

# Family Friends of Scouting

## Unit Guide to an Effective Campaign



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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](http://neic.org/friends-of-scouting).

# USING THE UNIT GUIDE & THIS YEAR'S UPDATE

## **The Unit Guide**

This 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.

This Unit Guide covers a wide range of topics, as shown by the Table of Contents on the preceding page. We hope it will answer all the questions that a unit coordinator or the families in a unit might have, and that it provides step-by-step guidance for running a campaign.

The contents of the Unit Guide itself are not expected to change from year to year. As a result, a returning unit coordinator will not need to comb through the Unit Guide each year, trying to discern what has changed.

## **This Year's Update**

However, there are some aspects of each annual FFOS campaign that may change to some extent from year to year, or even within a given year. So we will have a separate document each year, known as “This Year's Update,” that will set out those variable elements of an annual campaign. A returning unit coordinator can just review that document to understand what has changed from the prior year.

Examples of this type of variable information might include:

- Contact information for the council and district leadership for FFOS
- The means of setting FFOS goals for units
- The particular rewards available in the FFOS recognition program
- NEIC statistics that change from year to year

This Year's Update may be found by going to [www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting](http://www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting).

# 10 ESSENTIALS YOUR COUNCIL PROVIDES FOR YOUR UNIT

Just as Scouting teaches the “10 essentials” that a Scout needs in the outdoors, here are “10 essentials” that NEIC provides to your unit. Your support of the Family Friends of Scouting campaign makes these possible.

1. Well-maintained camping properties.
  - a. Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Scout Reservation: summer operation (staffing, food service, programs and activities) and year-round availability for units
  - b. Camp Sol. R. Crown: Year-round camping, self-service activities and staffed Local Adventure Days.
2. Fun and exciting summer camp programs:
  - a. Scouts BSA summer camp at Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Scout Reservation.
  - b. High adventure trips originating from Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Scout Reservation to multiple destinations in Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.
  - c. Family Adventure Camp for Cub Scouts and parents.
  - d. Cub Scout Day Camp.
3. Organized council-wide activities.
  - a. Examples include Boo Camp, Local Adventure Days, Cub Camporee and Pinewood Derby.
  - b. Discover Scouts program for underserved communities.
4. Youth and leader recruitment campaigns operating year-round.
5. Wide-ranging adult leader training.
  - a. Our training team offers in-person training throughout the year as well as online training.
6. Full and extensive liability insurance policies covering official Scouting activities, which must be consistent with the values, Charter and Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, operation manuals, and applicable literature of Scouting America.
  - a. General Liability
  - b. Accident and Sickness
  - c. Automobile Liability
  - d. Commercial Auto for NEIC owned vehicles (trucks at camps, etc.)
  - e. Property Insurance for Camps and Kasperson Center
  - f. Cyber Crime
  - g. Directors' and Officers' Liability

7. A fully functional council service center and Scout Shop: Kasperson Center for Scouting at Morrison Park.
  - a. Council maintains a large supply of uniforms, badges, certificates, awards, camping and other outdoor gear, literature, forms, and more.
  - b. Center is available for use by units for activities.
8. Comprehensive volunteer background checks.
9. A dedicated professional and support staff.
  - a. Each district has a fully dedicated district executive along with support for programs and advancement.
  - b. Support staff that handles hundreds of phone calls and visits from unit leaders, parents, donors and the general public seeking information about programs and procedures and that processes thousands of records.
10. Unit and council-wide support and communications.
  - a. Monthly Unit Leader News (Scouting Around) full of articles and help to support you.
  - b. Monthly Parent Newsletter.
  - c. Quarterly Supporter Newsletter.
  - d. An extensive volunteer network of Scout leaders to support your unit and your Scout (including unit service commissioners and committees focused on camping, outdoor activities, training, advancement, programs, and much more).

# NORTHEAST ILLINOIS COUNCIL FACT SHEET

Scouting America Northeast Illinois Council is the local service team for Scouting in northeastern Illinois. We empower young people to become the leaders of tomorrow. We provide a safe and inclusive environment that fosters teamwork, personal growth and a commitment to community service. With dedicated volunteers and community partnerships, we guide Scouts on a transformative journey, instilling values of integrity and respect and the idea that we all must be the example and not the exception. Through outdoor adventures, leadership training and mentorship, we equip Scouts with the skills and values needed to make a positive impact on society. Together, we build a better future, one Scout at a time.

