



Dear Parent/Guardian –

Congratulations! Your Scout has been elected as a candidate for the Order of the Arrow, Scouting's National Honor Society. Through their dedication to the ideals of Scouting, and earnest exemplification of the Scout Oath and Law in daily life, your Scout has the opportunity to join this prestigious organization.

Since 1915, the Order of the Arrow (OA) has honored and recognized Scouts and Scouters for their steadfast dedication to the principles of Scouting. Nentico Lodge 12 represents OA in Baltimore Area Council. Candidates for OA are chosen not only for what they have done, but also for what they are expected to do in serving the welfare of others.

In order to be inducted into the Order of the Arrow, your Scout must undertake a series of challenges, called an Ordeal, just as all OA members have done before. This experience, while challenging, will enrich your child's Scouting experience.

Your Scout has 18 months from the time of his/her election to complete an Ordeal Inductions Weekend. Nentico Lodge hosts several each year at Broad Creek Scout Reservation. Your Scout is free to attend any of the weekends. The dates are listed on the lodge's website, www.nentico.org

After completing the Ordeal, your Scout is not only a member of the Order of the Arrow, they are identified as a model Scout and leader within the Scouting program. We encourage new Arrowmen to supplement their activity in their home unit by becoming active in the Lodge and its programs.

To help ensure that no Scout loses out on this rewarding opportunity, scholarship funds are available to Scouts with financial need. Please contact us for additional information.

You may have questions regarding the Order of the Arrow. A Frequently Asked Questions sheet is enclosed for you to review. You may also contact me at chief@nentico.org or the inductions team at inductions@nentico.org.

Once again, I congratulate you on your Scout's election as a candidate. I look forward to having your Scout as a fellow brother in the Order of the Arrow.

Yours in Cheerful Service,

Tara Qualey
2026 Lodge Chief
Nentico Lodge 12



Frequently Asked Questions

Question: I was an OA member as a youth. How do I re-join?

Answer: Welcome back, Brother! Regardless of what lodge you were previously a member of, you can renew your OA membership simply by paying dues to Nentico Lodge. Use the "Pay Dues" link at www.nentico.org and enter the date of your Ordeal (approximate date is okay), plus Brotherhood and Vigil information if applicable. It's that easy.

Question: How do Scouts benefit from the OA?

Answer: Every year, over 1000 Arrowmen in Nentico Lodge give thousands of hours of service to their units, districts, council, and communities. The Order of the Arrow program provides additional opportunities for a Scout to develop leadership talents; improve speaking, planning, and motivational skills; fellowship with older Scouts; and achieve a deeper understanding about cheerfully and unselfishly giving of themselves in the service of their fellow Scouts.

Question: What happens during the Ordeal?

Answer: The experience of the Ordeal is to challenge the candidate to understand an obligation of life-long cheerful service. The Ordeal starts with an inspiring ceremony, where the candidate is presented with four challenges to help them understand the obligations of a member of the Order: brotherhood, cheerfulness, and service. Once the four challenges are completed, the candidate takes an obligation of service, and becomes an Ordeal member in the OA. Note that nothing in the Ordeal is considered hazing; the Ordeal activities are intended to promote self-discovery and inspiration while providing service to our Scout camps.

Question: Are there separate Ordeals for youth and adults and/or boys and girls?

Answer: Guidelines have been created by the National Order of the Arrow Committee that allow co-ed groups at Ordeals. BSA Youth Protection Guidelines are followed strictly at the Ordeal Inductions Weekend. For example, youth and adult members sleep in separate areas and use different bathrooms. Youth and adult members will work together in groups on Saturday, however, there will never be an instance in which a youth is alone with an adult. With these guidelines in place, any scout, regardless of gender or age, can attend any Ordeal.

(More information: <https://oa-bsa.org/about/membership/youth-protection-policies>)



Question: Why all the secrecy around the OA activities?

Answer: The Order of the Arrow recognizes that an aura of mystery not only stimulates interest in the OA, but also helps new members feel proud of an accomplishment that is not achieved by every Scout. Most candidates receive fewer benefits if they know about the induction in advance. Knowledge of the Ordeal events lowers expectancy and dulls the edge of experience. In other words, you hurt candidates by telling them about the Ordeal. Parents should feel free to discuss the experiences their Scout had at the Ordeal after its completion. The Order of the Arrow is happy to share any pertinent information about our activities with parents who are not members. The OA is not a secret society and does not support hazing in any form.

Question: Can parents or non-OA Members attend Ceremonies?

Answer: While parents and non-OA siblings may attend Order of the Arrow ceremonies, we do not encourage it. Our concern is that the future experiences of guests who may one day have an opportunity to join the Order of the Arrow will be spoiled.

Question: How do new OA members get involved?

Answer: There are many ways to get involved in the Lodge. New Arrowmen can begin by attending a chapter meeting or Lodge Fellowship. Youth are able to join a Lodge or Chapter Committee based on interests and skills, as well as run for an elected position in your chapter or the Lodge. Adults serve the Lodge in advisory roles.

OA programs provide a variety of opportunities for fun, leadership development, and service not found anywhere else in Scouting. These opportunities include Section Conclaves, the National Order of the Arrow Conference (NOAC), National Leadership Seminar, and Trail Crews at Northern Tier, Philmont, Florida Sea Base, and Summit Bechtel Reserve.

"He who Serves his fellows is, of all his fellows, greatest."
~ E. Urner Goodman, Order of the Arrow Founder