



- Packs
- Troops
- Crews



# Unit Membership RECRUITMENT GUIDEBOOK



20  
26



NORTHERN STAR SCOUTING

# PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDEBOOK

In our mission to welcome more families to the exciting world of Scouting, this Guidebook aims to help unit leaders expand their membership. Based on insights from accomplished unit leaders—your peers, each section provides guidance, strategies, best practices, and tools to empower you and your team in achieving successful recruitment.

|                                                                 |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Unit Support & Service . . . . .                                | 3  |
| Promoting Your Unit . . . . .                                   | 4  |
| Grow & Sustain Your Troop. . . . .                              | 5  |
| Community Presence & Engagement. . . . .                        | 6  |
| Adult Volunteers: Recruitment, Retention, and Pitfalls. . . . . | 6  |
| Word of Mouth . . . . .                                         | 7  |
| School Collaboration . . . . .                                  | 8  |
| Recruitment Materials . . . . .                                 | 10 |
| Ordering Instructions . . . . .                                 | 12 |
| FREE T-Shirt & Optional Uniform . . . . .                       | 13 |
| Exceptional Recruiting Results . . . . .                        | 14 |
| Key Takeaways & Post-Event Follow-Up. . . . .                   | 15 |
| 7 Point Connection Strategy. . . . .                            | 16 |
| Best Practices Successful Recruitment Strategy. . . . .         | 17 |
| Scouts BSA Recruitment Incentive . . . . .                      | 19 |
| Adult Leader Training Opportunities . . . . .                   | 20 |



## » UNIT SUPPORT & SERVICE WHO TO GO TO FOR HELP

Every Northern Star Scouting district, encompassing all units, is backed by a dedicated team known as the Key 3, which consists of a District Executive, a District Membership Chair, and a District Commissioner. The Key 3 meets at least once a month within the districts to ensure that units receive the necessary support and encourage collaboration. They are usually present at community summits and roundtables for open discussions.

We are here to support YOU! For further details please contact your District Membership Chair or our Membership Staff Advisor Greg Ball, at [gball@northernstar.org](mailto:gball@northernstar.org) or call 612-261-2351, or contact us at [membership@northernstar.org](mailto:membership@northernstar.org).



### TIP #1

Bring a buddy or wrangle the whole family...youth thrive on invites! Sprinkle those invites from Council's recruitment materials with a personalized touch for your young Scouts to dish out. Chat it up with families about spreading the Scouting buzz!

## » PROMOTING YOUR UNIT A TWO-PARTNER APPROACH!

Promoting your Scouting unit is essential for attracting new youth and building a responsible community. Utilize Northern Star Scouting's FREE resources to enhance your marketing. Here are strategies to improve your marketing efforts and online presence:

### Northern Star Scouting Offers FREE:

1. Recruitment training for volunteers.
2. Personalized promotional materials with your unit's QR code and other details.
3. T-shirts for ALL (new and existing youth)
4. Support from dedicated Key 3 team: District Executive, Membership Chair, Commissioner.
5. Pinewood Derby cars for VIP invitations (November-January)

### Your Unit Offers:

6. A welcoming program that invites all.
7. A dedicated coordinator for streamlined recruitment.
8. Engaging activities and events promoted effectively.
9. A striking promotional video for social media.
10. A robust social media strategy with family testimonials.
11. Persistent follow-ups to convert leads into members.
12. Attractive promotional materials highlighting unit activities.
13. Community service projects in local media and in schools.
14. Consider wearing your FREE T-shirts with your unit's info on the back for visibility (should you decide to do that).
15. Recruitment training participation.
16. Unit banner
17. Set the expectation that all parents volunteer in some way right from the start. Hold new parent meetings and encourage early volunteering to cultivate a culture of involvement.



Promote your unit by encouraging your Scouts to wear their Adventure Scouting t-shirts every Monday or on your unit meeting days.

