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Longevity badge comes with 50 years of scouting

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BELOIT, WIS. | It was September 1958 when Dick Case began his Boy Scouting career as a troop leader after his oldest son wanted to be a Cub Scout.

Fifty years and several positions later, the now 82-year-old Case is still involved with the Boy Scouts as chairman of the Moose Club benefit dinner for Friends of Scouting. Recently, he was honored for his dedication with a 50-year pin, a rare award in the scouting world.

The numerous patches adorning his uniform and the many plaques hanging on the wall of his Town of Beloit home are testaments to Case's many years in Scouting. He saw his youngest son all the way through Eagle Scout honors and was a leader to several boys who went on to become successful men, including Town of Turtle Fire Chief Tim Huffman and Jim Agate, co-owner of Culver's, Papa Murphy's and The Rock in Beloit. Others he led became pilots, engineers and school teachers. Many still come to visit Case from time to time.

"I'm proud that some went on to become pretty successful," Case said.

Case was a Webelo leader until 1961 when he became a Scout Master. That job entailed attending a lot of summer and winter camps and hiking — activities Case always loved. For a few years, he was an Explorer adviser, which involved a lot of "high adventure," he said. He also

served as a Cub Scout and Boy Scout chairman at both Powers Elementary School and Second Congregational Church. For 10 years, he was chairman of the Boy Scout food bag drive for the Salvation Army. Outside of Boy Scouts, Case worked at Fairbanks Morse for 42 years.

In his 50 years with the Boy Scouts, Case has been honored with the District Award of Merit and the Lifetime Achievement, Distinguished Leader, George Meaney, Good Shepherd, Organized Labor, and the Silver Beaver awards.

Case has completed all the training a Boy Scout leader can possibly take and completed Wood Badge training in 1991. His favorite memories of Boy Scouting include camping, taking canoe trips into Canada and hiking a trail at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico. Camping even was bearable in December as long as there was a good fire going and the boys wore warm clothes, Case said with a smile.

Often, Case's troops consisted of nearly 30 boys, but he always had a lot of "good help."

"You don't do it on your own," he said with a laugh.

When Case was presented with the 50-year pin at a banquet, the young boys could hardly believe he had been involved with the Boy Scouts for so long. The presenter even joked that Case had been involved in Boy Scouts longer than he had been alive. So why has he dedicated so many years to the Boy Scouts?

"Mostly so the boys in this area would have scouting," he said.