



**OBSERVATIONS FROM THE NNJC BOARD PRESIDENT REGARDING NATIONAL JAMBOREE AND THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT**

Dear parents and fellow scouters,

As you may know, more than 200 scouts, Venturers and adult volunteers from Northern NJ Council are currently attending the National Jamboree in West Virginia with 35,000 other youth from every US state and 40 countries. As a staff member, here at the Summit I can share with you first hand that they are having 'an experience of a lifetime.'

Our young men and women, including my son, are truly Living Scouting's Adventure, the theme of the jamboree. They are taking part in outdoor adventures like zip lining, white water rafting, mountain biking, and rappelling. Our sons and daughters have been a part of more than 100,000 hours of community service throughout West Virginia. STEM programs, merits badges such as Gaming and Chess, and high energy entertainment have all been pursuits by NNJC scouts. Some spoke to astronauts! Scouts tell me that our Wounded Warriors patch set is a high value trader. It's a joy to see our kids making new friends and building confidence to last a lifetime.

As part of the BSA's 80-year tradition, the President of the United States, who serves as BSA's honorary president, was invited to address the jamboree. President Trump accepted and became the eighth President to attend a jamboree and the first in 12 years. As part of the team that facilitated President Trump's visit I personally witnessed the sincerity and enthusiasm he showed individual scouts and was thrilled with his reaction when a scout presented him with the NNJC jamboree patch. In his prepared remarks, the President also strongly praised the Scouting movement and the positive impact it has on the lives of young people and their communities. Our scouts generally seemed excited to have seen the US President live, something most people never have a chance to do.

We recognize that remarks by President Trump that went beyond the scope of the scouting event have received a mixed response within NNJC. While I understand, and appreciate the concerns it is not the role of NNJC to explicitly endorse or repudiate the political statements of any politician. The BSA is wholly non-partisan and does not promote any one position, product, service, politician, candidate, party or philosophy. We agreed with the President's opening comment that an audience of scouts is not the place to discuss partisan politics, ever.

Rex Tillerson, US Secretary of State and former BSA President, also attended the jamboree and reminded us that The Main Thing in scouting is to focus on positive character building in today's young men and women. Living by the Scout Law and Oath are a good place to start. Let's keep our focus on that and not get distracted by partisan political opinions.

Thank you for all you do for scouting. Special appreciation to the parents and others who sponsored a scout or Venturer's trip to the 2017 National Jamboree. You're going to love hearing all the wonderful stories!

Yours in Scouting,  
David H. Verbraska, Esq.  
Executive Board President

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