

Scouting official leaves post due to conflict

JOSEPH PALMER
Herald Staff Writer

The Boy Scouts' district executive in Manatee County has decided to resign from his post due to a conflict with the head of the tri-county Sunnyland Council.

The resignation of Dale Baldwin, which is effective May 17, came about as a result of policy disagreements with Bill Robinson, the Sunnyland Council's chief executive.

Baldwin, a paid employee whose job is to serve as an adviser to the volunteer leaders, could not be reached for comment Monday evening.

Robinson, who oversees scouting activities in Manatee, Sarasota and DeSoto counties, said John DeForge will be appointed acting district chairman until a new executive is hired.

He said there is no widespread dissatisfaction within the area scout movement, despite some indications to the contrary.

"This thing is blown way out of proportion. We have over 500 volunteers and three have quit," he said.

But Billy Campbell, another district leader, who resigned two weeks ago, said about seven leaders have left because of what they see as an attempt by Robinson to wrest control from the organization's volunteers.

"He wants to take the whole thing in hand and run it himself," Campbell said referring to Robinson. "This is tying our hands."

Campbell also said Robinson calls too many meetings and always asks the same people to chair committees.

Baldwin almost doubled scout membership in the district, according to Campbell, who said he feels it does not make good sense to let a person of Baldwin's caliber go.

Out of 70 other councils in the state, the Sunnyland Council ranked number two last year in the percentage increase of growth, said William Pinney, council president.

Pinney, Robinson and Campbell all said their chief concern is that the turmoil may somehow affect the image of scouting in the community. Pinney also said he believes that part of the reason for the discord is that so many of the scouts' leaders were close to Baldwin, and were upset when they learned of his resignation.

"I wish everyone well," Pinney said. "But I don't think we should get into a row and a big newspaper story."

Campbell echoed those same feelings. "It's a shame," he said. "We're supposed to set the example. The boys are getting wind of this."

BR
Hera
A
whi
pac
D
seat
Poin
an ey
Liv
the p
Herra

Pol

Bar

A ma
said he
Thom
leaving
assailat
uncons
Swess
Wo
S
wo
ug