Preface

The Purpose of this Thesis
"Understanding the early history of women leadership roles in the Scouting movement will allow us to see how far we have come in a world that was once led only by men. It will give us an insight on how, by allowing females to hold leadership positions, it strengthened the Scouting program by their volunteering and setting forth good examples and role models for our youth today.

This thesis will show the early history through present day analysis of women leadership roles in the Boy Scouts of America within the borders of the United States. It will portray the first female scout leader, her struggles and accomplishments and how she paved the way for women to hold scout leadership positions across America in today's modern society."

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Chapter 1

Why should we learn about Female Leadership in Scouting?

To understand and know all there is to know about the Boy Scouts of America, it is necessary to go back to the beginning when the BSA originated. Until we look at how and when it came into existence, we cannot fully understand why we should want to know about the allowing of females as leaders in the BSA and just what impact it has had on the Scouting
movement.

The Boy Scouts of America was inspired by and modeled on the Boy Scouts, established by Robert Baden-Powell in Britain in 1907. It also borrowed ideas from Sir Ernest Thompson Seton, and James E. West, who was the first Chief Scout Executive of the Boy Scouts of America. He exemplified Ralph Waldo Emerson's observation that "an institution is the lengthened shadow of one man." Scouting today is the "lengthened shadow" of more than three decades of the visionary and dedicated leadership of Dr. James E. West. The Scouting movement was also inspired by and modeled the YMCA, and a number of other "Scouting" organizations for boys that had sprung up in the decade of the 1900s in the United States and abroad.

William D. Boyce    Sir Baden-Powell    Sir Earnest Thompson Seton
James E. West

The Boy Scouts of America was established on Feb. 8th, 1910 by William D. Boyce. Some assert that the boy vanished into the fog after refusing Boyce's money and never saw him again, but others declare that the two arranged another meeting, so that the boy could show Boyce to the headquarters. Still others hold that the boy was uniformed at the time. The truth of the matter is shrouded in years of Scouting legend and may never be known for sure.

Boyce, along with two other businessmen, Edward S. Stewart and Stanley D. Willis, incorporated the Boy Scouts of America on February 8. The first troop was Troop 1, based at a YMCA. Edgar Robinson, an important administrator of the YMCA in Chicago, agreed to help Boyce organize the Boy Scouts as a national organization.
In 1910, Seton, Beard, Baden-Powell, Boyce, Robinson and others called a national meeting of people involved in youth work. The first national officers of the BSA were selected. It was agreed that the President of the United States (then William Howard Taft) was to be the Honorary President of the BSA, a tradition that is still followed today. 1

About two-thirds of the men who became Scoutmasters during the infancy of the Boy Scouts of America already had some experience in working with boys. They were Sunday school teachers, public school teachers, and leaders of the Young Men's Christian Association, Boys Clubs, and various small organizations for boys.

It was a good thing they had dealt with boys, because they did not get much instruction in how to lead Boy Scouts. The pioneers were pretty much on their own for training. A lucky few were trained by the BSA's national leaders during the organization's first two years--1910 and 1911. In those years about 40 Scout leaders were invited to a two-week summer camp at the YMCA's camp at Silver Bay on Lake George in upstate New York. They received instructions in Scoutcraft and troop management from leaders of the young BSA, including Chief Scout Ernest Thompson Seton, Daniel Carter Beard, and Chief Scout Executive James E. West. In 1912 similar Scoutmaster schools were held at Lake Geneva, Wis.; Blue Ridge, N.C.; Cos Cob, Conn., as well as at Silver Bay. 2
For thousands of men who organized or took over troops in the early years, such training was only a dream. They had to rely on the Handbook for Boys (the first edition of the BSA Scout handbook) for program ideas until 1913 when a Handbook for Scoutmasters was published and Scouting magazine was born.

The official handbook and magazine became sources of Scoutcraft ideas and inspiration. So did Boys' Life magazine, which the BSA began publishing a year earlier. Many Scoutmasters looked to their own interests for program ideas. The first troop in Logansport, Ind., for example, had "sergeants" and "corporals" instead of patrol leaders and assistant PLs because the Scoutmaster was a Spanish-American War veteran.

