



SQUARE KNOT NOTES

Monthly Edition

From your Sam Houston Area Council Commissioner Team

November 2019

NATIONAL FEE INCREASE

To ensure that BSA has the resources to fulfill the promise of Scouting, the National Executive Board of the Boy Scouts of America has made the difficult but necessary decision to increase the annual membership fee effective January 1, 2020 to:

- \$60 for youth members in Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturing and Sea Scouts,
- \$36 for youth members in Exploring, and
- \$36 for adult members
- \$60 for unit charter fees

BSA SAFETY--BUNK BEDS

On average, 36,000 injuries related to bunk beds occur in the United States each year, according to Nationwide Children's Hospital and the American Academy of Pediatrics. The head and neck are most prone to injuries due to falls from bunk beds. Our Scouting family is not immune to this risk. What can be done to reduce the risk? Use guard rails on both sides of the top bunk. Gaps should be 3.5 inches or smaller to prevent strangulation. Guard rails should extend at least 5 inches above the top of the mattress on the top bunk. Verify that the foundation of the mattress is strong and that the mattress is the correct size. Are there any weight limitations? Teach children how to safely climb the ladder. Children under age 6—or anyone with a history of sleepwalking or a fear of heights—should sleep on the lowest bed. Roughhousing, bouncing, or playing on the top bunk or ladder is inappropriate. It is preferable to place the bunk beds in the corner of the room away from ceiling fans. Install a night light near the ladder. Ladders need to be securely fastened to the bunk beds. Objects such as belts, scarves, neckerchiefs, or ropes that could cause a hanging need to be stored away from the bed. Take the bunk out of service if the ladder or beds are broken, damaged, or missing. Many sports and outdoor retailers sell bunk-bed cots, with and without side organizers. However, these cots usually do not have safety rails and even though they aren't as tall as home or dormitory bunk beds, injuries from falls can still happen. Here are some safety tips for bunk-bed cots. If possible, install rigid safety rails on the long sides of the top bunk, at least 5 inches above the support rail. This is required if the bottom of the top bunk is more than 30 inches from the floor. Review the manufacturer's guidelines for weight limits on the top and bottom bunks. Teach all Scouts and adults how to safely get into and out of the top bunk. It is best to do this at the head or foot of the bunk. Never enter or exit the top bunk from the sides. Do not use the cot if the bunks are damaged. Do not enter or exit the bunk-bed cot at night without adequate lighting. Bunk beds and bunk-bed cots are especially useful in sleeping quarters where the amount of space is limited. However, make sure to follow the above safety practices to help prevent injuries.

CALENDAR

- 11/16 OA Service Day
- 11/19 Council Recognition Reception
- 12/5 Recharter Turn In
- 12/7 College of Commissioner Science
- 12/14 Top Leader Training Day

Have a great idea, pressing concern, success story? Email squareknotnotes@yahoo.com. We serve *you*!

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BACKGROUND CHECK DISCLOSURE

Every registered adult leader should have received an email from BSA National that included the new Background Check Disclosure and Background Check Authorization Form that needs to be submitted by all adult leaders during the upcoming recharter cycle.

Remember, a copy of the new background check form needs to be attached to each recharter for which the adult is registered. (each unit, district, etc.)

SEA SCOUTS

[Sea Scouts](#) is a specialized program of the [Boy Scouts of America](#), that focuses on water high adventure and personal development. Sea Scout units, called ships, focus on sailing and cruising either sailboats, power vessels or paddle sports. Youth in these ships sail, row, canoe, keep boats in shape, cruise the local waters of Galveston Bay or sail on long cruises far from home. Some SCUBA dive, but all are active in camping, social events, regattas and annual seamanship contests or rendezvous.

Each ship has a unique program designed and implemented by its youth members. Some ships only sail small boats such as Lasers and Sunfish, others sail catamarans or cruise in sailing sloops ranging from 22 to 33 feet, and some sail competitively. Some ships focus on aquatics, but most of our ships do it all. Basically, if it is an activity about, on, in, under or through the water, Sea Scouts in the Sam Houston Area Council are involved. You can experience the thrills of a lifetime, and let the world know you are ready to join the fun!



[SHAC Fleet Meetings](#) are an opportunity for Skippers and interested adult leaders to gather on the third Wednesday of each month at the Cockrell Scout Center to discuss program, upcoming events, and training for youth and adults. This is a networking and sharing opportunity. Non-Sea Scout leaders who are interested in joint activities or in starting a ship are welcome to attend.

UNIT STRONG

Recharter season is here! Strong units should have started the recharter process and should be working through the steps so that their recharterers can be turned in on time.