

# Council Service Territory Volunteer Leadership Newsletter



Scouting  America

Prepared. For Life.®

## Week of May 18, 2026

*The Council Service Territory Volunteer Leadership Newsletter is an official weekly digest of information for key local council and council service territory volunteers from multiple official Scouting America sources. Learn more about the items that may be important to you and **please share appropriate content with other Scouters.***

### 2026 National Annual Meeting

The 2026 National Annual Meeting in Dallas was a week of learning, reflection, celebration, inspiration, recognition, challenge, reunion, fellowship, new connections, and more. If you were not able to attend, below are a few of the things that were shared. We will have more from the meeting and more details in upcoming issues of the *Newsletter*. Visit and keep an eye on the National Annual Meeting [page](#) for more.

**Trail Map** – A flyer for the new “Trail Map” to enterprise strength and membership growth may be found [here](#). Much more to come, but here are the key issues identified:

- Volunteering is too hard
- Technology is the #1 organizational weakness
- Fees are pricing families out
- Training needs a complete redesign
- Trust and alignment are fractured across levels
- School and community partnerships are the #1 growth lever
- The first-year experience is make-or-break
- Eliminate what does not serve the mission

**Technology Updates** – Several milestones for updates were shared:

- August 2026 – New BeAScout and registration
- August 2026 – Eliminate duplicate member IDs and unified member ID
- September 2026 – New renewal system
- December 2026 – Simplify: Eliminate lapse
- December 2026 – Simplify: Align unit renewal
- March 2027 – New Scoutbook
- April 2027 – Align member renewal to February

**Military Family Fee Waiver** – A flyer with additional information on the fee waiver may be found [here](#).

**18–20-Year-Old Commissioners** - Scouting America has lowered the minimum age for commissioner registration from 21 to 18. This provides an additional council and district registrations for this age group, joining college Scouter reserve and merit badge counselor. Unit-level registrations for this age group include adult program participant in Venturing, Exploring, and Sea Scouting, assistant unit leader, and unit college Scouter reserve.

**New National Chair** – Eagle Scout Ricky Mason was elected to serve as the new national chair of Scouting America.

**Prohibited Activities Change** – Three activities which have been prohibited are now allowed: laser tag, low pressure water guns, and pie in the face. Read more [here](#) about pie in the face.

**Cub Scouting Four-Month Program Plan** – Find details [here](#) and [here](#).

**Adams Eagle Scout Project of the Year** – Go [here](#) to read about and see this amazing project announced and highlighted at the Americanism Breakfast.

**9/11 Memorial Scouts Special Offer** – The museum is offering Scout tickets and a special patch for \$20.50. More info may be found [here](#). Contact group sales [here](#).

### **New Eagle Scout Study**

The results of a new research study, “Eagle Scouts: A Legacy of Values-Based Leadership and Service,” were revealed. Review and share [this](#) interactive website on the study and download a printable booklet for the study [here](#).

**Chipmunks** – Learn more about the new Chipmunks program [here](#).

**2026 Virtual Religious Relationships Week** – *September 28-October 1*. Zoom registration opens in *July* for a variety of evening Zoom classes featuring faith-based sessions including religious emblems, faith hikes, chaplains/chaplain aides, and more. Watch for more [here](#).

**Philmont Leadership Courses in 2027** – Session dates for the Philmont Leadership Challenge (*June 6-12 or August 15-21*) and the National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience (*June 13-19, June 20-26, June 27-July 3, July 4-10, July 11-14, or July 18-24.*)

**College Scholarships for Catholic Scouts** – Learn more [here](#).

**Silver Buffalo and Silver Antelopes Presented** – See the list of recipients [here](#).

**Centennials** – The year 2026 was celebrated as the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Silver Buffalo Award, the Catholic Ad Altare Dei Award, and the National Jewish Committee on Scouting.

**Graphics and Video Assets** - The graphics, presentation template, and videos for the 2026 National Annual Meeting may be found [here](#).

### **Summer Safety Stand-Up**

The *2026 Safety Stand-Up* supports council boards in fulfilling their governance responsibilities by providing a structured opportunity for Scout executives, as their chief executive officers, to ensure that safety expectations are being actively managed. See the attached *Summer Safety Stand-Up*.

### **Scouting Safely Newsletter**

Find the latest article and subscribe to the newsletter [here](#).

