



September 2013

Unit Leaders and Unit Committee Chairs

Dear Friends:

From time to time it is a good idea to write to you and bring information to your attention. We are sending this letter to Scoutmasters, Varsity Team Coaches and Venturing Crew Leaders and to Committee Chairs.

1. Eagle Projects: BSA made changes to the Eagle Project process. We have attached the latest from National. There is now a fund raising application which requires Council approval in Sequoia Council. Please note the restrictions as to seeking donations and materials.

"An Eagle Scout project may benefit from donations from the beneficiary of the project, your Troop's charter partner, your parents and relatives, your Troop, or parents in your Troop. You may conduct a fund raiser such as a car wash or bake sale to secure funds. You may not seek or receive donations from any other source."

2. Lowe's Eagle Scout Project Gift Card: This program will continue for 2013-14. Each Council may apply for 25 \$100 gift cards. The cards will be distributed on a first come first served basis. The cards will be sent directly to the Eagle candidate. Eagle packets will have the application which is to be turned in to Sequoia Council.

3. Unit Committee Training: We are pleased to announce that we have established a formal unit committee training course as a break out for our days of training held four times a year in Visalia and Fresno. This training will be helpful for those adults who serve on unit committees. As always, if a single unit needs the Council to bring training to them we can also meet that need.

4. Unit Finances: Please see the attached set of rules from National regarding this topic. The one challenge I see from time to time is in the area of unit finances. Unit treasurers must periodically report to the committee and present bank statements for reconciliation. Please stay on course with this. Another area is connected to bank accounts, two signers on every check (whether the bank requires this or not), and tax id numbers. See the IRS website for SS4 which is the form to generate a new tax id number for your unit.

5. Advancement/Internet Advancement: We shifted to all online advancements at the beginning of 2013 but we still will accept paper advancement. We are eager to show every unit how to do online. Another great idea is to periodically request a person profile or even a unit profile. The profile will show everything we have in Scout Net for a youth or unit. Checking this now saves lots of time when a Scout is ready for Eagle.





6. Camp Chawanakee Discount: We know camp is expensive so we put our heads together and came up with a discount. We are offering the following discount for Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts and Venturers who will attend Camp Chawanakee in the 2014 season.

- ✓ For weeks/sessions 2-8, \$25.00 off the cost for youth
- ✓ For weeks/sessions 1 and 9, \$20.00 off the cost for youth (weeks/sessions 1 and 9 already have an additional discount)
- ✓ Brother discounts still apply.
- ✓ Returning week discounts still apply.
- ✓ The unit must complete rechartering with the charter in either office by December 31, 2013.
- ✓ Unit must complete a Friends of Scouting (FOS) effort by May 1, 2014
- ✓ Unit must have raised more in pledges/direct gifts than in 2013. All pledges need not be paid by May 1st.
- ✓ At least 50% of the unit families, as per the rechartered roster of December 31, 2013, must make a pledge/direct gift by May 1st. Pledges need not be paid by May 1st.
- ✓ This is a Sequoia Council only discount so this will not be published in the camp leader guide.
- ✓ In the case of LDS Wards and FOS, the same applies as above. The Ward as a group also must raise more than the past year and 50% of unit families must make a pledge/direct gift by May 1st.
- ✓ Discounts of a similar nature will be available for Webelos Resident Camp, NYLT and Cub Day Camp.
- ✓ Discounts will be posted by May 15th in your unit camp statement.

7. Membership Fees: We learned recently that the annual BSA membership dues will increase to \$24.00 per year. This will be effective when most of you recharter this December. This ends up being about 47 cents a week. This is a big jump and I apologize for the increase and the late notice. Even though most folks do not see much of the work of the National Office, I do get an inside look from my chair. I also worked for National prior to coming to Sequoia. So the dues we all pay go to support National who in turn supports our Council. I suggest units go back to the scribe taking attendance and dues each week. I remember doing this as a Scout.

Finally, this has been an interesting and stressful year for Scouting and I think the next year or so may be similar. We all know that parents still want what Scouting offers for their children and





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America still needs Scouting. Our tenets have not changed. Behavior is still expected and demanded. BSA is working on implementation plans for the January 1, 2014 roll out. More information is forthcoming. I was briefed at a recent national meeting. I really do think we will be fine and we will deal with the future as it presents itself. As always, my staff and I and our entire board of directors are here to serve you the unit leaders.

Sincerely,

John Richers
CEO/Scout Executive

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