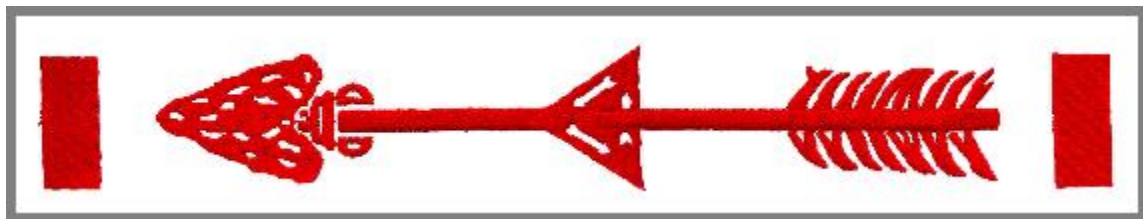




VIGIL HONOR



Alertness to the needs of others is the mark of the Vigil Honor. It calls for an individual with an unusual awareness of the possibilities within each situation.

The Vigil Honor is the highest honor that the Order of the Arrow can bestow upon its members for service to lodge, council, and Scouting. The Vigil Honor is a high mark of distinction and recognition reserved for those Arrowmen who, by reason of exceptional service, personal effort, and unselfish interest, have made distinguished contributions beyond the immediate responsibilities of their position of office. The Vigil Honor cannot be earned by a person's conscious endeavor; it comes as recognition of unselfish leadership in service. It is said that the Vigil seeks its own.

Any member of the Order of the Arrow registered in Scouting and in good standing in a regularly chartered lodge is eligible for recommendation to the National Order of the Arrow Committee for elevation to the Vigil Honor provided that, at the time of the recommendation, the individual has been a Brotherhood member for a minimum of two years.

Order of the Arrow

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **Order of the Arrow (OA)** is the national honor society of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA). It uses American Indian-styled traditions and ceremonies to bestow recognition on scouts selected by their peers as best exemplifying the ideals of Scouting. The society was created by **E. Urner Goodman**, with the assistance of **Carroll A. Edson**, in 1915 as a means of reinforcing the Scout Oath and the Scout Law. The goal was to establish these as lifelong guidelines, and to encourage continued participation in Scouting and camping. Influenced in part by camp traditions, and Indian folklore, the OA uses "safeguarded" symbols, handshakes, and ceremonies to impart a sense of community.



Inducted members, known as *Arrowmen* or *Brothers*, number more than 180,000 youth and adults. They are organized into local youth-led lodges that harbor fellowship, promote camping, and render service to Boy Scout councils and their communities. Members wear identifying insignia on their uniforms, most notably the OA sash, and are eligible for special OA awards. The OA program sponsors several events, awards, and training functions.

The Admonition

"I, (your name), do hereby promise on my honor as a Scout, that I will always and faithfully observe and preserve the traditions of the Order of the Arrow, Wimachtendienk, Wingolauchsik, Witahemui. I will always regard the ties of Brotherhood in the Order of the Arrow as lasting, and will seek to preserve a cheerful spirit even in the midst of irksome tasks and weighty responsibilities, and will endeavor, so far as in my power lies, to be unselfish in service and devotion to the welfare of others."

Chingachgook

In the initiation ritual of the Order of the Arrow, a program of the Boy Scouts of America, the Legend of the Order borrows the character of **Chingachgook** from James Fenimore Cooper's novels, and casts Chingachgook in the role of the Order's sole founder. The character of Uncas, son of Chingachgook, is cast as the original propagator the Order. Because the Order was founded in eastern Pennsylvania, the two characters are recreated as members of the Unami Clan of the Delaware (Lenni Lenapé), rather than as members of the Mohican.

Chingachgook was a fictional character in four of Cooper's five Leatherstocking Tales, a lone Mohican chief and companion of the series' hero Natty Bumppo. Chingachgook married Wah-ta-Wah who bore him a son Uncas, but she died young. Uncas, at his birth "last of the Mohicans" grew to manhood but was killed in a battle with renegade Magua. Chingachgook dies as an old man in the novel *The Pioneers* and so is the actual Last of the Mohicans, having outlived his son.

