MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Scouting America
Pathway to Adventure Council

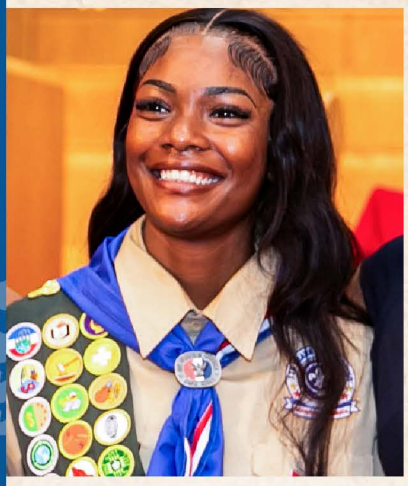
2026

JANUARY













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SCOUTING FOR FOOD KICKOFF

ZOOM WEBINAR, JANUARY 21 AT 7PM

Join us to kick off our annual, council-wide community service opportunity! Scouting for Food program representatives will cover the following topics to help unit leadership plan a successful food drive event:

- What is Scouting for Food all about?
- How can my pack/troop/crew participate?
- When do we get started?

REGISTER HERE

RECRUITMENT READINESS

As you are reading your January Membership article, I hope you and your family had a wonderful Holiday Season and will have a Healthy and Happy New Year. Before we go any further, I would like to thank our Unit Leaders, District & Council Volunteers along with our Professional Staff within Pathway to Adventure Council (PTAC) for your hard work and dedication in our 2025 Recruitment and Retention campaign. I would like to plant the "proactive planning" seed the around the topics mentioned in the following bullet points that will be discussed further over next couple of months. Please remember, a New Member Coordinator can assist your unit with the activities in each of these topics.

Crossover of our AOLS Scouts into our Troops:

- Starting in November, you learned about information regarding Crossover of our AOL Scouts into our Troops whether through this newsletter, attending your monthly Roundtables or by visiting the additional information regarding the Arrow of Light-to-Scouts Transition at: https://www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/resources/recruitment-marketing/webelos-to-scouts-transition/
- This information covers Arrow of Light Required Adventures, Unit Responsibilities details, and Unit Commissioner responsibilities along with the Keys for a 12-month Arrow of Light-to-Scout Plan
- Our goal should be to have our AOL Scouts cross over to a troop by early March, so they have the opportunity to participate with the activities in their new unit, which includes weekend camping, prior to attending Summer Camp

Family Troop Option:

- All existing troops, boy and girl are eligible to adopt the family troop option
- If your unit's decision is to form a family troop, please follow the instructions contained within the following guides
  - ***Family Troop Rollout Plan***
  - ***Family Troop Decision Guide***
  - ***Family Troop Best Practices Guide***
  - ***Intent to Convert to a Family Troop***
- These guides along with the Family Troop Rollout Plan can be found on the PTAC Website as follows:
  - Resources -> Unit Resources -> Family Troop Option
- Please direct all Family Troop questions to Rick Romani (arrek1@hotmail.com)

Spring Recruitment and Summertime Activities:

- By March, you will begin to see and hear information around Spring Recruitment and the materials that will be available to support the Spring Recruitment campaigns for our Packs, Troops, Ships, Crews, and Posts
- Information will be available whether through newsletter articles, in our Membership Folder, or at monthly Roundtables
- Please remember, your recruitment options and summertime activities are endless if you start your planning early
- Summertime activities are a great way to involve the new Scouts and Families in your unit to feel "Welcome and Included"

Ongoing Membership and Unit Renewal Support:

- If your unit has any Membership Renewals in their "Lapse Period" or if your Unit Renewal is outstanding, your District or Unit Commissioner, District Membership Chair, District Chair and / or your DE will be reaching out to you asking, "How Can We Help"

In closing, we need to remember that all our new and existing Families and Scouts need to be "Seen, Heard and Included". I would like to thank everyone for all your hard work and dedication to ensure our youth and their families can experience a Quality Scouting program. A successful recruitment program, for both youth and adults, should be 24/7 as it could take multiple contacts to recruit a new family to join Scouting. Please read future newsletters, visit our Membership Website, and attend your District Roundtables for additional information. If you have any questions, please work with your District Membership Chair, District Executive, and your Unit Commissioner.

Yours In Scouting,
Rick Romani – PTAC Membership VP

SCOUT STORIES

Learning Skills while Giving Back!

Meet Webelos Scout Carmen of Cub Scout Pack 773. She has taken it upon herself to participate in her own service project. While out delivering popcorn, Carmen spent time with a local nonprofit that makes sleeping mats for homeless out of plastic bags. Several years ago, Carmen visited the group and learned the process of cutting plastic bags, tying them to make plarn (plastic yarn) and then weaving them to make the mats.