Albert Drompp, who joined the troop in 1912, remembered: "He wasn't too well acquainted with Scouting. His activities for us were marching and camping--things he knew something about." Scoutmasters who were amateur astronomers, ham radio operators, or had some other hobby often featured it in troop meetings. Scoutmasters looked to each other for help. By 1912 Scoutmasters in Philadelphia; Paterson and Jersey City, N.J.; Tulsa; Cleveland; and Kansas City, Mo., had formed associations that held regular "round tables" to thrash out problems. Scoutmasters also exchanged ideas in a Scouting magazine page called "From the Scout Field."
The training of Scoutmasters was gradually formalized during the 1920s. A Volunteer Training Service was added to the education department, and by the mid-1930s a Scoutmaster's Training Course was available to local councils. Although training for Scouters evolved somewhat slowly in the movement's early years, the BSA eventually developed one of the country's outstanding training programs for volunteer leaders. No one appreciated the importance of training more than Chief Scout Executive James E. West, who once was asked to list the three most pressing needs of the BSA. He wrote, "1--training; 2--more training; 3--even more training."

Katherine A. Pollard became the first female Scoutmaster. She led Boy Scout Troop 13 in Milford, Connecticut, from 1973 to 1975. There will be much more about Katherine Pollard in the Chapter 4.

Until 1967, men could hold any Cub Scout leader position except Den Mother; now men can hold any position. Until the late 1960s, women were generally excluded from registered Cub Scout leader positions except Den Mother. Women have been permitted to be Cubmaster only since 1976, and Webelos Den Leader only since 1988. Today, men and women can hold any CubScout leadership position. It is interesting that the BSA did not allow women on the national Cub Scout Committee until 1969!

Meanwhile, girls in the United States during this time had two options similar to Boy Scouting: Camp Fire Boys & Girls (formerly called Camp Fire Girls, founded in 1911), and Girl Scouts of the USA (formerly called the Girl Scouts of America, founded in 1912).

Camp Fire began almost immediately after the Boy Scouts, and its founders included Julia Seton (Ernest Thompson Seton's wife), Lina Beard (Dan Beard's sister), and James E. West,
the BSA’s new Chief Scout Executive. Originally for girls only, the program is now coed, though its youth membership is still overwhelmingly female.

The Girl Scouts was founded by Juliette "Daisy" Low in 1912, and is the only other US youth organization with a Congressional Charter (granted in 1950). The girls' version of Scouting is called Girl Guiding in most countries, to differentiate it from the boys' program (the Boy Scout and Girl Guide movements were both founded by Baden-Powell). The Scout/Guide distinction has been lost in many countries, where boys and girls are members of coed troops. In other countries, the Boy Scout and Girl Guide programs have a common national organization, but with separate troops for Scouts and Guides. In still other countries (such as the US), the boys' and girls' programs are completely separate at all levels. Daisy Low created additional confusion by choosing to call her organization Girl Scouts instead of Girl Guides.

It's important that we know this much about the Girl Scouts because of its' founders and the connection it has with the male leaders for the newly-formed Boy Scout Organization.
Chapter 2

What was Accepted and Expected of Women in the 1900s?

In the earliest days of the Cubbing program, women were allowed only limited participation. They were not allowed to register with the BSA. They could not hold the role of Cubmaster, Committee member, or Commissioner. Those positions were reserved for registered men only. 1930 Women served "unofficially" on mother's committees and dinner committees and assisted the Boy Scout Den Chief who ran the den meeting.

Below are some of the major developments in the evolution of the role of women in the Cub Scouting movement:

- 1936 Den mothers could register with BSA, but registration was optional.
- 1948 Registration for den mothers became mandatory. The position of den mother was well established and an essential part of the Cub Scout leadership.
1952 Women participated in the training sessions of the Second Philmont Cub Scout Conference.

1960 The 1st den mothers conference was held. Forty women chosen from across the nation met under the leadership of the Cub Scout Division, Feb. 18-19 in the BSA national office, New Jersey.

1962 Den mothers conference at Schiff Scout Reservation in New Jersey, March 28-29.

1965 Eleanor Parsons Pratt becomes the first woman professional Scouter as the curator of museums for the Philmont Boy Scout Ranch in Cimarron, NM. She was born in Connecticut in 1915. She went to college for the first time at age 50 after which she began her 10 year career with the BSA. Eleanor died on July 6, 1998 after a lengthy and wonderful life of 83 years.

