

### **Quick recap of the leader meeting of mid February:**

For those of you who didn't get a chance to read my analysis of Trail's End popcorn you can find it attached. The only thing to add to that is shortly after I committed it to paper Trail's End announced they are discontinuing the Scholarship program.

The discussion revolved around:

1. If not Trail's End, what?
2. Is it worth "rocking the boat?"
3. Will Council 'allow' us to choose another fundraiser? If not, then what...?

To liberally paraphrase the ensuing discussion:

We all agreed we had personally invested at least \$150 in popcorn in addition to all our time.

We agreed before we change anything we need a plan in place.

We agreed that the bottom line is having a fundraiser that allows us to do all the things we want to do.

We debated to what end we were willing to accept the Council telling us what to do.

This segued into a discussion about the costs associated with BSA and what affect the increase in membership dues, from \$35 to \$60, has on Pack 53.

[I have attempted to discuss this with members of Council but they were not very forthcoming]

The official memo regarding fee increase from BSA can be found [here](#). A direct quote from the FAQ:

#### **Does this increase cover financial challenges the organization is facing?**

The increase was prompted because the **cost of liability insurance** the BSA must carry to cover all Scouting activities has increased dramatically over the past several months, and the organization is no longer able to offset the cost of insurance. The fee enables the BSA to continue essential services.

Here is a short breakdown of Costs:

September: ~\$1200 in registration fees

October: ~\$12,000 in popcorn sales to Council

January: ~\$6000 in Membership dues to BSA (~\$2000 in 2019)

[+ Uniform, books, advancement and camp fees]

= ~\$20,000

You might be wondering how an increase of 42% in dues turned into nearly 300% increase?

Here's the short answer: Not only did BSA increase the price, they changed the way in which the fee was assessed. Namely in two ways: All Tiger and Lion companion parents are also assessed a membership fee (essentially making the youngest kids pay \$120); and using online registration I cannot change any assessments – so I cannot take the Lion/Tiger Fees off and I have to assign the 14 additional leaders that BSA determines we need (in the past leaders were assigned dual roles, which is no longer allowed).

Note: We currently operate with 7 den leaders, treasurer and 2 pack leaders.

Someone brought up: So what do we do if we decide not to pay. Strike out on our own?

**In the interim:**

1. I reached out to council several times trying to get straight answers and I asked if we could pay a prorated fee until June when we finished to decide what further steps were needed. (No.)
2. On February 18<sup>th</sup> BSA declared bankruptcy.
3. I have chartered the Webelos only at this time to ensure they transition smoothly to BSA through the Order of Light.
  - a. Note the cost for that den alone was \$840
  - b. I believe that any money we pay will not be returned but we can always add names later
  - c. **I discovered at the end of the online registration an additional and separate fee for insurance was assessed**
4. I have reached out to an insurance agent to get us 3<sup>rd</sup> party liability Insurance at a cost of \$350-500/year.

You can check out BSA's [blahbity-blah-blah website](#) about Chapter 11.

**Fast forward: Early April Meeting:**

About bankruptcy: I understand the need for the filing inasmuch as it stops civil suits which are the ones that pay ridiculous amounts of money. But...

It takes a long time to file, in fact BSA hired the firm, which only does bankruptcy, in December 2018.

It's shady, bordering on dishonorable, to increase the fees with the knowledge of imminent bankruptcy.

The only parties paid up front in a bankruptcy are the lawyers.

There were probably a hundred ways to deal with this, I rate this as No. 97.

Fundraising: Understanding the "Brand" value that selling popcorn has, I reached out to [Gayleen's Home Grown Popcorn](#) in Wentworth. Turn's out they have a fundraiser program in place and are willing to work with us. The short version:

1. They sell to us at wholesale (which is about the same as Trail's End wholesale) and we set the retail price (if we sold at the same net .oz price we would make 70%)
2. They don't have micro popcorn
3. They do have other products such as fudge

*I would like to explore other options as well.*

***The group consensus: We need one fundraiser drive per year, that does not compete with other local fundraisers such as FFA; that nets enough \$ so we can do what we want.***

What about ReCharter:

The four options as I see it :

		Cost	Affiliation
1	Status Quo	\$8,000	1, 750, 000 Scouts
2	Baden Powel Service Association	\$ 2,105	1600/6, 500, 000 Scouts
3	World Federation of Independent Scouts	€ 50	6, 500, 000 Scouts
4	Go Rogue	\$0	86

After discussing the options the group agreed that option 2 was the best alternative if we choose to change. The BPSA, [Baden-Powel Service Association](#) is a traditional scouting organization named after the Scout founder, which focuses on outdoor craft and is a member of the World Federation of Independent Scouts. It is very similarly organized to BSA but with fewer US members and far less oversight. They have sufficient online training resources for leaders and for things like Youth Protection but is much more of a bottom up organization. I have attached the text of the email I got from the regional leader Jeff Kopp in a word doc.

***The group consensus: We are not getting an appropriate ROI from BSA nor have they been honest with us. Being part of a larger organization is beneficial. Whatever we chose to do we need to help transition scouts from our group to Troop 53, making it stronger and helping it grow.***

It is not that I don't believe in the mission or values of BSA. Rather I believe in our scouts and your Guys' (that's the royal *Guys* Kate, Megan and Amber) leadership. I don't think BSA is living up to the scout laws right now and should be held accountable for that.

Tons too talk about here: Please reply all to further the conversation. But if you have a question that you what an answer to first don't hesitate to contact me.

Thanks for all you do, look forward to hearing from you soon,

Jason and Amber