

NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA COUNCIL
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

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COLLEGE OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE

USING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES FOR SCOUTING



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COURSE OUTLINE

WHAT'S READILY AVAILABLE:

SOFTWARE

GRAPHICS AND DOCUMENT LIBRARIES

E-MAIL COMMUNICATION

DISCUSSION GROUPS AND FORUMS

IRC & CHAT

ONLINE SERVICES

INTERNET WEBSITES

BSA POLICY

WHY WEBSITES?

HOW TO FIND SCOUTING WEBSITES

WHAT RESOURCES ARE OUT THERE?

THE DARK SIDE OF THE INTERNET

SO A UNIT WANTS TO BUILD A WEBSITE

WHAT TO INCLUDE

WHAT TO THINK ABOUT

WHAT NOT TO INCLUDE

HOSTING ARRANGEMENTS

A FEW TIPS ON BUILDING A GOOD WEBSITE

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

USING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES FOR SCOUTING

WHAT'S READILY AVAILABLE:

SOFTWARE

Several Scouters have formed their own companies to produce and distribute software to assist units and districts manage record keeping tasks. Others have developed things as simple as bugle calls and screen savers. Some are free and some can be acquired for a modest fee (shareware). Generally all Scout Record Keeping software falls into the category of being shareware.

- Bugle Call Wave Files (<http://users.aol.com/randywoo/bsahis/index.htm>)
- Scout Tracker Software (<ftp://ftp.dartmouth.edu/pub/>)
 1. Pack Tracker
 2. Troop Tracker
 3. Ship Tracker
 4. Post Tracker
 5. Arrow Tracker
- Scouting Screen Saver (<http://www.netlink.co.uk/users/tovil/scouts>)
- Scoutmate Shareware and Others (<http://webcom.net/~bhowson/software.html>)
 - SCOUTMATE - U.S. Scout Troop Admin. Software - Shareware (DOS)
 - SCOUT TRACKER - U.S. Troop Admin. Software - Shareware (WIN)
 - WINDOWS TO YOUR PACK - U.S. Cub Pack Admin. Software - Shareware (WIN)
 - CUBMATE - U.S. Cub Pack Admin. Software - Shareware (DOS)
 - TROOP TRACER - U.S. Troop Admin. Software - Shareware (MAC)
 - SCOUT TRACKER - U.S. Troop Admin. Software - Freeware (MAC)
 - SCOUTWISE - U.S. Troop Admin. Software - Commercial (DOS)
 - SCOUT RECORD KEEPER - U.S. Cub, Scout Admin. Software - Shareware (MAC & WIN)
 - RANK N' FILE - U.S. Troop and Pack Admin. Software - Commercial (WIN)
 - TROOPMASTER - U.S. Troop and Pack Admin. Software - Commercial (DOS and WIN)
 - WINSOUT - U.S. Troop Admin. Software - Commercial (WIN)
 - SCOUTSOFT - U.S. LDS Scouting Admin. Software - Commercial (DOS)
 - EAGLEQUEST - U.S. Troop Admin. Software - Commercial (WIN)
 - TROOPER - U.S. Troop Admin. Software - Commercial (WIN)

- PATROL LEADERS ASSISTANT - U.S. Patrol Leader Software, supplements any Troop Software - Shareware (WIN)
- COUNCELOR KEEPER - U.S. Badge Counselor Admin. Software - Freeware (MAC & WIN)
- Software (<http://www.scoutwise.com> Scoutwise)
- Software (<http://www.america.net/~johnson/bsa134.html>)
- Troopmaster Software (<http://www.troopmaster.com>)
 1. PackMaster
 2. TroopMaster
 3. MBCmaster (Merit Badge Counselors)

GRAPHICS AND DOCUMENT LIBRARIES

File Transfer Protocol (FTP) Sites are the image and document warehouses of the Internet. Several FTP Sites are used to store information resources of value to Scouters. The most significant collections are held by the U. S. Scouting Service Project FTP Site and the FTP.ETHZ.CH Site.

Unless otherwise indicated below all of these FTP sites are what are know as anonymous FTP sites. Anyone with a computer can use telenet, an ftp client application, or a web browser to log into an FTP server as a guest and download files. If you use either Netscape Navigator Ver. 3.0 or higher or Microsoft Internet Explorer Ver. 3.0 or higher, you web browser's default configuration is set to log in anonymously. If you use an older browser, telenet, or an ftp client, login with "anonymous" as your username or user ID. Use your e-mail address as the password.

