



February 8, 2018

Greetings to all!

Many of you have moved on from your Scouting adventures to focus on your careers, raising a family, or seeking new adventures beyond the Scouting movement. It happens to all of us at some point in our busy lives. But surely you have felt it: That itch in your feet on an autumn day, the call to return to your favorite campsite, or even the urge to reconnect with the fellowship of Scouts.

You are not alone.

Scouting has heard the call for an official means of reconnecting former Scouters with both one another and their local council, and created an official Scouting Alumni and Friends (SAF) program. Here in Tidewater Council, we are in the process of establishing our local Alumni Association, with the goal of creating “affiliates” centered around NESAs, OAs, PSR Camp Staffers, Wood Badge, NYLT, Venturing, Exploring, STEM, Silver Beaver, and James E. West fellows. While members of some of these groups have already established mature communication networks, we know that we can do better as a whole.

The heart of this initiative is a single word: **Reconnect**.

The Alumni Association is an opportunity for former members to reconnect with their past in Scouting, share fellowship with other Scouters, and to connect with present members of the Scouting community. Throughout 2018, we hope to arrange meetups of former Scouters allowing you to relive your favorite **memories**, gain **new opportunities** by networking with the alumni community, and begin the process of establishing **mentorship** and **service** programs.

You may be wondering, “Why now?”

Allow me to offer several reasons: In 2018, Pipsico Scout Reservation will celebrate its 60th birthday and the Council is planning several opportunities to celebrate. We want you there to share your memories. Wood Badge will be celebrating its 70th birthday since the first course in the United States was offered in 1948. We’ll be calling all Wood Badgers back to Gilwell to share their memories! Lastly, we invite you to attend the annual gathering of Eagles. Nothing represents the Boy Scouts of America more importantly than recognizing Eagles Scouts, past and present.

The next two questions you might want answered is: how much is this going to cost and what do I have to do to reconnect?

How much is this going to cost? Answer - not a dime for "Hiker" status.

What do I have to do to reconnect?

Part 1. Join Scouting Alumni & Friends either as a Hiker (no cost) or Pathfinder (\$35). Fill in as much detail as you can with particular attention to e-mail, mobile #, and social media.

<http://www.scoutingalumni.org/site/c.ejIPK1NNLgJ0E/b.9309477/k.BF3E/Home.htm>

Part 2. Join the appropriate Tidewater Council (TWC) Facebook page for your affiliate(s).

In the coming months, we will be sending this letter through existing databases, i.e., NESAs, Wood Badge, etc. to validate and confirm the accuracy of existing individual data. This initiative, in and of itself, is transformational and intends to create a formidable Alumni network so past, present, and future Scouts, their families, and friends might be positively influenced by your Scouting journey.

We hope you will reconnect and consider participating in some of the planned celebrations throughout 2018 and beyond!

Yours in Scouting,

Jim Shannon
Scouting Alumni & Friends Committee
Tidewater Council