



Egwa Tawa Dee Unit Leaders' Guide to OA Elections in Troops, Crews and Ships



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Atlanta Area Council

Scouting's Barriers to Abuse

Two-deep leadership for all Order of the Arrow activities must meet the requirements of Scouting's Barriers to Abuse, which can be found at www.scouting.org/Training/YouthProtection.aspx. The relevant portion of this policy is quoted below:

Two registered adult leaders 21 years of age or over are required at all Scouting activities, including meetings. There must be a registered female adult leader over 21 in every unit serving females. A registered female adult leader over 21 must be present for any activity involving female youth. Notwithstanding the minimum leader requirements, age and program appropriate supervision must always be provided.

Adult Supervision/Coed Activities

Male and female adult leaders must be present for all overnight coed* Scouting trips and outings, even those including parent and child. Both male and female adult leaders must be 21 years of age or older, and one must be a registered member of the BSA

* Please note: If any female is present, of any age, the event is considered coed.

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USE OF THIS GUIDE

The Unit Leaders' Guide to Holding an OA Election in Troops, Crews and Ships has been prepared for Scoutmasters, Venture Crew Advisers and Sea Scout Skippers in the Atlanta Area Council to assist them in understanding policies of the Order of the Arrow regarding unit elections in Scouts BSA Troops, Venturing Crews and Sea Scout Ships and how unit elections are to be conducted. In addition, it contains information that is specific as to how unit elections are coordinated and managed by Egwa Tawa Dee Lodge and its chapters.

The content in this guide pertaining to rules and policies related to unit elections has been derived from National Order of the Arrow publications, particularly the 2019 Edition of the Guide for Officers and Advisers and as such does not supersede and cannot contradict current Order of the Arrow unit election rules and policies.

FEEDBACK

Unit leaders are encouraged to submit your comments, suggestions, and questions pertaining to this guide by sending an email to unitrelationschairman@aacegwa.org.

WELCOME

For over 100 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 are known for maintaining camping traditions and spirit, promoting year-round and long-term resident camping, and 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.

Founded in 1915, the Order of the Arrow is Scouting's National Honor Society. The Order has over more than 160,000 active members located in lodges affiliated with over 270 BSA local councils. Although the Order of the Arrow is a thing of the spirit, there are several layers of organization, all of which are youth led: lodges, sections, and regions and national. At each level, you will find Scouts who have been elected by other Scouts to serve as the Chief or in other leadership positions.

Lodges carry out the Order of the Arrow ("OA") program at the local level and are closely tied with BSA councils. Sections consist of several lodges within a geographic region and regions in turn consist of sections within a geographic region of the United States. Lodges, sections, and regions each have a distinct set of responsibilities which ensure that the OA program runs smoothly.

In the Atlanta Area Council, our lodge is Egwa Tawa Dee. The name is derived from the Cherokee word for the broad winged hawk, which is native to this region. Since 1938, our Lodge has served the Atlanta Area Council, providing opportunities for Scouts to exercise leadership beyond the Troop, Crew or Ship level, promoting and supporting our Council camping program and annually providing thousands of hours of service to our Council camps and our communities, and enjoying fun and challenging activities.

Egwa Tawa Dee is divided into Chapters, each with its distinct name, and which generally correspond to the Council districts. Like the Lodge, each Chapter is headed by a Chapter Chief and other youth officers who are elected by the youth members of the Chapter.

If a Scout is under age 21, to become a member of the Order of the Arrow, he or she must be chosen by a vote of the youth in his or her Troop, Crew or Ship. This is a unique feature of the OA since in most units the majority of those who select their unit's candidates for this honor are not members of the OA. In this way membership is controlled by the youth in their own unit and not by those who are already Arrowmen. However, OA members in the unit have a vote during the election as well as nonmembers.

INTRODUCTION

This guide has been made available to assist in your planning and preparation for scheduling an election in your Scouts BSA Troop, Venture Crew or Sea Scout Ship. Here you will find the information needed to understand:

- The membership requirements for youth and adults. An important distinction to note is that youth are elected while adults are nominated by the unit committee;
- The Order of the Arrow rules and policies for conducting a unit election for youth members;
- The procedures that a unit committee must follow when nominating qualified adults;
- The responsibilities of both the OA unit election team and your unit in the election process; and
- Answers to some frequently asked questions (FAQs) which you may find helpful.

This annual opportunity for the youth members to vote for those deemed worthy in each troop or team to be candidates for membership in the OA is provided by the lodge through unit election teams. The unit election team coordinates with the unit leader and the senior youth leader (senior patrol leader, president or boatswain) to set a date for the election and conducts the election in accordance with the current Order of the Arrow guidelines.

DEFINITIONS:

"ACTIVE MEMBER" - A Scout who carries a current national BSA membership card and participates in at least some unit activities during the year is considered to be a registered active member of the unit. For example, an assistant scoutmaster, member of the unit college scouter reserve or crew or ship members who are away at college but still participate in some unit activities when home, such as campouts, camporees, or occasional unit meetings, should be considered a registered active member.

A youth who moves away or drops out of the unit because of other interests would not be counted in the registered active membership figure.¹

"SCOUT" – A registered member of a Scouts BSA Troop, a Venturing Crew or a Sea Scout Ship who is under age 21.

"UNIT LEADER" – The registered adult leader, 21 years of age, of a unit. In a Scouts BSA Troop, this is the Scoutmaster; in a Venturing Crew, the Adviser; and in a Sea Scout Ship, the Skipper.

"YOUTH MEMBER" - In the OA, Scouts who are members of a Scouts BSA Troop, a Venturing Crew or a Sea Scout Ship and under age 21 years of age are considered to be youth. Thus, every registered active member of the unit who is under age 21 at the time of election is eligible to vote and if otherwise eligible for election, may be elected as a candidate for membership in the OA.,

In Scouts BSA Troops, registered young adults ages 18 through 20 are considered youth members even though they may be registered as an adult in a Troop and serve as an Assistant Scoutmaster or as member of the Unit College Scouter Reserve.

Similarly, Sea Scouts and Venturing crew members ages 18 through 20 are considered youth members for the purposes of OA elections,

Once inducted, these young adults may participate fully in the Order of the Arrow as youth members, until their 21st birthday.

