

WOMEN IN SCOUTING EDITION



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HOW IT ALL BEGAN

The Boy Scouts of America will prepare every eligible youth in America to become a responsible, participating citizen and leader who is guided by the Scout Oath and Law.

That's the Mission Statement of the BSA. In its first decades, *every eligible youth* meant just boys, led only by adults who had also once been boys.



Harris & Ewing Collection / Library of Congress

Early Boy Scouts

The Girl Scouts of America, a separate organization, formed in 1912 after Juliette Gordon Lowe met with Scouting's founder Robert Baden-Powell. A century later the GSA continues to provide quality programs built on Juliette Lowe's vision.



Harris & Ewing Collection/Library of Congress

Early Girl Scouts

Today, the BSA's definition of every eligible youth in its mission statement has expanded dramatically. Young women ages 14-20 thrive in the Venturing program. Staffs of high adventure bases and council summer camps are open to both genders. More than one-third of adult BSA volunteer leaders are now women.



Robert Birkby photo

**Outdoor adventures build strength, character,
and courage for everyone, regardless of gender**

A MARCH AND A MEDAL

What's the rarest BSA medal? That honor certainly goes to the first Eagle Scout pin, awarded to Arthur Eldred and now displayed in the National Scouting Museum.



First Eagle Scout Pin

In second place? A strong candidate is the medal given by the National American Woman Suffrage Association a hundred years ago to thank a group of Scouts who provided extraordinary service during difficult times.



Woodrow Wilson was about to be inaugurated president of the United States. 1,500 uniformed Boy Scouts were in Washington, DC, to watch the proceedings. The BSA was just three years old, and the inauguration was among the first national events attended by large numbers of Scouts.



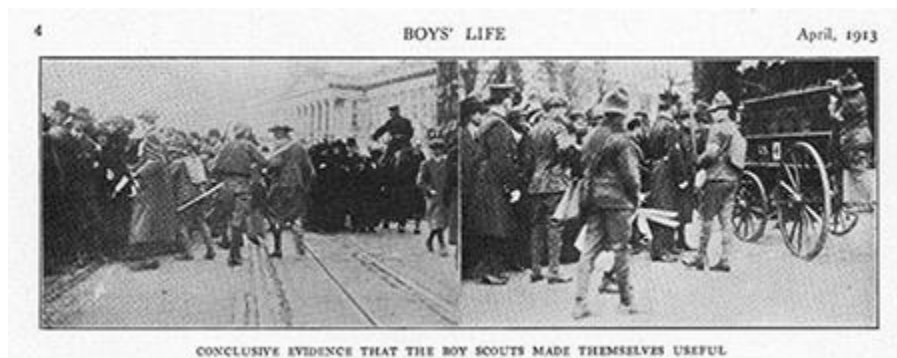
Library of Congress

Woodrow Wilson Inauguration

Crowds lined Pennsylvania Avenue for a parade that included thousands of marchers demanding women's suffrage - the right for women to be able to vote. (That would be settled seven years later with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution.) Not everyone agreed with them, and the crowd became unruly.

The April, 1913 edition of *Boys' Life* magazine reported that:

Between 5,000 and 8,000 marchers faced crowds of raucous male spectators in town for the inauguration. These onlookers assaulted the protesters physically, blocked their way, and yelled insults. At least 100 marchers were injured and hospitalized.



CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE THAT THE BOY SCOUTS MADE THEMSELVES USEFUL

Overwhelmed by the situation, the police asked the Boy Scouts to help. Many stepped forward with their hiking sticks to form a barrier between the marchers and the onlookers. Others administered first aid to those who had been hurt.