**TIP  
#2**

# » GROW AND SUSTAIN YOUR TROOP AOL CROSSOVER STRATEGIES

## Collaboration Between Troops and Packs:

Enhance connections by hosting a Troop Open House with local packs. Partner with multiple packs to organize recruitment-focused activities, bridging scouts, and providing Den Chiefs.

## Den Chiefs and Mentorship:

Assign Den Chiefs to boost communication and mentorship, cultivating high-performing packs.

## Joint Activities and Events:

- Hold joint meetings with engaging activities, participate in community service, and involve AOL scouts in troop campouts and events like the Pinewood Derby.
- Assist packs during orientations, align meeting times for Webelos/AOL dens, and collaborate on fundraising efforts, such as wreath and popcorn sales.

## Cub Scouts Exposure to Troop Activities:

- Invite younger scouts to troop activities to display their Scouting journey.
- Encourage Cubs to attend Eagle Courts of Honor to highlight Scouting's excitement.

## Role of Charter Organization Representatives:

- Leverage active charter organization representatives to strengthen troop-pack connections.
- Support community service and recruitment initiatives at charter locations, like churches, by setting up booths for Scouts and leaders to engage with the community and invite them to fun Scouting events.

## Involve Older Youth:

- Engage older youth through high-adventure activities and encourage their pursuit of the Order of the Arrow and other adventurous opportunities.



## » COMMUNITY PRESENCE & ENGAGEMENT

- **Partner with local organizations** for volunteers and resources and collaborate with nearby Scouters for event planning. **Engage the public** at farmers markets and festivals to raise awareness and establish a positive presence at community gatherings.
- **Set up booths** at parks, libraries, youth sport practices to distribute information
- **Create a spreadsheet** for family information to follow-up, use yard signs for visibility, and contact local churches and other organizations to share joining information.
- **Host outdoor events** like fishing days and participate in National Night Out to connect with residents.
- **Use FREE Council recruitment materials** to enhance activities and engage with the community at family events.
- **Follow up relentlessly, enthusiastically, and friendly with prospective families** to ensure every youth has the opportunity to participate.
- **Charter Organization Events** help your sponsor with their events.



## » ADULT VOLUNTEERS: RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND PITFALLS

### Recruitment Tips

- Host casual coffee meet-ups for one-on-one chats to build rapport and show genuine interest in recruits.
- Clearly define expectations for new team members from the outset to align them with team values.
- Provide training by having new members shadow experienced volunteers at events, gradually increasing their responsibilities.
- Encourage parents to share their scouting experiences at community events, fostering appreciation and recognition for volunteers.
- Warmly welcome new families with essential information and consider appointing a Membership coordinator to streamline recruitment.
- Highlight the value of contributions and express gratitude to create a culture of recognition. If in-person meetings aren't possible, send personal letters to share positive sentiments and suggest roles.
- Not all helpers need to be registered leaders.

## Be Ready To Recruit

### CALENDAR:

- New families need to know if Scouting will fit into their already busy lives.
- Make sure you have a calendar ready to share.
- Calendars don't need to be exhaustive and can be added to over time.
- At a minimum, share where and when your regular meetings are and what events are already planned for the next 3-6 months.

### COMMUNICATIONS:

- Make sure your unit has a communication plan.
- Most families want every-other-week emails.  
*Summarize upcoming events, reminders of due dates, and opportunities to get connected.*
- The most successful units have a designated communications volunteer.



## » WORD OF MOUTH

### Invite-a-Friend Campaign:

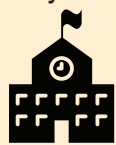
- **Organize a special invitation night** using buddy or peer-to-peer cards, encouraging Scouts to recruit one friend each year.
- **Motivate youth to invite friends** and new families to all Pack or Troop activities that emphasize fun rather than focusing solely on advancement or ranking.
- **Utilize the FREE invitations** available on the Council website for Scouts to share with their friends, as this approach has shown to be effective.
- **Invite non-members to participate** in Pinewood Derby build times and/or the actual Pinewood Derby.
- It's suggested that **troop scouts invite a friend to camp**. It's a fantastic way to introduce them to Scouting!
- **Encourage families** to personally invite one or more of their friends with children to join on a designated night.
- **Designate one day each week for all Scouts to wear their T-shirts**, fostering a sense of community and visibility. Consider adding unit information to the back of the **FREE** T-shirts provided by Northern Star Scouting.



