



Welcome to 1st Bedford – 2010-2011

Information for Parents and Guardians from the 1st Bedford Group Committee

“Who are you and what do you do?” is the familiar opening yell at every Beaver Colony meeting. To answer this question, we are the 1st Bedford Group Committee, a collection of volunteers who govern and coordinate Scouting at 1st Bedford, one of the many Groups that collectively form the World Organization of the Scout Movement (**WOSM**).

Organization

Since the organization of WOSM is very complex, here’s a description of where your child fits among its millions of members:

Each **Youth** is a member of a **Section**. At 1st Bedford, we have four active sections:

1. Beaver **Colony** (ages 5-7);
2. Cub **Pack** (ages 8-10);
3. Scout **Troop** (ages 11-14, with option to remain until 16); and
4. Venturer **Company** (ages 14-17)

Each Section has its own **Leaders** – volunteer adults who have been screened, trained, and subjected to police record checks – who plan and lead the activities of each Section (with participation from the Youth of the senior sections), subject to the approval of the Group Committee.

Each Group must have a **Sponsor**. In our case, we have been generously sponsored by Bedford United Church, with our membership open to boys and girls of all religious affiliations. All Saints Anglican Church also generously provides facilities for our Beaver Colony meetings.

1st Bedford and a number of other Groups form the Halifax **Area**. All of the Areas in the province form the Nova Scotia **Council** which, together with the other Councils across the country, form **Scouts Canada**, a member of the WOSM.

Each level of this hierarchy serves a function. Most of your child’s activities will be conducted at the Section level. However, there are also a number of “linking activities” held each year during which two or more Sections participate in the same activity to promote integration and develop leadership skills for the older Youth.

The **Halifax Area** organizes even larger events (e.g., Beavereen, Cub Fun Day, etc.) and delivers training for Leaders. The **Nova Scotia Council** organizes province-wide events (e.g., Lodges and Lairs, Operation Alert, provincial jamborees, etc.) and has a paid administrative staff. **Scouts Canada** also has paid staff that administer the Scouting program at a national level and organizes national activities such as Canadian jamborees.

Finances

As you might imagine, such a large organization requires money to keep it running. Here's an overview of the financing:

First, your \$125 annual membership fee is distributed as follows:

Scouts Canada	\$ 60.00
Nova Scotia Council	<u>65.00</u>
	<u>\$ 125.00</u>

You should note that a significant amount of the Scouts Canada portion of the fee goes toward insurance. Whereas many organizations require you to sign indemnification agreements that *wave* some or all of your legal rights, Scouts Canada has opted to *insure* its participants rather than compromise their opportunity for financial recourse in the event of accident or injury. In return, participants pay for this insurance coverage.

You should also note that the above fee qualifies for both federal and provincial tax credits. Official tax receipts will be distributed.

You may question why none of the above fee is distributed to the Section, Group, or Area, which also have financial needs. For example, each Section is responsible to pay for consumables (e.g., badges, craft supplies, snacks, etc.) and costs incurred for outings such as overnight camps, museum visits, and so on. To pay for these items, each Section will set periodic dues and may also charge activity fees to cover the costs of specific outings. Your Section Leader will inform you of the specifics.

The Group requires substantial financing for the registration of Leaders (\$40 each), police record checks of Leaders, training, the purchase of long-lived assets (e.g., camping equipment), and the rent and maintenance of our Group cabin at Miller Lake. To date, we have been able to raise the necessary funds through regularly-scheduled fundraising activities (see "Fundraisers", below) and generous corporate donations. It should be noted that we are very fortunate in this regard; many other Groups have had to add significant surcharges to their annual membership fees to keep afloat.

Fundraisers

Three major fundraising activities are scheduled each year. The first, which starts at the beginning of the year, is ***Scout Popcorn***. For each dollar of popcorn sales, roughly 25 cents of profit (the precise margin varies by product) stays with our Group. The remaining 75% goes to the supplier, Scouts Canada, Nova Scotia Council, and Halifax Area.

Later in the fall, the ***Apple Day*** campaign is held. 75% of the profit from this fundraiser goes to the Halifax Area, with the remainder going to the 1st Bedford Group.

The *Scoutrees* campaign is held in the spring. In this program, Youth obtain sponsorship from friends and neighbours and plant trees in the local area. The trees and collateral materials are all donated, so 100% of the proceeds goes to good causes, as follows:

1 st Bedford Group	70%
Nova Scotia Council	15%
World Scouting Brotherhood	15%



In addition, Scoutrees donations of \$20 or more entitle donors to charitable donation tax receipts and the related tax relief.

How can you help?

As a parent or guardian, you have already helped by enrolling your child in Scouting, a program in which we truly believe. Please spread the word. You can help even further by participating actively with your child in all of the fundraising campaigns and/or by making personal or corporate donations to our Group.

We are also always on the lookout for parents willing to devote their time and skills through participation as full- or part-time Leaders, parent-helpers, and Group Committee members. Our Group will support approved Leaders by covering the cost of registration, police record checks, uniforms, and training.

Further information

For further information about 1st Bedford, we encourage you to chat with your child's Section Leaders or to call our Group Commissioner, Terry Greenham (832.2272). You can also visit our website at www.bedfordscouts.ca. For information about the Scouting program in general, visit www.scouts.ca.