1967 The title of den mother was officially changed to den leader to include both male and female leaders of dens. The den leader coach position was created to give Cub Scout packs a leader and coordinator of den leaders. Women or men were allowed to register as den leader coaches.

1969 Den leader coach conferences are held at Augustus House and Schiff Scout Reservation in New Jersey to establish training curriculum. The first women were named to the national Cub Scout Committee: LaVern W. Parmley and Elizabeth C. Reneker. A study was conducted by BSA on the subject of "Awards for Women."

1971 Silver Fawn Award for women was introduced for use at the council level.
Elizabeth Augustus Knight, Marjorie Meriweather Post, and Ann W. Nally were the first "Fawns" of record. In 1971, 382 Silver Fawn awards were presented. During the next 2 years, 1,634 Silver Fawn awards were presented. In 1974 BSA discontinued their use after presenting 439 awards in the first 6 months of that year.

- 1972 The first standardized den leader coach conference was held at Schiff Scout Reservation on May 6-7. Thirty-six women participated with the staff of the Cub Scout Division including Bob Untch, Marlin Sieg, and Ed Hesser. The faculty included Janice Butcher, Joyce Port, and Ann W. Nally, chaired by Solveig Wald Horn. This conference was a forerunner of many regional training events.

- 1973 The national Executive Board voted to allow women to serve as institutional representatives, Cub Scout Roundtable Commissioners, Cub Scout Unit Commissioners, unit chairmen, and unit committee members, den leaders, assistant den leaders, and den leader coaches. The first women appointed to the national Executive Board of the Boy Scouts of America were Elizabeth Augustus Knight and LaVern W. Parmley. Women were appointed to regional and area Cub Scouting positions.

- 1974 The Silver Beaver Award replaced the Silver Fawn; women and men now receive identical awards.

- 1975 The first Silver Antelopes awarded to women were awarded to LaVern W. Parmley and Ann W. Nally
1976 The First Silver Buffalo awarded to a woman was awarded to LaVern W. Parmley. The first couple to receive the Silver Antelope award from the Northeast Region were John C. Horn (1967) and Solveig Wald Horn (1976). A second couple received the same awards later from the Western Region: Laurie Dievendorf (1980) and Robert W. Dievendorf (1981). Positions for women were expanded. Added to the list were Cubmaster, assistant Cubmaster, and all commissioner positions. Women were authorized to participate in Cub Scout Training Wood Badge courses and Scouter Wood Badge courses.

1980 Women were active in the planning and operation of the 50th anniversary program of Cub Scouting. Over 50 percent of the national Cub Scout Committees project committees for the Golden Jubilee celebration were made up of women and Cub Scouters from various parts of the nation.

1984 The first woman to serve on the Boy Scouts of America National Court of Honor was Ann W. Nally Today the position of Chief Scout Executive and BSA President are still the domain of men, but it’s only a matter of time! Many women are holding top level professional positions within the BSA. On the volunteer side, there are more registered women in all levels of Cub Scouting than men. In some Packs, the lack of male participation has become problematic. Many units now focus on ways to attract more men during their annual membership drives.
Let's remember that all troop adult leader positions have always been open to men. For over 50 years, women were excluded from troop operation except for an optional "mothers auxiliary."

More recently, women were allowed to hold any troop committee position but not Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster. Finally in 1988, the BSA opened these positions to women also.

As a result, all adult positions in the Boy Scouting Division (as well as in the other Divisions) are now open to both men and women.
Chapter 3

How Did the Scout Movement Suffer Due to the Unacceptance of Women?

When Lord Robert Baden-Powell began the Scouting program in 1907, he had in mind a way to teach boys to be successful men. He trained men to be scout leaders called adult leaders or Scouters today. Now, on the one hundredth anniversary of Boy Scouting in America, many of those leaders are female.

Scouters come in a variety of ages, races, shapes, backgrounds and genders. Women have been leading Cub Scouts pretty much since the Cub Scouts were introduced in 1930. Participation by women in Boy Scouting has been more recent.

