



Northeast Region Jewish Committee on Scouting

November 2025 Newsletter

NER JCOS Chairman's Message

By Barry Hantman

I'm excited! Why am I excited? I'm excited to see all of the great events that are scheduled for Jewish Scouts in the coming year. The 100th Anniversary of the National Jewish Scouting (NJCOS) is going to be fantastic with many activities planned including the Annual Jewish Scout Conclave, Kosher Klondike, Scout Shabbat Services across the region, the Scouts Read Sacred Texts event, the Northeast Region Kinus, the NJCOS Philmont Trek, the National Jamboree (with a Shomer-Shabbat contingent and large NJCOS display area), the NJCOS 100th Anniversary Jewish Camporee, 100th Anniversary events in many of the Councils, Kosher Summer Camp, 10 Commandment Hikes, and the fall Kit-Kat (Kids in Tents-Kosher Advancement Training) weekend. I can't recall a year with so much happening.

For leaders, there's the Northeast Region JCOS Annual Conference and Kosher, Shabbat observant Wood Badge courses. I encourage you to avail yourself of all that is being offered.

This issue of the NER JCOS Newsletter provides detailed information about many of these events. I hope see you there. The NER JCOS Conference in particular, to be held at Ten Mile River Scout Camp, is a fantastic learning opportunity and will feature the Chair- Elect of Scouting America's Executing Board, Mr. Ricky Mason, as the Keynote Speaker.

In closing, I want to wish you all a Happy Thanksgiving.

2026 Northeast Region Annual Conference

Mark your Calendars! The 2026 Northeast Region Jewish Committee on Scouting Annual Conference will be held on March 15th, 2026 at Ten Mile River Scout Camp in Narrowsburg, NY. The goal of the conference is to help you provide a vibrant and exciting program for our Jewish Scouts.



The conference is open to participants from across the country. Kosher Food is included in the conference fee. And, Friday night & Saturday night accommodations are available for those who desire to stay overnight. There will also be an opportunity to visit the extensive Ten Mile River Scout Museum. See the flyer at the end of the newsletter for registration information.

Ten Mile River Scout Camp is 2 hours from the George Washington Bridge, 2 hours from White Plains, 2 hours from Newark, 2.5 hours from

Syracuse, 3 hours from Philadelphia, and 4.5 hours from Baltimore.

The draft conference agenda follows (specific sessions and times may change as the conference date draws closer).

8:00 am Check-in & Breakfast

8:20 am – Minyan

9:00 am Opening - Sounding of the Shofar

- Scout Color Guard: Pledge of Allegiance, Scout Oath and Law
- Invocation
- Welcome and Introductions

9:20AM Opening Remarks

- Ms. Saroya Friedman-Gonzalez - CEO & Scout Executive, Greater New York Council
- Mr. Felix Lam – Chief Administrative Officer, Greater New York Council

9:40 am Keynote Presentation – Speaker: Mr. Ricky Mason Chair-Elect of Scouting America’s National Executive Board

10:20 am Morning Presentations

- NJCOS History – This session will highlight some of the NJCOS Leadership over the past years
- Nusach – Nusachs are the style of prayer, the chosen hymns, the way the tunes sound. This session will provide an introduction to the Nusach in Jewish Worship

10:50 am NJCOS Initiatives and Q&A with the NJCOS President –This session will provide an overview of some of the new initiatives at the National level

11:00 am Break to move between buildings

11:15 am Breakout Sessions

- Year-round Jewish activities for Troops – Although the Western New York Council has no Jewish-sponsored units, the Council JCOS has developed a program

to ensured that Jewish-focused opportunities are available to Scouts throughout the Council. This session will describe the program of Jewish-focus activities that the local JCOS conducts to instill Judaism into the Scouts BSA program.

- Shomer Shabbat Sea Scouts – This session will discuss Scouting America’s first (and only) Shomer Shabbat Sea Scout unit which was recently organized. The session will provide an overview of the unit activities and the operation of the growing unit as well as the challenges getting the unit organized using an inter-council model.
- Guided Tour of the TMR Museum – This session will provide a guided tour of the TMR Museum. Your Tour Guide will provide an overview of the museum exhibits, including the exhibits related to Jewish Scouting

12:00 pm Lunch Program

- D'Var Torah
- Buffet Lunch
- NJCOS 100th Anniversary Celebration
- Birkat haMazon (bentching)

1:00 pm Group Photo

1:30 pm Breakout Sessions

- Kosher Menus for Campouts – This session will provide easy-to-prepare Kosher menu ideas for Camping Trips.
- JCOS High Adventure Activities – For several years, the NJCOS has sponsored treks to Philmont and SeaBase. This session will describe the high adventure treks planned for 2026 at Philmont Scout Reservation. It will also provide information about the NJCOS plans for 2026 the National Jamboree, and 2027 World Jamboree
- Guided Tour of the TMR Museum – This session will provide a guided tour of the TMR Museum. Your Tour Guide will

provide an overview of the museum exhibits, including the exhibits related to Jewish Scouting

2:15 pm Break to move between buildings

2:20 pm Breakout Sessions

- Teaching Leadership Skills using Jewish Examples – This session will consist of two parts. The first part will cover the relationship between Scouting’s values and Jewish values outlining the commonality between the two. The second part will cover the use of Jewish stories and Jewish historical characters when teaching Leadership skills.
- Council Events on Shabbat Roundtable Discussion – Most councils hold their camporees and other events on Saturdays which make them inaccessible to Shomer Shabbat units. This is an issue of concern without any easy solutions. This roundtable will provide an opportunity to discuss the issue and brainstorm possible ways to address the concern.
- The History of Jewish Scouting in New York – This session will provide a historical overview of Jewish Scouting in the New York City area, including Jewish summer camping at TMR

3:15 pm Break & Mincha

3:20 pm Silent Auction Ends

3:45 pm Silent Auction Results Announced

3:55 pm Awards and Presentations

- Chai Awards
- Shofar Awards
- Yad Awards
- Special Recognitions

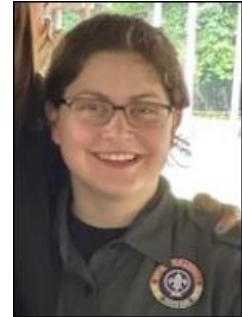
4:10 Naming of the Next NERJCOS Chairman

4:15 pm Closing Ceremony

4:30 pm Closing Prayer for Safe Travel

Scouts in Action: Jewish Scout Awarded Medal of Merit

Congratulations to Jewish Scout Maya Serotta of Venturing Crew 3065 in Haddonfield, NJ who is being honored with the Scouting America Medal of Merit. The Scouting America Medal of Merit is awarded to a youth or adult for an outstanding act of service that goes above and beyond typical duties, reflecting an uncommon concern for others' well-being. Maya, who recently earned her Ner Tamid Religious Emblem, will be recognized by the Garden State Council with this award later this month.



Maya was in the car with her mother when a boy on a motorized bike was hit by a nearby car. Maya’s Scouting training immediately kicked in.

“I open the door and charge, as safely as I can, across the street. The boy is struggling to get to the curb. His leg is bloody.”

After 911 had been called Maya continued her assessment

“I sit next to him. BSA first aid training has repeatedly taught me how to treat for shock. I know that I had to keep the victim calm. So, while we wait, I start talking to him. I ask questions to keep him calm and help with his disorientation. We chat for nearly ten minutes until a firetruck barrels down the street, and the boy returns to near incoherency.”

Maya stayed with the boy until the first responders took over.

The Northeast Region Jewish Committee on Scouting commends Maya Serotta for her meritorious actions. Job well done!

NJCOS 100th Anniversary Camporee

The National Jewish Committee on Scouting Is Celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2026 and is hosting a nationwide camporee to celebrate! The Camporee will be held at Camp Aquahonga, Ten Mile River Scout Camps in Narrowsburg, NY on August 9th-12th, 2026 (these dates do not interfere with the National Jamboree nor the NJCOS Philmont Trek).

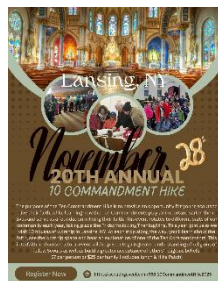
The Camporee, named B'Yachad (which means together), will feature the best of Jewish Scouting in a summer camp setting with aquatics, conservation, handicrafts, scoutcraft and shooting range along with high adventure

- Jewish themes, exhibits, activities, Kosher food
- Leadership, adventure, entertainment, friendship, Jewish Emblems
- Religious Emblems Workshops and Merit Badges

The camporee is open to Jewish Scouts and Scouters from 8-18. Come as a unit or register as an individual. Enjoy a camporee filled with fun activities, fellowship, and the opportunity to learn leadership skills together with Jewish Scouts from across the country. Please see the flyer and registration form at the end of this newsletter.

