

## **Vic Shelburne Honored for 40 years as Scoutmaster**

Vic Shelburne, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources, was honored for 40 years of service as scoutmaster of Scouts BSA Troop 235 in a ceremony at Clemson City Hall on October 20, 2020. He received a proclamation from the City of Clemson, along with recognitions from officials in local, state and national government, and current and former scouts. The event was broadcast to a virtual audience of former scouts, scouting families and friends, many of whom contributed to a presentation book of memories and tributes. A holly tree will be planted in his honor at sponsoring organization Fort Hill Presbyterian Church in Clemson.

Shelburne was an Eagle Scout and experienced scoutmaster when he arrived in 1980 to join the Department of Forestry staff. He soon was recruited to lead Boy Scout Troop 235 which had been serving boys ages 11 to 17 in the Clemson area since 1963. Under Shelburne's leadership, Troop 235 has enrolled an average 60 scouts per year. More than 220 members of the troop have become Eagle Scouts, the highest advancement rank in Scouting.

Shelburne has ensured that Troop 235's activities reinforce Scouting's goals of learning life and leadership skills through community service and outdoor activities, while also having fun. Troop members annually complete an average of 1,000 hours of service to the community through groups such as Clemson Community Care, Pendleton Historic Foundation and the Clemson Experimental Forest.

In addition to monthly camping trips in South Carolina, North Carolina or Georgia, Shelburne and the scouts regularly participate in Scouting's High Adventure programs including paddling canoes on the lakes of northern Minnesota at Northern Tier, backpacking through Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico, and sailing or scuba diving at Florida Seabase.

Shelburne's leadership has ensured Troop 235's survival through a number of changes and challenges during the past 40 years. Despite competition from other organized youth activities, increasingly busy family schedules, and distractions of social media and online pastimes, Troop 235 has remained one of the most active troops in the country.

In 2019, the Boy Scouts of America launched Scouts BSA, open to both boys and girls. Shelburne helped guide the establishment of Troop 7235, a girls' troop linked to Troop 235 through the same charter organization and troop committee with some cooperative activities. During the recent COVID-19 pandemic, Shelburne took on the challenge of organizing virtual scout meetings so troop members could continue to work on merit badges, advance to the next rank, and stay connected in a safe environment.

In all these endeavors, Scoutmaster Shelburne has been supported through the years by dozens of Assistant Scoutmasters and other volunteers, many of them parents who have continued with the troop long after their sons graduated.

Vic Shelburne has received numerous awards for his leadership of Troop 235 and involvement in Scouting in the Oconee District and the Blue Ridge Council including District Awards of Merit, four-time Scoutmaster of the Year, Silver Beaver Award for Service to Youth and Bill and Sylvia Dukes Award for Distinguished Service in Scouting. He has provided many years of guidance and maintenance to the Council's Camp Old Indian and is the benefactor of the camp's Three Forks Lodge.