

Voyageur Trace (VT) District Master Brochure

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FACT: A well planned program, delivered by a trained leader, with a strong outdoor element, supported by a good commissioner, attracts and retains youth!

Dear Scouter,

We salute you as a Scouting volunteer, and hope you fully realize the powerful and positive effect you have on the youth in your unit and in our community.

In an effort to make your job easier, we have compiled this brochure to answer the questions we are most commonly asked by Scouters like yourself.

As your “district key 3”, we welcome your comments/suggestions regarding this brochure, and on any other topic involving the Voyageur Trace (VT) District.

With continued best wishes,

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Important Upcoming Voyageur Trace (VT) Dates:

- **District Awards for Scouters – application deadline October 31st**
- **Resource Gatherings (a.k.a. Roundtables) for ALL Scouters**
 - **2nd Wednesday of the month**, from September through May, 7:00-8:30 p.m. at Plymouth Place/Dole Hall, 315 N. La Grange Road, La Grange Park, IL 60526
- **Monthly Committee Meeting**
 - **4th Monday** 7:00-8:30 p.m. at Plymouth Place, 315 N. La Grange Road, La Grange Park, IL 60526
Except December and May when it is the 3rd Monday due to holidays.

Your Personal Training Record

It's important for you and for your Scouting unit that your personal training record is kept up to date. One reason is that this year for the first time, all of the leaders on your scouting unit's charter must be fully trained in order for the unit to recharter.

Q1: **How do I access my personal training record?**

A1: Your scouting unit's "key 3" leaders (Committee Chair, Charter Organization Representative, and Cub Master or Scoutmaster or Crew Advisor) can access your training records and update them at www.my.scouting.org For more information about training records, email our District Training Chair.

Q2: **My training is recorded under more than one BSA ID number for me. How do I fix this?**

A2: We have found that many of our leaders have more than one id number. This situation adversely affects how online training, especially Youth Protection Training, is recorded with the units. Every registered leader should check with their unit committee chairman and obtain their id number. Your primary id number, listed on you're my.Scouting profile, needs to be the id number that is on your unit's charter. Once you have the id number, go to www.my.scouting.org. Enter your username and password. If you forgot either

your username or password, request that the information be sent to you, **do not create a new account**. Your id number can only be attached to one account (profile). Once the program loads, click on My Profile or Update My Profile from the left side of the screen. Verify that all the information on your profile is correct. If the id number listed at the bottom of your profile is different from the id number from your unit, you must add the new id number and mark that as **your primary scout id number**. Be sure to select Pathway to Adventure, #456, from the council drop down box. If the number is correct, no further action is necessary unless there are other changes you need to make to your profile (be sure your current e-mail is correctly shown). Once any changes have been made, be sure to save the information. This will allow the online training that you have done through MyScouting to be properly recorded with your unit. If you have any older training records attached to some of these non-primary id numbers, contact your district executive and they can arrange to merge the accounts so all of your training shows up under your primary id (the number on your unit charter). If anyone has any questions or needs assistance, please have them contact our training chair.



Training for Scouters

The Boy Scouting program simply cannot be properly delivered to our youth without its leaders being trained. Special focus is being given this year to leader training. We're not just talking about Youth Protection Training – we're talking about leaders specific training.

Some classes offer the option of online training vs. classroom. Of course all Scouters lead busy lives, but don't kid yourself into thinking that the training experience is the same. If at all possible, go for the live training. Among other benefits, live training gives you the chance to meet and learn from others in your same position.

Our District Training Chair will be happy to answer any and all questions regarding leader training requirements, upcoming classes, etc.

Another great resource is our council's training webpage <http://pathwaytoadventure.org/training/>. One of the many advantages of being part of a much larger council is the near countless training opportunities in the greater Chicagoland area.

PS. If you are an older, experienced Scouter, please consider two things:

1. Offer your services to our District Training Committee to teach a course. We can always use seasoned Scouters to share their wisdom and experiences.
2. Re-take your leader specific training classes. You no doubt have forgotten some things, and the courses have changed over the years – especially in Cub Scouting.



Charter Renewal for your Scouting Unit

Q1: **When is the best time for my unit to recharter?**

A1: With over sixty scouting units rechartering, it takes a herculean effort to properly submit all of them before National BSA's deadline. **PLEASE recharter BY THANKSGIVING.** If for whatever reason your Scouting unit has a tradition of waiting until the end of December, this is the year to **break that tradition.** Other Voyageur Trace (VT) units recharter in November. So can yours.