Baden Powell Council 10 Commandments Hike

The Baden-Powell Council's interfaith Duty to God Committee, including members of our Jewish Committee on Scouting, has organized a Ten Commandments Hike to be held the Friday of Thanksgiving break (Nov. 28) in Lansing, NY. This is an interfaith, cross-cultural event in which Scouts learn about the ideals found within the Ten



Commandments through the lens of a variety of faith traditions!

For more information, please see the flyer attached to the end of this newsletter. Registration is now live at <https://scoutingevent.com/368-10CommandmentHike2025>

Longhouse and Baden Powell Councils 100th Anniversary Celebration

The Longhouse and Baden Powell Councils invite everyone to join them on Sunday, May 31, 2026 to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Jewish Committee on Scouting. Regardless of what Council you are a member of, feel free to join in the fun.

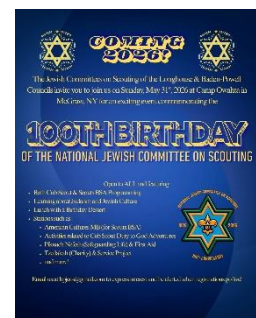
The event will be held in at Camp Owahta in McGraw, NY (Camp Owahta is approximately 1 hours south of Syracuse).

This event will feature:

- Cub Scout & Scouts BSA Programming
- Opportunities to learn about Judaism & Jewish Culture
- Lunch with a Birthday Dessert
- Stations for:
 - American Cultures Merit Badge
 - Activities related to Cub Scout Duty to God Adventures
 - Pikuach Nefesh (Safeguarding Life) & First Aid
 - Tzedakah (Charity) & Service Projects
- And much more

Please see the flyer at the end of this newsletter for more details. For questions, please send email to bjpcos@gmail.com.

This is just one of the events being held in the region to celebrate our 100th Anniversary. Stay tuned for other upcoming events and activities.



How faith-based support is helping Scouting America Stabilize

by David Crary

Associated Press - September 17, 2025

(reprinted with permission of the author)

NEW YORK (AP) — For the Boy Scouts of America — recently renamed Scouting America — the past 12 years have been arduous. Opening its programs to gay people and later to girls sparked dismay in some quarters. Its 2020 bankruptcy declaration led to prolonged wrangling over compensation for thousands of men claiming they were sexually abused as scouts.

Yet the 115-year-old organization — though serving far fewer youths than at its peak decades ago — seems to be stabilizing, with a slight uptick in membership last year. A key factor is the abiding loyalty of major religious denominations that still view scouting's mission as uniquely in tune with their own.

"I tell parents this is the best time to be involved with Scouting America, and the best time to be involved through a Catholic unit," said Bill Guglielmi, who chairs the National Catholic Committee on Scouting. "There is a hunger out there now for finding a values-based organization."

Guglielmi and others who are engaged in faith-based scouting praise the manner in which time-honored scouting programs — such as camping and expeditions — have been blended with newfangled activities such as indoor skydiving and an artificial-intelligence merit badge. But foremost, they value the organization's continued commitment to communal prayer.

"Worship is a big deal here," said Bill McCalister, who served more than 40 years as scoutmaster of Troop 285 in San Antonio under sponsorship of a United Methodist church.

"Every campout, we have a formal worship service. Sometimes we serve Communion," he said. "Many scouts come to me and say, 'Mr.

Mac, this is my church.'"

A diversity of faiths in scouting

According to Scouting America's latest data, faith-based organizations account for 42% of the nearly 40,000 units operated by chartered organizations. The Catholic Church and its affiliates are No. 1 — overseeing 3,514 units serving more than 87,100 of the roughly 1 million boys and girls now active in scouting.

Other major sponsors include the United Methodists, the Episcopal Church and various Lutheran and Presbyterian denominations. Nearly 250 units, serving more than 6,500 scouts, are sponsored by Muslim, Jewish and Buddhist organizations.

Roger Krone, Scouting America's president and CEO, took the post in 2023 as the organization emerged from bankruptcy proceedings. He appreciates scouting's religious diversity.

"It really speaks to the alignment of the mission, vision and values that our organization has and what those organizations have," he told The Associated Press. "It's character development, it's spiritual growth, it's community service."

The Boy Scouts lifted a ban on openly gay youth members in 2013 and began accepting girls in 2018 — steps Krone depicted as a message of welcome to any family considering scouting.

One step the organization will not take, Krone said, is abandoning the religious credo at the core of its mission. The famed Scout Oath begins, "On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God," while the Scout Law's concluding message is: "Be reverent toward God. Be faithful in your religious duties. Respect the belief of others."

"There are some places today where you're not encouraged to talk about spiritual growth and what may be going on outside your little bubble," Krone said. "In our organization, it's been core to our principles for years and years and will continue to be core."

Krone acknowledges that some nonreligious families, while admiring aspects of scouting, might be uncomfortable with the “Duty to God” pledge. He encourages them to try scouting nonetheless.

“You are all welcome in our organization,” he said. “But I want people to know when you come to scouting, there’s this concept of reverence and spiritual growth and saying prayers and being thoughtful.”

“The parent can come and be a volunteer and go through a couple meetings and a couple of campouts and watch what we do, see what effect the way we deal with duty to God and reverence has on the youth of your child’s age, and then make a decision,” Krone said. “Don’t dismiss us out of hand.”

How it’s done by Troop 228

That welcoming approach is fully practiced by Troop 228, chartered by St. Kateri Tekakwitha Catholic Church in the Los Angeles suburb of Santa Clarita, according to one of its adult leaders, Christine Tezai.

She estimates that less than half the troop’s 40-plus scouts are Catholic, yet all participate in occasional religion-themed events, including an annual Mass at which religious awards are presented.

“It doesn’t matter if you’re Catholic,” Tezai said. “A scout is reverent — it doesn’t matter how you’re reverent. You don’t have to say prayers. ... You know what we do by showing kindness and being helpful.”

Her 17-year-old son, Mykhail Tezai, entered Cub Scouts in the first grade. Now, as a high school senior, he’s on track to become an Eagle Scout.

He said several fellow scouts don’t identify with a specific faith but feel comfortable in a church-chartered troop.

“They’re very curious about my religion and being Catholic,” he said. “They want to know how it works.”

Some faith groups broke away

After the 2013 decision to admit gay youth, some disgruntled conservatives formed a new group, Trail Life USA, which created its own ranks, badges and uniforms. It now claims 65,000 youth members, participating in church-run units aligned with “biblical Christian principles.”

The biggest blow came at the start of 2020, when The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints — then the Boy Scouts’ largest faith-based partner — withdrew more than 400,000 scouts in favor of new programs of its own.

Krone said many Latter-day Saints families remain fond of Boy Scout programming and now place their children in units unaffiliated with their church.

“We would love to have more Mormon youth in our program,” Krone said. “They can have their own program ... but also maybe embrace Scouting America more than they have the last couple of years to gain the benefits of the program we’ve developed.”

As for Trail Life, Krone acknowledged that its conservative Christian outlook has strong appeal for some families.

“But our program will prepare you better for life,” he said. “Once you get out of high school ... you need to learn to get along with others in the world as it is today, outside of the environment that you grew up in.”

The loss of many units affiliated with the Latter-day Saints and conservative Christian churches was part of a broader shrinkage experienced by the Boy Scouts, which served more than 4 million boys in the 1970s. The COVID-19 pandemic and the bankruptcy process were major factors as membership dwindled.

In all, more than 82,000 people filed claims alleging they were sexually abused as scouts. Leading faith-based sponsors of scout units, including Catholic dioceses and Methodist churches, contributed to a \$2.4 billion reorganization plan that took effect in 2023, allowing the Boy Scouts to keep operating while compensating abuse survivors.

The Rev. Mark Carr, a Jesuit priest who serves as national chaplain for Catholic scouting, said concerns about liability and insurance were key factors in dissuading some dioceses from continuing with scouting.

For those who stayed, a deep commitment

Steven Scheid, director of the United Methodists' Center for Scouting Ministries, sees some upsides for scouting after its previous difficulties. He cited rigorous child-protection policies that he views as effective in curtailing sex abuse.

"The lessons we can gain out of the mistakes of the past can make a better, stronger community, a safer one," he said.

Back in 2013, the United Methodists accounted for almost 350,000 youth members in the Boy Scouts. The figure now is 52,600.

But Scheid, an assistant scoutmaster of a troop founded in 1916 in Springfield, Tennessee, says adults still loyal to scouting "are deeply committed. ... They see this as a calling."

While Christian churches account for the vast majority of Scouting America's faith-based units, there are more than 3,500 scouts in Muslim-sponsored units and about 1,560 in Jewish-affiliated units.

"Muslims in America are searching for their identity, and there's nothing more American than scouting," said Rashid Abdullah, executive director of the executive director of the National Association of Muslim Americans on Scouting. "It's aligning perfectly with the values of our faith."

