

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

Daylight prepares the camp. Night tests it.

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

LEADERS' GUIDE · FINAL EDITION · SHARE WITH YOUR UNIT

Revised 22 October 2026

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

Where: the Rifle Range

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

Where: Polaris

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** at the Flagpole (30 min instruction + 30 min navigation challenge) and **Pioneering** at Handicraft (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

Where: Handicraft

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

Where: the Training Center

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

Where: the trail behind First Aid

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

Where: the Flagpole

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

Where: the trail from Seminole toward the Chapel

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

Where: the STEM Lab

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.

Your glow band. Every Scout wears one on each wrist, and every adult who comes with a unit wears one, from Saturday dinner until the campfire. Each unit is told its colour at check-in — **red, green, purple or white** — and the bands go on as you go in to dinner. Wear them where they show: over a jacket, not under a sleeve. A Scout who finds a band on the wrist hard to bear can wear it round the neck instead. It is how staff count a group in the dark, how a Scout who has wandered is spotted and walked back, and how a leader moving with a group is known at a glance to be one of ours. You will need it at the finale. Please do not swap colours, and if a band breaks or fades, tell any staff member — there are spares.

Event Schedule

FRIDAY · OPTIONAL EARLY ARRIVAL (ENCOURAGED)

Evening	Arrival, registration, campsite setup, gateway construction begins. On your own with your troop. SPL meeting before cracker barrel — <i>place given at check-in</i> . 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 (Flagpole) and Pioneering (Handicraft) 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) — <i>place given at check-in</i>
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) — glow bands go on as you go in
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

SUNDAY · DEPARTURE

Morning	Breakfast · Scouts' Own service · campsite inspection & checkout sign-off · departure
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Who's Riding

Fifteen units are bringing Scouts — troops, and packs bringing their AOL and Webelos Scouts. The roster as it stood on 19 October.

15 UNITS WITH SCOUTS	158 PEOPLE REGISTERED	88 SCOUTS	34 ADULT LEADERS	36 CAMPOREE STAFF
PACKS	TROOPS · FIVE RIVERS	TROOPS · BALDWIN		
Pack 1017	Troop 1002	Troop 5070		
Pack 2227	Troop 1003	Troop 5082 B		
Pack 5271	Troop 1251	Troop 5082 G		
Pack 5087	Troop 2113	Troop 5087		
	Troop 2227	Troop 5170		
		Troop 5177		

Getting There & Checking In

Where

Camp Maubila — Boy Scout Road, off County Road 19, Grove Hill, Alabama.

Driving In

Start your map search with "**Maubila Scout Reservation,**" **Grove Hill, AL.** Come in from the **east on Allen Walker Road (County 19)** and turn onto Boy Scout Road. The first thousand feet or so is narrow, then it opens out. New to the area? Do not trust a rough back-road route in the dark without four-wheel drive — take the east approach.

Checking In — the Eagle Room

Friday evening if you are arriving early, or **Saturday between 07:30 and 09:00.** Arrive by 09:00 to get the whole event; we will take late arrivals until 11:00. **Check in as a whole unit, at one time,** with your paperwork in hand and your Scouts in uniform. Your campsite is on page 7; you will be told where to report when you check in. **You will also be asked whether your unit is taking part in the optional Saturday-morning training sessions** (orienteering and pioneering, 09:30–11:30).

What You Must Have With You

- ▶ Every Scout and leader current and registered with the BSA
- ▶ **Health forms A & B on hand for every person**
- ▶ Adults current on Youth Protection Training

Vehicles

No vehicles in campsites. The BSA is asking us to enforce this more firmly than in past years. Towing a trailer? Tell us at check-in if you would rather leave it connected at your site. Once you are parked, **no vehicle moves again until after Sunday service.**

Parking

Space is tight, so please arrive in as few vehicles as your unit can manage. The main lot is restricted to the **east end**; there is additional parking on the south side of Shawnee, next to the road. Some cars may end up across the main Maubila road from Ocoee. **Do not block roads or drives** — an ambulance may need them.

Camp Life, Plainly

The unglamorous half of a good camporee. Read it once, brief your Scouts, and the weekend runs itself.

Campsites

Every site used has water and a working bathroom within reach. It is going to be cozy. Leave No Trace and the Outdoor Code are how we look after Maubila, and they are part of your campsite score. If your unit has a Scout with special needs, contact Ward Faulk ahead of time.

