

The following contains highlights of Scouting history in our council area, summarized decade by decade, and representing the first 90 years of the Boy Scouts of America: 1910-2000.

THE BEGINNING: The 1910's

The genesis of Scouting in the United States began with the publication of Lord Baden-Powell's manual, "Scouting for Boys," in March of 1908. The manual quickly made the transatlantic crossing, and by late spring Scouting units began popping up. While no exact records were kept in the early days, Troops were organized in Ft. Leavenworth, Salina, and Pawhuska, Oklahoma before William D. Boyce filed incorporation papers on February 8, 1910. Early promoters of the Scouting program were the leaders of the YMCA and some Episcopal priests.

The first unit in Wichita was organized in 1912 by the YMCA with W. K. Leask, the Executive Director, as Scoutmaster. Troop 3 was organized at St. Paul's Methodist church in 13th and N. Lawrence Road (Broadway). Other early sponsors included College Hill Methodist Church, Plymouth Congregational, Central Christian Church, Riverside Group of Citizens, Grace Presbyterian Church, and First Methodist Church.

In the spring of 1917, Fred Williams was made the chairman of the committee to contact the national organization to determine the procedure for organizing a council. In early 1918 the Wichita Rotary Club started to work on a three-year fund drive to raise \$12,000 to organize a council. They raised \$15,000 in one day. The organization meeting was held at the Wichita Club on March 11, with Marcellus M. Murdock, publisher of the Eagle, presiding. Edgar S. Ridgeway was elected the first president of the council. The first office was in the city building. B. B. Dawson was selected as the first Scout Executive. Final negotiations for the council charter were completed in June.

The first organized council camp was called Camp Murdock, and held at the Hurst farm, near Murdock, Kansas with 65 Scouts and 12 leaders.

The first Scout exhibition was held in 1919, at the Forum, in downtown Wichita, in celebration of the council's first anniversary. The council also approved a motion to organize a Scout Band, and E. O. Cavanaugh was employed as bandmaster.

THE 20'S

Much of the activities of the twenties dealt with how to support a growing organization. Scouting was established in Wichita, but nearby communities began to call asking assistance with Scouting. Many local councils were chartered but continued to rely upon the Wichita Council for support. Wichita efforts centered on basics: camps, offices, staff, and structure. Incorporation as a nonprofit organization was completed in 1922.

Camping began, and Camp A. R. Bedstead, near Silverdale, was used in 1921, with no camp in 1922. Camp Lorentz Schmidt, near Oxford, followed in 1923.

John L. Tilden became the Scout Executive in 1923 and brought with him a camp theme called the Old Warrior program. - As a part of Indian Day activities, the story of Hiawatha was told. The program continues today. -In 1924, Camp Tawansentha was opened; in 1927 Camp Talahi was secured, and first utilized in 1928.

An Afro-American troop was chartered by St. Augustine Episcopal Church, in May of 1924, and was assigned the designation of Troop 75.

Two other properties were used by the council: The first was Scout Island, located in the Arkansas River west of Sims Park. It was used extensively until it was flooded out and the island disappeared. The other was a Scout Cabin in Riverside Park. It was originally owned by Troop 1 and was transferred to the council in 1926. In 1928 the council territory was enlarged to include nine counties, McPherson, Marion, Chase, Harvey, Butler, Greenwood, Sumner, Cowley, and Harvey. And the name was changed to the Wichita Area Council.

The Council joined the community chest in 1923 and continues community relationships, today, with local United Ways.

The Council moved to the Kaufman Building, on 212 S. Market, in 1928.

THE 30'S

The thirties were a time of developing the structure to support local units. Area councils were developed to keep Scouting services close to local communities while providing central administration. Finances are difficult, with each local community struggling to raise its fair share of support. The generosity of Frank Phillips, in providing funds to hire field staff, was a critical plus in maintaining Scouting units. The council was organized in divisions, which supported different programs. These areas included Lone Scouts, Cub Scouts, Air Scouting, Sea Scouts, and a Colored division.

Cub Scouting was developed by the Boy Scouts in 1930, and packs were organized at 1st Presbyterian, College Hill Methodist, 1st United Brethren, and Faith Baptist Churches. Frank T. Priest was elected president of the Cub Scout Board.

Scouting continued to evolve in this decade in organization, program, and financing. Because of the depression, cash was in short supply. But Scouting developed into sturdy stock. In 1937, the Elk and Chautauqua Counties were ceded to the Independence Council, and in 1938 Kingman County joined the Quivira Council, from the Southwest Kansas Council. Frank Phillips, of Phillips Oil, gave the Council \$50,000 in 1938 to enlarge the field staff. Phillips gifts to Quivira and other councils provided critical funding to continue and expand local units. And the council learned the value of thrift, as treasurers such as C. j. Chandler, from the 1st National Bank, carefully reviewed each expenditure.