Each year she has visited she has offered to help & practiced using the loom. Now she was gifted a loom to make a mat herself at home! Carmen says she's finds looming as both therapeutic and satisfying while also finding a great way to recycle plastic bags.





Scouts Participate in Wreaths Across America

On December 13, despite the below zero wind chills, Scouts from Pack 297 and Troops 263 and 623 participated in Wreaths Across America at Hope Cemetery in Highland, laying wreaths at veteran graves as a thank you for their service. Thank you, Stacey Heavner, for once again coordinating this activity.





Do You Have A Scout Story To Share?

SHARE HERE!

SPECIAL EVENTS



Annual Recognition Luncheon

Save the Date — Join us as we recognize the volunteers of our Council while having fun with fellowship, photo opportunities, and more! The highlight of the event is the presentation of the Silver Beaver Award, the highest recognition presented on the Council level.

Awards Presented: Silver Beaver, Council Alumnus of the Year, Special Needs Scouting Service Award, Torch of Gold, Venturing Leadership Award

Silver Beaver Recipients: John Biek, Ledell Carr, Sr., Jamie Goodwin, Deb Jennings, Anne Kritzmire, Dr. Blaise Lukasiewicz, Jeffrey Nowik, and Rich Stanislawski

February 22, 2026 – Registration coming soon!

Youth Recognition Dinner

March 7, 2026 —Join us to celebrate our Eagle Scouts, Venturing Summit Award Recipients and Sea Scout Quartermaster Award Recipients who received their award through 2025. This is the annual youth recognition event for those who attained the highest possible award in their chosen program.

Awards Presented: Eagle Scouts of 2025, Venturing Summit Award, Sea Scout Quartermaster Award, NESA Outstanding Eagle Scout Award, Eagle Scout Service Project of the Year Award, Venturing Leadership Award

REGISTER HERE

Eagle Scout Service Project of the Year Award Nomination:

This award recognizes valuable service of an exceptional nature by an Eagle Scout candidate. Examples include projects that have benefited underprivileged children, recognized veterans, been international in nature, and have required significant time and resources. Anyone can submit the nomination including the Eagle Scout themselves!

Deadline: January 31, 2026
Presented at: Youth Recognition Dinner
Submit To: ptac.nesa@gmail.com

FORM HERE

For more info, visit our awards page:

AWARDS PAGE

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES



Save the Date: Winter Scout Fun!

Exciting winter adventures are coming your way! The TriStar District is hosting special events for all PTAC Cubs and Scouts BSA youth. These experiences are designed to complement your current program, create lasting memories, and help keep Scouts engaged - all without adding to your planning workload.

Winterpalooza - Caldwell Woods Wellness Center - January 17

Ski Trip - Grand Geneva Resort - January 24

District Awards Dinner - Moretti's in Edison Park - February 1

First Aid Meet - Edison Park Lutheran Church - February 21

Cub Scout Planetarium Day - Triton College - February 28

Scouts BSA Planetarium Day - Triton College - March 28

Territory 6 Venturing Conference

Come to the Territory 6 Venturing Conference. Meet up with Venturers from other units, and other councils. Informative training sessions will be held as well.

January 10, 2026 — 9am-3pm — Oak Brook Park District, 1450 Forest Gate Rd.

Youth $40 — Adults $50

For more information, contact ptac.cvoa@gmail.com

Council Pinewood Derby at Woodfield Mall

April 12 — All Scouts are invited to attend a day of thrilling creativity and speed as we gear up for the 2026 Pinewood Derby at Woodfield Mall.

Build Your Own Lego Car: Channel your inner artist and engineer as you create your own miniature racer. The Lego racetrack is free and open to the public.

Tips and Tricks Table: Learn from the experts and gather insider knowledge on building a top-performing pinewood derby car.

Open Division Race: A race for all ages including adults, where anyone can compete with their custom-built cars. Pull out those legacy racecars from years ago and try your luck!

REGISTER HERE

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES



NATIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP TRAINING
SUMMER 2026

Take your leadership to the next level!

NYLT is an exciting, hands-on training where Scouts build real-world leadership skills they can bring back to their home units and beyond. Participants will learn, practice, and model leadership through fun challenges, team adventures, games and outdoor activities, all within a setting that mirrors the best of Scouting.

Why Attend?

- Gain confidence and practical leadership skills
- Experience the power of teamwork and communication
- Learn how to lead, not just follow

Who Can Attend

- Scouts BSA, Venturers, and Sea Scouts
- Must be at least 13 years old

Important Details

- Transportation to and from camp is not provided
- Scholarships are available!



