



## What's "Show Scout Spirit" All About?

### Scout Spirit Goals

If you look in your Boy Scout Handbook at the rank requirements, most of them are pretty straight forward - demonstrate first aid for serious burns, tie a bowline, earn 6 merit badges, etc. However, beginning with the Second Class rank there is an added, more indefinite requirement: **Show Scout Spirit**.

The Scoutmasters have had a lot of questions over the years about what exactly "**Show Scout Spirit**" means. NO it doesn't mean that on Halloween night you dress up as the ghost of Baden-Powell (or any other famous Scout Spirit).

National BSA must have had a lot questions too, because they changed the requirement recently to read "**Demonstrate Scout Spirit** by living the Scout Oath and the Scout Law in your everyday life." That's a little better, but still... what does it mean?

The first thing you need to understand about **Scout Spirit** is that even though the requirement looks the same for each rank, it's really different - **Scout Spirit** for Life Scout is very different (and much harder) than **Scout Spirit** for Second Class. You'll discover that the scoutmasters will only sign you off for one "Scout Spirit" requirement at a time, because each one is harder than the next.

The other thing that you will notice is that unlike almost all the other requirements, you can never convince a Scoutmaster to sign off the **Scout Spirit** requirement on the spot. Tie a bowline, and he'll sign that off; show him your merit badge card and he'll sign off that requirement for Star, but he'll never just up and sign off that pesky **Scout Spirit** one. That's because you must demonstrate **Scout Spirit** in your everyday life, not in the five minutes you're talking to the Scoutmaster. What happens is that at meetings and especially on campouts, the Scoutmasters are like Santa Claus - they're always watching you, to see when you are naughty or nice. **Scout**



**Spirit** should be shown at all times, and generally this requirement is one of the last ones to be signed off for any rank. Scoutmasters will want to see the appropriate **Scout Spirit** for some period of time before they sign off the requirement. For Second Class that may only be for a campout and the last few meetings, but for Eagle it may be for several months.

What are they looking for? Believe it or not, there's a "Scoutmaster's cheat sheet" that the Scoutmaster and his friends all have to give us some idea. Here is just a few of the things we look for: By the way, we expect Scouts to not only follow the items listed for that rank, but also all the items for the previous ranks.

### **Second Class**

Do you participate in lots of troop activities regularly (better than 50%, and better than 75% for Troop Officers and Patrol Leaders)?

Do you come to "work" activities like service projects and meetings, as well as fun nights?

Do you try not to complain or put other people down, even when you feel bad or you have to do a task like cleanup?

Are you willing to try new things, and keep trying even when you don't succeed at first?

Do you pay attention when we need you to, and know when to stop what you're doing to help out?

Do you come prepared for campouts? Do you keep track of your stuff, or lose it a lot?

Do you never bully, harass, or joke around with other Scouts unless they are willing & happy participants?

### **First Class**

A first class **Scout Spirit** Scout must never complain about weather, or work, or cleanup, and must never gripe or "whine" when a leader makes a decision they do not like.



A Scout must never criticize others harshly, or make fun of other Scouts whose skills aren't as good.

Do you handle normal personal tasks and patrol tasks (cooking, camp setup and tear down, getting water, etc.) without being asked?

Do you keep an eye on others in the troop and help them out - like pickup their garbage, or quietly returning stuff they forgot or left out, so that the Scoutmaster doesn't get it?

Do you sometimes lend a hand teaching new Scouts some of the basics (and you can do it without yelling)?

Are you starting to help out your patrol leader & troop by offering ideas for events, and helping to organize and call people when needed?

Do you listen & learn well when a Scoutmaster or more advanced Scout tries to teach you something, or do you play "know-it-all"?

Do you show **Scout Spirit** at home and in school?

Do you also meet the requirements for Second Class?

### **Star**

For Star rank, you have to serve in a troop leadership position. Did you serve well and help out the troop, or did you miss meetings, show up unprepared, not get things done, etc.?

Are you starting to show the kind of leadership a First Class Scout should know? Do you help organize other Scouts to get things done at campouts (like put up dining flies, set up campfires, etc.?)

Do you watch out for other Scouts and make sure they're doing OK - on the trail, in camp, etc.?

Can you be relied on to finish what you start?



Are you always ready to assist and be helpful when you see something that needs doing, or do you just "hang out" with your buddies?

Do you show respect for other Troop Leaders as you would like them to respect you when you're leading?

Do you also meet the requirements for First Class and Second Class?

### **Life**

As a troop leader (even if you don't hold an office), do you actively take up leadership when you see something that needs doing?

Can you organize & coordinate other Scouts of all ages (without yelling)

Are you a major player in the "behind-the-scenes" work that makes the troop run - organizing equipment, making camping arrangements, setting up activities for the PLC?

Are you a good, patient teacher and example to younger Scouts?

