



Pinebranch

First Pinelands



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LETTER FROM PINEBRANCH COMMITTEE

It has been almost 7 years since the last Pinebranch issue was released. We would like to thank the **CoH, and Grumphy (James Broadaway)** for agreeing to bring Pinebranch back. We also want to acknowledge the PL that helped make this happen, **Tiya (Malathi Mistry [Buffalos])**. She has always kept supporting Pinebranch and made sure the committee was reinstated.

This termly magazine is fully created, written, and designed by the scouts of 1st Pinelands. The Pinebranch committee consists of 5 scouts, **Modzi (Divya Jonnalagadda), Sylver (Anna-Grace Skead), Maverick (Iyaad Pandie), Tiya (Malathi Mistry) and Malachi Burt**

If you are interested in joining the Pinebranch Committee, Please message **Tiya (Malathi Mistry)** at 0724152441





TROOP CAMP 2026

Troop Camp this year was very eventful. It was Morox's, Daijahs and Fiyat's last TC as Scouts, Tiyas first TC being a PL, and much more. I am in the Zebras patrol but during this years TC my petrol got split up. I was really upset because it would be Morox's last year of being my PL and I might not be in the same patrol with her anymore. But luckily fate was on my side and I ended up being in the Buffalos patrol with 2 of my fellow comrades in Zebras, Morox, and Deeno. I also had a bunch of awesome people in the Buffs, Sylver, Tiya, Nikkel, Viola, Artemus and Rayfe.

We started constructing our campsites, everything was very calm, then every first time camper officially got their scout names. The food during TC was Bensons biscuits (really good) all made by Nikkel. My patrol was very chill and cool to be around with. Luma invented the TWOOO trend, which immediately became a mantra, it even had essays written about its importance. One day during parade we had the privilege of Grumpy reading some Patrol quotes. We worked hard on our campsites, I created a genuine connection with the tools I was using I even named them. Then suddenly at the middle of troop camp there was a mountain fire near the mountain where camp was so we had to evacuate to the 1st Herimanus Scout Hall, we stayed a night over then we came back to Camp when the fire was not heading towards us. While we were at the 1st Herimanus Scout Hall Fiyat and Maverick created a TC 2026 Rap. Then we had international food evening my patrol was India, I made a Rangoli. We did Henna for the Scouters.

Some things did change in Troop Camp this year, than the previous years, but either way I enjoyed Troop Camp this year. I will always remember the experiences, trauma and fun I had throughout it. When we came back to the hall, we had to pack up all our equipment back into the hall. After we finished packing everything up awards were handed out. Nikkel finally after her 5th Troop camp got her well deserved Cook of the Camp award. The Lions won Troop Camp 2026 overall, with the Seagulls coming in 2nd place. I was very happy to go back home and get ready to go to Spur with the Troop.

by Modzi (Divya Jonnalagadda)



TROOP CAMP 2026



PL INTERVIEWS

In the beginning of this year we had to say goodbye to two patrol leaders, who have become JATS because they are working on springbok. Pinebranch decided to do an interview with both of the new patrol leaders, Parsons (Matthew Metelerkamp [Eagles]) and Deeno (Luke Broadaway [Zebras]) so we can get to know them better as new PLs.

DEENO (ZEBRAS)



1. WHAT ARE SOME THINGS YOU ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO ABOUT BEING A PL?

I'm looking forward to watching everyone in my patrol advance and have opportunities to hike and camp together. These are all things that I enjoy, and watching them have the same opportunity is exciting. I'm also looking forward to being able to crash in the CoH room without having to ask permission.

2. WHAT ARE SOME CHALLENGES YOU HAVE FACED?

It can be hard when trying to work with patrol members who either won't listen or don't want to be at scouts. That is something I find extra challenging as a PL, because it is my responsibility to keep everyone engaged.

3. WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR YOUR PATROL IN THE FUTURE?

I hope that soon all my patrol members will be comfortable in their scouting skills. That way, we will be able to work confidently together on tasks. I'm not worried about my patrol's enthusiasm, there is plenty of that already!

