

FOCUS ON PHOTOGRAPHY EDITION



Greg Crenshaw photo

- [Tools of the Trade](#)
- [Visual Storytelling Workshops](#)
- [Visual Storytelling](#)
- [Photography Merit Badge](#)
- [A Photographer's Life](#)
- [Going Wild with Photography](#)

Photography is a great way to tell stories, and the BSA has a terrific story to tell. Cameras go everywhere with Scouts these days. Use yours to share the Scouting experience with friends, family, other Scouts, and those who might be inspired to join the adventure of the BSA.



TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Cameras and Scouting have been together since the organization's earliest days. The first photograph in a BSA publication was a 1911 Handbook advertisement for an easy-to-use camera called the Brownie:



MADE WITH A BROWNIE CAMERA.

The Camera for Field Service:

BROWNIE

Easy to carry on the march; simple to operate. Loads in daylight with Kodak Film Cartridges. Ideal for the equipment of every detachment of Boy Scouts. Negatives can be easily developed in the field—No dark-room required.

Write for the Book of the Brownies.

EASTMAN KODAK CO., Rochester, N. Y.

1911 Boy Scout Handbook Advertisement

By the 1930s, official BSA cameras included this folding Kodak model with the Scout emblem etched on the metal case:



1930s Boy Scout Kodak

Two decades later, Scouts could choose between a simple film camera and a more advanced camera that burned a large flash bulb with each low-light exposure.



Official 620 Camera-1950s



Scout 120 Flash Camera -1950s

There aren't any official BSA cameras today, but the tools for taking photographs are within reach of most Scouts. With easy-to-use digital technology, most modern cameras and cell phones require no film and give everyone a chance to take good pictures.

GoPro®

A big advance in technology is the GoPro® line of video cameras. Available from ScoutStuff.org, a GoPro® camera can be strapped onto a helmet or worn on a chest harness to record a run down a ski slope, a few minutes of a bicycling adventure, a hike in the woods, dropping into a skateboard park, and hundreds of other action-packed activities.



GoPro® HERO3 Black Edition Digital Camera

VISUAL STORYTELLING

Thinking ahead can help you get the shots you need to share the story of a Scouting adventure. For example, a Scout troop trekking at Philmont might have climbing Baldy Mountain as a goal. Your photo story could begin with a picture showing the size and beauty of the 12,000-foot mountain:



Baldy climb photos by Robert Birkby

Images of Scouts and leaders pulling gear off a bus can show the start of something big.



Illustrate the steps of a story. Here, a Philmont ranger conducts a shakedown to help a crew decide what to carry and what to leave behind. Next, she discusses the route to reach Baldy.



Watch for interesting details. The Philmont brand drawn on her leg tells a lot about the ranger wearing it.



Keep an eye out for humor, too. Showing the crew on the trail advances the timeline of the story. The speed limit sign can bring a smile to viewers.



Don't put your camera away when the weather turns bad. Protect it from the elements, but catch photos in rain, snow, and other less than ideal conditions to show your subjects in new ways.



Scenes of everyday activities can carry much of a story's weight. Cooking a Philmont meal will interest viewers by showing how it is done. The intensity of the cooks can stir meaning into the message.



Try different camera angles. Shoot low, climb up and shoot from above, go for close ups. Photos of signs along the way will keep your story geographically grounded.



As a story unfolds, remind your audience of the goal. Here, Scouts climbing Baldy are nearing the final ascent to the summit.



Share evidence of people reacting to challenges. When it comes to weariness on the trail, one picture really can be worth a thousand words.



Unusual situations will also energize visual storytelling. Scouts looking through the Baldy Town telescope see the route ahead and get a sense of what awaits them.



Big landscapes can capture the drama and rewards of a journey.



Of course you'll want a photograph that shows success. Here the crew on the Baldy summit.



A fun shot of Scouts leaning into the winds atop Baldy adds interest and delight to the story's high point.



A photo essay about climbing Baldy could end on the top, or might follow the Scouts down the mountain to the safety of the forest below.



Give your story a sense of completion with a photograph that ties up everything. For trekkers who have succeeded in climbing Baldy, it's hard to beat their return to Base Camp as a fitting conclusion.



A PHOTOGRAPHER'S LIFE

Plenty of people dream of making a living with a camera. Roger Morgan has done that for 28 years as one of several full-time photographers on the national staff of the Boy Scouts of America.



BSA Photographer Roger Morgan

Roger was bitten by the photography bug while studying journalism at Southwest Texas State University. A college internship with The San Marcos Daily Record led to a fulltime job as a photojournalist.

After further study in photography and work with advertising companies, he was asked to shoot pictures for the Boy Scouts of America. He jumped at the opportunity.



"You need to immerse yourself in the subject and experiencing what the people there are experiencing," Roger says of making a great photograph. "Quality of light, the camera, the angle, and the lens choice all matter, but the real secret is looking for the gesture or moment that tells more."

He encourages young photographers to learn computer skills too. Photography editing programs are essential for today's professionals. Amateurs use them, too, to enhance pictures and build memorable shows. Computers also allow photographers to share their pictures, videos, and stories via social media sites.

"I'm passionate about this stuff," Roger says. "I'm immersed in my profession, and feel as though the fun has just begun."



Roger Morgan photo

VISUAL STORYTELLING PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS

Among Roger Morgan's favorite projects is joining with other BSA photographers to staff Visual Storytelling Photography Workshops. The Philmont Training Center will again host a workshop this summer, August 3-9, and plans are underway for other sessions around the country. Scout leaders can learn the basics of multimedia storytelling, how to publish to the web, and techniques for passing on what their new knowledge.



greg crenshaw

For more on this and other opportunities at Philmont, check out the 2014 Philmont Training Center conference schedule at www.philmontscoutranch.org.

PHOTOGRAPHY MERIT BADGE

The Photography merit badge has been around since Scouting's earliest days. Boys in 1911 were required to "Make a recognizable photograph of any wild bird larger than a robin while on its nest; or a wild animal in its native haunts; or a fish in the water."



Scouts earning the badge today must understand how a camera works, take good pictures, and use the techniques of photojournalism to tell a story. They can also display proficiency with computer software for improving photos.

GOING WILD WITH PHOTOGRAPHY

These days, shooting a picture is just the beginning of making a photograph. With computer programs, you can adjust the lighting, remove something unwanted from the background, correct the "red eye" glare caused by a camera flash, and manage many other tasks to make a picture more true to the scene it depicts.

Sometimes the computerized changes can seem like magic. That's what happened a few of years ago when an advertising team put together the "Be One With The Wild" campaign encouraging boys to join the Atlanta Area Council.



Ogilvy & Mather-Atlanta

Computer experts enhanced a portrait of a Cub Scout to highlight his adventurous side. See that frog on his shoulder and caterpillar on his collar? Those probably weren't in the original picture.

How far can computer photo manipulation go? Check out these bearded boys, also part of the Be One with the Wild campaign:



Ogilvy & Mather-Atlanta

Photography really can be wild. And hairy. And beautiful, moving, emotional, and whatever else you want it to be. As BSA photographer Roger Morgan says, "The fun has just begun!"

(This edition of the *Be Prepared Newsletter* was developed and written by Robert Birkby, author of the current editions of the *Boy Scout Handbook*, *Fieldbook*, *Scout Stuff*, and *Eagle Scouts: A Centennial History*.)

