



GREATER TAMPA BAY AREA COUNCIL
AQUA CAMP 2026
Leader's Guide

Questions? Contact us!

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AquaCamp 2026 Leaders Guide v2 – additions/changes since original version are shown in red

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Introduction

This Leader's Guide contains the information your unit will need to have a successful and exciting time at the 2026 AquaCamp event. Be sure to read all the information before you register your unit for this event. Schedules, available merit badge/activity sessions, meals, and other details listed in this guide are subject to change.

This event depends on the support of volunteers, including adults from your unit. In addition to program support, we also expect all adults to maintain awareness of youth behavior and to always maintain safety and discipline.

Location

Flaming Arrow Scout Reservation, 1201 Boy Scout Camp Rd, Lake Wales, FL 33898.

Event Date

September 25-27, 2026.

Check-in begins at 4:30 pm on Friday. *Friday night program begins at 9:00 pm.* Departure will be completed by 1:00 pm on Sunday.

Storm Date

If severe weather forecasts, event organizers reserve the right to reschedule the event for the weekend of October 24-26, 2026.

Theme

AquaCamp! This event is an aquatics-focused merit badge and activity award weekend, although land-based merit badges and activities will also be offered.

Fees

The basic registration fee is \$55 per youth participant and \$29 per adult. The fee includes meals and one event patch. For youth participants, it also includes all merit badge/activity sessions. A few activities may have additional fees, which will be shown on the registration page.

Staff members pay a fee of \$20 each. This includes meals and a patch. To apply to be on staff, please contact a leader on the cover page for instructions. **Staff members will have separate accommodation and will be expected to arrive earlier and stay later than participants.**

Event T-shirts (Optional)

T-shirts are an optional purchase and can be pre-ordered when you register for \$18 each (an extra charge applies for XXL or larger sizes, see the registration site for the amount). T-shirts will be given to your Unit Coordinator at check-in. The Unit Coordinator will be responsible for handing them out. Staff T-shirts are \$9.

Event Patches

One participant patch is included with your fee. Additional patches may be pre-ordered when you register for \$3.00 each. No additional patches will be available on-site.

Registration Dates

Participant registration is only available ONLINE. Participants may register by unit or individually. Individual registrants will still be assigned camping spots by unit. Youth will select their desired merit badge/activity sessions at the time of registration, subject to availability. Staff & merit badge counselors will need to contact the leaders on the cover page to register.

Early Registration for Staff & Merit Badge Counselor ONLY	Online Registration OPENS for participants	Online Registration CLOSES for participants w/T-Shirt orders	Late Registration* CLOSES w/o T-Shirt orders
Open	June 1, 2026	August 28, 2026	September 11, 2026

Late*/On-Site Registration

Late registration will be available for an extra \$5 per registrant after regular registration closes. Late staff registrants are exempt from the extra fee. Late registrants will not be able to order T-shirts.

There will be no on-site registration. All participants must be registered in advance of the registration deadline. If you have a Scout who is registered but unable to attend, you can exchange their position with another Scout from your unit. Class assignments will not be changed.

Greater Tampa Bay Area Council Refund Policy

See the policy on the registration website.

Leadership

Two-deep leadership is required for each unit. Coordinate with other units in your district if you need additional leadership to meet this requirement. One possible solution is to camp with another unit.

Senior Patrol Leaders are responsible for their respective troops.

Friday Check-In

On Friday night, units will park in the Flaming Arrow parking area. Each Unit Coordinator, Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), and his/her Scout buddy will meet with event staff for check-in at Saunders Hall. When the unit arrives, please have the following information with you for faster check-in: **(1)** Medical Forms part A&B for all attending with the unit (leaders and scouts) **(2)** unit Swim Classification record for all participating in Aquatics Merit Badges and awards, **(3)** an updated unit roster identifying any registrants who will NOT be attending and who will be taking their place if applicable. The Unit Coordinator will be given any pre-ordered T-shirts at this time. The SPL will receive a packet with all materials for the weekend. **NO INDIVIDUAL CHECK IN- Must be by unit.**

Provisional Troop – If you are registering as a provisional scout (your unit is not attending or does not have the required 2 deep leadership). **You can check in with your parents/guardian but must wait until the Provisional Scoutmasters arrives.**

Vehicle Use & Parking Policy

On Friday night and Sunday afternoon, personal vehicles may be used to efficiently move gear to and from your unit's campsite. However, once the event program has begun, **no personal vehicles can be in the camping area.** Troop trailers may be left along the road adjacent to your campsite, but tow vehicles must be removed. Acceptable tow vehicles will need to have a high ground clearance. All personal vehicles must be in the parking area no later than 10:00 pm on Friday night and must remain there until 10:30 am on Sunday. If you have mobility issues, please notify the registrar in Saunders Hall when you arrive for arrangements.