Are you involved in your school or in the community as a volunteer?

Do you also meet the requirements for Star, First Class and Second Class?

### **Eagle**

Do you participate actively in all troop activities?

Do all the adults and Scouts treat you almost as if you were another Scoutmaster?

Are you involved in your school and community as a leader?

Do you also meet the requirements for Life, Star, First Class and Second Class?

**WARNING:** Using this list to ARGUE with a Scoutmaster over whether you have **Scout Spirit** is a sure way NOT to get it. NO Whining! Get the picture? To show **"Scout Spirit"** means to live up to your word and be Trustworthy,



Loyal, Helpful at all times! Good luck, & keep working on that Spirit at every meeting and campout.

Document Courtesy of:C. Baelz



Every rank above Tenderfoot includes the following requirement:

"Demonstrate Scout spirit by living the Scout Oath (Promise) and Scout Law in your everyday life."

The Troop takes this requirement seriously, and has put this sheet together to give you some guidance.

### **Living the Scout Oath**

"On my honor, I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country, to obey the Scout Law, to help other people at all times, to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight."

We know that none of us are perfect — far from it in fact — but are you doing your best to do your duty to God and country, or cutting corners? Are you living by the standards that God set? Are you practicing good citizenship and fulfilling your duties as citizens?

### **Living the Scout Law**

Can people trust you? Are you loyal, or are you selfish?

What about helpful — do you go out of your way to help others, or just when you think there's something in it for you?

To have a friend, be a friend. Do you go out of your way to make friends of new Scouts? Are you courteous at all times — courteous to your parents, courteous to adult leaders, courteous to your fellow Scouts? Courtesy is a habit, as is kindness. Do you have compassion for others and seek out ways to do a kindness, a "good turn daily"?

Is your obedience only to those you choose to obey? It's easy to obey those you agree with, but what about those you disagree with? Are you cheerful in the face of annoyances and things that can drag you down, or do you choose instead not to let things get you down? Are you careful with your money and resources?



Bravery means doing the right thing, not the easy thing. And are you clean in thought, in words (including jokes) and in the way you live? And most importantly, are you reverent to your Creator? Do you truly "revere" Him, or do you take Him for granted?

### **Your Actions Are You**

A wise man once said, "It's easier to act your way into right thinking than to think your way into right acting." What he means is that you can think about doing the right things but never do them—but if you start doing the right things, it will change the way you think.

Scouts, the way you act is who you are. It determines how others treat you—and think about you.

### **The Scout Uniform**

The Scout uniform makes everyone equal. No matter how rich or how poor we think we are, we're all equal when we wear our uniform. We're Scouts.

But what would you think if you saw a policeman directing traffic in his patrolman's shirt and blue jeans? Or what would you think if you saw a Marine wearing a dress uniform and a baseball cap?

A complete uniform includes a BSA shirt, BSA pants or shorts (or clean blue jeans) and a troop neckerchief (in Winter).

The way you wear your uniform is important to Troop 10 and to you! Don't let us down—it's a key component of Scout Spirit.

### **Attendance**

Your attendance at meetings is not only fun, but it's key to learning new skills— and advancing in rank. People have worked hard to put together a good meeting for you. You need to be there.

Campouts, hikes and other outdoor activities are what attracted most of us to Scouting to begin with. We love the great outdoors and want to see others love it as much as we do.



But some Scouts think campouts, hikes and service projects are "just for the junior Scouts."

Hogwash! Outdoor programs are the best way imaginable for older Scouts to pass on what they've learned to younger Scouts. How else can the new Scouts learn unless the older ones pass on what they've learned?

And isn't Scouting all about service to others?

### **Your Board of Review**

When you have completed your rank requirements you go before a Troop 10 Board of Review. This Board is made up of adult leaders (other than the Scoutmaster) and will test you on all aspects of your requirements—first aid, knots, other Scout skills—but will also discuss your Scout spirit with you.

If they feel as a Board that you're deficient in any area (including Scout spirit), you'll be asked to work harder in that area and try again. It's no disgrace to retake a Board of Review.

If you need to work a bit harder and try again, go for it. The sooner the better!

So drive on, Scout, and put into practice what you've learned on your Trail to Eagle. Act your way into right thinking, and Scout spirit will become a part of you that no one can take away. Guaranteed!

Scout

Ask Andy

As far as a Scout "living the Scout Oath and Law" in his daily life, his Scoutmaster actually gets to see about 2% of a Scout's actual "daily life," and so a Scoutmaster is hardly qualified to pass judgment on this. Who, then, is the best judge? Why, the Scout, himself! Ask him: "How are you doing with this?" He'll tell you. And then you can discuss how there's always room for doing even better! To do otherwise is the height of conceit and self-



importance, and this is absolutely not how we want ourselves to be, if we truly believe in the principle of positive role-modeling.