

## Holiday Greetings from the Chief



*Chief Scout Executive Mike Surbaugh with his wife, Lisa*

Each year during this special season our thoughts turn to family, friendships, peace, and renewed hope for the world in which we live. It is always a time to remember our many blessings and look forward to a fresh beginning for the coming New Year.

I welcome this opportunity for me and my wife, Lisa, to send warm and sincere holiday greetings to each and every member of our Scouting family. We wish a wonderful season filled with joy and abundant blessings for you, your family, and those you hold dear.

This is the season of gifts and thinking of others ... and I want to thank each of you for all the gifts of time and treasure you have given to make the Boy Scouts of America our nation's leading youth program. The Scouting program has unquestionably provided and continues to provide positive life experiences that form a lasting foundation to make crucial ethical and moral decisions based on the principles and values set forth in the Scout Oath and Law.

The world in which we live is rapidly changing—much different than the world of a century ago when the Boy Scouts of America

began. However, the need for what the Scout movement offers has never been greater. Especially in our nation!

Our changing society and new technology has produced a different youth today. Young people have new desires, demands, and life choices to make which will last a lifetime. Therefore it is of great importance that we find new and innovative approaches to deliver a revitalized program based on the unchanging values of the Scout Oath and Law. The program must take into account both the needs and desires of today's youth and the future of our nation.

Like many of you who have grown up in the movement, I am grateful for the positive impact that the Oath and Law have had on my life. And, I am committed to doing all that is in my power to provide the lasting values of our program to youth and adults. With your continued support, we can look forward to reenergized involvement throughout the movement, which will grow and sustain the Scouting program in new ways that appeal to young people.

Let us hope that the last several years of distraction are now behind us and we can redirect our focus to service and changing lives through a rich Scouting experience.

Our future is bright ... the need is great ... sacred values are firm ... and faith in the Boy Scouts of America is strong!

Together, we have a wonderful opportunity to give a gift for all seasons to the youth of our nation and the world.

May the spirit of peace, hope, love, and joy be the gift you treasure most now and in the coming New Year.



# Scouting Updates

## **100 Hours, 100 Days: 'It Starts with Us'**

Every member of the Scouting family, whether retired or active, would have felt proud, reinvigorated, and thrilled to be present and experience the National Order of the Arrow Conference (NOAC) celebrating and commemorating the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Order.

Since its beginning in 1915 at Treasure Island Scout Camp on the Delaware River, the Order has continued to serve as a key tool that retains and sustains participation in Scouting.

The Order has grown to a current membership of 170,000—plus members.

National OA conferences are unique in that they are totally developed and led by youth with the committed guidance and support of adult volunteers and two professional staff members. NOAC is an amazing opportunity to observe outstanding youth leadership in action.

In August, 15,000 Arrowmen came together to celebrate and reflect on the first 100 years of the Order and to launch the next century of service.

Michigan State University in Lansing, Michigan, was host to this once-in-a-lifetime happening. It was a sell-out event and the largest attended OA national conference in history.

The conference theme was “It Starts with Us.” This became the focus and foundation to challenge each Arrowman to reflect on creating a tomorrow of quality and sustainable Scouting experiences with personal action today.

All participants were challenged during this unique 100-hour period of fun, fellowship, and new experiences to not only reflect on the first 100 years’ heritage, but also to ask: What comes next? After NOAC, what will the first 100 days of the next century of OA brotherhood and service look like for each lodge and council?

Today’s youth love high-tech, and this conference was high-tech in every way from dynamic, action-loaded program to meaningful and inspiring theme shows with laser beams and pyrotechnics.

Excitement started upon arrival. At check-in, everyone received a device (seen at right) that enabled them to participate in a conference-wide electronic game called Spark. This game provided a creative way for conference participants to meet one another, make friends, and have fun.

Best of all, Spark allowed everyone to swap contact information so they could keep in touch after the conference via a computer data file in the device. That’s impressive stuff.

This NOAC was filled from start to finish with outstanding events and activities ranging from STEM Scouting and OA training sessions to zip lines, mountain bikes, scuba, physical games, and so much more. There is just not enough space to tell you all that happened, but maybe the pictures below can give you an idea!



## ***BSA Retirees Hold Fall Gathering at the Summit***

The mountains at the Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve in West Virginia were ablaze with spectacular color during a visit by retired BSA staff in October.

Thirty-five retirees and spouses from Florida, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Texas, and Virginia came together at the nearby Glade Springs Resort in Daniels, for a special opportunity to visit and tour the facilities at the Summit.

