

# Katy Eagle Scouts Grown Up



*Local physicians, business owners, and community leaders reflect back on the lasting benefits of being an Eagle Scout*

Written by Steve Straughter  
Select Photography by Marisa Hugonnett

Stan Stanley, Commander Rick Davison, CDR  
David Rypien, USN, Cory Davison, Brian Foster





On a mountainside in New Mexico, Stan Stanley, then 17 and a new Eagle Scout, helped battle a forest fire alongside his fellow Eagle Scouts. His troop had been visiting the Filmount Scout Ranch for junior leader training for two weeks when lightning had struck, igniting the forest. "We did not have the tankers that they have today, and the staff at the camp asked us to help fight the fires," Stanley recalls. "They did not put us in great danger by any means, they monitored us nearby, but that was an adventure 52 years ago that I will never forget."

### Shaping a Community

Stanley's experience as an Eagle Scout has shaped the man he has become. A 55-year veteran of the Boy Scout program, Stanley now proudly owns his own business, Stanley Signature Signs, and is a tireless volunteer in the Katy area. He was recently honored by Katy ISD, which named Stanley Elementary after him for his commitment to the local community. The skills and values scouts learn as they progress from Cub Scouts to Boy Scouts, and finally to the highest and most prestigious rank of Eagle Scouts, transfer into all aspects of their lives later on. Only 1-2 percent of all scouts ever attain the rank of Eagle Scout, which comes after years of hard work, dedication, and sound moral character. In Katy, over 1,000 Eagle Scouts have helped shape the community, committing their time and resources towards building a better future for all. They hold positions ranging from astronauts, Olympians, filmmakers, surgeons, and governors, to mayors, CEOs, attorneys, engineers, and physicians.

### The Youngest Eagle Scout

Mennen Gallas, M.D., a Katy area plastic surgeon and owner of Gallas Plastic Surgery and Vein Center, vividly recalls his introduction into scouting. "My older brothers were already scouts, but I was too young to join, so they allowed me to be a sergeant at arms until I was able to join at 11," he says. When he was 13, Dr. Gallas and his older brothers, then 15 and 17, received national recognition for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout at the same time. At the time, Dr. Gallas was the youngest scout to ever become an Eagle Scout.

### Defining a Career Path

Gallas has continued to incorporate the values he learned in scouting in his professional life, crediting his decision to pursue a career in medicine to his experience as a scout. "I can recall that through my experiences with Boy Scouts and camping, I learned what type of plant life was edible and what was poisonous and first aid skills," he says. "It was through those first aid skills that I was influenced to go into medicine. Getting that old first aid skill award gave me the ability to deal with cuts, scratches, broken bones, and twisted joints on camping trips. It opened me up to medicine, and I have not looked back since."

### High Achievers

Scouting promotes youth leadership, personal development, and community service, says David Rypien, an Eagle Scout who was named Boy Scout of the Year in 1973. Having a background in