## » SCHOOL COLLABORATION

Effective recruitment hinges on targeting schools receptive to scouting and promotional efforts. Engage actively with schools and charter organizations to forge strong ties with administrators and other key stakeholders.

- **Participate** in school events like open houses (see below for more detail)
- **Volunteer** with school organizations, like the PTO, on service projects such as garden cleanups, offering resources like supplies that come with a personalized label of your unit. Join school carnivals and family events to lend support.
- **Build relationships** with school staff, including custodians, by ensuring cleanliness after events. Collaborate with charter schools that may have fewer constraints and clarify policies with school board members.
- **Align values** with school leaders by supporting their youth development goals, such as character building that mirror scouting principles. Recognize the influence of PTA/PTO organizations, which may have varying access criteria.
- **“Access”** to schools is a privilege. Approach this opportunity with the aim of fostering trust and rapport over time. Prioritize nurturing relationships over transactions for mutual benefit.



### SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE: SCOUTING SHOWCASE!

Fall school open houses are excellent for Scouting to connect with families seeking children's activities. To make a strong impact, set up a table displaying past events and upcoming activities, staffed by an engaging Scouter. Prepare your unit by:

- **Creating a spreadsheet** for family contact details.
- **Planning a follow-up activity** to engage families and distribute invitations.
- **Using the FREE Recruitment Event Kit** for promotional materials and a fun Scout craft for kids.
- **Allowing parents to register** their children while Pack/Troop representatives interact with youth.
- **Following up enthusiastically** with families to invite them to a fun activity for prospective families to join.

## SCHOOL DISTRIBUTION & VISIBILITY STRATEGIES

- **Distribute school flyers** in person and include them in homework packets (with permission). Enhance visibility by handing out flyers during school pickup/drop-off.\*
- **Participate in school carnivals** or festivals with a booth or activities to gather leads.
- **Increase visibility with FREE yard signs** in the student pickup area.
- **Collaborate with teachers** to personalize invitations using class rosters and utilize display cases or bulletin boards to promote Scouting activities.\*
- **Request the principal or PTO** to feature an article about Scouting in the school newsletter. Send email reminders to teachers to encourage them to inform parents.
- **Issue a press release** highlighting your unit's contributions to the school and community and recognize youth and adult leaders. If schools resist publishing, share with PTO/PTA groups for posting in their Facebook groups.
- If hosting at school isn't feasible, **explore off-campus locations** or ask neighbors for permission to use their property for activities like rocket launches.
- **Encourage troops to connect with middle schools** for recruitment. Ensure approachable advocates are available to engage parents; if you can't be that person, find someone who can!

\*With permission



### TIP #3

Enhance your flyers by adding your unit's URL & important event details. Next, win over local churches, clinics, cafes and other businesses to showcase your fantastic flyers prominently on their counters.

# » RECRUITMENT MATERIALS

## Available to you at NO COST!

Recruitment materials available year-round to Packs, Troops and \*Crews!

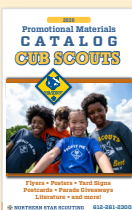
Northern Star Scouting offers a wide variety of materials for your unit to utilize and make the most of your recruitment efforts! Many items can be personalized with your unit #, contact info or other messaging details you'd like included. Some items have variations of gender-specific photos and language to suit each unit's needs.

Here, you'll find a sampling of the items available to your unit, printed at Council, at no cost! Find a complete collection of materials offered in our Materials Catalogs - 2 versions available: pack and troops. See page 12 for ordering instructions.