*The mission of Scouting America Northeast Illinois Council is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.*

NEIC serves youths and adults in Lake and northern Cook counties. NEIC is split into three districts:



# WHY FAMILY FRIENDS OF SCOUTING?

Family Friends of Scouting is a way for current families and alumni in packs, troops, crews and ships to show their support for the Scouting program in our communities. FOS is conducted with substantial support from volunteers at the council and district levels. It provides an essential portion of the council's funding each year.

- Family Friends of Scouting contributions reflect the pride and support of the program by its adult leadership and families.
- Family Friends of Scouting contributions are made by members for members.
- Family Friends of Scouting contributions reflect the awareness that programs are offered at a reasonable cost to encourage participation by those who otherwise might not be able to afford to participate.
- Family Friends of Scouting is the best way to say THANKS for the multitude of opportunities provided to our youths while building character and teaching values-based leadership.
- A contribution to Family Friends of Scouting recognizes that, for our program to be all that it can be, it takes a commitment of time, talent and treasure.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **Q: What is Family Friends of Scouting (FFOS)?**

The FFOS campaign is an annual solicitation of financial support from current and alumni families within NEIC. FFOS is largely conducted by unit-level volunteers with the help of council-level volunteers and NEIC's professional and support staff.

## **Q: Are there other elements of Friends of Scouting (FOS) in NEIC?**

Yes. In addition to FFOS, NEIC's overall Friends of Scouting efforts include:

- a board campaign, which solicits NEIC's executive board and advisory council members and long-time "friends of the board"; and
- a community FOS campaign, which will solicit businesses and community groups within NEIC's service territory.

*A note on terminology:* Although unit-level solicitations are technically part of FFOS, we often use "FOS" or "FOS campaign" for convenience in this guide when discussing those unit solicitations. Units and unit coordinators are not being asked to have any role in the board or community FOS campaigns; those are being handled separately.

## **Q: Are FOS donations tax-deductible?**

Yes. NEIC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization. Each donor will receive a tax document following the end of the calendar year.

## **Q: How are FOS funds used?**

All funds raised in FOS campaigns sustain and enhance local Scouting programs. The funds raised through FOS are used to cover various expenses associated with operating Scouting at a council level, such as providing training materials, maintaining camping facilities, purchasing equipment and offering scholarships for Scouts.

## **Q: Is participation in FFOS mandatory?**

FFOS participation is entirely voluntary, and there are no adverse consequences for not giving. We recognize and appreciate that not everyone is willing or able to participate. We don't want to press anyone on a tight budget to donate, and we are not asking anyone to "give until it hurts." We'd rather say, "Give enough that it feels really good."

## **Q: If it's not required, why should I donate to FFOS?**

The decision to contribute to FFOS is personal. People give to FFOS because they believe strongly in the value of the Scouting program to prepare our youths to become the leaders of tomorrow.



**Q: What payment methods are available for FOS contributions?**

There are several available payment methods:

- Credit or debit card – Use the following steps:
  - go to [www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting](http://www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting)
  - Select gift amount and click “Pay with Card”
  - Enter contact information, and your unit info into the relevant boxes to ensure your unit receives recognition
- Pay by Bank Account – Use the following steps:
  - go to [www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting](http://www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting)
  - Select gift amount and click “Pay with Bank Account”
  - enter gift amount, contact information, and your unit info into the relevant boxes to ensure your unit receives recognition
- Pay now by check – Use the following steps:
  - go to [www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting](http://www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting)
  - scroll down to the “Pledge Form” resource link and click it
  - print out/download the pledge card
  - fill it out (except credit card info)
  - mail in your check and the completed form
- Pay later – Use the following steps:
  - Print out/download the pledge card (1<sup>st</sup> three steps in “Pay now by check”)
  - Fill it out (except credit card info)
  - Check box for “Please invoice me” under “Select Your Option”
  - Mail the completed form to the address on pledge form or scan it and email it to the council staff advisor.
- Use a third party payor (e.g., a donor-advised fund)
  - NEIC’s EIN is 36-2663224
  - For further assistance, email the council staff advisor. Contact information is found in “This Year’s Update”.

