

Iowa's Real Wealth

Iowa is known for its wealth of corn and its wealth of golden prairies. But its real wealth is embodied in the character and grandeur of its youth — the boys and girls of today who will be our stalwart citizens of tomorrow. It is fitting, then, that two Boy Scout Councils should have adopted names indicative of the wealth of Iowa.

Tall Corn Area Council

The Boy Scout movement in the Tall Corn Area Council began with isolated troops in Des Moines, and in 1914 the Des Moines Boy Scout Council was organized, with J. F. Shaffer as president. From 1916 to 1921 Gilbert H. Gendall served as Scout Executive. He was succeeded by Fred G. Davie, who served until 1924. Meanwhile, in 1923, articles of incorporation were filed for the Des Moines Council, and three years later neighboring counties were brought into the Council. In 1932 the Des Moines Area Council, the Tri-Valley Council of Newton, the Tall Corn Council at Ames, and the Central Iowa Council at Marshalltown were consolidated to form the Tall Corn Council with executive offices in Des Moines. In 1950 this Council was incorporated under the name Tall Corn Area Council. This

Council now embraces thirteen counties — Boone, Dallas, Guthrie, Hardin, Jasper, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Polk, Poweshiek, Story, Tama, and Warren. In area this is one of the larger Boy Scout Councils of Iowa. It also has the largest population and the largest Scout enrollment of any Council in Iowa.

Camping and recreation have been leading factors in the Scout program of this area. For a number of years the Des Moines Council maintained overnight camps at Woody Acres near Urbandale, at Camp Uunali at the present site of the Veterans Hospital, and at "Kiwanis Cabin" on Four Mile Creek, east of Des Moines. Summer camps were located at Ledges State Park in Boone County, and at "Mitigwa" — an Indian name meaning "Maker of Men" — originally located near Adel in Dallas County. Later a hilly, picturesque spot ten miles north of Woodward became the site of a new Camp Mitigwa. This has grown and developed until the Tall Corn Area Council now owns more than 340 acres of land, and Camp Mitigwa is one of the outstanding Boy Scout Camps of the Middle West.

In 1925 Carl A. Bryan became Scout Executive, serving until 1928. Other Executives who have served the Council include Joseph S. Fleming, Joseph C. Underwood, James Hiner, N. Harold West, Marion Disborough, and Melvin Tudor.

Throughout the history of the Tall Corn Area Council various committees have functioned to promote the Scouting program. More than a decade ago the Council adopted what is known as the Six Operating Committees, with the chairman of each committee serving as a member of the Executive Board. These committees have functioned very effectively. Indeed, throughout the years adult leadership has contributed much to the character and leadership of Scouting in this area.

More than 20 leading citizens have served as president of the Council, and more than 60 adult workers have received the Silver Beaver award. Meanwhile, interest and membership in the Scouting program have advanced steadily. The first record, in 1917, shows a total of 28 Troops with 648 Scouts. In 1934 there were more than 100 Troops with 2,091 Scouts, and two Cub Packs with 58 Cubs — a total of 2,149 boys in the Scouting program. By 1946 these numbers were materially increased to 147 Troops with 3,169 Scouts, and 63 Cub Packs with 2,396 Cubs — a total enrollment of 5,561 boys. Since that time, under the leadership of Scout Executives Marion Disborough and Melvin Tudor, the Scout budget has increased to \$86,230 and enrollment has advanced to more than 8,500 boys with more than 2,700 adult leaders. Thus scores of communities are richer and thousands of Boy Scouts are stronger because of the effective work of the Council.

Prairie Gold Area Council

Boy Scout activities began in what is now the Prairie Gold Area Council as early as 1913, with Scout troops at Webster City, and perhaps elsewhere. One of the early Scout Camps was held near Spirit Lake in 1916, by Scouts and their leaders from Estherville. In 1918 J. L. Anguish was employed as Scout Executive at Fort Dodge. In 1922 the "Fort Dodge Council" embracing eight counties — Buena Vista, Calhoun, Humboldt, Kossuth, Hamilton, Pocahontas, Sac, and Webster — was organized, with C. E. Middleton as Scout Executive.

E. H. Zeller served as Executive from 1924 to 1927, when Bob Heath came to serve as Scout Executive for a period of fourteen years. During this period a thirteen-acre area of land along Lizzard Creek, near Fort Dodge, was acquired by the Council, and a substantial lodge was erected making "Lizzard View" a valuable summer camp site. In 1937 the Council sent thirty-six Scouts to the National Jamboree at Washington, D. C. For these boys Scouting came to have a national and international significance. In 1941, with W. R. Cummerford as Scout Executive, the Council was expanded to include eleven additional counties — Cherokee, Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, Greene, Ida, O'Brien, Osceola, Palo Alto, Plymouth, and Sioux — and was named "Prairie Gold Area Council." Encouraged by a grant of \$2,500 made

by the Frank Phillips Foundation, the Council extended its professional staff to include four Field Executives. Further encouragement came when E. C. Bertram of Spencer gave the Boy Scouts 160 acres of wooded land along the Little Sioux River near Peterson in Clay County.

In 1943 James I. Dolliver, now United States Representative in Congress from the Sixth Iowa Congressional District, was president of the Prairie Gold Area Council.

Summarizing the merits of the Boy Scout program Mr. Dolliver has said:

Scouting is an Outdoor Program. Every boy likes to be outdoors. Scouting gives a boy a chance to develop his own skills and interest. The merit badge system permits every lad to develop his own individual talents. Recognition is given for achievement. This satisfies a desire that is common to every boy. These factors have made the Boy Scouts the finest youth program in the world today.

From 1944 to 1947 Lyman Ossam served as Scout Executive. Meanwhile the Scout Summer Camp was transferred to Minnewahkan State Park near Spirit Lake. With Jack Rhea as Scout Executive in 1947 the Council purchased 123 acres of rolling grassland near West Okoboji. This site was officially dedicated in 1950.

Also in 1950 a contingent of 243 Scouts and leaders of this Council attended the National Jamboree at Valley Forge. This was the largest Council representation at the Jamboree with the excep-

tion of that from New York City. Total membership of the Council then numbered about 4,000.

In the fall of 1950 Mark Perkinson came as Scout Executive. Under his leadership interest in Scouting has continued to make progressive advancement. The Prairie Gold Area Council now embraces nineteen counties, more than 11,000 square miles of fertile Iowa soil. It has a population of almost 350,000. The Boy Scout membership in this area is about 4,600. There are 69 Cub Packs, 113 Scout Troops, and 5 Explorer Scout Posts — a total of 187 units. More than 100 of these units are in small rural communities of northwest Iowa. The Council budget for 1953 is in excess of \$46,000.

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