Waiting until December puts an unnecessary and unfair strain on VT professional staff, support staff and volunteer Scouters. Make your very first gift of the holiday season an early charter renewal, so everyone can enjoy the holidays at home with their loved ones.



Q2: **What is the single most important thing I can do to make my unit's rechartering easier?**

A2: Without a doubt, it is to *immediately* submit all of your youth and adult applications to the La Grange service office – *before* you begin the rechartering process. Then, when you recharter, all of the names and pertinent information will already have been recorded, and will already be on your charter document.



Q3: **What is the single biggest mistake I can make?**

A3: Without a doubt, it is to *not* immediately submit all of your youth and adult applications to the La Grange service office. Here's why. Until all Scouts and Scouters are registered, **THEY ARE NOT COVERED BY BSA INSURANCE.** That is a huge and unnecessary risk you take. Why put yourself, the other unit leaders and your chartering organization in legal jeopardy? Always submit ALL youth and adult applications immediately.

There are two other major reasons: Your Scouts cannot advance in rank, and your leaders cannot register for training until their applications have been processed. **But wait, there's still another major reason:** Certain scout rank advancements and certain adult recognitions have tenure requirements. The clock doesn't start ticking until their applications have been processed.



Q4: **I want to be a good person and recharter now, but I'm lost; how do I get help?**

A4: The answers you need may be awaiting you on the Pathway to Adventure Council website

- ❖ www.PathwayToAdventure.org

- ❖ Click "Resources" from the blue ribbon across the top of the home page. Click "Unit Resources" from the drop down menu. Click any of the links under the heading "Rechartering"

If that doesn't answer everything, contact your Unit Commissioner. Nothing would make him or her happier than you asking for help in October to complete your charter renewal.

Voyageur Trace District Annual Awards Banquet

Are you in the minority that doesn't join the annual celebration of our District's volunteer Scouters? Then mark your calendar now for the Annual Awards Banquet in January. Bring your spouse, bring your friends, and bring all of the Scouters from your unit. It's a fun and very reasonably priced dinner party near to home. Your Annual Awards Banquet is a non-uniform event, with a cash bar.

NEW FOR THIS UPCOMING BANQUET:
New Awards for Unit Scouters

If you or other Scouters in your unit have ever felt a little disconnected from the larger Scouting world, then this is the celebration that you won't want to miss.



Voyageur Trace District Awards for Volunteer Scouters & Scout Units

Do you know a volunteer Scouter who goes above and beyond in her or his service to youth? You owe it to that person to recommend her/him to receive at our Annual Awards Banquet either the . . .

Voyageur Trace District Distinguished Service Award or the Voyageur Trace District Award of Merit



You can find the applications for these two prestigious awards on the Voyageur Trace District web page at <http://www.pathwaytoadventure.org/districts/voyageur-trace/> or you can stop by the La Grange Service Center, or just email our District Recognition Awards Chair for the pdf versions. Just complete the application as best as you can – the awards committee will research the candidate to complete the profile.

Applications are due by October 31st, and may be sent to our District Recognition Awards Chair.

But wait, there's more.

BSA Veteran Award

. . . which recognizes BSA Volunteers for their tenure in Scouting. This award is given in five-year increments, starting with Scouters who have been active for at least five years. More information and the Veteran Awards Application can be found at: <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/membership/pdf/524-701.pdf>

Journey to Excellence (JTE)

Would you embark on a cross-country trip without a map or GPS? It would be equally foolhardy to try to run a Scouting unit without Journey to Excellence (JTE). JTE is an invaluable tool to guide you through the Scouting year. It is an easy-to-follow map to help your unit realize its goals and evaluate its performance. Submit your JTE form along with your unit's recharter documents. Learn more about JTE at:

<http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/Awards/JourneyToExcellence.aspx>



Did you know that JTE isn't just for units? It is also for districts and councils. Your Voyageur Trace District is proud to have earned Silver last year. For us to earn Gold depends in large part upon your unit having fully trained leaders, going camping, recording Scout advancements on a timely basis, scoring well on your JTE goals, etc. – all things that come naturally to a well-run Scouting unit.

Resource Gatherings (a.k.a. Roundtables) / Meet Your Unit Commissioner

- ✓ Do you want to become more confident in your role as a Scouter?
- ✓ Would you like to know more about the resources available to you to make your Scouting experience easier?
- ✓ Would it be helpful to draw from the experiences of other Scouters who serve in the same role as you?
- ✓ Could you benefit from a stronger relationship with your Unit Commissioner?

