

THE VFW SCOUTING TEAM HANDBOOK

HOW TO ORGANIZE AND MANAGE YOUR STATE SCOUTING TEAM

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WHY WE HAVE A SCOUTING TEAM

The Veterans of Foreign Wars have supported the Boy Scouts of America since the inception of the VFW. During World War I and II Boy Scouts played a major part in helping collect food and other items to support the troops in the war. Since that time Scouting has continued to be a supporter of the VFW and Scouts have grown up joined the military, fought in wars and subsequently become members of the VFW. It is a natural effort therefore that we focus the efforts of those of us who have been Scouts to continue and guide the VFW posts in the support of the Boy Scouts of America.

The Boy Scouts of America continues to provide a youth program for use by qualified organizations and the VFW is an ideal organization to incorporate into our planning for youth in our local communities. Many VFW posts are able to provide direct support to Scouting units thru sponsorship. This serves also as a means to attract potential VFW members through their family interests and gain recognition in our communities. We can also gain visibility in the community thru working with other community organizations in supporting the Scouting effort thru partnering in supporting a Scouting unit sponsored by another organization.

The department Scouting Team purpose is to foster this relationship with the VFW and Boy Scouts of America in your department. Objectives are:

- a. Foster partnering with Scouting to support community activities
- b. Help with Scouting to connect families
- c. Introduce Scouts to VFW activities and volunteerism
- d. Provide a positive image to a new generation of potential service members
- e. Help the Scouting program grow in our communities
- f. Support the selection of the Scout of the year for your Department

ORGANIZING THE TEAM

Each department may appoint a VFW member to the national Scouting team. This appointment is to be forwarded to national VFW director of programs for approval by National VFW as well. This Scouter now represents his department as a member of the national Scouting team and is responsible for organizing and managing his department team of Scouters. This is a permanent appointment because of the need of this Scouter to work with the national team of Scouters as well as maintaining his state Scouting team on a continuing basis over several years. A copy of the nomination and approval form is attached.

The department lead qualifications include having a background in the BSA Scouting program and having a background of VFW experience to be able to lead a group of VFW Scouters in supporting the VFW BSA program throughout the Department.

The department Scouting team leader is responsible for recruiting, organizing, training and maintaining an effective team in his department. There is no specific size requirement and the team lead can build the team that is appropriate for his department. A suggested organization is that the department lead appoints district personnel and has them recruit and work with team members at the post level.

Personnel recruited to the team must be approved by the team lead, complete the team applications, be appropriately registered in the Scouting program if they are working with Scouts. A Team application is attached and the approved application will be used as the basis to obtain a team member patch from National VFW. Scouting team members must be VFW members. They may be members of troops/posts/packs sponsored by VFW posts or units sponsored by other activities or at district or council level.

The department Scouting team lead will maintain copies of all applications and approval status. He should publish a list of all Scouting team members and make it available to posts throughout the department.

He is responsible to insure that all Scouting team members take the BSA Youth protection class on line and maintain a current youth protection certificate and remain current with other certifications as required by the BSA for positions held

He should coordinate with National VFW and other department leads on activities that may affect programs in his department.

He is responsible for working with the department commander and quartermaster for a budget for the team and Scout recognition as may be appropriate.

He is responsible for regular communications with the department and district commanders as to status and progress of the Team. He should provide quarterly reports when the commander holds council of administration meetings.

TEAM DUTIES

SCOUT OF THE YEAR: WHAT IT IS AND HOW TO DO IT SUCCESSFULLY

Each department may select an Eagle Scout as the department Scout of the year and provide the application to National VFW for judging for the VFW National Scout of the year.

The ideal process is to have each post in the department select and recognize a Scout of the year submitting the winners to district level for judging and district winners going to a department judging. The application for Scout of the year can be found on line at www.vfw.org under programs. All post Youth activities chairman have a copy of the application and instructions as part of the VFW Youth Activities Chairman's Manual.

Scouting team members need to work with local Scout units to advertise the program and help Scouts recognize the opportunity for recognition by their local VFW posts.

Following the selection of Unit Scout of the Year by posts, a district level judging should be conducted. The district Scouting lead can organize a judging team consisting of local teachers, religious leaders, school teachers etc or utilize members of the department Scouting team. Again the winner should be recognized at a district meeting and the application submitted to the department.

The department judging can be done by the Scouting team or by a board of people appointed by the Scouting team leadership. Recognition of this winner at the department convention is a great opportunity for the Scout to see the VFW in action and parents if not VFW members to further the understanding and reputation of the VFW in the community. The Scouting team leader is responsible to insure that this is a great moment for the Scout and the VFW.

Eagle Scouts can be recruited from individual units, visits to round tables or other Scouting functions. It should be remembered that the VFW is not the only organization seeking to recognize these young people. Because there is a lot of competition from many organizations for recognizing these Scouts, BSA councils often will not be able to take active action to distribute literature for any one organization. The VFW Scouting team should be in the active mode, visiting round tables, camporees, and individual units where the program can be presented by a VFW Scouting team member.

Awards and presentations to the winning Scouts should come from individual posts and the VFW districts and departments. These activities under the guidance of the Scouting team can develop ongoing awards that continue over time.

