

Taking part in inauguration history

Many area residents took an active role in the inauguration festivities last week in Washington, D.C., capturing their own pieces of history. Here are a few of their stories:

'The boys did amazing work'

Eight boys and two leaders from Olney-based Boy Scout Troop 264 served as volunteers for the inauguration festivities.

"The boys did amazing work," Assistant Scoutmaster Bob Irvin said. "They dealt with cold weather, huge crowds and a very long day and really represented Troop 264 and the Olney community very well handling the responsibilities they were given."

The group, selected from thousands of scouts that applied, was stationed in front of the Smithsonian Castle and was asked to hand out American flags and offer assistance to the crowds of people who filled the Mall.

"You could see the results the work of our Scouts, as well as others, by the photos of the blizzard of flags waving in the air," Irvin said.

Irvin said they ran into a few snags, but in living by the Boy Scout motto of "Be Prepared," the scouts dealt with the changes quite well.

Gerad Sherman, 16, of Silver Spring said that despite the cold, it was a lot of fun, although very long. They left Olney at 2 a.m. and arrived home that evening after dark.

Sherman said that he and his fellow Scouts were a little frustrated by the amount of trash left by the crowds and spent time cleaning up an area that was about 30 yards in diameter, although they had not been asked to do so.

"As Boy Scouts, we know to 'leave no trace,' so it was sad to see a ton of trash everywhere," he said. Sherman said participating in the inauguration was amazing and something that he and his fellow scouts will remember for the rest of their lives.

— TERRI HOGAN

'It was worth it'

Rockville High School senior Polly Ingram said she will never forget being 200 feet away from Tom Hanks and other celebrities during the Jan. 18 opening ceremony for President Barack Obama's inauguration.

"It was fantastic, it was amazing," the 17-year-old Rockville resident said. "I was really close to the stage, which was really cool."

Ingram, who serves as associate editor of Rockville High's student newspaper, *The Rampage*, scored a press pass to the opening festivities, putting her shoulder to shoulder with professional journalists.

"My favorite part was getting to be there with the other journalists," she said. "I got some amazing pictures."

Hanks provided her favorite speech and Garth Brooks' cover of the Don McLean classic "American Pie" got her tapping her toes.

The morning of the inauguration, Ingram said she and five other *Rampage* staff members left around 3 a.m. from the Twinbrook Metro station in Rockville to cover the Inauguration Day festivities.

"When we got into D.C., there were already hundreds of thousands of people there," she said. "It was insanely crowded."



PHOTO COURTESY OF BOY SCOUT TROOP 264

Scouts and leaders from Troop 264 in Olney head toward Washington, D.C., to take part in the inauguration of President Barack Obama.

The group was able to stake out a spot on 4th Street, but eventually ended up watching the event from a café in Georgetown because they could not see anything. She added that two of the staff had gotten press passes for the swearing-in ceremony, but they were turned away because the press pit was too crowded.

Despite the colds and the crowds, Ingram said she would do it all over again if given the choice.

"For Barack Obama it was worth it to go down there and see that," she said.

— MELISSA M. BRACHFELD

'It was an amazing experience'

Not many people got within arm's length of President Barack Obama during the inauguration ceremonies on Jan. 20, but Garrett Quinn did.

Quinn, 27, a Montgomery College graduate, was part of the 24-strong NBC camera pool covering the inauguration.

"When the politicians were walking down the steps, that was my shot," Quinn said.

He also got to be in the room when President George W. Bush and President Obama signed the official documents transferring power after the swearing-in ceremony.

"It was kind of interesting to hear [Bush] just talking, being himself," Quinn said. "He was joking around."

The Columbia resident said the atmosphere among most people at the Capitol was amiable.

"Minus a couple of the security guards, everyone there was very friendly," he said. "It was really low-key. It was more like hanging out with friends."

Quinn studied television and radio at Montgomery College, graduating in the spring of 2007. Now he films Washington Wizards basketball games and other sporting events.

Quinn said he got the job filming the inauguration through a friend who had filmed past inaugurations.

After being finger-printed and vetted, he was hired.

He said some of Obama's security detail told him they could tell how nervous the new president was simply by his body language.

"I guess they had been around him so much they could just tell," he said. "It was an amazing experience."

— NATHAN CARRICK

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