



Thursday, September 27, 2007 - 12:00 AM

*Permission to reprint or copy this article or photo, other than personal use, must be obtained from The Seattle Times. Call 206-464-3113 or e-mail [resale@seattletimes.com](mailto:resale@seattletimes.com) with your request.*

## **Fifth man files sex-abuse suit against Boy Scouts**

**By Tim Klass**  
*The Associated Press*

A fifth man has sued the Seattle council of the Boy Scouts on claims of sexual abuse by former scoutmaster Bruce A. Phelps.

The lawsuit for unspecified damages was filed Wednesday in King County Superior Court on behalf of a man identified as G.S., 38, of Mount Vernon, who was living with his mother when he spent about two years in the West Seattle troop where Phelps, 54, a City Light warehouse worker, was a scoutmaster from 1977 to 1983.

Phelps has refused to comment on any of the lawsuits accusing him of abuse during his time as a scoutmaster, including four which were settled earlier for undisclosed terms. Alicia Lifrek, a spokeswoman for the Chief Seattle Council of the Boy Scouts, did not immediately return a call for comment.

In the past, Scout leaders have said the organization now teaches boys, parents and volunteers to recognize and report abuse and trains boys to resist attempts at abuse.

One of the earlier cases, brought by Tom and Matt Stewart, of Enumclaw and Palm Desert, Calif., respectively, led to a state Supreme Court ruling on July 27, 2006, that the Boy Scouts must release to the brothers' lawyers the dossiers of sexual-abuse allegations the organization has received nationwide since the 1940s.

In interviews with The Seattle Times, the Stewarts said Phelps subjected them to sexual abuse from when they were Cub Scouts in grade school into their high-school years.

Boy Scout files show a pattern of cover-up and failure to report to authorities verified cases of sexual abuse by scoutmasters and a lack of warning to local troop leaders, parents and scouts, said Timothy D. Kosnoff, a lawyer for plaintiffs in the Phelps-related cases.

Technically, the latest case was brought by a bankruptcy trustee on behalf of G.S. because any award or settlement must be go first to his creditors from a Chapter 7 personal bankruptcy case in 2002, Kosnoff said Thursday in a telephone interview.

There was no indication that the bankruptcy was a direct result of what happened in the Boy Scouts, Kosnoff said. In the lawsuit, he wrote that "G.S. has been psychologically damaged and continues to be damaged psychologically and to experience mental anguish, humiliation and emotional and

physical distress."

Kosnoff said G.S. also gave the names of other scouts he said had been abused by Phelps.

"We're trying to track them down and interview them," Kosnoff said. "I wouldn't be surprised if there were other victims."

[Copyright © 2007 The Seattle Times Company](#)