This effort will keep the Scouting program in the forefront of the VFW and generate opportunities for the VFW and Scouting to work together on other efforts and generate much good will in the local communities.

If possible, provide a unique opportunity to the Scouts applying for Scout of the year. Freedoms Foundation has a program designed for Eagle Scouts only entitled "The Price of Freedom". There is no cost to attend the four day event in February except travel to and from the event. The Virginia team has offered Scouts submitting early application the

opportunity to participate in this exciting event. Other options might be appropriate patriotic efforts in your local area. The Virginia War memorial has made an offer to hold a patriotic event at the war memorial on a one day basis with speakers and patriotic presentations. There may be numerous opportunities to bring together all the nominees for Scout of the year at a similar activity. Be creative.

ORGANIZE UNITS SPONSORED BY VFW POSTS

The Scouting team should work with posts to organize units sponsored by VFW Posts. This should be done using the BSA steps to organize a unit. The unit COR should belong to the sponsoring post and work to make the unit successful. New parents coming into the unit should be checked for eligibility to the VFW and be recruited into the post. The Scouting team members should work with these units to help them be supportive of their VFW sponsor. The Scouts can do flag retirements, road clean up, grounds clean up, parades and many other areas of support to the sponsoring post.

COMMUNICATE SCOUTING OBJECTIVES TO POSTS

The Department Scouting team Lead should participate in the annual School of instruction for new commanders and officers and make a presentation on the Scouting team and Scouting objectives. Commanders will know who to contact for support and assistance. They will often ask how to organize a unit, who are the contacts for boy Scouting near their post, how to work with units that they do not sponsor but want to partner with and other things that the Scouting team should be ready to assist them with.

Attached is sample flyer for use at school of instruction or other training opportunity with VFW posts

TEAM MEETINGS AND TRAINING

The Department Scouting team lead is responsible for training his team members. This can be done in a weekend event. It is a great opportunity to get the team trained together in what the VFW Scouting program should be. Someone can arrange for a military base, local Scout camp, hunting club or other area where the team can get together for a weekend, exchange stories, show off patches and develop a plan for your team over the next year. You will find a lot of experience in the old time Scouters but now we need to channel that to make Scouting successful in the VFW environment.

Training should include how to organize units. Go through the 10 steps in detail. How can we make the Scouting program in your department successful and how best to work with VFW leadership to develop Scouting support and activities that will work in your communities. There are lots of diverse ideas on what can be done and the team can

develop a team strategy and plan that will work in your state. There should be an annual team meeting every year of some kind to insure the team is on track, all players understand what to do. Scouting team members should gather at department convention and winter department meetings to follow up on progress and planning.

ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION IN VFW YOUTH PROGRAMS

Boy Scouts are excellent candidates for Patriots Pen and Voice of Democracy contests. The team should take the opportunity to advertise these to the Scouting community and Scout troops with which you work directly..The VFW Youth Activities Chairman's Manual has information about these programs as well as the Scout of the year program and Scouting team personnel should work with the post youth activities chairman in supporting the Scout of the year in conjunction with other youth programs.

WORKING WITH THE DEPARTMENT COMMANDER AND DISTRICT COMMANDERS

The Department Scouting team lead is a part of the department commander's staff. He is responsible for working the department commander and Quartermaster to insure that any department funds allocated to Scouting programs are budgeted and available to support the Scouting program. He is responsible for reporting to the commander on status of the Scouting program at council of administration meetings, and insuring proper expenditure of any department funds for the program. The Scouting team lead should also work with district commanders and their staff as necessary to insure implementation of the program at all levels. He is responsible for communicating the Scouting program throughout the department. Attached is a sample Scouting flyer provided to the posts at the annual commanders' training class.

If possible the team should develop a web site potentially linked to the department web site to advertise the program and provide ongoing information to program participants. The Virginia Scouting Team has a website at www.vfwvaScouting.org which is linked to the department of Virginia web site.

SCOUTERS ACHIEVEMENT AWARD (COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION AWARD)

National VFW has worked with the Boy Scouts of America to recognize the VFW Community Organization Award as the highest award that the VFW can make to a Scouter. It is known as The Scouters Achievement Award. Receipt of the award entitles the recipient to wear the gold square knot backed with purple on his uniform. The Department Scouting team lead is responsible for working with team members and tracking their progress in

earning the Community Organization award. Time to earn the award requires 3 years of service on the Scouting team and all items to earn the award must be accomplished after joining the team. This may mean that a Scouter has done these things before but it is our desire that he do them again as part of our VFW team. Requirements for the award are attached.

When a member completes the award, the Department team lead should arrange for award processing and appropriate presentation and recognition of the individual for his efforts.

APPROPRIATE UNIFORM

Scouting team members should wear the proper BSA uniform with appropriate awards. Scouting team members may order a standard VFW cap from national VFW with the inscription : “State Scouting Team *Virginia*” or appropriate state. The cap may have red piping to show as members of the state Scouting team.