Camping facilities began to change, as the use of Camp Talahi ended in 1935 after water problems developed. In 1936, the council rented property on the Santa Fe Lake, and then in 1937, the first camp was held on the land now known as Camp TaWaKoNi. Camp leadership that summer included A. Max Hatfield, as director, and Arden Bradshaw as assistant Waterfront Director. Max would later become Scout Executive and Arden would become an active Scouter in the Mt. Hope area. - A bequest from Arden's estate, 60 years later, would fund an addition to the Hilton building at QSR.

The reputation for strong a Scout program has its roots in this decade. The Council would send 81 Scouts and leaders to the 1937 National Jamboree in Washington D.C.; and while the number of Eagles in the Wichita area is on the rise, so is Scouting throughout the state. In fact, in response to an article about families with two Eagle sons, Lewis Oswald, Scoutmaster of

Troop 1 in Hutchinson, wrote that their troop had 10 families with two Eagles, and the Troop had a total of more than 60.

With the addition of new counties, the Executive Board began to solicit new names for the council. Dr. William Jardine, President of Wichita State University, suggested the name "Quivira," and in 1939 the name was adopted.

THE 40'S

Scouting in this decade can be divided into two distinct parts. The first half was in support of the war effort. Scouts were called upon to sell war bonds, collect paper, metal and all other materials, and provide messenger and other services. With so many adult men involved in the military, leadership was in short supply. But throughout the effort, there was a great sense of mission and teamwork. After the war men and women returned to civilian efforts, including Scouting. Much of the council's effort revolved around determining the direction of camping.

The council began a special relationship with Philmont in 1940 when 93 Scouts and leaders made the first council trek to the new national Scout Ranch. This is believed to be the largest contingent of anyone council, at Philmont, at one time.

The success of any activity is dependent upon leadership. And the future of the council, particularly its camps, was greatly ensured when Murray Gill, President of Kansas Gas and Electric, joined the Executive Board in 1942. Over the next twenty years, Murray spearheaded efforts to develop both Camp TaWaKoNi and QSR.

As the War effort ended, the Council began the effort to develop its camps. Even though TaWaKoNi had been used since 1937, it was viewed as a short-term camp and training facility. A plan was developed to upgrade Tahali, at a cost of \$100,000. Initial commitments are received from KG&E for \$5,000, and Gas Service Company, for \$2500. A formal campaign was placed on hold, but quiet solicitation continued.

In 1947, three buildings from Herrington Air Force Base were made available to the council, and through the efforts of Martin Eby, these buildings are moved to TaWaKoNi. The Coleman Company also gives \$5,000 to the council for Camp Development efforts.

After four years of study, a decision is made on camp use. In 1949, Ken Stowell recommends to the Board that TaWaKoNi is developed as the council's long-term camp. He cites the access to resources and the proposed lowering of the age for Boy Scouts as reasons for his recommendation. The proposal is accepted.

In 1949 Jack Spines Jr., a thirty-one-year-old Wichita businessman, was selected as president of the Council. He and the other community leaders to follow begin the process of building the next generation of Scouting.

THE 50'S

The broad appeal of Scouting begins this decade, as parents returning from the war effort see Scouting as a program their sons should participate in.

The Boy Scouts of America had as its theme "Strengthen the Arm of Liberty." Jack Whitacker, a Regional volunteer from Kansas City, challenged Scouts in midwestern states to raise money to

place a miniature Statue of Liberty in every county seat. Many Scouts and leaders responded to this challenge and fifty years later these statues can be seen on courthouse lawns and in front of other public buildings.

The Order of the Arrow was organized in 1951, as Charter #458 was issued to the name of Hi-Cha-Ko-Lo Lodge. Among its charter members were Ken Fortney Jr., of Wichita, and Bob Johnston, of Wellington. In 1956, the Lodge started the tradition of holding its Vigils over the Thanksgiving weekend to accommodate college students. This tradition led to many fond memories of cold vigils and continued until the 90's. The lodge began to play an important role in camp promotion, and in 1956 produced its first "Where to go camping" booklet.