¹ The unit leader is the ultimate authority when it comes to determining whether or not a Scout is an active member of the unit.

OVERVIEW OF THE ELECTION PROCESS

The Lodge has overall responsibility for the management of unit elections in every troop, crew and ship in the council. The lodge determines the time of year for unit elections to be conducted and the length of the election cycle. Several factors are considered when deciding the dates of the OA unit election cycle, including the Induction Weekend dates, the Council and Lodge calendars, and holidays among others. Here in the Atlanta Area Council our OA lodge, Egwa Tawa Dee, has set the annual unit election cycle as running from January 1 to March 31. The actual beginning and ending dates are decided each year by the Lodge Executive Committee and publicized through the lodge website, social media, emails, and a direct mailing to the unit leader.

Egwa Tawa Dee Lodge delegates responsibility for executing the unit election process to its Chapters which generally correspond to the council's districts. Each chapter is responsible for all aspects of the unit election process within their district. This includes:

- Contacting the unit leader of every troop, crew and ship in their district(s) to schedule a unit election;
- Training chapter unit elections teams to conduct unit elections in accordance with the current Order of the Arrow guidelines;
- Coordinating with all the Scoutmasters, Crew Advisers and Sea Scout Skippers in their Chapter so that every unit with eligible Scouts has the opportunity to hold a unit election;
- Scheduling a unit election team to attend and conduct the elections, and then quickly and reliably transmitting the unit election results and candidate information to the Lodge Unit Relations Committee leadership; and
- Providing units with no eligible Scouts a presentation about the Order of the Arrow and camping opportunities that are available to Scouts.

The chapter unit election team is the interface between the chapter/lodge and the unit. It may be composed of youth and adults who are members in good standing of the Lodge. The members of the team are responsible for:

- Showing up on time, properly uniformed,

- Being prepared to conduct the unit election in cooperation with the unit leader;
- Ensuring that the election is conducted in accordance with current Order of the Arrow rules and guidelines;
- Tabulating the results of the election and posting them to the Unit Election Report;
- Ensuring that the Unit Election Report is complete and legible and then certifying it;
- Obtaining accurate information on each youth candidate elected, to include, at a minimum, their full name, rank, date of birth, gender, BSA Number and at least one valid email address;
- Inviting the unit leader to complete and submit the Unit Election Evaluation;
- Submitting the Unit Election Report and candidate information forms to the Chapter Adviser or his or her designee for transmission to the Lodge Unit Relations Committee; and
- After the unit election results have been certified, receiving Lodge Adult Nomination Forms from the unit and submitting them promptly to the Chapter Adviser.

Under rules established by the National Committee of the Order of the Arrow, “[a]ll elections must be conducted by the OA lodge of the council in which the unit is chartered. No unit may visit outside its council and hold an OA unit election under the auspices of the OA lodge of another council.”

Units also are not authorized to conduct their own elections. A chapter unit election team must be present to certify the unit election results. Unit members who are members in good standing of the Lodge (i.e., have paid dues for the current year) may serve on the unit election team for their unit, but must be supervised by trained members of the Chapter elections team.

MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Youth

To be eligible for election as a candidate for membership in the OA, a Scout must be registered with the Boy Scouts of America, in a Troop, Ship or Crew, and have the approval of their unit leader prior to the election. The unit leader must certify their Scout spirit (i.e., their adherence to the Scout Oath and Law and active participation in unit activities). The unit leader must also certify that the Scout meets the following requirements for membership at the time of this annual election:

- Be under the age of 21;
- Hold one of the following ranks corresponding to the type of unit in which they are being considered for election: Scouts BSA First Class Rank, Venturing Discovery Award, or Sea Scout Ordinary rank, or higher; and
- Have experienced at least 15 nights of camping while registered with a troop, crew, or ship within the two years immediately prior to the election. The 15 nights must include:
 - One, but no more than one, long-term camp consisting of at least five consecutive nights of overnight camping, approved and under the auspices and standards of the Boy Scouts of America. Only five nights of the long-term camp may be credited toward the 15-night camping requirement; and
 - The balance of the camping (10 nights) must be overnight, weekend, or other short-term camps of, at most, three nights each.
 - Ship nights may be counted as camping for Sea Scouts.
- Following approval by the Scoutmaster, Crew Advisor or Sea Scout Skipper, (as described above) be elected by the youth members of their unit.

NOTE: A Scout who was elected and inducted into the Order of the Arrow in another Council and Lodge and transfers into a unit in this Council is a member of the OA and may not be elected and inducted again.

Adults:

If a unit holds an OA unit election and elects at least one youth (under 21 years of age) candidate, the unit committee may nominate qualified adults² for membership in the Order or the Arrow. The number of adults that the unit committee may nominate cannot be more than one-third of the number of youth candidates elected, rounded up if the number of youth candidates is not a multiple of three. In addition to number of adults who may be nominated under the 1/3 limit, if the unit leader has been registered as the unit leader (Scoutmaster, Crew Adviser, Skipper) **for at least 12 months**, the unit committee can nominate him or her in addition to the other adult(s) nominated.³

The following chart may help understand this:

| No. of Youths Elected | Maximum No. of Adults That Can be Nominated |
|-----------------------|---|
| 0 | 0 |
| 1 | 1 + unit leader |
| 2 | 1 + unit leader |
| 3 | 1 + unit leader |
| 4 | 2 + unit leader |
| 5 | 2 + unit leader |
| 6 | 2 + unit leader |
| 7 | 3 + unit leader |
| 8 | 3 + unit leader |
| 9 | 3 + unit leader |
| 10 | 4 + unit leader |
| 11 | 4 + unit leader |
| 12 | 4 + unit leader |
| And so forth | |

NOTE: If an adult was inducted as a member of the OA as a youth, they cannot be nominated or inducted again. They may re-activate their membership by paying dues to the Lodge, but once inducted they are forever a member of the OA.

² If an adult holds more than one registered position in the BSA, the following rules also apply:

- If the adult is registered as a unit leader and also registered as a District or Council Scouter, the adult must be nominated where he or she is primarily registered (i.e., where his or her adult registration fee is paid);
- If the adult is registered as a unit leader in more than one unit (Troop, Crew or Ship), the adult may be nominated by any of the units that hold an election.

