



**SOUTHWEST FLORIDA COUNCIL**  
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

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# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



## Southwest Florida Council Boy Scouts of America

Serving: Manatee, Sarasota, Desoto, Charlotte, Lee,  
Hendry and Collier Counties

## From the Council President



Dear Scouting Friends,

It was an honor to serve as Council President for 2023, in which Southwest Florida Council exceeded many goals for program delivery and fiscal management. Our real success is revealed through the “Scouting Experience” our Scout Leaders provide thousands of young people throughout Southwest Florida. Instilling life skills, values, and leadership qualities in today’s young people continues to be our primary focus. Southwest Florida Council’s numerous volunteers, supporters, and donors believe in this focus and, through their help, have allowed us to enhance programs and facilities our Scouts and their families enjoy.

This brief report contains highlights of the past year. On behalf of our Scouts, thank you for your support, time, talents, and genuine treasure in making a difference in the lives of our young people.

The Honorable Josephine Gagliardi  
Council President



## Council Officers

Josephine Gagliardi  
Jim Thielen  
Tyrone Shinn  
David Dignam  
John Tobler  
Gary Hoyt  
Blair McVety  
Bill Coen  
David Verinder  
Douglas Adams  
Jim Fetterman  
Jim Pilon  
Dave Dale

President  
Council Commissioner  
Vice President, Finance & Fund Development  
Vice President, Council Relations & Marketing  
Vice President, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion  
Vice President, Strategic Planning  
Vice President, Physical Resources  
Vice President, Council Performance  
Vice President, Governance and Leadership  
Vice President, Program  
Vice President, Safe Scouting  
Council Attorney  
Past President

## Council Properties



### Price Sanders Scout Reservation

Price-Sanders Scout Reservation, a 1280-acre section of Cecil Webb Wildlife Management Area, includes two facilities: Camp Miles (for Scouts BSA, Venturing & Explorers) and Cub Family Camp (for Cub Scouts and their families).

The buildings on the Reservation (PSSR) include: a central dining hall, individual troop campsites, a health lodge, a trading post, archery, rifle and shotgun ranges, a chapel by the lake, and ecology lodge, a central shower facility, a training lodge, a swimming pool, a boating island for aquatics.

### Camp Flying Eagle

Camp Flying Eagle located in Bradenton, Florida on Upper Manatee River Rd, consists of 185 acers and is a unique outdoor wonder surrounded by mossy Oaks and large hardwoods providing a memorable camping experience.

Cape Flying Eagle is adjacent to Rye Preserve Park. The Manatee River provides a backdrop for the Amphitheater and Dining Hall and provides many water activities.



### Council Office and Conference Center

The Council headquarters in Fort Myers features administrative offices, three conference rooms, a kitchenette and a nationally operated Scout Shop.

The Council Conference Center offer over 2000 sq ft of meeting space with partitions to create four break-out areas.



## About Southwest Florida Council and Programs

Studies Reveal Scouting's Enduring Value.

Studies, by Harris Interactive and Tufts University, reinforce what the Boy Scouts of America has been teaching since 1910. Youth who were Scouts for four or more years are:

- Better able to care for the environment (89%)
- Better able to get along with others (88%)
- Always ready to give their best effort (87%)
- Confident in themselves (87%)
- Goal oriented (87%)
- Better able to care for other people (86%)
- Respectful of others (86%)



Like councils across the nation, the story of Southwest Florida Council is colorful, filled with rich stories, and flavored with incredible people.

The Southwest Florida Council, originally called the Royal Palm Council, was founded in 1926 in Ft. Myers, Florida. At that time, it covered the territories of Lee, Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Glades and Hendry counties.



At this early time there were approximately 191 Boy Scouts and at least 6 Boy Scout troops. It's first summer camp was held at Breezy Point in Highlands County, near the village of Lake Placid. The area was later known as Camp Ropaco.