4. WHAT MAKES A STRONG PATROL IN YOUR OPINION?

A strong patrol has two things. The first is an absolute trust and understanding, and the second thing is regular scout attendance and enthusiasm for scouts.

5. IF YOUR PATROL HAD A MOTTO WHAT WOULD IT BE?

If I could choose a motto for my patrol, I'd go for the classic "stronger together". If we were to decide as a patrol it would likely be something like "don't approach a zebra from behind" or "Les Zebres' Ziction". This has got to be the topic of our next patrol meeting.

6. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A NEW PATROL LEADER?

Remember that you are in charge because you have the tools to equip your patrol. It's not about you, but about each member. Think about what you appreciated from your past PLs, and imitate that.

7. DO YOU THINK THE WAY PEOPLE ACT CAN INFLUENCE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE?

Yes. If my patrol members are very compliant and don't contribute any of their own ideas, I would encourage them to share what they think. If my patrol members all have ideas and don't want to listen to anyone, I would ask them to respectfully zip it and listen. The level of command depends of my patrols level of compliance.

8. WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING TO ACHIEVE AS A PL AND WHY?

My Springbok award, in order to set an example for my patrol members and get them involved in fun activities. I would also like the zebras to achieve the gold star patrol award this year.

9. HOW IS BEING A PL DIFFERENT FROM WHEN YOU WERE A SCOUT/P2?

I feel more responsible, but I haven't had to stop doing what I enjoy on Friday evenings. The only big difference is that I have to rush off after the closing parade to attend CoH meetings with the other patrol leaders.

PL INTERVIEWS

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PARSONS (EAGLES)



1. WHAT ARE SOME THINGS YOU ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO ABOUT BEING A PL?

What I definitely look forward to is the ability to learn a lot more of a leadership role, to learn to be more of a knowledgeable figure, and I look forward to being someone that people in the troop can look up to and learn from.

2. WHAT ARE SOME CHALLENGES YOU HAVE FACED?

I think every patrol leader can say this at some point: the patrol not listening. Other than that, being a lot more active; I have to be a lot more on top of anything happening in the CoH and whatnot, so that's definitely been an adjustment. But I wouldn't say anything's been too challenging so far.

3. WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR YOUR PATROL IN THE FUTURE?

I think we can be a very powerful and strong patrol. We all work together really well already, and I think, in the past, when we've gotten things wrong it's been smaller things that have eaten away at us. I think if we can nail down those small things, we can make the patrol a lot better, and make us do a lot better in all sorts of things, from competitions to camps to whatever.

4. WHAT MAKES A STRONG PATROL IN YOUR OPINION?

I think the biggest part of a patrol isn't having necessarily one person who knows a lot or anything like that. It's having everybody having good communication, being coercive and getting along with each other. Not having anyone in the patrol dislike one another or get into fights with one another.

5. IF YOUR PATROL HAD A MOTTO WHAT WOULD IT BE?

I think we have something we said for an evening as a motto, I think it was "Eagles fly high". I think that was a pretty fitting motto for us, because we always try to strive to do our best and to apply ourselves to what's happening.

6. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A NEW PATROL LEADER?

Make sure that you hear everyone. It's very easy as a PL to be the biggest person because you're the highest in the patrol, but that doesn't mean that other people's opinions are invalid or wrong. I think one of the most important things is still listening to and always hearing everyone's voices in your patrol and never leaving anyone out because someone may say something that you're not expecting.

7. DO YOU THINK THE WAY PEOPLE ACT CAN INFLUENCE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE?

It definitely can. A leader, in my opinion, should adapt to who they are leading. If you have a mixed group of people where some are more soft spoken and some are louder, you should definitely change how you interact with each person so then the more soft spoken people speak louder and tell the louder people to sometimes quiet down, just as an example.

8. WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING TO ACHIEVE AS A PL AND WHY?

For the most part, my biggest plan is not to be a bad PL. Other than that, my main goal is to bring my patrol as a whole higher so we could do better and so we can be stronger. And for when there's new people, to try to teach them as much as we can.

9. HOW IS BEING A PL DIFFERENT FROM WHEN YOU WERE A SCOUT/P2?

There's a lot more responsibility. You have to watch everything and if one person is being problematic, you have to be the person to say, "Hey, you've gotta calm down", whereas if you were just another scout, you might not worry about it, or you might say to your PL "I think it's your problem". As for anything that's changed from being a P2, I already tried to help anywhere I could. I was actually only a P2 on troop camp; there was another P2 other than that. But on troop camp I tried to help wherever I could. Whenever there was something that needed to be done, and Zoe wasn't around to do it, I would make sure it would get done.

DAIAHS SPRINGBOK PIONEERING PROJECT

We arrived at the Scout hall bright and early Saturday morning, ready to start building. After being briefed on safety rules, we collected the necessary equipment and started on lashings. Everyone was focused – for about 10 minutes. Then people started chatting more and just having fun in general. As the day warmed up, progress was made and we had the first tripod ready. Moving it was a lot harder than expected, and there was even a threat to cut down the tree because it was in the way. But we managed to move it, and then lower it again so we could start working on the second tripod.

If there was ever a good example of trial-and-error, it was that second tripod! It just wouldn't cooperate! First it was too much to the left, then too low down. It took our whole team working together and listening to the directions of Daiah (Zoë) to get it in the right position and to stay there. After that was a much needed ice cream break. We enjoyed delicious ice cream with chocolate sauce and sprinkles.

The next steps in the operation (after securing the second tripod) was to add the platform at the top, and then lift the whole structure. Lifting the thing was a big task, so when we got it up we were so happy and excited. To celebrate, we sent Daiah up first, and then after a few tweaks of the ladder, the rest of us followed her. It was one of the scariest things I've done, climbing up that tower. But the view from the top was incredible and so worth it. However when I got down I lay on the floor and would not get up!

Once everyone who wanted to go up more had gone up (crazy people), we lowered the tower, deconstructed and packed away equipment. It was a really fun experience, and well done to Daiah and everyone else for building it.

By Sylver





RAYNER TROPHY 2026

The Rayner Competition took place from **28 February to 1 March**. First Pinelands sent two patrols, led by Matthew and Luke. Day one began with a hike through the mountains, starting at Silvermine and heading towards Kalk Bay. In a surprising twist we then boarded a lengthy train ride ending up at Cape Town station.

We were amazed to find out that we would be staying at the Castle of Good Hope, where we completed STAs, night bases, and spent the night. Everyone was shocked and excited by this unexpected and unique Rayner decision. We even had the chance to snap some incredible cityscapes!

Day two started with an urban hike through the city to Deer Park, where we completed a first aid base and were assessed by volunteer firefighters.

From there, we continued along Tafelberg Road to Platteklip Gorge, then followed the contour path to Oppelskop and the King's Blockhouse. The weather was tough, with steady rain throughout the event. There were 30 bases spread across the entire competition, making it both challenging and exciting. The competition ended at Rhodes Memorial, where the results were announced. Hermanus took first place, winning the trophy for the first time since 2007.

Our A team, led by Luke, finished 9th, and our B team placed 10th out of 36 patrols. Overall, it was a memorable experience filled with challenges, teamwork, and plenty of fun!

By **Malachi Burt**

Rayner is a senior overnight hiking competition for scouts over the age of 14 and a half and takes place every February. The competition was 72 years old this year, beginning in 1954 in the Western Province. Rayner is a competition focused on testing fundamental scouting skills, such as: mapping, survival skills, knots, teamwork, cooking and scouting knowledge. The teams hike along a path dotted with bases that test these skills and are scored based on their performance. The team with the highest score wins.



RAYNER TROPHY 2026

