

The
Order of the Arrow
in the
Flint River Council



A
Unit Leader's
Guidebook
to the programs and activities of the

Ini-To Lodge
Order of the Arrow
Flint River Council

INI-TO LODGE

ORDER OF THE ARROW FLINT RIVER COUNCIL

Fellow Scouters:

*This manual is written with you in mind – the Unit Leader. Knowing that your job is the most time-consuming and important job in all of Scouting, our desire is to assist you in any way possible in helping you achieve the primary goal of every unit leader – **to instill a sense of character and value in the life of each boy in your unit.***

Many of you may not be familiar with the Order of the Arrow (OA), except for a call-out ceremony or two – for you, we hope this manual will introduce you to what the Order of the Arrow can offer your unit and your boys. For those of you who are familiar with the OA, whether your experience was within this council or elsewhere, we hope you will learn how the Ini-To Lodge and its particular programs can be of service to you. For all, by becoming familiar with this manual, we trust you will better understand where the OA fits in the Flint River Council's program, and take advantage of the opportunities that the Ini-To Lodge provides.

If at any time you have questions about the Order of the Arrow in the Flint River Council, please feel free to contact me.

Yours in Scouting,

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The Following information and forms are available for you to download and use at the Lodge website: <http://ini-to324.org/>

Ordeal Candidate Registration Form (pdf document)

Lodge By-Laws (pdf document)

Lodge Handbook (publisher document)

Challenges of Brotherhood (pdf document)

Lodge Bead Program (pdf document)

Tips for New Arrowmen (pdf document)

OA Membership 2009 Dues / Registration Form (pdf document)

Purpose of the OA

The Order of the Arrow's Purpose is fourfold:

To recognize those campers – Scouts and Scouters – who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives, and by such recognition, cause other campers to conduct themselves in such manner as to warrant recognition.

Recognition is an important part of the Scout program, and helps build character values by rewarding a Scout's drive for achievement and self-esteem. As Scouting's National Honor Society, the Order of the Arrow recognizes those in Scouting who are active examples of the Scouting principles of cheerfulness, helpfulness, and trustworthiness – all the central virtues of Scouting. Furthermore, the OA challenges each of its members to continue to live up to these ideals, thereby promoting these ideals back to those in your unit.

To develop and maintain camping traditions and spirit.

The Order of the Arrow was founded at a Scout summer camp, and believes in the outdoor method as an integral part of the Scouting goal of building character, citizenship and fitness in its participants. In camp, Scouts interact toward a common goal, and in doing so, exercise skills that are important in the maturation of boys into valuable members of society. As such, the OA embraces the camping traditions that have stood the test of time with the Scouting program, and serves to keep the spirit of the outdoor program alive.

To promote Scout camping, which reaches its greatest effectiveness as a part of the unit's camping program, both year-round and in the summer camp, as directed by the camping committee of the council.

Under the direction of the Flint River Council's Camping Committee, the Ini-To Lodge of the Order of the Arrow is committed to promote Scout camping. The OA believes that the goals of Scouting can be best achieved by a year-round program of unit camping, and the programs of the Ini-To Lodge reflect the desire to be helpful to your Unit in meeting these goals.

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To crystallize the Scout habit of helpfulness into a life purpose of leadership in cheerful service to others.

As adult leaders in the Scout program, our goal is to help you in your goal of molding your Scouts into responsible leaders. The Order of the Arrow program emphasizes service to others as a central theme of leadership, and provides a framework through which to experience service as a building block in shaping the character of our youth.

The Ini-To Lodge also believes that youth membership retention is another benefit of the Order of the Arrow program. As a youth in Scouting matures and completes individual advancement goals, he can turn to the OA as a source of further opportunity to experience Scouting. Youth members who stay with the Scouting program longer typically achieve higher ranks of advancement, serve as camp staff, and ultimately choose to give back to Scouting in adulthood.

Structure of the Ini-To Lodge

The **Ini-To Lodge** consists of four Chapters.

The **Coweta Chapter** consists of the all OA members in the Coweta District which serves Coweta County. Chapter meetings are held the first Sunday of each month from 2 – 4 PM at Cornerstone United Methodist Church in Newnan.

The **Echota Chapter** consists of the all OA members in the Echota District which serves Fayette County. Chapter meetings are held the third Thursday of each month from 7 – 8 PM at Fayetteville First Baptist Church in Fayetteville.