Abdullah is also a lead organizer of scout units chartered to the Islamic Center of Northern Virginia Trust and the father of three sons who — like himself — made Eagle Scout.

Another Eagle Scout of long standing is Ricky Mason, a bankruptcy attorney who helped negotiate the reorganization plan and who next year will become the second Jewish chair of the Scouts' National Executive Committee. His mother foresightedly told Mason when he was 7 that he would become an Eagle Scout through their synagogue-sponsored troop in Richmond, Virginia.

Amid concerns that antisemitism is increasing, Mason depicts scouting as a way for the U.S. Jewish community to remain connected with American society.

"In addition to the having fun part, scouting is really about character and leadership development," Mason said. "This organization is needed now more than ever."

Shabbat Friendly Wood Badge Course

Looking for a Shabbat Friendly Wood Badge Course with Kosher food in the Northeast Region? Look no further. There is one coming in 2026 here in the Northeast Region.

We are pleased to announce one planned for May and June 2026 in the Baltimore area. This training is open to Scouters from all councils.



The orientation will be held on Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at the Schapiro Scout Service Center and the course itself will be held on Monday, June 15 to Friday, June 19, 2026, at Camp Spencer. For information and registration, please see the flyer later in this newsletter or visit the registration website at: <https://scoutingevent.com/220-WB12220261>

High Adventure Opportunity for Jewish Scouts in 2026

In 2026, the National Jewish Committee on Scouting is sponsoring a kosher, Shabbat-observant expedition at Scouting America's Premier High Adventure Base, Philmont. Philmont, located in the mountains of New Mexico, is the place to go to experience a challenging, high-adventure back-country trek through the Rocky Mountains while developing leadership skills, outdoor skills, and self-reliance. The trek is scheduled for June 25, 2026 through July 9, 2026.

Why a Jewish Trek? What better place can there be to ask the BIG questions? If this is “God’s country,” how does my Judaism fit in? When seeing a million stars before my eyes, how does that link me to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as they shepherded their flocks? When my friends and I observe Shabbat on the trail, how do I feel about my relationship with Judaism?



What is a Jewish trek? The JCOS treks include Shabbat observance, kosher food, daily prayer/reflection and on-going Jewish learning. As part of this unique experience, participants will grow physically, mentally and emotionally and most importantly, participants will experience a deeper insight into what it means to be a Jewish Scout.

For complete trek details or questions, see the flyer at the end of this newsletter with registration information. **Please note that at this time, the trek is full and that we are only accepting applicants for the waiting list.**

For questions, please contact Dr. Robert Weber at 1topgum@gmail.com.

Past trek participants have come from throughout the country and have had a wide variety of Jewish backgrounds.

The NJCOS expects to have both male and female leadership for this trek so all scouts are welcome to participate! The dates will not conflict with the National Jamboree.

Scholarships for Jewish Eagle Scouts

In 2025, the National Jewish Committee on Scouting awarded \$20,000 in College Scholarships to four outstanding Jewish Scouts (see details in the July issue of the NER JCOS newsletter). In 2026, the NJCOS will once again be offering four \$5000 scholarships. For details and application forms, please visit <https://www.jewishscouting.org/eagle-scout-scholarships/>.

What are the requirements for the scholarships? To be eligible, you must:

- Be a registered, active member of a Scouts BSA troop, Varsity Scout team, or Venturing crew.
- Have received the Eagle Scout Award.
- Be an active member of a synagogue and possess the Ner Tamid or Etz Chaim religious emblem.
- Have demonstrated practical citizenship in your synagogue, school, Scouting unit, and community.
- Be enrolled in an accredited high school and in your final year at the time of selection. Exception: Scouts whose Eagle Scout boards of review are held the same year of their high school graduation may apply in that calendar year.



Jewish Scouting at the 2026 National Jamboree

Summer is the traditional time for Scouts to go outdoors to Summer Camp and on High Adventure Trips, and next summer, Scouts and leaders should plan to include the 2026 National Jamboree in their plans.

There will be a large Jewish Scouting presence at the upcoming National Jamboree at the Summit Bechtel Reserve next summer, July 22-31, 2026. Now is the time to decide to participate.



The National Jewish Committee on Scouting, NJCOS, will have a large booth at the Jamboree to celebrate its 100th Anniversary in Scouting, and, additionally, the Friends of Shomer Shabbat Scouting will have a contingent at the Jamboree for adults and youth who want to have an observant Jewish experience.

Start by visiting <https://jamboree.scouting.org/> to get a good look at what the Jamboree is all about. Next decide on how you want to participate. Your options include:

- Attend as part of your local council contingent. Check with your local council about registering.
- Attend as part of the Shomer Shabbat Contingent. There's a special \$100 credit if you sign up by November 2nd. See the flyer at the end of this newsletter.
- Work on staff as an adult or youth (16-29). Submit your registration online from the Jamboree website. The NJCOS is looking for Adults and Senior Scouts (ages 16+) who are interested in working at the NJCOS National Jewish Committee's booth at the 2026 National Jamboree! If interested, contact the NJCOS President, Phil Sternberg, at phil.sternberg@gmail.com

Scouting America National Annual Meeting

The next Scouting America National Annual Meeting is scheduled for May 10-16, 2026 in Dallas, TX. While there are many sessions at this meeting that are of interest, there are two events scheduled that are of particular interest to Jewish Scouters.

- The National Religious Relationships Committee (NRRC) will be meeting on Wednesday morning, May 13th. All of the Religious Committees, including the NJCOS, will be giving presentations. Our NJCOS President, Mr. Phil Sternberg, will be representing the Jewish Committee.
- The Annual Duty to God Breakfast will be held on Thursday morning, May 14th. At this breakfast, several youth recipients of religious emblems will be recognized and the National Duty to God Award recipients will be announced. However, the highlight of the Duty to God Breakfast will be the keynote speaker, our very own Rabbi Joseph Prouser. Rabbi Prouser is a long-time member of the Northeast Region Jewish Committees on Scouting, has led many Scout Shabbat & Havdalah service, and has worked with the inter-faith chaplaincy team at a series of National Jamborees as well as at the 2015 World Scout Jamboree in Japan. Rabbi Prouser has served as the NJCOS National Chaplain, and has edited a Sabbath Eve prayerbook, *Siddur Tzofeh V'Yodeya*, for use at scouting events.



The NJCOS encourages everyone to join us at the National Annual Meeting, and specifically at the Duty to God Breakfast, as we celebrate our 100th Anniversary of Jewish Scouting.

Scout Shabbat

This is the time of year when we start planning annual Scout Shabbat services (typically held in February). If your council or synagogue is hosting a Scout Shabbat or Scout Havdalah service, please let us know about it so that I can include it in the upcoming events section or the next newsletter and help you publicize the event.

So far, one Scout Shabbat has already been scheduled:

- MA/NH Scout Shabbat at Temple Emanuel in Andover, MA on March 20, 2026. This service will be both live and via Zoom. Send email to Barry Hantman at neregion@jewishscouting.org to register.

If you wish to order JCOS patches for your Scout Shabbat service, you have a few choices:

1. You will soon be able to order patches on the JCOS website (jewishscouting.org).
2. If you want patches customized for the Northeast Region, these are available from the NER JCOS Trading Post (send email to neregion@jewishscouting.org). The cost has not yet been finalized and are in limited supply.
3. If you want patches customized for your Council, Unit, or Synagogue, you can order customized patches from the NJCOS (minimum order 25; see order form at the end of this newsletter). The cost has not yet been finalized.



2025 Patch

National JCOS Virtual Seminars

The National Jewish Committee on Scouting hosts quarterly virtual seminars to assist local JCOS committees in providing a quality program. These 1-hour seminars are conducted via zoom and are provided free to all who want to participate. The Seminars are held at 8:00PM Eastern Time, 7:00PM Central Time, 6:00PM Mountain Time, and 5:00PM Pacific Time. The upcoming seminars are:



- Nov 16th, 2025 – High Adventure Programs for Jewish Youth in 2026
- February 2026 – Interfaith Committees and their Relationship with Jewish Scouting
- May 2026 – NJCOS 100th Anniversary Celebration: 100 Years of Jewish Scouting
- September 2026 – TBD
- November 2026 – High Adventure Programs for Jewish Youth in 2027 (High Adventure Treks & World Jamboree)

You should have already received registration information via email. Please direct any questions or register information to Barry Hantman, at neregion@jewishscouting.org.

The Spelling of Hanukkah

The English spelling of חנוכה has been debated for many, many years. Is it spelled Chanukah or Hanukkah? The debate has raged for as long as I can remember. Even my own family can't agree. There's no right answer.

For fun, the following site offers many possible spellings for the holiday:

<https://kvetchs.tumblr.com/post/18903602805/5/yall-can-call-it-chanukah-channukkah-chanukkah>.

