



Becoming a Better Person in Our Community

By Kyle Esswein

*On my honor,
I will do my best, to do my duty,
To God and my country, to obey the scout law,
To help other people at all times,
To keep myself physically strong,
Mentally awake, and morally straight.*

-BSA Oath

My name is Kyle Esswein and I am a candidate Eagle Scout for Troop 1199 in Sugar Land, Texas. Part of my Eagle project, along with building three picnic tables, is to build a T14 model Purple Martin house for Smith Elementary School, which is an elementary school located near my high school, Lamar Consolidated High School in Rosenberg, Texas.

The three main points in the scout oath are duty to god and country, duty to others, and duty to yourself. In many ways, the scout oath links us with our community. It shows us the moral high points that we should reach for and the physical challenges we should strive for.

The Boy Scouts are highly involved in our community, as said in the scout oath. We learn leadership skills to help us participate in community projects. We also must earn merit badges to become an Eagle Scout that includes matters that help a boy understand his role in his community. The reason for this is because the Boy Scouts is an organization that helps a boy transfer into the role of a fully grown and responsible man. A man who understands how the community and government function together, a man who understands his responsibility towards other people less fortunate, a man who can see where he can help others, expecting nothing in return except for the welfare of his community.

An act of charity can be intertwined with our ideas and influence our actions as leaders in our community. "To help other people at all times" as quoted from the scout oath, challenges us to help others, no matter if those tasks are either small or large. A leader is one who sees that an individual can use a certain skill or object well and for a good purpose. Charity enables us to connect individuals with ways that can benefit their lives. Giving to children who are less fortunate will help their development of their education, and in return, create a new generation of future leaders. This act of charity also enhances the life of a Boy Scout.

Helping Purple Martins easily fits into this concept of leadership, and therefore leads to a better person that understands where he or she stands in their community role. Since our country has a heritage for helping animals and people in need, it can relate to your duty to god and country. By helping Purple Martins, a bird that, without our help, could not exist in this modern-day world,

we show that we care for the community and the betterment of itself. And why would someone want to help a bird that can't give you anything back, except for a beautiful song? You help for the same reason that you would help others that can't help themselves. You help for the same reason that you give to a charity. You help for the same reason that each and every one of us strive to make a difference in this world. All of this leads to a good mannered, caring person, who understands that even if his actions will not impact the world on a global scale, it will influence others to do better.

"But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty to throw off such government and provide new guards for their future security."

- Declaration of Independence

This means that if there's something wrong, those who have the ability to take action have the responsibility to take action. And those who take action will inevitably be the ones who will lead the community towards a better and more productive future. The more you understand the responsibilities in your community, the more you understand your role as a citizen and your leadership increases. We see again that "To help other people" shows here, at a national or local level as written in the Declaration of Independence, that it is your responsibility to help others. Not only that, but when you help other people, you are helping yourself, building your moral center, erecting towers of good and helpful deeds. The Purple Martins need our help to survive, and therefore, since we have the ability to help, we have the responsibility to help.

By helping Purple Martins, by supporting organizations such as the Boy Scouts, by giving to charity, we all make ourselves members in our communities. By becoming active members in our community, we show that we better understand our job as a citizen.