The **Ronotahatchi Chapter** consists of the all OA members in the Ronotahatchi District which serves Lamar, Pike, Spalding and Upson County. Chapter meetings are held the second Sunday of each month from 2 - 4 PM at Westside Church of Christ in Griffin.

The **Tusahaw Chapter** consists of the all OA members in the Tusahaw District which serves Butts and Henry County. Chapter meetings are held the second Thursday of each month from 7:30 – 8:30 PM at First Baptist Church in McDonough.

Each Chapter is responsible for carrying out the prescribed lodge program within its District, and answers to the **Lodge Executive Committee (LEC)**, which is responsible for mandating the overall Lodge program for the year.

The Lodge is governed by the Lodge Executive Committee (LEC), which consists of the elected Lodge Officers, the Chapter Chiefs and Advisers, the Lodge operating committee chairmen and their advisers, the Lodge Advisers, and the Scout Executive. The LEC is responsible for planning the overall lodge program, which will be established and fine-tuned at the LEC meetings. The Chapter Chiefs and Advisers attend the LEC meetings and help establish the program plan, and are then responsible for implementing this plan through their chapters.

Through this framework, each chapter has a unique and important responsibility - ***it is the interface between the OA Lodge program and the units within its district.*** Without the chapter carrying out its function, the lodge program cannot be effective – particularly at the troop level, which is the Order’s primary responsibility.

Contact information for each Chapter is available on the Lodge website at <http://Ini-to324.org>

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To help facilitate this interface between the OA and the unit, the **Troop OA Representative** program was established. This program establishes a youth liaison in each unit to serve between the OA lodge or chapter and his unit. In his unit, he will serve as a communication and programmatic link to and from Arrowmen, adult leaders and Scouts who are not presently members of the Order. More detailed information on this program may be found at the National OA website at <http://www.oebsa.org/programs/ttr/>.

To improve communications between the lodge and your unit, you are encouraged to support the Troop Representative program by asking your Senior Patrol Leader to appoint one for your unit. Each Troop Representative may wear a special leadership patch on their uniform, which is available at each Scout Shop. A **Troop Representative Appointment Form** is enclosed for you under “necessary forms” in this guidebook; please complete it and forward it to the specified address as soon as possible. Your designated Troop Representative will receive an *OA Troop Representative Support Pack* from the Council office once you send in the Appointment Form.

Functions of the Ini-To Lodge

Election Procedures

To become a member of the Ini-To Lodge of the Order of the Arrow, each youth must be elected by the fellow non-members of his unit. To be eligible for election, a Scout must:

- ◆ Be a First Class Scout
- ◆ In the last 2 years, have camped at least 15 nights under the auspices of the BSA. Six of those nights must be in a row, in a long-term camp (summer camp), and the remaining 9 nights must not be a part of a long-term camp.

If a Scout meets these requirements, he may be considered for election by the fellow Scouts in his troop. He must receive 50% or more of the votes of his unit to be elected.

Elections are usually held in the spring by an OA Elections Team from your chapter. A Chapter officer or member of the Elections Team should contact you to schedule a visit to one of your troop meetings to hold the election; if you have not been contacted by April 1st, please contact the Chapter Adviser in your district.

Alternatively, if you have at least 3 active youth OA members in your unit, you may ask them to hold the election at one of your troop meetings or events. To hold an OA election, you must be able to verify that at least 50 percent of the registered active unit membership is present. You must request a **Unit Elections Report Form** from the Chapter Chief – please make sure this form is **completed** and mailed by the deadline listed on the form.

Once elected, a “candidate” must participate in and complete the “Ordeal” within one year of his election to become a member of the Order of the Arrow – see “Lodge Ordeals” under the heading “Events of the Ini-To Lodge” in this Guidebook. Information for Ordeal candidates (registration forms, what to bring, etc.) may be found on the Lodge website.

Adults are nominated based on their potential to enhance the Order of the Arrow program within the Council. This nomination should not be based on merit, but on what they can offer the program and its purposes as outlined above.

National policy states that each year, upon holding a troop or team election for youth which results in at least one youth candidate being elected, the unit committee may recommend one registered unit adult, 21 years of age or older, to the Lodge Adult Selection Committee. Troops or teams having more than 50 registered, active youth members may nominate an additional adult for each 50 registered, active youth. For example, a troop having 51 to 100 registered active youth may nominate two adults, if at least one youth has been elected.

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Nominations for adults may be by a unit leader / committee, or by a district / council committee. An **Adult Candidate Nomination Form** must be completed and submitted according to the instructions on the form; you will need to ask the Chapter Chief for this form.