Sessions

Session 1
June 7 @1pm - June 12 @8pm

Session 2
June 14 @1pm - June 19 @8pm

Pricing

$325 per Scout

- $150 is required at registration
- $50 late fee applied if not paid in full a month before scheduled session

Location

Camp Frank S. Betz
3858 E. Snow Rd.
Berrien Springs, MI 49103

Questions? Contact:

nyltptac@gmail.com

For more info, registration, and scholarships:
Scan the QR code or visit
www.pathwaytoadventure.org/nylt/

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Chicago White Sox

Saturday, May 9 — 6:10pm — Gauranteed Rate Field

Ticket Includes exclusive Scout Night patch, pregame parade on the field, Pack/Troop shoutout on videoboard, Scouting activities in the Kids Zone throughout the game! Portion of the proceeds will go back to PTAC to support local Scouting programs.

To purchase tickets, contact Ryan Smith at rsmith@chisox.com or call 312-674-5459

CONTACT FOR TICKETS

Chicago Dogs

Saturday, June 13 — 6pm — Impact Field

Ticket Includes Chicago Dogs Hat, exclusive Scout Night patch, pregame Raingutter Regatta, pregame parade on the field, postgame fireworks show! Optional meal addon available. Portion of the proceeds will go back to PTAC to support local Scouting programs.

To purchase tickets, visit the link or contact shaunv@thechicagodogs.com or call 224-781-1808

TICKETS HERE

Chicago Bulls

Sunday, April 5 — 2:30pm — United Center

Cheer with us this season at the United Center! Join Pathway to Adventure Council for a legendary group outing with the Chicago Bulls.

Share the excitement of Bulls basketball and the NBA's leading entertainment experience as the team takes on the Pheonix Suns.

Get your tickets now through the link below!

For +15 group tickets, contact Joe Hunt at jhunt@bulls.com or 312-455-4173

TICKETS HERE

HIGH ADVENTURE

2026 National Jamboree

Scouts and Venturers across Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana will travel together to the 2026 National Jamboree at Summit Bechtel Reserve to experience an adventure of a lifetime!

We still have space for both youth and adult leader participants and would love to have you join. Visit the registration page for more information on getting signed up and who to go for with any questions!

PTAC Scouters, if you are planning to attend the 2026 National Jamboree but not as part of our PTAC council contingent, we would like to know. WE are getting close to purchasing our duffel bags, and would like to give you the opportunity to purchase one if you so wish. If so, please email Betsy Gates-Ehlers at betsy.gatesehlers@pathwaytoadventure.org

REGISTER HERE

2027 Philmont

Pathway to Adventure Council is organizing the 2027 Council Contingent Trek to Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico.

- **The contingent will depart Chicago on July 3 and return on July 17.**
- **The per person fee, estimated to be $2,850.00,** will include the Philmont registration fee, all trip transportation, a Taste of Philmont in February, a 10 mile Shakedown Hike in March, the Shakedown Weekend in April, Philmont belt & buckle, trail tee shirts, a laundry bag for transporting a backpack, and more.

Registration closes on March 20, 2026.

REGISTER HERE

2027 World Jamboree

26th World Scout Jamboree — Gdańsk, Poland: July 30, 2027 — August 8, 2027

The World Scout Jamboree is one of the largest outdoor educational events for youth on the planet! Tens of thousands of Scouts from all over the world come together to camp outdoors and join in fun activities where they make new friends, learn about other cultures, and develop leadership skills that will last a lifetime. This event is open to Scouts between the ages of 14 and 17 from all 176 Member Organizations.

WORLD JAMBOREE

TRAINING



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Wood Badge is advanced leadership training for Cub Scout, Scouts BSA and Venturing adult leaders at the unit, district, council, and professional levels. It is taught by living the experience of a Scouts BSA Troop, utilizing the patrol method, over two weekends.

Wood Badge teaches leadership skills by focusing on five key areas: ***Living the Values, Growing, Connecting, Guiding and Empowering.*** By using a variety of learning techniques, participants will learn contemporary leadership skills and tools needed to provide the youth members of their units with the highest scouting experience.



