

MOBILE AREA COUNCIL · FALL CAMPOREE 2026

THE RIDE OF THE HEADLESS HORSEMAN

"The Camp That Should Have Been Abandoned"



CAMP MAUBILA · OCTOBER 23–25, 2026

Troops · Packs (AOL) · Crews welcome

Daylight prepares the camp. Night tests it.

Built for older Scouts — a proving ground for youth leadership. Challenging by design.

PRELIMINARY GUIDE · SUBJECT TO CHANGE · SHARE WITH YOUR
UNIT

What Is This Event?

This is not a Halloween party. It is a skills-based, story-driven camporee built around one idea: daylight prepares the camp — night tests it.

As dusk falls over the pines of Grove Hill, Scouts arrive for a camporee unlike any other. Patrols construct towering gateways, master survival and engineering challenges, and navigate a camp transformed by the legend of the Headless Horseman.

Strange lights drift between the trees, something stirs near the water, and the Horseman rides at dusk — searching for patrols who fail to secure their camp. Every station demands teamwork, discipline, and leadership. No filler, no carnival games, no costume contest — every event sharpens a real Scout skill.

The night ends with a campfire of shadows, stories, and awards, sealing a shared experience your Scouts will talk about for years.

A patrol fled this area years ago after encountering something on the trail. They left behind broken gateways, scattered maps, and strange lights in the woods. What earlier patrols failed to finish, this year's patrols must confront.

The Shape of the Weekend

Friday — Optional early arrival (strongly encouraged): set camp, begin your gateway, settle in. Normal Scout camp — no theatrics, no scoring. Cracker barrel in the evening.

Saturday morning — Optional (reservation-based) training refreshers in orienteering and pioneering. Competition doesn't begin until mid-day, but morning training directly reinforces skills used in scored events. Units that skip it will feel it later.

Saturday afternoon — Patrol rotations through four competitive daylight stations, then gateway building and judging before sunset.

Saturday night — After dinner and flag lowering, the tone shifts. Night navigation, moving signals, immersive woodland scenarios, and leadership under fatigue become central — capped by a camp-wide finale and the campfire. The full program ends before midnight.

Sunday — Later wake-up, breakfast, Scouts' Own service, campsite inspection and checkout.

Who Is This For?

This camporee is **geared to older Scouts and built to test youth leadership**. Patrol leaders run their patrols, SPLs run the flow, and the sessions are deliberately challenging — physically, mentally, and after dark. **This is not a Cub Scout event.** There is a place for younger Scouts, though, and the two are different: **AOL Scouts (5th grade) may camp overnight** with a parent, while **Webelos come Saturday daytime only**. Both take part in the daylight stations, training and the gateway build — sized to them — while the full night program belongs to the older Scouts.

Who Competes?

Competition is **troop/pack-based**, run in patrols of 4–6, on four components — **Spirit • The Game • Gateway • Campsite** — announced at the Saturday campfire. Spirit is earned everywhere, all day: discipline, encouragement, and patrol integrity count even between events. *Individual stations are not separately scored — how your Scouts carry themselves matters more than any single result.*

Daylight — Preparing the Camp

Four rotations, 30 minutes each, patrols moving on the quarter-hour. Real skills, run hard, with a story wrapped around them.

Survival & Marksmanship Gauntlet

Range discipline, steady hands, and survival priorities under a ticking clock. A mass safety briefing in the morning clears every Scout for the line — miss it and your patrol watches.

Sharpen: archery range rules, focus under pressure, survival decision-making.

The Long Retreat — Obstacle Gauntlet

The patrol that fled this ground left a route behind them. Run it: an obstacle gauntlet where the slowest member sets the pace, because nobody gets left behind. Speed helps; communication wins.

Sharpen: teamwork, communication, fitness, carrying techniques.

Morning Training — Reserve Your Slots

Two refreshers run side-by-side, 09:30–11:30, and your Scouts hit both: **Compass & Orienteering** (30 min instruction + 30 min navigation challenge) and **Pioneering** (30 min lashing review + 30 min build challenge). They may provide subtle advantages later. We won't say what. Training participation also earns Spirit.

The Gateway Challenge

Every unit builds a campsite gateway — a *warding structure*, if you believe the story. Judged in daylight (16:30–18:00) on structure, function, theme, and how it holds up when the light is gone. **Bring your own poles/spars and lashing rope.** Start it Friday night; finish it Saturday. This is the signature build of the weekend — make it one your Scouts photograph.

The Old Ways — Scout Skills Workshop

The skills the old camp was built on — knots, lashings, and fieldcraft — with a twist only a prepared patrol handles cleanly. A pretty structure with loose lashings still fails.

Sharpen: square/diagonal/shear lashings, wrap-and-frap, core knots.

STEM & Engineering Lab

Build, test, and iterate: an engineering challenge where the patrol that plans before it builds beats the patrol that builds twice.

Sharpen: problem-solving, measurement, designing as a team.

Night — Surviving What Returns After Dark

After flags are lowered, movement happens by patrol. Four night rotations, then a finale we're not going to explain.

The Forgotten Trail

A patrol walk into the treeline, following what an earlier patrol left behind. Nerve, observation, and staying together are the whole exercise. What waits out there is part of the story — your Scouts will tell you about it afterward.

Sharpen: patrol integrity, observation, calm under the unexpected.

Glow-Stick Night Orienteering

Bearings and pace-counting when the flashlights are hidden and the markers glow. The morning compass refresher stops being optional-feeling right about here.

