

NOW & Then

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35 Years in Texas

It is hard to believe that three and a half decades have passed since the Boy Scouts of America took a major and bold step in its long and successful history, moving the national office from North Brunswick, N.J., to Irving, Texas.

It may also be surprising to some that 2014 marks the longest span of years that the office has been in the same facility.



The first BSA national office opened on June 1, 1910, in one small room at the New York City 28th Street YMCA. The first managing secretary (precursor to the Chief Scout Executive) was John Alexander, a YMCA administrator from Philadelphia. James E. West was hired to lead the fledgling Scout movement in the fall of 1910, and a new BSA office opened in the Toy Center building at 200 Fifth Ave. on January 2, 1911, with seven employees. That was its home until another move in 1927, 7 miles north across the East River to a rented space at 2 Park Ave., where the office remained for nearly three decades. During those years Scouting experienced significant growth, and by the early 1950s it was determined that new, larger facilities were required. The location would need to be no more than an hour from New York City and on a mainline railroad for staff travel and supply support operations.

One hundred-plus acres of wooded property were purchased at the junction of U.S. Route 1 and U.S. Route 130 in North Brunswick, N.J., and a two-story complex was constructed to house the national administration and supply warehouse needs. It opened in 1954, during the tenure of Chief Scout Executive Arthur A. Schuck.

As Scouting moved into the 1970s, changing needs demanded more efficient operation and program delivery support to provide Scouting to the youth of our nation. It became abundantly evident that some new and bold action was required. As a result, an extensive study and nationwide search was conducted to find a more centralized location with adequate, long-term resources. Irving, Texas, was selected, and the transition process began.



Moving the national office halfway across the United States proved to be the biggest and most important project in the history of the movement. It called for a lot of detailed planning, including leasing a temporary office building at 1425 W. Pioneer Drive in Irving for departments that needed to be moved before the permanent space could be occupied.

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BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

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One major issue was to physically transfer the large computer system from the New Jersey site to its new home. Allen Mossman, then director of council management systems, became the first member of the national staff to make the move to Texas when he was chosen to coordinate the computer system relocation and manage the temporary office.

The move to the four-story, 180,000-square-foot building at 1325 W. Walnut Hill Lane happened in the fall of 1979 when James L.

Tarr was Chief Scout Executive. In the 35 years since then, the Texas location has met its intended objective and has indeed served the movement very well.

We can take pride in our “home office” and the large, dedicated team there that strives daily to support local councils and the best interests of the movement. Through their work, lives are changed and millions of youth have experienced the sacred values of the Scout Oath and Law.

Journey to Excellence

Scouting has always sought to provide the highest quality program possible and make it available to every youth who wants to be a member of the Boy Scouts of America. The journey to achieve that objective continues.

Scouting’s Journey to Excellence, launched in 2011, is the BSA’s latest council performance recognition program designed to encourage and reward success and to measure the performance of our units, districts, and councils. It is meant to encourage excellence in serving members at all levels of the BSA. In Scout jargon, you may hear it referred to as “JTE.”

JTE is not based only on membership numbers. Membership experience, finance, program, leadership, and unit service are

also key issues of focus. It is a framework for planning and a method of evaluation and guidance in critical areas where we might do better in performance. Potential problem areas are identified, and units, districts, and councils are recognized for top-notch Scouting programs.

Through the Journey to Excellence program, many positive things are happening and exciting progress is being made. We’ll share more in future issues of *Now & Then*.

Scouting still happens, one person at a time, through a quality experience that changes lives!



Retirement Adventure

The Fish Whisperer

Dean Ertel grew up in Titusville, N.J. He served four years in the Air Force, used the GI Bill to go to college, and graduated from Southern Illinois University with a degree in zoology. His first job after graduation was to teach the Fishing merit badge at Pine Ridge Scout Reservation in Southern Illinois. After that, he had a three-month stint of trying to sell Kirby vacuum cleaners.

Dean's career as a BSA professional began in 1972 and spanned 40 years. He started as a district executive in Columbia, Mo., and later served as a Scout executive in the MoKan Area Council in Joplin, Mo.; the Northern Lights Council in Fargo, N.D.; and the Ozark Trails Council in Springfield, Mo.