³ The unit leader "exception" only applies to a person who is currently registered as a Scoutmaster, Crew Adviser or Sea Scout Skipper and has been registered in that position for at least 12 months. It does not apply to any other position.

Adults nominated by a unit committee must meet the same camping requirements as youth candidates:

- Have experienced at least 15 nights of camping while registered with a troop, crew, or ship within the two years immediately prior to the election. The 15 nights must include:
 - One, but no more than one, long-term camp consisting of at least five consecutive nights of overnight camping, approved and under the auspices and standards of the Boy Scouts of America. Only five nights of the long-term camp may be credited toward the 15-night camping requirement; and
 - The balance of the camping (10 nights) must be overnight, weekend, or other short-term camps of, at most, three nights each.
 - Ship nights may be counted as camping for adult leaders of Sea Scouts.

Because the Order of the Arrow is principally a youth organization, adults are not selected for membership as a recognition. A unit should only nominate an adult when the adult's position in Scouts BSA, Venturing or Sea Scouts will make Order of the Arrow membership more meaningful in the lives of the youth members.

REQUESTING A UNIT ELECTION

To schedule a unit election or request additional information, unit leaders should use the below listed email address which corresponds to your district to contact the chapter leadership responsible for coordinating your unit election.

NOTE: Because Chapter leadership changes from year to year as do personal email addresses, please do not use any email addresses that you may have acquired in the past. These addresses automatically are routed to the Chief and Adviser for the Chapter for your District. To ensure that your Chapter responds in a timely manner to your request, the Unit Relations Committee automatically receives a copy of emails sent to these addresses:

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Appalachian Trail District | OAelectionappalachiantrl@acegwa.org |
| Button Gwinnett District | OAelectionbuttongwinnett@acegwa.org |
| Foothills District | OAelectionfoothills@acegwa.org |
| Hightower Trail District | OAelectionhightowertrl@acegwa.org |
| Indian Springs District | OAelectionindiansprings@acegwa.org |
| Northern Ridge District | OAelectionnorthernridge@acegwa.org |
| Phoenix District | OAelectionphoenix@acegwa.org |
| Pickett's Mill District | OAelectionpicketsmill@acegwa.org |
| Silver Comet District | OAelectionsilvercomet@acegwa.org |
| Soapstone Ridge District | OAelectionsoapstoneridge@acegwa.org |
| Southwest Atlanta District | OAelectionsouthwestatlanta@acegwa.org |
| Southern Crescent District | OAelectionsoutherncrest@acegwa.org |
| Yellow River District | OAelectionyellowriver@acegwa.org |

We recommend that unit leaders select several potential dates so as to have back-up dates before requesting the unit election team in the event that all of the chapter's unit election teams are already committed on the date that is your first choice.

In the event that your unit has trouble communicating with your Chapter leadership, please contact unitrelationschairman@acegwa.org.

Appendices

A – Unit Elections Rules and Procedures

B - Adult Nomination Procedures

C – Call Outs & Induction

D - Frequently Asked Questions

E - Forms

Appendix A

Unit Election Rules

[The following rules are reprinted from the OA Guide to Unit Elections. Where the Lodge has adopted procedures to supplement the national rules, they will be printed in italics.]

Elections of Youth Members

1. The lodge will determine the time of the year unit elections will be held and *will* inform unit leaders of this by mail well in advance. *Egwa Tawa Dee Lodge will also use email and social media to notify unit leaders of the annual election period.*

As stated above, lodges are encouraged to complete all unit elections prior to their units going to summer camp. This insures that the maximum number of unit members can be present to vote in the election. For this reason and to avoid improper out-of-council unit requests, elections should not be conducted at summer camp.

2. The lodge, through the *Unit Relations Committee and the Chapters will* work with the scoutmaster, crew advisor, or skipper in establishing the actual time and place to conduct the election. The Order of the Arrow should be represented by a two- or three-member team from the lodge or *the* chapter unit elections committee. All OA elections team members must be trained and in proper uniform, *to include OA sash*, during the election.
3. Only one election can be held in a unit each year. Before the election, the unit leader must verify to the OA unit elections team that at least 50 percent of the registered active unit membership is present. If at least 50 percent is not present, an election cannot be held, and the election should be rescheduled. The number of registered active members and the number present are entered in the spaces provided on the Unit Election Report (*see forms section*). If the unit leader is a member of the Order, he or she may explain to the group the purpose of the Order of the Arrow and the basis upon which candidates should be selected and describe the method of election. If the unit leader is not a member of the Order, a member of the OA unit elections team should make this presentation with the unit leader's consent, demonstrating that election leadership is a cooperative effort of the unit leader and the OA unit elections team.
4. The unit leader provides a list of registered active members of the unit who meet all eligibility requirements, including attitude and participation. *Whenever possible, the Chapter Adviser, his or her designee or the unit election team should request this list be provided not less than 24 hours prior to the date of the election.*

The names *and ranks* of these members are entered on the report form and the unit leader signs the certification. It is important that the list be complete, as only one election can be held in a unit each year.⁴

5. The elections team leader explains the following to the unit leader:
 - This is the current method of election approved by the national OA committee in use by the lodge.
 - All eligible youths who receive votes from at least 50 percent of those who turn in ballots are elected. If no one is elected, a second vote may be held immediately, and the result of this vote will be final.
6. A voter may list on their ballot any combination of names, including all eligible candidates they believe are worthy to become members of the Order of the Arrow.
7. The OA unit elections team conducts the election. A unit election ceremony is contained in the resource section of the OA Website available at oa-bsa.org/resources/ucl-support/lodge-program-resource-videos. Stress the following points:
 - Select the candidates who, in your opinion, have set the best examples of brotherhood, cheerfulness, and service.
 - Vote only for those you believe will continue in unselfish service to your unit.
 - If you feel that no one is worthy, turn in a blank ballot.
 - If you are new in the unit and do not know the candidates well enough to vote wisely, you may abstain by not turning in a ballot at all; this will not affect the final result.
 - Youths eligible for election also vote, and they may vote for themselves if they feel they are worthy.
8. When the voting is finished, the OA unit elections team counts the number of ballots turned in and enters the numbers on the Unit Election Report.
9. The OA unit elections team determines the minimum number of votes one must receive to be elected, as follows: If the number of ballots turned in was even (2, 4, 6, 8, etc.), divide this number by two. If the number was odd (1, 3, 5, 7, etc.), add one and then divide by two. The number of votes a youth must receive to be elected is entered on the Unit Election Report.