Chingachgook is said to have been modeled after a real-life wandering Mahican basket maker and hunter named Captain John. The fictional character, occasionally called John Mohegan in the series, was an idealized embodiment of the traditional noble savage. The French often refer to Chingachgook as "Le Gros Serpent", the Great Snake, because he understands the winding ways of men's nature and he can strike a sudden, deadly blow.

History

Founding and development of the society

In 1915, **E. Urner Goodman**, a newly hired field executive for the Philadelphia Council, was assigned to serve as director of the council's summer camp at Treasure Island Scout Reservation on the Delaware River. He believed that the summer camp experience should do more than just teach proficiency in Scoutcraft skills; rather, the principles embodied in the Scout Oath and Scout Law should become realities in the lives of Scouts. Along with his assistant camp director, **Carroll A. Edson**, he started an experimental program, *Wimachtendienk* ("Brotherhood" in the Lenape language), to recognize those Scouts best exemplifying those traits as an example to their peers.

Goodman and Edson decided that a "camp fraternity" was the way to improve the summer camp experience and to keep the older boys coming back. In developing this program they borrowed from the traditions and practices of several other organizations. Edward Cave's *Boy's Camp Book* was consulted for the concept of a camp society that would perpetuate camp traditions. College fraternities were also influential for their concepts of brotherhood and rituals, and the idea of new members pledging themselves to the new organization. Ernest Thompson Seton's Woodcraft Indians program was also consulted for its use of American Indian lore to make the organization interesting and appealing to youth. Other influences include the Brotherhood of Andrew and Phillip, a Presbyterian church youth group with which Goodman had been involved as a young man, and Freemasonry. The traditions and rituals of the latter contributed more to the basic structure of the rituals than any other organization. In an interview with Edson during his later years, he recalled that the task of writing the first rituals of the society was assigned to an early member who was "a 32nd degree Mason." Familiar terms such as "lodge" and "obligation," were borrowed from Masonic practice, as were some ceremonial practices. Even the early national meeting was called a "Grand Lodge," thought to be a Masonic reference. Goodman became a Mason only after the OA was established.

They ultimately devised a program where troops chose, at the summer camp's conclusion, those boys from among their number who best exemplified the ideals of Scouting. Those elected were acknowledged as having displayed, in the eyes of their fellow Scouts, a spirit of unselfish service and brotherhood. Edson helped Goodman research the traditions and language of the Lenni Lenape—also known as the Delaware—who had once inhabited Treasure Island. The brotherhood of Scout honor campers with its American Indian overtones was a success and was repeated again the following summer at Treasure Island. Those Scouts honored at Treasure Island in 1915 and 1916 would eventually become members of the organization's Unami Lodge.

By 1921, Goodman had spoken to Scout leaders in surrounding states about the honor society resulting in a number of lodges being established by Scout councils in the northeastern United States. The name of the society was changed to *Order of the Arrow*, and in October 1921, Goodman convened the first national meeting of what was then called the "National Lodge of the Order of the Arrow" in Philadelphia—where Goodman was elected as Grand Chieftain. Committees were organized to formulate a constitution, refine ceremonial rituals, devise insignia, and plan future development.

In the early 1920s, many Scout executives were skeptical of what they called "secret camp fraternities." By September 1922, opposition to the Order of the Arrow was such that a formal resolution opposing "camp fraternities" was proposed at a national meeting of Scout executives. Goodman argued against the motion: "Using the Scout ideals as our great objective", he said, a camp activity that will "further the advancement of those ideals" should not be suppressed. The motion was narrowly defeated, and the fledgling Order continued as an experimental program throughout the 1920s and 1930s. In 1931, there

were OA lodges in seven percent of BSA councils nationwide. By 1948, about two-thirds of the BSA councils had established OA lodges. That year also marked the time when the OA was fully integrated as an official part of the Scouting program.