ENCLOSURES

- 1. Sample handout to post commanders for department training. Tailor to your needs**
- 2. VFW Scouters Achievement Award requirements**
- 3. State team of Scouters application**



**Congratulations:
Baylor M. Dickerson**

**VFW Post 9808
Scout of the year 2010**

**Department of Vir-
ginia Scout of the year
2010**

**National VFW
Scout of the Year 2010**

**VIRGINIA VFW
SUPPORTING
THE
BOY SCOUTS
OF AMERICA**

Sponsor a Scouting Unit - Virginia VFW Posts sponsor 27 Units of Cubs, Scouts and Venture/Sea Scout Crews with 655 members and 312 adult leaders. Post 7916 is the only sponsor of a VFW Sea Scout Ship.

Partner with another activity to support a Scouting Unit- Virginia VFW posts can provide leadership and regular support to a unit sponsored by another activity. You need to let our Scouting team know who from the post is involved in various leadership positions.

Recognize the successes of Scouts and their leaders. Make presentations to Scouts making Eagle, Silver Award, Quartermaster award. Recognize leaders supporting Scouting in your community whether or not they are VFW members. Recognize post members who are participating in Scouting activities.

Provide Scouts with opportunity to earn service hours. Scouts can assist your post with flag retirement, participate with post in parades, assist with Flag Day and other ceremonies. Scouts can be great assistance to the post with visits to veterans' hospitals.

Recognize an Eagle Scout of the Year (SOY). Our 2010 – 2011 Scout won the national VFW Scout of the Year and received a \$5000 scholarship. Don't let your post miss this special opportunity to select and recognize Eagle award /Silver award / Quartermaster award.

SOY Schedule for 2011-12

Final date for Scouts to submit entries to VFW Post 1 Mar 2012

Post submit winners to District for judging 15 March 2012

District submit winners to Department 1 April 2012

The VFW Scouting team will take the first 10 Eagles submitting a Scout of the Year application before 31 Dec 11 to the "Price of Freedom" program in Valley Forge Feb 9-12 2012

Go to web site www.vfwwascouting.org for continued information, SOY applications and list of district and scouting team members.

Virginia Scouting Chairman Stan Hunter VFW Post 9835 540-347-1093 rangerstan@msn.com

Vice Chairman Ronald Knowles VFW Post 7589 703-368-4743 rknowles703@comcast.net

Requirements :

VFW SCOUTERS ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

This award is designed to recognize VFW Scouters who serve on the VFW State and National Scouting teams for a three-year period and who accomplish the required tasks during this period. This award is not meant to be a selective or limited award, but one that is available to any VFW Scouter on the Scouting team who completes the requirements. It is our personal VFW award to recognize dedication and work required by a VFW team member to assist in furthering the Scouting program in the VFW.

The award consists of a gold and purple square knot which may be worn on the Scout uniform and a certificate.

Requirements

It is expected that the VFW team members will work to provide the maximum impact of VFW support to the Scouting program and to achieve maximum visibility for VFW efforts.

- A. Service. Be registered in a Scouting position at the District or Council level: Chartered Organizational Representative (COR), District/ Council Member-at-Large, Unit Commissioner. (Your Department National Scouting Team Member can help you obtain this registration.)
(Objective: To go beyond the Post and be able to understand and influence Scouting in the VFW District and Department as well as at the local Council level).
- B Training. While a member of the State or National team:
1. Attend a VFW Scouter's training course at State or National level.
 2. Participate in a Chartered Organizational Representative (COR) training course.
 3. Complete a BSA District staff training course or
 4. Attend a Woodbadge training program.
- C. Tenure. *(Tenure starts when you join the team.)*
1. Complete a total of three years as a member on the National or State Team of VFW Scouters.
- D. Performance. While a member of the State or National team do five of the following:
1. Serve a minimum of two years as a Post Chartered Organizational Representative for Scouting and demonstrate success with your units in terms of growth in program.
 2. Help with your VFW Department or District or Post to raise funds to support Scouting in your Department.
 3. Participate with a local BSA District or Council Friends of Scouting fundraising effort.
 4. Serve on the staff of a Department or National training team to train VFW Scouters.
 5. Participate as member of a BSA District or Council Membership/Relationships Committee and represent the VFW.
 6. Assist in organizing or reorganizing a Scout Troop, Cub Pack or Venture Crew in a VFW unit.
 7. Participate in the Eagle Scout of the Year program at Post, District or Department level.
 8. Make contact with Scout Troops and Venture Crews in your area through visits, roundtables or other means and solicit their participation in the Youth Essay and VOD programs and document the results of your efforts.
 9. Recruit manpower from your Post or VFW District to support a Scout activity such as a camporee, bicycle rodeo, merit badge day or other related event to help further VFW recognition in support of the Scouting program.
 10. Develop and carry out or participate in a VFW program to recognize the leaders of Scouting programs in your Post, District or Department.
 11. Promote and coordinate the development of a network of State VFW Scouting Team members to assist in the development of Scouting within the VFW.
- E. Approval.
- Obtain the approval of the Department Commander and Department National Team Scouter that you have satisfactorily completed the requirements for this award. Documentation will be sent to VFW National Headquarters for review and final approval.