⁴ Even if a mistake is made by the unit or the OA elections team and an eligible Scout's name is omitted, once the unit has voted, there can be no supplemental election.

10. The elections team and the unit leader count the votes in private. All votes count equally. *[A tally sheet for this purpose has been designed by the Lodge and is included in the Unit Election Packet in the Forms section.]* If at least one has been elected, the election result is final. The OA team places a check mark next to the names of those who have been elected *on the Unit Election Report*.
11. If no one is elected, the OA team announces this fact and states that the unit will now be given the opportunity to vote again. Time is allowed for further explanation of the purpose of the Order of the Arrow and the election procedures, and for any questions. No information about the votes received by candidates is to be revealed at any time. The second ballot is then held immediately, and if the unit still elects no one, this is the final result for this year's election.
12. *All members of the Unit Election Team must sign the Unit Election Report after the election is completed.*
13. *The Unit Election Team is responsible for obtaining the full names, rank, date of birth, gender, BSA registration number, mail and email addresses, and phone numbers for all the newly elected candidates. The Lodge has developed a Youth & Young Adult Candidate Information Form for this purpose.*
14. *The Unit Election Report and candidate information must be forwarded to the Lodge Unit Relations Committee by the Chapter Adviser or his or her designee immediately following the election.*

Announcement of results. As soon as the election is completed, the unit leader may or may not choose to announce to the entire unit the names of members who have been elected. *If the unit leader chooses to delay announcing the results, Scouts who are elected as candidates must be notified of their election no later than the day prior to the deadline for registering for the first Induction Weekend for the year.*

Appendix B Unit Adult Nominations Process⁵

As noted earlier, if a unit holds an OA unit election and elects at least one youth (under 21 years of age) candidate, the unit committee may nominate qualified adults for membership in the Order or the Arrow. The number of adults nominated cannot be more than one-third of the number of youth candidates elected, rounded up if the number of youth candidates is not a multiple of three. In addition to number of adults who may be nominated under the 1/3 limit, if the unit leader has been registered as the unit leader (Scoutmaster, Crew Adviser, Skipper) for at least 12 months, the unit committee can nominate him or her in addition to the other adult(s) nominated.

Adults nominated by a unit committee must meet the same camping requirements as youth candidates as described on page 6 of this Guide.

The unit committee is responsible for providing all of the information on pages 1 & 2 of the **Egwa Tawa Dee Adult Candidate Nomination Form** (Note: this form is revised from time to time, so the unit must use the current form which can be found on the Lodge website). Failure to use the correct form or provide all the required information will result in the nomination being sent back for revision. If corrections are not made before the deadline, the nomination may not be considered by the Lodge Adult Selection Committee.

Adult nomination forms cannot be submitted until after the unit election and must be received by the Lodge Adviser on or before the March 31 deadline. Nomination forms must be signed by the unit leader and the unit committee chair. Original signatures (not electronic) are required. Adult nomination forms must be submitted to the Chapter Adviser. Units are encouraged to submit a copy of the signed nomination via email to the chapter unit election email address shown on page 9 of this Guide so that there is a record of the nomination having been submitted.

Chapter Advisers, if they wish, may set a deadline in March for receipt of adult nomination forms, provided that it doesn't prevent a unit that holds a late election from submitting nominations. Units holding an election after the Chapter deadline will be given an adequate amount of time after the unit election to turn in their nomination(s).

Please understand that the unit committee only nominates an adult as a *potential* candidate for membership in the Order. Unlike youth who become candidates upon

⁵ This section only applies to adults who are being nominated by the unit committee of a Scouts BSA Troop, Venturing Crew or a Sea Scout Ship. The procedures for nominating adults whose primary registration is as a District or Council level Scouter are different. For information about how to nominate district and council-level adults, contact the Lodge Adviser.

election by their unit, an adult does not become a "candidate" until they have been reviewed and recommended by the Lodge Adult Selection Committee and approved by Atlanta Area Council Executive as not only meeting the camping and membership requirements, but also having it determined that they will be an asset to the Order and the Lodge by performing functions that help fulfill its purpose as a youth led organization.

The adult nomination process takes several weeks so adult nominees cannot be called out and should not be otherwise publicly recognized as "candidates" by the unit or the OA election team. **The Lodge Adviser notifies the unit committee chair of the status of all nominated adults prior to the registration deadline for the first Induction Weekend in May. Adults who have been approved as candidates are notified by their unit committee chair.**

Appendix C Call Outs

A Call Out is a ceremony at which candidates for membership in the Order of the Arrow are announced and recognized. Depending on the circumstances it can be formal or informal. The Call-Out Ceremony is a candidate's first experience with the Order of the Arrow after their election, and generally the public's only experience with the Order. However, **there is no requirement that a candidate must go through a Call Out ceremony prior to being inducted.**

Call-outs for youth are conducted by the OA lodge of the council in which the unit is chartered. In Egwa Tawa Dee, each Chapter should try to schedule a call out ceremony for youth candidates in conjunction with a District-wide event such as a District Camporee or at special ceremony. Adults who have been nominated by their unit are not candidates and may not be called out or otherwise publicly recognized as "candidates" unless and until the Chapter Adviser has been notified in writing by the Lodge Adviser that they have been approved as a candidate.

It is possible for a visiting unit to have their elected candidates called out at an out-of-council summer camp if the lodge serving the camp is willing to conduct the call-out. The unit leader must present a letter from the home lodge chief and lodge adviser requesting the call-out and identifying the members to be called out. A signed copy of the home lodge's unit election report must accompany this request. Following the unit's return, the home lodge chief and lodge adviser must receive confirmation of the call-out.