Shawnee — Troop 1003 · Troop 1251

Natchez — Troop 5070

Seminole — Troop 5177

Ocoee — Troop 5082 B · Troop 2113 · Troop 5087

Pawnee — Troop 1002

Wichita — Troop 2227

Pushmataha — Troop 5082 G · Troop 5170

Family site — Pack 1017 · Pack 2227 · Pack 5271 · Pack 5087

Fire

Campsite fires follow BSA guidelines. Leave No Trace and the Outdoor Code apply to your fire ring as much as to anything else.

Food

Each unit cooks its own meals, with one exception:

Saturday dinner is provided camp-wide

(18:00–18:50; glow bands are handed out there).

Posting your duty-roster menu where a judge can see it helps your score.

Bathrooms

Look after them, and ask staff if you need help.

Flushing is mandatory — and that means holding the handle down until the bowl is actually clear.

Rubbish

Bag it and take it home, or put it in the blue dumpster near the dining hall before you leave on Sunday.

Electronics

Please keep a lid on them. Using a phone as a tool is fine; using it for entertainment pulls a Scout out of the weekend and drags his patrol with him. And the codes and puzzles are a great deal more fun solved by a patrol than by a search engine.

Senior Patrol Leaders

There are two SPL meetings: **Friday evening, before cracker barrel**, for units already in camp, and **Saturday 12:15–12:30**. The place is given at check-in. They cover rotation flow, discipline and safety, and they are a chance for SPLs to practise leading — everything they cover is also handed out in print.

Adult Leaders

Registered leaders must be current on Youth Protection Training, and two-deep leadership applies throughout. Remind your Scouts about the buddy system. **Guide your Scouts — but let them lead.**

If you are not already assigned to a station or a training session, leave your details at check-in and come ready to help. The more adults we have, the better the weekend is for everybody.

Campfire & Awards

Weather permitting, the campfire runs **22:50–23:20 on Saturday** — songs, skits and the closing story, in the usual way. Awards are presented there. Assuming, of course, that the mission gets finished.

Safety, Rules & Getting Home

Two signals are never part of the game. A **steadily ringing bell** means a hazard is imminent — come to the dining hall at once. An **air-raid siren** means shelter in place: find the nearest walled building and get inside. Neither will ever be used as an effect, at any point, for any reason. A single short ring of the bell is only a reminder to assemble on schedule.

Health Forms

BSA Health Forms **A & B** are **required for every person on site**, youth and adult, and must be with your unit. If someone is coming with a medical need, or cannot manage the trails, contact Ward Faulk beforehand and we will work out how to make it go smoothly.

First Aid

Every unit should bring its own basic first aid kit and know where it is. For anything beyond that, contact the Camporee director or any staff member and seek professional care.

Grove Hill Memorial Hospital

295 S. Jackson St, Grove Hill, AL 36451
251-275-3191

Knives

Scouts carrying a knife will be spot-checked for their **Totin' Chip**. Folding knives, or fixed blades shorter than 4½ inches. Nothing else.

Leave at Home

- ▶ Alcohol and illegal substances
- ▶ Tobacco and vapes — whatever your own habits, this is not something Scouts need to watch
- ▶ Fireworks
- ▶ Chainsaws and generators

Sunday Service

A short all-faith service on Sunday morning. Scouts in uniform. No vehicle moves before it is over.

Patches

The design is on the cover of this guide. **Event patches are distributed at check-out** on Sunday — the leader who signs your unit out collects them for the whole unit.

Check-Out — and it is not optional

Scouts leave a place better than they found it. Before you drive out, your **SPL walks the campsite evaluation with a designated leader and signs the unit out at the Eagle Room porch bench** — it is worth 20 points of your campsite score. Your unit's patches are handed over at the same time. We have had units leave hot fire pits behind. Let it not be yours.

If anyone has to leave Maubila before Sunday, tell staff before they go.

Questions Before the Weekend?

Anything this guide has not answered, ask — we would far rather sort it out now than at the gate.

Ward Faulk

wardiii@wthree.org

251-406-1631 (in the days before, and during, the event)

Hannah Ashbee

251-605-4830

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 — closed

Registration closed on 15 October: 88 Scouts from 15 troops and packs, 158 people in all. Saturday dinner is included for participants. **AOL Scouts 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.

See you at **Camp Maubila** · October 23–25, 2026 · mobilescouts.org
The Horseman is already riding. Make sure your camp is ready.

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*Their support helps keep this weekend affordable for every Scout.
With personal thanks to a Scouting family.*