U. S. Scouting Service Project (USSSP) FTP Site

The U. S. Scouting Service Project FTP Site includes all the files that were on the pluto.utdallas.edu ftp site before its closure and has been significantly expanded since then. This FTP site includes an estimated 17,000 files, making it the largest collection in the world. You can access the USSSP FTP by using the following addresses:

Using A Web Browser	Using An FTP Client
http://clipart.usscouts.org	ftp1.scouters.com/usscouts

Due to large number of directories and files, I am unable to provide anything close to an adequate summary of the holdings of this site on this web page. The USSSP FTP Site is also available on a CD for those wishing to avoid lengthy download times for the large number of files there. The CD can be ordered at <http://www.usscouts.org/cd>.

The site administration team works constantly to improve the holdings of this FTP site. Contributions are encouraged and welcome. You send files to the appropriate site coordinator, as listed below:

Gary Hendra (hendra@macscouter.com) -- Mac clipart, Mac files, general site administration

Mike Bowman (mfbowman@usscouts.org) -- PC clipart, PC files

Chris Marcey (cmarsey@usscouts.org) -- ExplorerNet and site administration

Bill Nelson -- rec.scouting FAQ's

Bruce Chr. Johnson -- Sea Explorering.

The FTP.ETHZ.CH/rec.scouting/ Site

The ftp.ethz.ch/rec.scouting/ site is the official home site for the rec.scouting FAQ files and the next largest FTP repository of Scouting files.

You'll always find the newest versions of FAQ files here, often even before they get posted to rec.scouting. This archive also contains over 500 files related to scouting -- hints, history information, how-to's, stories, recipes, songs, information about major scouting events, etc. The clip-art directory is kept small due to ftp.ethz.ch's site policy.

This ftp site is operated by . Files may be uploaded to the /rec.scouting/incoming folder. If you do upload files, please send Danny Schwendener an e-mail message at dannys@iis.ee.ethz.ch to tell him what the stuff is and where to put the files. Make sure application specific files are uploaded in a binary compatible format, such as .bin or .hqx for Mac, or .zip for PC. Use your FTP client or Telnet in FTP mode, with 'anonymous' as the username, and your e-mail address as the password.

This FTP Site also operates a Gopher Server with the URL of gopher://ftp.ethz.ch:70/1ftp%3Aftp.ethz.ch@/rec.scouting/ .

FTP.IMP.CH/scouting Site

The ftp.imp.ch/scouting/ site is basically a mirror for ftp.ethz.ch site described above. The only discernible difference is the inclusion of some clipart. In the /scouting/art directory are the scouts1.zip, scouts2.zip and scouts3.zip clipart files. [These files are also available on Scouts-1, in both PCX and PICT.] There are also about 500 pictures - - scanned photos from finland, switzerland, south africa. scouting cartoons, knots, national signs from around the world, etc.

The FTP.ITC.UNIVIE.AC.AT/pub/scout Site

The anonymous ftp site, <ftp://ftp.itc.univie.ac.at/pub/scout>, contains a few pieces of clip art, in four different formats. These files are:

[/pub/scout/bsa_lilly.gif](#), [.ras](#), [.tif](#), and [.xbm](#)
[/pub/scout/czech_lilly.gif](#), [.ras](#), [.tif](#), and [.xbm](#)
[/pub/scout/eaglefeathers.xbm](#), [.ras](#), [.tif](#), and [.xbm](#)
[/pub/scout/international_lilly.xbm](#), [.ras](#), [.tif](#), and [.xbm](#)
[/pub/scout/norsk_lilje.xbm](#), [.ras](#), [.tif](#), and [.xbm](#)

The above list is the only Scouting related material that was found.

The FTP.CTS.COM/pub/mikey Site

The following information was obtained by Gary Hendra when logging onto this site:

"The files available in this directory are primarily of interest to Casio BOSS owners, DOS Wafflers, Boy/Girl Scouters, Amateur Radio Operators (Hams) and Pretty Good Privacy users.