It was 1988 when the Boy Scouts of America finally and voluntarily removed all gender restrictions from adult leadership positions. Female Scoutmasters are still in the minority, but ever more women hold positions on the committees that run scouting. Merit Badge Counselors, Treasurers and Advancement chairpersons are frequently female. Females are teaching training sessions, running the monthly Scouter meetings called Roundtables and doing a variety of other important jobs for BSA.

There was a time when females could not earn Scouting’s highest awards or hold jobs as
Scout Executives. Those days are a faint memory now. Scout Executives are full time employees
of BSA who administer the daily business of the national, regional, council and district levels of
the organization.

The real world contains not just males, but also females. It behooves young men to learn
to deal with the different world view of women. It is no longer true that their future boss will
definitely be a male. It is no longer true that all their college professors will be male. It is still
ture that most of them will date or marry a female and interaction with females on a daily basis
is an absolute certainty.

The oldest of male Scouters still see the advent of women in the Scout troops as
unnecessary, even intrusive. Discrimination against women in the BSA has gone underground
and it is not generally a public topic of discussion. Female Scouters find varying degrees of
acceptance depending on the troop or even the area of the country in which they find
themselves.

It would be difficult to run the BSA without women now. Camping and hiking are not
activities that only men enjoy, but women frequently know as much as or more than their male
counterparts. Modern families often have no male in residence at a home.

Families with two parents with both working struggle to find the time to volunteer with
the Scouts. It is difficult enough to fill the volunteer needs of the organization without
eliminating 51% of the available adults. Women add a new dimension to Scouting. What if the
sisters and daughters could participate? The whole organization might find itself in the twenty-
first century.
The Role of Women in BSA Leadership and Camping

Women have played an important role in the success of the Boy Scouts of America. Without their direction, Cub Scouting would never have flourished as it has. From the earliest days, many Boy Scout troops have benefited from the operation of mothers' auxiliary Organizations in which women was predominant, such as parent-teacher organizations, which, traditionally have sponsored a high percentage of all Scouting units. At the present time, virtually all volunteer positions in the Scouting movement are open to adult females. However, in the continuing study of history to keep Scouting as an effective educational program, the BSA has adhered to the principle of developing boys of Webelos Scout, Boy Scout and Varsity Scout age needs close association with adult males who can provide models of manhood.

Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting and Varsity Scouting were carefully designed to meet the emotional, psychological, physical, and other needs of boys at various stages in their development. This was done after consideration in a study backed by professional psychologists and other child development professionals.

Scouting's high school-age program, Exploring, traditionally has encouraged co-ed involvement in membership leadership as an important part of activities.

Therefore, the Rules and Regulations of the Boy Scouts of America limits the following volunteer positions to male, Scoutmaster, assistant Scoutmaster, Webelos Den Leader, Assistant Webelos Den Leader, Varsity Coach, Assistant Varsity Coach, and Loan Scout friend and counselor. All other positions in Scouting are open to women.

Because of this, only male leadership is authorized to accompany Boy Scout troops, Varsity teams, or Webelos dens in overnight camping expeditions. Female leadership is authorized in all other camping activities for Cub Scouts, Explorers, and Family Camping.
Who Paved the Way for Women to Hold Scout Leader Positions?

Catherine N. Pollard paved the way for women to be leaders today. She became nationally known in the United States as well as abroad for her legal battle against the BSA for rejecting her Adult Leader Application to become Scoutmaster. Her struggle to become Scoutmaster took her 14 years to accomplish. Her son was in her troop.

Photos of Catherine are rare; however, articles about her struggle to become Scoutmaster are plentiful. Not much is mentioned about her early years, other than where she was born, who her parents were, and of course, her death in 2006.

She received much recognition across the United States during her struggle to become a registered leader. Below is one of many:

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February 17, 1988
A Woman Wins Her 14-Year Fight To Be Scoutmaster
By RICHARD L. MADDEN, Special to the New York Times
Published: February 17, 1988

MILFORD, Conn., Feb. 16 — Catherine N. Pollard got out her old Boy Scout uniform with the Troop 13 patch on the shoulder last weekend and announced proudly, "I can still get in it."

