

# Scout Spirit Goals

If you look in your Boy Scout Handbook at the rank requirements, most of them are pretty straight forward - demonstrate first aid for serious burns, tie a bowline, earn 6 merit badges, etc. However, beginning with the Second Class rank there is an added, more indefinite requirement: *Show Scout Spirit*.

The Scoutmasters have had a lot of questions over the years about what exactly "*Show Scout Spirit*" means. NO it doesn't mean that on Halloween night you dress up as the ghost of Baden-Powell (or any other famous Scout Spirit).

National BSA must have had a lot questions too, because they changed the requirement recently to read "*Demonstrate Scout Spirit* by living the Scout Oath and the Scout Law in your everyday life." That's a little better, but still... what does it mean?

The first thing you need to understand about *Scout Spirit* is that even though the requirement looks the same for each rank, it's really different - *Scout Spirit* for Life Scout is very different (and much harder) than *Scout Spirit* for Second Class. You'll discover that the scoutmasters will only sign you off for one "Scout Spirit" requirement at a time, because each one is harder than the next.

The other thing that you will notice is that unlike almost all the other requirements, you can never convince a Scoutmaster to sign off the *Scout Spirit* requirement on the spot. Tie a bowline, and he'll sign that off; show him your merit badge card and he'll sign off that requirement for Star, but he'll never just up and sign off that pesky *Scout Spirit* one. That's because you must demonstrate *Scout Spirit* in your everyday life, not in the five minutes you're talking to the Scoutmaster. What happens is that at meetings and especially on campouts, the Scoutmasters are like Santa Claus - they're always watching you, to see when you are naughty or nice. *Scout Spirit* should be shown at all times, and generally this requirement is one of the last ones to be signed off for any rank. Scoutmasters will want to see the appropriate *Scout Spirit* for some period of time before they sign off the requirement. For Second Class that may only be for a campout and the last few meetings, but for Eagle it may be for several months.

What are they looking for? Believe it or not, there's a "Scoutmaster's cheat sheet" that the Scoutmaster and his friends all have to give us some idea. Here is just a few of the things we look for: By the way, we expect Scouts to not only follow the items listed for that rank, but also all the items for the previous ranks.

## Second Class

- Do you participate in lots of troop activities regularly (better than 50%, and better than 75% for Troop Officers and Patrol Leaders)?
- Do you come to "work" activities like service projects and meetings, as well as fun nights?
- Do you try not to complain or put other people down, even when you feel bad or you have to do a task like cleanup?
- Are you willing to try new things, and keep trying even when you don't succeed at first?
- Do you pay attention when we need you to, and know when to stop what you're doing to help out?
- Do you come prepared for campouts? Do you keep track of your stuff, or lose it a lot?
- Do you never bully, harass, or joke around with other Scouts unless they are willing & happy participants?

## First Class

- A first class *Scout Spirit* Scout must never complain about weather, or work, or cleanup, and must never

gripe or "whine" when a leader makes a decision they do not like.

- A Scout must never criticize others harshly, or make fun of other Scouts whose skills aren't as good.
- Do you handle normal personal tasks and patrol tasks (cooking, camp setup and tear down, getting water, etc.) without being asked?
- Do you keep an eye on others in the troop and help them out - like pickup their garbage, or quietly returning stuff they forgot or left out, so that the Scoutmaster doesn't get it?
- Do you sometimes lend a hand teaching new Scouts some of the basics (and you can do it without yelling)?
- Are you starting to help out your patrol leader & troop by offering ideas for events, and helping to organize and call people when needed?
- Do you listen & learn well when a Scoutmaster or more advanced Scout tries to teach you something, or do you play "know-it-all"?
- Do you show *Scout Spirit* at home and in school?
- Do you also meet the requirements for Second Class?

### **Star**

- For Star rank, you have to serve in a troop leadership position. Did you serve well and help out the troop, or did you miss meetings, show up unprepared, not get things done, etc.?
- Are you starting to show the kind of leadership a First Class Scout should know? Do you help organize other Scouts to get things done at campouts (like put up dining flies, set up campfires, etc.?)
- Do you watch out for other Scouts and make sure they're doing OK - on the trail, in camp, etc.?
- Can you be relied on to finish what you start?
- Are you always ready to assist and be helpful when you see something that needs doing, or do you just "hang out" with your buddies?
- Do you show respect for other Troop Leaders as you would like them to respect you when you're leading?
- Do you also meet the requirements for First Class and Second Class?

### **Life**

- As a troop leader (even if you don't hold an office), do you actively take up leadership when you see something that needs doing?
- Can you organize & coordinate other Scouts of all ages (without yelling)?
- Are you a major player in the "behind-the-scenes" work that makes the troop run - organizing equipment, making camping arrangements, setting up activities for the PLC?
- Are you a good, patient teacher and example to younger Scouts?
- Are you involved in your school or in the community as a volunteer?
- Do you also meet the requirements for Star, First Class and Second Class?

### **Eagle**

- Do you participate actively in all troop activities?
- Do all the adults and Scouts treat you almost as if you were another Scoutmaster?
- Are you involved in your school and community as a leader?
- Do you also meet the requirements for Life, Star, First Class and Second Class?

**WARNING:** Using this list to ARGUE with a Scoutmaster over whether you have *Scout Spirit* is a sure way NOT to get it. NO Whining! Get the picture? To show "*Scout Spirit*" means to live up to your word and be Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful at all times! Good luck, & keep working on that Spirit at every meeting and campout.

Document Courtesy of : C. Baelz