During load-in and load-out, you must operate your vehicle with the **driver's side window open, radio off, emergency blinkers on, and observe the posted camp speed limit.** Anyone failing to operate their vehicle in this manner will not be permitted to stay in camp and will not receive a refund.

Friday Night Program - Arrival at Camp

Arriving on time for Friday night's program is **critical** to the success of the weekend's aquatic merit badge programs. Safety Afloat and Safe Swim Defense will be covered for all youth participants, leaders, and adults, as this is a core requirement of all aquatic activities. The program will start promptly at 9 pm on Friday night.

If you cannot make the Friday night program, you must provide a copy of completion of Safety Afloat and Safe Swim Defense from online trainings at my.scouting.org. Any Scout who doesn't attend the Friday night program or doesn't provide proof of completion may not be able to complete their merit badges. No refunds will be offered if this occurs. Adults must also have proof of training so that they can assist on the waterfront as lookouts.

Campsites, Adirondacks, and Tents

Campsites will be allocated based on the preregistered numbers submitted during registration. Smaller units will be placed together in camp sites based on their registration (Family, Boy, Girl). Standard sites DO NOT have tents or cots, please be prepared and bring your own equipment – all units and provisional scouts. Site assignments will not be provided until arrival. Units sharing sites are expected to be **courteous** in sharing common areas such as pavilions and tables.

Swim Tests

The swim classification of individuals participating in a Scouting America activity is a key element in both Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat. All persons participating in SA aquatics activities are classified according to swimming ability. The classification test procedures have been developed and structured to demonstrate a skill level consistent with the circumstances in which the individual will be in the water.

Every unit is **required** to perform swim tests in advance, using the attached **Unit Swim Classification Record**. These tests **MUST** be administered according to the Guide to Safe Scouting and Aquatics Supervision manual. Scouts may use their swim checks from summer camp if they have their buddy tags; however, all scouts must be included in the Unit Swim Classification Record.

If you have a Scout who has not completed a swim test prior to arrival, we will do our best to administer a swim test to that Scout. However, if scheduling does not permit this, we may need to move that Scout into a land-based merit badge class. **No refunds will be offered if this occurs.**

Behavior

Scouts and adults are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the Scout Oath and Scout Law at all times and to follow all policies of Scouting America, including the Guide to Safe Scouting and Youth Protection Policies.

Medical & Photo Release Forms

All registrants (leaders, scouts and staff) must submit properly completed Parts A and B of the SA Annual Health and Medical Record Form signed by the participant and parent(s) or legal guardian(s). This form can be found on National's website:

http://www.scouting.org/filestore/healthsafety/pdf/680-001_AB.pdf.

No Scout will be allowed to participate in this event without a properly signed permission photo release form. Occasionally we may use pictures from an event to promote Scouting. We need your permission to do so. The photo release consent is located within Part A of the SA Annual Health and Medical Record Form.

First Aid

Medical emergencies should be directed to the Health Lodge during the event. The location of the Health Lodge will be announced during Friday night's meeting. After hours, contact one of the camp directors or staffers. Minor first aid should be handled at your campsites if you have supplies.

Security

Please ensure all vehicles are locked and secure. All valuables should be stored in a locked and secure container, preferably inside a vehicle. Greater Tampa Bay Area Council and event staff will not be liable for stolen or missing items.

Emergencies

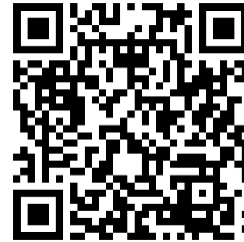
See: <https://tampabayscouting.org/council-emergency-procedures>

**In case of emergency - call 911
Then contact Ranger Mason at 863-632-0389**

Emergency Procedures



Incident Reporting



Trash

All units should follow Leave No Trace principles, including the proper removal of all trash at the end of the event. All trash is to be properly bagged and placed in trash receptacles or hauled out. Bring your own garbage bags. We ask that you remind your Scouts to use good judgment. Please note that we have 2 trash containers – one for trash and one for recycling.