After a 14-year fight to become the nation's first official female scoutmaster of a Boy Scouts troop, Mrs. Pollard, who is 69 years old, is nearing her goal. The Boy Scouts of America, which
won a suit in the Connecticut courts last year denying Mrs. Pollard her scoutmaster's post, has changed its policy of more than 70 years and will allow women to become scoutmasters. Filling a void

Mrs. Pollard, expressing surprise at the organization's reversal, said today that she hoped to start a new troop "within a month" in Milford.

Scouting officials said that if a valid community organization, such as a church or a parent-teacher organization, agreed to sponsor a troop and have Mrs. Pollard lead it, the Boy Scouts would accept the application.

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For five years Catherine served as the leader of Troop 13. During this time she was not registered as the troop's Scoutmaster. In both 1974 and 1976, Catherine attempted to register as the troop's Scoutmaster, but each time her application was rejected. The BSA stated that boys needed male role models and she would not be able to provide that. Finally she decided to file a complaint against the BSA for sex discrimination with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

When she filed the complaint, she was forced to relinquish her leadership role in Troop 13. Once again, no man stepped forward to take over as Scoutmaster. As a result, the troop was forced to disband.

The following information comes from www-bsa-discrimination.org

When informed of BSA's actions, Catherine, who by this point was a 70 year-old grandmother,
said, "We straightened out a wrong. I think that it is a great thing that happened and I think it's about time, after trying hard for 14 years to get this stupid situation straightened out," she told reporters.

"I do think this is marvelous because there have been women all over the United States, in fact all over the world, that have been doing these things for the Boy Scouts because they could not get a male leader, but we could not get recognition for the things we've done," she said.

In one news article, Catherine, a widow who lived with a son and daughter, described herself as a 'tomboy' "who enjoys camping, chops her own wood, drives a tractor and rides a motorcycle." Of course Catherine rejected BSA's role-model argument. "Who models the male in the first place?" she asked. "The mothers do. The fathers are out working." She added, "When you have a given ability to lead young people, you should be able to do it."

For her funeral in Milford on December 18, 2006, her casket was carried on a Milford fire truck. She had served the fire department as a volunteer in several positions, including bugler, for many years and when the BSA eventually allowed female Scoutmasters, it was the Milford Fire Department that sponsored a Boy Scout troop so she could be a Scoutmaster. She was the wife of the late John Pollard. She was born June 25th 1928 in Hartford. She was a music teacher, a member of the VFW Ladies Auxiliary, a member of the DAV Ladies Auxiliary and very active in her community where she lived in Florida until she died. She was the mother of 3 children and 10 grandchildren. 10
Chapter 5

Are All the Problems Solved Regarding Female Leaders in the BSA?

In 1961, the BSA’s National Executive Board approved females serving as committee members at all levels of the movement. Many local Councils continued to keep females from serving at any level other than at the unit level.

In 1972, with the introduction of the "Improved Scouting Program," female professionals and paraprofessionals were hired for the first time with most of them working as Cub Scouting or Exploring field executives or staffers. The summer of 1973 brought adult females to serve on Cub Scout Day Camp staffs for the first time as well as an expansion of females working at summer camps on staffs. Those women frequently wore the "Women's Reserve" badge of office
like those created for other "special category" of volunteers -- Physicians, Chaplains and Chaplain Aides. The emblems were freely available for purchase from local Councils -- there was no longer any restriction on its ordering or wearing.

Posted: Thursday, 11/19/2009: from Scouter.com/forum

"One of our Troop leaders has apparently told her that women aren't allowed in the Troop." 11 Statements such as the one above and copied from scouter.com are one of many that we will see on the internet today.

Are all problems solved regarding female leadership in the BSA? No, I don't think so. If it was, we would not be reading blogs or forums that suggest that women should not be Scoutmasters or Unit Commissioners or in Executive positions. In this modern day, all we have to do is click on the mouse and go to numerous websites to see the thoughts and opinions of fellow scouters across the USA. Many of these Scouters, mostly male, but some female, still believe that the "Boy Scouts of America" should be led by only men. However, there are also supporters that favor women in the Scouting Movement.