The first major fund-raising effort for TaWaKoNi was announced in 1952. The projects included a swimming pool, dining hall, chapel, cabins, and the acquisition of 60 more acres. Leadership for the effort included Murray Gill, Paul Foley, Ken Stowell, Jack Spines, Sheldon Coleman, Martin Eby, Walt Keeler, Marvin Dondlinger, Owen McEwen, and Eugene Coombs. The effort raised \$182,000 and provided the facilities to spur tremendous growth in camping.

In 1958, the Council leadership determined that TaWaKoNi could no longer meet the needs of a growing Council and Ken Stowell and Murray Gill were appointed Camp Development Chairman. This process, to look for a new camp of at least 2000 acres, would take two years. As an interim step the Scout Executive made a request to the council in Fort Smith Arkansas to use their Camp Orr, and in 1959 several Quivira Troops went to Orr.

The 40th anniversary of the Council was in 1958, and the 40th annual circus was held at the Wichita Field House. A special feature was the dancing of Post 502, the MiKaNaMids. This Post, chartered to College Hill Methodist Church and led for many years by Ward Vickery, was an extremely popular group and for several years was closely associated with the pageantry of the camp Old Warriors program.

The decade closed with the first opportunity for local councils to operate a Wood Badge Course. Under the Leadership of a Scoutmaster supplied by the National Office, our first local course was offered at the camp at Fall River.

THE 60'S

Scouting boomed in the sixties, as the post-war youth population peaked. Camp, advancement, and programming all achieved new records.

To meet interest in camping, the camp development committee took aerial flights over Kansas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Missouri looking for a suitable new campsite. A potential site was identified in southeast Kansas and on February 20th, 700 Scouters from across the council boarded 20 charter buses to visit the site in Chautauqua County. Although the weather was cold and drizzly, the leaders were excited by the prospects and a plan was developed to start raising \$10 per member, for "warranty deeds," to purchase the land. Options were then taken for 2960 acres and the Quivira Scout Ranch was born.

While this \$10 per member effort started the process and created a unique ownership that many leaders still feel toward QSR, the bulk of the funds raised came from a public solicitation chaired by Del Roskam. Del was aided by many civic leaders including Fred Murfin, Paul Foley, and Lawrence Wells.

A look at the records also indicates that many behind the scenes efforts were needed to fully develop the camp: Issues relating to the relocation of bridges and roads required the negotiating skills of our Council leadership. Perhaps the most profound action was the persuasion of the Soil Conservation Service to build one large flood retention reservoir instead of several small structures along the Caney River. This decision led to our magnificent 473-acre lake.

The first organized Troop camping at QSR was in 1961. By 1966 a total of 2,757 Scouts were camping at either TaWaKoNi or QSR. The number increased to 3,111 the next year, and growth continued throughout the rest of the decade, as scores of Scouts and leaders helped clear the river bottom for the lake project.

Wood Badge training, for Boy Scout leaders, had firmly taken hold in the sixties. After national personnel was used for top positions in the initial courses, local leadership was sufficiently developed to continue the course. One staff member from the 1967 course, Al Goering of Neodesha, continues to be active in the council.

An expanding program also meant more staff room was needed, and in 1967 the Council Office was moved to the 400 Rule Building.

The fiftieth anniversary of the Council, in 1968, was marked in grand style. QSR was formally dedicated on June 29, with Chief Scout Executive Alden Barber in attendance. A patch with eleven segments was offered for participation in Scouting events. And in an effort never repeated, over 600 Quivira Scouts and leaders hiked the trails of Philmont at the same time. This program, termed Philtrek 600, was the culmination of planning and promotion of many Scouters, including Jim Copeland, Paul Jacobs, and Don Crandall.

Also, in April of that year, scouting magazine featured Bill Coulsen, who had served for 38 years as Scoutmaster of Troop 410, chartered to Fairview Christian Church. His conservation effort of planting trees at TaWaKoNi is marked by a row of trees now known as Coulsen's Grove.

The decade ended with the start of a new program at QSR dedicated to acquainting Scouts and leaders with the use of the Scout camp. The program, Black Jack Trail, started in the fall of 1969 and was designed for a Scoutmaster and his SPL to hike the camp. After the initial treks, a group of "perpetrators," headed by Paul Wittsell, was organized to maintain the BJT program.

THE 70'S

Much of the dramatic growth and enthusiasm of the 60's carried forward into the 70's. Quivira began to have an impact beyond our Council borders and into national programming.