Due to system constraints, files in this directory may be of a transitory nature, 'here today; gone tomorrow'. The Scouting directories at FTP.CTS.COM are:

[/pub/mikey/scouting](#) - general scouting site (small amount of information)
[/pub/mikey/scoutgir](#) - scout-girls-l list archive, and general list info
[/pub/mikey/smte](#) - Scoutmate information (see section 6)

The archive is maintained by mikey@cts.com

The FTP.NETCOM.COM/pub/jn/jnelson/cubs Site

The <ftp://ftp.netcom.com/pub/jn/jnelson/cubs> ftp site contains a few pieces of Cub Scout related clipart in .pcx format.

The SETON.COR.NET/pub/scouts Site

This site is maintained by Brian Davis. The [/pub/scouts](#) directory contains general purpose materials relevant to the Scouting movement. Contributions are welcome. Place any uploaded files in [/incoming](#) and mail a short e-mail message containing a brief description of the file to Brian at the above address.

The directory, /pub/scouts/clipart/bsapcx, contains the BSADSK PCX files. These files are unzipped and ungrouped. This means, if you need a few pieces of clipart, not the groups, this is a good place to get them. Remember to download these in binary format. Scattered throughout this very long list of files are the images from Aids to Scoutmastership and other sources. Five of the BSADSK disk images are here, as are .zip files of most other non-BSADSK clipart groups. It is difficult to tell if there is anything here that is not available on Scouts-L or USSSP, because it is not clearly organized. This FTP Site also has a related website at the following URL:
<http://circle10.cor.net/scouts/t117.html>.

FTP.US.NET/PUB/SCOUT Site

The <ftp://FTP.US.NET/PUB/SCOUT> site is the home of the Scoutware 1.0 software.

The MacScouter FTP Site

Gary Hendra's The MacScouter FTP Site at <ftp://ftp.macscouter.com>, provides a number of MS Word 5.1 for Macintosh documents covering a wide range of Scouting subjects. The booklet, Aids to Scoutmastership by Baden-Powell including all the graphics, is available on this site in MS Word format.

The [ftp.cam.org/users/malak/scouting](ftp://ftp.cam.org/users/malak/scouting) Site

Don Buchan, has a Scouting FTP Site at <ftp://ftp.cam.org/users/malak/scouting/> All of the documents currently on this site are zipped (ms-dos) text, so if you can unzip it, it's all useful under any platform. You will find that the stories.zip file has been incorporated into the Tall Tales and Campfire Stories page at <http://www.macscouter.com/Stories/TallTales.html>

The [rec.scouting](ftp://rtfm.mit.edu/pub/usenet-by-group/news.answers/scouting) FAQ Site

The <ftp://rtfm.mit.edu/pub/usenet-by-group/news.answers/scouting> site contains the rec.scouting Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) files.

E-MAIL COMMUNICATION

Many units and districts use e-mail to supplement telephone calling trees as a method of getting information out quickly. However, only about half of the households in any given community have computers with Internet service and less in economically challenged areas. For that reason, e-mail does not serve well as a primary means of communication to all Scouters yet. Although it does not reach all Scouters it does give online Scouters

the opportunity to exchange ideas with other Scouters from around the country and around the world through discussion groups and discussion forums.

Modem

To get started you will need to have a computer with a modem installed. If you do not already have a modem I would recommend that you go to the extra expense of buying a modem that moves data at 56,600 baud. Take your time, read the descriptions on the packages and compare prices. If you want to be able to do faxes from your computer, make sure that the modem can handle this too. Some modems will also be able to handle caller ID, voice mail, and other features. Pick the one that you think will best meet your needs.

Connectivity

Now that you have a modem, you are going to have to hook it up to a service that will give you access to the Internet. For ease of use, some of the online services may be a good bet for your first few months on the Internet. They tend to have the easiest user interface and take less time to learn. Most offer unlimited connection time at about \$20.00 a month. Once you get the hang of things, you can move on to what is known as an ISP (Internet Service Provider) in your area.

ISPs - Research before Buying

Most of your research will need to be done online. So if I want to get online, how do I research online? Many public libraries have computers connected to the Internet that you can use. Others have stopped by a friend's house and used a friend's computer.