Since then, there have been many changes, thousands of youths, and a long line of red-jacketed leaders. Throughout we have remained faithful to the ideas and ideals that began it all – a dedication to youth, community, and a better future – tied together with an oath of 40 simple words along with a set of life directing laws that number just twelve.

## Council Membership

When you're a kid, fun comes first. Final exams, driver's education and summer jobs will arrive soon enough. Scouting lets kids have fun while teaching them skills that will help them later. From the thrill of shooting an arrow to learning how to transform a block of wood into a race car, Scouts learn the value of hard work, and experience the thrill of seeing it pay off. With a myriad of exciting adventures, Scouting gives kids the experience they need to become productive adults.

	Cub Scout Membership:	2,091
	Scouts BSA Membership:	1,266
	Venturing Membership:	113
	Membership:	352
	Membership:	11,080

**2023 Council Membership Highlights**

- Over 20% increase in Cub Scout Membership in the last two years.
  - 102 Eagle Scouts
  - 18 Female Eagle Scouts since 2021

## Council Programs

The Boy Scouts of America is the nation's largest values-based, youth development organization. The BSA provides a program for young people that builds character, trains them in the responsibilities of participating citizenship, develops personal fitness and leadership.

For over a century, the BSA has helped build the future leaders of this country by combining educational activities and lifelong values with fun. BSA believes — and, through over a century of experience, knows — that helping youth is the key to building a more conscientious, responsible, and productive society.

- Over 600 Southwest Florida Scouts experienced a high-quality Long-term summer camp program in 2023. Council-sponsored events brought thousands of Scouts, adult leaders, and family members to our two Council properties for weekend-long camping experiences.
- Over 20,000 hours of service have been provided by Scouts that have benefited thousands of residents of Southwest Florida.

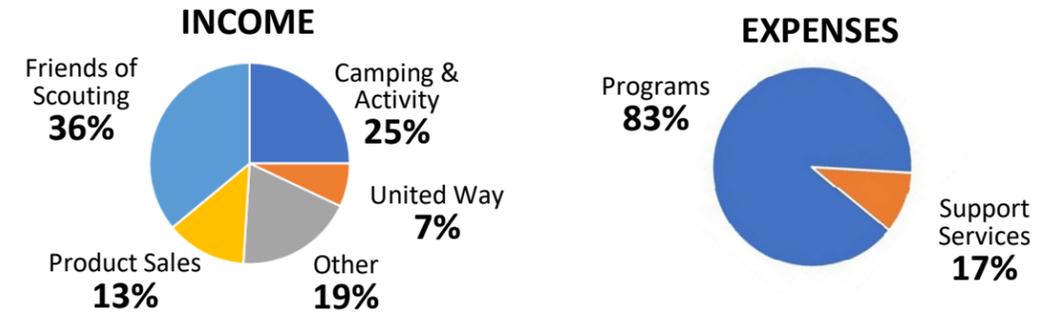
### 1. TOP 4 Merit Badges Earned



4484 total Merit Badges and 3160 Rank Advancements Earned

## Council Finance

It costs \$1.8 million to make Scouting happen in our Council. The budget is our program expressed in dollars. That's why we need the generous and loyal support from our Friends of Scouting.



FOS, or Friends of Scouting, is the council-level annual giving campaign. In most councils, Friends of Scouting represents the council's largest source of income.

The Friends of Scouting campaign typically begins in November and ends in March. During the campaign, a volunteer visits pack meetings or troop courts of honor to explain the campaign and make an appeal for support. The tax-deductible pledges help the volunteers' local council.



But where does that money go?

Many councils answer by using "The Iceberg Analogy." The idea here is that Scouts and volunteers see only 20 percent of what councils provide to members. There's a whole lot more beneath the surface. Councils provide volunteer and staff training, insurance coverage, support staff, camps, equipment, recognitions for leaders, administrative needs, AV supplies, a council website, scholarships, and so much more.