If your answers are **yes, yes, yes** and **yes** --- then join the conversation on the **second Wednesdays of the month from September through May at Plymouth Place's beautiful Dole Hall starting at 7:00 p.m.**

Plymouth Place is located in the heart of our district, at **315 N. La Grange Road, La Grange Park.**

It's an excellent opportunity to meet and mingle with your District "Key 3", and the entire District Commissioner staff. Make it a group event by bringing all the Scouters in your unit. See you there!



Advancements – How to Record Them

You can now enter your unit advancement on www.my.scouting.org. As of June 2019, there is a new and much improved version available that includes some of the features already available in Scoutbook.

A better tool to track scout advancements can be found at www.scoutbook.com. Here's one of the best features of this web app: once you enter the information in Scoutbook, it automatically updates National BSA's advancement records! You no longer need to click another button to "Submit to Council."

If you have advancement questions, reach out to our District Advancement Chair.

How to Access the Voyager Trace District web page & calendar

Start by visiting the Pathway to Adventure Council (PTAC) website: www.PathwayToAdventure.org

To view the Voyager Trace District web page:

- On the blue ribbon near the top of the PTAC home page, hover over “Districts”, then click “Voyager Trace District” from the drop-down menu – we’re at the very bottom of the list, because they saved the best for last! You’ll land at <http://www.pathwaytoadventure.org/districts/voyageur-trace/>
- Once you’ve arrived on our district web page, you’ll see eight tabs to choose from. Be certain to click on “Events” to see some of what is on the agenda for the year.

To view the Voyager Trace District calendar:

- On the blue ribbon near the top of the PTAC home page, hover over “Calendar”, then click “Calendar” from the drop-down menu.
- Click the word “Districts” in the upper left, then click the little box to the immediate left of “Voyager Trace”, then click the blue “Apply Filter” button. (All this serves to clear from your view the events for the other fifteen PTAC districts, leaving just Voyager Trace entries and relevant council entries.) Of course you are more than welcome to attend events anywhere in the council. You can select more than one district before applying the filter.
- You can also further narrow your calendar view by clicking “Categories” above the “Apply Filter” button and selecting as many or as few categories before clicking on the “Apply Filter” button.

Connect with your District via Social Media

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background.

Like Voyager Trace on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/voyageurtrace/>



Scouting Unit Tools

Need help getting started with some of the basic Scouting unit tools? Then

- visit the Pathway to Adventure Council (PTAC) website at www.PathwayToAdventure.org
- Click “Resources” from the blue ribbon across the top of the home page
- Click “Unit Resources” from the drop down menu, to see:
 - Journey to Excellence (JTE) scorecards and goal setting sheets
 - Unit Calendar templates
 - Budget examples and templates
 - Sales Tax Exemption Certificates
 - ... and much more. More links are being added all the time.

Community Service Hours – How to Report Them

Service hours reporting is available on your my.scouting.org web page under “Legacy Tools.” Click the link for “Journey to Excellence Resources” for lots of helpful information.

We have listened to you, and have devised a simplified system for your Scouting unit to enter its community service hours. Visit <https://servicehours.scouting.org/> to log in and enter your hours

Q: Does my troop need to complete this form for Service Hours performed as part of an Eagle Scout Service Project, or is that done by others?

A: The hours are already entered by Paul Whittenhall, who is a Professional Scouter responsible for certifying the final Eagle paperwork. The service hours will be credited to the Eagle Scout’s troop.

Q: What did our district do in community service hours?

A: VT District total hours for 2018 were 8,381. Please remember to input ALL of your units community service hours.

Eagle Scout Service Project Concept Approval



Before we start, let’s clarify some terminology.

- **District Eagle Coordinator (DEC):** Volunteer Scouter who is a member of the district a committee and is authorized to approve Eagle Scout Service Projects for the council. DEC’s also chair Eagle Boards of Review (EBOR) as the council representative. In addition to their work with Eagle candidates, DEC’s serve as an advancement resource to packs, troops and crews.
- **Eagle Coach:** Volunteer Scouter who helps guides Life Scouts along the Eagle trail. Often an Eagle Coach works only with Scouts in his own troop.
- **Eagle Mentor:** This was an official position within the district advancement committee when we were Des Plaines Valley Council. This position no longer exists. However, some people refer to an Eagle Coach as an Eagle Mentor.