Induction

Newly elected youth, and adults who are selected as, Candidates for membership in the Order of the Arrow must complete the Ordeal and be inducted into the OA by the lodge that serves the council in which the unit is chartered within 12 months of the date of their election (youth) or selection (adult). This allows the Candidates to bond with their contemporaries as they go through the Ordeal and creates a positive leadership environment in which they can progress.

If the religious customs and observances of a candidate (such as Sabbath-observant Jewish Scouts or LDS Scouts) precludes attendance for part of the scheduled Induction Weekend, Egwa Tawa Dee Lodge will make every effort to accommodate religious observant Scouts.

It is the Candidate's responsibility to contact the Chapter Adviser before the registration deadline for the first Induction Weekend for instructions on how to submit a request for religious accommodation. The Chapter Adviser can be contacted using the email addresses found on page 9 of this Guide. Requests for a

religious accommodation for Induction can only be approved by the Lodge Adviser. If the Lodge is unable to provide an accommodation, the Lodge Adviser will notify the region Order of the Arrow chair and request an exception to permit the Scout to be inducted by another lodge.

To register for an Induction, go to <http://www.acegwa.org/candidates.htm>. There is additional information for candidates on this web page.

After the Scout is registered for an Induction, the Chapter may send the candidates an email with additional information to help you better prepare for the weekend.

No matter what you may have heard from any other source, Candidates must arrive at camp on Friday night before 8:30 pm and must stay in camp until all members are dismissed on Sunday morning, except as noted above. Dismissal on Sunday takes place about 10:00 am. The activities Saturday night and Sunday morning are designed to enrich the new Arrowman's Induction experience.

Appendix D Unit Elections Frequently Asked Questions

The definitive rules and procedures for unit elections are contained in the Guide for Officers and Advisers. In case of any conflict or ambiguity between the Guide to Inductions or the Guide to Unit Elections and the Guide for Officers and Advisers, always refer to the Guide for Officers and Advisers as the definitive document.

1. When does a Scout have to earn their Scouts BSA First Class rank, to become eligible for election?
 - A. The *Guide for Officers and Advisers* says:

... At the time of their election, youth must be under the age of 21, and hold one of the following ranks corresponding to the type of unit in which they are being considered for election: Scouts BSA First Class rank, the Venturing Discovery Award, or the Sea Scout Ordinary rank or higher ...

To ensure that the Scout will be able to handle the challenges of the Ordeal week-end and to uphold the OA's standing as Scouting's national honor society, each candidate must have passed a board or bridge of review for the First Class rank, Venturing Discovery Award, or the Sea Scout Ordinary rank before the election is held. Any Scout who has passed their board or bridge of review meets this requirement, even if the award has not been formally presented, such as at a court of honor.
2. Can a Scout use the same camping nights towards the requirements of Camping merit badge and for the OA camping requirement?
 - A. Yes. While the Scouts BSA advancement program often prohibits one action or event from counting towards two different requirements, camping nights can be counted towards both Scouts BSA advancement and the OA camping requirement.
3. A Scout who recently joined my unit camped a lot in their previous unit. Should that camping be counted when deciding if they can be listed on the election ballot for my unit's election?
 - A. Yes. All BSA camping done by a Scout in the program area for which they are being considered for election (see question 4 for exception) counts towards the camping portion of the membership qualifications, as long as the camping was within the last two years.
4. A Scout in my Scouts BSA troop is also registered in a Venturing crew or Sea Scout Ship. Can camping trips with the crew or ship count towards the camping requirement?
 - A. It is preferred that camping requirements be met as part of the unit in which the youth is being considered for election (i.e., troop, crew, or ship); however, extenuating circumstances may exist (e.g., in cases where a youth did not have an opportunity to meet the requirement with the unit), that make it appropriate for unit leaders to consider other BSA camping experiences (e.g., a Venturer counting camping nights completed with a troop or camping nights completed while serving as a staff member at a council camp or national high adventure base). In each case, the unit leader must satisfy themselves the spirit and intent of the requirement was met (i.e., it was indeed qualifying outdoor camping).
5. If a Scout goes to summer camp and a

jamboree in the same summer, how do these count towards the camping requirement?

A. The Guide for Officers and Advisers says:

Have experienced 15 nights of Boy Scout camping while registered with a troop, crew or ship within the two years immediately prior to the election. The 15 nights must include one, but no more than one, long-term camp consisting of at least five consecutive nights of overnight camping, approved and under the auspices and standards of the Boy Scouts of America. Only five nights of the long-term camp may be credited toward the 15-night camping requirement; the balance of the camping (10 nights) must be overnight, weekend, or other short-term camps of, at most, three nights each. Ship nights may be counted as camping for Sea Scouts. *[emphasis added]*

Only one long term camp can be used towards the camping requirement. For a Scout who attends summer camp and a jamboree in the same year, five nights of the time at summer camp or at the jamboree (but not both) can be used towards the camping requirement. Ten more nights of short-term camp would also be required to meet the camping requirement in order to reach the 15 nights requirement.

6. Does the long-term camp have to be at my council's camp?

A. Camping at a council's own camp(s) is not part of the national requirements for eligibility for election to the Order of the Arrow. Any "long-term camp ... approved and under the auspices and standards of the Boy Scouts of America" meets this portion of the camping requirement.

Councils and lodges should conduct elections in any unit that requests one, without regard to where the unit attends summer camp.

7. Does the camping have to be with a Scout's unit?

A. Camping does not have to be with a Scout's unit. For example, participation in a seven day, six night National Youth Leadership Training course should be considered a "long-term camp" as would attendance at summer camp with another troop. (However only five nights of the long-term camp count towards the fifteen nights of camping requirement.)

8. My unit attends summer camp for five days and four nights. Can that count towards the camping requirement?

A. The camping requirement for long-term camps is a minimum of five nights, so three nights of this could be counted as a short-term camp.

9. What does "... under the auspices of the Boy Scouts of America" mean in the camping requirement?

A. It means: Camping conducted within the guidelines of the Boy Scouts of America, amongst other things, to conduct the program in accordance with the Guide to Safe Scouting and all youth protection guidelines, and, if water sports are conducted, using Safe Swim Defense and the buddy system, and all other policies in force not specifically listed here. Ultimately, the local council is the final arbiter of whether an encampment is in compliance and therefore under the auspices of the BSA.