He says he owes a special thanks to his first Scout executive, Darwyn Van Gorp, and Field Director Wiley Tracy for taking a chance on a tall, skinny country kid in 1972. Other important people in his life include Mary, his first wife and soul mate who passed away in 1989; his present wife and best friend, Janice; his children, Ben, Jenny, and Nathan; and three grandchildren.



State University and has sold some of his work. He mostly paints landscapes and places where he has fished or dreams about fishing. Dean also is active in Rotary and still plays in the annual fundraising basketball game . . . even at his maturing age!

Dean would like to write a book about what the “ol’ fish whisperer” has experienced over a 40-year BSA career.

Or to tell his story about the big black bear in Minnesota that tried to run him down and have him for lunch. And how the bear also tore up the council-leased car. Or maybe he could tell about the morning he was on his way to work and saw a red-tailed hawk in the road. He thought it was dead and put it in a box. An hour later his co-workers were surprised when the hawk woke up and started flying all over the Joplin Scout office.

Another tale could be about the time when Scouts at Pine Ridge Scout Reservation in Illinois thought he was a vampire. Fortunately, he avoided the masses hunting for the vampire with their stakes. There are hundreds of such stories.

There is no question that Dean believes retirement should be about doing all the things you enjoy doing and experiencing new adventures that are fun and exciting.



Dean claims to be a fanatical fisherman and has fished in many states across the country. His favorite lures are Rooster Tail spinners.

His second hobby is painting. He has taken two advanced painting classes at Missouri

Your Questions and Comments



Question

For years our BSA retirement was funded at 130 percent. Reports now say it is funded at 88 percent. Our government is keeping interest rates low to make their borrowing less expensive. We believe this is the reason for the change. Should we be concerned about retirement payments in the future?

Leo C. Lee, 183rd National Training School

Answer

Thanks, Leo. I visited with the experts in the Human Resources Department and shared your concern. Here are the comments:

In 1938, the Boy Scouts of America formalized its retirement program into what is known today as the Boy Scouts of America Retirement Plan for Employees, which is the defined benefit pension plan that provides a lifetime annuity benefit for covered employees of the BSA.

The Retirement Plan has undergone limited changes in the past years as new regulations, including the Pension Protection Act of 2006 (PPA) and guidance from the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, sought to provide additional levels of protection and oversight for defined benefit plans. PPA requires all employers who sponsor a defined benefit plan to send out an Annual Funding Notice to all plan participants. BSA retirees received this notice in May 2014.

The notice includes the Funding Target Attainment Percentage, which tells participants how close our plan is to being fully funded for current pension liabilities. It includes the amount of money held in trust plus the interest earned on that money compared

to our current and future pension liabilities. Depending on the interest rate used to calculate those earnings, the plan's funded ratio may vary.

This year's notice reflected an increase in plan liabilities, which reduced the funding target attainment percentage to 88.29 percent in 2013. In general, the higher the percentage the better-funded the plan will be. However, federal regulations require the BSA to use specific interest rates for the purpose of performing this valuation; it's not quite as simple as looking at the account balances and benefits at a given point in time. Current bond interest rates remain at historically low levels, which reduces earnings on our current assets and would suggest higher current assets are needed to meet future liabilities.

Even though estimated future pension payments to retirees have changed very little in the past several years, the dollar amount needed to fund them (using the new valuation method directed by PPA) has increased substantially. If the BSA were to use a more realistic interest rate that is consistent with our average investment return for the last several years (around 7 percent) to value our current plan liability, the resulting funding level would be 98 percent. Because of this, in the latest plan valuation, the actuary for the Retirement Plan submitted a recommendation to the Executive Board that the current contribution schedule is appropriate to fund the benefits payable from the plan.

The future cannot be predicted with any degree of certainty, but the plan's assets are well diversified and have strong oversight by the BSA's volunteer committees. Assets in the plan are held in trust and can only be used to pay retirement benefits; the benefits covered employees have accrued are considered part of the BSA Retirement Plan and cannot be taken by general creditors of the BSA. Additionally, while the BSA is fully confident the BSA Retirement Plan is well positioned to fulfill its promise to pay the benefits earned by covered employees and retirees, the BSA Retirement Plan is also "insured" by paying premiums to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, which helps to protect our pension benefits.

