

## Understanding the Council Budget

Last month District Leaders (District Chairs, Commissioners, Finance Chairs, FOS Chairs) along with several Council Leaders (Council Treasurer, VP of Development, VP of Operations) from across Mount Baker Council came together to discuss the Council budget. What we learned is that everyone one of us have a piece of the puzzle that goes into making our Council Budget.

I had the opportunity to share with the group about two scouts in my unit who are working on the Personal Management Merit Badge. And as many of you know, that merit badge requires the Scouts to do a weekly budget and track income and expenses for 13 weeks. Well, my scouts had a very hard time understanding income. After all they did not get an allowance and did not have jobs. So after much discussion about expenses (they have no trouble spending money) we returned to where the money came from so they could spend it. They got it. And they are working hard at doing their weekly budget along with recording their weekly income and expenses.

Just like my Scouts know where they spend money, it is easy to see where we spend money as a Council. Membership supplies, two service centers, training materials and salaries. The Council has hosted events such as Stampede and Aim for Autumn Family Camp. Don't forget about supplies for Day Camps and maintenance of Fire Mountain. The list goes on and on.

So do you know where we get our income? I can tell you money does not grow on trees! Our income comes from things like Friends of Scouting (FOS), popcorn sales and camping. The Council also holds special events through the year to raise the needed funds. You may have heard about our Good Scout Breakfast, Pull for Scouting and Council Auction. There is investment income and matching donations. And more!

My Scouts are learning about money management and how they do have financial responsibilities in their families. So, what is your responsibility as a leader or family in Scouting to the Council budget? Our Council would not be able to support our units and Scouts without the various sources of income. This is where you have the opportunity to give back to Scouting. Our Friends of Scouting campaign will kick off shortly, and you have the opportunity to be part of the success of our Council. I ask that you look at your individual situation, consider the value of Scouting to your family and give appropriately when your unit has its FOS presentation. We are all in this together.

The Personal Management Merit Badge requires you to learn about budgeting, income and expenses. Our Council knows these lessons quite well. We are one of a handful of Councils across the country that is debt free. We operate in the black year after year. So when your unit has its FOS presentation just remember that money does not grow on trees! It is a lesson my Scouts have already learned.