Order in the 21st century

"The Order of the Arrow is a 'thing of the spirit' rather than of mechanics. Organization, operational procedure, and paraphernalia are necessary in any large and growing movement, but they are not what count in the end. The things of the spirit count: Brotherhood, in a day when there is too much hatred at home and abroad; Cheerfulness, in a day when the pessimists have the floor; Service, in a day when millions are interested only in getting or grasping rather than giving."

Over the decades since the Order of the Arrow's founding, more than one million Scouts and Scouters have worn the OA sash on their uniforms, denoting membership in the Brotherhood. The four stated purposes of the Order of the Arrow are: "(1) Recognize those who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives and through that recognition cause others to conduct themselves in a way that warrants similar recognition; (2) Promote camping, responsible outdoor adventure, and environmental stewardship as essential components of every Scout's experience, in the unit, year-round, and in summer camp; (3) Develop leaders with the willingness, character, spirit and ability to advance the activities of their units, our Brotherhood, Scouting, and ultimately our nation; and (4) Crystallize the Scout habit of helpfulness into a life purpose of leadership in cheerful service to others.¹

In a new program of national service conducted from June through August 2008, the OA offered *ArrowCorps*⁵ to both youth and adult Arrowmen. Described as "one of the largest conservation efforts in Scouting's history" by the Boy Scouts of America, approximately 3,500 Arrowmen converged on five national forests to work on various conservation projects such as building new trails and helping preserve nearly extinct species, as well as removing invasive species, in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service. The five national forests are: Mark Twain National Forest, Manti-La Sal National Forest, George Washington and Jefferson National Forests, Shasta-Trinity National Forest and Bridger-Teton National Forest.

Membership

More than 180,000 youth and adults are members of the Order of the Arrow. This number is approximately one-seventh of the total number of those registered in the Boy Scout division. Youth members are elected by their local unit. In contrast to Boy Scouting, where youth members are under 18 and adult members are those 18 and over, OA youth members include all persons under 21 years of age while those 21 and over are considered adult members.

The OA is a program of the Boy Scouting division; youth members are elected only from Boy Scout troops and Varsity Scout teams. To be eligible for election, a Scout must be at least First Class rank, have fulfilled specified camping requirements, have the approval of his Scoutmaster or Varsity Coach and must be elected by the youth members of the troop or team. Once elected, a youth must complete their Ordeal within the same year; failure to do so requires that the Scout be reelected in the following year.



Most lodges or chapters support an election team to help hold the OA elections; it is charged to inform the unit of the service and duty required of Arrowmen. Adults who had not previously joined the Order as a youth member may become members by being nominated by the unit, district or council committee and then approved by the lodge adult selection committee. Adults must meet the same camping requirement as youth and, if under age 21, must also meet the rank requirement of First Class or higher. In addition, at least one youth from the adult's troop or team must be elected to the OA in that year for an adult to be nominated. Co-ed Venturing crews cannot have OA elections, thus girls are not eligible for OA membership. A boy in a Venturing Crew who has dual registration with a Scout troop (or Varsity unit) is eligible for election by his troop or Varsity unit. Honorary membership used to be bestowed in special circumstances, as was the case with Franklin D. Roosevelt and Dwight D. Eisenhower, but this practice was officially discontinued in 1953.

Ordeal

After being elected or nominated, candidates may participate in a call-out ceremony to recognize those scouts and scouters that were selected before they attend their Ordeal. The call-out ceremony may be performed at summer camp, a camporee, a call-out weekend or at a troop or team meeting. Candidates then participate in an Ordeal induction ceremony. The Ordeal is intended to emphasize service and self-sacrifice, and oftentimes encompasses extended periods cooperative learning in silence, and fasting. Candidates will then be welcomed as Ordeal members upon successful completion of the Ordeal and participation in a formal induction ceremony.