**Q: Don’t my Scout’s council fees already pay for Scouting?**

Yes, but they do not nearly cover the total cost of Scouting. Funding from FFOS and other sources are essential for NEIC to balance its budget without sacrificing the quality and breadth of Scouting programs and services you’ve come to expect.

**Q: Does FFOS replace my unit’s other fundraising, like popcorn?**

FFOS is in addition to any fundraising you do for your unit, including selling popcorn. Funds raised through the FFOS campaign go to support the council’s operating budget, which is solely dedicated to delivering the Scouting program in our communities.

**Q: Where does the money go that is raised through FOS?**

All the funds raised through FOS are used to support Scouting in NEIC. The overall FOS campaign provides a large of NEIC's overall operating budget – as shown in This Year's Update – which makes it an important element of NEIC funding.

**Q: Doesn't Scouting America provide funding for NEIC?**

No. Scouting America requires its local councils, like NEIC, to fund themselves. This approach provides far greater local control than would a top-down operation.

**Q: Doesn't NEIC raise enough funds through camping and other fees and sales of goods to support itself?**

No, it does not. Those sources account for only about 35% of NEIC's total support and revenue. To make Scouting available to as many families as possible, camping and other fees are kept at affordable levels, and NEIC also provides a lot of scholarships for youths. Fundraising through FOS and other channels is essential to balance the budget.

**Q: What does NEIC spend its money on?**

NEIC is in the business of delivering the Scouting program, and it spends money on a wide range of things that go its operation. About half of the budget consists of employment costs for NEIC staff. Other large items include the operation of NEIC's two camps (Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Scout Reservation and Camp Sol R. Crown) and real estate occupancy. Also, NEIC is actively seeking to bring the benefits of Scouting to lower-income and minority communities within the council borders that do not have a history of Scouting.

**Q: Is NEIC careful about its expenditures?**

Yes, it is. NEIC is governed by an executive board that makes a lot of difficult decisions to maintain fiscal discipline for the council. NEIC exemplifies the thrifty nature of a Scout.

# UNIT COORDINATOR POSITION DESCRIPTION

## Family Friends of Scouting Campaign *Unit Coordinator – Position Description*

### Responsibilities:

- Obtain or create a current roster of your unit's current parents and other adult leaders and members with family names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses.
- Obtain or create an alumni roster of your former members who likely have fond memories of Scouting and who may be interested in supporting your Family Friends of Scouting campaign. Include family names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses.
- Conduct a unit FFOS campaign using one of the two methods described below. *(Note: Templates for each type of message described below are included in this guide in the section titled "Communications Resources.")*
- **METHOD 1 (preferred): Kick off your unit campaign with an FOS presentation**
  - Advise your district FOS contact of a presentation date for your unit. Sometime between January 1 and the end of April is preferable, but May and early June presentations can be accommodated.
  - Advise your district FOS contact if you would like the district to provide an outside FOS presenter and/or another support person. *(Note: If you would like us to identify a presenter, please give your District Contact at least one week's advance notice.)*
  - Here is a suggested timeline for your campaign:
    - 2 days before the FOS presentation: Send a message to adults on the current roster and alumni, announcing the campaign and presentation.
    - Hold the FOS presentation. Introduce the FOS presenter at the unit event and endorse the FOS campaign. The FOS presenter will make the FOS presentation, and an FOS support person will assist the unit coordinator in distributing and collecting pledge cards.

- Collect pledge cards from the audience after the presentation and turn them in to the presenter or your District Contact.
  - The day after the presentation, follow up with email messages to those who did not turn in pledge cards following the presentation, soliciting their contributions to FOS.
  - Two to four weeks later, follow up with a second email solicitation to current members and alumni who have not yet participated.
- **METHOD 2 (permitted): Conduct an FOS campaign without an in-person FOS presentation.**
  - Advise your district FOS contact (i.e., the district FOS chair or vice chair) of your intention to use this approach.
  - Send FOS messages to all contacts on your current roster and alumni roster, soliciting their contributions, using this suggested timeline:
    - To initiate the campaign, send a message to everyone on the current roster and the alumni roster.
    - Two or three weeks later, send a follow-up message to all recipients who have not responded at that point, encouraging their support of the FOS campaign.
    - Three or four weeks after the second message, send a final message asking for support.

# TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN

## **Tips for all Campaigns**

- Select an adult who is well-regarded in the unit to serve as unit coordinator. Candidates include significant donors, former unit leaders and unit committee members, salespeople, Scouting alumni, parents of former scouts, and current adult members and committee members.
- Having good rosters of current families and alumni is important to an FOS campaign. In units that have some of NEIC's most successful FOS campaigns, alumni families can provide half or more of the total contributions. The alumni list should include, at a minimum, former adult leaders and families of Arrow of Light recipients or Eagle Scouts.
- Some units that run successful campaigns have found it beneficial to hold an informal gathering for large donors from prior years and select unit leaders a week or so prior to the campaign kickoff date. If your unit is interested in this idea, your district FOS contact can provide more guidance.
- You can track donations made in respect of your unit campaign by asking your District Contact to keep you informed.
- Follow the applicable timeline described above in the "Unit Coordinator Position Description" for sending messages. Sample messages are included in the Communications Resources section of this guidebook. These messages will help create awareness among families and alumni as to why FOS is important to support.
- Send a brief thank-you note to each donor in your unit.

## **Further tips for an FOS campaign that includes an in-person FOS presentation**

- Select an occasion for the presentation when you will have significant family participation. Events such as courts of honor, blue and gold banquets and pack meetings are good examples. (Troop meetings usually do not have many parents in attendance beyond unit leaders, so they probably are not good occasions.)
- If desired, the district can arrange for an FOS presenter to attend the unit event and make the FOS presentation. If the unit coordinator or another unit adult would prefer to make the presentation instead, that would be even better, as the audience will probably be more receptive to a unit member than to an "outsider," even one who is a fellow Scouter.

# FAMILY FRIENDS OF SCOUTING SUPPORT

A strong FFOS campaign is a team effort. Each district maintains a dedicated volunteer leadership group whose role is to guide units, provide resources, and ensure a smooth and successful campaign.

The **Family Friends of Scouting District Chair** leads FOS for all units in the district. This leader coordinates the recruitment of unit FOS coordinators, ensures each unit has a scheduled presentation, and provides strategic guidance throughout the season. The Chair also works closely with district volunteers and the council development team to monitor progress and ensure goals are met.

**Family Friends of Scouting Vice Chairs** support their District Chair by helping recruit unit coordinators, organizing volunteer presenters, and maintaining regular communication with units. They assist with follow-up regarding scheduled presentations, track unit progress, and help resolve questions that may arise.

*FFOS District Chairs and Vice Chairs are listed in This Year's Update.*

The **District Contact** for your unit in any year will be the volunteer Scouter who reaches out to your unit to discuss running an FOS campaign. In all likelihood, your District Contact will be either the FFOS District Chair or an FFOS District Vice Chair for your district.

## How the District Team Supports Your Unit

- **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. Up-to-date contact information is available in This Year's Update.

# RECOGNITION PROGRAM

The recognition program for units is designed to provide a series of achievable incentives for units to run FOS campaigns.

The committee has established a graduated series of “ranks” that a unit can achieve. Each rank will reward units for reaching a progressively higher level of donations. The unit goals are calibrated to the number of Scouts in the unit. The dollar levels are lower for packs than for troops and crews, reflecting the lesser time in Scouting for most Cub Scout families and the greater ability for troops and crews to engage alumni families.

The chart in This Year’s Update sets out the ranks, the requirements for achieving those ranks and the premium that can be earned for each rank.

## Notes on Unit Goals and Premiums

1. FOS pledges must be received by June 30 each year to be counted towards unit incentives.
2. 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 the end of February, the unit coordinator should reach out to the unit’s District FOS Chair to reset the unit’s targets.
3. 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.

# COMMUNICATIONS RESOURCES

The materials below are intended to help unit coordinators send messages to families in their units. The materials use the term “troop” throughout, but they can easily be adapted to packs or crews with a straightforward search-and-replace.

