THIS NEWSLETTER WON’T LEAVE YOU HANGING!

Spring 2017 Update
What’s New on scouting.org?

The official Outdoor Program website (http://www.scouting.org/outdoorprograms) has become a great resource for COPE & Climbing program information. At this website you can find the following information:

- **RECENTLY UPDATED! Belay On.** The latest version of BSA’s COPE & Climbing textbook.
- **RECENTLY UPDATED! Climb On Safely.** BSA’s guide for unit climbing activities
- **NEW! Canyoneering Safely.** BSA’s guide for unit canyoneering activities
- **NEW! Cave Safely, Cave Softly.** BSA’s guide for unit caving activities
- **Training syllabi for COPE & Climbing courses**
  - **NEW! Presentation Aids.** A checklist was added to show where NCAP and ACCT standards fit into the training topics in the syllabi. More training aids and presentations will be added over the next few weeks to help National Camping School and local COPE & Climbing instructors with presenting training materials.
  - **Activity Consent Form.** A link to the BSA approved form for activity consent which should be used for non-scout participants in program activities.
  - **Training Course Codes & Cards.** A list of codes for all BSA COPE & Climbing related courses and a template for use with printing trainee information on pre-printed training cards.
  - **Training Program Evaluators.** A current listing of all approved Training Program Evaluators by Region and Area, a flowchart of the Training Program Evaluation (TPE) process, and the current TPE form.
  - **RECENTLY UPDATED! Continuing Education.** The continuing education process provides alternative methods to renew National Camping School training cards for Climbing Directors, COPE Directors, and COPE & Climbing Program Managers
  - **Frequently Asked Questions.** A document of answers to frequently asked questions concerning COPE & Climbing programs.
  - **NEW! Documents for COPE & Climbing Professional Inspections.** Request for Proposal and Suggested Agreements for purchasing professional inspection services for COPE & Climbing facilities (see NCAP RP-753).
  - **Risk Management Resources.** Materials to assist with implementing the CHECK program.
  - **Contact.** Email information for Region COPE & Climbing Chairs and National Task Force Chair.
Stand-Alone Bouldering Facilities

A question recently came up concerning stand-alone bouldering facilities and professional inspection requirements.

**Question:** Do the changes to NCAP standard FA-715.C mean that the stand-alone bouldering facility that I have at my Cub Scout camp now needs to be professionally inspected each year?

**Answer:** Stand-alone bouldering facilities at Cub Scout camps are not considered part of the council’s Climbing or COPE program. They are more like obstacle courses or playground structures. These kinds of facilities are addressed on page PS-206-4 of the NCAP standards as follows:

“Scout camp structures such as monkey bridges, obstacle courses, and pioneering towers are expected to meet safety standards in equipment and supervision comparable to COPE but are not subject to COPE and climbing standards, do not require professional inspection, and do not require an onsite COPE Level II instructor or director. Councils may find their COPE and climbing committee to be a valuable resource for writing operating procedures and providing training for staff who supervise these activities”.

If the bouldering facility is part of the council’s COPE and/or Climbing program, then it should be part of the professional inspection along with all of the other program facilities.

COPE & Climbing Training

The BSA National Camp School (NCS) provides Climbing Director, COPE Director and Program Manager training. Although typically attended by summer camp staff and professionals, these are not limited. Volunteers are encouraged to attend. NCS Director cards are good for 5 years and recognized by councils nationally. For details, contact your council professional who has stewardship for outdoor programs. Fees and registrations are handled according to council policies. Attending NCS in a location different from your local camp brings fresh new ideas to your programs. Check the NCS schedule online for dates and locations; [ncbsa.org/resources/ncs](http://ncbsa.org/resources/ncs).

Level II Climbing & COPE training is available through many councils or groups of councils. These councils have gone through a rigorous Training Program Evaluation or TPE. Level II training is good for 3 years. Holders of these cards can conduct program only in those program areas specified by the TPE process. For details, contact your council professional who has stewardship for outdoor programs. If they do not have an approved program, contact your Climbing/COPE area advocate or regional chair; [http://www.scouting.org/Home/OutdoorProgram/COPE.aspx](http://www.scouting.org/Home/OutdoorProgram/COPE.aspx).

Councils with approved Level II training programs may recognize credentials issued outside of their local program (e.g. Level II instructors moved from another council, AMGA guides, instructors certified by an ACCT certifying body, etc). The local council is ultimately responsible for the qualifications of the instructors working in their programs. As a minimum, some type of evaluation and demonstration of the required skills must be done to verify and acknowledge the credential.
So You Want to Build a Zip Line?

Attend the 2017 National Outdoor Conference

All across the world zip lines and other aerial adventures are being built at an ever increasing pace. If you are looking to invest your council’s resources in such facilities, there are a lot of things to consider beyond just the initial cost of construction. Some of the greatest challenges for councils involve marketing, ongoing maintenance, staff training, and equipment replacement. The COPE & Climbing Task Force put together a presentation called “So You Want to Build a Zipline” which was presented at the 2015 National Outdoor Conference. An updated version is currently on the schedule for the 2017 National Outdoor Conference coming up on September 28 - October 1.

Other topics of interest currently on the schedule are:

• Retaining Older Scouts With COPE & Climbing Programs
• Ice Climbing: No Need to Chill This Winter
• STEM in COPE & Climbing
• Philmont’s New COPE Facilities: Leveraging Volunteer Expertise

Philmont Training Center’s Fall Conference

Speaking of Philmont, there is a brand new COPE course and climbing tower at Philmont! Join us for one of the three courses that will be offered at the Philmont Training Center’s Fall Conference on September 17-23:

• COPE Director Certification: This is a National Camping School COPE Directors course designed for those who will be leading COPE (challenge course) programs. This course includes initiative games, spotted challenge course elements (Low COPE), challenge course elements using life-safety systems (High COPE), bouldering, and climbing/ rappelling activities using Philmont’s newly constructed facilities.

• Climbing Director Certification: This is a National Camping School Climbing Directors course designed for those who will be leading and instructing climbing/rappelling programs. It has been developed to support council, district and unit volunteers in teaching safe climbing and rappelling techniques at natural sites or constructed facilities. This course includes initiative games, climbing, bouldering, rappelling, anchor systems, and a wide variety of ways to teach them. Best of all, most of the course is conducted in Philmont’s backcountry at Cimmaroncito Camp.

• NEW! COPE Advanced Facilitation: This is an advanced course designed to deepen the skills and knowledge received at National Camping School COPE Director courses. The course will provide opportunities to learn and practice techniques facilitating and processing initiative games and low course activities, as well as applications for team development on the high course. Options to facilitate participants with physical challenges using universal access techniques will also be explored. In addition, participants will be introduced to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) lessons that provide insights into how ziplines work, the physics of falling, mechanical advantage, vectors, and others.
2017 Jamboree Aerial Sports Staff Needed

There are still plenty of opportunities to serve on the aerial sports staff for the 2017 Jamboree. There have been a lot of exciting changes at the Summit. Training for aerial sports staff will happen just prior to the start of the Jamboree. Join us for the fun! For more information and to register see http://www.summitbsa.org/events/jamboree/volunteers/.

• For more information on Canopy Tours, Zip Lines, and Challenge Courses contact Dean Carlson at dackansas@gmail.com.
• For more information on Climbing programs contact Randy Hinckley at rjhinckley@bellsouth.net.