

Telstar Times

TELSTAR INTERNATIONAL SCOUT GROUP · LUXEMBOURG · WWW.TELSTAR.LU

★ SUMMER 2026 ★



One big Telstar family, together at camp

Inside: a record awards season · 503 Explorer nights away · a real Enigma machine · a fire engine · our new home · and a packed summer of camps!

From the Top

Hello from our new Chair

Dear Telstar families, it is a real privilege to write to you having been voted in as Chair at the AGM on 9th June. On behalf of the whole group, I want to pay tribute to **Paul Dunn**, who steps down after steering Telstar through our 50th anniversary, our registration as a Luxembourg A.s.b.l. and the journey towards our wonderful new home. On behalf of everyone at Telstar, thank you, Paul, for your years of dedication and service.

2025–26 showed once again what makes Telstar special: a vibrant, multinational group linked with both FNEL and British Scouting Overseas. Our sections are thriving, Mérite Jeunesse numbers are near record levels, and our new premises, kindly provided by the Ville de Luxembourg, are in the final stages of completion. See you around the campfire!

Yours in Scouting,
Julien Rawle, Chair, Telstar A.s.b.l.

Hello from our Group Lead Volunteer

It is clear from the section reports that Telstar is flourishing, with all sections full, providing exciting and challenging activities for our young people. This success comes with its challenges, and the group needs help in a number of areas to keep growing and offering quality programmes.

A warm welcome to **Lynn Frank**, who takes on the Explorer Lead Volunteer role as Margret returns to Iceland. My focus for the year ahead is simple: support our volunteers, grow the leadership team so every section has the qualified leaders it needs, and get our new home ready. If you think you have the skills and time to help, please let us know. We'd love to hear from you.

Yours in Scouting,
Francis Marso, Group Lead Volunteer



Mérite Jeunesse awards from the Grand-Ducal family



Out and about, whatever the weather



Beavers

6-8 YEARS · THE COLONY

19

BUSY BEAVERS

16

BEAVERS (+ BAILEY!) AT FAMILY CAMP

9

SWIMMING UP TO CUBS IN SEPTEMBER

Our Beavers earned the **Air Activities, Swimming, Navigator, Snow Sports and Emergency Aid** staged badges, worked through their Adventure, Teamwork, Skills and World Challenge badges, and still found time for Gardener, Cycling, Global Issues and more. Jumpers are officially running out of space.

The year took the Colony swimming at Les Thermes, ice skating at the Kinnekswiss Christmas market, navigating at the Kaltreis playground, orienteering in Parc Coque and cycling in Mamer. Back home at FNEL: open-fire marshmallows and pitta-pocket pizzas (“mostly successful”). And when one of our Young Leaders, who moonlights as a volunteer firefighter, brought his kit along, the shiny silver helmet was the accessory of the season.

Nine Beavers swim up to Cubs in September, following five who made the move in February. Good luck, everyone! A special thank you, too, for a wonderfully generous birthday collection from Beaver parents, which went towards a 3D printer, now something of an obsession of our section leader, with hours spent printing crowns, sword handles and bars of “Really real Gold” (the filament is a plant-starch bioplastic, so it’s biodegradable too!).

Huge thanks to our seven leaders and four Explorer Young Leaders for another brilliant Beaving year, and very warm wishes for a speedy recovery to Sonja, whose first aid instruction and friendly presence have left a real gap.



Sixteen Beavers (plus Bailey!) at Family Camp



The famous shiny helmet



Cubs

8-10½ YEARS · MOWGLI & BALOO PACKS

Mowgli pack · 24 Cubs · 6 Chief Scout's Silver Awards

What a year to be a Cub: a **real fire engine** came to visit for the Fire Safety badge, a litter pick at the Strassen recycling centre ticked off the World Challenge, and the pack fitted in Halloween treats, Christmas cookie decorating, a night hike, winter swimming, martial arts, athletics and baking with Kitchen Chef Robert (thank you, Robert!). The undisputed highlight? The long-awaited trip to the **Diekirch Military History Museum**, complete with a train ride, a genuine Enigma machine and lots of fun with WW2-era communication.

Six Cubs receive their **Chief Scout's Silver Award** this year. Thank you to leaders Tom, Jakub, Kira, Martina, Faye and Jesse, and Young Leaders Robert, Thomas, Barbora and Henrietta!



Mowgli Cubs supporting their summit



Tanks for the memories, Diekirch!

Baloo pack · 17 Cubs · 2 Silver Awards · 4 moving up to Scouts

What a year to be a Cub! Baloo Cubs explored communication and inclusion through sign language activities, learned about the Red Cross and mental wellbeing, practised navigation skills, celebrated the 110th birthday of Cubs, and took part in science experiments, athletics and gardening activities. The pack also enjoyed creative and cultural sessions, including Lichtmëssdag lanterns, an Italian-themed International Badge evening, Easter treasure hunts, camp preparation and plenty of outdoor games and teamwork challenges.

