



# Scouting Facts

## Vision

All youth have the character, confidence, and experience to improve the world.

## Mission

Northern Star Scouting prepares youth in a safe and inclusive environment to be leaders and individuals of strong character.

## Goals, Objectives, and Impact

Northern Star Scouting's strategic planning process has historically been leading-edge, and proactive with regard to market-driven change. The plan is centered on (1) strengthening core programs, (2) broadening our impact beyond core programs, and (3) ensuring strong foundational elements that provide a base for serving as many young people as possible. **In 2023 we served 35,151 youth, for a 4.9% gain over 2022.**

## Partnerships

Joining in partnership with Northern Star Scouting, 669 Scouting units are chartered by 423 community organizations representing educational, religious, non-profit, civic, and business organizations (251 Cub Scout packs, 348 Scouts BSA troops, 34 Venturing crews, and 66 Explorer posts).

## Service Area

Northern Star Scouting serves 25 counties across central Minnesota (Anoka, Carver, Chippewa, Chisago, Dakota, Hennepin, Isanti, Kandiyohi, Lac Qui Parle, Le Sueur, McLeod, Meeker, Ramsey, Renville, Rice, Scott, Washington, Wright, and Yellow Medicine, and portions of Stearns and Swift) and Wisconsin (Pierce, St. Croix, Polk, and Burnett).

## Camps/Properties

Northern Star Scouting operates eight camps in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Young people can choose from multiple programs at various camps, including day, introductory, high adventure, summer and winter weekend, and resident camps for Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturers, and families.

## Leadership and Staff

Northern Star Scouting is led by a volunteer board of directors with 67 members who come from education, business, other non-profits, and community organizations. Youth and volunteers are supported by 75 full-time paid staff and 36 part-time paid staff. Additionally, more than 500 seasonal employees deliver camping programs and outdoor adventure in the summer and winter months.

## Budget

Northern Star Scouting operates its programs and properties on a 2023 budget of \$13.8 million.

## BSA Scouting

Northern Star Scouting supported more than 6,393 volunteers in BSA Scouting who developed and enriched the lives of 15,164 boys and girls, ages 5 through 20, in the program year ending August 31, 2023 for a 1.6% decline. We served 7,141 Cub Scouts, 6,576 Scouts BSA, 513 Venturers/Sea Scouts, and 934 Explorers.

## Community Scouting

Northern Star's Community Scouting programs reached 19,987 youth at Base Camp and other camps, for a total youth served of 35,151 and a 10.5% increase.

Scouting invites all people to get involved, mindful of the importance of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status, religion, physical ability and political belief. We create a positive and welcoming environment for all, valuing backgrounds and experiences that will grow and strengthen our movement and continue to make us a valued contributor to the communities we serve.

## Outreach

**Juvenile Diversion:** The Juvenile Diversion program targets first-time non-violent youth offenders. In 2023, 362 youth were referred by its program partners (8 police departments and one charter school).

**Exploring:** A work site-based program that provides young men and women ages 14-20 regular hands-on opportunities to learn about careers and trades from adult mentors who are professionals in the student's area of career interest. In 2023, 635 youth were served through 54 posts across the council, all sponsored by community/workplace partners. The team also formalized a pilot program with English Language Learner High School students to provide a hybrid Scouting/Career Exploration program in Minneapolis Public Schools.

**Polaris:** The Polaris program brings both traditional Scouting and Exploring programs to physically and developmentally challenged boys, girls, and adults (with cognitive challenges). In 2023, 364 individuals were served through 28 traditional and Exploring sites/classroom partnered with educational and community partners.

**Huron:** Huron is a site-based Scouting program where Northern Star Scouting provides staff. Most often the sites are in low-income schools and immediately after the school day or at park and recreation locations. Most groups meet once every week throughout the year. In 2023 Huron served 1,286 youth, which is a 83.5% increase over 2022.

**Registration Assistance:** There is a gap of approximately \$450,000 between what families can afford to pay (no youth is ever turned away), and the total registration fee revenue if everyone had paid the full fee. This is after restricted endowment and event income are applied. The remaining gap includes all programs of Scouting, and annual gifts to help fill the gap are also restricted.



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**For More Information**

[www.northernstar.org](http://www.northernstar.org) or call 612-261-2300.



## YOUTH MEMBERSHIP

- We served, within two percentage points (max), equal percentages of youth across four major ethnic groups in BSA Scouting.
- 771 Webelos earned the Arrow of Light.
- Three youth earned the Summit Award.
- 58 Scouts earned a STEM award in 2023.
- 29% of newly joining Scouts BSA youth were girls.

## VOLUNTEERS

- 561 Scouts and adult leaders participated in our two University of Scouting events taking classes ranging from leadership training, unit program planning, to outdoor cooking.
- 40 Scouting volunteers attended Wood Badge, multiple weekend advanced leadership training course for volunteers.
- 1,884 unit visits were logged into the commissioner tools.

## RESOURCES

- \$789,607 was spent on camp maintenance including facility improvements, utility repairs and equipment replacement at our eight properties.
- Awarded \$161,399 in academic scholarships, and \$143,323 in camperships to youth.
- The Annual Fundraising Campaign exceeded the goal of \$2,475,000.
- Northern Star Scouting had the number two popcorn sale in the United States, at just over \$2.44 million dollars. Over \$1.71 million dollars went back to support Scouting units and Northern Star Scouting.

## PROGRAMS

- 300 youth participated in one of four sessions of Grey Wolf: a week-long council-facilitated National Youth Leadership Training course.
- Attendance at our summer community day camps (serving all kids) grew 29% to 1,132 kids. This includes 201 kids at the new STEM based Camp Invention.
- The Totanhan Nakaha Lodge of the Order of the Arrow has 1,906 total members in 2023 and 355 new inductions. The Lodge also contributed \$8,862 in campership and annual campaign support, and 8,802 hours of service to camps and the community.
- 18 Aviation Explorers attend and provided support at the OshKosh International Air Show.

- Over 1,200 Cub youth and their families attended an introductory Fall Campout to mark the beginning of the Scouting year.
- 1,780 Cub Scouts and their families ventured into the cold while tubing, kick sledding, and learning the basics of winter camping at Polar Cubs Day Camp!
- 1,308 Scouts successfully spent a day or night outside in negative or near zero-degree conditions (and enjoyed it!) due to the expert training and equipment at our Snow Base camps.
- Over 700 female Scouts BSA youth attended Many Point and Tomahawk, an increase over 2022!!
- 2023 saw the highest Webelos to Scouts BSA crossover rate in recent memory with 77% of eligible 5<sup>th</sup> graders joining a troop.
- Our inflatable axe throwing at the MN State Fair had more than 7,000 youth participants... a 2,000 youth increase from 2023.

- **In 2023 we had a total of 467 Scouts earn the Eagle Scout Rank with 26 of them being girls.**
- **Across all programs, we served more youth of color than Caucasian youth as percentages of population.**
- **More than \$250,000 in registration fee assistance was given by donors for families and youth who required financial aid.**
- **1,995 Cubs or 30% of our Cub membership attended overnight summer camp, the third consecutive year of this percentage high.**
- **Almost 5,500 Scouts BSA youth attended an overnight summer camp, which means 8 of every 10 Scouts attended camp.**
- **\$1,029,000 was spent on capital improvements at our camps to better serve all genders, families, and community users.**
- **After our 2019 expansion to include girls in all programs, we ended 2023 with 16% of our Cubs in girls. Girls made up 13% of our Scouts BSA youth, 42% of Venturing, and 42% of Exploring membership.**
- **Including Community Scouting, we had growth in total youth served for the third year in a row.**

- Membership advertising on Facebook, Instagram and Google Search resulted in over 10 million impressions, 24.7K clicks to our new Go Scouting website! From there, we had nearly 5K clicks to learn more about joining a unit.
- Media coverage of positive Scouting stories in print and online resulted in 3.4 million impressions.
- Facebook and Instagram posting resulted in a reach of 111,000 and 6,878 with growth in our two active Facebook Groups: Scouts BSA (1.8K) and Cub Scouts (1K).
- In 2023, the Totanhan Nakaha Lodge of the Order of the Arrow coordinated two service projects for Fort Snelling National Cemetery, with 1,244 volunteers

totaling 742 total hours.

- 60 of our Polaris special-needs adult program participants came out to Base Camp in mid-September for a day of fun including climbing the outdoor tower for the first time!
- 130 youth and 43 adults attended the 2023 National Jamboree at the Summit Bechtel Reserve in West Virginia.
- Over 300 Law Enforcement Explorers and 150 adult volunteers attended the Law Enforcement Exploring Conference and Competition. 90 Fire Fighter Explorers and over 50 adult volunteers participated in the Minnesota Governor's Fire prevention day demonstration and competition at the Minnesota State Fair.