



Tidewater Council of Boy Scouts of America

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On Sept. 11, 1911, the first Hampton Roads Boy Scout troop was founded by the First Christian Church Disciples, and two years later, the first local council's charter was officially issued.

By 1919, the area had six troops and 127 scouts.

In 2011, 10,000 Hampton Roads scouts proudly wear their uniforms and uphold the scout's oath:

“On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
mentally awake, and morally straight.”

Bill Deany, the director of the Tidewater Council of the Boy Scouts of America, has been involved in scouts for 40 years. He became director of the Tidewater Council in 1997, and has seen a lot of changes in scouting since he was a scout himself.

“We didn't have women in a lot of our leadership positions,” Deany said. “Women now play a fairly predominate role in the scouting program. They are in every position that we have, including the overall leadership council of our council.”

In the mid 2000s, the local council had its first woman president, Dorcas Helfant of Virginia Beach. Another change: a proactive and strong screening program of adults involved in the scouts.

“Before any other organization was actually doing it, we developed ways for doing background checks and teaching people how to keep their kids safe,” Deany said. “That's good training for any organization to have, and we lend the material to other organizations so they can keep their kids safe. Any place that kids are, they need to be protected and you have to have a zero-tolerance type of attitude.”

Here are some milestones that scouts have seen over the past century:

- In 1913, the local scouts traveled to the Eastern Shore to help farmers harvest their potato crops.

- In 1915, the area's first Eagle Scout was Richard McArdle of Troop 1. He later became the chief of the Forest Service with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

- In 1918, local scouts did their part in the war effort, selling 1,609 World War I Liberty Loan bonds that added up to \$267,100.

- By 1934, the program had expand-



COURTESY BSA

In 2011, there are 10,000 Boy Scouts in Hampton Roads, compared to 127 in 1919.

ed throughout the area, so the Norfolk Council Board of Trustees voted to change the scouts' moniker to the Seaboard Area Council. The following year, though, it voted to change its name to Tidewater, Boy Scouts of America.

- In 1944, the local Scouts again helped the war effort, selling \$645,475 worth of war bonds.

- In 1945, Tidewater Scouts collected 409,960 pounds of paper during the BSA General Eisenhower Waste Paper Drive.

- In 1948, age levels for Cub Scouting changed to 8-10 years old, with boys entering Boy Scouting at age 11.

- In 1950, the U.S. Postal Service issued the first Boy Scout stamp. That same year, the Cub Scout promise added the line “to do my duty to God and my country.”

- In 1957, the scouts began a campaign to recruit boys with disabilities.

- During the Cold War, in 1958, the scouts distributed 40 million copies of books, urging communities to “be prepared” for nuclear emergencies.

- By 1965, the program had 40 million members.

- In 1971, the Cub Scouts dropped “to be square” from its motto and replaced it with “to help other people.”

- In 1976, women, for the first time, were allowed to serve as Cub masters and assistant Cub masters.

- Five ranks were established in Cub Scouting in 1978 – Bobcat, Wolf, Bear,

Webelos and Arrow of Light award.

- In 1980, famed designer Oscar de la Renta spent two years remaking the Scout uniform, the biggest redesign of the uniform in 60 years.

- In 1990, the scouts introduced a “Hispanic emphasis,” to recruit Hispanic families.

- In 1991, the scouts released “It Happened to Me,” a video aimed at Cub Scouts to show them how to protect themselves against abuse.

- In 1994, the scouts introduced the National Den Award to recognize Cub Scout packs that do service projects all year.

- In 1998, the scouts introduced the Venturing program aimed at both young men and women, ages 14 to 21, to help give them the tools to succeed.

- In 2000, rappelling and climbing were introduced into the Cub Scout program.

- In reaction to the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, Scouts across the country collected donations of food and clothing.

- In 2002, the National Scouting Museum opened in Irving, Texas.

- In 2005, the Cub Scouts celebrated their 75th anniversary.

- In 2010, the national chapter of the Boy Scouts of America celebrated its 100th anniversary.

- In 2011, the Tidewater Council of the Boy Scouts of America celebrated its 100th anniversary. ■