Highlights of the year included the live Monopoly challenge across Luxembourg City, and rebuilding the Six system with new Sixers, Seconders and opportunities for Cubs to take more responsibility. Two Cubs receive their Chief Scout's Silver Award this term. Thank you to leaders Alexandra, Stefania, Ruth, Aaron, MJ and Anselmo, and to Young Leaders Raisa, Chiara, Katy, Anastasia, Joe and Thomas for helping make the year possible.



Scouts

10½-14 YEARS · APOLLO & GEMINI TROOPS

70

SCOUTS ACROSS TWO TROOPS

10

LEADERS

5

CAMPS THIS YEAR

Led by Alexander Gunn (Apollo) and Patricia Suárez (Gemini) with a brilliant leader team, the troops powered through knotting, backwoods cooking, shelter building, pole construction, orienteering, map reading, survival skills, and advanced cooking. Special-session heroes: **Nick & Kate** (Touch Rugby), **Tony** (orienteering), **Luis** (survival skills) and **Mark** (backwoods cooking).

Camps came thick and fast: PL/APL camps, Group Camp, Winter Camp, District Camp and summer camp to round off the year. The recent **PL/APL forum was outstanding**: the next generation of Patrol Leaders chosen after impressively mature discussions. Young Leaders from Explorers joined Scout sessions for the first time, and their support has been invaluable. The **Food from Around the World** evening was a delicious celebration of all the cultures that make up Telstar.

Most Scouts moving up to Explorers this summer are expected to do so with their **Gold Award**, a fantastic achievement.



Campfire circle at summer camp



Kayaking on the river



Backwoods cooking in action



Explorers

14-18 YEARS

56

EXPLORERS

503

NIGHTS AWAY!

21

MÉRITE AWARDS IN MARCH

19

ACTIVE YOUNG LEADERS

The Explorers clocked up an extraordinary **503 Nights Away** this year, nearly nine each, including Winter Camp, District Camp, Intercamp, and an Indoor Camp at Néihäischen with the Brussels Explorers. With FNEL space available only six times this year, a heartfelt thank you to **Les Aigles, Les Lions Blue and HoGa** for hosting us. Alongside first aid, cooking, pioneering, navigating and knife & axe handling, the unit picked up new skills too, including Lacrosse, crafting and bike maintenance, and gave back by running Telstar Got Talent, performing in the Fakelzuch, teaching the Scouts Touch Rugby and guiding Swedish scouts around the city.

Mérite Jeunesse – Duke of Edinburgh Award (led by Nicola Laurent and Clare Dunn): 21 Telstar Explorers received their awards **from members of the Grand-Ducal family** in March: four Gold, two Silver and 15 Bronze, plus four more via school. Expeditions reached North-East Luxembourg (Bronze) and the Vosges (Silver), with the Gold expedition heading to **Slovenia in mid-July**. Beyond Mérite, three Explorers earned their **Diamond Awards**, and two former Explorers are working towards their King's Scout Award with Margret as mentor. A refreshed Explorer programme launches in autumn 2026.

Young Leaders Scheme (led by Clare Dunn and Lynn Frank): a full YL Camp saw 17 Explorers finish their training, with 19 active Young Leaders in all, and for the first time Explorers supported Beavers, Cubs and Scouts in the same year, with four older Explorers serving as YLs with the Scout sections.

“It has been a very pleasant ride. B-R-A-V-O.”

Margret, signing off after three years leading the Explorers



Meeting Swedish Scouts over the Easter holidays



Carrying the torch at the Fakelzuch on National Day



On the trail



The Jamboree team planning their fundraising

Save the date: World Scout Jamboree fundraising

The 18 Jamboree participants will be holding a second-hand book, games and good-quality camping equipment sale on **Saturday 21 November, 12 to 6pm at FNEL**, followed by a **Bingo Night** in the evening. Donations for the sale and prizes for the Bingo Night would be very welcome.

Camp Spotlight

District Camp

Once again the marquee event of the year! Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, and Explorers from across the BSO Northern Europe District came together, and Telstar turned out in force across every section. The weekend delivered everything a camp should: great food, warm weather, new friendships, and a respectable amount of mud. For many of our youngest Beavers it was a first taste of camping with the wider Scouting family, and they did us proud. Thank you to every leader, parent helper and Young Leader who made it happen!



Field-testing the inflatable sofa



Gathered round the campfire at camp

Scout Summer Water Camp

Scout Summer Camp was a fantastic adventure for all 32 scouts. They cooked paella on multiple stoves, battled for the flag in an epic water-gun showdown, paddled up the River Sûre by kayak, and built countless campfires to spend their evenings around. With the weather on their side, the scouts enjoyed another unforgettable weekend of outdoor adventure and friendship.



Ready to paddle the River Sûre



Paella on the stoves

Camps on the Horizon

Here's what's coming up for Telstar Scouts, Explorers and families. Dates and places are filling fast, so speak to your section leaders to book a spot, and watch out for invitations landing soon!