In 1972, with the introduction of the "Improved Scouting Program," female professionals and paraprofessionals were hired for the first time with most of them working as Cub Scouting or Exploring field executives or staffers. The summer of 1973 brought adult females to serve on Cub Scout Day Camp staffs for the first time as well as an expansion of females working at summer camps on staffs. Those women frequently wore the "Women's Reserve" badge of office like those created for other "special category" of volunteers -- Physicians, Chaplains and Chaplain Aides. The emblems were freely available for purchase from local Councils -- there was
Women's Reserve emblem worn between 1972 and 1988

A emblem was also designed for College Scouter Reserve members but was shelved when the Exploring program created a new category of Explorer Posts called "Collegiate Scouting".

In 1988, all volunteer positions were opened to male and female volunteers, and the "Women's Reserve" emblem became a relic of its past as an emblem denoting "female supporters of Scouting".

Below is from an article in Boy Scouts of America, Chief Seattle Council in celebration of the recent 100th Birthday celebration Scouting:

National Statistics – Females in Scouting leadership:
Of 298 Boy Scout councils in the country, only five women hold the position of Scout Executive. Nationally, there are 2,895 professionals, of which 487 (17%) are women.

The above statistics comes from a biography of Sharon Moulds, who is the highest ranking female in the nation. This biography was in celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the BSA.

no longer any restriction on its ordering or wearing.
Chapter 6

Where are we Now?

So, where does this male/female issue leave us hanging? Have we progressed and made Scouting better than it ever has been. Is there need for improvement? Are we still thinking logically when it comes to today's society or are we still living "old school"? Shouldn't we be thinking on keeping our good leaders we have and increasing our leadership as well as our membership? Isn't that what we all want.......to see the growth and interest continue to increase?

It was in the 1950s when the Den Mother officially assumed full control of the den, with the Den Chief becoming the helper. During this period, Philmont Cub Scouting courses were opened to women and the minimum age for Den Mothers and Assistant Cubmasters was raised from 18 to 21. The minimum age for Cubmasters remained as 21 years of age.

In 1967, Den Mothers became Den Leaders as men were also allowed to lead Dens. The first women were appointed to the national Cub Scout Committee in 1969. And by 1973, women were allowed to serve in all Pack positions except Cubmaster and Webelos Den Leader and their assistants. In 1976 women Cubmasters were permitted and in 1988 women were allowed to be Webelos Den Leaders, effectively removing all gender requirements for adult leadership roles in Cub Scouting.
While Women were involved in Cub Scouting from its earliest days, they did not even have an advisory role (officially or unofficially) to play in the Boy Scouting program. Because of the ages of the boys, BSA believed it necessary for the boys to be led by men. BSA felt that the presence of women in a program for boys of this age would only strengthen the feminization effects boys were subjected to in the female dominated educational system.

Once again, while BSA’s policies stated that there was no place for women in leadership roles in Boy Scout troops, there were women who filled those roles. Most of the time, these women did so without drawing attention to themselves. However, the Scouts, parents, chartering organizations, and some BSA professionals knew about them.

A few women did reach public notice and they are worth mentioning:

In 1975, Marjorie Ripple of Jessup, MD, had been serving as Cubmaster for Pack 471. When BSA found out about it, they wanted her removed. The Pack, with a membership of 22 boys, refused to take such actions and BSA revoked the Pack's charter.

For four months in 1975, Genny Newton of Ludlow, MA, served as the Cubmaster for Pack 181. The 26-year-old mother of four filed sex discrimination charges with the state's office of human rights. It is unknown how that case was resolved.

Pack 46 of West Hartford, CT, announced plans in September 1986 to appoint Judith Power as the Webelos Den Leader on October 1st. Upon notification of the planned action, BSA stated that the Pack's charter could be revoked. As there was another case pending before the Connecticut Supreme Court dealing with BSA’s ban on women leaders, no legal actions were taken by Power.
Of all the women who assumed the title of Cubmaster, Webelos Den Leader, or Scoutmaster, in full knowledge that their gender prohibited them from that leadership role, none was more well-known than Catherine N. Pollard.