If you are thinking about selecting an new ISP, it might be a good idea to stop by at ZDnet's Anchor Desk (<http://www.zdnet.com/products/ispuser/isp.html>) to review some critical summaries of what ISPs offer, how well their services meet needs, and more. This website will also give you some suggestions on things you should look for when selecting an ISP. Another source of information on ISPs is at ISP Review (<http://www.mindspring.com/~mcgatney/isprate.html>), which provides user reviews of ISPs that can be very critical at times (not responsible for content).

Finding An ISP in Your Area

If you want to skip all this and just get to a list of ISPs by State and Locality, then you probably should visit

Cyberspace Today (<http://www.cybertoday.com/cybertoday/ISPs/Products.html>) for a listing of ISPs by services offered,

ISP Meta List (http://www.herbison.com/herbison/iap_meta_list.html) for a listing of ISPs by locality, or

The Library of Congress List of ISPs (<http://www.loc.gov/global/internet/access-providers.html>), which also includes links to listings of local freenets.

Get All the Features

Typically an ISP should provide you with all of the necessary software to access e-mail, surf the web, and use FTP sites. Often they will provide you with "lite" freeware/shareware versions of software. If for example you are provided with Eudora-Lite, it is worth the extra money to upgrade to Eudora-Pro to handle your e-mail. At most major shareware websites you can download full featured versions of commonly provided software. If you opt for an e-mail connection using a FreeNet (local networks offering free e-mail access only without access to the web), you may need to buy your own connectivity software that will allow you to dial into local networks and emulate a compatible terminal for access. For more information stop by Mike Lewis' List of Freenets (<http://www.fcl.metronet.lib.mi.us/MIKEL/fn/index.html>).

Netiquette

Once you begin to use E-mail you will learn that netiquette is important. Messages in all CAPITAL LETTERS are regarded as shouting and generally frowned upon. The sparing use of all capitals for emphasizing a particular word in an appropriate context may be appropriate to express a strong feeling, but you need to be careful not to offend others unknowingly.

Likewise you will find that flaming (personally attacking an individual rather than an idea) is not acceptable in most forums and lists. Rude conduct is neither necessary or acceptable. Remember to live the Scout law online. Be courteous and kind.

Abbreviations You May See

You probably will also find some strange abbreviations in E-mail messages. To help you decipher them, here is a partial listing of common abbreviations:

- 7/24 24 hours, 7 days/week, full time
- AFAIK As Far As I Know
- BTW By The Way
- FAQ Frequently Asked Question(s)

- FWIW For What It's Worth
- FYI For Your Information
- HTH Hope this helps
- IBACS In Brotherhood and Cheerful Service
- IMHO In My Humble Opinion
- IMNSHO In My Not-So-Humble Opinion
- IMX In My Experience
- IRC Internet Relay Chat
- LOL Laughing Out Loud
- OTOH On The Other Hand
- RL Real Life
- ROTFL Rolling On The Floor Laughing
- RTFM Read The Fine Manual
- SO Significant Other
- WIITWD What it is that We Do
- WTH What The Heck
- WRT With Respect To
- TIA Thanks In Advance
- TTFN Ta Ta For Now
- YiS Yours in Scouting
- YMMV Your Milage may Vary

Some Jargon You May See

- | | |
|--------|---|
| Flame | A vitriolic attack in response to a post, generally on a personal level. |
| Lurker | Someone who reads the messages in a group, but doesn't post responses or join in the discussion. |
| Spam | An e-mail message (almost always an ad or personal) posted to a group of e-mail addresses or several groups which is clearly irrelevant to the group, unsolicited, and undesired. |

Ways of Expressing Feelings/Emotions

You may also run across hieroglyphic-like punctuation marks that look like :-). These are not slips of the fingers on the keyboard, nor are they electronic noise, but they are smiley faces. If you turn your head to the left, you see that the colon makes up the eyes; the nose is a hyphen; and the mouth is a parenthesis. Substituting a semicolon for the colon ;-), gives you a winking smiley face. There are many other variations on the smiley face, but most of the others are not used very often.

- :-) Your basic smilie. This smilie is used to inflect a sarcastic or joking statement since we can't hear voice inflection over the net.
- ;-) Winky smilie. User just made a flirtatious and/or sarcastic remark. More of a "don't hit me for what I just said" smilie
- :-(Frowning smilie. User did not like that last statement or is upset or depressed about something.
- :~I Indifferent smilie. Better than a Frowning smilie but not quite as good as a happy smilie
- :> User just made a really biting sarcastic remark. Worse than a :-).
- >:-> User just made a really devilish remark.