Environmental Impact

No digging of any kind will be allowed in the camping area. Guide ropes and small stakes are acceptable. No ground fires of any kind will be allowed!

Saturday Night Program

We will have a campfire or similar program on Saturday. Details will be announced at the event. Scouts may wish to bring portable chairs for the campfire as other seating will not be available.

Insurance

Accident insurance coverage is included in your registration fee. All hospital or medical charges incurred are the primary responsibility of the individual.

Scouts Own

A Scout is Reverent. All Scouts and leaders are encouraged to participate in our Scout's Own service on Sunday morning. Please wear your field uniform.

Uniform - There are two uniforms for this event.

Field Uniform



The SA Field uniform consists of a SA uniform shirt, SA Pants/Shorts, SA belt, SA socks, and closed-toe shoes. It should be worn:

- While in transit to and from camp for the event
- For the duration of the Friday night program
- At Saturday dinner meals
- At the Scout's Own service

Activity Uniform (Aquatics Style!)



The Activity uniform for this event for scouts participating in Aquatics programs consists of a rash guard/swimming shirt (UV-protective preferred) or Scouting t-shirt, swim trunks, and closed toe

shoes should be worn at all times. The Field Uniform is not required. It is highly recommended that a full brim hat, sunglasses, and sunblock also be worn during the day. For Scouts taking canoeing, kayaking or other boating activities, the shoes should be shoes that can (and will) get wet.

Scouts participating solely in land-based activities may wear a traditional activity uniform consisting of a Scouting T-shirt, shorts, and closed toe shoes with socks.

Closed toe shoes are a requirement any time Scouts are moving from one program area to another.

Event Schedule

This schedule is subject to change without prior notice.

Friday

Start	End	Program	Location
4:30 pm	7:00 pm	Participants arrive, register, set-up camp	Saunders
8:00 pm	8:30 pm	Scoutmaster/SPL Meeting	Saunders
9:00 pm	10:00 pm	Safety Afloat, Safe Swim Defense	Wood Hall
10:00 pm	10:30 pm	Cracker Barrel	Wood Hall

Saturday

Start	End	Program	Location
7:15 am	8:00 am	Breakfast (1st Shift)	Wood Hall
8:00 am	8:45 am	Breakfast (2d Shift)	Wood Hall
9:00 am	1:00 pm	Morning Merit Badges	Various
1:00 pm	1:45 pm	Lunch	Sites & Wood Hall
2:00 pm	6:00 pm	Afternoon Merit Badges	Various
6:15 pm	7:00 pm	Dinner (1st Shift)	Wood Hall
7:00 pm	7:45 pm	Dinner (2d Shift)	Wood Hall
8:00 pm	10:00 pm	Campfire	Council Ring

Sunday

Start	End	Program	Location
7:15 am	7:45 am	Breakfast (1st shift)	Wood Hall
8:00 am	8:30 am	Breakfast (2d Shift)	Wood Hall
8:00 am	8:30 am	Scouts Own (attend 1st shift breakfast if desired)	TBD
8:30 am	12:00 pm	Merit Badges	Waterfront
10:30 am	1:00 pm	Checkout	Sites and Saunders

Merit Badge Class Schedule

This schedule is subject to change without notice. Class sizes as are listed below.

		Saturday		Sunday
Program		9 AM – 1 PM	2 PM - 6 PM	8:30 AM - 12:00 PM
A Q U A T I C S	Canoeing*	40		
	Kayaking*	20		
	Lifesaving*	30		
	Swimming*	50		
	Motorboating*	12	12	[REDACTED]
	Rowing*	12	12	
	Snorkeling SA*	40	40	
	Watersports*	8	8	
	Small Boat Sailing*	12		Knots & makeup
	Paddle Boarding SA*	6	6	6
	Emergency Preparedness*	20	20	[REDACTED]
	First Aid*	20	20	
	Citizenship in the World	36	[REDACTED]	
	Communications	15	[REDACTED]	

		Saturday		Sunday
Program		9 AM – 1 PM	2 PM - 6 PM	8:30 AM - 12:00 PM
	Citizenship in the Nation	30		
	Cooking	20		
	Fishing	20		

*See Prerequisites and other requirements.

