

# AMERICA 250 HERITAGE FESTIVAL AND SCOUT EXPO

## Path of the Patriot

OCTOBER 9-11, 2026

Hosted by Gulf Coast Council – Scouting America

NWF Fairgrounds (Destin/Fort Walton Beach Rigdon Center)

1958 Lewis Turner Blvd., Fort Walton Beach, FL 32547

## Welcome

The America 250 Heritage Festival and Scout Expo will be held October 9, 10, and 11, 2026 at the Okaloosa County Fairgrounds at 1958 Lewis Turner Blvd., Fort Walton Beach, FL 32547. This event is in recognition of the historical significance of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States and will blend citizenship, American history, community, and Scouting in a single event. This Heritage Festival will be an event where all types of parties gather to share stories and yarns, compete, trade, buy and sale goods, display their crafts and skills, and enjoy fellowship. This Heritage Festival is also designed to allow Scouts to travel through history of the United States in the unique backdrop of historical re-enactment camps and community exhibits. Scouts will use their Scout skills and teamwork to earn passport stamps from different eras and different events. Units are encouraged to become deeper engaged by participating in one of the different exhibition opportunities as a unit. Units can participate with either static or interactive exhibits. Cub units are invited to bring carnival type games for public and Scout involvement. This Heritage Festival will also be open to the public as an opportunity to engage many community groups and to provide an opportunity to demonstrate Scouting 2026 to the public.

Units, community exhibitors, vendors, and reenactors can arrive any time on Friday to provide adequate time complete the set-up of displays, events, competition events before 9:00 Saturday morning. Exhibits are requested for Saturday between 9:00 and 4:00. Saturday evening will include a closing show at 7:00 p.m. and a unique late evening ghost tour event.

## Logistics

- **Arrival:** Units should arrive at the Okaloosa County Fairgrounds between 5:00 and 8:00 PM on Friday, October 9, 2026. Earlier check-in available upon request.
- **Check-In:** Leaders will check in at the designated registration area, submit Troop and Patrol rosters, and receive camp assignments.
- **Camping:** Units will camp by district in designated areas across the back portion of the fairgrounds. Units may leave their unit trailer with the vehicle pulling the trailer in its designated camping area. Areas will be assigned based upon the number of camping individuals with the unit so pre-registration is requested to ensure the unit has a sufficiently sized camping area. Jamboree style camping is requested
- **Parking:** Scout unit vehicles must remain in designated parking areas for the duration of the event which will be along the back of the fenced area of the fairground property so that the vehicles are separated from the day visitor parking.
- **Sanitation:** Potable water will be available, but it may be some distance from the camping areas so plan to bring some water for the unit's camping area and expected use. Port-a-lets will be available near the camping areas and across the festival site. Units and Scouts should help maintain all the facilities as a courtesy to the other Scouts and units. No formal shower facilities are expected for the site at this time.
- **Departure:** Units may schedule their departure with their district rendezvous commissioners in a manner to not disrupt other ongoing activities. Camp areas must be inspected and cleared before leaving.
- **Quiet Hours:** Please recognize quiet hours between 11:00 pm and 6:00 am.

## Contact Information – [America250@gulfcoastcouncil.org](mailto:America250@gulfcoastcouncil.org).

- **Event Chair:** Bret A. Moore, [bamoore71039@gmail.com](mailto:bamoore71039@gmail.com), 850-865-3621
- **Gulf Coast Council Office:** (850) 476-6336 – Quin Gable 850-582-2273

## Event Overview

The America 250 Heritage Festival is a council wide event for the Gulf Coast Council designed for Scouts to live out the Scout Oath and Law through a variety of challenging activities and public interaction. The theme of the event centers on patriotism, leadership, and outdoor skills, with events and activities crafted to provide practical learning and memorable experiences. Expected outcomes include improved self-reliance, enhanced teamwork, with a deeper appreciation for civic duty and American history.

## Safety Guidelines

- Review the Guide to Safe Scouting and ensure all activities comply with BSA safety standards.
- Emergency procedures will be reviewed at the Scoutmaster meeting. Leaders should familiarize themselves with the nearest first aid station and emergency exits.
- All medications must be stored and administered according to BSA policy.
- Report any incidents, injuries, or safety concerns immediately to event staff.
- Maintain two-deep leadership and adhere to Youth Protection policies at all times.
- All Scouts must follow the buddy system at all times.
- No ground fires will be permitted.