DISCUSSION GROUPS AND FORUMS

Scouts and Scouters frequently share common interests through e-mail based discussion groups. These groups are great for sharing information on cooking, camping, campouts, Eagle projects, service projects, trips, and much more.

You'll find many experienced Scouters who are willing to share their knowledge and many helpful tips. Unfortunately you'll also find some self-appointed experts that may not be as reliable as you'd like.

E-mail discussion, just like any other discussion is valuable, but you have to get to know the folks involved and use some discretion in deciding what information to rely on. For policy related matters it is usually best to consult with your professional and commissioner staffs in your Council and District, particularly when it comes to matters related to BSA Policy and health & safety. For example, many local Councils will have policies developed based on risk assessments and local laws. And you'll find that policies related to advancement vary from Council to Council. For example, in some Councils you'll find that Eagle Boards of Review are conducted entirely by a District and in others the board is conducted by the Troop with District Representatives.

The following graphic is taken from the “The NetCommish” website and illustrates a comprehensive listing of e-mail discussion groups and Usenet newsgroups. This listing is available online at <http://members.aol.com/netcommish> under NetResources. You can click on one of the discussion groups listed to get information about the group and detailed information on how to subscribe to a group.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ■ APO-L | ■ N&W.CA/NV OA-L |
| ■ Arrow-L | ■ OA Brotherhood-L |
| ■ bsa-centralcal-net | ■ oa-central-region-net |
| ■ Bowline List | ■ OA Vigil Honor-L |
| ■ BPWeb List | ■ Patch-L |
| ■ Canoe List | ■ Philmont List |
| ■ DENSCOUTS (Denver) | ■ Philmont PSA-List |
| ■ DPRV-L | ■ Scouting-NL |
| ■ DPSG (German) | ■ ScoutNet-PenPals |
| ■ E-Scouts | ■ ScoutsCan-L |
| ■ Embers | ■ SCOUTS-DK |
| ■ Escoteiros-L (Brazil) | ■ Scouts-ES |
| ■ Explorer-Net | ■ Scouts-Europe |
| ■ Global ScoutNet | ■ Scouts-L |
| ■ Guiding Mailing List | ■ Scouts-LDS |
| ■ J97scouts | ■ Scouts-New England |
| ■ Jambo01 | ■ Scouts-UMC |
| ■ Jambo97 | ■ Sea Base List |
| ■ JOTA-L | ■ SPEJDER-L |
| ■ J-Scouts | ■ UseNet News Groups |
| ■ Juilette | ■ WAGGGS-L |
| ■ Junak-L (Czech) | ■ WDBadge-L |
| ■ NCAC-L | ■ Webmasters |
| ■ NELCnet | ■ WJChile |
| ■ NOAC98-L | |

How do they work?

Generally you send an e-mail to the person who maintains the e-mail discussion group list and request membership.

For example, to subscribe to Scouts-L you would send an e-mail to:

LISTSERV@tcu.edu

and include the message

Subscribe Scouts-L Your Name.

The listowner generally will send you a set of guidelines for using the list.

Members then send a message to the list and the the message is relayed to each member of the list. Often you will get 50 or so e-mails a day. You can delete items that are not of interest to

you and read the ones that have information that you think would be helpful to you. If you find something interesting you can respond back directly to the person that sent the e-mail or to the group.

IRC & CHAT

Internet Relay Chat (IRC) is a multi-user online chatting system that allows users to talk to other users all around the world via the Internet. If you have an Internet Connection that is running TCP/IP and an IRC client application, you can join in the fun. My favorite IRC client application is mIRC. Even if you don't decide to use mIRC, you may want to visit their website and make use of their excellent primer on IRC basics and their excellent Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) files.

Some good servers for IRC connections are IRC.COLORADO.EDU, IRC.IO.ORG, IRC.ESKIMO.COM, and IRC.MIT.EDU. The port number used by IRC servers is usually 6667.

IRC users are identified by nicknames of their own choice. Nicknames may be at most 9 characters long. The nickname is set via preferences or the NICK command in your IRC client. If you choose a nickname already in use, you have to set a different nickname. Some users have registered their nicknames with the NickServ database. If you get a message from NickServ that your nickname is in use, you will have to choose another.

