



The Bison

PLANTING SEEDS TO SECURE THE FUTURE OF BOY SCOUTING IN WEST TEXAS



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While the Permian Basin's economic outlook has grown, so has its population. The bustling metropolitan area has brought new challenges for our children. Scouting remains one of the best methods to address those challenges.

The Most Important Week of Your Life



A Scout troop strikes a pose at BTSR

summer camp will be the highlight of anything they've done in Scouting this year. It's the realization of their preparation, their goals, and their dreams. And it's what will keep them involved in Scouting.

The better their summer camp adventure, the more likely they'll be to reach Scouting's highest rank, Eagle Scout. The more likely they'll be to earn a badge that will help them save a life. The more likely they'll be to learn a skill, discover a talent, and develop a confidence that will lead to their future hobbies, vocation, or career. The more likely they'll be to becoming a patriotic, productive, family-oriented, community-minded leader with integrity and ability.

Yes, Scout camp is about a whole lot more than just seven days in a tent. That's why the Buffalo Trail Council spends so much time and effort in making BTSR the very best camp in the nation. A place where today's Scouts become tomorrow's leaders.

Imagine being eleven years old again. Remember the excitement and anticipation of experiencing your first summer camp? This summer, thousands of young men (and a few young women), are making the magical trip to Buffalo Trail Scout Ranch in the Davis Mountains to spend a week that will be forever etched in their memory as one of the finest, and perhaps funnest, seven days they will ever experience. Their time at



Winter Camp staff member, Nathan Justice, supervises a Scout in Welding Merit Badge class

Winter's Gone But Skills Learned Last a Lifetime

Almost everyone has spent a week at summer camp at one time or another. But why settle for just one week or one season a year to have one of the best times of your life?

Winter Camp at Buffalo Trail Scout Ranch is the answer to that. Perfectly positioned between Christmas and New Year, the camp has a wealth of exciting program opportunities that continue to grow each year. That may also explain the camp's ever-increasing attendance.

Merit badge classes at last year's camp ranged from fairly traditional Scouting fair like First Aid, Rifle Shooting, and Horsemanship to less common and very challenging badges such as

Neil Florer Honored for Lifetime Achievement



On Thursday, July 16th, Neil M. Florer was honored with the council's first ever Lifetime Achievement Award.

Born as a Leap Year baby, on February 29, 1936, his entrepreneurial spirit and natural leadership abilities led him to great success in a number of business and personal interests. He has been a member of the Boy Scouts of America for over 65 years.

He has served on numerous boards and associations in various positions of leadership including President of Buffalo Trail Council, Director at Health Facilities Development Corporation of Midland County, Trustee for Manor Park, Inc. since 2006, Director of the Petroleum Club of Midland, past president and member of the Exchange Club of Midland, past president and member of Midland College Board of Trustees, past co-chair for St. Ann's Family Fair, and active on several boards for the Catholic Church.

Mr. Florer has also been past President, Vice President of Endowment, and a member of the Buffalo Trail Council for the Boy Scouts of America since 1977 and Scoutmaster for Troop 84. He was active on the committee responsible for the acquisition of 3,000 additional acres for Buffalo Trail Scout Ranch. He now serves on the Presidents' Council for the Boy Scouts.

He is a father of five and grandfather of three. Neil has an interest in antique cars following a career with Ford Motor Company and is the former co-owner of Rogers Ford Sales, Inc. His background includes service to our country in the U.S. Army. Between his educational and service background, community interaction, and current work history Neil Florer has been and continues to be a great asset to the Permian Basin.

Summer

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What makes summer camp such an important time in the development of a young person's life?

According to a recent American Camp Association (ACA) report, parents cite the following as the most important reasons for sending their children to camp:

- Camp helps build self-confidence and self-esteem
- Camp is a safe environment
- Camp is a place to build social skills and make friends

Parents also reported that the camp experience helped their child:

- feel good about themselves
- gain more self-confidence or self-esteem
- increase in independence and show more leadership skills
- increase their friendship skills and feel more socially comfortable
- gain in their adventurousness and willingness to try new things

The ACA isn't the only organization singing the praises of summer camp.

Psychology Today reports that kids build resilience for dealing with life-



A Night Time Scene from BTSR

long challenges through building new relationships, developing a powerful identity, helping them feel in control of their lives, being treated fairly, physical development, and, perhaps best of all, offering kids a chance to feel like they belong.

Apparently, Scouting's been on to a good thing for a very long time. Ask any Scout, present or former, whether summer camp had a positive impact on his life. He may just tell you that it was the most important week he's ever had.

Tax Woes? Consider a Gift of Appreciated Stock

The tax planning benefits of donating appreciated shares of stock or a fund include deducting the amount of the charitable donation AND avoiding the unrealized gains on the appreciated shares. This is because of the general rule that the deduction for property donated to charity is equal to the fair market value of the donated property.