As a part of a national effort to develop the most effective way of delivering the Scouting program, Councils were urged to consider mergers. In response to this effort, the Sekan and Quivira Councils merged in 1972. Cub Scouting began to take a higher profile in 1970, as Akelas' Council was started to train male Cub Scout leaders in outdoor skills. In 1972 a new support organization called Liv-A-He-Liv (live and help live) was formed. Early leaders included Court and Laura Stalnaker, John and Alta Montoyne, and Jim and Mary Colbert. Kind Eyes, an outdoor education program for female Cub Scout leaders, was introduced in 1973 to complement the earlier developed Akelas' Council. Cub Scout Day Camp started in 1974, at TaWaKoNi.

Boy Scout Camping at Camp Kanza and QSR hit their high marks in the seventies, while Scout Camping at TaWaKoNi begins to decline and concludes in 1974. Order of the Arrow also reaches several pinnacles, as one of its local programs, "Spring into Scouting," is adopted for national use. In 1974, Brad Haddock is elected the National Chief of the Order of the Arrow, and four years later our local Advisor, Ed Reeves, is selected as the Section Advisor. Brad is also selected for one of the National Young American awards. At the presentation dinner, in Washington D.C., he meets his future wife, Terri.

The Exploring program is also extremely active. Al Herrington is selected to serve on the Regional Exploring Committee and Larry Jones, then President of the Coleman Company is selected to serve as the national chairman for the Exploring Adventure Program. In 1977, Explorer Todd Duke won the Reader's Digest National Speech Contest. Another young Scout who distinguished himself was Ken Van Haverbeke, who was selected in 1978 as the outstanding Catholic Scout in the state. He now serves as Pastor of the Church of the Magdalen, in Wichita.

The Council continues to rent office space, moving to the Century Plaza in 1972 and, then, to the Rule building in 1978. The year 1978 also marked the start of a new winter camping adventure called Trappers' Rendezvous. This event, held at Harvey County Park West, has grown into a regional attraction.

THE 80'S

The 80's was a decade of repositioning to meet a new "marketplace." Major changes were made in the facilities, structure, and programs to remain relevant to the needs of youth.

The Order of the Arrow expands its cheerful service to include service to youth with handicapping conditions, with the new program Sunshine Kids' Fishing Derby, in 1981. Also, in December 1981, after 60 years of office rental, the council purchases its own building and moves to 1555 E. 2nd St., in Wichita. Changes in camping interest led to two capital campaigns to improve Scout camp at QSR. Under the leadership of Jim Grier and Grant Stannard, a major effort was launched to develop campsites, aquatics, and related support facilities, and Camp Pioneer becomes the long-term campsite.

A second campaign was initiated, four years later, through a challenge grant from the William Graham Foundation to provide for the construction of the QSR Troop Service Building and a major renovation of the Camp TaWaKoNi dining hall and pool. Again, Jim Grier and Grant Stannard provide leadership to raise the matching funds. Koch Industries then provided funds for the C.O.P.E. course, and by the end of the decade, camp use is up.

In 1985 the council celebrated BSA's 75 years with a council-wide camporee, at Sim Park, in Wichita. The national program, "Scouting for Food," is also adopted. Annually, the council collects more than 100,000 cans of food!

THE 90'S

Scouting in the nineties was marked by improved facilities and programs and major changes in the delivery of Scouting programs.

The development of new programs at QSR continued, such as hot heater-stack meals, in 1990. Then, a dining hall tent was added in 1994. Other major improvements at QSR include the

addition of the water skiing program; the Wolff Nature Center in 1997; the Bradshaw addition to the Hilton; and the Clyde Stange Building, in 1999. The Camping committee reaffirmed the value of the Tribe of Quivira, by establishing the Tribal Council, for coordination, in 1992. The council added new ranks and ceremonies. And the Tribe took on the project of expansion of the Lee Phillips Council Ring.

Renovation of the facilities at TaWaKoNi continued also, with the dining hall, pool, and shower building projects. The Office and Scout Shop were updated through a gift from Koch Industries.

The seventy-fifth anniversary of the council was celebrated, in 1993, with an encampment at Sedgwick County Park. More than 5,000 Scouts and leaders gathered for a weekend of Scouting fellowship.

The program of financing the Council was expanded with the addition of the Popcorn Sale and the initiation of the Distinguished Citizen Award program, in the 90's, also.

In 1995, the National Council began a strategic planning process designed to position the BSA to meet the challenges of a new century. One of these benchmarks related to the minimum size of a local council. Based on this benchmark, the Quivira and Kanza Councils began merger discussion. On July 1, 1997, the two Councils merged. The expanded council now serves youth in thirty south-central and southeastern Kansas counties. - The first council-wide activity was an encampment held in the spring of 1998 at the Kansas State Fairgrounds, in Hutchinson.