WHAT TO EXPECT

- **INSTRUCTION & MENTORSHIP BY SKILLED STAFFERS**
- **TEAM-BASED LEARNING IN THE PATROL METHOD**
- **IMMERSIVE, OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES**
- **REAL-TIME LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**
- **PRACTICAL GOAL DEVELOPMENT**
- **LIFELONG CONNECTIONS**

WEEKEND 1

April 10 @7am - April 12 @5pm

WEEKEND 2

April 25 @7am - April 26 @5pm

PRICING:

Early Bird - $300
By Dec. 17, 2025

Regular - $325
Starting Dec. 18, 2025

LOCATION:

Camp Frank S. Betz
3858 E. Snow Rd.
Berrien Springs, MI 49103

Questions? Contact:
PathwayWoodbadge@gmail.com

For more info, registration, and scholarships:
Scan the QR code or visit
www.ScoutingEvent.com/456-WoodBadge26

TRAINING

Advancement and Recognition Webinar

The January Advancement and Recognition webinar will cover Boards of Review best practices for the unit to consider as they prepare for these opportunities to review a Scout's progress and accomplishments.

MORE INFO HERE



Cub Scout Rangemaster Training

Archery, BBs and slingshot are consistently the top-rated activities for our Cub Scouts and their families. Certified Rangemasters are vital for delivering a safe and enjoyable environment to learn and practice these skills.

In March, we will have three FREE, hands-on training opportunities covering range setup, equipment handling, and safety protocols, qualifying you for two years to run Cub Scout ranges at Council and District events. No range experience required!

REGISTER HERE



Fundamentals Part 1: Science of Training

Fundamentals Part 1: Science of Training will be offered on Saturday, Jan. 17, 2026 at St. Michael's Church in LaGrange Park, IL. This course introduces teaching techniques to Scouts and Scouters age 14 and up. It is one part of the required series to staff NYLT or Wood Badge, and is recommended for leading District or Council training courses as well!

January 17, 9am-1pm. Course fee is $15 includes materials and refreshments.

REGISTER HERE



Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Training

Are you a new Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster? Maybe you've been one for a while but want to refresh your skills? This in-person training will give you tools and knowledge to lead your Scouts in a safe, engaging, and effective program!

March 21, 9am-3:30pm at St. Michael's Lutheran Church, La Grange Park

This is an opportunity to work toward your position-specific training alongside dedicated leaders like yourself.

REGISTER HERE

OWASIPPE

2026 Camp Staff Applications are now open!

Spend your summer working in beautiful West Michigan woods. Provide youth with an unforgettable outdoor adventure that will develop leadership and teach new skills. Management interviews are happening now. General interviews take place in December. Check out our site to apply and find more information: pathwaytoadventure.org/owasippecampstaff

MORE INFO HERE

OWASIPPE

♦ *America's Oldest Scout Camp* ♦



SESSIONS

June 14 - June 20
June 21 - June 27
June 28 - July 4
July 5 - July 11
July 12 - July 18
July 19 - July 25
July 26 - August 1

♦ NEW – OWASIPPE MAXED ♦

New for 2026, Session 3 brings **Owasippe MAXED**—a week of exclusive programs, merit badges, and high adventure experiences only available **June 28–July 4.** Scouts can tackle the new Multisport Merit Badge, Golf Merit Badge with disc-golf options, and more. Special events include Night Zip Lining, Blacklight Range & Target activities, ATV Overnighters, and Specialty River Trips. MAXED also features three-day high adventure camps like Fishing Camp (with Angler Award), Trek Camp, River Canoe Camp, and Conservation Camp. Don't miss this chance to push your limits and try something new!

ACTIVITIES

Sailboats
Camping
ATVs
Horseback Riding
Mountain Biking
Water Skiing
Clay Shooting
Archery
Metalworking
Scoutcraft
Handicraft
Lake Tubing
Fishing
COPE
Climbing
Zip Line
& More!

OWASIPPE

Cub Scout Resident Camp - At Owasippe

Tigers, Wolves, Bears, and Webelos, are all invited to experience Owasippe's Camp Wolverine! Our program will be centered around a variety of age-appropriate adventures and provide Scouts with plenty of time to explore!

Arrow of Light Scouts will partake in advanced programs while exploring into the horizons of Owasippe's 4800 acres.

Session 1 - Both programs - July 26 - July 29

Session 2 - Both programs - July 29 - August 1

REGISTER HERE **WEBPAGE**





Reneker Family Camp - At Owasippe

Camp Reneker offers affordable week-long cabin camping for both Scout and non-Scouting families. Each cabin includes a full kitchen and two bedrooms, and a central shower house with washroom, shower, and laundry facilities. Staff-led programs feature age-group activities like hiking, crafting, sports, science experiments, swim instruction, skill development, and service projects.

Have a Scout already attending Owasippe? Families can reserve a cabin at Owasippe's Camp Reneker for the week your Scout is at camp and have them join you before or after their session.

