

Genealogist Bill Sanders Develops and Teaches Genealogy Merit Badge Course to Louise Boy Scout Troop 226

Genes – Genetics – Genealogy

Rarely does one pass through his or her lifetime without thinking about who preceded them. Six scouts and three parents of the Louise Boy Scout Troop 226 participated in a genealogy workshop conducted by the Cradle of Texas Chapter of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (NSSAR). Compatriot Bill Sanders, 30-yr. teacher, Chapter Registrar and Genealogist, taught the class on November 27 and 30, 2017 using the “essential elements”* as specified by both the Boy Scouts Genealogy Merit Badge and the NSSAR Genealogy Merit Badge course requirements. The requirements for this merit badge emphasize the use of references including 1790 to 1940 U.S. Census Records from the National Archives, 1775 to 2017 Fold 3 Military Records, and Ancestry, Family Search, plus many other genealogical databases. Mr. Sanders presented and discussed approximately 130 books and references covering these and other topics during the course. Examples of birth and death certificates and marriage and divorce certificates were examined to illustrate how they link one generation to another - as were land and probate records and wills. The scouts were shown where to find and how to use these records to establish their own genealogy. After their research, each scout was tested one-on-one with their Scoutmaster, Mark Lilie, to show how they met the genealogy merit badge requirements. Beginning with the scout as generation 1, three scouts were able to trace their family ancestors back 4 generations, and two scouts traced them all the way back to 1710. Three scouts, Steven Appling, Matthew Lewis and Blake Beeson, were able to complete all requirements and earned their Genealogy Merit Badge which was presented to them by Scoutmaster Lile at a Court of Honor conducted at the Louise Boy Scout Hall on December 3, 2017. SAR Registrar Bill Sanders honored each of these three scouts with a SAR Certificate of Recognition for their accomplishments.

*here the term “essential elements” relates to the individual items that Mr. Sanders used to teach the required items as outlined in the Boy Scout Genealogy Merit Badge Handbook as well as those taught by the NSSAR in their Genealogy Merit Badge course. (The NSSAR teaches this course in-house throughout the year to several hundred boy scouts working on their Genealogy Merit Badge at their Louisville, KY headquarters.) Sanders incorporated the NSSAR course essential elements with the Boy Scout Genealogy Merit Badge Handbook essential elements to fine-tune his curricula for this workshop.

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