Call-out Procedures

Each Chapter conducts a call-out ceremony during the closing campfire at their District Spring Camp-o-ree, to publicly recognize those Scouts who have been elected by their unit. Please bring the names of those in your unit who are to be called-out during the campfire – the Chapter Chief will need this list for the ceremony.

After the ceremony, each new candidate should receive an **Ordeal Candidate Letter / Registration Form** with instructions on what to do next to become a member of the Ini-To Lodge. If he does not receive this, please refer him to the Ini-To Lodge website, where he can download the document. These items **are not** mailed to each candidate, so please make sure your elected candidates receive them in time to submit the registration form by the deadline.

If your unit does not attend the Spring Camp-o-ree, you may choose to recognize the newly elected candidates at a unit function, such as a court of honor, in lieu of their call-out. If so, please provide each candidate with a copy of the **Ordeal Candidate Letter / Registration Form** found on the Lodge website.

Summer Camp Promotion

One of the primary purposes of the Order of the Arrow is promotion of the Scout year-round outdoor experience. The Ini-To Lodge believes that the summer camp experience is the highlight of the camping year, and therefore encourages each unit to take advantage of the program opportunities offered at our own Camp Thunder. Each OA chapter is a part of the District Camp Promotion Team, and helps with the planning of unit visits for the purpose of promoting Camp Thunder to your unit. If you would like to request a visit, please contact the OA Chapter Adviser in your district.

District Events

Each District has its own chapter, which is responsible for carrying out the Lodge program within its district. While the primary functions of the chapter are membership elections and summer camp promotion, the chapter also functions as a service arm to assist in the program of district events, and should be called upon to help if needed.

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While service to the district is an important part of the chapter's responsibility, the chapter understands that each member's primary responsibility is to his unit.

Klondike Campout

Part of the Lodge program to promote camping is the sponsorship of the annual Klondike Campout. This camporee style event is completely planned and executed by members of the Lodge. It give them an opportunity to learn a higher level of leadership and organizational skills, and also gives them a chance to shine in front of their own troop members. Because so many scouts benefit from the fun they have, and scoutcraft they learn and practice, the Arrowmen of Ini-To lodge provide a meaningful service to the units of Flint River Council.

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Events of the Ini-To Lodge

Lodge Calendar

Below is the Lodge Calendar for **2008-2009**. These dates were approved during the annual Council Planning Meeting. Please make note of these dates as you plan your unit's calendar, to allow the OA members in your unit maximum opportunity to participate in the Lodge's events.

July 26 – Aug 2, 2008	Arrow Corps 5 National Service Project	5 National Parks
August 15 – 17, 2008	Ordeal / Brotherhood	Camp Thunder
September 26 - 27, 2008	Fall Fellowship / Brotherhood	Lawhorn Canoe Base
December 5, 2008	OA Banquet	Camp Thunder
December 6 - 7, 2008	Lodge Leadership Development Conference	Camp Thunder
Jan 30 – Feb 1, 2009	Klondike Campout	Lawhorn Scouting Base
March 6 – 8, 2009	Spring Fellowship / Brotherhood	Lawhorn Canoe Base
April 17 – 19, 2009	Section Conclave	Comer Scout Reservation Mentone, Alabama
May 15 - 17, 2009	Ordeal / Brotherhood	Camp Thunder
August 1 - 6, 2009	National OA Conference	Indiana University

Summer Camp Events

The Lodge offers a weekly fellowship each Wednesday night during Summer Camp in the dining hall, and encourages all OA members in camp to attend. This reception is a great time to meet other members of the OA who are in camp that week, as well as get to know those on the Staff who are OA members.

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Lodge Fellowships

Each year, the Ini-To Lodge offers two Lodge-wide Fellowships to its members: the Spring Fellowship, and the Fall Fellowship. These fellowships are planned by the Lodge Fellowship Committee, and are intended to be weekends devoted to fellowship and learning more about the OA and its programs within the Council.

Section Conclave

The Ini-To Lodge belongs to Section 9, along with OA lodges from Georgia and Alabama. Every April, these lodges meet for fellowship and competition during a weekend at one of the Scout camps in the Section. Called a conclave, this event is always enjoyed by all that attend.

