



PIEDMONT SCOUTING
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February 18, 2020

To the Friends of Piedmont Scouting and our local Piedmont community,

We at the Piedmont BSA Council would like to share the following information about our local Piedmont Scouting program in light of the National Boy Scouts of America's recent decision to file for relief under Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code.

A little over a year ago, we reached out to you to address the national organization's efforts to address abuse claims. Its goals were to ensure that it met its moral responsibility to fairly compensate victims who suffered abuse during their time in Scouting, while continuing to pursue its vision of preparing young women and men to become responsible, participating citizens and leaders, guided by the Scout Oath and Law. After a lengthy consideration of its options, the national organization has determined that pursuing reorganization under Chapter 11 in a single federal court offered the best opportunity for achieving both of those goals.

Piedmont Scouting, and Scouting nationally, understands that our highest priority must be to protect all youth who participate in our programs. Among youth organizations, Scouting has been at the forefront of developing policies to ensure youth safety for decades. Youth Protection training is required for all adult leaders. Our policies include a ban on one-on-one adult-youth settings, and a requirement of two-adult-deep leadership on our outings. Our volunteers and staff are trained regularly on identifying precursors and actual incidents of sexual abuse, bullying, cyberbullying, and other potential harms. Youth members themselves receive training on these topics as part of their advancement.

More importantly, these policies and practices work, and have been so successful that Scouting's policies and practices are now emulated by other youth organizations. Scouting's Youth Protection policies have dramatically reduced incidents of sexual abuse, bullying, cyberbullying, and other potential harms in our programs, though we recognize that even one such incident is absolutely unacceptable. We are thankful that none of the pending abuse claims involve our local Piedmont BSA Council or its units, and we strive every day to ensure the safety of the youth in our care.

The challenges faced by the national organization are not due to any increase in claims related to recent conduct. Instead, most of these cases involve conduct that allegedly



occurred decades ago, and extensions or elimination of statutes of limitations in several states have revived older claims. But none of this undercuts the fact that our current Youth Protection policies and practices are working.

What does National's action mean for our local Piedmont council? First and foremost, we will continue to do what we have always done, provide quality programs to the youth of our community. While our local Piedmont council receives a charter from the National Council to provide Scouting programs in our area, our council is a separate and independent 501(c)(3) corporation, as are all local councils. We are not a party to National's bankruptcy filing, nor do our local programs receive or rely on funding from National (either at the council or unit level). A portion of our unit dues go toward paying membership fees to National in connection with our charter, and we do pay some service fees to the National Council, but the remainder goes to the local units.

The programs we provide to nearly 1,100 youth in our community—through Cubs, Scouts, BSA, Venturing, Exploring, Sea Scouts, and Learning for Life—have been successful due to the dedication of local volunteers and staff who deliver those programs, and the financial support that this community has provided to the Piedmont Council over the years. Your generosity in contributing to our Friends of Scouting campaigns, buying a wreath or a tree at our Tree Lot, or contributing in other ways, including the thousands of hours of volunteer service, has made our local programs what they are today, one of the most successful Scouting councils in the United States. We hope that our community will continue to support this council's efforts for the youth of this community.

For me personally, Scouting provided me immeasurable benefits as a youth, and I lean on the lessons I learned in Scouting nearly every day. As a volunteer Scouting leader in Piedmont Scouting, I've seen the youth of our community, including my own son, benefit from those same values and lessons that I absorbed as a youth. And I look forward to our local Piedmont BSA Council continuing to provide those benefits for years to come.

We understand that many in our community may have further questions, and we welcome further dialogue. Piedmont BSA Council Executive Board members are available to answer any questions you may have. Board members will also be attending unit meetings over the next several weeks to provide parents with opportunities to ask questions. And as new information becomes available, we pledge to keep you updated. For now, please contact:

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Seth Hilton, Council President, seth.hilton@stoel.com

Thank you for all you have done to support our mission to deliver high quality programs to this community to support the character development of young women and men.

Yours in Scouting,

Seth Hilton, Council President, Troop 1 Assistant Scoutmaster, and Eagle Scout