## MESSAGING FOR UNITS WITH AN IN-PERSON PRESENTATION

### Initial Message to Current Families (BEFORE the FOS Presentation)

Dear Troop/Pack \_\_ parents and leaders,

On [DATE of EVENT at \_\_: \_\_ [a.m./p.m.], Troop \_\_ is having our TITLE OF EVENT]. I am looking forward to seeing you there!

We will be having our annual Family Friends of Scouting (FOS) presentation at this event. FOS is the occasion each year when families across the entire Scouting America Northeast Illinois Council (NEIC) are asked to make a voluntary financial contribution.

FOS dollars go directly toward the Scouting program in NEIC. These dollars cover a multitude of costs, such as operations of NEIC’s camps and scholarships for families who need assistance to cover the cost of Scouting.

At the presentation, you will receive an FOS pledge card and will learn more about the campaign. To learn more about FOS or to give online, please visit [neic.org/friends-of-scouting](http://neic.org/friends-of-scouting). Among other things, that site includes buttons for “FAQs on FOS” and a form to “Donate Now,” if you are inclined to do so.

Donations to FOS are an important component of funding for NEIC’s operations.

I believe in Scouting and I believe that supporting our local program is important. Please join me and many other families across the council by giving a gift to the Family Friends of Scouting campaign. Together, we can help to cover the costs of these important resources that our Scouts enjoy each year. I ask that you show that you, too, believe in Scouting’s impact.

(Your Name),  
FOS Unit Coordinator  
(Troop/Pack #)



## **Follow-up Message to Current Families (AFTER the FOS Presentation)**

Dear Troop/Pack \_\_ parents and leaders,

Last [night/week], we held a Family Friends of Scouting presentation at our [TITLE OF EVENT]. I want to thank all of those in attendance who made a pledge or contribution to support Scouting America Northeast Illinois Council (NEIC). Your participation ensures that we can keep Scouting strong for all participants, including those in our troop.

A number of you were unable to make the presentation or did not turn in your card that night. We need your help!

Family FOS dollars go directly toward many unseen but vital expenses incurred by NEIC in the operation of its Scouting programs.

Your donation will not only help deliver Scouting across the NEIC, but they will also help move our unit closer to several rewards that we can earn if we meet certain giving thresholds. Our goal is to raise \$\_\_\_\_\_ at which point we will receive *Current Year Incentive*. So, you will be doing a good turn in two different ways by contributing!

If you have the means to continue supporting our unit and council, please join me in contributing to this worthy cause. Here are three ways to donate:

1. Credit card: Go to [www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting](http://www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting), then fill in the fields on the embedded form.
2. Check: Mail it to Northeast Illinois Council, 850 Forest Edge Dr., Vernon Hills, IL 60061, Attn: FOS. Indicate "FOS" and our unit number on the memo line.
3. Pledge now, pay later: Use the pledge form you received or download one at [www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting](http://www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting), fill it out and send it in.

Or, if you want to learn more about FOS, please visit [www.neic.org/Friends-of-Scouting](http://www.neic.org/Friends-of-Scouting).

Please join me in making sure all of our Scouts have the opportunity to be prepared for life. Every dollar helps the cause. Thanks in advance for your generosity!

(Your Name),  
FOS Unit Coordinator  
Troop/Pack \_\_

## **Initial Message to Alumni Families (can be sent before or after FOS presentation)**

Dear Troop \_\_ alumni families,

Last [night/week], Troop/Pack \_\_ held its [TITLE OF EVENT]. **Add some description of the event, such as:** *It was a jam-packed Court of Honor, recognizing our Scouts for all of their achievements and activities over the last several months.*

At this event, we also kicked off our annual unit Family Friends of Scouting (FOS) campaign. As you no doubt recall, FOS is the occasion each year when families across Scouting America Northeast Illinois Council (NEIC) are asked to make a voluntary contribution to support NEIC.

As a parent of one or more Scouts in our unit, you surely appreciate the benefits of Scouting. Scouting's aims are character development, leadership development, citizenship training and physical fitness, and the program instills our Scouts with these characteristics. I am willing to bet that you see these virtues in your own child(ren) who participated in Scouting!

FOS dollars go directly toward the Scouting program in NEIC. These dollars cover a multitude of costs, such as operations of NEIC's camps and scholarships for families who need assistance to cover the cost of Scouting.

