

BSA membership fee to change beginning Dec. 1, 2017

September 29, 2017 Bryan Wendell Boy Scouts (Scouts BSA), Cub Scouts, Venturers 218 Comments



Effective Dec. 1, 2017, the Boy Scouts of America membership fee will be \$33 a year for all registered youth and adult members.

Scouting remains an incredible value. Where else but in Scouting can young people acquire hands-on leadership skills, become more comfortable in nature, and learn to make ethical and moral decisions throughout their lives?

Not bad for just \$2.75 a month.

As with every major decision affecting the BSA, this decision was made in concert with the volunteer-led national executive board of the BSA.

This change will affect Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, Venturing crews and Sea Scout ships. However, it will not apply to LDS-sponsored units, nor to those units with council-paid memberships.

All November and December 2017 charters will renew at this new rate. November is included because November charter renewal actually spans from Dec. 1, 2017, to Nov. 30, 2018.

What your BSA membership fee covers

So what are you getting for that \$33 a year?

In short, your membership fee pays for the operation of the BSA National Service Center, which supports approximately 270 local councils that administer the Scouting program.

The National Service Center develops program enhancements, covers liability insurance costs and much more.

For adult leaders, the fee also pays for the communications resources that keep Scouters informed. That includes online resources, like this blog, and printed publications, like *Scouting* magazine.

Additionally, the National Service Center:

- Provides training to local council volunteers and staff
- Maintains a national training center at Philmont Scout Ranch
- Develops and maintains four year-round national high-adventure bases and executes national events (jamborees, National Eagle Scout Association and Order of the Arrow conferences, and National Council meetings)
- Continues our leadership role in protecting our youth by providing Youth Protection resources, training, and criminal background checks for all registered volunteers and staff
- Provides local councils with program as well as tools for camp and office planning and evaluation, extensive financial counseling, planned giving and fundraising information, and professional personnel support

- Coordinates a communications network through printed literature (handbooks, merit badge pamphlets, brochures, training materials, and professional development training)
- Makes available uniforms, equipment and program supplies
- Maintains and develops new relationships with chartered organizations that use the Scouting program (religious institutions, civic organizations, labor unions, professional organizations, business and industry)
- Serves in a leadership role with Scouting associations in other countries as a member of the World Scout Conference
- Sets and maintains program standards (e.g., advancement, health and safety, etc.) to ensure consistency of the brand throughout councils across the country

How BSA's fee compares to other youth-serving organizations

Scouters know that the \$33 fee doesn't cover it all. There are also costs related to uniforms, personal equipment, and the activities of individual members like outings and field trips, camporees or summer camp. Even when you add all that up, membership in the BSA costs less than other youth-serving organizations.

I did some research online to find just how good of a value Scouting really is.

Each of the activities below offers a great experience for young people. In fact, research has shown that youth who participate in both Scouting and sports do really well in life.

This list is simply meant to put into perspective the BSA's membership fee:

- **Youth football, \$250 per year:** In Phoenix, a season of Pop Warner football for participants ages 5 to 14 costs \$250. On top of that, parents must pay \$65 per season to rent equipment (helmet, pads, jersey and more).

- **Boys basketball, \$500 per year:** The Amateur Athletic Union's boys' basketball season typically runs from March through June. Fees include uniforms but not travel, meals or hotels. Combined, these can raise the costs to more than \$4,000 a year.
- **Youth orchestra, \$225 per year:** These vary greatly, but here's one example. Members of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra Youth Ensembles pay \$20 to audition and a tuition of \$225 per school year. This does not include instruments; a good violin, for example, can easily cost \$650 to \$850.
- **Competitive swimming, \$165 per year:** In North Carolina, competitive swimmers pay a \$165 registration fee, plus \$181 a month after that, for a total of about \$2,000 a year.