*\*Venturing items will be created for the needs of individual Crews.  
Email [membership@northernstar.org](mailto:membership@northernstar.org) to coordinate.*



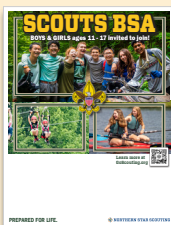
Yard Signs



Materials Catalogs



Cub Scouts Flyers



Scouts BSA Flyers



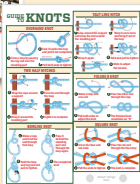
Posters



Open House Kits



Contact us:  
Your Name, Cubmaster  
email here  
phone #



## Knots Cards



**TROOP #**  
Contact Name  
email/phone



**TROOP #**  
Contact Name  
email, phone

## Trading Cards



## Lenticular Cards



## Mobile Inflatable Archery Range

Archery is one of our most popular camp activities and these commercial, specially branded inflatable archery ranges can give festival-goers a taste of Scouting. They use safe foam tipped arrows with beginner-friendly bows and accessories. Perfect for drawing attention to and show-casing Scouting at recruitment events and community festivals. Fee of \$25 per day due at pickup.



## Scooter the Scout Air Dancer

A 40 ft. tall Arm-waving Scout Colossus. Scooter requires a dedicated 15 amp circuit and a windless day. Reserve by emailing [membership@northernstar.org](mailto:membership@northernstar.org).



To reserve a mobile archery range, scan the QR code or visit:

<https://www.northernstar.org/news/enavigator/mobile-archery-ranges-available-to-showcase-scouting>



**TIP  
#4**

Pass out or sell water bottles decked out with unit's personalized label and URL or QR code at soccer tournaments!

# » ORDERING INSTRUCTIONS

## Two ways to order

Ordering marketing materials for your 2025-2026 program is a breeze!

### Option #1 - Online Order Form

- The most convenient way to order your unit's FREE recruitment materials is by using our online order form. Visit the appropriate link below to choose the items you'd like, specify any personalization (if available) and printing details, indicate the quantities needed, and fill in your contact information before submitting. There are no charges to you or your unit!
- Once your order is ready for pickup, the Council will notify you. If you prefer delivery, coordinate with your District Executive for arrangements.

#### Access Online Order Form

By typing in the URL or by scanning the QR code using your phone's camera.

#### Cub Scouts Materials

<https://tinyurl.com/CubMaterialsOrderForm>



#### Scouts BSA Materials

<https://tinyurl.com/ScoutsBSAMaterialsOrderForm>



### Option #2 - Order Through Your District Executive

- Contact your District Executive, providing your order details and any specific information you'd like printed. You can then schedule a pickup or delivery. Again, no charge to you or your unit!
- To locate your District Executive, go to [northernstar.org/connect/districts](https://northernstar.org/connect/districts). Scroll down to find your district and access the contact information for your District Executive. For further assistance, call 612-261-2300.



If you're not able to get into schools with flyers or during open house, consider setting up a "mock campout" nearby with a small campfire complete with marshmallows to roast!

**TIP  
#5**



## » FREE T-SHIRT!

EVERY youth who registers in a Pack, troop or Crew, new and returning Scouts, will receive a green, full color print, t-shirt!

*Shirts available starting in August. Order early to ensure size availability.*



## NORTHERN STAR SCOUTING

### UNIFORM OPTION

The official BSA uniform is still recognized should a unit choose to continue to utilize it. The current, "Class A" uniform is NOT discouraged or discontinued.

**Uniform Option** *A method of Scouting is the use of a uniform that visually reminds all members they are a part of a team.*



### Cub Scouts

can wear a t-shirt provided annually by the Council as part of the program fee for the year.

#### PLUS rank-specific neckerchief



Lions



Tigers



Wolves



Bears



Webelos



### Scouts BSA

can wear a t-shirt, polo shirt, or any other shirt acceptable to their unit leaders and a Northern Star Scouting neckerchief (necker) will be available for purchase to wear with it. They can be worn with or without a slide. Troops may choose to use neckers of their own design in lieu of the Northern Star Scouting necker.



### Venturing

will follow the same options as Scouts BSA members.



### Adult Leaders

will follow the same options as Scouts BSA members.

Youth and adult leaders wearing either uniform may use the Scout salute when participating in flag ceremonies.

