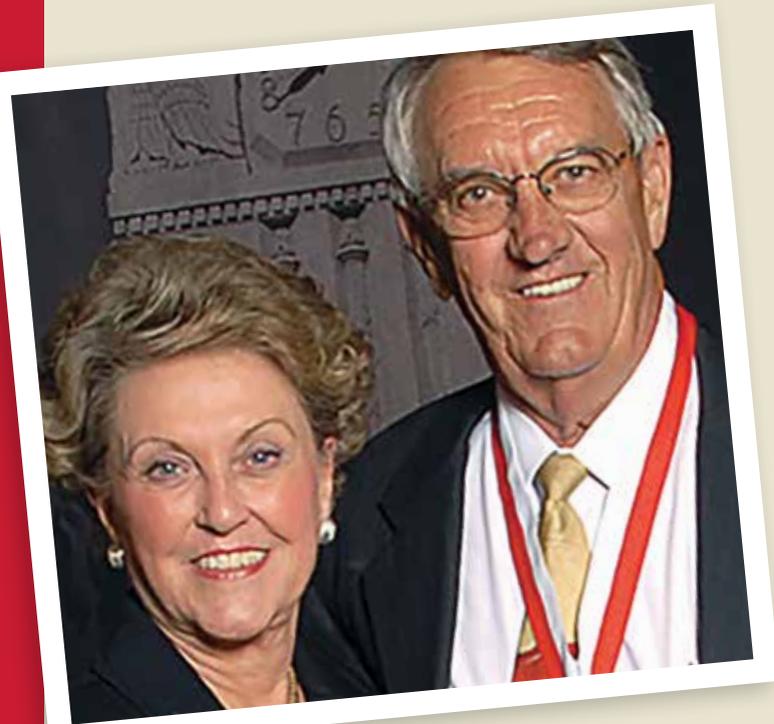


Lonnie Poole



His experience as a Scout and leader has inspired him to give back.

Lonnie Poole was a businessman and entrepreneur before leaving grade school. In fact, the founder of Waste Industries — a solid waste disposal company that began in 1970 in Raleigh, N.C. — has worn many hats throughout his life, including that of a businessman, pilot, boat captain, husband, father and, of course, Boy Scout.

Poole affectionately refers to friends and neighbors he

knew as he was growing up in the 1940s as the “mule people,” those he knew from a time when locals described the size of one’s farm by counting the number of mules that helped plow their fields and harvest crops. An entrepreneur from age 12, Poole sold produce and tobacco that he grew on his parents’ farm in North Carolina. Around age 13, his business had earned him enough to pitch in half the

funds for a \$950 Farmall Cub tractor that helped his farming business take off. But that tractor wasn’t used just for farming.

“When I really got into Scouts,” Poole says, “the guys in my troop would use that tractor to pull our camping gear through the woods!”

Like many boys his age as he was growing up, Poole was introduced to Scouting in grade school. His family would visit his grandmother and grandfather Suitt in Garner, N.C., on Sundays after church, and when Poole saw the Scouts of Troop 90 unloading their camping gear in the Garner Baptist Church parking lot after a campout, he asked Mr. Purvis Jones, the Scoutmaster, what he needed to do to join. The next thing Poole knew, he and five of his friends he recruited from Mount Auburn Elementary School were members of Troop 90, and Poole was well on his way to the Eagle Scout rank. He achieved that honor in December 1951.

“All those guys were very competitive, and we had been since first grade,” Poole recalls. “When we all found ourselves in eighth grade in Garner — with girls who were both smart and competitive, just like us — Scouting helped me through it. The boys from Auburn and the girls from Garner have stayed together and frequently meet at the class of 1955 reunion.”

Poole remembers that earning all those merit badges to reach the Eagle rank wasn’t too tough, but one particular badge gave him a little trouble.

“I was all done with every requirement except one: the Camping merit badge,” Poole says. “My Scoutmaster asked me when I was going to turn it in, but I kept telling him I was having a hard time getting 40 nights of camping in. Every time I would get close to 40, something would come up, such as a thunderstorm or a cold snap. When he told me that the required 40 nights didn’t have to be all at once, well, I felt a little silly. But I had made the requirement just the same!”

After high school, Poole attended North Carolina State University, where he was selected for flight school while an Army ROTC cadet during his senior year.

“That was a big fork in the road for me,” Poole says. “It wasn’t at all what I had planned to do with my life, but I did get that private pilot’s license, and the ‘airplane people’ I met because of that big turn in my life are still with me to this day.”

Poole’s flying experience led him to serve in the U.S. Army in Hanau, Germany, around 1961 — when he came to another fork in the road that led him back to Scouting. A strong suggestion from his commanding officer landed Poole the position of

Scoutmaster for a troop of 90 sons of military parents.

“I wound up hiking all over Germany with the Scouts,” Poole says. “My first role as Scoutmaster was really fun — flying to explore possible campouts throughout Europe.”

More recently, Poole followed yet another fork in the road, this one leading to a group of friends he calls his “car people.” As a Scouter who keeps a watchful eye on developments in Scouting from two local councils — the Occaneechee Council of Raleigh, N.C., and the Central Florida Council of Apopka, Fla. — Poole has given much of his time and treasure toward ensuring youth have the opportunity to experience Scouting. Besides service on local council boards of directors, including a term as Occaneechee Council president, Poole is an active fundraiser for the Boy Scouts of America. His “car people” include antique automobile enthusiasts who join



him in donating valuable cars to benefit the BSA.

“We auction them off,” he says. “All that money — more than \$500,000 for camperships — goes back to the councils. Somebody else might help build a camp, but I have sold cars that enabled a lot of kids to go who otherwise would not.”

Poole’s interests in helping Scouting make a transformational difference in the lives of young people extend to the national level, as well. He is the benefactor of Lonnie Poole Gateway Village, the launching point for all Scouting

adventures at the Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve.

Both Poole’s sons were also Scouts. Ven earned the Arrow of Light Award as a Cub Scout, while Scott earned the Eagle Award in 1981.

Speaking from the experience of being a Scoutmaster himself, Poole is quick to praise those volunteer leaders who give so freely of their time and talents: “They are the true heroes of our organization,” he says. “My Scoutmaster, Purvis Jones, will live forever in my mem-

This bronze statue at the Lonnie Poole Gateway Village near the Scott Visitor Center is a welcome sight to those who visit the Summit Bechtel Reserve in West Virginia.

ories of growing up in Wake County, N.C.”

Poole is a Distinguished Eagle Scout and a Silver Beaver Award recipient, and he recently enjoyed his first trip to Philmont Scout Ranch to attend the opening of the National Scouting Museum. He is proud to live his life guided daily by the principles of the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

WHY WE GIVE

To further spread the principles of Scouting

LONNIE POOLE and his wife, Carol, have given generously to such institutions as the Baptist Children’s Home; the YMCA; and his alma mater, North Carolina State University in Raleigh, where, in 2010, they funded the Poole College of Management as well as the university’s golf course. At the Summit Bechtel Reserve, the Pooles funded Lonnie Poole Gateway Village.

“My passion — my basic mission —

is giving to youth programs that teach Christian principles,” Poole says. “When I started out, I had no idea I would be able to give back this much. The most I had ever planned ahead was five years. But I am thrilled to be able to do this now.”

Most of all, Poole says, he supports the BSA because he believes in what it has done over the last 109 years to shape young people of exceptional character

and leadership abilities. He says that over the course of his lifetime Scouting has done the same for him.

“The Scout Oath and Scout Law taught me life lessons,” he says, “and that’s what I’m all about.”