10. I went on several camping trips when I was registered as a Webelos den leader and before

I registered as an assistant Scoutmaster. Can those trips count towards the OA camping requirement?

- A. The Order of the Arrow's membership eligibility requirements focus on youth registered in Scouts BSA, Venturing, or Sea Scouts, and the camping requirement must be fulfilled through camping done while a Scout in one of those three programs. Because of this, time spent camping as a Cub Scout does not count towards OA eligibility. This makes sense when we consider another requirement, which is that election candidates hold the Scouts BSA First Class rank, the Venturing Discovery Award, or the Sea Scout Ordinary rank or higher, and work towards these rank or award requirements cannot begin until becoming a member of a Scouts BSA troop, Venturing crew, or Sea Scout ship.

Similarly, camping done by unit adults only counts towards OA membership when the adults are registered as Scouts BSA, Venturing, or Sea Scout leaders. Thus, camping done while registered as a Cub Scout Webelos den leader does not count towards OA eligibility (unless the adult is also registered in a troop, crew or ship at the time).

11. We have an adult assistant Scoutmaster who is two nights shy of the camping requirement. Youth elections are next week. Most likely two Scouts will be elected (one of them the assistant Scoutmaster's son). Five days after the youth election the assistant Scoutmaster will have met the camping requirement. Can the troop committee nominate the assistant Scoutmaster several days after the youth election?

- A. The *Guide for Officers and Advisers* says:

"Each year, upon holding a unit election for youth candidates that results in at least one youth candidate being elected, the unit committee may nominate adults to the lodge adult selection committee..."

In many units, the unit committee meets once or twice a month, so adult nominations may follow the youth election by as much as a few weeks. Adults must meet the eligibility requirements when the unit committee makes its decision on whom to nominate, not at the time of the youth election.

12. Do youths have to be present for an election, or can they participate by phone or Skype or vote through an absentee ballot?

- A. All youths must be physically present to vote in a unit election. Voting by phone, Skype, absentee ballot, etc. is not permitted in unit elections.

13. Do youths have to be present to be placed on the election ballot and be elected?

- A. No. All Scouts who meet the eligibility requirements should be included on the election ballot, even if some of these Scouts are not present when the election is being held.

14. As a unit leader, how do I determine which youths are active and thus count for purposes of determining if a quorum is present for an election?

- A. The *Guide for Officers and Advisers* says:

Registered active member. In Scouts BSA troops, Venturing crews, and Sea Scout ships, every registered active member of the unit under age 21 at the time of election (including assistant Scoutmasters who are 18, 19 or 20 years old) is eligible to vote.

A Scout who carries a current national membership card and participates in at least some unit activities during the year is considered to be a registered active member of the unit. For example, a youth away at college who participates in some unit activities when home, such as a campout, camporee, or occasional unit meeting, should be considered a registered active member.

A youth who moves away or drops out of the unit because of other interests would not be counted in the registered active membership figure.

As an example, a Scout who hasn't participated in unit activities in several months and who cannot be reached to confirm that they have dropped out of the unit should not be counted as a member of the unit when deciding if at least 50 percent of the registered active unit membership is present.

15. Can a unit conduct its own election?

A. The *Guide for Officers and Advisers* says:

Induction: Election to Ordeal

2. The lodge, through the unit elections committee, should work with the unit leader in establishing the actual time and place to conduct the election. The OA should be represented by a two- or three- member team from the lodge or chapter unit elections committee. All elections teams must be trained and in proper uniform during the election.

The lodge is responsible for making sure that elections teams are properly trained, so it's important that units not conduct their own elections.

16. What's the status in the OA of assistant Scoutmasters who are under age 21?

A. Young adults ages 18 through 20 are considered youth members of the Order of the Arrow. Because of this, assistant Scoutmasters who are 18, 19 or 20 years old and who meet the youth eligibility requirements should be included on election ballots whenever an election is held in a troop, and these young adults should be allowed to participate in the election in the same manner as youth members under age 18. Once inducted, these young adults may participate fully in the Order of the Arrow as youth members, until their 21st birthday. Similarly, Sea Scouts and Venturing crew members ages 18 through 20 are considered youth members for the purposes of OA elections.

17. Can a unit use pre-printed ballots in an election?

A. Yes. However, care must be taken to ensure that all candidates' names appear on the ballot. Excluding a candidate's name and having it "written in" during the election is inappropriate since this may prevent a fair opportunity for this candidate to be elected. If it is discovered that an eligible candidate's name is missing from a pre-printed ballot, blank ballots should be used instead.

18. Can "All of the above" be included as a choice on a pre-printed ballot?

A. Yes. A voter may list on their ballot any combination of names, including all eligible candidates who they believe are worthy to become members of the Order of the Arrow so having an "all of the above" box on a pre-printed ballot is appropriate. Here is a sample:

Please place a check next to the name of each candidate who you believe is worthy to become a member of the Order of the Arrow.

- Jeff Scout
- José Star
- Dhairya Eagle
- All of the above

If you feel that no one is worthy, turn in an unmarked ballot.

If you do not know the candidates well enough to vote wisely you may abstain by not turning in a ballot at all. This will not affect the final result.

19. Can a unit leader or council add requirements to the national OA requirements for election?

A. No, a scoutmaster, crew advisor, or skipper (or unit committee, district, council, chapter or lodge) has no authority to change the requirements for election to the Order of the Arrow, just as they have no authority to change the Eagle Scout or other rank requirements. However, a unit leader does have the responsibility to certify that the unit's Scouts have met the national eligibility requirements before submitting their names for the ballot for the unit's election.

20. What is the unit leader's role in a unit election?

A. The *Guide for Officers and Advisers* says:

Membership Requirements

Unit leader approval. To become eligible for election, a Scout must be registered with the Boy Scouts of America and have the approval of their unit leader immediately prior to the election. The unit leader must certify their Scout spirit (*i.e.*, their adherence to the Scout Oath and Law and active participation in unit activities). The unit leader must also certify that the nominee meets all

specified requirements at the time of this annual election.

Induction: Election to Ordeal

4. The unit leader provides a list of all registered active members of the unit who meet all eligibility requirements, including attitude and participation.