## Leadership Tips

- Encourage Scouts to take initiative and participate actively in each station.
- Model positive behavior and reinforce the Scout Oath and Law throughout the event.
- Support patrol leaders in organizing tasks and promoting teamwork.
- Monitor Scouts' well-being and provide guidance as needed.
- Foster a supportive environment where every Scout feels included and valued.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to Scouting. With your preparation and support, Scouts will have a rewarding experience at the America 250 Heritage Festival and Scout Expo. If you have any questions, please contact the event chair.

## Preparation Checklist

- Complete all required registration forms for Scouts and adults.
- Ensure all medical forms and emergency contacts are up-to-date.
- Pack appropriate camping gear: tents, sleeping bags, weather-appropriate clothing, personal items, and Scout uniforms.
- Bring unit first aid kits.

## Uniform Guidance

Field uniform: flags, ceremonies

Activity uniform: program stations

America 250 Heritage Festival and Scout Expo  
Gulf Coast Council

FRIDAY EVENING – October 9, 2026

|               |                                                                         |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5:00–8:00 PM  | SPL & Scoutmaster Check-In – Registration Tent - Units set up campsites |
| 5:00–11:00 PM | Heritage Festival Exhibit preparation                                   |
| 9:00 PM       | SPL / Scoutmaster Meeting – Dining Tent                                 |
| 11:00 PM      | Lights Out / Quiet Hours Begin                                          |

SATURDAY – October 10, 2026

|                   |                                                       |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 6:00–8:00 AM      | Breakfast at Campsites                                |
| 9:00 AM           | Opening Ceremony & Flags – Parade Field Assembly Area |
| 9:15–11:45 AM     | Morning Activity Rotations                            |
| 11:45 AM–12:45 PM | Lunch & Rest – Campsites                              |
| 1:00–4:00 PM      | Afternoon Activity Rotations                          |
| 5:00–7:00 PM      | Supper in Campsites                                   |
| 7:00 PM           | Closing Show and Recognition – Bowlegs Hall           |
| 9:00 PM           | Round robin Ghost                                     |

SUNDAY – October 11, 2026

|               |                                                           |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| 6:30–8:00 AM  | Breakfast at Campsites                                    |
| 8:15 AM       | Interfaith Religious Service – Parade Field Assembly Area |
| 9:00–11:00 AM | Break camp, clear and clean areas, checkout               |

## COMMITMENTS AS OF AUGUST 26, 2026

Troop 532 – Cross-cut sawing

Troop 773 – Ropemaking machines and demonstration

Troop 529 – Flag Retirement

Travis Souther – colonial reenactor – Revolutionary War or Daniel Boone

Farris Powell – Creek Indian Camp – has lean-to camp and tent camp with gear

Bret Moore – Creek Indian Camp – has camp with 2 lean-to tents and gear  
- Colonial to civil war tent with camp boxes, tables, and chairs

Jim Hartwell – Indian village with teepees  
Need the teepee poles from camp and the lodge's teepee  
Bret has the second teepee  
- Have several buffalo hides, animal hides

Tony Bigot – fishing and casting demonstration

Okaloosa County Supervisor of Elections

Okaloosa County Post Overdose Support Team – includes CPR dummy

Okaloosa County ambulance (standby and demo)

Florida Public Archaeology Network – Univ. of West Florida

Scout Shop Remote Shop – Andy McMillian

Jon Coleman – Scout history exhibit

Bret Moore – Scout history collection

CELEBRATE AMERICA IN NATURE

# PHOTO CONTEST



## CELEBRATE AMERICA'S 250<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY BY CELEBRATING AMERICA'S NATURAL BEAUTY

The "Celebrate America in Nature Photo Contest" is presented by the Gulf Coast Council to celebrate one of America's lasting contributions to the pursuit of happiness, nature.



View contest rules and submit your photos at:  
<https://gulfcoastcouncil.org/america-250-heritage-festival/>



