

## COVER STORY: SERVICE TO AMERICA

## Project Ideas

- Be a Page in the State Assembly.
- Plant flowers at your town hall.
- Help direct parking for community events.
- Distribute "Have You Seen Me" posters for missing kids.
- Encourage participation in a ride share program.
- Build flower boxes in your neighborhood park.
- Form a youth court at your school or church to help resolve problems between kids.
- Work to save endangered species by helping an environmental group with spotting, posting signs, or raising public awareness.
- Become a pen-pal with religious Missionaries.
- Create a mentoring program for your Scouts to help younger kids in the community.
- Have your Scouts tutor other children who need help with reading or other skills.
- Sponsor a Family Walking Night.
- Find used and broken bikes, repair them and donate them to kids who can't afford them.
- Put together a first-aid kit for a homeless shelter.
- Create a website of local historical sites.
- Help fix up run down buildings and homes in your neighborhood.
- Volunteer your group to help wrap the coins donated to charity from a wishing well fountain.
- Start a family vegetable garden.
- Gather clothing that you have outgrown and give it to children's shelters in your area.
- Become a Super Sitter, then offer training on how to be one. Promote your community Super Sitters to neighborhood parents.
- Get out the Vote! campaign.
- Clean up a local park, playground, or school.
- Get involved with peer counseling.
- Invite the community to participate.
- Create a community Liberty Garden for our armed forces.
- Volunteer to do work around the church (Painting, cleaning, maintenance, etc.).
- Help decorate the dining hall for holiday dinners put on by other groups for the needy.
- Organize a "used sports equipment bank" to share old gear with families who can't afford new things.
- Work in Toys for Tots distribution.
- Scouts can learn (and teach) about Ham radio for emergency community preparedness.
- Hold a fitness contest at a community festival.
- Create and sign a "drug free pledge" and ask your friends to sign it, too.
- Volunteer for the American Red Cross.
- Volunteer to be a Salvation Army bell ringer.
- Repair and renovate a local cemetery or help preserve a local historical site.
- Ask people to cut six pack plastic rings before disposing of them.
- Get involved with Special Olympics.
- Offer to retire American flags for your city, schools, or business in your community.
- Help out with National River Clean up Week.
- Setup community compost bins to create fertile soil for people's gardens and planting projects.
- Community police ride-a-long.
- Hold a book drive and donate collected books to homeless shelters.
- Plant Trees on Arbor day.
- Work with your Chartered Partner on one of their special projects.
- Don't forget about Scouting for Food!
- Paint house numbers on curbs.
- Lobby for historical status for some local building that's important to your local history.
- Build fish habitats in neighborhood ponds, streams, rivers and lakes (you can use collected Christmas trees from a tree drive).
- Create a Bible study group within your Scout group.

## SCOUTER MAGAZINE'S RING OF SERVICE

There are two levels to the ring of service for both the Scout unit and the individual Scout. Each level includes an Honor recognition and a Meritorious recognition, for going above and beyond the minimum requirements. The Ring of Service is designed to be completed over the course of one year.

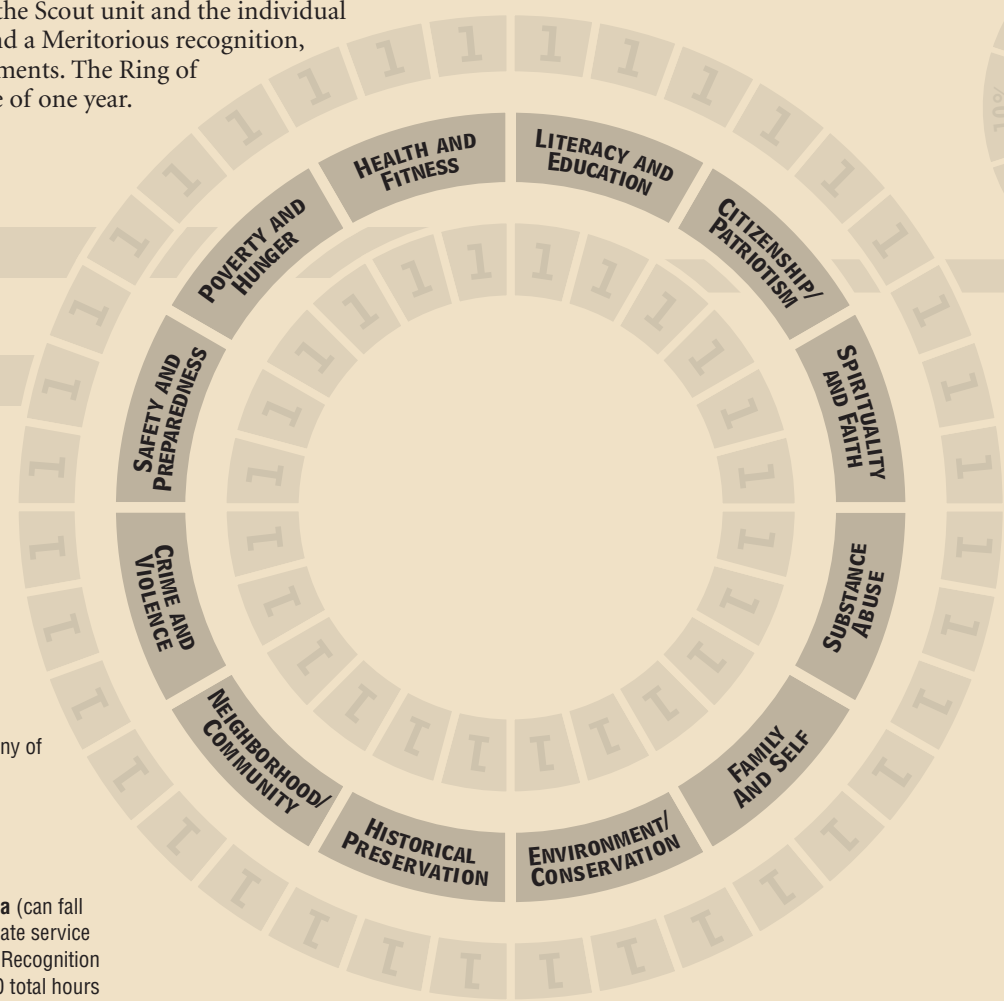
## SCOUT LEVEL AWARDS AND REQUIREMENTS:

## HONOR RECOGNITION

- Complete, at minimum, two hours of service in each of the twelve categories on the ring

## MERITORIOUS RECOGNITION

1. Earn the Honor Recognition.
2. Do at least three of these four requirements (service related requirements below can be fulfilled at the same time as earning Honor Recognition):
  - a. Plan and lead your fellow Scouts in a Service Project (which can be as part of a fulfillment for your own rank requirements)
  - b. Serve as a part of an Eagle Scout Service Project (not your own)
  - c. Be a part of a Service Project coordinated by any non-scout group (like your church youth group, or a school group, or a local service club)
  - d. Get yourself prepared to serve by becoming certified in any of the following programs:
    - CPR Certified
    - Red Cross First Aid certified
    - BSA or Red Cross Lifeguard or Lifesaving certified
    - Others?
3. Complete at least 36 additional hours of Service to America (can fall under any of the 12 Service Categories or any other appropriate service as judged by your unit leader. A Scout who earns Meritorious Recognition and the Ring of Service Medal will have completed at least 60 total hours of Service to America over the course of the year).



## SCOUTER MAGAZINE'S RING OF SERVICE

The *Ring of Service* is a program developed by SCOUTER Magazine to help your unit meet and even exceed the BSA's *Service to America* program requirements. To participate in the *Ring of Service* program requires a very significant commitment from your unit, and is only intended as a guide to help you really challenge your Scout group.

The BSA's *Service to America* program requires twelve hours of service per person; SCOUTER Magazine's *Ring of Service* doubles that requirement.

The *Ring of Service* is divided into twelve distinct areas of service:

- Literacy and Education
- Citizenship and Patriotism
- Spirituality and Faith
- Substance Abuse
- Family and Self
- Environment and Conservation
- Historical Preservation
- Neighborhood and Community
- Crime and Violence
- Safety and Preparedness
- Poverty and Hunger
- Health and Fitness

The *Ring of Service* program is just a guideline for you to develop a program that works for your unit. It can be ran in addition to the BSA's *Service to America* program, and operates completely on your honor as a unit leader. We have developed this program and provide it to you as part of SCOUTER Magazine's corporate commitment to America's Promise – *The Alliance for Youth*.

## LITERACY AND EDUCATION

The Boy Scouts of America considers illiteracy one of the "five unacceptables" in today's society. BSA has worked hard to come up with programs, support material, and literature acceptable for all reading levels to help combat this problem during the last decade. We, as Scouters, need to continue to take this one step further and use this material, as well as many of the other resources available, to help fight illiteracy in our communities. We need to bring attention and focus to helping the people in each community learn how to read. We also need to make our resources, our Scouts and adult leaders available to address this problem head-on. According to Ben Love, BSA's former Chief Scout Executive, "We are the nation's largest youth development organization, and as such we have a moral obligation to attack societal problems that adversely effect young people." He went on to say, "To get ahead in Scouting, you have to be able to read; this encourages literacy." The programs initiated by the BSA are only the start, though. Today there are many other resources available to fight this problem, from websites on the Internet, to community outreach programs that target minorities.

- Have members of your unit **volunteer to read to people** at local retirement homes. Involve the elderly by either reading to or being read to by your Scouts.
- **Hold a book drive** that collects new or used books and then donate them to the homeless or needy.
- Ask your Scouts if they would like to **tutor other children** who need help with reading and writing.

<http://literacy.nifl.gov/>  
<http://www.barbarabushfoundation.com>

## CITIZENSHIP AND PATRIOTISM

Participating in citizenship is one of the cornerstones of the Scouting Movement. "Duty to Country" is one of the three points of the Scout Oath. It is what Scouts are known for, what Scouts should plan for, and what has been expected of every Scout from the beginning. Planning community service hours around flag ceremonies, parades, and celebrations brings a tremendous sense of pride to your Scouts and Troop. Giving them the opportunity to show patriotism at an early age breeds honor and respect for our flag and country.

- Offer to **retire flags** for local business and community centers. Your Scout unit can contact businesses that display flags that are tattered and torn and offer to retire them. Set up a specific date and hold a proper flag retirement ceremony to retire all of the flags collected.
- Have your Scout unit develop a **Color Guard or Honor Guard** to be used at Flag Ceremonies, Sports Events, and parades. Let people in your community know that you have this service and you will have more requests than you know what to do with. Color Guards will be used during the parades, and Honor Guards will be used for ceremonies and escorts for dignitaries.
- There are many opportunities for your Scouts to help in your local government offices. For instance, Scouts have served as Pages in the State Assembly; volunteered for local elected officials; and helped the local City Council with projects. **Get Out The Vote** is also popular.

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