Communication on IRC is done via Channels and Private Messages. Channels have names starting with # (public channels) and & (local) and usually up to 12 characters long. You can see a list of the channels currently in use via the /LIST command issued to your IRC client. As soon as you join a channel with the /JOIN command, everything you type is sent to that channel and seen by all other users on that channel. You will see what the others type, respectively. There are over 2000 IRC channels. Of interest to us is the #scouting channel. You can join the discussion by issuing a "/join #scouting" command to your IRC client or selecting #scouting when prompted by more sophisticated programs.

Each October Scouters use IRC to conduct what is known as Jamboree on the Internet (JOTI).

In 1997 several networks carried JOTI and were linked by a program called SL. This enabled all participants, on any net, to converse with others. Here is a listing of the nets and channels that carried JOTI:

- Undernet - #scouts
- Dalnet - #scouting_around or #scouting
- IRCNet - #scouting
- EfNet - #scouting
- NewNet - #scouting
- ScoutLink - #linked

The next Jamboree on the Internet will probably be carried at the same time as Jamboree on the Air (JOTA - Ham Radio) in mid-October. If someone knows the specific dates, I'll post them here.

If you want to try using an IRC you may find the three help files listed below very useful. Please use the MacScouter FTP site to retrieve a copy of any of these files. You may reach these files at ftp.macscouter.com. If for any reason these files are not available, you may send a private e-mail to the author of the files, Scouter Jess Olonoff, at jolonoff@gate.net and request the same by filename. Jess Olonoff will send files to you as soon as he can.

Filename	Description
PRIMER	An excellent IRC Primer perfect for first time users and those who would like to know more about IRC without paying for a book! 2,172 lines
IRCFAQ	Frequently asked Questions regarding IRC - 439 lines.
OTHERS	Info and World-Wide listing of servers - 204 lines.

ONLINE SERVICES

America Online (AOL)

The Scouting Online Forum on American Online can be reached by using AOL keywords. Keywords for the Scouting Online Forum on America Online are SCOUTS or SCOUTING. Apple II users will need to use the keyword PIN, then select Scouting Online from the menu. AOL has a library of text and graphics files that can come in very handy. You will find sample ceremonies, reference material, .pcx files and much more. To get to these resources follow the steps outlined below.

Getting Scouting Goodies on AOL

1. At the menu bar pick "GO TO"
2. On the pull down menu pick "Keyword" and type "Scouting"
3. Pick Scouting Library
4. Use the "List More" button to keep going down the list

5. You will find at least three types of unit management software, dozens of graphics sets in .tiff, .pict, .pcx, and .gif format for both BSA and Girl Scouting. You will also find a rich assortment of program files on almost every subject you can imagine.

Compuserve

Compuserve has an excellent resource software resource library for Scouting with files dating back to 1986. You could literally fill your hard disk with information that you might want to download from this library. To get to this software library, use the "go to" command to pick "Scouting" and then open the software. The files include hundreds of .pcx and .gif files for graphics lovers; hundreds of text files on all sorts of subjects and copies of database software designed for Scouting. The databases found here are designed to help manage a unit's records. You can download the following for example:

1. PackTracker
2. Troop Tracker
3. Ship Tracker
4. Post Tracker
5. Arrow Tracker
6. CUBSYS
7. SCOUTSYS
8. VENTSYS
9. CUBMATE
10. SCOUTMATE

To get to the real Scouting Goodies on COMPUSERVE

1. Select "GO"
2. Type in "Scouting"
3. Pick the icon for software libraries
4. Here you will find unit management programs, graphics of all sorts, program files, etc.

Delphi

Delphi no longer offers a Scouting area. It was tried for awhile and did not prove viable.

GENIE

The following information was provided by Olan Watkins (o.watkins@GENIE.GEIS.COM), a member of the SCOUTS-L discussion group some years back. It has been rumored that Genie has discontinued its Scouting Section, so it is possible that this information is no longer viable:

In general the Genie Scouting Section is divided into discussion topic areas. There is about an equal division of areas for Boy Scouting and Girl Scouting, with a somewhat smaller area reserved for Exploring and Sea Scouting. There are topic areas for camping, advancement, camp cooking, Order of the Arrow, OA Flap and CSP trading, Cub Scouting, Sponsor Problems, Flag Protocol, and Safety concerns. On the Girl Scouting side, there are topics for each group such as Brownies, Cadets, etc.