Your donation will not only help deliver Scouting across the NEIC, but it will also help move our unit closer to several rewards that we can earn if we meet certain giving thresholds. Our ultimate goal is to raise \$\_\_\_\_\_ at which point we will receive [*Incentive specified in This Year's Update*]. So, you will be doing a good turn in two different ways by contributing!

If you have the means to continue supporting our unit and council, please join me in contributing to this worthy cause. Here are three ways to donate:

4. Credit card: Go to [www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting](http://www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting), then fill in the fields on the embedded form.
5. Check: Mail it to Northeast Illinois Council, 850 Forest Edge Dr., Vernon Hills, IL 60061, Attn: FOS. Indicate "FOS" and our unit number on the memo line.
6. Pledge now, pay later: Download the pledge form at [www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting](http://www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting), fill it out and send it in.

I believe in Scouting and I believe that supporting our local program is important. Together with many other families across the council, we can help to cover the costs of important resources that our Scouts enjoy. Please show that you, too, believe in Scouting's impact.

(Your Name),  
FOS Unit Coordinator,  
Troop \_\_

## **Additional Content for Messages & Follow-up Messages**

***In the event you would like to add more detail to your messages to current or alumni families, below are some potential insertions.***

***(More about the benefits of Scouting)*** The aims of Scouting are character development, leadership development, citizenship training and physical fitness, and our program does a phenomenal job of instilling our Scouts with these characteristics. I am willing to bet that you see these virtues in your own child(ren) who participated in Scouting!

***(More about the uses of FOS donations.)*** FOS helps to support local behind-the-scenes expenses that NEIC incurs: operating costs for Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Scout reservation and Camp Sol R. Crown, programs and activities—such as Pinewood Derby, Boo Camp, and Local Adventure Days—professional and camp staff salaries, and insurance policies that cover Scouting participants and NEIC property. FOS donations also help to fund scholarships for Scouts who can't afford the full cost.

***(More about the voluntary nature of FOS donations.)*** Please understand that FOS is voluntary; NEIC does not want to impose a further burden on families operating on tight budgets. NEIC wants to keep the cost of Scouting at an affordable level, and NEIC acknowledges that families, either directly or through participation in unit popcorn sales or other fundraising efforts, are already covering national and local registration fees, as well as camping and activity fees and unit dues.

***(More about ways to participate.)*** For families who would like to participate but would prefer to fill out a pledge card now and make their payment at a later date (or pay by check), there's a form for that! Just click on this link to access the pledge card. It can be filled out and mailed to the address on the form, or it can be scanned and sent to the NEIC FOS staff advisor.

### ***(More about the recognition premiums that the unit can earn – Alternative 1.)***

By the way, your donations will not only help deliver Scouting across the NEIC, but they will also help move our troop closer to several rewards that we can earn if we meet certain giving thresholds by June 30. These goals are:

<b><i>FOS "Rank"</i></b>	<b><i>Threshold*</i></b>	<b><i>Recognition**</i></b>
Scout	\$	
First Class	\$	
Eagle	\$	

***\*Note to unit coordinator: your District Contact will give you these thresholds.***

***(More about the recognition premiums that the unit can earn – Alternative 2.)*** Our Eagle goal is to raise \$\_\_\_\_\_ (at which point we will get a new unit flag with Scouting America branding), but at lower levels we can also win *[Fill in from This Year's Update]*. So you will be doing a good turn in two different ways by contributing!

## MESSAGING FOR UNITS WITH NO IN-PERSON PRESENTATION

### Initial Message to Current Families

Dear Troop/Pack \_\_\_ parents and leaders,

*[Insert an introduction, such as: I am a fellow parent in our troop. Our [son/daughter] \_\_\_\_, a 7th grader, is having a tremendous experience in scouting. And our [son/daughter \_\_\_\_], a college student, is a proud Eagle Scout.]*

Like many other scouts, our children have learned countless life lessons from the experiences, their fellow scouts and the incredible adult volunteers that have mentored them. Scouting has had a huge impact on our children, and we are so grateful that they are part of such a great program.