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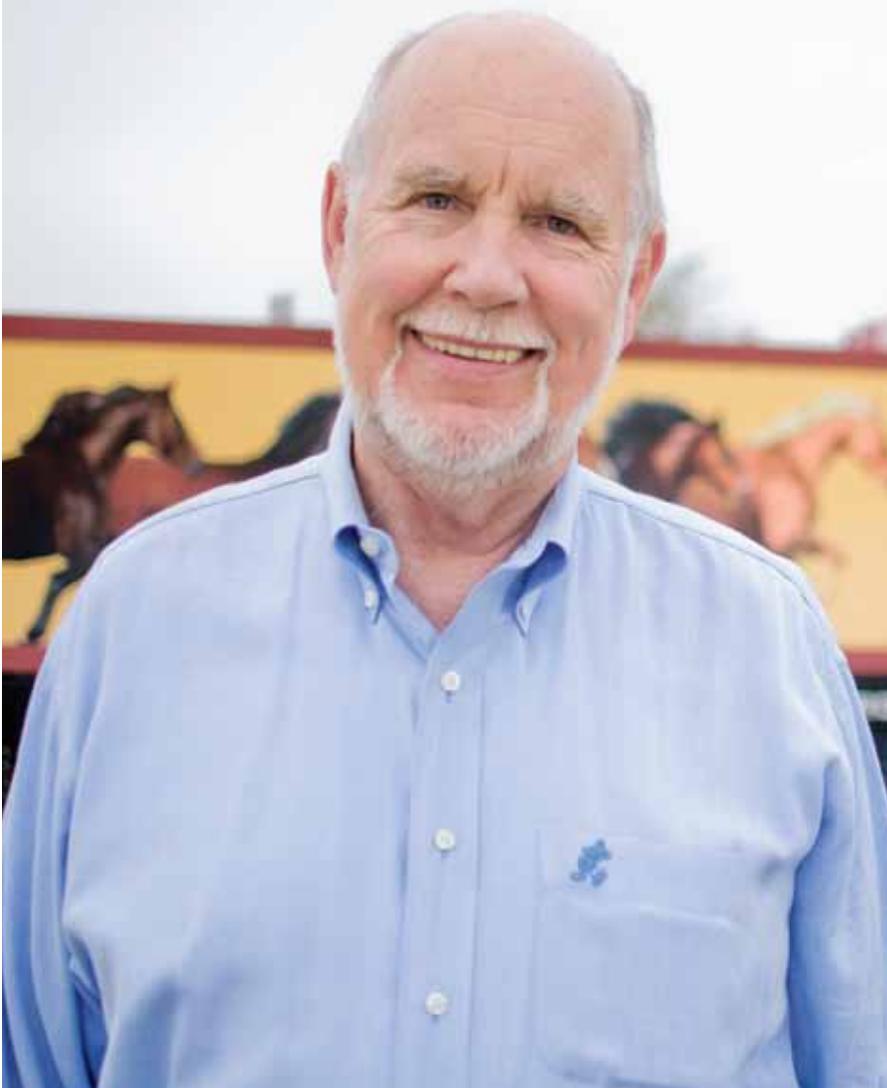
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Katy ISD named an elementary school after Stan Stanley



Stan Stanley poses with two of his fellow Eagle Scouts in December 1958



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Rick and Cory Davison are father and son Eagle Scouts



Brian Foster today

“Only 1-2 percent of all scouts ever attain the rank of Eagle Scout, which comes after years of hard work, dedication, and sound moral character.”



Brian Foster with his father, Charles Foster

scouting not only helps teach vital skills, it can also help come time to find your first job because of the leadership skills employers know scouts have acquired. "The biggest thing is it gives you leadership skills in the sense of being able to attack a job," he says.

For Rypien, that sense of leadership proved especially important during his 15 months of service in Afghanistan. As a commander in the U.S. Navy, Rypien served as chief engineer from 2006-2007. When he first began training with the navy, his fellow service men and women noticed his sharpness of skill. "They'd ask, 'Where'd you learn how to do that?'" Rypien says. "And the answer is, 'I learned it in Boy Scouts.'"

### A Lifetime of Benefits

Eagle Scout and Katy resident Brian Foster also points out the lasting importance of scouting on a young man's life. As the West Division Commissioner of Boy Scouts of America and a project management litigation consultant, he knows scouting greatly impacted his success in life. When his own son expressed an interest in joining Boy Scouts, Foster was enthusiastic. "What he did not know was that Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts were part of my plan for his growth and development," he says. "The fact that he saw it as his idea was just that much better!"

By the time a young man reaches the rank of Eagle Scout, he will have experienced 21 different career opportunities. "When you're 31 years old, in a downturn economy, and you lose your job, being an all-state football player or a state champion does not go very far

in describing your leadership skills, but the skills that you learn as a scout give you a better chance to survive," Stanley says.