The unit leader holds the responsibility of certifying a Scout's eligibility before placement on an Order of the Arrow election ballot. The unit leader's certification is as of the date of the election, and any Scout who meets the camping and other requirements as of that date should be listed on the election ballot. This approval is not one of preferential treatment or specific selection for membership rooted in the unit leader's own vision, but one of qualifying a candidate for eligibility. By including a Scout's name on the list of those whose names should appear on an election ballot, the unit leader certifies that:

- a. The Scout is a currently registered active member of the unit (troop, crew, or ship).
- b. The Scout exhibits Scout spirit by living in accordance with the Scout Oath and Law;
- c. The Scout fulfills all other Order of the Arrow membership requirements.

Clearly, the unit leader's approval is earned through merit in Scouting. The unit leader has two roles with the OA: an administrative certification that the objective requirements are met and a more judgment-oriented one with the Scout spirit requirement that the Scout, in their opinion, has been a "good Scout" and lives up to the obligations taken in the Scout Oath and Scout Law. This requirement helps to uphold the high standard that OA membership warrants.

21. Can a unit leader adjust the results of the

youth election results before the results are announced?

- A. After the youths have voted, the unit leader cannot adjust the results of the election. The *Guide for Officers and Advisers* says that lodge rules must include this standard rule:

Rule III.A. The requirements for membership in this lodge are as stated in the current printing of the *Order of the Arrow Handbook* and the *Order of the Arrow Guide for Officers and Advisers*.

The "Induction: Election to Ordeal" section of the *Guide for Officers and Advisers* details the procedure to be used for elections. Voting by unit leaders or adjusting the results of the youth votes is not part of the procedure and therefore is not allowed.

However, the unit leader is **not** an ineffective actor with regard to OA unit elections. Here is what one successful, long-term unit leader did. He reports that he was never disappointed with the wisdom of the voters:

"I made the OA unit election a yearlong process of encouraging the Scouts in the unit to participate in the OA's activities, and always made sure a youth member (the OA Unit Representative) got up and explained what the event was being held, and ensured that our unit youth leaders had a copy of the chapter and lodge calendar to be sure that they did not schedule any events in conflict with the published OA calendar. This calendar exercise alone put the OA events front and center in the minds of the unit youth leaders once a month.

"Beyond talking about the OA and their events, I would follow up the Unit Rep's presentation by telling the unit "why" the OA did these things. Often, I would include discussions of service and the concept of servant leadership in my Scoutmaster minutes.

"Then, six weeks before the election, as soon as our youths scheduled the chapter elections team to come to the meeting, I would begin a series of short comments in each meeting or campout describing the OA and what it was about. It went like this:

"Six weeks out: Bring in a copy of James Fennimore Cooper's book, *The Last of the Mohicans* and explain that the OA had roots in great American literature. See what they know about it.

"Five weeks out: Show a video I compiled on *The Last of the Mohicans* movie... and take questions about the Delaware Tribe... Get out a map of the Great Northeast and show the range of the Delaware.

"Four weeks out: Introduce the concept of service. Bring in my 1914 handbook and show the Scouts the chapter on chivalry and let them see the original drawing of a Scout helping an old lady cross the street.

"Three weeks out: Remind them of their slogan, to do a good turn daily, and see if any Scouts have examples of ones they might share with the group. Ask them to be sure to do this in the coming week.

"Two weeks out: Talk about the OA and ask three or four Scouts who are members to speak for two to three minutes each about what to look for in a member, drawing on the above. Ask the Scouts to give you specific examples of

acts of kindness that have been performed by the unit members. Include as many Scouts in this as you can... you can suggest those squeamish or awkward Scouts who you believe may be overlooked, but you feel are worthy. Scouts will know if you are honest in this... or campaigning, so just speak from your heart as the Scouts do most of the talking about their fellows.

"One week out: Specifically talk with them about the ballot, post the draft ballot so all can see, and be sure they come see the advancement committee member present, if we do not show them as qualified, when they think they may be. Address the "popularity contest" aspect of the election as something to avoid and call on their higher angels to identify each person who lives the Scout Oath and Law in the meeting.

"Election night: Introduce the elections team and reiterate the purpose of the OA. Explain that the OA is the only organization in Scouting where the non-members choose the members and reinforce that I have authorized this ballot because I believe these Scouts are qualified and worthy of consideration.

"Of course, every situation is different, but over the years, our unit's Scouts chose a wide range of Scouts, but I was never disappointed. I made it a year-round education process, so never was tempted to have to adjust the will of the Scouts. I spent my time adjusting their thinking to what would serve the unit and the OA best. It worked.

22. How do you keep the elections from being a popularity contest? Some Scouts who meet the requirements and definitely have the qualities of a true Scout are not elected. They meet the qualifications year

after year. Even the other Scouts are surprised certain Scouts are never elected.

The unit elections chair from the local lodge or chapter might be invited to come and talk to the Scouts about the Order of the Arrow, rather than relying solely on the OA Elections video. Nationally, many of our most successful chapters and lodges have noticed that this practice, especially when the unit leader is also invited to comment, makes those in the unit recognize the founding ideals of the OA and helps to take away consideration of other factors.

In May 2008 the Order of the Arrow distributed an Operations Update which included a Unit Elections section on page 3. Its recommendations have been used effectively in a number of units around the country. Here is a quote from the Operations Update to further address the question:

Electing candidates from medium to large size units can be a challenge. The basic problem is that many Scouts, especially the older ones, don't really know the younger Scouts and are reluctant to vote for them. This can be a significant problem especially with youths who are quiet and introverted.

Noticing their low election results, a number of unit leaders have developed a procedure to directly address this situation. It has produced significant improvements in the election results in these units. Some unit leaders announce the youth's rank/award, number of nights of camping, and service hours as the names are read. Others include similar information on the ballot of names. Another technique is to print the individual Scouting record of each candidate, listing their name, school grade, rank/award, number of merit badges (if applicable),

summer camp years, camping nights, leadership positions held, and special awards or events attended. Regardless of the procedure used, the purpose of this is to help the unit members know something about the candidates before they vote. It works and produces much better election results.

The scoutmaster, crew advisor, or skipper still decides the names to appear on the ballot, listing only those who have demonstrated Scout spirit and who meet the OA eligibility requirements. A Scout whose name is being withheld because of Scout spirit needs to be told why in advance.