# » How to Achieve EXCEPTIONAL RECRUITING RESULTS with a Community Event

Pack 3301 Testimonial: Amazing Results of 39 NEW Youth

**EVENT** *Time frame: Friday afternoon to Sunday afternoon:*

- Chaska Community Festival, Chaska River City Days.

## How To Start:

- Engage with your community summits/roundtables to collectively decide which events to attend, leveraging combined volunteers and resources.
- Inquire with families about their connections to events and for people better booth placement and promotion.

## On Hand Supplies:

- Reserved Northern Star Scouting mobile archery booth well in advance of event.
- Inquire with families to identify connections to those events in the community to garner better booth placement and promotion.
- Clipboard, spreadsheet & pens.

## Volunteers/Roles:

- At minimum 3 adults present. One for each of the tasks below:

**1** Welcome and engage visitors initially and invite them to experience the archery range.

**2** Stand with the families in line for the archery range. Hold a clipboard with spreadsheets to capture contact info of those interested in Scouting. This person shares their story of Scouting and what it has meant to them.

**3** Manager of the archery range, assisting children even if they need additional assistance continuing a warm and inviting experience.

## Attendees Received:

- Promotion materials (order FREE personalized materials at [goscouting.org](http://goscouting.org)).
- An invitation to a fun activity within two weeks.

## Leads (or Prospects) Collection & Forms to Create:

- Develop spreadsheets with event details, names, ages, and contact information. This data is crucial for follow-up!
- Create a Google document that can be shared amongst leaders.
- Post-event, transfer information to a document for unit leaders, including tracking columns for follow-up.
- Consider using the “invitation manager” in [my.scouting.org](http://my.scouting.org).

## RESULTS:

**700+**

**KIDS and ADULTS**  
visited archery booth

OVER  
**FIFTY LEADS**  
from  
**Interested Families**

**39 NEW**  
**YOUTH**

## REASONS FOR SUCCESS:

- Approachable booth and friendly Scouter interactions encouraging archery range participation.
- FREE archery range experience!
- Relentless, enthusiastic, and friendly follow up!



## » KEY TAKEAWAYS & POST-EVENT FOLLOW-UP

### POST-EVENT FOLLOW-UP:

Sent email to attendees within 48 hours of event. Invited them to the next planned event.

Called the families the weekend before the upcoming activity. Reminded them of event details.

Maintained contact with prospects until they opted out.

Kept activities simple and engaging.

Continued inviting those on the list to future events – this is crucial!

Encouraged families to invite others, rewarded them with a recruiter strip. Ask adults about their connections to Scouting.

Implemented a marketing strategy suggesting 7 connections are needed before commitment. See page 16.

*\*It's important for both parents and kids to experience it firsthand before committing.*

### NEXT ACTIVITY TO INCLUDE YOUR NEW ATTENDEES:

- Keep it simple – organize fishing, park gatherings, or tie-dye t-shirt activities.
- Appoint a friendly parent to greet new youth and families, introducing them and answering questions.
- Maintain enthusiastic and friendly follow-up!



# » 7 POINT CONNECTION STRATEGY

1

## Personal Phone Call

Thank families within a couple of days, invite them to events, and keep the communication going.



2

## Personal Email/Texts

Continue relentless, enthusiastic, and friendly follow up until they opt out.



3

## Flyers

Distribute in restaurants, libraries, churches, coffee shops and dental offices.



4

## Community Resources

Share personalized recruitment materials to boost Scouting visibility.



5

## Families

Ask your families who they know that they can invite to a fun activity.



6

## Social Media

Use various platforms to highlight the fun of Scouting.



7

## Schools/Friends

Create invitations for youth and families to attend a future activity.



*The most successful packs, troops and crews follow these strategies or a similar plan of their own. How will your unit's recruitment season go? And how will your unit ensure success in improving its health and sustainability?*



# » BEST PRACTICES Successful Recruitment Strategy

Nick Pedersen, Pack 3301



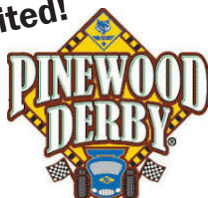
Summer  
Pack meetings  
and activities  
following  
community  
events



Bike rodeos with police  
department involvement



You're  
Invited!