To put that in context, a donation of an initial investment of \$10,000 which has appreciated to \$20,000 could result in a capital gains savings of 20% plus an additional 25% (or more depending on your tax bracket). To sum it up, you are getting about \$7,000 in tax benefits



for a donation of property with a current value of \$20,000 that originally cost you only \$10,000. It's a double play for you and for Scouting! Just make certain that you've held the stock for longer than one year. Also, if you have a non-stock appreciated item (such as jewelry, artwork, real property), special limitations may apply.

Not quite sure about how to go about making a gift of stock? Call Aaron Bedell at the Scout Office (432) 570-7601.

New Features Enhance Program for Scouts at Buffalo Trail Scout Ranch

Buffalo Trail Scout Ranch is well known for its rugged, natural beauty and boundless opportunities for wilderness adventure. But with its ongoing increase in popularity come new challenges to the infrastructure—particularly at Base Camp. With weekly attendance at summer camp often exceeding 600 participants, one of the most obvious needs is for a new dining hall. However, before that addition can be built, a number of other improvements must occur.

One of the biggest additions to BTSR since last summer is the new 5,000 square foot pavilion, home to the Trail to Eagle program. Equipped with solar power, the facility accommodates all the modern necessities for teaching including a 100 inch view screen for Power Point presentations (and movies, of course), a sound system, and LED lighting system.

It's been a while in coming

but the new WB Stowe Showerhouse boasts private (hot) showering and toilet facilities for up to eight individuals simultaneously. It also features storage for the climbing program.

Two new 600 square foot program pavilions have been



Scouts have the privilege of raising and lowering our nation's colors at BTSR

constructed for specific use in the nature and ecology areas. Both pavilions will feature solar powered lighting and secure storage in the near future. The upper building will be used for the Radio, Astronomy, and Robotics merit badges when construction reaches 100%.



The WB Stowe Showerhouse stands ready

A new pad has been cleared and construction has begun on the first of two Cowboy Action Shooting ranges. This program will feature an opportunity for Scouts (and Scouters) to dress up in period outfits and practice their aim in an Old Western Style building. The facility should be completed sometime this summer.



3D VIEW - FRONT

ACTION SHOOTING PAVILION
BUFFALO TRAIL SCOUT RANCH

The Cowboy Action Shooting Sports Range will soon be complete



The First Year Camper Pavilion



A perfect outdoor classroom



The NatEco Program (nature & ecology) received two new covered program areas

WINTER (continued from Page 1)

Welding, Space Exploration, Automotive, Search & Rescue, Farm Machines, Home Repairs, Truck Transportation, and Metal Work to name a few.

While the fun and challenge of earning merit badges is certainly a major

part of the allure of Winter Camp, there's no denying the challenge of camping in a cold weather environment in the mountains. But that's also not without its benefits. There are few sights that compare to the majesty and quietude of the Davis

Mountains when they are covered in a pristine layer of snow. And when Scouts return home, they not only have more skills and knowledge, they've got a few bragging rights to go with them.



A Scout learns the art of blacksmithing

SMARTER GIVING: Is Cash Still King?

When it comes to funding programs, breaking ground for new buildings, endowing the future, or sending underprivileged kids to camp, nothing beats cash as the preferred method to drive all projects.

Long live the king! However, gifts of real estate, business interests, equipment, cars, securities, and even personal property can all be viable means of reducing tax burden while benefiting the Scouting program.





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Scouting: A Game of Teamwork, Leadership, and Communication

Sure, Scouts go camping but what do they do besides whittling and cooking while they're in the outdoors?

When faced by challenges, Scouts not only use practical outdoor skills, they're given opportunities for real problem solving which translates into an ability to deal with whatever life throws their way.

It's fascinating to watch young people communicate these days. Technology and social media in particular has rapidly changed the way we communicate – reducing conversations to 140-character tweets, six-second Vines and, of course, all of the abbreviations, acronyms and emojis.

Great leaders often set themselves apart as expert communicators. They develop an ability to get the message across in a way people understand. Learning these diverse methods offers our Scouts the opportunity to sharpen both the communications and leadership skills that will serve them well later in

life – and potentially connect with a wider universe of people in a meaningful way.

A recent column in the *Washington Post* reports that the new Sign, Signals and Codes Merit Badge is a “throwback” that gives young people skills they rarely learn today while giving them an opportunity to teach older generations about new forms of communication. We're always looking for teaching opportunities for Scouts, but it's also fascinating to think about all of the ways Scouts teach and inform us as parents and leaders. This is a good reminder that we have to provide activities that kids today

want to do for our organization to thrive and grow – and our Scouts are helping to show the path forward. The new badge is just one example of how we can take youth-guided innovation and make it work with our long-standing methods to deliver a quality Scouting experience that appeals to a variety of interests.

Our merit badge program offers many opportunities to have a lasting impact in value areas of peer leadership opportunities, goal setting and achievement; positive role models; ideals and opportunity to serve.

For more information, contact Aaron Bedell, Development Director and CFO, at (432) 570-7601 or email aaron.bedell@scouting.org.