

*Article in the Hudson Gazette*  
**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2006**  
*Letter to the Editor*  
**Saddened**

As a resident of your community and a representative (and volunteer) of Scouts Canada, I am greatly saddened by the article Scouting facing major crisis: Watchdog, which appeared on August 30 in your newspaper.

Do credible and reputable newspapers no longer take the time to gather different perspectives on an issue? Why was only one source quoted and facts not checked? If you had contacted representatives of Scouts Canada, they would have told you that the organization has reduced its staff by 20 per cent over the past three years. They would have also told you that while membership has indeed been declining by about 10 per cent, we only saw a 6.6 per cent decrease in membership between 2004-05 and 2005-06. This is an improving trend. In my sector, I am pleased to report that we had 60 more members this past year than the year before and we are expecting more growth this season.

Scouts Canada remains a vibrant part of Canadian society and is poised to celebrate its one-hundredth birthday in 2007. Scouting is making great strides in welcoming Canadians from all cultural backgrounds so that they can become a part of this worldwide Movement that is over 25 million strong.

In my book, these are positive developments. They confirm that Scouts Canada is taking the proper actions and is willing to adapt its operations to meet current realities and requirements.

Again, I wish to reiterate that I am disappointed by your coverage of this story. Scouting has contributed to OUR community for decades and has had a phenomenal impact on OUR children. Why not, at least, take the time to paint a more balanced and accurate picture of today's Scouting.

Danica J. Lewington  
Area Commissioner, Ohiyo Area

*Editor's note:* Nobody at Scouts Canada was available to deal with our questions by deadline. We saw no reason why Scouts Canada's summer vacation schedule should dictate when we published the story, which was of considerable local interest. Rather than complaining about the coverage, we encourage Scouts Canada to address the specific financial and organizational allegations contained in our original story. We all support and believe in Scouting, but that should be no reason to avoid answering hard questions.