

Unit Elections Ceremony

OA Member A:

Fellow Scouts, the Order of the Arrow is Scouting's National Honor Society. Its purpose is to recognize and honor those campers who best live up to the Scout Oath and Scout Law in their daily lives and to guide them in expanding the service that has made them outstanding. The OA promotes Scout camping, develops leaders, and maintains camping traditions and spirit. It emphasizes that the good Scout camper is not only skilled in Scoutcraft, but also true to the ideals of Scouting and its tradition of the daily Good Turn.

The only way that a Scout can become a member of the Order of the Arrow is to be elected for this honor by the members of their unit. To be eligible for election, a youth must fulfill the camping requirement and hold the Scouts BSA First Class rank, the Venturing Discovery Award, or the Sea Scout Ordinary rank or higher. (Election team note: The election team should identify the appropriate rank to mention based on the type of unit they are conducting the election. For example, if the election team is visiting a Sea Scout Ship they would only mention "Sea Scout Ordinary rank or higher".).

After being elected, the Scouts must complete the Ordeal, which is a series of tests of their sincere dedication to the high ideals of Scouting and the OA. If they are faithful in performing the tests, they take a solemn pledge of service and are admitted into the OA. A long period of self-improvement and service then follows.

The lodge flap, Universal Arrow ribbon, and the distinctive sash identify the Order of the Arrow member. They are symbols of service. Our lodge has its own activities and projects, but our program does not replace the member's responsibility to their unit. Indeed, each Arrowman is expected to give richer service to their own unit in return for the honor their unit extended to them.

American Indian lore is an attractive sideline in the OA. American Indian dances and ceremonies add color to our program of

service, and members often make American Indian lore their hobby. However, one does not need American Indian attire or skill in American Indian lore to become a valuable member of the Order of the Arrow.

Scouts, you will elect representatives to our brotherhood of cheerful service, and we are here to assist you in the election. All registered active members of this troop, crew, or ship, except those 21 or older, are entitled to vote.

All those who receive votes from at least half of those who turn in ballots are elected. The number of candidates you elect will depend on how your votes agree with votes of other members of your unit.

Remember that an Order of the Arrow election is not a popularity contest! Don't vote for a Scout just because they are your friend or just because they are a good athlete or because they are older than the rest. What really counts is their loyalty to the Scout Oath and Law.

Campaigning in an Order of the Arrow election is not permitted. You are expected to think for yourself; do not let others influence your decision. The election is by secret ballot and no discussion will be permitted, so no one will know for whom you are voting. This important decision about your fellow Scouts is entirely up to you.

Before we announce the names of those eligible and begin the election, are there any questions?

(Answer any questions about the nature and purpose of the Order of the Arrow and the election procedure.)

OA Member B:

The following members of this unit have met the camping and advancement requirements and are eligible for election, as certified by your unit leader. Will you stand and form a line over here (point) as your names are called?

(Point out a place to line up and read the list slowly. Arrange the candidates in a line facing the voters at the place indicated; the line can be semicircular if the eligible group is large. Write each name on the chalkboard or flip chart as called.)

Scouts, you should now answer each of the following questions to yourself; your answers will help you to make the right selections.

OA Member C:

Who in this group is a friend to all? Who is pleasant and easy to get along with? Are they kind and helpful? In all, if you were a new Scout, would you like to hike and camp with them?

Who is cheerful, even when they have many tiresome jobs to do? Who smiles whenever they can? Who obeys promptly and cheerfully? Does they control their temper? If you were at camp with them for several weeks, do you think you would enjoy it? Who is always ready to give unselfish and wholehearted service to others? Who, in serving others, can forget their own desires and interests? Who has served your unit all year round, faithfully attending your meetings and helping with your service projects? Do you think they will continue their service in the future? If you were their leader, could you depend on them?

In all, ask yourselves: Who in this group, by living up to the Scout Oath, serves your fellow Scouts with such an example of brotherhood and cheerfulness that you look up to them with deep respect and admiration?

OA Member B:

Scouts, on the ballot you will be given, print the first and last names of 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 an unmarked 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, and this will not affect the final result. Those eligible for election also vote, and they may vote for themselves if they feel they are worthy.

The names of the eligible candidates are listed on this chalkboard (flip chart, poster, etc.). When you are finished, fold the ballot only once and give the pencil and ballot to any member of the election team.

(Distribute election ballots and pencils.)

(Collect ballots and pencils. Count the votes in private with the unit leader. The following text should be used whenever there is no formal calling-out ceremony planned.)

OA Member A:

The following have been elected to the Order of the Arrow. Will you please come forward as your leader calls your name? *(Name those elected.)* This concludes the election. Thank you for your cooperation. Good camping and good night (day).

(Elected candidates and any Arrowmen within the unit who can be spared are taken into a separate room where the election team records necessary data and instructs the candidates as to the date, time, and place of the beginning of the Ordeal. The following paragraphs should then be presented as a charge to the candidates and present Order of the Arrow members.)

OA Member B:

That you, my fellow campers, have been chosen by your companions to become members of the Order of the Arrow reflects great credit upon you, and I congratulate you upon your election. You have impressed upon those who have lived closest to you the sincerity of your purpose to live in accordance

with the high ideals of the Scout Oath. The judgment of your fellows could hardly have been mistaken.

In a short time, you will take upon yourselves another solemn obligation to be unselfish in service and devotion to the welfare of others. Your fellow Scouts elected you because they felt that you would continue your service. Do not let them down.

OA Member C:

My brothers in the OA, you have proved during the past year that the traditions of our brotherhood are not a collection of meaningless words. As we welcome these new candidates (the new candidate) on our journey, let us be mindful of our obligation to help and guide them during the trials that lie ahead.