However you choose to spell it, you can be sure someone will tell you you're wrong.

Sea Scouts

For Many years, there have been Jewish-sponsored Cub Scout Packs, Jewish-sponsored Scout Troops, and Jewish-sponsored Venture Crews. But, for the first time, we now have a Jewish-Sponsored Sea Scout Unit.-Ship 613 is now up and running with the name of "Leviathans"!

While Ship 613 is based in South Carolina, the unit is one of the first trans-council units that Scouting America has approved. This means that members don't have to be residents within the Council's boundaries to join.

Ship 613 has created a special, limited edition, founders' ship number patch. A few extras are available for sale as a fundraiser for patch collectors. In addition, those who are slightly under age 14 (the cutoff for joining Sea Scouts) and wish to join when they can may also order the patch in advance to wear on their uniform when they are old enough. Those interested in ordering the patch and supporting Ship 613 can visit



<https://forms.gle/cJKZCZDVbfsXJ7sX8>. Questions about the unit should be directed to I Skipper Barry Stiefel at bstiefel@yahoo.com

Mr Steifel will be one of the Speakers at the March 2026 NER JCOS Conference to provide additional information regarding this groundbreaking Jewish-sponsored Sea Scout unit.

Scouts Read Sacred Texts

The Third Annual Scouts Read Sacred Texts Event is scheduled for May 7, 2026. This past year's event had 5683 Scouts and other youth participating, a 55% increase over 2024. Fourteen foreign countries and territories participated as well as 43 States. 24 different faith groups, including Judaism, were represented. Let's make next year's event even better!



NJCOS Chai Awards

The Northeast Region Jewish Committee on Scouting presents Chai Awards to deserving Leaders during the Annual Conference. There are three separate Chai Award Levels: Bronze, Gold and Silver. Individuals, local JCOS or BSA Councils may submit nominations for these recognitions. Submissions are then subject to approval by the NER JCOS Awards Subcommittee. The recipient of the award must be present at the Annual NER JCOS conference to receive the award (no awards will be presented to those not physically present at the conference).



- Bronze CHAI Award: The nominee must have served at least two years on the local Jewish Committee on Scouting or on the Region or National Committees. Work should be of an outstanding and exemplary nature. All volunteers and professional BSA personnel who have done exemplary work toward the betterment of Scouting within the Jewish Community over a two-year period are eligible.
- Gold CHAI Award The Gold CHAI award is given to a deserving individual who has received the Bronze CHAI at least two (2) years earlier and continued to provide worthy service to Scouting and the Jewish Community.
- Silver CHAI Award The Silver CHAI award is presented to an individual who has received the Gold CHAI at least two (2) years previously and has now rendered at least six years of service to Scouting and the Jewish Community.

Please see the Chai Award application attached to this newsletter for complete details.

Calendar of Religious Holidays

Scouting America maintains that no member can grow into the best kind of citizen without recognizing an obligation to God, but it is absolutely nonsectarian in its attitude toward religious training. Its policy is that the home and the organization or group with which the member is connected shall give definite attention to religious life.

There are certain holidays that individual Scouts and Scouters of different faiths celebrate each year. These holidays are not always on the same date on the calendar and may not be familiar to everyone. In order to respect the traditions of all Scouts and Scouters, care must be taken in scheduling Scouting activities.

Scouting America has developed a religious holiday calendar for the use of local units, councils and others in scheduling Scout-related activities. It provides a brief description of each holiday and an indication of the significance of each. The calendar is continuously updated to provide a two-year holiday schedule.

Please remember that certain holidays begin on the night before the actual day of the holiday as shown on the calendar.

The BSA Religious Holiday Calendar is here: <https://www.scouting.org/resources/relationships/religious-observances/>

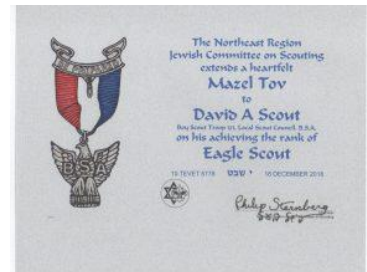
Please share this calendar with your council, district, and those planning Scouting events.



Certificates For Eagle Scouts

The Northeast Region Jewish Committee on Scouting provides certificates for presentation to those who earn the rank of Eagle Scout. These certificates are excellent for presentation at Eagle Courts of Honor. If you need a certificate for someone who is earning their Eagle rank, please send a letter to our NER JCOS Scribe, Ted Severe via US Mail (Northeast Region Jewish Committee on Scouting, Eagle Recognition Certificate, c/o Mr. Theodore E. Severe, 3218 McElderry Street, Baltimore. MD 21205-2819). Please send Ted:

- The full name of the new Eagle Scout
- Unit type (troop or crew) and its respective number
- The name of his/her Scout Council
- The date of his/her Eagle Court of Honor
- Address to which the certificate should be mailed
- Contact information (phone number, email address) in case there are questions regarding the certificate request



If more than one Eagle Scout is being honored at the same Eagle Court of Honor, please provide the same information as above for each additional new Eagle Scout (these additional Scouts may not be Jewish but, by tradition, the Northeast Region will honor ALL Eagle Scouts at a single Eagle Court of Honor regardless of their individual religious faiths).

In addition, the National Jewish Committee on Scouting (NJCOS) provides an Eagle Kit, consisting of a letter & certificate, for Jewish Eagle Scouts. Details and the application form can be found on the NJCOS website at <https://www.jewishscouting.org/eagle-scouts/>

Jewish Religious Emblems

The National Jewish Committee on Scouting offers Religious Emblems for Scouts of all ages. Here are the age/grade brackets for each of the religious emblems:

- Aryeh - Lions and Cubs through grade 1
- Maccabee - Lions & Cubs through grade 3
- Aleph - Cubs & Webelos through age 11
- Ner Tamid –
 1. Scouts BSA through age 14 or through 9th grade, whichever is later.
 2. Scouts BSA through age 20 if they also obtain the Etz Chaim and it is presented at the same time.
- Etz Chaim - Scouts BSA aged 14 to 20



The Northeast Region Jewish Committee wishes to commend all who have earned a Jewish religious emblem in August and September 2025.

Baltimore Area Council

- Ethan Espinoza

Greater New York Council

- Moti Beyderman

National Capital Area Council

- Joshua Lipson

Suffolk County Council

- Darren Heitman

(please note that the September Newsletter Tziporah Fuerst was incorrectly listed as being from Seneca Waterways council. She is in fact from the Scouting America New Hampshire Council.)

Do you have a Scout that wants to earn an emblem but doesn't know where to find a counselor to work with? The NJCOS has you covered. If you are a Jewish Scout interested in earning one of our religious emblems, but you live far from a synagogue or Counselor, what can you do? Contact the NJCOS Chaplain, Rabbi Art Vernon (shaarayrabbi@gmail.com), and he will

help you connect with a Rabbi or Counselor via Zoom! This is particularly important for the Ner Tamid and Etz Chaim medals which require a knowledgeable person to guide and assist. In the age of technology, distance is no longer an issue.

Attached to this newsletter is a document describing the Jewish Religious Emblems. For detailed requirements for the emblems and an application form, you can visit the NJCOS website at <https://www.jewishscouting.org/> and click on "Emblems & Awards" at the top of the page.

NJCOS Living History Interviews

Interested in the history of the National Jewish Committee on Scouting? Check out some of the oral histories posted on the NJCOS YouTube Channel at:

<https://www.youtube.com/@NationalJewishCommitteonScout>

The site includes interviews of some the current and former NJCOS leaders including:

- Alan Smason
- Bruce Streger
- Paul Kramer
- Rabbi Peter Hyman
- Bruce Chudacoff
- Nelson Block
- Jay Lenrow
- Rabbi Art Vernon
- Jay Schnapp
- Daniel Chazin



Additional interviews are being added regularly so check back often.

There's no better way to learn about the history of Jewish Scouting than to hear it directly from those who played a major role.

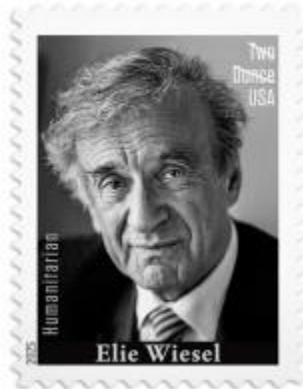
Special thanks go to David Malatzky for his efforts to conduct, edit and post these interviews for all to see.



USPS Issues Stamp for Elie Wiesel

The 18th stamp in the US Postal Service Distinguished American series honors Elie Wiesel (1928–2016), a survivor of Nazi concentration camps whose writing about the Holocaust is forever seared on the public consciousness.

Embodying the struggle and urgency of the Holocaust, Wiesel became the voice for victims and survivors, fighting for human rights at every opportunity. He wrote *Night* (1960), which would become one of the most powerful accounts of the Holocaust.