Brotherhood

Ordeal members are entitled to all the rights and privileges of membership in the Order as Brotherhood and Vigil Honor members—there are no ranks within the Order. However, moving on to Brotherhood membership offers an opportunity "to reaffirm [one's] belief in the high purposes of the Order. Before becoming a Brotherhood member, each Arrowman makes a special effort to serve his troop or team. Each Brotherhood member commits to even more service to Scouting through the Order." Arrowmen may "seal" their membership after ten months by demonstrating their knowledge of the traditions and obligations of the OA. They then participate in an induction ceremony and become Brotherhood members.

While the Ordeal consists primarily of physical impressions, "the Brotherhood ceremony is one of deeper and quieter mental impressions."

Vigil Honor

The Vigil Honor is a high mark of distinction and recognition "reserved for those Arrowmen who, by reason of exceptional service, personal effort, and unselfish interest, have made distinguished contributions beyond the immediate responsibilities of their position of office to one or more of the following: lodge, Scouting community, Scout Camp." The Vigil Honor may be conferred upon Arrowmen who have completed a minimum of two years as a Brotherhood member and perform exceptional service above through leadership, exemplary efforts, or dedication. But under no circumstances should tenure in Scouting or the Order of the Arrow be considered as reason enough for a Vigil Honor recommendation. Selection is annual and is limited to one person for every 50 members of the lodge, and members of the Order can be inducted into the Vigil Honor only with the written approval of the national OA committee.

As a part of the Vigil Honor induction, each new Vigil Honor member is given a Vigil Honor name in the language of an American Indian tribe, on whom the traditions and ceremonies of the Order are based.

An English translation of the Vigil Honor name is also provided, and the name often represents a characteristic of the individual.

Organization

The Order of the Arrow places great emphasis on being a youth-led organization. Only youth under age 21 are voting members and are eligible to hold elective offices. Professional and volunteer adults are appointed in non-voting advisory positions at the chapter, lodge, and section levels.

Lodge

The basic unit of the OA is the lodge, which is chartered to a local BSA council. The lodge chief is the elected youth leader, the lodge advisor is a BSA adult volunteer appointed by the Scout Executive, and the lodge staff advisor is the council Scout executive or his designated council professional Scouter. The lodge youth officers, consisting of the lodge chief, one or more vice chiefs, a secretary, and a treasurer are responsible for organizing and leading the various programs and activities of the lodge. Many lodges have standing committees responsible for ceremonies, service projects, publications, unit elections, camp promotions, and dance teams composed of youth members. Lodges can also divide into chapters, usually corresponding to districts within the council. The chapter is led by the elected youth chapter chief, a volunteer adult is appointed as the adviser and the district executive is the professional (staff) adviser.

Although the *Field Operations Guide* is clear that only one lodge will be recognized per council, there are three councils with multiple lodges. The Greater Saint Louis Area Council and the Great Lakes Council both have two lodges as the result of mergers. The Greater New York Councils operate one lodge in each of its five boroughs. Two councils do not have lodges, but use their own honor society: Pony Express Council in Missouri with the Tribe of Mic-O-Say and Long Beach Area Council in California with the Tribe of Tahquitz.

Section

Lodges are grouped into sections that are then grouped into regions. The section chief is the elected leader, a volunteer adult is appointed as the section adviser, and the area director (or his designate) is the professional (staff) adviser. In addition to the section chief, the section has two additional elected officers. The vice chief and secretary are elected immediately following the election of the section chief at the section's annual business meeting.

Region

The Order of the Arrow is organized into four regions. Each region has an elected region chief, a volunteer adult is appointed as the region chairman to oversee its region committee, and an appointed professional (staff) adviser. Each region chief is elected at the National Planning Meeting after the election of the national chief and vice-chief by a caucus of the section chiefs from the given region. The members of the Region Committee consists of the region chief, the region chairman, all national committeemen from the region, and other appointed adult volunteers.

National

The national chief and the national vice-chief are selected by a caucus of the section chiefs during the Order of the Arrow's National Planning Meeting. At the National level, the OA is headed by the National

Order of the Arrow Committee of which the national chief, national vice-chief, and the four region chiefs are voting members.