Genie has recently expanded the scouting area into two adjacent categories because of the popularity of the discussions. One category is reserved for information exchange and the discussion of scouting in theory. The other is a networking category, where our participants share their experiences of what works and doesn't with co volunteers from across the country.

The software library currently contains hundreds of informational files that have been uploaded by our subscribers. These range from clip-art, databases, music files, and archives of bulletin board discussions. Another feature of GENIE is the Real Time Conference (RTC). They host a scouting volunteer RTC every Sunday afternoon where leaders come together on-line to chat in a virtual "face-to-face" environment. It is also a place for special events. If you would like to learn more about our service, please write to the systems operators at either address below:

f.corradino@genie.geis.com or j.margul@genie.genis.com

Prodigy

The Prodigy Scouting Forum: On Prodigy: Jump Service Clubs BB, click on "Choose a Topic" and select Boy Scouts.

INTERNET WEBSITES

BSA POLICY

Date: Jun 29, 1995

To: Scout Executives

From: Jere Ratcliffe, Chief Scout Executive

Subject: **Computerized Communications Networks - The INTERNET**

The position of the Boy Scouts of America regarding the Internet is as follows:

At this time, the National Council, Boy Scouts of America, does not sponsor, provide or hold official space for disseminating information of any kind regarding programs, activities, resources or lists of names of unit leaders or chartered organizations on the Internet or other computerized communication networks.

The Boy Scouts of America disseminates information through regional offices and local councils to chartered organizations, unit, leaders, and youth members.

For example, Exploring magazine published and distributed four times annually is the official national communications tool for unit leaders and youth members registered in the Exploring program. Similarly, Scouting magazine provides a more generalized format for BSA programs and activities.

Individual units, youth, and adult members act on their own as private individuals and do not represent or serve as agents of the BSA at any time, especially when disseminating information over computerized communication networks (Internet, etc.).

At this time a National Council task force is evaluating the issue of alternative communication methods such as the Internet. After a full and thorough evaluation, the findings of this task force will be made available to all local councils.

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cc: Regional Directors, Group Directors, Area Directors, Division Directors

WHY WEBSITES?

- Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- Relatively inexpensive way to give out information and update information
- Huge increase in numbers of people relying on websites to obtain information in preference to other media
- Can easily use pictures, graphics, and color to present information
- Living encyclopedia of knowledge available to users with over 70 million websites online

HOW TO FIND SCOUTING WEBSITES

• Traditional Web Search Engines

- <http://www.altavista.digital.com> Alta Vista
- <http://nearthnet.gnn.com/wic/best.toc.html> Best of the Net
- <http://www.excite.com> Excite
- <http://www.hotbot.com> HotBot
- <http://www.infoseek.com> InfoSeek
- <http://lycos.cs.cmu.edu/> Lycos Search Engine
- <http://www.mckinley.com/> Magellan
- <http://www.metacrawler.com> Metacrawler
- <http://home.netscape.com> Netscape Search Site
- <http://www.opentext.com> Open Text Index
- <http://www.webcrawler.com/> Webcrawler
- <http://www.yahoo.com> Yahoo

• Specialized Scouting Index Websites

- <http://members.aol.com/netcommish> The NetCommish
- <http://compass.scouters.com> Scouters.Com
- <http://www.bsa.scouting.org> Boy Scouts of America
- <http://www.scout.org> World Organization of Scout Movements
- <http://inter.scout.net/> InterNetional Scouting
- <http://www.emf.net/~troop24/scouting/otherbsa.html> Troop 24, Berkeley, CA

WHAT RESOURCES ARE OUT THERE?



Welcome to the World Scout Movement!

[Europe](#) | [North America](#)

Please pick the site closest to you

SCOUTING IS...

[What is Scouting?](#) What do Scouts do?
See how Scouts worldwide are involved in meeting real community needs.

25 MILLION SCOUTS, BOYS AND GIRLS, IN 217 COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES

The [January '98 country list](#) shows some interesting new facts: How many Scouts and leaders are in each country?

When was Scouting founded? When did each county become a member of World Scouting?



THE LEADER'S LIBRARY

Here's a [list of some of the publications](#) of the World Scout Bureau. Most are for national leaders, but some can be useful to unit leaders, and some contain practical activity ideas.