Using his devastatingly minimalist style, Wiesel published dozens of works throughout his career that focused on the Holocaust and the Jewish experience.

Wiesel became a United States citizen in 1963. He was appointed chairman of the President's Commission on the Holocaust in 1978, which led to the opening of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1993.

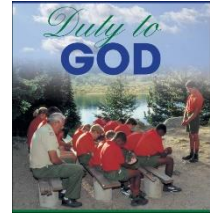
He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1986 as a "messenger for mankind." Wiesel and his wife Marion established the Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity with the prize money.

Wiesel's remarkable body of work ensures future generations will bear witness to the Holocaust while his resilience and compassion continue to be a source of inspiration.



Religious Emblems Promotion Night

Join the Scouting America National Religious Relationships Committee (NRRC) on Thursday, February 26th, 2026 from 8pm-9pm (Eastern Time) via Zoom to get all of your questions answered about religious emblems. This event is appropriate for unit leaders, youth, faith leaders, and BSA professionals. The NRRC will spend the first 10 minutes in a quick overview of what religious emblems are, and how to find more information about them. Then participants will go into a Breakout Room for the faith group of your choice, including on led by the NJCOS regarding the Jewish Religious Emblems.



Sign-Ups will open in December. A Save the Date Flyer is available at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YuCAslmhVf_8Kw7G8QwTg1OjuvFQSHn_/view?usp=sharing

2026 Virtual Religious Relationships Week

Plans are underway for a Virtual Religious Relationships Week hosted by the Scouting America National Religious Relationships Committee (NRRC) via Zoom on February 22nd-27th, 2026.

This weeklong virtual conference will feature Over 40 classes to choose from including faith-specific sessions, session regarding religious emblems, and sessions for program coordinators, council / district professionals, chaplains & worship leaders, membership coordinators, marketing specialists, religious



Registration will open at the beginning of December. A Save the Date Flyer is available at https://drive.google.com/file/d/16_VqpOCvneVYs4mTjnbukBRMyHspkYIJ/view?usp=sharing

NER JCOS Statement Regarding the Return of the Hostages and the Ceasefire in Gaza

(issued 10/13/2025)

The Northeast Region Jewish Committee on Scouting joins with Jews from across the world in celebrating the return of the hostages to their families in Israel. May they quickly recover from their injuries and enjoy their freedom with their loved ones. May they go on to lead long, joyous lives. We know that the trauma they have endured will not be easily overcome. But we want them to know that they have the support of the entire Jewish Community around the world.



We also know that this day is bittersweet for some families in Israel as we remember those that did not return alive. We extend our deepest sympathies to those families. May the memories of their loved ones be a blessing. We will not rest until all are returned.

We pray that this day serve as the start of a new beginning in the middle east. May the people of Israel enjoy peace and security in the years ahead.

Simchat Torah takes on an additional meaning this year as we celebrate the end of this cycle and the beginning of a new cycle. May the Jews in Israel, and especially the freed hostages, feel the Joy of Torah as they dance and celebrate this week. Shalom (peace) is one of the underlying principles of the Torah, *"Her ways are pleasant ways and all her paths are shalom (peace). She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her"* (Proverbs 3:17). The Talmud explains, *"The entire Torah is for the sake of the ways of shalom"*.

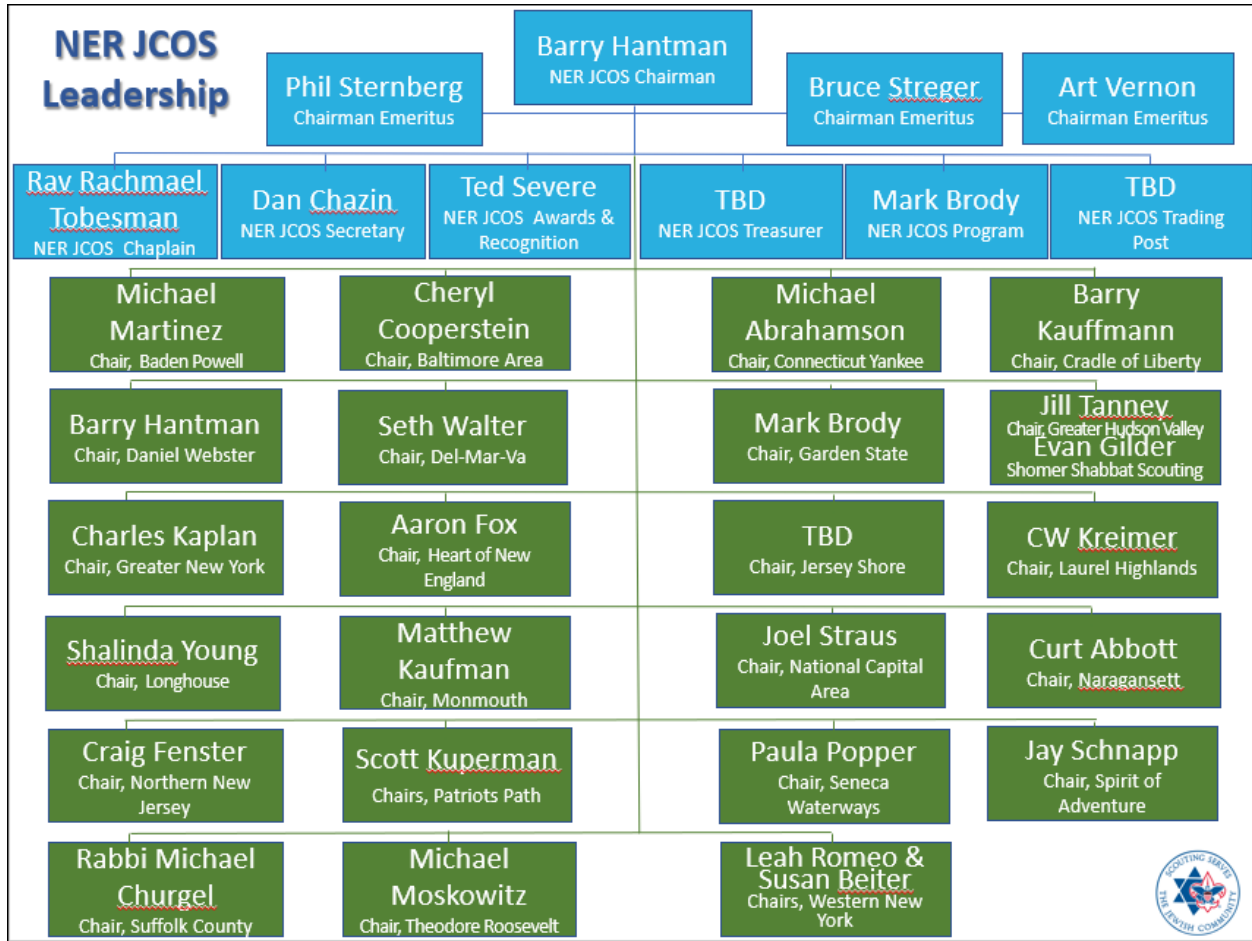


Upcoming Events

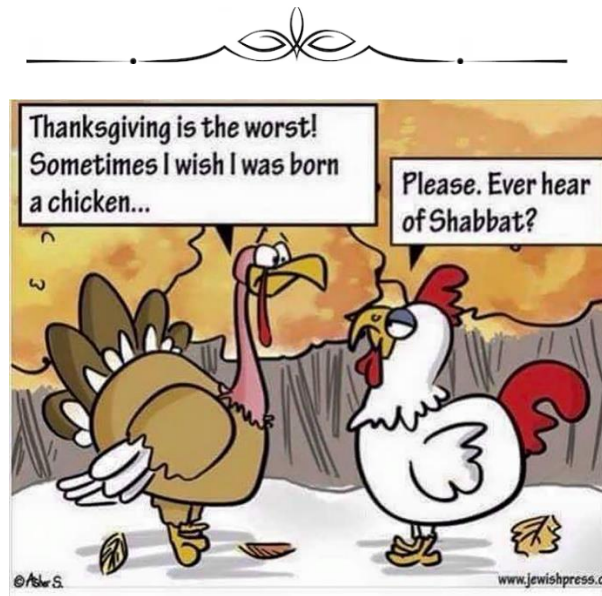
- November 16, 2025 – NJCOS Virtual Seminar
- November 28, 2025 – Baden Powell Council 10 Commandments Hike
- November 28, 2025 – Theodore Roosevelt Council 10 Commandments Hike
- December 2025 – Friends of Shomer Shabbat Scouting Annual Conclave
- February 2026 – Kosher Klondike Derby on President's Day Weekend
- February 22-27, 2026 - Virtual Religious Relationships Week
- February 26, 2026 - 2026 Religious Emblems Promotion Night
- March 15, 2026 – Northeast Region Jewish Committee on Scouting Annual Conference
- March 20, 2026 – Scouting America New Hampshire and Spirit of Adventure Councils Scout Shabbat
- May 7, 2026 – Scouts Read Sacred Texts
- May 9, 2026 – May 10, 2026 – NJCOS Annual Meeting
- May 10, 2026 – May 16, 2026 – Scouting America National Annual Meeting
- May 2026 – Northeast Region Kinus
- May 31, 2026 - Longhouse and Baden Powell Councils 100th Anniversary Celebration
- June 15, 2026 - June 19, 2026 - Shabbat Friendly Wood Badge at Camp Spencer
- June 25, 2026 - July 9, 2026 NJCOS Philmont Trek
- July 22 – 31, 2026 National Scout Jamboree
- August 9, 2026 – August 12, 2026 NJCOS 100th Anniversary Camporee
- December 2026 – Friends of Shomer Shabbat Scouting Annual Jewish Conclave
- September 2026 – Kit Kat Camporee over Labor Day Weekend
- July 30th – August 8th, 2027 – World Scout Jamboree