Symbols

Arrowmen are identified by a white sash bearing a red arrow that is worn over their right shoulder. An Ordeal member wears a sash with a lone arrow. The Brotherhood member wears a sash bearing an arrow with a red bar at each end of the arrow. A Brotherhood member who has been awarded the Vigil Honor wears a sash with the same bars of as the Brotherhood sash at each end of the arrow, and a Vigil Honor triangle on the center of the shaft. The triangle bears three small arrows arranged in a counterclockwise direction. Members wear the sash at Order of the Arrow functions and special Scouting activities when members

need to be identified as Arrowmen rendering special services. The OA sash is not worn at the same time as the merit badge sash, nor worn folded in the belt. The sash as a form of recognition dates to the founding of the Order and has a long history of changes in usage and design.

The OA Universal Ribbon is worn suspended from the right uniform shirt pocket button. Vigil Honor recipients may add the Vigil Honor pin to the ribbon. Lodge affiliation is indicated by the wear of the lodge emblem (commonly known as a lodge flap), an embroidered patch emblem worn on the right pocket flap of the uniform shirt. Each lodge flap has a unique design, generally reflecting the name, geography or history of the lodge. Many lodges, against national policy, have flaps which distinguish different membership levels. Special issues of flaps may be created to commemorate anniversaries and other events and are a popular item for those who engage in Scouting memorabilia collecting.

Arrowmen also exchange a special handshake as a token of brotherhood, along with other signs and passwords.

Ceremonies

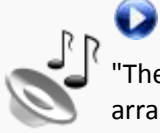
The Order of the Arrow utilizes three nationally standardized ceremonies for Ordeal, Brotherhood, and Vigil Honor memberships using themes, stories, and symbols centered on American Indian traditions as interpreted by the Order of the Arrow. There is an element of mystery in the ceremonies for the sake of its effect on the participants, and so the three membership ceremonies are not performed in public. The ceremonies were standardized almost from the beginning of the OA to avoid misunderstandings regarding the diversity of religious beliefs among BSA members. Ceremonies were once considered to be secret, and consequently the OA has been viewed by some as a secret society. With the introduction of Youth Protection program guidelines in 1980s, the BSA has made clear that any concerned parent,



guardian, or religious leader may view a video of the ceremonies, attend meetings, or read scripts upon request to a council, district, lodge, or chapter official to assure themselves that there is nothing objectionable.

Such persons are asked to safeguard the details relating to ceremonies for the sake of the participants. The intent of the provision for parents and religious leaders to be allowed access to ceremonies is to ensure that there is no religious conflict or violations of youth protection guidelines occurring. Parents have long been discouraged in many Lodges from seizing the opportunity to use the provision for photo opportunities with their sons. Hazing or demeaning initiation pranks are also prohibited by the OA and the BSA.

[The Order of the Arrow Song](#)



"The Order of the Arrow Song"
arranged by E. Urner Goodman for
lodge closing ceremonies. - 1.3 mb

Problems listening to this file? See [media help](#).

The ceremonies utilize symbolic settings, rites, and characters to convey various Scouting ideals to participants. As one author depicts a ceremony, "The values of the Order of the Arrow, 'a brotherhood of cheerful service,' were passed on during a night-time ceremony: an arrowhead outlined with stones on the ground, candles on the stones, a huge bonfire at the base of the arrowhead, and at the point of the arrow a lectern from which was read, and danced, the story of heroic sacrifice for others." Ceremonies also utilize the OA song, commonly referred to by its first line of lyrics as *Firm Bound in Brotherhood*, and titled *Order of the Arrow Official Song* and *The Order of the Arrow Song* in the printed music score of official BSA OA publications. It was written in 1921 by OA founder E. Urner Goodman to the Russian hymn tune *God Save the Tsar!*, composed by Alexei Lvov in the 19th century.

OA ceremony teams are also occasionally asked to assist local Cub Scout and Boy Scout units with special ceremonies including Arrow of Light ceremonies for the Cub Scouts and Eagle Scout ceremonies for Boy Scouts.