Map and Directions to Flaming Arrow Scout Reservation

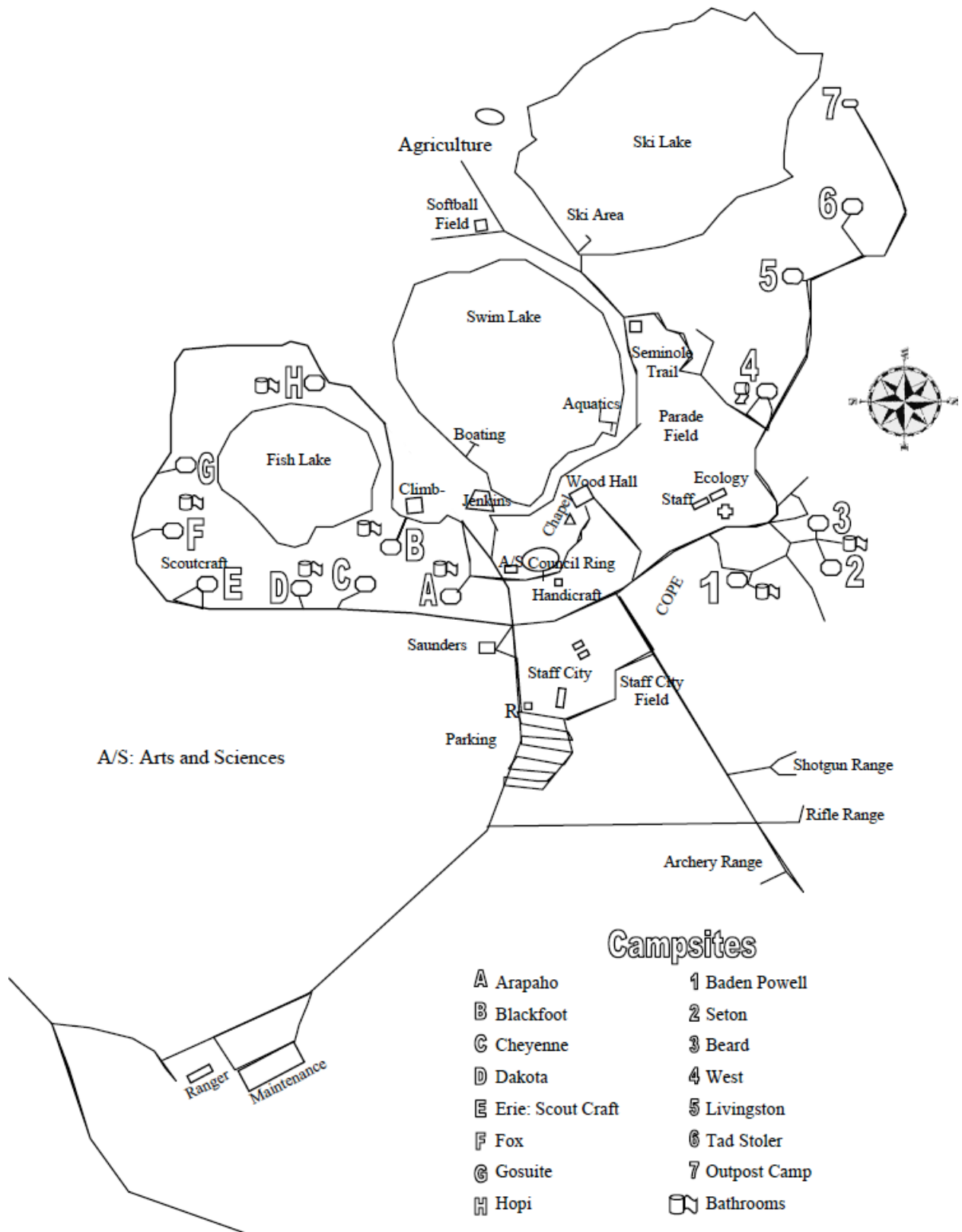
Flaming Arrow Scout Reservation
1201 Boy Scout Road
Lake Wales, FL 33898

Google Maps: <http://g.co/maps/8y737>

Bing Maps: <http://binged.it/IX0QBZ>



Map of Flaming Arrow



Unit Swim Classification Record

This is the individual's swim classification as of this date. Any change in status after this date would require a reclassification test by the event directors. Swim tests should be given every year at the beginning of the swim season. Refer to the Guide to Safe Scouting for test administration. Please refer to <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/Outdoor%20Program/Aquatics/pdf/430-122.pdf> for the procedure, and who is qualified to conduct the test.

