, Steve, Wendy, Matthew, Adele, Starr, Helen, Emily, Kathleen, Marty, Don, Linda, Elizabeth, Cathy, William, Dan, Lindsey, Shelby, Rob, Dick, Melissa, Ned, Paula, Sandra, Diane, Hobie, Nathan, Francine

FOR LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE: Stephen, Melba, Susan, Scott, Charles, Vinnie, Doug, Rusty, Ian, Lydia, Lisa, Fritz

ON ACTIVE SERVICE: Lt Benjamin Schramm, USMC; Lt Alex Bursi, Capt. Charles Bursi, Lt Nicholas Clouse, USN; Lt Col. Harry Hughes

Certainly it is legitimate to debate the issue of gun control, but, no matter where one stands on the issue, it should surely be obvious that forbidding boys to play with toy guns as harmless as water pistols is asking for trouble.

In any event, this isn't the sort of Scouting I experienced as a kid. Heaven knows what this present generation of leaders would have made of our boisterous games? No doubt they would be horrified. Capture the Castle and British Bulldog can only be described as pure roughhousing – and how we adored them!

Under the leadership of such a timid, politically correct bunch of folk, small wonder Scouting is losing its appeal. **GPH**

FROM PASTORAL CARE

Red Cross Blood Drive

The Red Cross is in desperate need of blood donations at this time of year, and your generous contribution of an arm- or legful could help save a life.

The parish's next Red Cross blood drive will take place at St Stephen's on Tuesday, 21 July from 2.00–7.30pm. To schedule your exsanguination, please contact Happy Riley on 410 560 6776.

ON THE KALENDAR

Nativity of St John Baptist

St John the Baptist (the BCP omits the ‘the’) is that rare saint whose principal feast celebrates his birth, rather than his death. That’s because St John’s birth is part of the Christmas cycle. Elizabeth was six months pregnant when she greeted her cousin Mary (and the ‘babe leaped in her womb’), so when the Nativity of Christ was fixed to the winter solstice (likely to distract the faithful from the Roman Saturnalia), that placed his cousin John’s birthday on the summer solstice.

The Feast itself is 24 June, but in many countries the celebrations occur on the Eve – a lingering effect of the pagan celebration of the quarter days, no doubt. The close association of St John’s Eve with otherworldly doings is the foundation for one of Shakespeare’s masterpieces, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

FROM THE PARISH CHEFS

Silly Summer Suppers

Each Wednesday, through 9 September, the chefs of St Stephen’s will be serving *Silly Summer Suppers* at 6.30pm. These remarkable gastronomic events – entrée, dessert and salad – are priced at only \$10. Soda costs a buck; wine is \$3 per glass or \$5 for two.

If you are handy in the kitchen (or even if you are not) you are

welcome to join our team of volunteer chefs. In fact, if you decide to do so, you’ll be welcomed with open arms. When you come to think about it, cooking your way to heaven isn’t such a bad idea.

FROM THE TREASURER

Church treasurers find that summertime is far from easy

Summer is not the best-loved time of the year for church treasurers. The trouble is that parishioners frequently forget the church when they go on vacation, and this can place havoc with the cash flow. And a healthy cash flow is essential for keeping the lights lit, the air conditioning cooling, and the doors open.

So please take pity on the poor church treasurer struggling to make ends meet in the summer season, scrabbling under the pews in hopes that small change might have fallen from parishioners’ pockets. How much simpler life would be for him if he could anticipate a nice smooth cash flow.

We know you have a lot of calls on your time and your treasure, but if you are a little behind with your pledge we would be most grateful if you’d bring it up to date. It would be so nice if the treasurer didn’t have to hide under his desk when the plumber or the electrician comes to call.

St Stephen’s Anglican Church

11856 Mays Chapel Road, Timonium, MD 21093

Office: 410 560 6776 · Rectory: 410 665 1278

Pastoral Care: 410 252 8674

www.ststeve.com

The Ven. Canon Guy P. Hawtin, *Rector*

The Ven. Michael Kerouac, *Vicar*

The Rev. Michael Belt, The Rev. John Novicki, *Associate Rectors*

The Rev. Mr M. Wiley Hawks, *Deacon* · Adric, *Magister Chori*

Mrs Happy Riley, *Director of Pastoral Care & Wedding Coordinator*

SUNDAY SERVICES

8 am: Said Eucharist

9.15 am: Choral Eucharist (with Nursery & Church School)

11 am: Choral Mattins (1st Sunday: Sung Eucharist)

6 pm: Choral Evensong (as announced: evensong.ststeve.com)

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Wednesday, 6 pm: Evening Prayer

Friday, 12 noon: Healing Eucharist

Saturday, 5 pm: Family Eucharist

Calendar of Events

WEEKLY

Mondays, 6.30 pm: Bridge Club

Tuesdays, 7 am: Fellowship Breakfast (Nautilus Diner)

Thursdays, 10 am: Knitting Circle

Fridays, 10.30 am: Bible Study

MONTHLY & SPECIAL

Sunday, 5 July, 6 pm:

Patriotic Hymnfest

Wednesday, 15 July, 12 noon:

The Ladies Who Lunch meet

Thursday, 16 July, 2 pm:

Afternoon Tea

Tuesday, 21 July, 2.00–7.30 pm:

Red Cross Blood Drive

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Timonium, MD 21093

11856 Mays Chapel Road

St Stephen’s Anglican Church

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