Some American Indian advocates have criticized the Order of the Arrow of misrepresentative appropriation and marginalization for conducting mock American Indian ceremonies and for reinforcing hurtful stereotypes about American Indians.

Awards

Awards are separate and distinct from the membership levels of Ordeal and Brotherhood. Awards available through the Order of the Arrow include: Vigil Honor, Founder's Award, Distinguished Service Award, Lifetime Achievement Award, Red Arrow Award, E. Urner Goodman Camping Award, E. Urner Goodman, Scholarship Fund, and National Service Award. Scholastic awards are also available to Arrowmen to aid in education expenses.

Events

Most lodges hold several annual events for achieving the purpose of the OA, such as one or two annual lodge fellowships, an annual lodge recognition dinner, and one or more Ordeal weekends which usually include Brotherhood ceremonies as well. Many larger lodges devolve responsibility for Ordeal weekends and other service projects upon the individual chapters.

The section conclave is an annual activity (prior to 1972 known as an Area OA Conference) involving three or more lodges in an established geographic area. Each conclave is led by section youth officers

elected from among the member lodges at the previous year's conclave, and the event itself is prepared in cooperation with various other lodge officers, and with one lodge serving as the "host lodge".

The National OA Committee also sponsors various national service opportunities, the oldest of which is the National OA Service Corps at the national Scout jamborees, at which Arrowmen help with many functions including shows and the Outdoor Adventure Program exhibit.

High Adventure Program

The National OA Committee also sponsors service groups to the three National High Adventure Bases, originally starting with the Order of the Arrow Trail Crew at the Philmont Scout Ranch working to build new trails and repair old ones. Later this expanded to the Northern Tier National High Adventure Bases with the OA Wilderness Voyage, repairing the portage trails in the Boundary Waters area. Most recently, the OA began the Ocean Adventure at the Florida National High Adventure Sea Base in the Florida Keys, which offers scuba diving certification and works to repair reefs in the Florida Keys. In the summer of 2009, the OA will pilot the OA Canadian Odyssey which will provide service to the Donald Rogert Canoe Base in Atikokan, Ontario.

National Order of the Arrow Conference

The National Order of the Arrow Conference (NOAC) is a multi-day event which usually takes place on a university campus east of the Mississippi River, bringing together thousands of delegates from OA lodges around the nation for training and activities. NOACs are held every two years, with exceptions made to align the event with significant anniversaries. As a youth-led organization, these national conferences are organized and directed by the elected section and region youth officers, who serve on committees responsible for various conference aspects under the leadership of the conference vice-chief. Events include training for programs, leadership and American Indian culture; competitions in athletics, ceremonies, cooking and American Indian dances; and exhibits on OA history, outdoor activities and camping. There are also opportunities to talk with national leaders, perform service work and trade patches. Evening shows have different themes, including American Indian culture and recognition of dance competition winners, presentations of awards including the OA Distinguished Service Award and other entertainment.

Training

In addition to training courses available at a NOAC or section conclave, the OA offers specialized leadership training as weekend events for members: Lodge Leadership Development (LLD), National Leadership Seminars (NLS), and National Lodge Adviser Training Seminar (NLATS). LLD is a one-day or two-day event conducted by a lodge to train their officers and advisers, making use of an OA website to create a customized training syllabus based on survey data entered by lodge officers and advisers. NLS's are conducted by regions for lodge officers and advisers. Many lodges send key officers to receive training. Typically, each region schedules three or four NLS weekends annually, at geographically dispersed locations within the region. NLATS is a training event for adults, usually held in conjunction with an NLS and conducted by regions, on the role of advisers in the OA.



Amangamek-Wipit Lodge 470

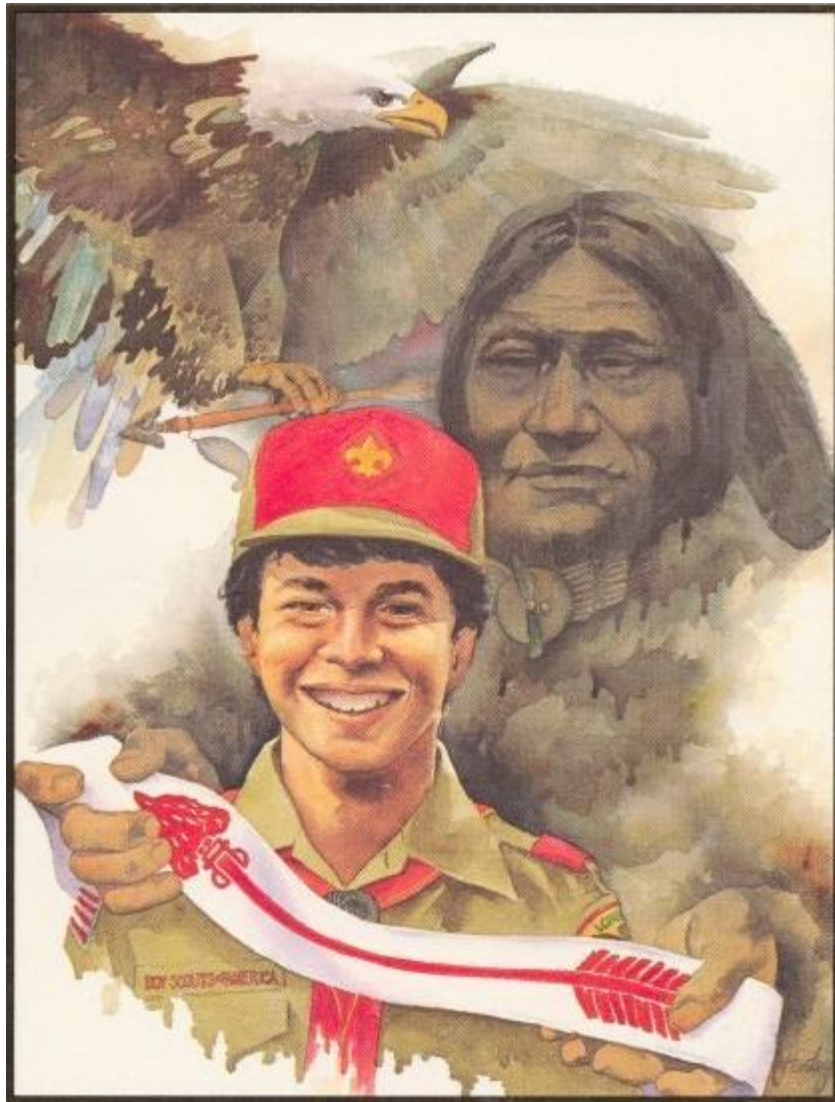
Welcome to the home of Amangamek-Wipit Lodge #470. Amangamek-Wipit serves more than 4,400 Arrowmen in 20 chapters across Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia.