Foster also encourages parents to look at scouting as a valuable after-school activity for their children. "What is the benefit of program X, Y, or Z, to the development of the young man over the next five years or their lifetime?" he asks. "Is the time they spend each week in football, baseball, basketball, or soccer going to give the long-term benefit, or are there benefits to be found in scouting that they may be overlooking? The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to instill in the youth values and leadership to become participating citizens of the world." **KM**

*STEVE STRAUGHTER is a securities trader and writer. He currently resides in Katy.*

### EAGLE SCOUT QUIZ

This local scout earned his Eagle rank in the 1930s. He is a lawyer and a well-known banker who founded Tradition Bank and is still Chairman of the Board. Can you name him? (Answer below\*)

*Ed Vickery*

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Katy Mayor Don Elder became an Eagle Scout at age 14 and says the program taught him many important qualities including leadership, discipline, and caring for others.



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# Katy Eagle Scouts

*In Katy, the Eagle Scout tradition continues. We salute these Katy Area Eagles Scouts of 2009 and look forward to seeing how they shape our community and world.*

- |                                |                                 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Alexander Krusemark, Crew 444  | Matthew Smith, Crew 1078        |
| Alexandre Wenzel, Troop 584    | Michael Jaska, Troop 424        |
| Andrew Edelman, Troop 230      | Nicholson Black, Troop 925      |
| Ashton Bishop, Troop 73        | Patrick Cardillo Jr., Troop 567 |
| Benjamin Bills, Crew 1050      | Reid Witt, Troop 424            |
| Blake Ardrey, Troop 209        | Robert Howell, Troop 230        |
| Brandon Beals, Troop 230       | Robert Kirkwood, Troop 230      |
| Brian Eckstein, Troop 925      | Robert Svoboda, Troop 584       |
| Christopher Frame, Crew 1078   | Ryan Crawford, Troop 1288       |
| Connor Bancroft, Troop 1047    | Spencer Fairwell, Troop 780     |
| Connor Lamb, Troop 567         | Steven Rupe, Troop 209          |
| Craig Brandenberger, Troop 209 | Steven Zoeller, Troop 1288      |
| Ian Golightly, Troop 209       | Taylor Felt, Crew 780           |
| Jason Cummons, Troop 424       | Taylor Jiron, Crew 1065         |
| John Hernandez, Troop 1065     | Taylor Leander, Troop 230       |
| John Huttenhoff, Troop 424     | Thomas Dante, Troop 925         |
| Jonathan Bomar, Troop 925      | Thomas Nunez, Troop 73          |
| Kevin Cooke, Troop 230         | Thomas Spain, Troop 584         |
| Kristopher Keiser, Troop 230   | Vance Anderle, Troop 1031       |
| Kyle Hampton, Troop 925        |                                 |
| Kyle Henry, Crew 444           |                                 |
| Kyle Lemons, Troop 73          |                                 |
| Kyle Taylor, Troop 590         |                                 |
| Logan Lickteig, Troop 1288     |                                 |
| Matthew Barton, Troop 567      |                                 |

Visit [texasskiesdistrict.org](http://texasskiesdistrict.org) to learn more or to reconnect with local scouts.

## Eagle Scout Checklist

What does it take to achieve the Eagle Scout Rank?

- ✓ Earn 21 merit badges in areas like emergency preparedness, first aid, citizenship, community, nation, and personal fitness.
- ✓ Receive recommendations from various leaders.
- ✓ Complete a service project for a church, school, or community organization.
- ✓ Participate in a scoutmaster conference.
- ✓ Live by the principles of the scout oath and law daily.
- ✓ Successfully complete an Eagle Scout board of review.
- ✓ Be an active member of the troop for at least six months after achieving the rank of Life Scout, serving actively in a position of responsibility such as a den chief, patrol leader, or instructor.

Adapted from [scouting.org](http://scouting.org)

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