

Scouting Membership Fees and the Value of Scouting

by Susie Mackie

“How does Scouts Canada use my money? And why is there a fee when Scouting is run by volunteers?”

As a leader, you may find you're frequently asked these questions by parents at registration time and throughout the year. You know you put a lot of your time and energy into delivering your programs – it may be difficult for you to answer these types of questions when there is so much misinformation out there. Through the web site, and the Ask Your Chief Commissioner page, the national office also receives many such questions every fall registration time. Here is some information that may help you.

The Real Value of Scouting

Scouting's programs far exceed the value of the registration fees. For example, many parents pay as much or more for programs that only function for three or four months. Our programs generally run for 42 weeks or more and include many activities such as camping trips that kids will remember forever.

Most important of all: Scouting makes a difference in the lives of children, youth and young adults. They are more likely to demonstrate greater self-confidence and optimism about what the future holds. They express a strong sense of civic responsibility and have a desire to “pay back” the community. They become more physically fit, energetic, outgoing, conscientious and compassionate.

Remember also that Scouting's great value is all because of you, the leader. We are very proud of our leaders, and will continue to support your efforts in everything you do. Your energy, your time and your efforts are what makes your program worthwhile and well worth the money.

Breakdown of the membership fee

1. Of the total membership fee, a portion (this year \$56.50), supports the national office in serving Scouting programs nationwide. This pays:

- ✓ insurance costs (\$15)
- ✓ training materials and resources for leaders
- ✓ planning programs and activities for youth
- ✓ publications including handbooks and the *Leader Magazine*
- ✓ providing service and support to twenty councils across Canada – including the work of Scouts Canada's Board of Governors members nationwide, and the Operations Advisory Committee to support Scouts Canada's administration
- ✓ volunteer servicing expenses
- ✓ World Organization of the Scouting Movement fee payment (approximately \$1).

2. The balance of the amount a parent pays is added by the council. This goes to group and program support, leader training, leader resources (newsletters & web sites) and to support camping and outdoor activities. Your council takes into consideration these costs, and calculates this fee based on the lowest possible amount necessary to cover them. These fees often only cover a part of a council's expenses.

3. Some groups may also add a small activity fee.

Assistance

Councils do not want any youth who is interested in joining Scouting to be denied due to financial hardship. There is assistance available in some councils for families who are financially challenged. Contact your council office for details in your area and for any further questions you have regarding fees.

Offset Costs with Scout Popcorn

By now, you are well familiar with the many benefits of Scout Popcorn! Scout Popcorn has been a tremendous success – it's well organized, easy to manage, and gives Scouting groups a great return for their efforts. With your encouragement, your group can fund its own Scouting fun and adventures for the year. X

– Susie Mackie is Executive Editor and Internal Communications Specialist.

How to Have the Best Year Ever!

Challenging and exciting programs don't just happen; they are the result of effective planning. Like New Year resolutions, it begins with reflection and commitment, and a resolve to deliver the absolute best year of Scouting ever.

If you and other Scouters in your group want to experience the warm glow that comes from seeing smiling youth “eating up” a continuously stimulating program, NOW is the time to begin the process of building that resolve.

Go to the national web site (www.scouts.ca), click on the Popcorn icon, go to Leaders Resources and then click on the Ideal Year of Scouting Planner; a simple planning tool that will facilitate your planning for this year.

Imagine having one fundraising event; one commitment to raise enough funds to have the best program ever, and pay for camps or unit registrations. Join the hundreds of successful groups by deciding to use a proven fundraiser. It's all possible with SCOUT POPCORN! X

– Barry Hardaker, Executive Director, Field Services, is the national resource person for Scout Popcorn. There are 20 Council Popcorn co-ordinators who are ready to help you have a great year with Scout Popcorn.

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