Pollard, a grandmother, who had been involved with Scouting since 1950, became the Scoutmaster for Troop 13 (Milford, CT) in 1971. As stated in earlier, Pollard became Scoutmaster because, as in other similar cases, there were no men around willing to make the commitment to take the position. In 1974, she completed a BSA Adult application to be the registered Scoutmaster of Troop 13. BSA rejected her application and she filed a complaint against the BSA with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights. In 1984 the Commission ruled that BSA had to allow Pollard to register and remain Scoutmaster of Troop 13. BSA filed a lawsuit against the Commission, appealing the decision.

In the meantime, BSA forced Pollard out of the troop and the troop disbanded shortly thereafter in 1976. Why? No man was willing to be Scoutmaster. In 1987, Pollard's case had reached the Connecticut Supreme Court and on July 6th, the Court ruled that BSA had the right to bar women from leadership positions.

A few months later, in February 1988, the BSA National Executive Board voted to remove gender restrictions on all adult volunteer leadership positions. According to news accounts, one of the motivating factors was the "great cost to the organization, both in terms of money and in the perception of what we are."

Since this is the only legal case we've been able to locate that challenged BSA’s ban on women in certain leadership roles, it is difficult to understand this stated rationale. In terms of money spent, there have been far more spent on cases challenging BSA on the issues of sexual
orientation and religious belief.

Although there are some women holding top level professional positions within the BSA, it is a very small number. Few are in top management positions. On the volunteer side, there are more registered women in all levels of Cub Scouting than men. In some Packs, the lack of male participation has become problematic. Many units now focus on ways to attract men during their annual membership drives.

Currently, all Executive positions held at Irving, TX are by men. But, that has nothing to do with women and their leadership in the Scouting movement. There have been and will always be exceptional women in leadership roles in scouting, who have helped form, nurture and prepare the way for other female leaders to follow.

But without the female leadership that helped shape Scouting from the earliest days, we may not be to the level where we are today. Personally, until now, I never knew anything about Catherine Pollard or her struggles or that she even existed. It has made me really admire her and want her to become known and appreciated for who she was and what she stood for. When Catherine finally became recognized for her Scout Master position and at her death, women from various places sent her flowers thanking her for paving the way for them as leaders because the troops they were leading had been meeting secretly and they were acting as female Scout Masters.
Final Thoughts about Women in the Scouting Movement

As for me, I've been in Scouts now for almost 16 years. I joined Troop 456 when my son, Brett, crossed over into Boy Scouts. Brett is now an Eagle Scout. I was their first female leader. And even though I was fully accepted by the troop, I still had things said to me by other male leaders such as: "You shouldn't be wearing the Class A uniform", "You really should be a Den Mother", and "I don't think you should be a leader because you are female". I am employed by the BSA, and just in the last month, a call-in customer told me on a speaker phone, "All Boy Scout leaders should be men". After he said what he wanted, he hung up on me. There were two male witnesses who heard this and couldn't believe their ears and that there are still those that believe that Scouting is only for males. These remarks, however, make me stronger and even more persistent in my leadership roles and endurance. I want to point out.....these remarks did NOT come from Troop 456 and the leaders in this troop were and still are wonderful leaders to work with.

It's not always important that women be in the "front line" and be the "star" of the show, but it is important they be accepted as part of any leadership position, because everyone has a talent and a gift. In life's pursuits and trials, sometimes whenever a man just can't make a difference, a woman just may make that difference in a young boys' life in the Scouting world. And isn't that what we are all here for, male and female, to make the world a better place and make a positive difference in a young boys' life?
Footnotes


2 http://www.scoutingmagazine.org/issues/9809/art/wwas-b.gif

3 By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS Published: December 15, 2006

4 www.scouting.org History of the BSA Highlights Timeline

5 Sun Sentinel, Florida February 21, 1988

6 Weekly World News April 5th 1988, Volume 9, Issue 26 rare photo of Pollard

7 By RICHARD L. MADDEN, Special to the New York Times Published: February 17, 1988

8 Published: Thursday, December 14, 2006 MILFORD, Conn. (AP)

9 www-bsa-discrimination.org

10 Smith & Sefcik Funeral Home, 2006 Florida

11 Thursday, 11/19/2009: from Scouter.com/forum

12 Article in Boy Scouts of America, Chief Seattle Council in celebration of the recent 100th Birthday celebration biography of Sharon Moulds

13 www.scouting.org/Media/MediaKit/Bios.aspx