

# ORANGE COUNTY COUNCIL,



Prepared. For Life.

## BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA



### ORANGE COUNTY SCOUTING

*Prepared. For Life.*

Orange County's first American city was the birthplace of the Boy Scouts of America in Orange County. Anaheim had been laid out in 1857; just seven years after California became a state. In 1910, Elmore B. Douglass organized the first Boy Scout Troop in Orange County, the same year that the Boy Scouts of America was founded.

The earliest reference to Scouting in Orange County is in the *Anaheim Gazette* on October 20, 1910, which reports, "Scout Master Douglass is meeting with much success in the organization of a local troop of Boy Scouts."

In 1920, a group of civic leaders formed the Orange County Council, with headquarters in Santa Ana. One of the reasons for starting a Scout Council was to provide summer camp facilities for the local troops. In 1922, Camp RoKiLi was established in the San Bernardino Mountains. It was named for the three service clubs that did the most to help start the new camp -- the Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions. Camp RoKiLi served local Scout until 1964, and was then replaced by Lost Valley Scout Reservation (now Schoepe Scout Reservation at Lost Valley).

Orange County created our own Cub Scout program in 1928, two years before the national Cub Scout program was introduced. For older boys, Sea Scouting proved popular. In 1937, the Newport Sea Base was established on Newport Bay and has become one of the premier youth aquatic facilities in the state.

In 1943, the Orange County Council split. The northern communities formed the Northern Orange County Council, with headquarters in Anaheim. The southern area was renamed the Orange Empire Area Council. The line between north and south was roughly Katella Avenue.

The biggest Scouting event to ever hit Orange County was the third National Jamboree, held on the Irvine Ranch in 1953. It is the only time a Jamboree was ever held on the West Coast. Some 50,000 Scouts and Scouters from around the world attended. The 3,000-acre site was donated by the Irvine Company. It was located above the Pacific Coast Highway, from the Back Bay to MacArthur Blvd.. The main entrance road is still known as Jamboree Road.

In the late 1950's, under the leadership of Bill Spurgeon III, the Orange Empire Area Council created the first Exploring Post, a vocation opportunity for older Scouts. The first vocational post was chartered by the Helipot Division of Beckman Instruments in 1957. Within two years, the program had spread across the United States. In 1960, the first law enforcement post in the nation was chartered by the Orange County Sheriff's Department. It is still active today.

In 1972, the two local Scout councils merged and again became the Orange County Council. By the 1980's we were ranked as one of the 10 largest councils in the nation. In recent years, the Orange County Council has worked to provide opportunities to all of Orange County's youth. Many of the new programs are open to both boys and girls. Learning for Life, an in-school program was introduced in 1980 to reach students in inner city neighborhoods. Other programs serve older youth, and "at risk" groups.

Camping has remained a key part of the Scouting program. Since the 1970's, the Orange County Council has offered several camps, including the 210 acre, The Irvine Ranch Outdoor Education Center, Newport Sea Base, Oso Lake and Schoepe Scout Reservation at Lost Valley.