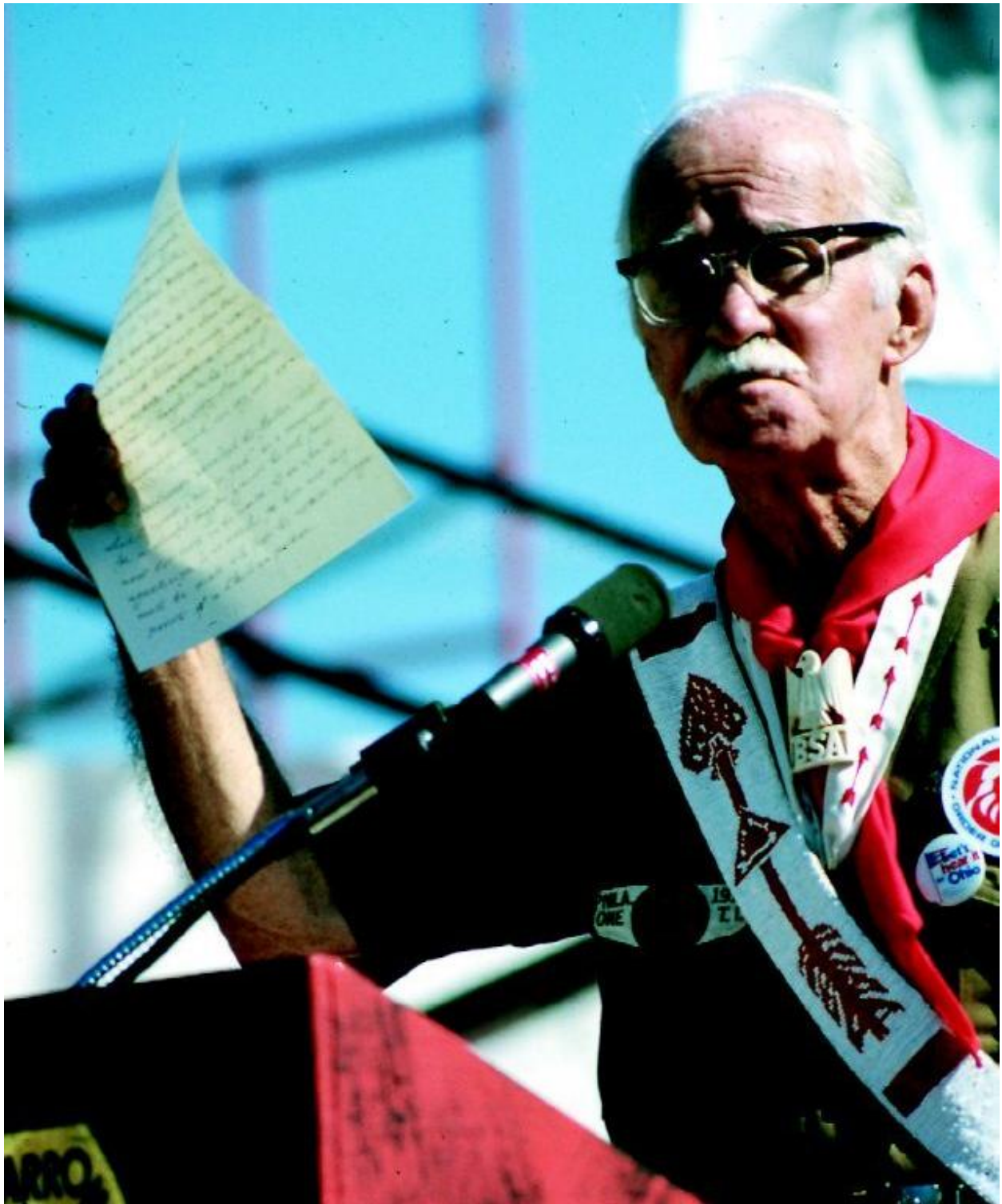
Amangamek-Wipit is proud to be a part of the North East Region and the new Section NE-6A!

Source: http://www.boyscouts-ncac.org/openrosters/view_homepage.asp?orgkey=2002



This is the lodge patch from the 1960's when I was a member.





OA Founder E. Urner Goodman

He signed my fully beaded Vigil Honor sash back in 1965.



YouTube video of OA Call Out ceremony: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQcEtroMq7s>

Vigil Honor Order of the Arrow



Boy Scouts of America

This Certifies that

WAYNE M. CASWELL

Is Awarded the Vigil Honor

In recognition of exceptional service, personal effort, and unselfish interest in the welfare of others. He has made distinguished contributions above and beyond his immediate responsibilities in the Order of the Arrow as a member of

AMANGAMEK WIPIT

Lodge in the

NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA Council. He was inducted

as a Vigil member on
His Indian name is
Interpreted as

APRIL 3, 1965

KSCHIECHELENSIN

A SERVANT OF MANKIND

Martin Hochfeld
For Vigil Honor

This is my Vigil Honor certificate from 1965.

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