Each year our local council conducts a Family Friends of Scouting campaign, asking current and alumni families to support its efforts. With our donations, we help bring scouting to underserved communities, we help keep Makajawan running, and we provide much needed support to ensure our council remains in operation. (Note that the fundraising we do each year through our *[pancake breakfast/spaghetti dinner/wreath sales/etc.]* funds the operations of our unit only, not the council.)

The top-level fundraising goal for our unit is \$\_\_\_\_\_. That is eminently achievable, but we need significant participation to get there. In case you're interested, the average donation to NEIC is about \$430. But any amount is welcomed.

Please join me in contributing to this worthy cause. Here are three ways to donate:

1. Credit card: Go to [www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting](http://www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting), then fill in the fields on the embedded form.
2. Check: Mail it to Northeast Illinois Council, 850 Forest Edge Dr., Vernon Hills, IL 60061, Attn: FOS. Indicate "FOS" and our unit number in the memo space.
3. Pledge now, pay later: Download the pledge form at [www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting](http://www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting), fill it out and send it in.

With my thanks,

*Your name*

FOS Coordinator, Troop/Pack \_\_\_

## **Initial Message to Alumni Families**

Dear Troop \_\_ alumni families,

*[Insert a brief introduction, such as: Like you, I am a former Troop \_\_ parent. My two sons benefitted enormously from their association with the troop. Although my sons have aged out, I continue to be involved as an adult leader with the troop.]*

I suspect that you have fond memories of the time that you and your child(ren) spent in the Scouting program. I find that I appreciate the benefits of Scouting more and more as time passes, and I imagine that you do, too.

As you likely recall, each year the Northeast Illinois Council conducts a Family Friends of Scouting campaign, asking current and alumni families to support its efforts. With our donations, we help bring scouting to underserved communities, we help keep Makajawan running, and we provide much needed support to ensure the NEIC remains vital.

The top-level fundraising goal for our unit is \$\_\_\_\_\_, which we aim to raise by June 30 or sooner. That is eminently achievable, but we need significant participation to get there, and I hope that you are willing to help us get there. In case you're interested, the average donation to NEIC is about \$400. But any amount is welcomed.

Please join me in contributing to this worthy cause. Here are three ways to donate:

1. Credit card: Go to [www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting](http://www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting), then fill in the fields on the embedded form.
2. Check: Mail it to Northeast Illinois Council, 850 Forest Edge Dr., Vernon Hills, IL 60061, Attn: FOS. Indicate "FOS" and our unit number in the memo space.
3. Pledge now, pay later: Download the pledge form at [www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting](http://www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting), fill it out and send it in.

With my thanks,

*Your name*

FOS Coordinator, Troop \_\_

## **Idea for Follow-up Messages to Current or Alumni Families**

Follow-up messages to units, encouraging families to contribute, will likely be brief reminders. So we have provided examples, as we think they will likely vary across units. But we do have a few tips and possible topics to cover.

### **Tips**

- Consider forwarding (and referencing) the initial message that was sent to the group, as doing so will save the effort of repeating points already made.
- Use a subject line that might entice a recipient to open the email and read it. Possibilities might include:
  - Still looking for some Friends of Scouting...
  - Friends of Scouting needs your help...
  - A Scout is friendly...
  - Not too late to be a Friend

### **Topics**

- Indicate the current status of the unit campaign, both in dollars raised and in number of donors, and whether that level qualifies for any level of unit rewards
- Indicate the amount needed to reach the FOS incentive
- Mention that contributions must be made by June 30 to count toward the incentive
- Alumni donors are often interested to hear about developments in the unit, as they are likely not in close touch. Consider providing an update or two on recent activities, notable achievements, new leaders or other developments.

## OTHER RESOURCES

Other resources that you may wish to use in your email campaign, in-person campaign and/or pre- and post-communications include:

1. A three-minute video about the council that features highlights from scouts, parents, unit leaders and board members.
2. A second three-minute video that features the importance of Scouting in today's world with testimonials from scouts, parents, unit leaders, and board members.
3. A script in the event you choose to make your unit's presentation. We are happy to provide a presenter for you.
4. Downloadable Word Docs of the forms of messages in this guidebook.

All of these resources are available at <http://www.neic.org/friends-of-scouting>.