REGISTER HERE **WEBPAGE**





CAMP BETZ

PTAC 2026

BETZ 250

CUB SCOUT FAMILY CAMP

SCOUTS, START YOUR ENGINES

The roar of adventure is calling — it's time to hit the track for the Betz 250! Cub Scouts and their families will race through a weekend packed with outdoor challenges, themed adventures, and all the classic camp fun you love. Parents, guardians, and siblings are all part of the race team and invited to join in on the fun!

Sign up now and secure your spot on the starting line! Then keep your eyes on the finish line—because Family Camp memories last forever.







2026 SCHEDULE

SESSION 1	June 26 - June 28
SESSION 2	July 10 - July 12
SESSION 3	July 17 - July 19
SESSION 4	July 24 - July 26
SESSION 5	July 31 - August 2
SESSION 6	August 7 - August 9

QUESTIONS?

Contact PTAC.Camping@scouting.org

2026 FEES

STANDARD FEE

Scouts & Siblings 5-15yrs	$95
Adults & Siblings 16+yrs	$55
Siblings 0-4yrs	FREE

AFTER JUNE 1

Scouts & Siblings 5-15yrs	$105
Adults & Siblings 16+yrs	$65
Siblings 0-4yrs	FREE

TRACK LOCATION: CAMP BETZ | 3858 SNOW RD. | BERRIEN SPRINGS, MI

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

The Family Camp program includes a full schedule of high-speed fun from Friday night to Sunday morning, delicious meals and snacks, crafts to take home, and an exclusive camp shirt and patch.

ON THE TRACK THIS YEAR!

- SWIMMING & BOATING (YOU MAY GET WET!)
- RANGE & TARGET SPORTS
- WOOD & LEATHER CRAFTS
- SATURDAY NIGHT FIRE BOWL
- 57 ACRES OF WOODED CAMPSITES

Scan the QR Code or Visit

PATHWAYTOADVENTURE.ORG/

Scouting America

Pathway to Adventure Council

Faith Relations Committee

January Religious Holidays

View Here. Please research further into each faith's celebrations to have a better understanding of what your fellow scouts celebrate.

Upcoming Events

Scout Sunday: February will mark another Scouting Anniversary! If your unit doesn't celebrate Scout Sunday as a whole with your COR, you can ask your own religious leader to make an announcement at your worship service for you and other scouts at your place of worship. If you need help planning see the information in this Scout Sunday link. This year Scout Sunday is February 1st, but your place of worship can choose another Sunday (or Saturday) service. If you attend one, send us pictures for the newsletter!

February 1 - Catholic Religious Emblems Cathedral Ceremony: Scouts, if you are still in need of your Board of Review, please contact Deborah Sitz via email at dcgsitz@gmail.com



May 7 - Scouts Read Sacred Texts:
You can register your unit or just yourself here.
See flyer for QR code to register or visit the website at
https://www.scoutsreadsacredtextsworldwide.org/

Scouts and Neighborhood Religious Activities

Peace Light: If you participated in the Peace light events in December around the PTAC area, please submit a picture to us.

If your scouts are participating in local Religious Activities, please send a short write up to ptacfaithrelations@gmail.com. We will try to include it in the newsletter.

District Religious Emblems Coordinators

The committee is looking for a few more people to cover the following districts:

Checaugau **Iron Horse** **Thunderbird** **Tri-Star** **Trailblazer**

For more information, please contact Donna at ptacfaithrelations@gmail.com.

SCOUT SHOP



CUT DAYS

LaGrange (9:30 am - 1:30 pm)	Arlington Heights (10:00 am - 2:00 pm)
~~December 13, 2025~~	~~December 20, 2025~~
January 10, 2026	~~January 3, 2026~~
January 24, 2026	January 17, 2026
February 7, 2026	February 14, 2026
February 21, 2026	February 28, 2026
March 7, 2026	March 14, 2026

Bring in your car kit with the design you want drawn on the side, or use one of our templates.

Full stock of cars and supplies available for purchase.



Follow Us

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Do You Have A Scout Story To Share?

Don't keep the good work your Scouts do a secret. Tell us what they did and send a couple pictures. We might put your story on our social media or perhaps your Scout will be the feature in our next story.

Help get Scouts the recognition they deserve!

SHARE HERE!

Contact Us

(312) 421-8800

PathwayTo.Adventure@Scouting.org

Arlington Heights Center for Scouting
617 E. Golf Rd., Suite 101 | Arlington Heights, IL 60005

Chicago Center for Scouting
106 N. Aberdeen St., Suite 200 | Chicago, IL 60607

La Grange Center for Scouting
27 Calendar Ave., 2nd Floor | La Grange, IL 60525

Robert J. Welsh Center for Scouting
8751 Calumet Ave. | Munster, IN 46321

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