

NESA Committee Spotlight:

Pathway to Adventure Council



In the six years since the BSA celebrated its centennial in 2010, dozens of local councils have merged. In many cases, that has meant combinations between struggling suburban councils and their big-city neighbors. Last year, for example, the Chicago Area Council merged with three neighbors — Calumet, Des Plaines Valley and Northwest Suburban — to form the Pathway to Adventure Council.

While council mergers help the BSA operate more efficiently and serve more kids, they also shift the landscape for people who identified with councils that have closed or changed their names. If you became an Eagle Scout in the Calumet Council, for example, you might not see an obvious home for yourself in the PTAC.

That is, until now.

Almost from day one, the new council's NESA committee, NESA PTAC, has

strengthened ties and reduced barriers. Beginning in January 2015, a core group of 15 volunteers from the four previous councils — many of whom had never met before — began meeting monthly to develop a unified vision for their group. That group has since doubled, and it continues to grow today.

"It took a lot of brainpower on all our leaders' parts — a lot of thought, a lot of intentionality around what we were doing and how to make it work," says Jac Charlier, chairman of NESA PTAC.

Two priorities quickly emerged: holding social events for adult Eagle Scouts and hosting a recognition dinner for new Eagle Scouts.

To emphasize that NESA PTAC would serve the whole Chicagoland region, the first social event was held at a barbecue restaurant in the Indiana suburbs — and was very well attended.

"It signaled very clearly that NESA PTAC was not NESA Chicago," Charlier says.

This March's first Scout Recognition Dinner sent a similar signal to current Scouts and Scouters. More than 500 people attended the event, which recognized not only new Eagle Scouts from across the council, but also high-achieving Venturers and Sea Scouts.

In other words, NESA PTAC is proving the new council is far more than the sum of its parts.

"You can't say you're about something bigger if you don't demonstrate it in action," Charlier says. ☐

The 500 Club

Last December, Ben Kenyon became the 500th Eagle Scout in Troop 890 of Dallas. To celebrate the milestone, the 55-year-old troop held a Texas-sized celebration in May. On hand were Chief Scout Executive Mike Surbaugh, Congressman Pete Sessions

(the father of two Troop 890 Eagle Scouts), more than 60 of the 500 Eagle Scouts, and a host of current and former Scouts and leaders. Attendees renewed friendships, swapped stories and reflected on the impact the troop has had on its members and community. But they also looked ahead. In fact, the color guard for the evening was composed of the first members of the troop's next cadre of 500 Eagle Scouts. ☐



BSA FILE PHOTOS (12)

ONLINE NETWORK FOR ALUMNI

Have you visited the all-new Scouting Alumni Network 1.0? The service available at nesa.org — went live this year, replacing the online network NESA used since 2008. With a few clicks or taps, you can reconnect with your old troop or connect for the first time with Scouting alumni from your city, college or industry.

And it doesn't matter if those connections are former Eagle Scouts. For the first time, the network is joining forces with the Scouting Alumni Association, the Order of the Arrow and the Order of the Arrow alumni groups affiliated with the four high-adventure bases. Check it out today at nesa.org.

NESA LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS

- Philip R. Engelmann South Florida Council
- Don E. Hall Trapper Trails Council
- Michael T. Heitke Glacier's Edge Council
- Craig Hudson Orange County Council
- Marc Hudson Orange County Council
- Paul Hudson Orange County Council
- James C. Karegeannes Daniel Boone Council
- Franklin L. Lobb Mount Baker Council
- Paul G. McLaughlin Lewis & Clark Council
- Dustin Randell Phelan Chief Seattle Council
- Matt Scherocman Dan Beard Council
- Charles A. Spain Sam Houston Area Council
- Dr. Michael S. Stecker Old Colony Council
- Robert Tarquinio, Ph.D. Western Los Angeles Council
- Andrew D. Willis East Carolina Council

JOIN THE NESA LEGACY SOCIETY

By making a contribution to the national NESA endowment, you can help fund Eagle Scout scholarship programs. NESA committee service grants provide networking opportunities and more. (Note: You must first become a West Fellow in your local council.) Visit nesa.org/PDF/542-121.pdf for more information. All NESA LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS will be recognized with a certificate, a pin to wear on their Scout vest and name recognition on the pages of *Eagles' Call* magazine.