Special Note: When swim tests are conducted prior to the event, the event directors reserve the authority to review or retest all participants at all times to assure that standards are being maintained. (Please copy and bring completed form to event.)

Unit Number _____ Date(s) of Swim Test _____

	Classification		
	Non-Swimmer	Beginner	Swimmer
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

Swim Test Administered By:

Print Name _____ Signature _____

Certification _____ Expiration _____

Merit Badge Pre/Post Requisites

This section details what requirements must be completed in advance for the Scout to earn the listed merit badge. For Aquatics merit badges and activity awards, Safe Swim Defense requirements, Safety Afloat requirements, and basic weather hazard considerations will be covered at the Friday night program. If you cannot attend the Friday night program, you must provide written proof of having completed these requirements. Prior successful completion of the SA Swimmer test is also a prerequisite for all Aquatics merit badges and activity awards.

Each Scout must be familiar with the corresponding merit badge booklet prior to attending.

Scouts are not guaranteed completion of any badge. Eagle-required badges often have requirements that must be completed at the unit level after the class. Where possible the classroom instruction will provide instructions to help complete them at the unit level.

Canoeing

Study requirements 1, 3-6 and be prepared to discuss in class.

Kayaking

Study requirements 1, 3, 4, & 5 and be prepared to discuss in class.

Lifesaving

Must have previously earned the Swimming merit badge (requirement 2.a).

Motorboating

Each Scout must be at least 13 years of age.

Rowing

Study requirements 1 & 3 and be prepared to discuss in class.

Small Boat Sailing

Study requirements 1 & 4 and be prepared to discuss or complete in class. Scouts should learn the knots covered in Requirement 7 in advance and be prepared to demonstrate and complete *after* regular class session (either Saturday evening or Sunday morning) as there is inadequate time to cover these in class. Small boat sailing is a challenging class and scouts will receive a partial if pre-requirements are not adequately prepared or if scouts are not able to meet the on-water requirements.

Swimming-~~NOT A LEARN TO SWIM CLASS~~

Study requirement 1.b and be prepared to discuss in class.

Watersports

Each Scout must have water skied or wake-boarded before and be able to stand freely. Study requirements 1 & 2 and be prepared to discuss in class.

Snorkeling SA

Each Scout must be familiar with the SA Snorkeling Safety Pamphlet. Each Scout must bring his or her own mask, snorkel and fins.

SA Stand Up Paddleboarding

Each Scout must be familiar with the SA Stand Up Paddleboarding Pamphlet

Citizenship in the World

Be prepared to discuss their research for prerequisites 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7

Emergency Preparation

Emergency Prep instruction will not cover the following requirements during Aqua Camp class time: 1, 2(c), 8b, 9a

1. Scouts may bring proof of earning First Aid merit badge.

2(c). Must be completed at home with family after class.

8(b). Individual scout emergency service pack and family emergency kits should be compiled at home *after* class using counselor provided checklists.

9(a). Scouts will go home with a counselor approved checklist to conduct a home inspection after learning all course material.

******To complete the above requirements, scouts will be provided with counselor contact information for follow up after camp. 2-deep leadership will be maintained for all scout-counselor communications. ******

6. This requirement will be met during class; however, scouts must research this information in advance and be prepared to discuss/explain as indicated below:

(a.1) Describe the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

(a.2) Describe the Incident and the Incident Command System (ICS).

(b) Identify the local government or community agencies that normally handle and prepare for emergency services like those of the NIMS or ICS.

(b.1) Explain to your counselor how the NIMS/ICS can assist a Boy Scout troop when responding in a disaster.

(c) Find out who your community's emergency management director is and learn what this person does to prevent, protect, mitigate, respond to, and recover from emergency situations in your community.

First Aid

For requirement 5(a), Scouts must bring a personal or home first aid kit. Requirement 5(b) to be completed at troop level after the class.

Cooking

Be prepared to discuss requirement 7, requirements 4 and 6 must be done prior to camp, please bring a copy of your menu(s) and be prepared to discuss what you made and how