Also, some Scouts may not be interested in becoming OA members. The unit leader should have a conversation with those youth who are not interested in becoming an OA member to understand the reasoning behind that decision. The unit leader should offer the eligible candidates the opportunity to "opt out" of being on the annual ballot prior to its printing.

This procedure has been tried and tested. It produces 50% to 100% better election results and is worthy of your consideration.

23. Can you help me better understand the number of unit adults who can be nominated when a unit conducts an election?

A. The *Guide for Officers and Advisers* says:

Each year, upon holding a unit election for youth candidates that results in at least one youth candidate being elected, the unit committee may nominate adults to the lodge adult selection committee, composed of the lodge adviser, the chair of the council committee on which the lodge adviser serves, and the lodge staff

adviser. The number of adults nominated can be no more than one-third of the number of youth candidates elected, rounded up where the number of youth candidates is not a multiple of three. In addition to the one-third limit, the unit committee may nominate the currently serving unit leader (but not assistant leaders), as long as they have served as unit leader for at least the previous 12 months.

So, as long as the adults meet the camping and other requirements, this chart can be used:

| No. of Youths Elected | Maximum No. of Adults That Can be Nominated |
|-----------------------|---|
| 0 | 0 |
| 1 | 1 + unit leader |
| 2 | 1 + unit leader |
| 3 | 1 + unit leader |
| 4 | 2 + unit leader |
| 5 | 2 + unit leader |
| 6 | 2 + unit leader |
| 7 | 3 + unit leader |
| 8 | 3 + unit leader |
| 9 | 3 + unit leader |
| 10 | 4 + unit leader |
| 11 | 4 + unit leader |
| 12 | 4 + unit leader |

24. What is the role of the unit leader (scoutmaster, crew advisor, or skipper) and the unit committee chair in signing the adult nomination form? Do they decide which adults get nominated or does the unit committee make the decision?

A. The *Guide for Officers and Advisers* says:

Each year, upon holding a unit election for youth candidates that results in at least one youth candidate being elected, the

unit committee may nominate adults to the lodge adult selection committee, composed of the lodge adviser, the chair of the council committee on which the lodge adviser serves and the lodge staff adviser.

The unit committee decides which adults are nominated, and the unit leader and unit committee chair sign on behalf of the committee and its decision.

25. What should our lodge do if a unit leader mistakenly certifies a Scout as eligible for election when they are not eligible and that Scout is subsequently called out?

A. If a Scout was incorrectly elected, but not called out, do not add them to the list of those to be called out. Have the unit leader counsel the Scout and explain to them that a mistake was made. Encourage the Scout to remain involved and committed so that they may appear on next year's ballot.

If a Scout was incorrectly called out but not inducted, do not induct them, and, again, have that unit leader conference.

If a Scout was incorrectly inducted, the Scout should be allowed to retain membership in the Order of the Arrow. The Scout should be counseled about the circumstances with guidance from their unit leader and the chapter or lodge adviser so that they can help the Scout mature, participate, and be successful in the Order of the Arrow.

26. I'm a chapter adviser. A chapter election team recently conducted an election for a unit in my chapter and three Scouts were elected. The day after the election, the unit leader contacted me to ask for a supplemental election because he accidentally left some Scouts off the list of those eligible for election. Can the chapter

arrange for another election?

A. Election policy is set by the national OA committee to ensure uniformity across the nation. One longstanding policy is that a unit may have only one election per year. While it's regrettable that the unit leader did not provide a complete list of eligible Scouts for the election that was held, national policy does not permit an additional election to be held to address the issue.

The following are additional FAQ that have been raised by leaders in the Atlanta Area Council and submitted by the Lodge to the National Chairman of the OA.

Q. Our Council operates two camps that have full summer camp programs. At one of those camps, the majority of the staff is housed in traditional wall tents. At the other camp, most of the staff are housed in cabins or dormitories, with only a few being in tents. If you have a youth who serves on staff at a BSA summer camp or at a high adventure base, does that time count toward meeting the long term camping requirement (subject to the 5 night maximum for long term camping)?

A. From the Order's beginnings, our emphasis has been on "outdoor camping" and enhancing our "outdoor camping skills." The outdoor skills mentioned most often include cooking, safety, shelter, unit and patrol camping, environment, etc. I think we have been quite consistent with this theme. The latest printing of the OA Handbook demonstrates this throughout. In fact, it is so important that it is present in our four purposes.

To become eligible for election, a Scout must be registered with the Boy Scouts of America and have the approval of the unit leader prior to the election. The unit leader must certify the nominee's Scout spirit (i.e. adherence to the Scout Oath and Law and active participation in unit activities). The unit leader must also certify that the nominee meets all specified requirements at the time of the unit's annual election. The acceptability of the camping days is something that is determined by the unit leader.

While the National Committee would prefer the long-term camping requirement be met as part of the unit's long-term camping experience, there may be unique circumstances related to the individual Scout or the council that would justify counting a staff experience as an appropriate long-term camping experience. For that reason, we leave it to the unit leader to make the decision regarding meeting the spirit and intent of the long-term camping requirement.

Q. In this year's class of youth candidates, we have several who are 20-year-old Venturing Scouts. Two of them will turn 21 between our Lodge's last May induction and the Fall Induction in November. May they be inducted?

A. The only time candidate age comes into play is when he or she is elected, not when they are inducted. A youth or adult candidate has one-year (12 months, not 21 months) to complete their induction following election or adult selection.

Q. A Scout who is dual registered in a Troop and Venturing Crew and has more than enough camping nights. She meets the minimum rank requirement in her Venturing Crew but has not yet achieved First Class in her Troop. However, the

Venturing Crew Adviser does not want to hold an election for "just one Scout." May she be elected by her Troop?

A. No. The rank must be specific to the organization electing them. There are lots of reasons we did that, but the most important is that the candidate must have served and participated in that unit, the rank is one measure of participation.

Appendix E

Forms

Please use the latest version of these forms which are found on the Lodge website under Resources Forms

<http://www.acegwa.org/forms.htm>

All forms located on the Lodge website are fillable .pdf forms