The 2009 Section 9 Conclave is on the weekend of April 17 – 19 at Comer Scout Reservation, Mentone, Alabama. Coosa Lodge will host this event, and this will be a great opportunity for your OA members to meet and interact with OA members from throughout the Section. More information on how members in your unit may register will be available on the Lodge website (<http://ini-to324.org/>).

Lodge Ordeals

To become a member of the Order of the Arrow, an elected candidate must attend and complete the “Ordeal” within one year of his election. Ini-To Lodge holds two Ordeal weekends each year to allow every candidate an opportunity to attend one after their election.

Each candidate **must pre-register** for the Ordeal that he intends to attend by completing the **Ordeal Candidate Registration Form**. If the candidate is called out at the Spring Camp-o-ree, he should receive this form after the call-out ceremony; if not, they may be downloaded from the Lodge website – look under “Candidates” in the left navigation bar on the main page. The cost of the ordeal is \$30.00, which covers meals for both Saturday and Sunday breakfast, an Order of the Arrow Handbook, a current Ordeal member Lodge flap, an Ordeal sash and dues for the first year.

Ordeal Membership is the beginning of the induction sequence, as new members progress to Brotherhood membership during their first year. Becoming a Brotherhood member is about learning and understanding “what I went through” in my Ordeal

All members are invited to participate in the Ordeal weekend. Members are **not** required to pre-register, though it is recommended, and the cost to members is \$15 for the weekend, payable at registration Friday evening (usually from 7 – 9 PM). The Ordeal is typically finished by 11 AM Sunday morning.

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Brotherhood Membership

Ini-To Lodge encourages every Ordeal member to seal their membership in the OA by becoming a Brotherhood member. Ordeal members that have been a member for at least 10 months are eligible for Brotherhood membership.

The Brotherhood ceremony is offered at each Lodge Fellowship and Ordeal. Brotherhood candidates should state their intention to complete the Brotherhood requirements at registration of these events Friday evening – pre-registration is not necessary. Brotherhood candidates pay \$10 extra for the weekend, to cover the cost of their Brotherhood sash. Further requirements for Brotherhood membership are described in the Order of the Arrow Handbook.

National OA Events and Opportunities

Every 2 years, the National Order of the Arrow Conference (NOAC) is held for one week on a major university campus in the late summer. The NOAC is similar in scope to a National Jamboree, in that lodges from across the country send delegates for training, fellowship, competition, and fun. All OA members in the Lodge are eligible and encouraged to become a part of the Ini-To Lodge Contingent to the 2009 NOAC – it will be a trip to remember! Contact the Lodge Adviser or check the website if your members are interested.

Each summer, there are also special opportunities for Arrowmen at some of Scouting's High Adventure bases: Philmont's Order of the Arrow Trail Crew and the Northern Tier Wilderness Voyage at the Charles L. Sommers High Adventure Base in Minnesota are 2 of the most popular. If any of your unit's members are interested in these opportunities, please contact the Lodge Adviser, or look on the National OA Website at <http://www.oa-bsa.org/>.

Publications of the Ini-To Lodge

Lodge Web Site

The Lodge maintains a web page, found at <http://ini-to324.org/>, which contains up-to-date information on Lodge events and programs, as well as all of the forms mentioned in this guidebook (and many other useful forms!). Youth members maintain this web page, and the web team is always interested in hearing from members who have an interest in helping with this service.

Lodge Planning Calendar

The Lodge has a planning calendar on the web, found at <http://ini-to324.org/calendar.html>, which can be very helpful in incorporating Ini-To Lodge functions into your unit calendar. This calendar reminds you of event registration deadlines, and points you toward the forms necessary to meet the deadlines.

Lodge Newsletter

The official newsletter of the Ini-To Lodge is the **Thunderhead**, which is published quarterly and mailed to all dues-paid members in the Flint River Council. News on past events, along with pertinent details on upcoming events, is included in each issue. This newsletter is edited and published by a youth staff, and all members are invited to submit articles for consideration.

Lodge Handbook

The Lodge published and gives each new member a Lodge Handbook that contains a lot of useful information about the lodge, its activities, the rules and by-laws, and the Lodge program. It's a great supplement to the "*Order of the Arrow Handbook*" published by the National OA Committee, which is also provided to each new member.

Where to Go Camping Guide

As part of their camping promotion service, the Ini-To Lodge electronically publishes a "Where to Go Camping Guide" available as a link on the Lodge website. This guide is reviewed yearly, and updated as needed. The Lodge encourages you to submit your favorite camping or hiking sites for inclusion, and welcomes your comments and reviews of the sites listed.