WHERE TO STAY IN EUROPE'98

The March 1998 issue of this Guide to over 280 [European Scout campsites and homes](#) is a valuable resource for all those who want to organize a scout camp abroad or to volunteer as a camp staff member.

NEW





BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

**WELCOME TO THE
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA**

Welcome to the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America on the World Wide Web!

We're here to tell you about Scouting and provide you with a few games and activities along the way. If you're a boy between the ages of 7 and 20, you might be interested in one of the Scouting programs: Tiger Cubs, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, or Explorers. Maybe you're a parent interested in being selected a Scout Leader. If you meet our standards of membership and leadership, there may just be a place for you in Scouting!



[19th World Jamboree!](#)

THE DARK SIDE OF THE INTERNET

- Net Stalkers
- Computer Viruses and Virus Hoaxes
- Scams and Cons
- Disinformation/Rumors

SO A UNIT WANTS TO BUILD A WEBSITE

WHAT TO INCLUDE

- Where you are located - City/County and State
- Chartered Organization
- Adult Leaders

- Activities and Programs
- Calendar of Events
- Pictures
- Links related to content
- How to join information
- How to support information (FOS)
- Sell the adventure of Scouting

WHAT TO THINK ABOUT

- What is your purpose in having a website?
- What do you want to accomplish?
- What information do you want to make available?
- What policies should you have for content?
- What policies does your chartered organization have?
- Who will maintain the content to keep it fresh and current?
- Who will answer e-mail generated by the website or screen e-mail?1
- Where will you host the website and how will you fund it?

WHAT NOT TO INCLUDE

- Information that would adversely impact the privacy of Scouts
- Many units do not disclose the names of youth members
- Never give addresses and telephone numbers of youth members unless the page is at least password protected
- Personal information about individual Scouts; e.g., sports, hobbies, activities, schools - keep the focus on what the unit does and adult contacts

HOSTING ARRANGEMENTS

The screenshot shows a web page with a title "The NetCommish" in a stylized font, followed by "Free Website Hosting". Below the title is a URL: <http://members.aol.com/netcommish>. The main heading is "POSSIBLE FREE WEBSITE HOSTS". A list of links follows, each with a brief description of the hosting service and its features or limitations. The links are: <http://www.bsa.net> (Anglefire), <http://www.granoladisk.com/> (Geocities, 2mb, Yosemite and Heartland neighborhoods), <http://www.fortunecity.com> (6mb), <http://www.gamma4.com> (Lets Scout units have up to 5 MB), <http://www.hotr.com/>, <http://www.scout.net/>, <http://scouter.org> (Requires Microsoft FrontPage), <http://www.vhm.com/~joefox> (No up currently, may be available later), <http://wbs.net>, and <http://xoom.com> (5mb). Below the list, there is a paragraph recommending a comprehensive list of free web page resources at <http://www.creighton.edu/~bsteph/pack114/library/freepgs.html>. The final paragraph discusses consulting the agreement with the ISP for access to the Internet and limited free web space, noting that the page is hosted on AOL.

A FEW TIPS ON BUILDING A GOOD WEBSITE

- Start simple with a single page - get it online early (don't try to develop a complex website before going on line); e.g., Tell who you are, how to find out about meetings, and how to join.
- Use graphics sparingly - text loads faster
- Avoid too many gimmicks in favor of getting information on the screen quickly
- Put the most important stuff at the top of the page - many people will not scroll down
- Update regularly and keep content fresh
- Notify your audience that you have a web page and how to get to it
- Use e-mail and flyers to let folks know that new information is on the site
- Register your website with major search engines to help people find you
- Be careful about accepting a hosting arrangement where the host company can put advertising on your page. Sometimes the advertised product may not be consistent with the values of Scouting.
- Visit other websites and borrow successful ideas and ways of presenting information
- Let the Scouts have a hand in building the website or take over as webmasters
- Make sure that it is easy to navigate from page to page and back to your home page (links to the home page on every page help)
- Try to use the same style and headings on each page to give all of your web pages an identity with your site.
- Monitor content to make sure that it reflects the goals and purposes of Scouting - this is a very public window on Scouting. Make it a good window.
- Don't sweat it, if isn't perfect - websites are always under construction

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS