



**SCOUTS CANADA**  
**Southwestern Ontario**  
**Serving the Battlefields & Tri-Shores Councils**

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Dear Scouter

I am writing to you to inform you about events which do not normally occur within the Scouting movement. I am also writing to you seeking your support and cooperation as I have serious concerns about the actions that have been undertaken by some members.

As you know, the Camp Timken property has been a matter of some interest during the last couple of years. At one time, it was considered to be a possible sale candidate because the usage rates of the property were considerably lower than other Scout Camps in our area.

There were different views. Some believed that the property had the potential to succeed, despite a variety of challenges. These views were advanced by way of an internal appeal within our organization. Scouts Canada considered the points that were raised and decided to remove the property from the list of sale candidates and to support the local Scouters in the implementation of a five-year business plan. For me it was satisfying to watch our volunteer organization manage an internal disagreement and resolve it in a sophisticated and civilized manner.

Although the Scouts Canada appeal process resulted in the property being removed from the list of sale candidates, the matter has now re-emerged in a very public fashion. A group of volunteers, unknown in size, led by David Palmer has launched a court application in the Superior Court of Ontario against Scouts Canada – the Provincial Incorporated Body for Ontario. Mr. Palmer purports that he is the representative of 1<sup>st</sup> Aylmer, 1<sup>st</sup> Belmont, 1<sup>st</sup> Shedden, 1<sup>st</sup> Springfield and the 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> St. Thomas Scout Groups. Mr. Palmer's court application challenges the ownership of the property by The Boy Scouts of Canada – the Incorporated Body of Ontario. Each of the local Scout Groups above are applicants in this lawsuit that Mr. Palmer has launched against Scouts Canada. If you are a member in one of these Groups, you are involved in this lawsuit and may have responsibility for the legal costs or consequences that may result.

If you are a member of one of these Groups and did not agree to participate in the lawsuit please advise me so that I may ensure that you do not bear any unintended consequences.

Since it has been sued, Scouts Canada had to respond by retaining counsel and filing material in reply. Scouts Canada is protecting the interests of all Scouts, including all area members, by taking the position that the property is owned by Scouts Canada through the Provincial Incorporated Body for Ontario. Scouts Canada will ensure that control of the property does not fall into the hands of any splinter group.

This is an important issue for our movement. Scouts Canada has an obligation to protect the assets of the organization, ensuring that they remain available for the use of all members and member programs.

I am writing this letter to all of the adult area members, including those who have decided to put themselves in a public legal conflict against the movement to which we belong. It is our common responsibility through our pledge to advance the Mission of Scouts Canada, and it is my personal view that this can only be accomplished by keeping our organization strong and vibrant. Disputes may exist within any large organization, but they should be resolved through civilized discussion rather than an unnecessary and expensive court proceeding.

I am asking and encouraging those members who remain committed to Scouting to speak up and let your view be known. Don't be lulled into the belief that local Scout Groups need to sue Scouts Canada to save Camp Timken.

For those persons who are currently members and have decided to pursue their personal views by commencing a court action against Scouts Canada, I ask you to consider how you are serving Scouts Canada, and the Mission of our movement, by suing our organization and causing our financial resources to be spent on litigation when it could be better applied to our youth programs. If, after careful consideration, you still believe that this is the correct path, I would ask you to do two things. Firstly, I request that you clearly identify yourself to me so that, as the Council Commissioner, I will know where you stand and your opposition to Scouts Canada will be transparent and open for all to see. Secondly, I request that you resign your appointment until the current conflict is concluded. It is quite inappropriate and an obvious conflict to remain in an appointed position while you are in direct opposition to Scouts Canada on a matter that is causing direct harm and expense to our organization.

It is my personal mission to ensure that scouting in Elgin thrives and that our youth members are provided with exciting programs that capture the spirit of the Scouting Movement. In my view, we will accomplish this by building a strong organization that works together rather than a fractured one that sues itself.

Let your views be known!

Yours in Scouting,



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