The evening before the on-site visit, former Chief Scout Executive Bob Mazzucca joined the group at an opening fellowship dinner. He shared his insight into how the Summit came into being.

Fort A.P. Hill in Virginia—where eight national Scout jamborees had been held since 1981—was no longer available, and the three national high-adventure bases were nearing their operational capacity. Additionally, \$40 million had been spent for infrastructure improvements over past jamborees on property that the movement could no longer use.

An extensive nationwide search eventually settled on the 10,600 acres in West Virginia, located within a day's drive for more than 60 percent of the U.S. population. In 2009 the Bechtel Foundation provided the largest single gift in BSA history to acquire the land, and the dream moved forward, setting the stage for a multipurpose, state-of-the-art BSA facility like no other.



*BSA retirees got together for a photo on top of the Summit.*

The Summit became the permanent jamboree home in 2013. The site now hosts our newest national high-adventure base with creative program innovations different from those at Philmont, Northern Tier, and the Florida Sea Base. The Summit is also home to a national Scout camp for older Scouts and Venturers.

Dan McCarthy, Summit Group director, personally welcomed the retirees on-site and presented an operations update and future development plans. Many things were learned:

- During the next five years, the Summit will host three jamborees, including the 24th world Scout jamboree in 2019.
- The Paul R. Christen High Adventure Base opened in 2014 and has had an annual attendance of close to 5,000.
- The James C. Justice National Scout Camp, which opened this year, focuses on advancement and merit badges, supporting local council program.
- Next year the John D. Tickle Training and Leadership Center will add yet another component to the Summit.
- Ground has just been broken for an exciting new welcome center along U.S. 19. Upon completion, it will provide parking for more than 12,000 vehicles.

During a tour of the Summit, everyone marveled at resources such as the award-winning, five-story Sustainability Treehouse, the CONSOL Energy Bridge, adventure sports venues, and—of course—the lakes and a breathtaking panoramic view from the top of the mountain.

It was a “wow” experience that provided insight and a better understanding of the crucial impact this innovative adventure and educational hub will have on thousands of lives for generations to come.

# Your Questions and Comments

## Question

*On page 2 of the fall issue you mention that BSA has had a continuing loss in youth membership that has occurred since 1972. Is that correct?*

John Maxwell, NEI 7501



children to acquire the types of values and virtues we teach in Scouting, and young people still want the kinds of life experiences that Scouting offers. And Scouters today are committed to understanding and meeting those needs.

## Answer

That is a great question, John. The answer is that there have been years with membership gains since 1972, but the net gains and losses during those decades have resulted in a smaller BSA membership today.

Gains have generally happened in years when the BSA launched new programs and initiatives to address the evolving interests of young people and families. One example was Venturing, which began in 1998. Another one, introduced in the early 1980s, was the Tiger rank that expanded the Cub Scout program to second grade. These and similar advances were due to worthy and commendable efforts by BSA volunteers and staff to deliver the promise of Scouting to more and more young people. However, in each case, an initial spike in membership was followed by registrations trending incrementally downward.

The fast pace of change in our world challenges every organization and business to understand and meet the needs of those they serve. Reviewing successful BSA programs and initiatives of the past may provide a useful context for volunteers and staff who are working just as diligently to deliver Scouting to the youth and parents of today.

Of course, the specific circumstances of the past and present differ a bit, but the essentials remain the same. Parents today still want their

## Question

*My question has to do with the Report to the Nation for 2014. I find it odd that there seems to have been no presentation to President Obama [because the reports] used to include a photograph of the youth members with the sitting U.S. president. During my many years at the national office, that report has always been to the president. May I ask why not this time?*

Audrey Clough, NEI 7315

## Answer

You are correct. In past years, our delegation for the Report to the Nation had the opportunity to meet with the president of the United States and present the formal report in the Oval Office at the White House. Unfortunately, due to the president's schedule, the delegation did not have the opportunity to be received and have a photo op in the Oval Office. Arrangements were made to present the formal report at another venue, and pictures of that occasion were not available when we went to press. Another important objective of the Report to the Nation activity is to meet with other cabinet members and key congressional and senate leadership, as well as the report to the president.

The presentation at Arlington National Cemetery shown in the picture was an important and moving moment for the delegation as they paid tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

Have a question? Have a concern? Want information?  
Send your comments to ASK ALLEN

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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*.