Invite a VIP to your  
Pinewood Derby  
– include mayors,  
EMD resources,  
principals, etc.

Bring  
flyers to  
your  
dentist,  
hair salon,  
or other spots you  
have connections  
with to have  
distributed



Mock campsite at a park



School spirit day  
participation in  
uniform or unit t-shirt

Provide engaging  
activities with a  
“tower” display of  
favorite treats  
such as a  
gigantic  
container of cheese  
balls!



Utilize  
inflatable  
mobile  
archery  
ranges at  
events

# Hey Cub Scouts!

Recruit a friend and you and your friend receive a  
**FREE WATER BOTTLE!**

**2026**

Cubmasters, hold an  
open house  
recruitment event  
to support this effort.



All Cubs must be registered by 12/31/26 to receive a water bottle - while supplies last

Submit this completed form to: [membership@northernstar.org](mailto:membership@northernstar.org)

Pack number: \_\_\_\_\_ District: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of new recruited Cub: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Cub recruiter: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and email of Cubmaster to distribute items: \_\_\_\_\_

Pick up at Base Camp or arrange delivery with your DE? \_\_\_\_\_



# ATTENTION SCOUTS BSA



Recruit a friend and you and your friend each receive a **FREE POCKET KNIFE** and you will also receive a **RECRUITER** patch!

**For YOU & Your Friend**



**For YOU**

**Scoutmasters, we ask you hold an open house recruitment opportunity in support of this effort.**



Scoutmasters, we ask you hold an open house recruitment opportunity in support of this effort. Joining youth must be brand new to Scouting; youth crossing over from Cub Scouts are not eligible for this promotion.

Knives, recruiter strip patch and Totin' Chips will be distributed through Scoutmasters who are to obtain parent permission and review safety rules with the Scouts before presenting them with their knife.

**All Scouts must be registered by 12/31/2026 to receive a knife**

**Submit this completed form to: [membership@northernstar.org](mailto:membership@northernstar.org)**

Troop number: \_\_\_\_\_

District: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of new recruited Scout: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of recruiter: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian of new Scout approval signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian of recruiter approval signature: \_\_\_\_\_

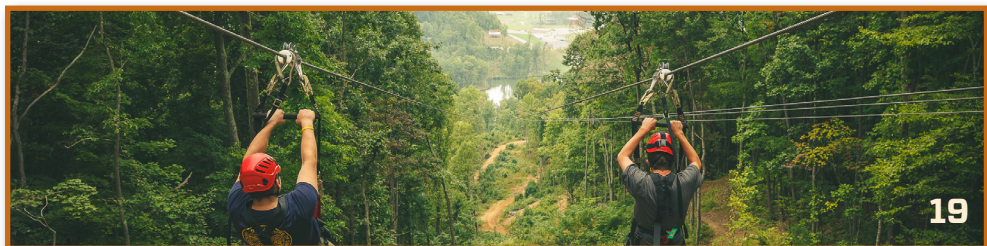
Scoutmaster to distribute items: (name) \_\_\_\_\_

(email) \_\_\_\_\_ (phone) \_\_\_\_\_

Pick up at Base Camp or mail to Scoutmaster? \_\_\_\_\_



**NORTHERN STAR SCOUTING**



# ADULT / LEADER » TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES



Because every Scout deserves to have a trained leader!

Did you know that there are training opportunities for you as a parent to become more familiar with Scouting? Are you a new leader who wants to be as efficient and knowledgeable as you can be in your role?



Check out the array of opportunities here:

Visit [www.my.scouting.org](http://www.my.scouting.org) for online trainings by creating an account and going to the Scouting America Volunteer Learning Center.



*Your District Membership Chairs  
are ready to serve you!*

**612-261-2300**

**GoSCOUTING.ORG**



**NORTHERN STAR SCOUTING**