Sharpen: compass bearings, pace counting, night navigation.

The Injured Hikers — Night First Aid

Hikers went missing on this ground once. Find them, assess, treat, and improvise a carry — in the dark, while the scenario refuses to hold still. First aid you only half-remember will show.

Sharpen: patient assessment, bleeding/shock/fracture care, improvised carries.

The Sealed Room

A room the old camp closed up and never reopened. Locked in with puzzles that reward Scouts who read carefully, divide the work, and listen to each other. Time pressure is real; panic is expensive.

Sharpen: puzzle logic, delegation, communication, time management.

22:05 — THE GAME: The Horseman's Finale

A camp-wide, patrol-based night operation. At 22:00 every group musters at the arena and patrol leaders receive **sealed mission packets**. What's inside stays sealed until then — that's the point, and it's the same for every unit. We'll say only this: everything your Scouts practiced by daylight matters after dark, prepared patrols who ignore the whispers do better than patrols who don't, and rumor holds that Scouts who can read a simple coded signal have always fared well on this ground.

At 22:45 the Horseman makes his **Last Ride** through camp — and then the campfire: shadows, the telling of what happened, and awards. Cracker barrel after. The program ends before midnight; plan supervision and rest accordingly.

Event Schedule

FRIDAY · OPTIONAL EARLY ARRIVAL (ENCOURAGED)

Evening	Arrival, registration, campsite setup, gateway construction begins. On your own with your troop; cracker barrel. No scoring Friday night.
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SATURDAY · MAIN EVENT

07:30–09:00	Arrival / registration / campsite setup — arrive by 09:00 for the full event
09:30–10:30	Training Session A — Orienteering and Pioneering side-by-side (reservation-based)
10:30–11:30	Training Session B — groups flip stations
11:30–12:15	Lunch at campsites + gateway planning
12:15–12:30	SPL meeting (rotation flow, discipline, safety)
12:30–12:40	Mass archery & range safety briefing — ALL Scouts
12:45–13:00	Opening ceremony & safety briefing
13:00–15:45	Day Stations 1–4 (30 min each + transit · starts 13:00 13:45 14:30 15:15)
15:45–18:00	Gateway build & decorating
16:30–18:00	Gateway & campsite judging (in daylight)
18:00–18:50	Dinner (provided) — wristband swap at the door
18:50	Flag lowering · night safety briefing · <i>the tone turns</i>
19:15–22:00	Night Stations 5–8 (4 rotations · 19:15 20:00 20:45 21:30)
22:00	All groups muster at the arena — mission packets issued
22:05–22:45	THE GAME — the Horseman's Finale (camp-wide)
22:45	The Horseman's Last Ride
22:50–23:20	Campfire — awards & closing story
23:25–23:55	Cracker barrel (informal)
00:00 / 00:30	Quiet time / lights out

PRELIMINARY — this guide is a planning draft. Times, stations, and details may change before October; the final leaders' guide will be issued closer to the event.

SUNDAY · DEPARTURE

Morning	Breakfast · Scouts' Own service · campsite inspection & checkout sign-off · departure
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How to Prepare Your Unit

Skills Worth Sharpening Now

- ▶ Compass bearings & pace counting — day and night
- ▶ Lashings: square, diagonal, shear — tight wrap-and-frap
- ▶ Core knots, done fast, done right
- ▶ First aid: assessment, bleeding, shock, improvised carries
- ▶ Archery range discipline & whistle commands
- ▶ Fire & survival priorities
- ▶ Simple signal codes (a rumor, not a requirement)
- ▶ Patrol drill: moving together, quietly, with a leader

What to Bring

- ▶ **Class A field uniform** — opening ceremony, flags, campfire, Sunday service
- ▶ **Class B activity uniform** — camporee or troop t-shirt for all stations
- ▶ Gateway poles/spars and plenty of lashing rope
- ▶ One compass per patrol (minimum)
- ▶ Headlamps/flashlights — red-light mode recommended
- ▶ Patrol flag — guard it well
- ▶ Warm layers; October nights get cold
- ▶ Food for all meals except Saturday dinner (provided)
- ▶ A campsite you'd be proud to have inspected

Scoring — What We'll Tell You

Four components decide the awards: **Spirit** (earned all day, everywhere — including training and between events), **The Game** (the 22:05 finale), **Gateway**, and **Campsite** (Saturday judging + Sunday checkout). Troop/pack-based; a unit's Game score is its best patrol's. That's all we're telling you — the rest would spoil it, and everyone finds out together.

Registration

Scouts & parents full weekend	\$55 through Sep 30 \$60 through Oct 15
AOL (5th grade) & parent overnight stay	\$40 each
Webelos & parent Saturday daytime only	\$25 each
Staff (station code required)	\$25 + \$10 meals

Out-of-council units are welcome — ask us about the visiting-unit discount. Saturday dinner is included for participants. **AOL Scouts may stay overnight** with a parent; **Webelos attend Saturday daytime only**.

Safety, Plainly

Two-deep leadership throughout. Night activities run inside a staffed safety perimeter with radio coverage and a medic on site. Nothing touches your Scouts, nothing chases them, and the program is designed to build nerve — not nightmares. The full program ends before midnight.

Register now at **mobilescouts.org** • Camp Maubila • October 23–25, 2026
The Horseman is already riding. Make sure your camp is ready.

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