# Recent Happenings

## Fall Reunion Highlights



The Dunes Manor Hotel in Ocean City, Maryland was the location for the **Northeast Region Retiree Reunion** in late September. All of the guests had ocean-front rooms where they could listen to the peaceful sound of the Atlantic waves.

As usual, there was plenty of great fellowship and things to see and do including shopping, quiet strolls along the boardwalk, and afternoon tea for the ladies beside the piano in a relaxing setting overlooking the ocean. A group highlight was a bus tour to historic Snow Hill, Maryland, a small town chartered in 1686 and still home to 2,000 residents. While there, the retirees enjoyed a presentation in the town's one-room school house. In 2016, the group will gather on September 22–25 at the Hilton/Wilmington Christiana Hotel in Newark, Delaware for another time with old and new friends.

The **Western Region Retiree Reunion** was held at Philmont Scout Ranch. It was a nostalgic return to the deep roots of our Scouting heritage,



and the ranch was filled to capacity. Fun, fellowship, and happy times always abound when career Scouters get together,

and this was no exception: Everyone enjoyed the new Metcalf Station camping venue where summer trekkers get to experience laying rails and learning about U.S. railroad history. Other activities ranged from fly-fishing and shooting sports to tours of behind-the-scenes ranch operations, the famous Chase Ranch, Villa de Philmonte, and a day trip to Taos, New Mexico. Everyone had an outstanding time, and they are

all looking forward to September 19–21, 2016, when the reunion will be in Solvang, California in the Santa Ynez Valley.

The scenic Upper Peninsula of Michigan provided the perfect backdrop for the 2015 **Central Region Retiree Reunion** as 81 retirees and spouses gathered at the Holiday Inn in Marquette, Michigan. The weather turned out to be perfect with sunny skies and mild temperatures (a rare occurrence for early fall in this part of the country). Reunion highlights included a reception at Jim and Arlene Stone's



log home overlooking beautiful Lake Superior; boat tours along the Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore; visits to the Marquette

Regional History Center and the Michigan Iron Industry Museum; charter boat fishing for lake trout on Lake Superior; and last but not least, Da Yoopers Tourist Trap. Many attendees also sampled one of the Upper Peninsula's culinary treats, the “pasty”—a folded pastry filled with meat and vegetables. The next reunion will be at Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico, September 27–30, 2016.

## Now & Then Editor Receives Coveted Award

Allen Mossman was surprised and deeply honored to receive the Distinguished Eagle Scout award at the NOAC National Committee Dinner for his local and national service to the Scouting movement.



## Watch for the next issue of *Now & Then*

with a complete listing of 2016 reunions including dates, locations, and contact information. Put a reunion on your 2016 calendar “bucket list,” and make sure to attend.

# Health and Well-Being

## **Group Life Benefit Rate Change for 2016**

A necessary rate change in our Group Life Benefit program will take effect in 2016.

Several years ago, when MetLife became publicly traded on the stock market, the Boy Scouts of America received a number of MetLife stock shares. As a result the BSA was able to use funds from these shares to temporarily lessen the Group Life Benefit rates for 2014–2015. These funds are now exhausted and no longer available to subsidize rates. Beginning in 2016, the Group Life Benefit rate will return to the pre-subsidy rate of 2013.

You will receive specifics regarding your 2016 rate in the BSA Benefit Bulletin. If you have any questions or feedback related to this issue, contact the BSA Benefits Center at 1-800-444-4416.

## **Keeping Well ... October Through May**



The condition of one's immune system has a lot of impact on personal wellness. It is critical that you take steps to optimize your immune system, particularly during times of high risk for viruses and infections, including the current flu season.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that most people over the age of 6 months receive a yearly flu shot. The reason the vaccine is needed annually is because a person's immune system declines over time and because the active flu strains are different each year. There is always a small, limited chance of catching the influenza virus even though you received the shot, but it will still reduce the risk.

The flu season usually peaks in January and February. However, remember that the influenza virus is unpredictable and the seasons of danger may vary. The shots are first made available in early fall, but it isn't too late to get a shot even after Thanksgiving. The bottom line is that is very important for seniors and those with weak immune systems to get the annual inoculation.

If you are a caregiver, you must get a flu shot because catching the flu could prevent you from properly caring for someone else for several weeks. Be aware of symptoms associated with the flu, including headaches, coughing, and a runny nose. These often differ from common cold symptoms such as sneezing, a sore throat, and a stuffy nose.

