

What is the OA?

The Order of the Arrow is Scouting's National Honor Society.

Its purpose is:

- To recognize those Scouts and Adult Leaders who exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives.
- To develop and maintain camping traditions and spirit.
- To promote Scout camping.
- To crystallize the Scout habit of helpfulness into a life purpose of leadership in cheerful service to others.



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How can my Scouts and Adults get in the OA?

Once a year (usually in the spring), Boy Scout Troops and Varsity Teams can select members to become candidates for the OA:

Youth members (under 21) must be at least First Class rank, have 15 days and nights of camping in the past 2 years, have Scoutmaster approval, and be elected by the other Youth in the Troop.

One *adult (over 21)* can be selected by the Troop Committee each year that a youth election is held, and they must fulfill the same camping requirements.

You can find out all the details and how to schedule an OA election for your Troop from the OA Chapter officers in your District. They should be contacting you this spring with more information.

Where can we get more info?

The primary source of information is our **Lodge newsletter**, the *Portage Times* which all paid members should receive. We also sometimes send out **e-mail reminders** of upcoming events. Our Lodge **web site** offers a lot of important info and more is being added all the time.

Phone numbers / email

Lodge Adviser – Rich Geyser

440-748-1060 / LodgeAdviser@Portage619.org

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On the internet...

Portage Lodge Website:

www.Portage619.org

Heart of Ohio Council Website:

www.HeartOfOhioCouncil.org

National OA Website:

www.oa-bsa.org



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Why the OA Is Good For My Troop

A Guide for Adult Leaders





Some of our Troop Members used to be in the OA, how can they get active again?

It is actually quite simple. They would just need to pay the current year's dues of \$10 and fill out a form with the details of their past involvement in the OA. Contact one of the Lodge Advisors for more details.

Some of my Scouts have had a bad experience with the OA, why should I send anyone else?

As with most volunteer organizations, sometimes things don't go as well as we all hope or plan that they will. Occasionally, this may be due to a few members who did not plan or follow-up well enough. Sometimes it is because we do not have enough OA members to cover all the bases, and those present are stretched too thin.

That's why it is important to encourage your Scouts and Adults who are in the OA to attend more events – to make it better for everyone.



"If boys stay in scouting beyond the age of 14-15 they may feel they have 'done it all' as far as leadership within the troop. OA gives these scouts an avenue to channel their leadership and creative energies within the scouting movement."

Dudley T., Committee Chair Troop 20

What events does the OA have?

Our Lodge holds only a few events a year, so as not to replace your Troop's program.

In addition to a few **Ordeal** weekends where we induct new members, we have an annual **Banquet**. Some of the more exciting events are **Fellowships** and **Conclaves**, where we gather with OA Members from the Council or across the State. We also encourage members to help with **Council and District service** opportunities. There are also national **high adventure** opportunities for OA Members across the country.

Where can I find a list of the OA events?

Most events can be found in the Council Calendar, published each summer.

Updates are found in our newsletter, the *Portage Times* and on our website www.Portage619.org

National OA Event dates and details can be found on the National OA web site at www.oe-bsa.org.

Will the OA steal all of my Older Scouts?

Absolutely not!

An OA Member's first responsibility is to his Troop. Many of our active Members are also active in their Troop, as well as school and sports.

Occasionally, some older Scouts may choose to participate in an OA event instead of the "same old thing" at the Troop – but at least they are still doing something in Scouting.

What does the OA offer for my Scouts?

- They can meet, work, and have fun with some of the best older Scouts and Adults from across the Council and beyond on a regular basis.
- Since the Youth members run the OA, they get more hands-on experience at planning and leading events and meetings for other Youth.
- They are considered Youth members until the age of 21, giving them more time to enjoy some of the best aspects of the OA.
- OA events and meetings are a change from the "same old thing" of standard Troop life.
- It helps keep older Scouts interested in Scouting.



If the Youth run everything, then what do adults do in the OA?

- Provide guidance to the Youth leaders.
- Help interpret Council and National guidelines and procedures.
- Help maintain consistency and stability amid changing Youth leaders.
- Help provide rides to events and other expertise which the Youth may not possess.
- Adult participation tells the Scouts that the program is worthwhile.

"Being involved in the OA gives me the opportunity to meet and get ideas from other Scoutmasters from around the Council, the State, and the Country."

Greg C., Scoutmaster Troop 175