2026											
January			February			March			April		
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4	5	6	4	5	6	4	5	6	4	5	6
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28	29	30	28	29	30	28	29	30	28	29	30
31											
May			June			July			August		
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31											
September			October			November			December		
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25	26	27	25	26	27	25	26	27	25	26	27
28	29	30	28	29	30	28	29	30	28	29	30
31			31			31			31		

NER JCOS Leadership



Please let provide any updates for this chart to Barry Hantman, neregion@jewishscouting.org



NER JCOS Photo Gallery



◀ Troop 226 of Teaneck, NJ joined other Shomer Shabbat troops for an exciting four-day canoe trip at Floodwood Mountain Scout Reservation in the Adirondacks

Jewish Scouts from across the region Came together for the Kit Kat ((Kids in - Tents Koshur Advancement Training) Camporee at Hidden Valley Scout Camp ▶▶



Send us your event Photos!



◀ Barry Kopelof is presented with the Yad Award by Phyllis Stein of the Suffolk County Council JCOS

▶ The Scouts of Troop 613 in Washington Crossing Council helping to build the community sukkah



▶ Interfaith Service at Hidden Valley Scout Camp in Scouting America New Hampshire Council



◀ Congratulations to Joel Gokalp of Troop 664 in Greater New York Council on earning the rank of Eagle. Joel was presented with a certificate from the Jewish Committee on Scouting.

▶ Shomer Shabbat Troop 226 of Northern New Jersey Council enjoyed Shabbos in the Woods at Camp Glen Gray





Northeast Region Jewish Committee on Scouting Trading Post



Your Source for Jewish Scouting Items!



Knit Kippot
(available in Black & White)
\$15



Leather Kippot with
Embroidered JCOS Logo
(available in Tan, Brown,
Light Pink, Dark Pink,
Blue & Black)
\$15



Leather Kippot with
Embossed JCOS Logo
(available in Tan, Blue
& Black)
\$10



JCOS Bolo Ties
(available with Black
Cord or Red Cord)
\$15



Jewish Committee
Patches
\$5

The NER JCOS Trading Post also has a variety of patches from Jewish Scouting Events (NER JCOS Conferences, Scout Shabbat, National Jamborees, etc.) with prices starting as low as \$1 each

To order, please send email to neregion@jewishscouting.org

*Shipping cost is additional
(to avoid shipping costs, items may be picked up at the Annual NER JCOS Conference)*



Northeast Region Jewish Committee on Scouting



38th Annual Conference

Sunday, March 15, 2026

Ten Mile River Scout Camp (TMR)

47 Headquarters Rd, Narrowsburg, NY 12764

Join the Northeast Region Jewish Committee for a day of
Training & Camaraderie
Sunday March 15, 2026

9AM-4:30PM (doors open at 8AM)

- Keynote Speaker: Mr. Ricky Mason – Chair-Elect of Scouting America's National Executive Board
- Informative Training Sessions¹
 - Shomer Shabbat Sea Scouts
 - Teaching Leadership Skills using Jewish Examples
 - Kosher Menus for Campouts
 - Year-round Jewish activities for Scouts
 - 100th Anniversary Activities
 - Upcoming JCOS High Adventure Treks
 - The History of Jewish Scouting in New York
 - And Much More!
- Guided Tour of the TMR Scouting Museum including the NJCOS 100th Anniversary Exhibit
- Kosher Breakfast & Lunch
- Jewish Committee Award Presentations
- Jewish Scouting Trading Post
 - Kippot, Bolo Ties, Patches
- Silent Auction



\$50 per person if paid by March 1st (\$10 additional after 2/15/26)

Lodging available Friday & Saturday Night, March 13 & 14

on a space available basis

See attached registration form

¹ Preliminary program agenda. Subject to change.

The 38th Northeast Region Jewish Committee on Scouting Conference Registration



(Participants of all faiths and all Regions welcome)

Where: Ten Mile River Scout Camp, 47 Headquarters Rd, Narrowsburg, NY 12764

When: Sunday, March 15, 2026, 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM
(lodging available Friday & Saturday Night, March 13 & 14, 2026)

Conference fee: \$50.00 per participant if paid by Feb 15, 2026
After Feb 15, 2026, the fee increases to \$60.00 per participant.
Fee includes breakfast, lunch, patch, conference program, and handouts.
Those with a financial need should contact Barry Hantman (email address below.)

Registration Information:

Cub Scout Leader, Scouts BSA Leader, Venturing Leader, Other: _____
 JCoS Committee Member, Council: _____ JCoS Committee Chair
Primary Scouting Position and Unit #: _____
 1st Time Attendee? Who encouraged your attendance? _____
Last NER JCoS Conference attended (year): _____
Have you Earned a Chai Award? Bronze Gold Silver

Contact Information:

Name: _____
Mailing Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
E-Mail Address (please print clearly): _____
Cell Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

Breakfast includes bagels, spreads, fruit, coffee, tea and juices. Lunch includes cold cuts and tuna sandwiches, salad, fruit, and drinks (maybe Chinese Food). All food is kosher. If you have specific dietary requirements, please let us know:

Optional Lodging (Select one of the options below if lodging is desired):

Bring your own bedding. Beds are 20 to a room with separate rooms for male & female attendees (no mixed gender rooms). Lodging, while within the camp, is not within easy walking distance to the conference site.

I request accommodations at Ten Mile River for Saturday evening, March 14. Cost: Additional \$50.00/person.

I request accommodations at Ten Mile River for both Friday evening March 13 & Saturday evening March 14. Cost: Additional \$75.00/person (note: food will not be served on Friday or Saturday nor will food be readily available)

Comments: _____

Contact: NER JCoS Chairman, Barry Hantman <neregion@jewishscouting.org>

Mail this registration form and your check to

NER JCOS, c/o Barry Hantman, 52 Justin Drive, Danville, NH 03819

Make your check out to "NER JCOS" and write "2026 NER JCOS Conference" on the memo line

Venmo & Paypal accepted. Please enquire for details.

Northeast Region Jewish Committee on Scouting

CHAI  Award Application

(Bronze, Gold or Silver)

Instructions: Please print out this page and neatly print the information requested. The Award Nomination form should be signed by the local council Scout Executive, the local council JCoS chairman and another member of the committee. Please mail or email (PDF) the application at least Twenty One (21) days prior to the Northeast Region JCoS Conference to:

Barry Hantman, NERJCoS Chairman
52 Justin Dr., Danville, NH 03819
Email: neregion@jewishscouting.org

Person being nominated:

Nominee's Name: _____

Nominee's Mailing Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Nominee's Current Position in Scouting: _____

Nominee's Council Name: _____

I nominate this person for the Bronze, Gold, Silver Award

Person making the nomination:

Nominator's Name: _____

Nominator's Mailing Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Nominator's Phone #: (_____) _____

Nominator's Email: _____

Approvals:

Scout Executive: _____ Date: _____

Council JCoS Chairman: _____ Date: _____

Member of Local JCoS: _____ Date: _____

100th Anniversary Jewish Camporee – B'yachad



B'yachad - The Great Jewish Scout Gathering of 2026 The 100th Anniversary of Jewish Scouting August 9-12, 2026

Camp Aquehonga, Ten Mile River Scout Camps, Greater New York Councils

The best of Jewish Scouting in a full summer camp setting with aquatics, conservation, handicrafts, scoutcraft, shooting sports and archery

- Jewish themes, exhibits, activities, Kosher food
- Leadership, adventure, entertainment, friendship, Jewish Emblems
- Open to Scouts BSA, Venturers, and Cub Scouts
- Scouts will leave with pride in their heritage, a patch for completing activities, merit badges, Jewish Religious Emblems and 100th anniversary memorabilia.

Note: *We are currently working out logistics and program. Here are tentative ideas for the activities we are looking at.*

Picture this. 5-50 shofars blasting a תקיעה גדולה tikiya g'dola all at once to open the B'yachad Jewish Gathering. What a glorious sound!



Scouts will get a scorecard כרטיס ניקוד *kartis nikud*

A patch around the themes of Jewish history, Jewish resilience, Jewish culture and faith through completing 3-4 activities:

Jewish history and resilience such as “scaling the walls of Jericho with climbing and rappelling,” swimming/ canoe/kayak across the “Reed Sea” (lake), or rifle/archery

Jewish culture and faith such as earning a Jewish emblem, making a handicraft project such as a mezuzah, cooking challah on a stick.

100th Anniversary Jewish Camporee – B'yachad (continued)

Tikkun Olam projects such as signing new year cards for seniors and Israeli soldiers, putting together Rosh Hoshana packages, and doing a conservation project for the camp.

Exhibit Hall with an NJCOS store, Jewish Emblems, Exhibits and guests from Israeli and Jewish organizations. Game: What's your "JQ?" Prizes too.

Gala campfire programs that includes a Jewish camp singalong, learning some Israeli dances, welcoming Jewish Scouters and perhaps officials from the State of Israel.

For those that need it, possible hospitality before or after in the New York area. Staff opportunities for Adult Leaders, older Scouts and Ventures.

For information, Event Chair Howard Prager at ceregion@jewishscouting.org

For registration*, NJCOS Chair Phil Sternberg at chairman@jewishscouting.org

**See registration Form attached.*

See Registration Form on Next Page

100th Anniversary Jewish Camporee – B'yachad (continued)



The National Jewish Committee on Scouting



100th Anniversary Celebration Campout



Where: Ten Mile River (TMR) Scout Camps, 1481 Crystal Lake Rd, Narrowsburg, NY 12764

When: Arrive - Sunday, August 9, 2026, Check-in after 1:00 PM, Depart – Wednesday, August 12, 2026
(Participants of all faiths and from all Regions welcome) Questions: Email: chairman@jewishscouting.org

Conference fee: \$175.00 per participant, \$50 Down payment by November 30, 2025. After Mar 1, 2026, the fee increases to \$225.00 per participant. Fee includes all Kosher meals, accommodations, patch, Campout program, and handouts. If you have specific dietary requirements, please let us know.

Will you accept provisional Scouts to attend with your unit? _____

Can you help run a program activity? Describe: _____

Contact information: Name and Position _____

Unit Type and Number, Council: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____

E-Mail Address (*print clearly*): _____

Cell Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

Attending with: ____ Youth ____ Male ____ Female ____ Adults ____ Male ____ Female

Total Cost will be \$175 x ____ = \$ _____. Please supply a roster of all attendees names and ages.

Please bring a current Scouting America Completed Medical form for all in Attendance.

E-Mail this registration form to: chairman@jewishscouting.org

Make your check out to "NJCOS" and write "2026 NJCOS Campout" on the memo line. Mail checks to:
NJCOS, c/o Phil Sternberg, PO Box 4052, Alexandria, VA 22303

Other Payments, e.g. credit cards: <https://www.jewishscouting.org/product/donation/>

2026 Philmont Trek

Announcing the 2026 National Jewish Philmont Treks

Contact National Jewish Committee on Scouting, Philmont Trek Coordinator
Dr. Robert Weber, 1topgum@gmail.com, 646-425-6006 Evan
Gilder, wp613scoutmaster@gmail.com, 914-946-4744

What is a Philmont Trek?

It is the ultimate Scouting High Adventure!

Backpack through New Mexico's glorious Rocky Mountains. Participate in crew selected activities — panning for gold, archaeology, blacksmithing, burro racing, muzzle-loading rifle shooting and more.



Why a Jewish Trek?

What better place can there be to ask the BIG questions?

If this is "God's country," how does my Judaism fit in? When seeing a million stars before my eyes, how does that link me to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as they shepherded their flocks? When my friends and I observe Shabbat on the trail, how do I feel about my relationship with Judaism?



What is a Jewish trek?

Our treks include Shabbat observance, kosher food, daily prayer and on-going Jewish learning.

As part of this unique experience, participants will grow physically, mentally and emotionally and most importantly, participants will experience a deeper insight into what it means to be a Jewish Scout, **all with rabbinical participation and supervision.**

When is it?

- June 26th through July 9th, 2026 (plus travel days)
- Travel Arrangements will be coordinated by Crews.

Can I go?

- We will have two (12 person) crews for the **12 day** treks
- Youth Age – 14-20 (or 13 and have completed 8th grade)
Scout Rank – First Class or higher
- Up to 12 Adults over 21 years of Age

Where is Philmont:

- Philmont Scout Ranch Headquarters is 220 square miles in size, located four miles south of Cimarron, New Mexico.
- Check out this video:
<http://www.youtube.com/user/PhilmontScoutRanch>

Budget: Estimated Trip Cost: \$3,200

- This covers Philmont Trek Fee, Meals, Flights, Ground Transportation, Lodging, Crew Shirts and Patches
 - Reservation Fee: \$100 due December 1, 2025
 - Initial Payment: \$1,600 due February 1, 2026
 - Final Payment: May 1, 2026
- **It includes estimated cost of flights**
- **It does not include gear necessary for the trek.**



The 2024 NJCOS Trek Crews

Philmont Trek Registration Information Form

For Trek Registration, Scan this QR code



or visit: <https://forms.gle/g5tKC9d2hj4ezqMR9>

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS TREK WILL NOT INTERFERE WITH ANYBODY WHO WANTS TO ATTEND THE 2026 SCOUTING AMERICA JAMBOREE, SO BOTH ACTIVITIES WILL BE POSSIBLE FOR THOSE INTERESTED.

What to expect for trek participation:

A traditional Philmont backpacking trek is 12 days in duration. Shabbat will be a day of rest and there will be no trekking. The trek duration will be 50-75 miles and will include 3 hours of conservation work necessary to earn the Philmont Arrowhead Patch.

Trek preparation will involve extensive commitment to physical conditioning and training as well attendance at regular meetings

After **pre-registering**, we will send additional information to include:

Transportation Plans, Physical Conditioning, Equipment, Medical Forms, and more!

Questions?

Contact National Jewish Committee on Scouting, Philmont Trek Coordinator
Dr. Robert Weber, 1topgum@gmail.com (646) 425-6006



Spring – June 15-19 at Camp Spencer

Sabbath Friendly

Course Director: Gabe Hare

Gabe.harewb26.1@gmail.com

<https://scoutingevent.com/220-WB261>



Lansing, NY



November 28th 20TH ANNUAL 10 COMMANDMENT HIKE

The purpose of the Ten Commandment Hike is to provide an opportunity for young scouts to live their faith, while learning how the Ten Commandments play an important part in their lives and serve as a foundation in living their faith. This event rotates to different parts of our community each year, taking place the Friday following Thanksgiving. This year, join us as we visit 10 houses of worship in Lansing, NY. At each stop along the way, you'll learn about the faith, see the worship space and hear an explanation of one of the Ten Commandments. This interfaith and cross-cultural event will help Scouts gain greater understanding of religions of fellow Scouts as well as build a greater acceptance of others' religious beliefs.

\$7 per person or \$25 per family (includes lunch & Hike Patch)

Register Now



<https://scoutingevent.com/368-10CommandmentHike2025>



**COMING
2026!**



The Jewish Committees on Scouting of the Longhouse & Baden-Powell Councils invite you to join us on Sunday, May 31st, 2026 at Camp Owahta in McGraw, NY for an exciting event commemorating the

100TH BIRTHDAY OF THE NATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE ON SCOUTING

Open to ALL and featuring:

- Both Cub Scout & Scouts BSA Programming
- Learning about Judaism and Jewish Culture
- Lunch with a Birthday Dessert
- Stations such as:
 - American Cultures MB (for Scouts BSA)
 - Activities related to Cub Scout Duty to God Adventures
 - Pikuach Nefesh (Safeguarding Life) & First Aid
 - Tzedakah (Charity) & Service Project
 - and more!



Email us at bjcos@gmail.com to express interest and be alerted when registrations go live!

**2026 Scout Shabbat Patch Order Form
(for Customized Patches)**



<https://WWW.JewishScouting.org>

**The National Jewish Committee on Scouting
--Scout Shabbat Program for 2026--**

The patch design contest is being released with this flyer.

Let Us know if you are having a Scout Shabbat Program
(Live or Zoom or Both to post on our website calendar)
Our 2026 patch design will be released by the end of October

Send Us Your Order by November 1st or sooner.

Contact: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Number of Patches: _____ Organization Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Ship Patches to: Same as above

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Price for orders, with shipping, to follow.

By ordering 25 or more, Your Council, Temple, JCOS, Organization
name can be on YOUR patches.

