

Friends of Scouting
2026 This Year's Update



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The key to a successful Family Friends of Scouting campaign is to educate our membership regarding the many facets of the Scouting program in Scouting America Northeast Illinois Council.

For more information, visit: neic.org/friends-of-scouting.

USING THIS YEAR'S UPDATE

This Year's Update

This document, which we call “This Year’s Update,” supplements the Unit Guide to an Effective Campaign, which is called “The Unit Guide” herein. The Unit Guide is described in the next heading.

This Year’s Update identifies those aspects of the 2026 Friends of Scouting (or “FOS”) campaign that differ from the prior year’s campaign. A returning unit coordinator who was familiar with the 2025 Unit Guide can just review This Year’s Update to understand what has changed from last year.

The Unit Guide

The Unit Guide is meant to provide each unit – pack, troop or crew – in Scouting America Northeast Illinois Council (NEIC) with a complete set of instructions on how to conduct an annual Family Friends of Scouting, or FFOS, unit-level campaign. It should serve as a resource for the person serving as the “unit coordinator” who spearheads the FFOS campaign for a unit.

CHANGES IN THE UNIT GUIDE

There are a handful of ways in which the Unit Guide that is in use this year differs from the version used in 2025. This section summarizes those differences, so that unit coordinators who familiarized themselves with last year's version do not need to pore through the current version trying to find the changes.

1. The premiums to be received for achieving the Eagle rank are different than they were in 2025.
2. The FOS leadership team is recommending this year that units schedule in-person presentations to kick off their FOS campaigns.
3. There is now a single portal for credit card donations: www.neic.com/friends-of-scouting.
 - There will no longer be separate portals for each unit.
 - Donors need to fill in the optional fields for unit type and number (e.g., "Pack" and "123") for the donation to be automatically credited to the unit
 - Suffixes like B, G and F (for boy troop, girl troop, or family pack or troop) are not needed
 - Unit coordinators cannot directly access the list of donors to their unit; reach out to your District Contact if you wish to be updated periodically
4. The model forms of communications to current and alumni families have been streamlined to make them crisper.

THIS YEAR'S NEIC COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS



FOS LEADERSHIP TEAM

Role	Name	Email
<i>Council FOS Leadership Team</i>		
FOS Council Chair	Amy McJoynt	amy.mcjoynt@gmail.com
FOS Council Staff Advisor	Kevin Ronayne	Kevin.Ronayne@scouting.org
<i>Aptakisic District FOS Leadership Team</i>		
FOS Chair	TBD	
FOS Vice-Chair	Dave McCall	david.mccall@gmail.com
FOS Vice-Chair	Scott Fleming	dsf025@yahoo.com
District Executive	Andrew Rejebian	Andrew.Rejebian@scouting.org
<i>North Star District FOS Leadership Team</i>		
FOS Chair	Kevin Waldenstrom	kevinwaldenstrom@comcast.net
FOS Vice-Chair	TBD	
District Executive	Taylor Summerfelt	Taylor.Summerfelt@scouting.org
<i>Potawatomi District FOS Leadership Team</i>		
FOS Co-Chair	Ken Morrison	kpmtroop5@gmail.com
FOS Co-Chair	Betsy Uzzell	bkuzzell@aol.com
FOS Vice-Chair	Tom Macfadden	tmacfadden@gmail.com
FOS Vice-Chair	Mary Wadleigh	m.wadleigh@att.net
District Executive	Garret Ram	Garrett.Ram@scouting.org

The **FOS Council Chair** is a volunteer who leads the overall 2026 FOS campaign for the Northeast Illinois Council. In consultation with other members of the council and district leadership teams, the FOS Council Chair establishes campaign practices and policies. The Council Chair also provides strategic guidance and updates the council's executive board and development committee on the status of the overall campaign.

An **FOS District Chair** (or Co-Chair) is a volunteer who leads FOS for all units in the district. This leader, along with each **District FOS Vice-Chair**, facilitates the recruitment of unit FOS coordinators, and ensures each unit has a scheduled presentation. Each District FOS Chair also works closely with district volunteers and the council development team to monitor progress and ensure goals are met.

The **Council Staff Advisor** and the **District Executives** are members of NEIC's professional staff. The Council Staff Advisor is a development professional who reports to NEIC's chief executive, works closely with the FOS Council Chair on the formulation of FOS policies and practices and designs and oversees all FOS reporting. The District Executives are field staff professionals who advise and support volunteer unit- and district-level leaders in their respective districts.

How the District Team Supports Your Unit

Your unit will be assigned a contact from the District FOS Leadership Team. This individual will support your unit in the following ways:

- **Scheduling & Logistics Support:** Your district team helps coordinate all FOS presentation dates and ensures each unit has the information and materials needed.
- **Training & Resources:** District FOS Chairs and Vice Chairs provide training for unit coordinators, including messaging, best practices, and step-by-step instructions for running a successful campaign. They also supply updated collateral, scripts, videos, QR codes, and online giving information.
- **Campaign Strategy & Goal Setting:** Your district FOS team works with the council development team to set unit goals based on membership size, historical giving, and district needs. They help unit coordinators understand these goals and create an achievable plan to meet them.
- **Ongoing Communication:** For support at any time (scheduling, materials, training, or general questions) contact your district's FOS leadership team or the council staff advisor.

RECOGNITION PROGRAM

The recognition program for units is designed to provide a series of achievable incentives for units to run FOS campaigns. Below are the ranks, the requirements for achieving those ranks and the premium that can be earned for each rank for the 2026 FOS campaign.

Unit Goal Level	Requirements for Packs	Requirements for Troops/Crews	Premium Earned
Scout Rank 	Raise at least \$20/Scout in unit FFOS contributions	Raise at least \$40/Scout in unit FFOS contributions	One free Local Adventure Day at Camp Sol R. Crown for the unit in the next 12 months
First Class Rank 	Raise at least \$40/Scout in unit FFOS contributions	Raise at least \$80/Scout in unit FFOS contributions	Free rank advancement patches for the next twelve months
Eagle Rank 	Raise at least \$80/Scout in unit FFOS contributions	Meet or exceed the FFOS Eagle Rank goal for the unit set by NEIC (typically, \$160/Scout, but higher for select units)	Packs: Free Pinewood Derby cars in 2027 Troops: Free Eagle required merit badges for the next twelve months

Notes on Unit Goals and Premiums

1. The premiums are cumulative. So, for example, a unit earning the Eagle rank will be entitled to the premium for each of the three ranks.
2. FOS pledges must be received by June 30 each year to be counted towards unit premiums.
3. The number of Scouts in a unit, for purposes of these goals, will initially be based on the number of Scouts registered on the unit roster on November 30 of the prior year. If that number changes appreciably due to drops or adds through year end (as reported in early March), the unit coordinator should reach out to the unit's District FOS Chair to reset the unit's targets.
4. Each 12-month period above runs from July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027.
5. An FOS donation by an NEIC Executive Board or Advisory Council member (other than district chairs and district commissioners) will be attributed to the Board FOS Campaign, rather than the unit campaign, excepting a secondary donation to the unit campaign by such a person.