

# AEDC's Mike Walton receives two national Boy Scouts of America awards

(OBERAMMERGAU, GERMANY) — Retired Army Lieutenant Colonel and current U.S. Scouting Service Project, Inc. board member Mike Walton was honored during the Transatlantic Council (TAC) BSA's annual Training and Service Conference here with two national Boy Scouts of America (BSA) awards.

Walton, who earned the BSA's time-honored Eagle Scout Award as a youth living at Fort Knox, Kentucky in 1975 was presented the BSA's Outstanding Eagle Scout Award certificate and civilian lapel pin by TAC Scout Executive Vince Cozzone. The Council serves 5,500 youth in 35 European, North African and Middle Eastern countries. The Outstanding Eagle Scout Award, introduced by the BSA's National Eagle Scout Association in 2010, is a national award which recognizes Eagle Scouts who have "rendered outstanding contributions and achievements, bringing great honor to the highest rank of the Boy Scouts' program through their personal and professional contributions at the local, state and regional level."

Walton became the second recipient of this special award in TAC's history. In a grander scale, more than 2 million Scouts who earned the Eagle Scout rank since the first award in 1911; only close to 1,400 have been recognized by the BSA as Distinguished Eagle Scouts nationally while 400 or so are locally recognized as Outstanding Eagle Scouts.

Walton, who was unable to attend the previous year's conference in Europe, was also formally presented the BSA's International Service Award during this year's banquet. The certificate and special uniform item recognizes his more than 20 years of promotion of BSA international opportunities as well as providing leadership, advisement and service to a variety of host-nation Scouting efforts in some eight nations worldwide including assisting with the re-start of Scouting in the Republic of Iraq.

"I am extremely surprised and touched," Walton stated on his Facebook page later reflecting on the honors. "I was so moved, I didn't even have time to pull out and give my \$1.49 speech —but I thank everyone for their support of me and what I try to do in support of Scouting for them." His "\$1.49 speech" is a reference to a presentation he frequently delivers to churches and civic groups stating the daily cost of Scouting today per boy —\$540 or so a year. "Millions of us spend close to three times that much on coffee alone," Walton said.

Walton started his American Scouting experiences as a Cub Scout and later Boy Scout with the Ludwigsburg, Germany based Pack and Troop 63. He later returned overseas as a member of Troop 225, in nearby Pattonville - part of the Stuttgart, Germany military community - before his family was transferred and Mike registered as a Lone Boy Scout for a few months. After return-

ing to the United States, Walton eventually earned the Eagle rank as a member of Troop 801, a unit he organized and founded; and Post 294, a communicative arts Explorer Post both at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

Walton later returned to Germany after graduation from college and served as a Scoutmaster, Explorer Advisor and Commissioner in the Goeppingen and later Ludwigsburg-Kornwestheim military communities. Subsequent returns to the TAC found Mike Walton volunteering his time on the District and local Council levels, and traveling on behalf of the Council to some of the outreaches of that Council to assist and train volunteers unable to come to Germany, Spain, England or Italy.

Walton was first appointed to the TAC's Executive Board in 1985 and served until 1986; he once again served on the council board in 1996-97, 2001-02, and most recently from 2008 to the present. He currently serves on TAC's advancement, direct service/lone Scouting, and international volunteer teams/committees.

Walton took the skills he learned as a Boy Scout and applied them to his leadership, mentorship, innovation, and service in a variety of successful stops at the platoon, company, battalion, brigade, command and Army levels.

Significant in his Army service were the restoration of a brigade's worth of computers and printers and rushing them to the field to support operations in Bosnia; the development and fielding of specialized postal barcoding software during the first weeks of Operation Desert Storm; the development and execution of the Department of Defense's media embedding plan during Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom; and his marketing and branding development of "Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Programs" throughout the midwest and southern U.S.

Retired from the Army in early 2011 after "seeing the world several times over," he currently uses some of those skills in his position as an Air Force civilian employee at AEDC in south-central Tennessee. The recipient of the Bronze Star and Legion of Merit among many awards and decorations from the Departments of Defense and the Army, Mike Walton's various Scouting awards and recognitions are equally as noteworthy, having been previously honored with the Silver Beaver and the District Award of Merit.

Mike Walton became a member of the board of directors of the U.S. Scouting Service Project, Inc. in 1999; and is currently closing out a two-year tenure as Vice President — Marketing and Communication and in the middle of a four-year tenure period as BSA Liaison/National Partner Representative.

When not at AEDC near Manchester, Tenn., Walton resides with family in Excelsior, Minn. (Courtesy of the U.S. Scouting Service Project, Inc.)



Mike Walton displays the Outstanding Eagle Scout Award and civilian lapel pin. (Photo by Jacqueline Cowan)

