



July 30, 2012

Congratulations to your son!!!

Several month's ago your son may have attended the Maramech Hill Spring Camporee and was tapped out as a candidate to enter the Order of the Arrow, (also known as the 'OA'). If he was unable to attend, then he would have been told about his election at the Troop Meeting on Monday. For some parents, you may be well aware of the *OA - Scouting's Honor Society* - and the challenge, meaning, and symbolism involved. Others have been kept in the dark by their teenager, and, for all you know, this was just another weekend where your son returned with bag of dirty clothes and an interesting odor.

*Our History ...* The Order was begun in 1915 outside of Philadelphia. For the past 96 years, the OA has been made up of the best and brightest in Scouting. You should be proud that the Scouts in your son's unit see him as being one who lives the Scout Oath and Law in his daily life. However, the OA is not an award one earns like Eagle Scout; rather, it is a call for a life of *cheerful service to others*.

*About the Ordeal...* During the Ordeal, your son will face four challenges, each symbolic of 'the challenges a leader often faces.' He might not return home fully aware of the meaning of everything through which he has been. I want to share with you about these challenges so you can help him to understand and look ahead to how he can better serve his unit, his school, his family, and his community. The four challenges of the Ordeal are ...

- *A Vow of Silence...* the candidates will take on a 24-hour vow of silence. Hours spent in thoughtful silence helps us make the right decisions, more than many days of talking. Silence helps bind us all together in brotherhood.
- *Sleep Alone ...* on Friday night, the candidates will sleep alone on their groundsheet underneath the stars, (actually, not more than 20 feet away from anyone else). This challenges the candidates to be steadfast as the polestar, self-reliant and undiscouraged.
- *Scant Food ...* during Saturday, both the breakfast and lunch meals will be smaller than a typical meal. Through this form of fasting, sacrifice, and self-denial, they will learn that a cheerful heart is lively even under hardship.
- *Arduous Labor ...* the day will be spent working in service of one of the Council camps, as a day spent in cheerful service is consistent with the Order's purpose of seeking to serve and being faithful to the high ideals of the Order of the Arrow.

Your son will have several opportunities to complete his Ordeal Challenges. The first will be the weekend of June 1<sup>st</sup> thru the 3<sup>rd</sup>, at Camp Freeland Leslie at the Spring Fellowship. He will also be able to complete his Ordeal at any of the weeks of Summer Camp, (also at Camp Freeland Leslie). The last opportunity will be at the Scout Adventure Camp in Rochelle, Illinois, the weekend of the 14<sup>th</sup> through the 16<sup>th</sup> of September. Note that if your son does not seal his membership in 2012 he will have to be re-elected in 2013 in order to have another opportunity to complete his Ordeal.

For more information about the Order of the Arrow, visit the National Order of the Arrow website at: <http://www.oa-bsa.org/>. You should also visit the website of your local lodge, Lowaneu Allanque Lodge #41 at <http://oa41.com/>. There you can find information on lodge events, lodge forms, and keep updated on all the happenings!

Note that you will also find the forms to sign your son up to attend the Ordeal on the Lodge's website under the 'Lodge Forms' link (found under the Main Menu). Also under the Lodge Forms link you can find the annual registration form your son will need to re-register each year AFTER he has completed his Ordeal. Please be sure to keep him as a member in good standing by re-registering and paying his dues on time each year.

If your son is on Facebook have him send a Facebook Friend request to your Vice Chief, (Billy Doody), and he will add you to the Maramech Hill Chapter group (it is a closed group and you must be invited to view it). This is the number one way that the Chapter gets information out to its members.

As soon as he finishes his Ordeal, he can begin working on the 1<sup>st</sup> Year Arrowman Award. This is a relatively new award and your son can be among the first to earn it! More details on how to earn that are in the attached 'First Year Arrowman Award - Lowaneu Allanque' document.

Lastly, you should know that the OA is youth run: young men are able to take on district and council leadership roles beyond their units. Each district's OA chapter has a youth chapter chief. Your Maramech Hill chapter chief is Kenny Kratzer. In fact, this weekend's Call Out Ceremony was organized and led in large part by youth. It's an amazing organization, and I'm honored to work with these young men.

There is so much more to the Order of the Arrow - your son can have the time of his life as a part of the OA. Who knows the path he will take, but I do know this: being a brother in the Order of the Arrow is about being a person who serves his community, family, and Scouting unselfishly. The OA is about the joy of cheerful service to others. We are pleased to welcome him into the brotherhood!

In the spirit of Scouting,



*Bill Doody*  
*Associate Lodge Adviser of Committees*  
*Lowaneu Allanque Lodge #41*