

His Twelve Points of the Scout Law  
(Grandpa Fesses Up)

*R. A. Christmas*

*Excerpt from "Taps for the BSA"*

*Mormon Church to cut all ties  
with the Boy Scouts of America  
at the end of 2019.*

News release

*Dedicated to the memory of James "Jim" Tuepker,  
field-archer, Scoutmaster extraordinaire,  
BSA Troop 10, Pasadena, California.*

*Trustworthy*

Generally, with exceptions.  
Buffalo Nickels skimmed when  
he worked at Botts' Ice-Cream,  
small bills at Sam's parking-lot  
when he was desperate to pay  
for babies that kept coming,  
supplements when he was a  
caregiver for a blind old lady.  
An opportunistic pilferer, a

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The complete poem, "Taps for the BSA," can be found in the author's collection *Leaves of Sass*.

borrower of no-return. Face it,  
a bit of a thief. Ouch! But he  
only cheated on a wife once—  
oops, forgot, well twice.  
(No wonder Baden-Powell  
put this first. Ouch!)

*Loyal*

Another stinger. Yes, but  
passively, irresponsibly.  
A beatnik outsider, a rebel  
without a cause partly raised  
by pinko-commie-sympathizers  
Wants to overthrow everything,  
marched in '67 in S.F. against  
the Vietnam War, but stands  
and sings the National Anthem.  
WWII history buff, files but  
doesn't pay. A contrarian—thinks  
Bernie's too conservative, etc.  
Wants to put everyone on  
Social Security and Medicare  
pay couples to marry, and pay  
them for having kids too.  
Complains, but seldom votes  
(he lives in Utah, folks!).

*Helpful*

Easy to be entreated  
(facile à supplier).  
Soup-kitchen volunteer,  
Anyone on his road

holding up a sign gets  
five bucks (at least),  
a Book of Mormon,  
and some Grandpa  
Teresa conversation.  
("Where you from,  
where you going?  
God bless you on your  
way.") Shows love.  
Picks up hitchhikers,  
gives blood, big tipper.

*Friendly*

Superficially, always,  
but no glad-hander.  
Treasures old friends,  
but seldom writes or calls,  
(neither do they, but  
such waters run deep).  
He's here for them, and  
them for him, if possible—  
the mystery of knowing  
some so deeply he  
can't discover why  
they met or why they  
continue connected, the  
experience too sacred to  
take lightly, analyze.

*Courteous*

Door opener. Pro-driver.  
Signals, yields right-of-way,

lets people in, Keeps  
under the limit, never  
tailgates. Looks both ways  
checks his mirrors, no  
hollow-headed lane switcher.

*Kind*

Unfailingly, but firm  
rather than gentle.  
Non-combative, simply  
finds less to do with  
those he can't abide.  
Forgives everything  
short of murder (Do  
yo thang!) "Loosey-  
goosey," his wife  
would say. Sweetly,  
secretly resentful  
and judgmental like  
his mom, but a quick  
counter-puncher,  
like his dad, when  
pushed too far.

*Obedient*

Fearfully so.  
Church every Sunday,  
Temple every Monday,  
Prayers morning  
and night. A chapter  
of Scripture most  
mornings: Bible,

(Old T and New T)  
Book of Mormon,  
Doctrine & Covenants.  
Full tithe-payer  
(on gross) plus  
\$100/m for the needy.  
Family history buff.  
But like his friend  
Gene England, Grandpa  
has “moments of utter  
skepticism” (How  
could an embodied  
God survive in a  
space full of black  
holes?) A Jesus freak,  
but still trying to fathom  
His mysterious Father,  
and still more in love  
with himself than his  
neighbor. A religious  
revolutionary, like  
Joseph Smith (his 4th  
cousin) and Brigham  
Young. An evolutionist,  
Gay-Rights Advocate  
(“Same rules same  
blessings for all!”) Sees  
the Body of Christ as  
a person—born, growing,  
messing up Big Time,  
learning from mistakes  
(about now a teenager).

*Cheerful*

Seriously, because  
as soon as he could talk  
he had to find words  
to make his lonely  
anxious mom smile.  
(Dad worked seven days.)  
So Grandpa still has  
this habit of listening just  
enough to hear something he  
can spin into a one-liner  
for a laugh, or better yet,  
something unforgettable,  
amazing if possible,  
at least droll. And while  
he's got your attention,  
hit a shot over his net  
and see if he doesn't  
return it to a corner  
to your left while  
you're running right.

*Thrifty*

Compulsive saver,  
agonized spender.  
14% Scot on one  
side (Muir, Stewart)  
14% German-Swiss  
Jew (Wetzler-Guggen-  
heim) on the other.  
His pinched pennies

look like the ones  
the kids used to  
put on tracks  
for trains to run  
over. But married  
a money-maker  
spender. Loved it!  
Lived on Osmond  
Lane in Provo  
in a 6,000 sq. ft.  
French Country  
chateau. Went  
bankrupt twice.

*Brave*

Two minor tussles with  
bullies in grade-school.  
Boxed at Stanford until  
he didn't see a left-  
hook coming and came  
fully "to" a couple hours  
later and decided he  
preferred to be able  
to think. Otherwise  
physically and militarily  
untested. Too young or  
too old or too married  
with kids for any wars,  
but foolhardy enough  
to get hitched in Vegas  
on a weekend and  
make it last 12 years.

*Clean*

Addicted to the usual  
suspects until he  
was fifty. Went cold  
turkey on cigarettes  
and alcohol when he  
got married the third  
time. Porn was tougher.  
Finally forswore all  
images, even bathing-  
suits (No Images  
Therapy). There's  
scars on his plate,  
some flecks, leftovers  
for Jesus to wipe off,  
but Grandpa keeps it  
clean as he can.  
A poster-adult for  
continuing repentance.

*Reverent*

Shuts his mouth and  
parks his brain and  
his butt in Church  
most Sundays and  
bows his head, folds  
his arms like a little  
kid and closes his eyes  
as he partakes of a  
piece of bread and a



thimble of water in  
remembrance of the One  
who descended below  
and rose above, in order  
to redeem him and  
everyone else, in a  
world that looks like  
it created itself.

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