Please email Bruce Streger @ WB2ADF@GMAIL.COM



SHOMER SHABBAT CONTINGENT TO THE 2026 NATIONAL JAMBOREE JUL 12-AUG 2



בס"ד

V2.2

ATTEND THE 2026 NATIONAL SCOUT JAMBOREE

The *Shomer Shabbat* Contingent for the National Jamboree will gather for pre-Jamboree activities from July 12th – 19th at Forestburg Scout Reservation in NY and visit Washington DC July 19th – 21st. We then will join tens of thousands of Scouts at Summit Bechtel Reserve - a premier High Adventure Base in WV - for the Jamboree through July 31st. Our experience will conclude with Shabbat in Silver Spring, MD and Scouts will return home on August 2nd. Jamboree highlights include: one of the **longest zip lines in North America**, a worldclass **skate park**, **all-terrain vehicles**, **treetop canopy tours**, **rock climbing**, **mountain biking**, **patch trading**, **stadium shows**, and **much more!** Held every four years, the Jamboree is an amazing opportunity for everyone to experience the best of Scouting, all in one place.

Participant Registration Requirements:

- Youth: be at least 12 years old by July 22nd, 2026 and not yet 21 by July 31st, 2026
- Adult: be over 21 by July 22nd, 2026
- Be currently registered as a youth or adult program participant in a Scouts BSA, Venturing, or Sea Scout unit

Jewish Scouting Includes Commitment to:

- *Kashrut* – We observe Jewish dietary laws at all times
- *Shabbat* – We observe the Sabbath from sundown Friday to nightfall on Saturday
- *Tefilah* – We hold thrice-daily prayer services
- *Tzniut* – We strive for modesty in dress, behavior, speech, and thought, guided by Jewish law
- *Limudei Kodesh* – We provide opportunities for ongoing Jewish learning

Scan or Click to Apply (space is limited):

- <https://jamboree.scoutcamp.info>

Questions? Contact Us:

- Howard Spielman: Contingent Coordinator
781 439-5250 HASpielman1@gmail.com
- Uri Cohen: Jamboree Troop Scoutmaster
646 382-1500 UriCohen613@gmail.com
- Rabbi Avraham A. Witty: Rabbinic Advisor
416 986-9299 WittyAvrahamA@gmail.com

Organized by **Friends of Shomer Shabbat Scouting** — a 501(c)(3) organization serving Jewish youth with Scouting



Jewish Religious Emblems



THE NATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE ON SCOUTING

The NJCOS promotes Scouting among Jewish youth, helps Jewish institutions, Regional and Local Councils and Jewish Committees. We provide Scouting opportunities for Jewish youth, and promote Jewish values in Scouting through Scouting America and the Religious Emblems program.

The NJCOS website is a good resource related to Jewish Scouting.

For additional information contact the Regional or NJCOS: JewishScouting.Org

Religious Emblems, Awards and Recognitions: JewishScouting.Org/Awards

Visit the website where you can purchase patches and/or make a donation. Kippahs, bolos and other items can also be purchased from the Northeast Region JCOS.

NJCOS and Regional Eagle Certificates and Chai Awards are available in each region. There are 4 Eagle Scholarships for \$5000 available each year.

For all Jewish Scouting questions, Award Certificates and Religious Emblems, contact your Regional JCOS chair.

Central: CeRegion@JewishScouting.Org
Northeast: NeRegion@JewishScouting.Org
Southern: SoRegion@JewishScouting.Org
Western: WeRegion@JewishScouting.Org

Adult Awards

The Shofar Award

Recognizes outstanding service by adults in promoting Scouting among Jewish youth, just as the Shofar, (Ram's Horn) calls people to the service of G-d. The requirements can be found at JewishScouting.Org/Awards/#Shofar



The Chai Award

These regional awards recognize a continued service above and beyond to Jewish Scouts and Scouting. There are 4 levels: Bronze, Gold, Silver and Diamond.



The Yad Award

For Adults who have excelled in chairing a local, regional or National Jewish Committee. JewishScouting.Org/Awards/#Yad



Frank L. Weil Award for Jewish Units

To recognize Jewish Scout units that provide a top-quality program. JewishScouting.Org/Frank-L.-Weil-Unit-Recognition-Award.pdf

Mortimer L. Schiff Award for Jewish Committees

Recognizes local Jewish Committees on Scouting that meet standard objectives in the support of Scouting for Jewish Youth in their local council. It is named after Mortimer L. Schiff, a member of the first BSA National Council and a former president of the BSA. JewishScouting.Org/Mortimer-L-Schiff-Quality-Jewish-Committee-Award.pdf

As an adult learn how you can play an important role in our youth's development and leadership skills. Learn how your organization can sponsor a Jewish Unit. Email your Local, Regional or National Chair.

Mission and Vision

The mission of the National Jewish Committee on Scouting (NJCOS) is to prepare young Jews to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of Judaism as expressed in the Scout Oath and Scout Law. The Vision of the National Jewish Committee on Scouting is that Jewish Youth will develop generations of caring, concerned, capable citizens and leaders who are guided by the Scout Oath, Scout Law and Torah.

How does a youth start working on Jewish Religious Emblems?

Download the workbook from the National Jewish Committee on Scouting website
Cubs: JewishScouting.Org/Cub-Scout-Emblems/

Scouts BSA, Explorers, Venturers. Sea Scouts: JewishScouting.Org/Scouts-Bsa-Emblems/

Ask your parent, Rabbi or Religious teacher/educator to serve as your counselor.

Work on the activities/requirements, and record your work in the workbook. Discuss what you have learned with your counselor.

When completed, have your counselor sign-off. Submit the application form and payment per the instructions on the bottom of the application. The workbook is for you to keep, to use, and to display for your fellow Scouts to see.

The Emblem presentation should be made at a service in your synagogue, unit meeting, or other appropriate event. It can be presented more than once.

Your Religious emblem knots, youth and adult, should be obtained by your parents or unit at the closest Scout shop.



Jewish Religious Emblems

Jewish Youth Religious Emblems For Jewish Youth Members in Scouting America

Aryeh Emblem - For Jewish
Lion Scouts in Kindergarden
or 1st Grade

The young Lion is a symbol of curiosity, energy and power. The Aryeh Emblem challenges the youngest Scouts to learn. The requirements are fun, and for the beginner, with help from a parent, religious leader or counselor, will learn some of the basics of the Jewish Faith such as their Hebrew name, what Shalom means, what a mezuzah is, Minyan, Jewish games and more.

JewishScouting.Org/Cub-Scout-Emblems/#Aryeh

Maccabee Emblem - For
Jewish Tiger Cubs and Cub
Scouts, 1st through 3rd
Grade

The Maccabee Emblem takes its name from Judah Maccabee and his brothers, who led the military and the Religious struggle against the Syrian King, Antiochus, who attempted to suppress the practice of Judaism. Their revolt ended in victory with the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem in the year 167 B.C.E. which is celebrated during the holiday of Chanukah, the festival of lights.

JewishScouting.Org/Cub-Scout-Emblems/#Maccabee



Aleph Emblem - For Jewish Cub
Scouts and Webelos, 3rd through
5th Grade

Just as Aleph is the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, the activities of the Aleph Emblem are among the first steps that a Scout will learn to understand more about the Jewish faith. Working on the Aleph Emblem will help the Cub Scouts get to know his or her Rabbi or religious educator who will be the Scout's counselor and guide along the way.

JewishScouting.Org/Cub-Scout-Emblems/#Aleph

Ner Tamid Emblem - For
Jewish Scouts, Venturers,
Explorers, and Sea Scouts 6th
through 9th Grade

Learning by doing is a basic principle of Scouting. The Ner Tamid (Eternal Light) program will help a Scout grow spiritually. It will help the Scout practice *Duty to G-d*, be *Reverent* and to be *faithful in his or her Religious duties*. Counselor's assistance is required.

The Ner Tamid Emblem represents the Eternal Light that hangs in front of the Holy Ark in every synagogue. The pendant is attached to a blue and white ribbon and a bronze bar pin that carries the inscription "Ner Tamid" in Hebrew letters and "Eternal Light" in English. Requirement areas include: Home observance, Synagogue worship, Jewish Study, the American Jewish community and World Jewry.

JewishScouting.Org/Scouts-BSA-Emblems/#Nertamid



Etz Chaim Emblem - For
Jewish Scouts, ages 14-17
and Venturers, Explorers and
Sea Scouts ages 14-20

The Etz Chaim (Tree of Life) Emblem is to encourage the young adult to Explore Jewish roles in the context of family, community, world and the Jewish people.

JewishScouting.Org/Scouts-BSA-Emblems/#EtzChaim

Talmud Torah Award

For a Scout who has earned all of the Jewish Religious Emblems during their tenure in Scouting.

JewishScouting.Org/Scouts-BSA-Emblems/#TalmudTorah



For Cub Scout
Emblems scan



For Older Scout
Emblems scan



Celebrating 100 Years
1926 - 2026