Have a question? Have a concern?
Want information?
Send your comments to ASK ALLEN
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Email: bsanowandthen@gmail.com



Allen Mossman is a retired BSA professional with more than 75 years of Scouting in his background. He retired with 30 years of active service on the national executive staff and serves as the editor of *Now & Then*.

Proud Moments

Retirees Receive Distinguished Eagle Scout Award

Three retired BSA professionals have been recognized recently with the highest and most prestigious honor the National Eagle Scout Association can bestow. The citations used in the recognition for two of them are presented below. The third recipient, Jim Chandler, died shortly after receiving the award, after a long and courageous battle with cancer. Jim was well known throughout the BSA as a member of the national executive staff. He achieved great success during his lifetime as a leader in his profession, church, and community.

The Distinguished Eagle Scout Award is presented and administered by the National Eagle Scout Association upon selection and approval of the Distinguished Eagle Scout Committee and the NESA Board of Regents. Nominations are submitted by the local council where the Eagle Scout resides.

The award is granted to Eagle Scouts who, within a minimum of 25 years after receiving the Eagle Scout Award, have distinguished themselves in their life work and have shared their talents as volunteers in their communities. Nominations cannot be made for posthumous awards.

Don Wilson, 255th National Training School

“As a member of the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 3—Santa Barbara, CA, on October 8, 1956, Don received the Eagle Scout Award. He has achieved distinction as a professional Scouter. His distinguished service to the BSA began in 1963 holding several positions in local councils including Marin County, Los Angeles Area,



Don Wilson

and Great Alaska (Anchorage). He served on the national staff at Philmont (1966–1972) as business services director, as the interim jamboree and jamboree director for the 1997, 2001, and 2005 national Scout jamborees, and as jamboree administrator for world Scout jamborees in Chile (1998–1999) and Thailand (2002–2003). In addition to his civic and fraternal endeavors, he is the recipient of the Department of the Army Outstanding Civilian Service Medal.”

Larry Pritchard, National Executive Institute 7423

“Larry earned the Eagle Scout Award in 1969. He started a career as a BSA professional in 1973, serving as a district executive, camp director and program director; as the Scout Association of New Zealand executive officer, programme, including deputy jamboree director and national Venture director; and as a finance director, the Scout executive of four councils, and the 2010 and 2013 national Scout jamboree director. He also served on the staffs for the 2001 and 2005 national Scout jamborees, the 2011 World jamboree, and the 1978 Asia-Pacific jamboree; as a member and officer of numerous service clubs including five Rotary clubs; as the executive vice president of the National Youth Council of New Zealand; as vice president of the Illinois Spina Bifida Association; as a board member and the national president of P.R.A.Y. (Programs of Religious Activities with Youth); on hospital councils and church finance and parish councils; and as a Kentucky colonel. He is the recipient of the Vigil Honor, the Pro Deo et Patria Award, and the God and Service Award. Larry and his wife, Mary, have two sons who are Eagle Scouts.”



Larry Pritchard

Health and Well-Being

Study Shows Walking May Cut Health Risk in Older Men

Several months ago, an article in *HealthDay News* by Steven Reinberg indicated that older men may reduce their risk of stroke by taking a daily walk. And that walk doesn't need to be especially brisk, according to a British research study.

We thought it might be worthwhile and helpful to share some excerpts from the findings released in the article. It may give BSA retirees some useful ideas as we continue to age and seek to maintain and improve our health. It's good to take stock periodically of the decisions we're making in that area. See if these sound like preventive actions you want to pursue:

First, the study suggests that walking for an hour or two each day might lower the risk of stroke by as much as one-third, and walking three hours or more daily may cut the risk by two-thirds. "Stroke is a major cause of death and disability and it is important to find ways to prevent stroke, especially in older people who are at high risk," lead researcher Barbara Jefferis told *HealthDay*.

The study also notes that maintaining an active lifestyle—which, of course, includes walking—could protect against stroke. Just walking as you are shopping or running errands, taking a leisurely walk in a park,

or even walking around indoors can be important to your health.

It doesn't seem to matter how fast one walks. Just walking does the trick, regardless of pace.

In the article, Dr. Ralph Sacco, chairman of neurology at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, commented that this is yet another study confirming the benefits of exercise in regard to stroke prevention. "All forms of physical activity, including walking, can promote ideal [heart] health and reduce stroke risk," he said.