### **Commissioner Newsletter**

The *May 18* Special National Meeting Edition of the Commissioner Newsletter is available [here](#).

- Scouting America Military Family Fee Waiver
- Sea Scout Advancement Updates
- Scouting May Be Available to Kids as Young as Four Years Old
- Pies In the Face Are Now Back on the Approved Activities List
- David Berg Presented the Silver World Award
- Jay Bottorff Named 2026 National Alumnus of the Year

David Clark Received the 2026 National Eagle Scout Service Project of the Year Award  
Silver Antelopes and Buffaloes Presented  
We Are Here To Help You  
Ask A Commissioner

### **Back Issues of the Volunteer Leadership Newsletter**

We have created a repository of the most recent back issues of the *Newsletter*. Find them [here](#). Be sure to check them out if you are new to this newsletter and/or to review earlier issues.

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### **Reminders from Previous Newsletters**

Fall Recruitment Local Council Marketing Playbook - [here](#)  
2026 National Jamboree Day Visitor Tickets - [here](#)  
2026 National Jamboree VIP Experience - [here](#)  
Camp Collaborative at Philmont – *September 27-October 2* - [here](#)  
Exploring Training and Live Hour - [here](#)  
Family Adventure Camp at High Adventure Bases - [here](#)  
Distinguished Eagle Scout Award Application Cycle - *April 1 through July 31* - [here](#)

### **Program Livecasts**

Cub Chat Live (every Friday at 3 pm Eastern) - [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)  
Troop Talk Live (second Wednesday of each month at 2 pm Central) - [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)  
Leading our Adventures (every other Friday at 4 pm Mountain) - [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)  
Trek on Tuesday (Tuesdays at Noon Pacific) - [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)  
Exploring Live Hour (second Wednesday at 1:00 pm Central – Schedule and registration [here](#)

### **Webinars**

Monthly Finance and Fund Development Webinar – *Third Wednesday at 2:00 pm Central* - See recordings [here](#)  
“Council Financial Statements 101” - *May 21 at 2:00 pm Central* - [here](#)

Scouts BSA Advancement Demystified Series – *8:00 pm Eastern* - Recordings may be found [here](#) and the links to the webinars may be found [here](#)

Monthly Membership Rally - Future Rallies *June 18, July 16, August 20, September 17, October 15, and November 12* – Register [here](#)

Alumni Webinars - 3:30 PM Pacific – Read more [here](#)  
How to Create an Eagle Scout Mentoring Program – *June 7* - Register [here](#)

National Jamboree - Register for upcoming and view past webinars [here](#)

Venturing – See recordings of program webinars [here](#)

### **Newsletters/Blogs/Podcasts**

Scouting Safety - [here](#)  
*On Scouting* - [here](#)  
Marketing – Subscribe [here](#)  
Aquatics - [here](#)  
Scouting in the Boardroom - [here](#)  
Commissioner - [here](#)  
Trail To Adventure - [here](#)

Scouting Alumni - [here](#)  
Training Times - [here](#)  
Abilities Digest - [here](#)  
Scouting Wire - [here](#)

### **Important Links**

Youth Safety - [here](#)  
Incident Reporting - [here](#)  
Health and Safety - [here](#)  
Safety Moments - [here](#)  
Scouting America Brand Guidelines and Materials - [here](#)  
Language of Scouting - [here](#)  
Training Resources - [here](#)  
Merit Badges - [here](#)  
Online Registration Information - [here](#)  
Scouting America Membership Standards - [here](#)  
Philmont Training Center Conferences - [here](#)  
National Council Videos - [here](#)  
High Adventure Bases - [here](#)  
National Jamboree - [here](#)  
Scouting Forms - [here](#)  
2027 World Scout Jamboree - [here](#)  
Council Support - [here](#)  
National Eagle Scout Association - [here](#)  
National Camping Schools - [here](#)  
Scouting Forums - [here](#)  
Order of the Arrow - [here](#)  
Commissioners - [here](#)  
Program Updates - [here](#)  
Summer Camp Staff Jobs - [here](#)  
Awards Central - [here](#)  
Marketing and Recruitment Resources - [here](#)  
Scouting Newsroom - [here](#)  
Scouting Emergency Assistance Fund - [here](#)  
Brand Center - [here](#)  
America250 Visual Identity Guidelines - [here](#)  
America250 Generic and Local Council Logos - [here](#)

### **Scouting America**

**Council Services Territory Operations**

### **Scouting America**

**Council Services**

# 2026 SAFETY STAND-UP



**Scouting America’s outdoor adventure programs rely on clear leadership accountability and effective governance.** The 2026 Safety Stand-Up supports council boards in fulfilling their governance responsibilities by providing a structured opportunity for Scout executives, as their chief executive officers, to ensure that safety expectations are being actively managed. Through attestation, Scout executives affirm that established safety practices—particularly for range and target activities, COPE and climbing, aquatics, and emergency preparedness—are in place and operating within their councils. This executive assurance strengthens prevention and supports the safe delivery of high-quality adventures.



## RANGE AND TARGET ACTIVITIES

**Supervision:** All personnel involved in supervising RATA must be properly certified, understand the importance of their role in keeping the activity safe, and knowledgeable of the ramifications of not understanding that role.

**Equipment:** All equipment used during RATA must be:

- Age appropriate
- Properly sized for the participant, including protective equipment
- Well maintained with routine inspections
- All firearms must be council owned

**Resources:**

- [RATA Manual](#)
- [NCAP PS-213 Range and Target Activities: Archery, Slingshots, and Throwing Sports Programs](#)
- [NCAP PS-214 Range and Target Activities: Firearms and Devices Programs](#)
- [NCAP SQ-407 Range and Target Activities Program Staff](#)



# COPE AND CLIMBING

## Supervision and Assessment:

- Ensure every participant undergoes a Safety CHECK (Clothing, Harnesses and Helmets, Environment, Connections and Knots) before beginning an activity.
- Ensure participants and staff communicate using the See and Say method.
- Back up belayers are required. There should be two sets of hands on a rope, except in locations where a top anchored auto belay is used.

## Resources:

- [CHECK](#)
- [Climb On Safely](#)
- [Belay On Manual](#)

## Additional Camp Resources:

- [PS-206 COPE and/or Climbing Programs](#)
- [SQ-409 COPE and/or Climbing Staff](#)
- [RP-256 The CHECK Program](#)



# AQUATICS

## Supervision:

- Ensure lifeguards are properly certified for the type of activities they are supervising. Lifeguards should have programmed in service training throughout the season to reinforce lifeguarding skills and emergency action plans.
- All camps should have a process and method to ensure participants in aquatics programs have completed the annual swim test prior to participating.
- Consider how all aquatics merit badge instruction is supported with additional trained personnel to support in case of emergency.

## Equipment:

- Ensure all rescue equipment is in good repair, in a sufficient quantity, and accessible for emergency use.
  - Rescue tubes are in good working condition.
  - Backboards have sufficient head immobilizers and straps.
  - Reach poles are readily accessible.
  - Throwable rescue equipment, such as ring buoys and throw bags, need to be readily accessible and the rope is untangled and in good condition.
- All craft need to be inspected and maintained to ensure the vessel is in good operating condition with no obvious hazards such as sharp edges, cracked ribs, broken seats, or missing equipment.

## Resources:

- [Safety Swim Defense](#)
- [Safety Afloat](#)
- [SQ-406 Aquatics Staff](#)
- [PS-201 Aquatics: General](#)



## CAMP EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- All camps need to have a written emergency action plan that unifies all actions keep people safe to include evacuation, shelter-in-place, and lockdown procedures with annexes for specific emergencies such as flashfloods, fire, severe weather, or a lost Scout.
- The plans need to have clear leadership roles and responsibilities, and all camp personnel should be trained and exercised on their responsibilities to the plan. Plans also need to account for the unique layout and topography of the camp, such as flood plains, or wildfire risk.
- Ensure resources and relationships are ready prior to the emergency by maintaining and regularly checking go-kits, first aid equipment, and radios, as well as engaging local fire, EMS, and law enforcement.
- All camps must have access to mainstream disseminated weather and the local emergency alert system, whether through the NOAA weather radios or some other electronic means.
- Camp personnel must monitor weather conditions sufficiently enough to activate the emergency action plan in a timely manner.

### Resources:

- [SQ-402 Camp Staff Training: General](#)
- [FA-703: Fire Detection and Protection](#)
- [AO-805: Emergency Procedures](#)
- [FEMA](#)
- [National Weather Service](#)