

Membership Musings

Bill Guglielmi, VP Membership
Greater Tampa Bay Area Council
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A Scout is Helpful

I begin again hoping that all are still well during this pandemic, and would also ask that each of you take some time to thank all those who continue to work to make sure our lives remain as close to normal as possible in these time. I believe, like Sir Winston Churchill did during the Battle of Britain, that we the many owe much to the few. I also want to congratulate all those who have graduated from college and high school under these unique circumstances.

I would like to start with rehashing a bit of the past and clear up some misconceptions that have been floating around during the past couple of months. Some unit leaders have been contacted by their District leadership about creating plans this year to grow their units past 12 members before the 2021 recharter process. These contacts were made for one simple reason—the volunteer leadership of the Greater Tampa Bay Area Council believes that unit membership greater than 12 youth provide a much better program experience for their youth. Larger membership allows for better Pack programs and for more and broader leadership experiences in Troops, Crews, and Ships. Given that, we intend to help those units grow; nothing more and nothing less. It is not an effort by Council or District to do anything else. We will, in support of your specific plans, help you any way that we can. Let us know what you need, and you will get it. Do not be shy about it.

Your Council Membership Committee has been hard at work during this time of Virtual Scouting. We are putting together a campaign that we believe will accomplish two major goals during the remainder of this year. The first goal is to assist existing units to GROW—with the ultimate objective being an overall increase of youth membership across the Council of 10% by the end of the year.

The second goal is to embark on an effort to create new units in the areas of our Council that we currently underserve. We believe that doing so will require us to form at least 100 new Packs, Troops, Crews, Ships, and Posts. Your membership team is now conducting detailed research into determining where to target the creation of new units.

These new units will supplement, not encroach upon existing units. That is where the leadership of existing units can be of great assistance to the effort. Each of you understand your unit; you know how much you can grow without negatively impacting your program and what the best size is for your unit. You also understand where there is need that you cannot fill. Let us know where that need is, and we will take it from there. Here is a generic example of what I am talking about. You have a pack that recruits from a general area that covers several elementary schools. Your pack has the capacity of serving no more than 32 Cubs, but you know that there are many more young people in those schools that would love to join Cub Scouts. Tell you District Executive, District Commissioner, and/or District Membership Chair of the need and they will set the wheels in motion.

I have had the opportunity to witness a lot of great Scouting taking place during this pandemic. It is you dedicated leaders who are making this happen. Remember we are here to support you. Thanks for all you do. Stay safe and Keep on Scouting!