Q.: How does a Life Scout get his Eagle Scout Service Project concept approved?

A.: He emails the District Eagle Coordinator (DEC) assigned to his troop. (The DEC is then responsible for informing the Voyager Trace Advancement Committee Chair of the Scout’s progress.)

Voyager Trace District has four DEC’s, each of which is assigned to specific troops, as follows:

Tom Frencl	snacker1@sbcglobal.net	Troops 1, 3, 24, 31, 32, 35, 73, 90, 92, 126
Matthew Kelly	Matthew.Kelly@cmegroup.com	Troops 22, 60, 111
Greg Lietz	GPLsvs1@gmail.com	Troops 12, 14, 33, 39, 117
Paul Sulak	P.Sulak@sbcglobal.net	Troops 13, 19, 216, 301

Merit Badge Counselors

An approved Merit Badge Counselor (MBC) can choose to serve just the Scouts in her/his troop, or can serve all Scouts in need. There is just one MBC List for our entire council, which currently does not show “in troop only” MBC’s. The most current MBC List is sorted first by community (we are in the West or La Grange Community), then by merit badge name, then by counselor’s last name. Any Scoutmaster, Troop Committee Chair or Troop Advancement Chair can get a refreshed copy by emailing our District Advancement Chair.

The council advancement committee is working hard to make several enhancements to the MBC List. The information on the MBC List is becoming more accurate and stable with each new version. Stay tuned.



Q1: How do I become a MBC?

A1: The three documents shown below need to be clipped together and either delivered to our La Grange Service Office or sent to:

Mr. Paul Whittenhall
BSA - Arlington Heights Service Center
617 E Golf Rd, Ste 101
Arlington Heights, IL, 60005

- Completed MBC Application, found at <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/34405.pdf>
- Completed Adult Application showing 42 as the Adult Position Code (no fee required).
- Current Youth Protection Training (YPT) Certificate.

The approval process should take about two weeks if all of the paperwork is in good order.

Q2: I’m currently a MBC, but my name isn’t on the list; what do I do next?

A2: Email Frank Benda at Frank.Benda@comcast.net your full name, BSA ID Number and Unit Number. Indicate that you are a Scouter in the Voyageur Trace District. Frank will look to see if you are missing a credential; show an expired (or soon to be expired) YPT certificate; etc. Frank is a volunteer Scouter who has extensive experience with MBC Lists. If anyone can figure it out, it’s Frank!

Q3: I’m already an MBC, but haven’t received a renewal application lately; what do I do next?

A3: See A2 above.



What Your District Does for You

The basic purpose of a district is to mobilize resources to ensure the growth and success of units within the district's territory.

All districts are responsible for carrying out four standard functions: **membership**, **fund development**, **program**, and **unit service**.

- The **membership** function strives for growth through the organization of new Scouting units and growth through new members joining existing units.
- The **fund development**, function sees that the district provides its share of funds to the total council operating budget.
- The **program** function concentrates on helping Scouting units with camp promotion; special activities, including community service; training adult volunteers; and youth advancement and recognition.
- The **unit service** function provides direct coaching and consultation by district volunteers for unit adults to help ensure the success of every Scouting unit.

The **membership**, **fund development**, and **program** functions are carried out by members of the district committee. The **unit service** function is carried out by the district commissioner staff.

Our district, Voyageur Trace, has 26 Packs, 26 Troops and 4 Crews. These units represent 1,345 Scouts and 565 Scouters, for a total of 1,910 members served. (Note: A "Scout" is a youth; a "Scouter" is an adult volunteer.) In this inaugural year we are serving 20 female Cub Scouts and 50 female Scouts BSA in addition to the 10 female Venturers we already had.

With this large of a district, we rely on many volunteers to keep the gears turning. Contact any of the District Key 3 shown at the top of page 2 for more info on how you can help.

History of our District's Name: *Voyageur Trace* by Ernie Froemel

When West Suburban and Thatcher Woods Councils merged, I think in 1993, the districts were reorganized and new names were solicited from our Scouters. Dave Wells, the District Executive, noted that we were in the middle of the canoe and portage routes used by the Voyageurs in their trading.

Marquette and Joliet used this route or trace in their explorations and were the first to write about it. "Trace" just means a path or trail made by animals or people. There are still traces of the Voyageurs in some of the forests and untouched areas in our boundaries, and various nearby rendezvous portray their lifestyles.