Finally, physical activity offers benefits for a wide range of mental and physical health outcomes, according to study author Jefferis. Each of us should aim "for 150 minutes per week of moderate physical activity, which includes walking at a brisk pace or light gardening, or 75 minutes per week of vigorous activities, such as jogging or tennis," she says. Besides the effect it can have in preventing strokes, such a regimen could also protect against heart disease and diabetes.

There is no question that maintaining health is critical to quality of life and enjoying the journey. It boils down to each person's decision and commitment to "keep myself physically strong, mentally awake. . . ." Sound familiar? Here's to your health!



Financial Well-Being

Planning Tips for Your 2014 Tax Return

Before we know it, 2014 tax reporting time will be here. For most of us, the biggest hassle will be pulling together all of the documentation to file our return. This will include data from the 2013 return, this year's W-2s and 1099s, receipts, and so on.

It's not too early to do some of this preparation. It could even save you some tax liability and possibly increase any refund you may have coming. If you really want to make tax season go smoothly, you may find it wise to set up your 2014 tax file now. The following information may be helpful.

Taxpayers over age 70½ are required to take minimum withdrawals from their IRAs each year. Failing to do so will subject you to one of the toughest penalties in the tax law: The IRS claims 50 percent of the amount that should have come out of the account. Your IRA custodian can help you determine the amount of the required payout each year.

Carefully maintain your medical expense records and itemize your deductions. The Affordable Care Act mandates that a medical expense tax deduction benefit can only be taken to the extent your expenses exceed 10 percent (up from 7.5 percent in 2013) of your adjusted 2014 gross income, or 7.5 percent if you're 65 or older.

The IRS allows deductions for modifications you make to your home for medical needs, such as adding a wheelchair ramp, lowering counters, widening a doorway, or installing hand controls for a car—as long as you deduct only the amount in excess of the value the changes add to your home or car. That amount can be included in your deductible for medical expenses.

In addition to transportation expenses getting to and from your doctor, you can deduct up to \$50 a night for lodging required if medical care takes you away from home overnight. The \$50 is per person, so if you are



Photo courtesy Shutterstock.com. ©Shutterstock/Mr Doornits

accompanying a dependent when that person travels for medical care, you should be able to deduct \$100 a day for yourself and the dependent.

Many Energy Efficiency tax credits that were available for home improvements expired at the end of 2013, including those for home heating and cooling systems, insulation, windows, and sealing. However, tax credits are available for homeowners who install alternative energy equipment. The credit equals 30 percent of what a homeowner spent on qualifying property like solar electric systems, solar hot water heaters, geothermal heat pumps, and wind turbines—including labor costs. There is no cap on this tax credit, which is available through 2016.

If you are considering making charitable contributions during the next few months, doing it before December 31 can reduce this year's taxable income. Also, in some cases, you can avoid capital gains taxes on appreciated securities by donating the securities directly to a qualified charity like the BSA. This has the potential of saving you significantly more on taxes than if you donated cash.

Note: The tips shared on this page are for information only, and should not be considered as tax advice.

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I joined Boy Scouts in 1946

I don't remember the exact year that *Boys' Life* magazine offered to match Scouts with pen pals in other countries, but it must have been before 1950. Anyway, I was a pen pal to a Scout from Holland. Fortunately, he could write in English so we wrote back and forth and continue writing today. In recent years, it has been by email.

My wife, Bea, is Dutch. Therefore, we planned a family vacation to the Netherlands and to my family roots in Scotland in 1979. We met my pen pal and his family for the first time, in their home, and had a wonderful time.

We met again during the world jamboree in Holland in 1995, and once more in 2004 at the conclusion of a European river trip. Scouting is strong in the Netherlands, and we were impressed with their jamboree operation. They had a fine national Scouting museum, and my pen pal was the curator.

Wow, more than 60 years of an international Scouting friendship. A rich and cherished life experience, just because I was a Scout!

Jim Stevenson
194th National Training School

BSA membership as of July 31, 2014

Cub Scouts	936,758
Boy Scouts	792,966
Venturers	134,775
Explorers	77,941
Total Youth	1,942,440
Grand Total Youth and Adults	2,836,637
Packs	39,546
Troops and Teams	44,066
Crews	14,373
Posts	4,344
Total units and Explorer posts	102,329
Learning for Life, Estimated Served	427,276
Local Councils	280

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