Strengthen and support your body's immune system this winter. Eat well-balanced meals and consult your doctor or pharmacist about vitamins that may help to support your health. Drink six to eight glasses of water per day and consider reducing your caffeine intake. Make time in your schedule for exercise and seven to eight hours of sleep each night.

Take care of yourself this winter and have happy holidays!

# Financial Well-Being

## Year-End Tax Tips to Maximize 2016 Refunds

### Tip 1

Even though we are still in 2015, it may be wise to take an early look at your tax liability for the year. Make sure to get the full benefit of any deductions that you are entitled to take. For a lot of us, that involves making year-end financial gifts to charities. You must make these contributions before December 31 if you wish to take the tax benefit deduction for 2015.

You might also consider giving appreciated stock to a tax-exempt charity like your local BSA council. Normally, if you *sell* stock that has gone up in value, you will owe tax on the capital gains. However, if you *give away* that stock, you can deduct the full market value and not owe any tax.

Keep in mind that the process of making a charitable stock gift takes much longer than a simple cash gift, so you should get the ball rolling well before the end of the year. December is a great time to do a good deed that will mean a lot to a favorite charity. Plus it will give you a good feeling, and you can give yourself some great tax savings in the process.

### Tip 2

This is not exclusive to the end of the year, but we will mention it anyway. One smart tax tip that everyone should consider is to adjust their tax-withholding status to match their taxable income.

Did you know that we, as tax-paying Americans, are addicted to receiving a refund from the IRS? Records show that almost 80 percent of taxpayers get money back from the IRS. Allowing the federal government to hold money that belongs to you for extended periods of time is not wise. Why? Because that money is earning

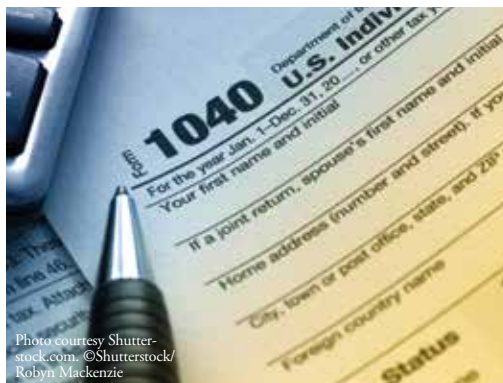


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no interest for you. Not adjusting your tax-withholding status allows the federal government to borrow your money for free.

Consider taking time to estimate the tax you might owe. Use the federal tax tables from the IRS to help you with the calculations, and don't forget your tax liability for Social Security or Medicare.

A rough estimate of your federal tax liability can help you make adjustments to minimize the amount you owe and, most importantly, to reduce the amount of money the federal government is keeping without paying you a single penny.

### Tip 3

If you are 70½ years of age and older, and have an IRA or a 401(k), be sure that you take the required minimum distribution (RMD) before the end of this year. Failure to do so will cost you a 50 percent penalty on the amount of the RMD. It is our understanding that, in addition, a tax will be due for the full amount of the RMD.

For further information, check with your financial advisor or the financial institution responsible for your investment.

# Prepared. For Life.®

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## Dukeman Named as New OA Director

Beginning in November, Matt Dukeman became the ninth national director of the Order in its 100-year history. He succeeds Clyde Mayer, who has served in that capacity since 1993 and is now retiring.



Dukeman has worked with Mayer as OA specialist since 2012. Matt has a rich Scouting experience both as a youth and adult leader. He is an Eagle Scout, a Vigil Member of the OA, and a recipient of the OA Distinguished Service Award.

Matt served earlier as a district executive and a successful council director of development. In 2012, he was selected to join the national staff to provide funding support for Project Arrow for the development of The Summit in West Virginia.

Scouting and the Order of the Arrow have been substantial and positive influences in his life. He says: "The Order of the Arrow is what really kept me in Scouting."

Congratulations to Matt as he assumes new and important career leadership responsibilities.

## BSA membership as of October 31, 2015

Cub Scouts	1,174,475
Boy Scouts	813,425
Venturers	131,134
Explorers	86,273
<b>Total Youth</b>	<b>2,205,307</b>
<b>Grand Total Youth and Adults</b>	<b>3,103,938</b>
Packs	38,714
Troops and Teams	43,533
Crews	13,887
Posts	4,345
<b>Total Units and Explorer Posts</b>	<b>100,479</b>
<b>Learning for Life, Estimated Served</b>	<b>429,888</b>
Local Councils	259

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You can find it at <http://scoutingwire.org/newsletters/now-then/>