Near Harlem and 47th in Lyons, there is a statue commemorating the Voyageurs in the Chicago Portage National Historic Site, which includes the western end of the portage linking the Des Plaines River to the Chicago River, thus connecting the Great Lakes to the Mississippi River.



The history was compelling enough that we chose the name "Voyageur Trace," keeping the original spelling to honor those explorers. Dave Wells designed the Voyageur Trace logo which includes pack, moccasins, canoe paddle, and wagon wheel.

An interesting bit of our local history that many of your Scouts might want to learn!

BSA Structure

Scouters, especially newer ones, sometimes get a little fuzzy on the difference between District and Council. So let's start at the top. In terms of the BSA organization, our country is divided into ...

- **regions**, which are divided into ...
- **areas**, which are divided into ...
- **councils**, which are divided into ...
- **communities**, which are divided into ...
- **districts**



You serve in the Central Region, Area 7, Pathway to Adventure Council (PTAC), West Service Area, Voyageur Trace (VT) District.

To more fully complete the council picture for you, PTAC is comprised of four areas, which basically are the four legacy councils from which PTAC was created in January, 2015. The four PTAC areas are:

- ♣ **South** (formerly the Calumet Council), consisting of 4 districts: Crossroads, Nishnabec, Prairie Dunes and Thunderbird.
- ♣ **East** (formerly the Chicago Area Council), consisting of 4 districts: Founders (formerly Ft. Dearborn, North River & Western Trails), Greater Southside, Indian Trails and Iroquois Trails (formerly Iroquois & River Trails)
- ♣ **North** (formerly the Northwest Suburban Council), consisting of 4 districts: Blackhawk, North Woods, Pathfinder and Signal Hill.
- ♣ **West** (formerly the Des Plaines Valley Council), consisting of 4 districts: Arrowhead (formerly in Chicago Area Council), Tall Grass, Twin Lakes and Voyageur Trace

Since the Des Plaines Valley Council (and the other three legacy councils) no longer exists, it's best to replace any old shoulder patches with the PTAC Council shoulder patch – so you are in synch with your Scouts.

The Voyageur Trace District represents the communities of Bedford Park, Berwyn, Bridgeview, Brookfield, Countryside, Forest View, Hodgkins, Indian Head Park, Justice, La Grange, La Grange Park, Lyons, McCook, North Riverside, Riverside, Stickney, Summit, Westchester, Western Springs, and Willow Springs.

Each community has a service office. The professional Scouters and support staff at those offices are often “shared resources”, providing services to many others throughout our council. The West Service Area office is located at 811 West Hillgrove, La Grange, Illinois 60525. (It's just across the railroad tracks from Lyons Township High School North.)

We are very fortunate that there is also a National Scout Shop at that facility. Telephone: 708.352.3144. You can find the Scout Shop on Facebook at **La Grange Scout Shop** <https://www.facebook.com/LaGrangeScoutShop/> Hours: Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri 9 AM – 5 PM / Thu 9 AM – 7 PM / Sat 9 AM – 3 PM

Each district is assigned a “Professional Scouter”. This is someone who had dedicated his/her career to Scouting. It's a full time job – and then some! The Professional Scouter for most districts is a “District Executive (DE)”. At times, Voyageur Trace is fortunate to have a Professional Scouter who is one level higher, a “District Director (DD)”.

Voyageur Trace District Committee

The District Committee is made up of volunteers. Some serve as Members at Large, Committee Members, or Committee Chairs – similar to your unit committees. You can find the contact info for the District Committee on the Leadership tab of our web site. <http://pathwaytoadventure.org/districts/voyageur-trace/?tab=leadershiptab>
If your unit needs assistance with anything, please feel free to reach out to your District Committee. We are here to help you succeed and prosper.

Helpful Websites

- ♣ Order of the Arrow – Takhone Lodge: <http://oa7.org>
- ♣ The Ultimate Scouting Resource Website: <http://scoutingwire.org/>
- ♣ Advancement (kiss your old advancement tracking software good-bye): <https://www.scoutbook.com/>
- ♣ Bryan on Scouting: <http://blog.scoutingmagazine.org/>
- ♣ Pathway to Adventure Council (PTAC): <http://pathwaytoadventure.org>
- ♣ BSA National: <http://www.scouting.org>
- ♣ BSA Online Learning Center: <http://my.scouting.org>
- ♣ BSA Online Retail Store: <http://www.scoutstuff.org>