Camp	When	Who	Notes
Eclipse Camp, Spain	9–15 Aug 2026	Scouts & Explorers	24 places confirmed. Approx. €550. Leaders sorted, ready to go!
Family Camp	2–4 Oct 2026	All sections + Beaver & Cub families	A relaxed weekend for the whole Telstar family.
Kandersteg Winter Camp, Switzerland	6–13 Feb 2027	Explorers	Max. 22 places. Approx. €1100. February Lux holidays.
Easter Camp: Moravia & Tayathal, Kapraluv Mlyn	26 Mar – 2 Apr 2027	Scouts & Explorers	Planned for max 14 (so we can travel by van). Easter Lux holidays.
Intercamp, Merksplas, Belgium	14–17 May 2027	Scouts & Explorers	Approx. €150. BSO Prague joining us with 14 young people + 4 leaders.
Haarlem Jamborette	24 Jul – 4 Aug 2027	Scouts & Explorers	3 contingent places available. A huge event with 640 young people and 100 leaders. Organised by BSO Prague.
World Scout Jamboree, Poland	30 Jul – 8 Aug 2027	Scouts & Explorers	Near Gdansk, with the Luxembourgish Contingent (21 YP, 3 IST, 1 CMT). Approx. €2100. Waiting list open. Bus from Luxembourg.

For information on any camp, contact camps@telstar.lu. Looking further ahead, Explorers and Scouts: we'd love to hear which camps you'd like to do in 2028. International camps are usually booked around a year in advance, so the sooner you share your ideas, the better the chance of making them happen.

Could you help at an event?

As with all our events, we're very glad of help and support before, during and after. If you can lend a hand, please get in touch with Nadia Farcas (nadia.farcas@gmail.com). Every extra pair of hands makes a difference!

AGM 2026: The Headlines

Telstar's Annual General Meeting took place on 9 June 2026. Here's what you need to know.

Finances

The Trustee Board kept Telstar safe, compliant and financially healthy all year, with ongoing compliance under both Luxembourg and UK charitable legislation. The Quiz Night and the 50th Anniversary BBQ brought the community together and raised vital funds for the group.

New Faces & Changing Roles

- **Julien Rawle** was voted in as the new Chair at the AGM, as Paul Dunn steps down
- **Lynn Frank** takes on the **Explorer Lead Volunteer** role as Margret returns to Iceland
- **Paul Holmes** steps down as Events Treasurer before the end of 2026, and a new volunteer is needed
- Wanted: a new **Cub section leader**, and extra hands across every section

Challenge #1: Leaders, leaders, leaders

Recruiting leaders is a never-ending challenge, and with around **70 young people on our waiting list**, section sizes are limited only by the number of qualified adults we have. No experience needed: full training, great company and guaranteed campfire privileges.

Interested in finding out more? Get in touch with our Group Lead Volunteer Francis Marso, glv@telstar.lu

Challenge #2: The new home

The move to our new home in Luxembourg-Hamm is behind schedule, so we're lining up alternative meeting venues from September 2026. Thank you for your patience, and to **Les Aigles, Les Lions Blue and HoGa** for hosting our sections this year. Work also continues on harmonising our IT tools (OSM, Microsoft 365) so the right info reaches the right people.

Thank You & Fond Farewells

Telstar runs entirely on volunteers, around 260 Scouts and adults strong. Every badge, hike and marshmallow happens because someone gives their time freely. To every leader, Young Leader, trustee, parent rep and helper: **thank you!** We're also delighted that **Beverley Atkinson**, having handed over the Group Lead Volunteer role after a fantastic job through a year of big changes, now takes on the role of Training Leader, putting her long experience with Telstar to great use. This year we say a special goodbye to people who have given Telstar so much:

Paul Dunn steps down as Chair after guiding Telstar through the 50th anniversary, A.s.b.l. registration and the new home project, though he'll still be around. Thank you for everything, Paul.

Paul Holmes steps down as Events Treasurer after years of behind-the-scenes magic.

Margret Gylfadottir returns to Iceland after three years leading the Explorers. B-R-A-V-O right back at you, Margret!

Joanne Bywood leaves the Explorer team after years of service (and faithful guardianship of the badge stock).

Hayley Montague, Loic Khelafa & Richard Todd, thank you for years of dedication to the Explorers.

Daniel Latev & Giorgio Benali, thank you for your service to the Scout troops.

Our five departing Beaver leaders, moving on as their Beavers swim up. The Colony salutes you!

Alexandra Czapiewska leaves the Cub section and takes on leading the coordination of camps.

Could you be one of us?

Around 70 young people are waiting to join Telstar, and the only thing standing between them and the adventure is adult volunteers. An hour a month or an evening a week: there's a place for you. Volunteering.

It's **#GoodForYou**.

Get in touch → www.telstar.lu

Telstar International Scout Group A.s.b.l. · Luxembourg · Member of FNEL & British Scouting Overseas

Here's to the next 50 years of friendship, adventure, and a whole lot of Scouting spirit!