The actions of the boys were recognized as a shining example of Scouts helping others in a time of need. Each Scout received a medal engraved with his name and this message:

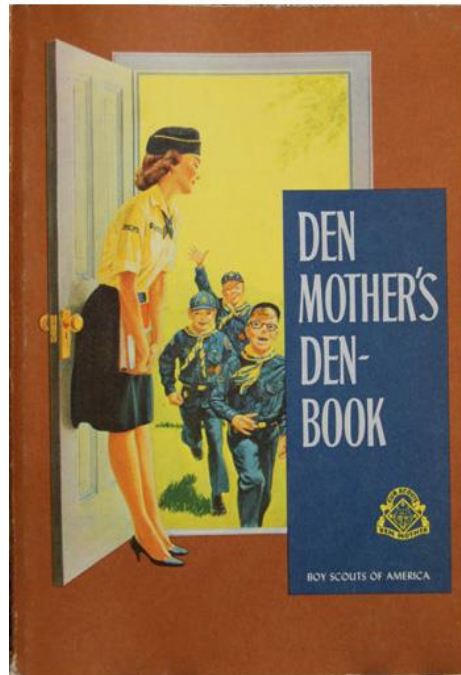
"In Grateful Acknowledgement of Duty Well Done. Washington DC March 3 1913"

DEN MOTHERS

In 1930 the Cub Scout program was launched for boys too young to be Boy Scouts. Women could serve as Den Mothers in partnership with Den Chiefs.



Den Mother's Pin



Den Mother's handbook

For the next 30 years that was the only BSA leadership role open to women, though they have always provided encouragement as their sons and other boys took part in BSA activities. Norman Rockwell illustrated that support in two of his paintings:



America's Manpower Begins with Boypower



A Great Moment

The *Den Mother* designation changed in 1967 to Den Leader, recognizing the fact that both women and men could head up groups of Cub Scouts. Twenty years later, women were invited to serve in all of Scouting's adult leadership roles, from Den Leader to Scoutmaster and beyond.



Mary Stevens with Venturers

Corey Rich photo

Dr. Mary Stevens is a terrific example. A longtime advisor of Venturing Crew 84 in San Rafael, California, she also worked tirelessly to create or overhaul a dozen BSA training courses, ran the Technology Quest exhibit at the 2010 National Scout Jamboree, and led development of the Geocaching merit badge. In recognition of her tremendous leadership, the BSA granted her the Silver Buffalo, Scouting's highest award for service to youth.

BSA'S WOMEN OF ADVENTURE

Before Venturing, Exploring was Scouting's program for boys ages 14-18. Exploring became coeducational in 1971 and the age extended to 14-20. Young women were immediately attracted to the adventure of Exploring, and within two decades represented half of all registered Explorers.



Women Rangers of 1979 - Philmont Scout Ranch

Marty Tschetter collection

Also in 1971, Philmont Scout Ranch began hiring women to serve as rangers – summer staff who see crews through base camp, teach them skills for the trail, and guide them into the backcountry.

Today, hundreds of young women provide valuable leadership and service to the operations of high adventure bases and council camps across the country. They also serve in many Venturing leadership positions. Here, for example, is the 2013-2014 National Venturing Youth Cabinet:



Annaliese Parker
National President



Gerry Souser
National Venturing Vice President



Aaron Parks-Young
National Venturing Vice President



Allie Frownfelter
Northeast Region



Christina Vejt
Central Region



Maddie Culwell
Southern Region



Jillian Infusino
Western Region



Billy McElligott
SeaScout

HISTORY OF SCOUTING TRAIL - H.O.S.T.

The History of Scouting Trail is an inviting walk through the heart of Washington, DC, developed by the National Capitol Area Council to highlight important places and events in Scouting's past. The route was recently designated a Nationally Recognized Historic Trail by the Boy Scouts of America.



Memorial Day of 2014 marks the opening of a new leg of the trail. Beginning at the FDR Memorial, the 7.2 mile trail passes the Smithsonian Museums and White House, and follows the Pennsylvania Avenue route of the Women's Suffrage Parade of May 3, 1913, the event when 1,500 Scouts stepped onto the national scene to give the America a true sense of Scouting values.

To honor the new trail, the council is awarding select groups of Scouts facsimiles of the original Women's Suffrage medal, a fitting tribute to the vital roles of women in the Boy Scouts of America.



H.O.S.T. Medal

For more information on the History of Scouting Trail, check out the H.O.S.T. Trail page on the National Capital Area Council's website at:

http://www.ncacbsa.org/members/group_content_view.asp?group=125566&id=298522

(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*.)

