



ORDER OF THE ARROW



**BOY SCOUT TROOP 555
NORTH STAR DISTRICT
LAS VEGAS AREA COUNCIL**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®



This document is intended for parents of Troop 555 who have questions about what the Order of the Arrow is, and its purpose.

WHAT IS IT?

For more than ninety years, the Order of the Arrow (OA) has recognized Scouts and Scouters who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives. This recognition provides encouragement for others to live these ideals as well. *Arrowmen* (as they are called) are known for providing cheerful service to others. OA service, activities, adventures, and training for youth and adults are models of quality leadership development and programming that enrich and help to extend Scouting to America's youth.

PURPOSE

The mission of the Order of the Arrow is to fulfill its purpose as an integral part of the Boy Scouts of America through positive youth leadership under the guidance of selected capable adults.

As Scouting's National Honor Society, the purpose is to:

- Recognize those who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives and through that recognition cause others to conduct themselves in a way that warrants similar recognition;
- Promote camping, responsible outdoor adventure, and environmental stewardship as essential components of every Scout's experience, in the unit, year-round, and in summer camp;
- Develop leaders with the willingness, character, spirit and ability to advance the activities of their units, our Brotherhood, Scouting, and ultimately our nation;
- Crystallize the Scout habit of helpfulness into a life purpose of leadership in cheerful service to others.

WHEN DID ALL THIS START?

The OA was founded by Dr. E. Urner Goodman and Carroll A. Edson in 1915 at the Treasure Island Camp of the Philadelphia Council, Boy Scouts of America. It became an official program experiment in 1922 and was approved as part of the Scouting program in 1934.

In 1948 the OA, recognized as the BSA's national brotherhood of honor campers, became an official part of the Boy Scouts of America.

In 1998, the Order of the Arrow became recognized as Scouting's National Honor Society when it expanded its reach beyond camping to include broader service to Scouting and the community.

INDIANS?

The Order of the Arrow, as with other aspects of Boy Scouting, is steeped in Indian history and tradition. In particular one of the key stories, known as "The Legend", tells of aged Chieftain Chingachgook and his noble son, Uncas. Together they form the basis of selfless service that is the foundation of our Order. This story is told through the induction ceremony. They were a peaceful tribe of Delaware Indians, *Lenni-Lenape*, and it is from their language where Order of the Arrow words and names are derived.



WHO IS IT?

The OA has more than 170,000 active members located in lodges affiliated with over 295 BSA local councils. In our troop, the Scoutmaster and other recognized adults, as well as certain recognized youth are members.

Youth Requirements

The Order of the Arrow membership requirements are:

- Be a registered member of the Boy Scouts of America;
- Have experienced 15 days and nights of Boy Scout camping during the two-year period prior to the election. The 15 days and nights must include one, but no more than one, long-term camp consisting of six consecutive days and five nights of resident camping, approved and under the auspices and standards of the Boy Scouts of America;
- Youth must be under the age of 21, hold the BSA First Class rank or higher; and following approval by the Scoutmaster, be elected by the youth members of the troop.

Adult Requirements

- Adults (age 21 or older) who are registered in the BSA and meet the same requirements as youth may be selected following nomination to the lodge adult selection committee;
- Adult selection is based on their ability to perform the necessary functions to help the Order fulfill its purpose, and is not for recognition of service, including current or prior positions;
- Selected adults must be an asset to the Order because of demonstrated abilities, and must provide a positive example for the growth and development of the youth members of the lodge.

WHAT DO THEY DO?

Members of the lodge experience leadership growth and other opportunities for personal development, all in a fun, action-packed program. Each member's first responsibility is to his troop; Arrowmen bring leadership and service to their units. Indeed, they are considered to be the finest in all of Scouting.

Arrowmen work on service projects benefiting the local council or community, ceremonies, and one of the bigger events called "Conclave". Conclave is a gathering of three lodges together to train, learn, and have fun. The event venue is rotated between the three lodges: Wipala Wiki lodge from the Grand Canyon Council, in Phoenix; Papago lodge from the Catalina Council, in Tucson; and the Nebagamon lodge from the Las Vegas Area Council. This event can best be described as a regional Jamboree but only for Arrowmen, and takes place across a weekend in the Fall of each year.

Arrowmen from our troop are part of the Lowaneu chapter of the Nebagamon lodge. Our chapter is involved in the planning and execution of two district-wide events every year: The North Star District Camporee and North Star District Gateway at Expo. Our youth leaders design, plan, and run these events, and it is a tremendous growth and achievement opportunity. Our Arrowmen are recognized as being the best of the best in the North Star district.



HOW DOES ONE GET IN?

Election

Once annually members of our chapter will come and conduct an election for us. Only those on the election list vetted by the Scoutmaster are eligible, with no exceptions. Based on any extenuating criteria of which the Scoutmaster is aware, a scout that meets the other criteria might not be eligible.

During the election it will be explained to scouts that they may vote for every member on the eligible list, not just one or a few. They will be encouraged to consider the scouts on the list and if they feel they represent the scouting spirit, even while others are not watching them. They may also vote for no candidates, and will be encouraged to do so if they do not know any of the candidates well enough.

Following the election, those who were selected from among their fellow scouts will be given information about their induction into the Order. The induction, held twice annually over a weekend, is called the Ordeal. It is so named because during the experience, candidates maintain silence, receive small amounts of food, work on camp improvement projects, and sleep apart from other campers. These four tests of character are designed to teach significant values. All candidates for membership must complete the Ordeal.

Ceremonies

There are two ceremonies, which are kept in confidence to maintain their mystery for candidates. One ceremony occurs Friday evening, the other Saturday evening. It goes without saying that in neither case is the scout ever subjected to any sort of harassment or harm. Parents who wish to know what is in the ceremony can arrange to view the ceremony scripts with the Scoutmaster. Parents are discouraged, however, from discussing too many particulars with their sons as this tends to ruin some of the excitement and mystery the boys enjoy. Overall the candidates enjoy a feeling of accomplishment and prestige at being elected and completing their Ordeal.

After the ceremony on Saturday evening, families are invited to come up and enjoy a feast with the new Arrowmen. At this time more information and membership cards will be presented. New members will learn about the purpose of the OA and about the fun activities and events there are to attend.

Brotherhood Membership

After 10 months of service as an Ordeal member and fulfilling certain requirements, a member may take part in the Brotherhood ceremony, which places further emphasis on the ideals of Scouting and the Order. Completion of this ceremony signifies full membership in the Order.

What is a “Lodge”?

Our lodge helps the Las Vegas Area Council provide a quality Scouting program through recognition of Scouting spirit and performance, development of youth leadership and service, promotion of Scout camping and outdoor programs, and enhancement of membership tenure.

The lodge operates under a charter granted by the National Council, BSA, and must apply annually for its renewal. The council appoints leadership over the lodge and oversees all aspects of its operation.