April 13, 2020

Dear Scout Leaders & Parents,

As we start our fifth week “Scouting at Home”, I wanted to communicate what we as a council are doing, what resources we have available to you, what our plans are for summer, and what our finances look like as result of COVID-19.

While many of Scouting’s adventures happen outdoors, we’ve adapted to social distancing – and social media. To keep our staff as healthy as possible, all of our active employees are working from home and our office, Scout Shop, and camp properties are closed through May 15th. But Scouting doesn’t stop! **We are as active as ever**, using technology to our advantage.

Over the past four weeks, we have hosted five Facebook Live videos, one Scout Leader meeting on Zoom, and a Virtual Roundtable. We’ve covered woodworking, backyard camping, rope splicing, pet care with a veterinarian, and face masks. In the coming weeks we have a full schedule of activities for you and your Scouts:

- Tomorrow, Tuesday April 14: **Radio Merit Badge** via Zoom at 7pm
- Thursday, April 16: **Religious emblems for Scouts** on our Facebook page at 4pm
- Friday, April 17: **Virtual Roundtable** for all parents and scout leaders at 7pm
- Saturday, April 18: **Bike safety** demonstration on our Facebook page
- Monday April 20: **Summer camp information** via Zoom at 5:30pm
- Tuesday, April 21: **Penny boat challenge** on Facebook
- Tuesday, April 21: **Merit Badge Counselor Orientation** Training via Zoom at 7pm
- Thursday April 23: **Cooking demonstration** on Facebook
- Saturday, April 25: Penny boat challenge **Sea Scout competition** on Facebook

All of the information to join these online activities is listed on our dedicated webpage [www.longbeachbsa.org/scoutingathome](http://www.longbeachbsa.org/scoutingathome). We created this page specifically for you to access materials, meeting plans, Scouting videos, 30-day challenges, and much more. We update this page daily so I’d encourage you to check back often.

We also know many parents want to know what’s going on for the summer. The short answer is that while many decisions are out of our control, we are actively planning to run **summer camps at both Camp Tahquitz and at the Long Beach Sea Base**. We are taking health concerns seriously and we will never put any youth’s health or safety in jeopardy. We will be following the direction of local health authorities and we are working with medical professionals to determine our best course of action. To address these questions and more, we have scheduled a **camp informational meeting next Monday, April 20 at 5:30pm on Zoom**. For regular updates on our camps, I recommend that you visit the webpage [www.longbeachbsa.org/camps](http://www.longbeachbsa.org/camps).
Financially, we as a council stand to lose $250,000 in revenue for 2020 due to COVID-19. If we are unable to operate our summer camps, I estimate our deficit will increase to $400,000. Like many small businesses, we have already tightened our belt. We have applied for funding through the federal CARES Act. Without camp revenue, without shop sales, with foundation grants re-directing aid, and fundraising events postponed, our income has dried up.

I think it’s important to clarify again that our council finances are separate from the current National BSA bankruptcy case. For more information on the distinction, see this letter from February 18.

I also wanted to reassure you that we will issue refunds for any payments made prior or in the future for activities that are cancelled due to COVID-19 “safer at home” orders.

We know many families are struggling. Yet we still humbly ask that if you are able, in any way, to give your financial support, we would be so appreciative. If you are moved to give a charitable gift, please visit www.longbeachbsa.org/fos. We are ever grateful for our strong base of supporters.

It's times like these where we rally together that shows the value of Scouting. Instilling in youth the values of hard-work, being of service to others, resiliency through hard times will make for a more fulfilling life for decades to come.

If you have a question you’ve been meaning to ask, a concern about Scouting activities, a creative way you've figured out how to meet online, or a success story or photo about your Scouts adapting to “Scouting at Home” please contact me anytime by email at john.fullerton@scouting.org.

I look forward to the next time we can all get together in person. Until then, Scouting goes on, and I hope you’ll stay in touch with us on Facebook, on Instagram, on our website for daily updates, and subscribe to our weekly Thursday emails.

PS - I’ve been thrilled to see how many of you are also using video-conferencing. Several units have held Scout meetings, parent meetings, boards of review, and even award ceremonies online. If you haven’t jumped on board, I highly recommend you try. Keeping our Scouts engaged through these times, however difficult it may be, is critical to their growth as leaders our future needs.

John Fullerton
Scout Executive
Long Beach Area Council