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**Members of Falls Church City's Newest Boy Scout Troop, 349, Meet Falls Church Resident and Secretary of the Army, Preston M. Geren, III**

**Falls Church, Virginia, 5/13/2009** – Members of Falls Church City Boy Scout Troop 349 took some time from their schedules to tour the Pentagon and to meet the Secretary of the Army. Pete Geren, a resident of Falls Church himself, took the members of the troop, its leaders, and some family members on a tour of his office where he pointed out historical artifacts and artwork. The scouts were given a chance to ask questions, which included who his heroes were and what he thought about Scouting. They were then photographed with the Secretary next to the desk that Robert Todd Lincoln used when he was Secretary of War in 1881.

The scouts then went on to a personal tour of the Pentagon and its 9/11 memorial. In addition to the meeting and the visit to the memorial the scouts also saw exhibits on the First and Second World Wars, the Vietnam War, an exhibit on Douglas MacArthur, and the battle of the Pacific. They also toured the center courtyards "No cover no salute" zone and were told the story of the world's most dangerous hot dog stand.

The American Legion Post 130 on Oak Street in Falls Church City charters Troop 349. The Troop was created by three Falls Church City residents; Scout Master, Tony Uises, Assistant Scout Master, James Custer, and Committee Chair Steven Valley to meet the growing need for Scout Troops in Falls Church City. In March of this year the National Capital Area Council of Boy Scouts (NCAC), issued a plea for help in supporting the growing number of graduating cub scouts in the area. Troop 349 rose to the occasion and opened its doors on March 21<sup>st</sup> to help house this growing need.

Troop 349 has over 19 active members and is looking to help the NCAC in any way it can as this renaissance in scouting begins to take hold. In its first three months of existence, Troop 349 has been to Quantico, Gettysburg, visited the Pentagon and the Sec. of the Army, and held a very successful Yard Sale fund raiser with some of the items being donated to charity and the homeless. In the future, Troop 349 plans to work with the Legion Post to offer support to the many city residents who served our country in times of war.

**ABOUT TROOP 349:** The Troop is open to any boy between the ages of 12 and 18, who has graduated from the fourth grade, and/or has received his arrow of light award. Boys desiring to join the troop are welcome at any time to attend a meeting and present themselves to the Scout Master for admission. Troop 349 meets every Tuesday evening at 7 PM between September and June at the American Legion Hall on Oak St. The troop web site contains more information about joining and what boy scouts is all about. Go to [www.troop349.us](http://www.troop349.us) and click on downloads to view the scout handbook and primer.

**- MORE ON NEXT PAGE -**



**Front Row (kneeling) L to R:** Timothy Gilmour - *Cub Scout Pack 657*, Nick Roberson, Andrew Skomra, Evan Gorman, Preston Custer. **Back Row (Standing) L to R:** Matthew Valley, US Air Force Honor Guard, Truman Custer, Ian Griffin, Jack Ulses, Jonathan Gilmour, Sec. of the Army Hon, Pete Geren, Owen Miller, James Coppack, Noah Dana, Davis Hagigh, Neil Tomson, US Army Honor Guard



Senior Patrol Leader Jack Ulses presenting Sec. Garinin with Troop 349 mementos of their visit, while family and Troop members look on.

**- END -**